



H. M. LLOYD.



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OLDER ENGLAND.



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# Older England,

ILLUSTRATED BY THE

ANGLO-SAXON ANTIQUITIES IN THE  
BRITISH MUSEUM

IN A

COURSE OF SIX LECTURES,

TO WHICH IS ADDED, BY SPECIAL PERMISSION OF THE COUNCIL OF THE  
BRITISH ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION, A PAPER READ  
BEFORE THAT BODY, AND ENTITLED

THE MYTH OF THE WEEK.

H. M. LLOYD.

BY

J. FREDERICK HODGETTS,

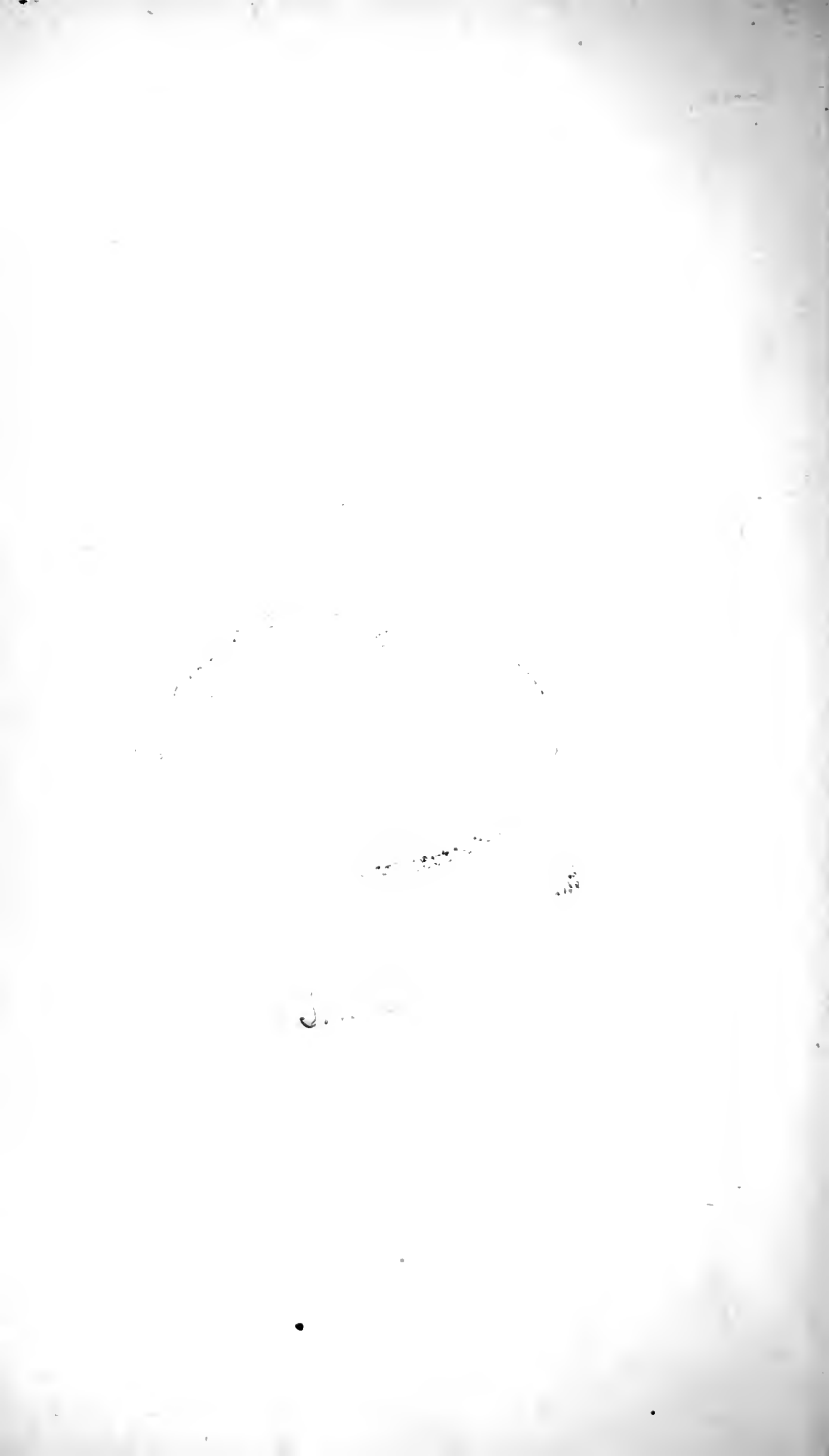
LATE EXAMINER IN ENGLISH TO THE UNIVERSITY AND DISTRICT OF MOSCOW;  
PROFESSOR IN THE IMPERIAL COLLEGE OF PRACTICAL SCIENCE, AND OTHER  
CROWN ESTABLISHMENTS AT MOSCOW.

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1884.





TO  
JOHN RUSKIN, Esq., M.A.,  
ETC., ETC., ETC.,  
SLADE PROFESSOR OF FINE ART, OXFORD,  
THIS COURSE OF LECTURES  
IS  
AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED  
BY  
THE AUTHOR.



## PREFATORY LETTER.

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MY DEAR PROFESSOR RUSKIN,

Allow me, as a disciple of a very old school, to adopt a very old-fashioned custom, and dedicate the following pages to you.

The cordial sympathy which you have extended to me in my humble effort to point out to my countrymen and countrywomen the mines of mental wealth and *heart* treasures lying lost to them, was the *primum mobile* of my second attempt at lecturing.

From my long absence abroad I have become almost a foreigner in my own country, and have returned, after an absence of thirty years, to find the very lore I was yearning to enjoy in England actually less appreciated, because less known, in England than in Germany, and even than in Russia! I may safely say that all through Scandinavia, from Torneå to Schleswig-Holstein, Early English is better known than it is here in its own home.

I shall never forget the kind words of encouragement with which you urged me forward, and the unexpected and public nature of your appreciation of my very humble work; and as you expressed a warm sense of admiration of the beautiful line of thought which led our poetic sires to the construction of the Teutonic week,

I have reprinted at the end of this work, with the special permission of the Council of the British Archæological Association, from the *Journal* of that body, the little paper which was so fortunate as to win your approbation, as setting forth some of these older thoughts.

The aim of my present effort is not to proclaim a new doctrine or to seek renown for myself in opening up the hoards of our saga lore to the young men and maidens who frequent our schools, but simply to do their hearts and minds good by pointing out a purer, holier source of classic delight than the pages of Homer or Hesiod can afford.

The wealth of our pure tongue of old is the outcome of a purity in heart and life which was peculiar to our race in the past times of Older England. But, like the hoard in our own glorious Myth of Beowulf, a dragon guards the gold! Who will care to brave the storm of classic fury and schoolmen's scorn, and slay the dragon for the people's good? *You* have done giant's work in showing men the power of LOVE in Art. And you perhaps, alone may see the way to quell the monster and set free the hoard.

Believe me,

Yours very sincerely,

J. FREDERICK HODGETTS.

LONDON, *June* 1884.

## INTRODUCTION.

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THE present course of Lectures, being the second which, by the kind permission of the Authorities at the British Museum, I have been allowed to deliver to a private audience of ladies and gentlemen specially interested in this subject, has been called forth by the unexpected success of the former course, delivered just before Christmas last year.

On the former occasion I was much encouraged in the work which I felt called upon to do, by the cordial sympathy expressed all round by those who did me the honour to attend; by the flattering notices of my work in the public journals; and by the hearty and almost unexpected appreciation of my work by certain men of high standing in the world of science and art, who, instead of throwing obstacles in my way, have done everything they possibly could to facilitate my effort to bring the English people to a knowledge and love of their own language, literature, classic remains, and mythology.

And herein I must beg my readers not to misunderstand my own claims. I do not put myself forward as the prophet who is to teach a new sect; the master who is to found a new school!—Far from it! I am merely one of the many who have felt the want of a knowledge of the history of our language, our grammar, and our

literature. I never knew that we *had* a grammar until I read, at Berlin, a quarter of a century ago, a book published by Dr. Koch under the title of *Eine Historische Grammatik der Englischen Sprache* ("An Historical Grammar of the English Language"). Here, for the first time, I saw that we had a grammar and a language of our own, and from that moment resented, as a cruel wrong done to me, the neglect of our noble tongue in our High Schools. It was the theory of the old days, and it is almost as much so now, that all a man wanted was to know Latin. With the classic forms in his mind, derived from the Eton Latin Grammar, he would be set up as a well-educated member of society.

As with our language, so with our history. We are nowhere in history, we English! Our story begins with the Norman Conquest. The Norman barons spoke French, and the Norman monks wrote Latin; therefore they were nearer to the true source of civilisation and refinement—Rome—than any other nation, "so, as they came to England, we will, if you please play at being descended from them", was the thought in the minds of the writers of history and grammar in the last century and the beginning of this. Who, then, are the English? What are they? Where are they? These questions have never been satisfactorily answered, on account of the snobbishness of our teachers, who have ignored the English name.

I am not setting up to teach the world what it can learn for itself without me; I want the world to help to teach *me*. I have only tried to show how these remains, "poor dumb mouths", speak for the claims of England to have a *classic* time and tongue of her own.

We have able men conducting such work. Dr. Morris, with his *Historic Outlines of English Accidence*, his *Eng-*

*lish Grammar*, his reprints for the Early English Text Society, has done much to pave the way. Mr. Sweet has taken up Thorpe's labours; Mr. Furnivall is doing grand work in the same way; but—for there is a *but*—the authorities in schools do not insist that a boy should know English better than anything else. The works of the authors I have just mentioned ought to be in the hands of *everybody*, instead of being regarded as rather choice and rare things to possess, things to be found in the libraries of antiquaries and philologists. I want the whole world to read them. I want England to be enthusiastic about English, and to know that she is a daughter of pure, moral, high-souled Scandinavia, and not the spurious offspring of a Norman monk! I want Latin to be studied in the second or third place (but studied well or not at all), as it is in Germany, where the Germans know Latin better than our most learned schoolmen ever do, and yet are proud of being Teutons and knowing German better still. This is the case in other countries too. The Swedes, the Danes, the Russians, know their own languages and are proud of them. It is only we, who have an Alfred, a Shakespeare, a Byron, who say that it is a waste of time to learn English.

Circumstances rendered the foul wrong done to me, in being taught a foreign idiom instead of my own, especially cruel; and I shall be glad if my own urgent appeal to the powers that teach may procure for boys, more fortunate than I was when a boy, the opportunity of learning from some of the many sources now open to them something of the true nature of that language in which Alfred wrote and Shakespeare sang.

To the authorities at the British Museum I have again to express the very deep sense I entertain of their courteous and ready aid. Dr. Bond has done everything

in his power to render my humble attempts successful. Mr. Franks, under whose special care the Anglo-Saxon department has been placed, has taken much trouble to point out to me where he thought I was wrong in my inferences respecting the "casket", and in deference to his opinion I have withdrawn my own statements regarding the materials of the casket altogether, feeling that anything like controversy on the subject would have been out of place in a Lecture; therefore where the text in its present form differs from that actually read and reported in various public journals, the change is due to the care taken by Mr. Franks to set me right. To Mr. E. M. Thompson, for his prompt assistance in causing the manuscripts referred to in Lecture III to be brought from the MS. Department and displayed in the Anglo-Saxon Room, I have also to express my very best thanks.

I have also publicly to acknowledge with sincere gratitude the constant courtesy and kindness of the British Archæological Association from the very first day of my arrival in England down to the date of the appearance of this volume, for which the Council of the Association has given special permission for me to reprint a paper read by me before the Association on the 3rd January 1883, and published in the *Journal* of the Association.

My audience, as well as myself, are greatly indebted to General Sir James Alexander and to Mr. Fawcett for their conduct in the chair.

J. FREDERICK HODGETTS.

LONDON, *June* 1884.



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LECTURE I.

THE EARTHEN JAR.



# LECTURE I.

## THE EARTHEN JAR.

WHEN we regard the remains of any results of ceramic art, whether the rude production of nomadic tribes, or the refined efforts of highly civilized nations, we find certain points of similarity which lead some antiquaries to the hypothesis that the utensils of ruder nations are but copies of higher forms of art existing among peoples of greater culture, and consequent greater completeness in their artificial productions. For civilization is at war with nature, and those men who are prone to indulgence in all the refinements suggested by art in its various developments, are apt to recede more and more from the teachings of nature; and, unfortunately, in learning to love their beautiful outward surroundings, they sink into a love of external things, which, being their own invention, and not the immediate work of God, become really idols of wood and stone.

The earlier dwellers on the earth, fresher than we are from the hand of the Divine by (who knows how many?) centuries, saw in the wave, the cloud, the sun, and all the host of wonders surrounding them, things which raised their thoughts *from* themselves. The luxurious Roman in the later ages saw, in the many refinements created by the busy hand of art, objects ministering to his love of *self*.

And the more self-hood is worshipped the less does our capacity of reverence for anything higher than self become, and the refined sensual man would be inclined to adopt any convenient form that would minister to his physical wants and necessities, whether presented by a barbarous people or not. A refined and cultivated race will adopt the vices of savages more readily than a savage will adopt the refinements of so-called civilized life. Save in the instance of the adoption of fire-arms by savage tribes, as being better suited to the purpose of destruction than bows and arrows, there are hardly any arts which savage men adopt from those in a higher state of civilization, unless the civilization be thrust upon them by colonization, while civilised men readily add to their own the vices of any newly discovered set of savages.

The theory that all the world became more or less Roman in a frantic desire to imitate the Imperial self-styled mistress of the world, has been shown in my former Lectures to be untenable as regards the arms and military arts of the northern "Barbarians" who humbled her to the dust. I have shown that she, in her boasted conquest, owed much to surrounding nations; that the days of the week and the number of the months were copied by the Romans from barbarians, and not *vice versa*. The term "barbarian" should not be considered by us as a term of reproach, inasmuch as it only implied a "foreigner", *i.e.*, not a Greek, and subsequently not a Roman. In the sense of being neither Greeks nor Romans, we are barbarians still—and barbarians, with God's help, ever shall remain!

Now, because, from the very nature of the object, any vessel made on a potter's wheel—from the Ganges to the



Amazon—partakes of common peculiarities, it would be rather hazardous to say that a form produced in South America by some aboriginal artist was a copy from a Hindu design, merely because it was similar. If anybody will take the trouble to turn a potter's wheel—or get it turned for him—while he moulds a vase with his untaught hands, he will be surprised to find how *classical* the first attempt he makes becomes. This only shows that the potter's wheel all over the world produces the same effects and similar forms, but by no means justifies us in saying that the forms we see *must* be Roman because Roman potters produced similar pots to those made by barbarians.

In illustration of this position I shall tell you a little anecdote of a child born in Russia and visiting England for the first time. She was taken to see some remarkable antiquities exhibited by Major di Cesnola at a meeting of the British Archaeological Association. These relics were all from Cyprus. Among them was a fine specimen of an urn, on seeing which the child exclaimed: "At all events I know what *that* is: it is a *Kouvschin* from Moscow." Some years ago this would have been taken as an evidence of classic influence on so remote a region as "Muscovy", where, I need hardly tell my audience, no Greek or Roman influence ever penetrated before the tenth century. A hasty conclusion arrived at from external points of similarity is not infrequent in archaeological deductions; and I mention the case of this child as a gentle satire on the custom of so judging.

The forms before us prove no obligation to classic models; they only show that the vessels were formed by

Aryans, who had the potter's wheel in common with all members of that race. They are precisely similar to those found in Scandinavia; the patterns observable on some of them being identical with those found on other Northern remains.

The art of moulding clay and rendering it hard by the application of heat is by no means exclusively classical; nor should we be too readily inclined to attribute that of brick-making to a classic source, merely because the Scandinavians preferred wood for their edifices. Brick-making has certainly been known in India from remote pre-historic times; though doubtless the Romans obtained their first ideas of brick-making from a Semitic source. Be this as it may, they introduced bricks and pottery into Britain, while the Saxons at first certainly did not employ the former.

The English were accustomed to live in a manner strongly reminding us of the mode of life among the Russians of the present day, whose peasants inhabit cottages of wood, made by applying the trunks of large trees one on the top of the other, the ends being cut for the reception of others at right angles to them. A square frame is thus gradually constructed, which is raised on stones to keep the flooring off the ground, though sometimes a foundation is laid in an excavation in the earth. In the houses of the better sort we meet with a lower course of masonry or brickwork on which the wooden superstructure is raised. That wood should be so much employed in Russia is perfectly natural, when we bear in mind what vast forests cover the land, more especially in the northern and eastern districts. But in the infancy of

our race, in the country whence we came, *i.e.*, the southernmost portion of Scandinavia, the same phenomenon was observable also; consequently we were, like the Russians, a wood-building people; and the tendency to use timber we of course brought with us to Britain, where there was plenty of wood and to spare. It may not be generally known, but it is a fact, that wooden houses are much warmer than those of brick or stone. This was another reason why they should have been used in preference. The Hall of Herot was of wood, and that must be taken as a type of the mansion of the early English in Older England. It consisted of a long oblong hall with doors at either end, with the hearth in the middle of the floor, and certain side buildings for the women's apartments, etc. Cooking was performed in the central hall before the assembled guests, who were wont to feast long and merrily, while the *scóp* sang his lay and the mead went round briskly. The outer side of such a mansion resembled the modern style of building in Russia, where at the gable ends large pieces of wood, fantastically carved, are made to *cross* each other, explaining the odd appellation of the "Horn", or the "Hart", by presenting the appearance of a pair of horns, or rather antlers. Sometimes these gable endings are very elaborately carved, and generally into the rude resemblance of eagles' heads; but whatever the modern Russian form may be, it amply explains the early English notion of calling a house a "hart".

In a former Lecture I alluded to the structure of the mead-hall, with its high bank and other surroundings, but struck no special key-note for the smaller buildings or rooms which surrounded the chief apartments. At present, the

sight of the earthen jar before us, reminding us of the various uses to which such a vessel could be applied, and of the places in which it could be kept, brings us to the consideration of the wine jar, the water jug, and the funeral urn, with the respective places in the house or out of it which were devoted to their reception.

In the first place, we are informed that there was a regular place or cellar set apart for wine contained in such jars as some of these, and that this place was called the *wín-ærn*, or "wine place". This was either a cellar dug below the floor of the house (or, at least, under the ground near it), or else a kind of artificial cave made of large stones piled one on the other, so as to form an out-building to the hall itself. In such a *wín-ærn* was stored a number of wine *cesters*, or things to contain wine (from the same root whence the word *chester*, an enclosed place is derived—having no connection whatever with the Latin *castra*). In Ælfric's *Vocabulary* we find the word *cantarus* (*canthores*) so translated. Besides these wine *cesters*, we meet, in the *wín-ærn*, with the *wín-bælg* (wine sack or skin, or leathern bottle); *wín-côle*, i.e., wine-cooler; *wín-fæt*, i.e., wine vessel or tub, all of which had their places in the *wín-ærn*. Besides the *wín-cester* (pronounced *chester*), we have the *wín-sester*, which was a measure of fifteen pints; and the two words are very distinctly referred to by Ælfric, who translates *Amphora* by *sester*, and *Enophorum* by *wín-fæt*.

Not only were there so many various vessels for containing wine, but we find as many, if not more, for those intended for the reception of water—*wæter-buc*, bucket; *wæter-bydan*, a barrel; *wæter croc* or *croc* (German,

*wasser krug*), a pitcher; *wæter-fæt*, a vessel for water (a flagon); the two latter being earthenware vessels similar to those before us.

When the champions were seated in the hall, then the fair-haired maidens passed round the board and filled the horns with mead, and the warriors drank deep draughts, for the glad giver of golden mead gave them drinking-horns without feet, so that they could not set them down, as long as anything to drink was within, without spilling it, and so they emptied the deep horns at a draught, and more was given them until they had taken enough, or until all the healths had been drunk that the king or eolderman wished them to drink—

“And it was merry in the hall,  
Where the beards wagged all!”

From such pitchers as these, and larger, the shene waitresses poured forth the foaming stream, and gladdened the hearts of the champions. And when the *Hlæfdige*, before going to her *búr* (pronounced “bower”, the *ú* having the diphthongal power of *ow* in *now*), presented to the *Hláford* a horn, or, in later times, a glass cup of wine, then she would pour it from such a *fæt* as one of these, or from the bag or bottle—whichever you like to call it—and then she would withdraw to her withdrawing room, as ladies do at this very day as descendants of true Anglo-Saxon mothers. And when the demands of court etiquette had been complied with, the king would rise and “join the ladies”. Then “in bower” he would see what she had been working in the way of cunning tapestry, or he would see what the children of the house had been doing—how they got on with their learning

how they progressed in the use of warlike weapons, and the like, much as a good father would do now.

The *búr* was built off from the larger hall, though often in itself of no mean dimensions, having to accommodate a great number of ladies, serving women, and female slaves. In the houses of less pretension the grand hall was not wanted, and therefore the space which it would have occupied was divided into compartments by *scide-wealls*, or partitions. These partitions are supposed—but, I think, on very insufficient authority—to have been constructed of wicker-work filled up with clay. The evidence is more in favour of such divisions as sailors call “bulk-heads”, made of planks of wood. A house would thus be divided into four or more compartments, of which the chief would be the general dining-room, another the women’s apartment, another the place for certain domestic animals, and fourthly, the place which we might call the scullery or kitchen, all of which were distinctly separate in the more stately “Hall”.

Moritz Heyne, in a learned work on the position and construction of “Hall Heorot”, enters fully into the position of these various outbuildings, and has very ingeniously taken certain ancient remains in various parts of Germany as corroborating his view. There can be no doubt that the *bredw-hus*, the *mealt-hus*, the *wæsc-hus*, and the *hors-ærn*, or stables, were separate buildings, connected together, and forming one establishment, as is the case in Russia to this day, where a “house” is a collection of buildings in a courtyard. The normal Russian house is evidently the result of the civilisation introduced into that country by Ruric, and was, therefore,

in its origin Scandinavian, like that of the inhabitants of Older England. Save in the descent to the cellar, and in the ascent to the hall, which *may* sometimes have been raised slightly from the level of the ground (although the evidence which has come down to us is opposed to such an idea), the use of the staircase seems to have been almost unknown as forming a portion of the house. Of course, our word "stair" is only a corrupt mode of spelling the Anglo-Saxon *stæger*, in which the *g* has become *y* or *i*, in the usual Teutonic way.

It is unnecessary to say that our forefathers were acquainted with stairs. They were cut in rocks, and when towers were built, they were involved in the construction; the assertion just made applies only to their employment in dwelling-houses, which was introduced some time after the settlement in Britain. The Teutonic hatred of town life, and of the confined feeling of being enclosed by walls, was more emphatically exhibited by the Scandinavians than any other Teutons. And the English, on coming to Britain, had absolutely no reason to copy either British or Roman models. They had come by invitation of a weaker race to aid them against certain enemies. Those enemies they defeated by their own strength and knowledge of the art of war. That they despised the Britons is a matter of course; for they worshipped physical strength. They were moral in their lives, stern in their manners, unyielding and obstinate in their convictions, and thoroughly satisfied with themselves. To these fundamental principles the Britons offered a striking contrast. They were not physically strong, they were far from leading moral lives, their manners were more lively and engaging than those of

the English ; and we may see among the descendants of the Kelt at the present day a much greater brightness of style and desire to please than obtains among the descendants of Odin. The Scandinavian Englishman had been taught to despise the shelter of walls in war. Nay, the Berserkir, a class of warriors specially trained to seize the shields of the foe in their teeth, attacking the enemy with bare hands, had the habit of flinging their own shields away after the first discharge of arrows and javelins had been received upon them. Their laws and customs were all dead against walled towns and castles. Why, then, should they adopt them from a race which, despite their aid, had failed to defend themselves from another race of inferior advantages and resources, over which the English gained easy victories ? Accordingly, we find among the English remains here preserved no traces of any copying from Roman or British models. Even when Britons had houses of brick, when Roman villas were still standing in Britain and were occupied by Romanized Britons, the Englishman built his log-cabin or cluster of cabins forming a house ; and these homesteads were constructed in the rambling, disconnected manner best adapted to avoid the danger of fire, or rather to prevent the spread of fire, the one element which the Teutons dreaded. Nor should we feel surprise at the greater number of remains of Roman pottery than of English, when we consider that for the decoration of the house no such articles were (as a general rule at least) employed. The water jug and the wine croc were the chief articles of pottery ; of the dish or platter no remains have (as far as I know) reached us, so that I am confirmed in my opinion, expressed on a former occasion, that the



warriors took their soup in the little bucket found so frequently in their graves, and took the solid meat from the liquid soup by means of the perforated spoon, so as to avoid soiling the highly prized beard.

Representations of the platter are found in several illuminations. It appears to have been of wood, and, like the platter now used for bread, of a circular form. It was called by the name now applied by the Germans to a table, *i.e.*, *Disch*, or, in modern German, *Tisch*: hence our own word dish. It was written, *d.i.s.c.*, where the *sc*, like the *sk* in many Scandinavian words, is pronounced as *sh*. It is strange that the Latinists have not seized upon this as a proof that our forefathers in the North imported this ancient utensil from the classic land of the *discus*, because both are round. But although in modern German we do meet with plenty of Latinisms, I have not found any in the older Icelandic, where our "dish" appears in all its glory, having the *k* with the *h* power, and the true Norse terminal *r*, the actual meaning of the word being a plate—German, *Teller*; certainly not derived from *discus*, although possibly of remote common origin, being both Aryan words. In the Anglo-Saxon version of the New Testament, of the latter part of the tenth century, we find "disc" used for the vessel in which the daughter of Herodias brought the head of John the Baptist. Wycliffe, in 1389, four hundred years later, uses the same word, spelt "disch"; Tyndale, in 1526, has "platter"; while in the version of our own time we have substituted "charger" for the pure English word. In the same way the "water pots", at the marriage in which the water was turned to wine, are *wæter-fætu*, in the Anglo-

Saxon version, the measure of water contained in each being expressed by two or three *sestra*; in Wycliffe's version *mesuris*; in Tyndale's by *fyrkyns*, which in the Latin version is rendered by *amphoræ*. The clear and concise version of the Anglo-Saxon Gospels published by Thorpe in 1842, is a book which ought to be in the hands of all lovers of our ancient speech; the phraseology is not so archaic as that of Beowulf, and it contains much interesting matter which renders it indispensable in a real English library.

The national character of the English house maintained itself even in Britain, for which country it was far better adapted in many respects than the Roman structure which had been adopted, to a certain extent, by the Britons. But fancy a *compluvium* in a villa in Westmoreland or anywhere in the Lake district! or the cosy feeling of an *atrium* in a house on Blackheath in November! They certainly could not be calculated to promote the comfort of the inhabitants; while the Scandinavian hall, with its immense hearth in the very centre, was just the thing to enable the inmates to get as much warmth as possible out of the blazing fire, none of whose heat was lost, save such as escaped through the aperture in the roof provided for the exit of the smoke.

The early English have been sneered at for not having adopted a higher stage of civilization than their own. I have yet to learn that the Roman civilization *was* higher than our own; and then, what advantage we should have derived from its adoption if our forefathers had discarded their own. If it had been so much superior to Teutonic civilization, the latter would not have so completely

stamped it out and crushed it. The fact was that Roman civilization was *not* superior to ours, and for that reason we are, at the present day, Englishmen, and not "debased Romans"; so that we have, indeed, great cause for thankfulness when we reflect that our sturdy ancestors took nothing from the Roman source. Where their descendants have descended to the mimicry of another race they have always had cause to repent it; for however superior to English customs Romance customs may be, *they don't suit us*. This was distinctly recognised by our forefathers, who until their conversion to Christianity never adopted anything from other races, and even after that time were very cautious in doing so. And, curiously enough, as soon as they began to imitate they fell before the race they aped. Upwards of eight hundred years' interval has not been sufficient to wash out the Norman stain on our language, manners, arts, and literature. Generally speaking, imitation by one man of another is contemptible, but the imitation of a race by a race intensifies the meanness in the ratio of one man to a nation. Had we continued improving our own style, we should now have had more to be proud of.

When we look attentively into the form of an Anglo-Saxon jar and contrast it with a Roman urn, we see at a glance that it is the production of another race. There is a sturdiness, a thick-set character about an English jug that looks like business. The curves are not so elegant, nor is the whole effect so pleasing to the eye, but it is highly interesting as exhibiting the same kind of curve as is to be found in the centre of many of the older forms of columns supporting Saxon arches. Now, I have before

told you that we are able to trace the influence of the early Scandinavians in many peculiarities observable in modern Russia, where they have remained unchanged since the time of Ruric. In other Lectures I have called attention to the tunic, the cross gartering, and the linen trousers, called still in Russia by the Icelandic name of *bruki*, the same word which gave the celebrated Ragnar Lodbrok the title by which he has come down to us; the same word that exists in Scotland as "breeks", and in England as "breeches". Such preservation of these old Scandinavian habits and customs among the Russian peasants at this very day I have mentioned, but such of you as have not travelled in Russia will be surprised when I tell you that the Saxon arch exists now in more modern Russian architecture: that the little bulging column, resembling in the thick portion of the shaft the outlines of one of the jars in the British Museum, is to be met with all over Moscow! The double arch with only two columns, the centre one being purposely omitted, is of constant occurrence all over the empire. It is rarely found in Scandinavia now; but in some of the more ancient remains occasionally turning up there, we have the same arch, the same column, the same zigzag pattern, and the same jug that we find in Russia and in England. This proves that the force of Northern civilization expanded east and west, from Scandinavia to Moscow on the one hand, and to Britain on the other, where it drove out the Roman and stamped out the Keltic.

The circular form of arch is in agreement with the mysterious veneration for the circular form evinced by our forefathers in the construction of their Thing-temples, and,

in fact, of every object capable of being well presented in a circular form. Their shields were circular, and many other objects have been spoken of as partaking of this wonder-working form. The zigzag pattern on the arches having no parallel in Italian art, is called specially "Saxon", and the Saxons called it "*fræt*" work. This *fræt* is from the verb *fretan*, to gnaw, devour, eat, and refers either to the saw or tooth-like appearance of the ornament, or to the cutting out of the original wooden arches into tooth-like ornament. It became applied to any kind of ornament that was elaborately worked, and the English goldsmiths of the time of Alfred were remarkable for the beauty of their execution of such ornaments in gold and silver.

Under these circumstances we ought to feel rather proud of this dumpy jug, which, like nearly all the Anglo-Saxon remains in this "Máthum house"\* of ours, may lead us to see that our ancestors were men of thought and men of action clearing the way for us.

Such a vessel was indispensable for cooking purposes; and we see in one of the representations to Cædmon's "Paradise Lost" a picture of our still more remote ancestors quitting the Garden of Eden, Adam with a jar similar to the broader kind among these, and a spade in the other hand. Both he and Eve are dressed in Anglo-Saxon garments, and the spade he carries is curious, as being precisely similar to those used by the peasantry in the more remote parts of Russia. It is of wood, it has only one shoulder, and the cutting edge is armed with a rim of metal.

The jar or pot seems full of some sort of fruit or seed,

\* Treasury.

intimating, with the spade, that Adam was to become a tiller of the ground. The first mother is evidently *our* ancestress, being clad in the wimple and complete dress of an Anglo-Saxon lady.

There is another illumination in the same MS., where the offerings of Cain and Abel are represented. Abel carries a kid in his hand, while Cain holds a bowl in which are certain vegetable productions requiring some skill in botany to identify. The bowl itself is similar to the smaller specimens preserved in the national collection, and is perhaps a reminiscence of the sacrificial bowl of pagan times. It is of very primitive form, evincing little attempt at taste, though of course dear to us, however humble, as being a form of art practised by our own forefathers; for no real Englishman will ever be ashamed of his origin, or endeavour to cast a slight upon his own ancestors because they were not somebody else.

As the settlement in Britain became more confirmed, and the arts of peace began to make way among the military settlers, they, like the Romans (who had occupied the same ground before them in much the same way), commenced such work as was absolutely required for the production of the mere necessaries of life; and, like the Romans again, they had no reason for copying British models, having their own with them upon which to work. They would have no use for British or Roman bricks, because they built their houses of wood. They had no need of Roman or British pottery, because their own habits and requirements were different from those of the Romans in the most essential points, and they established their own means of supplying their own wants in their

own way. To expect a military colony, fifteen centuries ago, to have all the arts with them which we have since acquired, would be to start a theory as ridiculous as it would be untenable. But there is a vast difference now-a-days between the dwelling of a man of great wealth and cultivated taste in a fashionable part of London, and the first attempt at settling made by an English party of emigrants, whether in the Far West, or in Australia, or New Zealand. The first wants have to be gratified, the means of cooking food and building houses found, before any of the more refined cravings can be satisfied. In the case of the English invasion of Britain, the civilization left behind in the Scandinavian home was not—as in the instance referred to in modern colonization—much superior to that which was brought away. The Scandinavians enjoyed a degree of civilization, not derived from either Greek or Roman sources, and in many respects widely differing from the civilization of the classic races; but it was civilization all the same, and it was better adapted to their needs. Living in a state of constant warfare, the first requirements were necessarily military; accordingly, the chief remains of the earliest times are such as distinguish the warrior; and the two great trades among civilians were the smith and the shoemaker, both of which terms were expressions of wider application than the more modern acceptance of the words admits of. Smith included the armourer, the gold-smith, the silver-smith, the copper-smith, and other branches of the grand class. In the *Colloquies of Archbishop Ælfric*, a work of the tenth century, the palm of usefulness is decidedly borne by the smith, while the shoemaker takes the second place.

In these *Colloquies*, though the carpenter or wood-wright is mentioned with praise, he has to yield to the smith in point of importance; while the potter is not mentioned at all, his art being evidently of too little value in the eyes of the interlocutors to be worthy of any special mention. And it is remarkable that the wood-wright alone claims the credit for building houses and ships; this claim is disputed by the smith, who tells him that without tools made by him (the iron-smith) he (the wood-smith) could do nothing.

The word "pot" has been derived by some from *pytt*, a deep place with water in it. I have been led to suppose that it is a corruption from "botle" or "botel", originally a dwelling-house, but used in later times for the dwelling-place of the spirit which wrought so much ill among our forefathers when released. Certainly our "bottle" comes from "botel", as does "pottle", and it would seem an easy matter to get "pot" out of it. On the other hand, there is an Icelandic word *pottr*, which means a vessel, whether of earthenware or metal, for water or wine, and this would of course account for it. But this word does not occur in Bosworth, nor have I met with it in Anglo-Saxon writings; we must have got it through the Normans, indirectly from Icelandic—unless it be, as I have suggested, a very corrupt contraction of "bottle", or a form of *pytt*.

The word occurs in a vocabulary of the fifteenth century, which is no proof that it was not used before. It only seems to point to its being of Norman introduction. I believe that the vulgar expression, "gone to pot", is a corruption of "gone to pytt", *i.e.*, to the grave. In the



edition of *Piers Plowman*, by Professor Skeat, he gives us at the end of the "Crowley", or B text of the poem, a short "glossary", in which the *crock* of the original is explained by "pott". This is of the sixteenth century.

Although the word potter is evidently a recent addition to the vocabulary, the *cylene* or kiln, as a place for drying, occurs, and the workman whom we should call potter, is designated *croc-wirhta*, crockery-wright or crock-worker; while the brick maker or tile maker is called *tigel-wyrhta*, translated by Bosworth by "a tile or pot worker, potter". The word is from *tigian* or *tigan*, to draw, and the substantive *tigel* stands in the same relation to the verb as the German *ziegel* (a tile) stands to the word *ziehen* (to draw). In fact, the substantive does not indicate merely a tile, but anything that can be made by the potter and *drawn out* of clay. In Bosworth's Dictionary a remark is made that "porringes are to this day called *tigs* by the working potters". The adjective form is *tigelen*, quasi *tilen*. The tiles used for a roof are called *thæctigel*, i.e., thatch tiles; thatch being cognate with the German *dach*, a roof, or *decke*, a cover. The final *c* in English becomes *tch* in many words, and generally after a *soft vowel* (i, e, æ, or œ), as *wicce*, in modern English becomes "witch".

As the earliest houses of the Anglo-Saxons were of wood, and the baked clay portions of the edifices were confined to earthen floors and hearths, so when stone became used there was at first, very naturally, a tendency to imitate rather the style to which the builders had been accustomed, than to work upon Roman or other models. Accordingly we find the same simple arch that we meet with at the present day in Russia, in the Anglo-Saxon

churches. Singularly alive to the demands of an active faith, the Christian Anglo-Saxon was remarkable for the extreme simplicity of his own dwelling, and the disproportionate gorgeousness of his temple; just as in the older time the greatest exertion of combined strength imaginable was necessary to roll the huge rocks into their places in forming such a structure as Stonehenge, while the meanest hut served the warrior for a dwelling place, or a hall like a big booth in a fair was regarded as the grandest admissible form of dwelling even for a king.

The same phenomenon is to be seen in Russia, where the hut of the peasant is of the simplest possible structure of rough trunks of trees laid one upon another, the interstices being plugged with tow or oakum, much as the planks on board ship are *caulked*; the house of the country squire owning as much land as would make a county in England, is poorly built also of hewn logs piled one upon the other, though plastered inside with stucco, and sometimes papered within and meagrely furnished; while the church is a handsome stone structure, well finished within and without, and overladen with gilding and costly adornments. Grandly did our forefathers seize on Britain, wrenching her from the hand of the feeble Kelt; and as grandly did they seize upon the New Faith and make of it a Church of England. Simple as the Englishman of the seventh and eighth centuries was in his own domestic arrangements, contenting himself with plain deal tables, unpolished floors, and roofs of thatch or of shingles, he could afford golden tables for the altar—tables of solid gold, worked by the hands of cunning

goldsmiths into fantastic shapes such as he loved. And yet the trace of the wooden edifice lived on in the stone; the arches were such as could have been constructed with the aid of a simple wheel for the curve; the pillars were either straight like the trees of the fir forest from which they came, or bulged into the form of the jug-like column to which I have already alluded.

Before the introduction of glass for windows, they were, of course, as narrow as possible, being mere slits for the passage of air (wind eyes, or eyelet holes for wind); but towards the end of the seventh century, Benedict, Bishop of Wearmouth, and Bishop Wilfrith introduced glass for church windows, and it was applied to ecclesiastical purposes before it was used in private buildings.

A very curious circumstance respecting Saxon architecture is that the head of a column retained in stone the pattern of its wooden predecessor. The wooden column had been cut into a long, cylindrical form, having for a capital a mere butt-end or block, such as may be produced by shaving down a piece of ordinary firewood, leaving a cubical portion untouched at either end. Such is the simple construction of the original Saxon column, and such a form is reproduced in stone. Sometimes this simple block was carved into a rude representation of foliage, but most generally it was left plain, and without any ornament than its own club-like strength supporting the superincumbent arch.

Christianity, although at first received with extreme caution by the English, who protested against certain dogmas of Rome from the very beginning of their reception of the faith, had struck firm root in good

ground, and its growth was rapid, yet healthy. The strong minds that would use their own judgment in deciding so important a matter as the national faith, pruned that faith of certain accessories which they saw at once were excrescences; but succeeding generations, coming into closer connection with Rome, were led by their habit of submission to the dicta thence promulgated to accept them as gospel, until a future age—now not long behind us—threw off the shackles, and left the English Church pretty much as it was in the time of Ælfric.

The first structures were certainly not due to the work of the *tigel-wihrta*, save, perhaps, that the tub-like, or jar-like, column may have resulted from copying the outer form of the vessel; although it is just as likely to have been caused in the first instance by the chipping or shaving away of the portions of a wooden column or trunk lying between the centre and the two ends, leaving the centre of the same diameter as the original trunk, and squaring the two extremities into cubes, forming respectively the base and the capital of the column. Such a process would leave the Saxon column as we find it in many parts of England, and such a process was doubtless the *modus operandi* of the wood-wright who built the mansion. Later on, the shafts were straight, as there was no reason why they should not be when there was stone to work in and no bulging centre to cut away. But even in the later times, in times after the Conquest, when the straight shaft was the rule of building, there was no attempt at Greek or Roman capitals. Even when the foliated capital occurs, there is no doubt of its being derived from the purely Scandinavian source referred to already.

The well-known crypt in the Church of St. Peter's, at Oxford, is one of the oldest now remaining in England. Dr. Ingram, the celebrated Saxonist, and editor of an edition of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, attributes it to the time of Alfred; but it is evidently of later date, although undoubtedly Anglo-Saxon. The capitals have the butt-head appearance which I have noticed, but they contain elaborate sculpture of a foliated pattern, and the shafts of the columns are straight. The late Mr. Thomas Wright, the well-known antiquary, has given some fair illustrations of the *jar* column, to which he applies the term baluster. I have no doubt that the respective age of the two forms will be ably investigated by others better qualified than I am to undertake the task; but I throw out these remarks as the result of observations in various parts of the world.

The word timber is pure English, free from all Roman or Greek taint, and we know that the word means *wood*. The Anglo-Saxon verb "to build" is *timbrian*, and we have used it in speaking of ships until quite lately in the expression, "a well-timbered craft", simply meaning well built. Now, suppose this expression carried over (like the word *linden* to Beowulf's iron shield) to the iron walls of New England, and you have before you precisely what was done when house builders abandoned wood as the only material for building, and began to work in stone. Their constructions were called *stán-getimbru*—stone timberings or stone buildings; and it is not likely that they should suddenly have dropped all their old associations with their work when they could not even do away

with so suggestive a name. It remains in German to this day as the name of a room—*zimmer*; a carpenter being a *zimmermann* in that language, not implying that he keeps to his room, but he is a builder; a house, too, in German may be said to be *gut zezimmert*—well built. *Frauenzimmer* is a being of female build. With the name, much of the art went over to the stone, and we find constant repetitions in the mineral of what must have existed in the wooden material. Delicate ribbed-work, executed by the *tigel wirht* of tiles, and of a semi-cylindrical form, and bright with many colours (similar to those spoken of by Tacitus as peculiar to the Northern Germans, and possessing a beauty of colour and brilliancy that no Roman tiles possessed), form arched roofs such as might be supposed to be produced by the boughs of shady trees bent into the form of a cupola or dome. The arch itself is such as we see in long vistas of bending boughs seen in perspective, and forming in their average effect a semi-circular arch. And the early column of support was the roof-tree, the mighty shaft spoken of already in *Beowulf*, and known in far back ages in Scandinavia as bearing in the swelling centre the carved semblance of the household god. Sometimes there were two such columns, and then Thor and Odin were the supports of the roof, as they were of the faith of our sturdy forefathers. They were, in more senses than one, the *roof-trees* of the house and race. The roof-tree has passed away from among the things that are, but the expression remains a cherished one to this very day, retaining a sacred halo floating round it that even the superior glories of our Christian day cannot quite efface.

And the men who made these bottles, or jars, or jugs or urns, also formed the bright tiles of the Saxon roof. When motives of economy did not demand that the materials of the roof should be of humble straw or shingles, then the *tiglere*, or tiler, came boldly forward, and the ridges of the arches were his work, the delicate corrugations of the cupolas were made by him, and, more recently, the bricks of which the various ornamental portions about the windows were constructed, came from his hand. The stone *timberer* (which sounds rather as from a neighbouring island than sober Saxon diction) raised the pile; the *tiglere* formed the roof and many ornaments. Then the earthen vessels in which precious wine was stored were also his manufacture.

In the old pagan times the tiler formed this very urn; his hand shaped the peculiar ornaments that identify the vessel as the outcome of English skill; and in this cinerary urn the ashes of the warrior were placed. It was, so to speak, the coffin of the brave pagan to whom we owe so much. The vase that held his wine; the cooler that contained the water which the bright partner of his joys and woes preferred to the more fiery beverage that burned through his veins; the vat that held the beer and mead, to which his followers looked with delight as sufficient reward for dangers which few of their degenerate offspring would care to face, even upon much better terms!—all these, and many more highly interesting works of ancient art, were made by the same hand that shaped this dumpy earthen jar!

Now, having glanced at the external surroundings with which the tiler could furnish his Anglo-Saxon

customer, let us take a peep at the inside of the jar, and consider what such a vessel—of course, not a cinerary urn—might contain: we love our dear dead forefathers too well to commit sacrilege—but we have spoken of various kinds of drink, let us see what they were likely to be that were kept in urns, in many respects similar to this, though differing in precise shape.

The beverages most prized by our stalwart forebears were chiefly ale and mead. Of the ale with which they were acquainted we have records of three kinds—clear ale, Welsh ale, and lithes or mild ale. Doubtless this ale was potent stuff, though the Saxons drank no stinted draughts, any more than their Scandinavian forefathers had done from time immemorial, and died in the faith that they should still do so in an eternity of bliss in Valhalla. To our debased senses, though we have lost the keen relish for such joys as beer and stewed pork, world without end, the distinction between the three kinds of beer is not difficult to comprehend notwithstanding. Perhaps we may have improved on the wisdom of our forefathers, and increased the number of the varieties of malt beverage to somewhat more than the mystic three. If this be so, it is a sad reflection upon us who are so ready to cry out upon the sins of our fathers! Let us claim to be Romans, who never became intoxicated. Of course not. *They* were refined and noble, despised our barbarous sires, and never did anything to be ashamed of! Three kinds of beer!

But that is not all—there was mead!

Can we be descended from people who drank mead? Some of my auditors may not know even what this atrocity is. I will tell you what I have read



about it, for although it is still consumed in large quantities in Russia, I have never been able to bring myself to taste it. It is said to be a fermented liquor made by dissolving one part of honey in three of boiling water, flavoured according to taste with ginger, spices, or what not. To this a preparation of malt is added, and some yeast is introduced by the ingenious process of steeping a piece of toasted bread in the yeast, putting it to the rest of the mixture, and allowing the whole to ferment.

Another favourite beverage was pigment or pie-ment, a sweet and odoriferous liquor made of honey, wine, and various kinds of spiceries. Besides which, there was morat, another drink which was founded upon honey, but diluted with the juice of the mulberry. They indulged in cider, perry, or wine made from pears, and in various kinds of wine.

It is true that the great reproach made against our forefathers was drunkenness. It was a grievous fault, and grievously they answered it! Nor would I palliate the fault which, to this very day lives on among us, degrading many classes of society and doing incalculable harm. But are the descendants of great Rome any better. Are the lazzaroni, or the brigands that boast descent from Imperial stilettoes, so much better than the English rough? Perhaps there may not be much for the mere speculative philosopher to prefer; but I hold that our rough, properly trained, may be made a man of if not driven to despair, while no power on earth could make *men* of the gentry I referred to who infest Naples and the country round Rome.

The vice of the Anglo-Saxons was drinking. They shared it with their kinsmen, the Danes; but we must—without defending the disgusting practice of inebriety—say a word for them. They did not look upon it as a vice. It was not indulged in as a sin to be ashamed of, but as an accomplishment to be proud of. The reward in Valhalla was perpetual drinking, and the nearest approximation they could get to that joy was to drink here. In their pagan state they were taught to drink to Odin and the gods; when they embraced Christianity they drank the healths of the Apostles and their saints, and they thought it not profane even to couple a still higher name with their draughts.

No trade was more flourishing than the ale-house keeper's. The Alewife was a person of some distinction in a town or village, but she enjoyed a bad reputation for giving short measure. This lasted on into the Norman times, and beyond, even into the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. There are carvings, ornamenting several English churches of this period, where various misdemeanours are represented; in one of these, at Ludlow, an alewife is represented as being carried off to the infernal regions by a demon. Another demon plays a bagpipe, and a third holds a roll of parchment of terrific length, supposed to be a list of her offences; she is entirely divested of clothing, except the head-dress, and she carries the *jug* in her hand. She is borne off, head downward, the demon holding her by the feet. The amount of sarcasm and bitter reproach conveyed in this strange piece of sculpture is more forcible than was usual with the moral admonitions of our forefathers.

We may see, in this indication of the existence of so deplorable a vice amongst us, arising from our forefathers having loved their potations not wisely but too well, a proof of our Scandinavian descent. The wretched condition of so many in this country tallies with the long roll of charges brought by the accusing demon at Ludlow against the ill-starred alewife ; while the size of the vessel carried by that lady forms as strong an accusation against those upon whose vice she flourished. The vice has descended to us, but we have not the colouring for it that our Anglo-Saxon forebears had. They had not only the *excuse*, but the command, of religion for their excesses in this respect, and other vices were strongly curbed, as I have before had occasion to point out. With us now, as in the fourteenth century (to the latter part of which, probably, or to the commencement of the fifteenth, the alewife figure belongs), there is no such excuse, and we can only lament that the moral strength which enabled our ancestors to abstain from other evils, does not appear to have descended to us in sufficient force to enable us to abolish this.

But we must not despair. We have certainly inherited much from those stalwart warriors of Thor and Wodin, which may give us cause of pride in our ancestry ; and let us ever remember that even this sickening and revolting vice was with them a part of their religion ; that the joys of their Valhalla consisted largely in vast potations ; and that their supreme god himself was as mighty with the wine-cup as with the sword. And yet there was not any premium set for drunkenness. There was no Bacchus ; there were no saturnalia ; and the mighty warrior was

supposed to be able to stand—aye, and to require—grand potations. The drunkard—that is to say, he who took more than was good for him—was regarded with contempt.

There are no records of the use of strong waters distilled from corn or grapes, as in our day—the various evil spirits which are constantly reducing other women than the alewife to the terrible condition of the lady at Ludlow. The chief drinks were ale and mead. Odin or Wodin and the higher chiefs alone drank wine. And it is a remarkable circumstance—we may almost call it a refinement—in the theology of the Scandinavian English, that of their supreme deity the grossness of *eating* could not be predicated. The sensual principles, the giants were emphatically eaters, *Eotun*, because of the fact that sensuality *assimilates* all vice to itself, and grows to a dangerous and bloated monstrosity, which has to be quelled by Divine aid; therefore Thor combats the giants. Wine, on the other hand, is the emblem of Divine wisdom, as water is of external truth. Both of these are partaken of by All-Father. He descends to Mimer's fountain, and leaves his eye as a pledge for the draught; denoting, in the high mythological sense, that the Divine *descends* even to natural truth, of which it takes full cognizance. The eye is left in the well; and this shows how the sun, also the eye of Wodin, has to descend to the sea, the great water which it illuminates, also. Wine is much higher in its signification than water; therefore the drink of All-Father—who is the god of wisdom—is that which constitutes his sole food, and symbolizes Divine Wisdom. To my mind, this myth of the descent to the well, and

the refinement of the food of the chief divinity, being the emblem of Divine Wisdom, have in them something of awful grandeur, and they seem to contain teachings which may not be without use in contemplating truths of a higher order still.

Thus, even in what many who reason from mere outside facts may be disposed to regard as unqualified evils, we may be able to trace the internal good of all things as decreed by the Creator, though we see them at first through the misty haze of antiquity, and deformed by man's own act. The myths of our cycle *belong to us*, and, properly understood, are richer in their teachings of goodness and truth than Hellenic myths or Roman legends.

And even if the custom of drinking healths to Wodin and his sons be pointed at as the dark spot on the white shield of our ancestors—if we can only boast of inheriting *the shield*, surely we ought, after two thousand years, to have washed away the spot! If we have increased it, and made it a foul blemish, it is not the fault of those who regarded it as a part of the whole not to be dispensed with. We have, I hope and trust, inherited, with their noble language, some of the noble thoughts and high moral virtues peculiar to those grand old men of the brave days of old. Champions for what they deemed the right, impatient of meanness, and of a courage equalled by no other nation of antiquity whatever. They were Englishmen; and my very strong national feeling impels me to hope that our inheritance of the virtues of these great warriors extends not only to us in this lovely island, which they won for us by the sword, but to all their other descen-

dants spreading out from this Anglian centre, and covering the whole world with the light of sincere conviction of Faith and true Christian Love, so that the words of Gregory may be seen to be a glorious prophecy when he said—“*Non sunt Angli, sed Angeli.*”

LECTURE II.

THE RUNE.





## LECTURE II.

### THE RUNE.

IT seems a favourite theory with the English, of which instances are not wanting all round modern literature, that our ancestors were illiterate, drunken brutes, of whom we ought, as Christians and people of culture, to be heartily ashamed. I asked an Oxford Professor recently, who was then disposed to combat the truth of our almost unmixed Saxon blood, what he thought we really were? He replied that he fancied we were a mongrel breed, but he did not care much about it, because we derive what good is in us, what knowledge we possess, from Hellenic or Roman sources. I was able to convince him that we owe nearly all upon which we have any right to plume ourselves to our despised Saxon ancestors. We have *not* been developed up from a hideous savage, half brute, half man, and whole monster, by intermarriages with the Romans and the Kelts. We despised the Kelts and hated the Romans, who, besides, had withdrawn from the island entirely, according to the Roman custom in military colonization, before we came. The Romans withdrew, and left nothing but the traces of their military occupation of the island in the forts and camps which they had constructed. The Britons, unsupported by the Romans, were cut to pieces by the stronger Saxons; who, though greatly inferior to the Britons in

number, contrived to demolish almost every trace of British life in the country. Constant war, deep, burning hatred on both sides, were not elements from which happy matrimonial alliances could be expected. The habits of the Scandinavian Englishman, also, were quite opposed to intermarriage, for he thought that there resided a peculiar sanctity in an English woman; which made her the most fitting wife for him, and any other connection than that of lawful wedlock was forbidden by the laws, save in the case of certain very great chieftains, who were permitted to have a second or sub-wife, more for ostentation than anything else.

The language which we speak at this day is the same which our forefathers used twenty centuries ago, *plus* the importation into its vocabulary of certain words taken from foreign tongues, and *minus* those endings which have dropped off in the usual course of the history of language. In modern High German we find similar changes taking place to those which have already been effected in English, and in this case there is no Roman influence appealed to. Properly regarded, there is no such influence in our own case either, and Sir F. Madden has shown that the changes which have taken place in English would have arisen under any circumstances, even if Rome had never been. When the Christian missionaries introduced certain terms into the language of the Church, they were specially regarded as ecclesiastical *termina technica*. In many instances, too, such expressions were translated into English, which is quite as capable of harmonious combinations, in its purer or unaffected state, as ancient Greek or modern German. The apparent injury done to the language is

the result of the morbid love of Latinity, which raged like a disease in the 17th and 18th centuries, and a perfect ignorance of the beauties, resources, and wealth of our own tongue, which it has been the absurd custom of our schools and universities to ignore altogether. A modern university college has so far recognized the value of the teaching of the classic tongue of our nation, as to insert in an advertisement for a teacher of German, a sort of parenthesis, stating that if such a person knows a little Anglo-Saxon it will be a recommendation, though by no means an indispensable adjunct to his function as a German teacher. The stipend offered is £40 a year, and the German teacher will not be a professor, but just an ordinary German master! To me, having seen the custom in Germany and other parts of the Continent, of choosing the most qualified men to teach the national idiom, this advertisement seems monstrous! It is an insult to the language of the greatest writers of ancient and modern times; and either proves that the advertising authorities are indifferent to the claims of their own language, or, being blindly bent on following the lead of older establishments, cry—"Let us be classical or nothing!"

No more absurd idea could enter a Teutonic head, but, being in, it is difficult to get rid of it again. It is difficult to show those who are wilfully blind to facts, that we want English, and don't want Latin! We never use Latin, and as soon as we leave school we thank God that we are not compelled any more to employ the language which we have wasted the best years of our lives in acquiring! That the language of Rome should ever be the language of London is absurd. It never can be and never will be any-

thing more than a dead form of speech, to be studied for philological purposes and with intelligent interest, but not as a means of improving our knowledge of English.

There is a very droll theory somewhere—I fancy it must have appeared in *Punch* originally—that the Runic letters peculiar to our race are copied from, or are modifications of classical and, more emphatically speaking, Roman models. Whether this be a joke of *Punch's*, or the result of ignorance on the part of a less intentionally funny professor, I cannot say; but if the latter be the case, it bears out my statement most fully that the English are lamentably indifferent to that which should be the chief object of all education, namely, to have a refined knowledge of certain requisite branches of learning, and the ability to converse on them in a clear and agreeable manner in their own tongue.

Doctor Johnson (whose curious fad of using a Latin word with an English termination, instead of the expressive forms provided for him by nature, has done so much to make our speech un-English) once said by mistake: “I owe it to not being unmindful of the ills of others that I bear my own so well!” Pausing abruptly, he looked round angrily, and said in correction of the *error*: “I am indebted to my reminiscential evocations concerning the misfortunes occurring to others that I am able to support my present tribulation properly.” This is not language! It is hiding one’s thoughts *from* others, whereas speech should be the fitting exponent of them. To conceal one’s ideas from others whom we in our pride call the *vulgar*, is strange Christianity; and it is a narrow-minded

feeling that would seek to hide itself, like the cuttle-fish, in a cloud of ink.

Some of this littleness lurked behind the Latin of the writers of the seventeenth century; but they had some excuse, because it was the language of science in that day. But men do not write Latin nowadays—(which is one sign of progress); wherefore, then, should we deface our pure mother tongue with words borrowed from so different a form of speech?

The worst feature in the matter is that the language of Rome is not by any means so full as ours was in the old time before the canker had eaten into the flower; before we had killed some healthy English expressions by juxtaposition with uncongenial forms of speech. What vigour must the language possess to be able to throw off the Johnsonian poison! And we are really beginning to feel that it is going. An interest in our forefathers is beginning to be felt, and the day is not far distant when English shall be studied by the English as well as by the Germans.

All round in this interesting room, which ought to be the dearest to us of all the departments in this collection, we find Runes. There are rings with Runes; there are Runes on the separate gold plate attached to the sheath of one of the swords; there are Runes on the valuable casket which stands on that pedestal; there are Runes on the relic which in a former Lecture I referred to as being a portion of the "*Token*" borne by some brave chief of old. And now my object is to explain to you more fully what these wonderful signs are, and to point out to you in what respect they differ from the Roman letters, and how it is that they suit us better than any other form of letters could.

The first idea of giving another man a thought occurring to a man in a state of perfection fresh from the hand of his Maker, would be to utter a sound or sounds as truly corresponding to that thought as the picture in a camera-obscura corresponds to and reproduces on another scale, and under different circumstances, the landscape or figure which it receives. For as the lines in the picture accurately and by mathematical laws reproduce the picture in that most wonderful camera, the eye, so by a similar process the form so impressed upon the brain expresses itself again by laws of harmonious relationship through certain sounds uttered by the voice. These sounds produce an effect on the tympanum of the ear, which records in the second man's brain—reached, however, by another avenue—the same impression which had been produced on the first brain through the sense of sight.

That man in his early state of purity and perfection possessed the faculty of perceiving intuitively what sound was the fitting symbol of an idea conveyed to his mind from without, is seen by the statement that early man named the creatures, *i.e.*, he perceived what names really represented them, as Heraclitus says, by being “statues in sound”; as truly conveying an image of the thing to be represented as the statue of the object could have done—one appealing to the ear, and the other to the eye. At such a period of man's career on the globe—the Sunday of the human race—the representations of certain forms of thought would of course be very different from such representations invented now at the present day, when all the conditions in which we are placed are so widely different from those in which primitive man found himself.

We are not in the Eden phase now. And here comes a strange thing to consider. We cannot invent new roots such as shall fittingly represent new ideas, new sciences, and new inventions, because we have lost the faculty which enabled man to name the creatures! We only rearrange roots still existing; we cannot form new ones. Such a science as photography is new, but the name is a compound from very old Greek words. We cannot make such words as light, love, son, sound, and the like, but we can ring endless changes on the roots which we possess. Much in the same way we are prevented by our want of perception of what the fitting vehicle should be, from making new letters. The difficulty is not merely the circumstance that we cannot get a hundred men together to agree upon any special sign which we may think fit to adopt, but there is no one now living who can see at a glance what forms should be the most fitting to represent ideas; and each person in an assembly would be able to see that any arbitrary sign that might be suggested to express a given sound *did not do so*, but was purely conventional; and no one present would give his consent to any sign that might be suggested for such a purpose by anybody else.

But there are certain peculiar phenomena connected with roots which render it as impossible to invent one as it would be to invent a sense. The Brahmins call a root the *Dhatú*, or the life, soul, or spirit-giving thing or essence. They claim for their letters Divine origin, and deny that man possesses the power of inventing them. I cannot go into the subject of the breathings, and the different abstract meanings of the vowels, but there is no doubt that what the Brahmins say is true—

although the conventional Devanagari character is of human invention. But some points in this alphabet are of such universal application, that I cannot refrain from mentioning them. The vowels are sacred, and the grand vowel "ah", A, is inherent in all consonants, and need not be written—in fact, *must* not be written save as an initial or when it occurs alone. The other vowels in Sanskrit are written as initials with what may be called the vital part of this letter, consisting of a horizontal bar. When the full or double A sound, heard in our *bar, far, car*, etc., is given, an upright line is drawn at right angles to the horizontal bar, which indicates the simple sound of *ah*, as in father. These bars and line are not essentials. The signs of the other vowels are written over or under the consonants; and when a consonant stands alone, but written in full, it is pronounced as if followed by *a*; and if final in a word the vowel *ā* is sounded, unless there be a mark to show that it is not to be heard.

Connected with this highly refined mode of writing is the Semitic custom, known to all Hebrew scholars, of not writing the vowels at all, on account of their exceeding sanctity.

It will be interesting to all here to know that the great authority on these matters, Professor Max Müller, distinctly states that the ancient Indian alphabet, called the Kapurdigiri, is of Semitic origin, and is, like other Semitic alphabets, read from right to left; but "while the transition of the Semitic types into this ancient Indian alphabet can be proved with scientific precision, the second Indian alphabet, that which is found in the inscription of Girna, and which is the real source of all other Indian alphabets, as well as those of



Thibet and Burmah, has not yet been traced back in a satisfactory manner to any Semitic prototype. To admit, however, the independent invention of a native Indian alphabet is impossible. *Alphabets were never invented*, in the usual sense of that word. They were formed gradually, and purely phonetic alphabets always point back to earlier, syllabic or ideographic, stages. Samskrita means what is rendered fit or perfect; but Sanskrit is not called so, because the Brahmins, or still less, the first Europeans who became acquainted with it, considered it the most perfect of all languages. Samskrita means what is rendered fit for sacred purposes; hence purified, sacred. A vessel that is purified, a sacrificial victim that is properly dressed, a man who has passed through all the initiatory rites or samskaras—all these are called Samskrita.\*

The languages which we are taught have alphabets, and these are Hebrew, Greek, and Latin. They are so called on account of the sequence of the first two letters, Aleph and Beth in Hebrew, Alpha and Beta in Greek. These alphabets are all derived from the ancient Phœnician, and the order of sequence is not so arbitrary as at first sight appears; for, taking the primitive sixteen letters as a nucleus, we find them fall into certain groups, best explained by the accompanying table, which exhibits them in four groups of four each. These are headed vowels, labials, palatals, and dentals. The first row is devoted to the flats or medials, the second to the aspirates, the third

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\* Max Müller's *Sanskrit Grammar*, 2nd edition. London, 1870. Pages 3 and 4, notes to §1 and §2.

to the sharps, and the fourth to the liquids in each category—

Vowels.	Labials.	Palatals.	Dentals.	
ᚨ <i>a a</i>	ᚋ <i>β b</i>	ᚨ <i>γ g</i>	ᚥ <i>δ d</i>	Flats.
ᚥ <i>é e</i>	ᚢ <i>F digamma</i>	ᚨ <i>ḡ chē</i>	ᚥ <i>θ th</i>	Aspirates.
ᚢ <i>ι i</i>	ᚥ <i>λ l</i>	ᚢ <i>μ m</i>	ᚨ <i>ν n</i>	Liquids.
ᚦ <i>o ω</i>	ᚦ <i>π p</i>	ᚥ <i>κ k</i>	ᚥ <i>τ t</i>	Sharps.

Reading these across, we obtain the order of letters known as the alphabet, and we see how the signs arrange themselves into a regular and systematic sequence, but not that observed by our own original Runic alphabet, which, on the principle from which the word alphabet is derived, should be called the *Futhork*.

The ideographic alphabet preceded the phonetic, or, in other words, pictures of objects were used before pictures of sounds. At least this is the generally received theory, and it has been borne out by the statement that the Hebrew alphabet was, in fact, a series of pictures of familiar objects, the names of which were used as the names of the letters, the initial of such name being afterwards used as the letter required in the composition of a word.

I have already mentioned, in a former series of Lectures, that the Scandinavians as well as the Hindus attributed the invention of letters directly to divine inspiration. The Brahmins ascribe language and the alphabet to Brahmi, and the Scandinavians to Odin. Whether the Runes owe their existence to Phœnician models more or less remotely, or are

indigenous signs as much the outcome of the spirit of the language as the sounds themselves, is a matter for discussion and investigation, rather than for didactic purposes. There are three considerations which furnish powerful arguments in favour of the indigenous theory: namely, that the forms are different in the whole Gothic, or rather Teutonic, series; the arrangement is different; and the ideas of the objects represented are different. The square of four (sixteen), which is the fundamental number of signs in the Phœnician and other alphabets derived therefrom, is, by a remarkable coincidence, the same in the Teutonic system. But this is to be expected if both were based on similar principles of abstract thought common to all early peoples. Certainly Max Müller is right in saying that letters were not invented any more than roots; but still, in the picture alphabet we can trace the evidence of adaptation of forms to certain requirements; and this will be more plain when we bear in mind that the sixteen fundamental Runes of the earliest Scandinavian type became amplified in the most perfect form, the Anglo-Saxon, into forty different characters, expressing the various sounds in the language, besides exhibiting some arbitrary forms for syllables and words of constant occurrence.

In considering the primitive form of the Scandinavian *Futhork*, we are at once struck with the circumstance of the letters being all, with one exception, right lines, with smaller marks, also consisting of right lines, but placed at acute angles against the chief stroke, which is always perpendicular. The most simple is the Rune *ís* (ice), which is nothing more than an upright line, and is the letter I. From such an upright stroke the other letters are all made.

The first letter in all the Teutonic or Scandinavian series is F, and the name by which it is called is *feoh*, meaning cattle, and also money. Here we perceive a strong family likeness between the Latin *pecunia* and the word *pecus*, cattle: the German *Vieh* and the English fee. This does not by any means warrant the conclusion that either one is derived from the other. It only proves that the ancients, all round, paid incattle. The form of *feoh* was simply a perpendicular stroke with two slighter lines meeting it on the right side (speaking from the point of view of the reader), each at an angle of about 45° parallel with each other and in the upper half of the perpendicular. This is not a picture of anything resembling cattle, but it is not unlike our modern *f*, which is its power. What is very curious is, that through all the Teutonic dialects we find the same thing without a change of form, name, or function, from Old Norse down to Anglo-Saxon; and this would point to some reason stronger than conventional agreement to adopt a certain sign. When this Rune stood alone it meant payment or cattle; when used before a vowel it was neither more nor less than *f*. However much it may resemble the digamma, it is not derived from that character, because there is no probability that the Greeks could influence the dwellers in Scandinavia, whose language was as different from theirs as it is well possible for any two forms of speech to be; and yet this character is the first in all the Teutonic *Futhorks*, as Alpha is in all the Græco-Phœnician alphabets. I am inclined to think this sign rather symbolical than pictorial.

The second letter is *úr*, the *ú* being a diphthong, like *ou* in *our*, only not so broad. The sign was formed by two

perpendicular parallel strokes, one longer than the other, united at the top by a third, occasionally somewhat curved. The name of this letter, *úr*, signified the Aurochs; but here again it is difficult to trace any resemblance to any created object whatever. It has nothing about it to remind the beholder more readily of an Aurochs than of a ship's rudder, or, in fact, of anything else. The third figure is, to us, the most interesting of the whole sixteen, representing the English *th*. This character, in English called *thorn*, was known as *thurs* in Norse. This latter word simply means a Giant. The letter is a perpendicular stroke with two smaller lines meeting it, and inclining towards each other, so as to form, with the portion of the perpendicular cut off, an equilateral triangle, the whole figure having the appearance of an awkwardly formed P. In English the name of the letter was *thorn*, and the character has been supposed to represent the sharp point of a thorn. In German it became D, and the word *thorn* is *Dorn* in German, from which language the *th* has vanished entirely. The fancied resemblance to a tree, or even to the prickle of a thorn, requires more imagination than falls to the lot of ordinary humanity to detect; and the same letter serving the old Scandinavians for a giant, and the Germans for a door, is a circumstance which strongly militates against the pictorial theory. This Rune was retained, together with the *wæn* (of which we shall speak presently), by the Anglo-Saxons after their conversion to Christianity, when Latin letters were introduced. The modern Icelanders have retained the two forms of this sound Ð, expressing *th* in *though*, *that*, etc., and the þ, representing the sharp sound in *think*, *three*, etc. It would have been wise in us had

we adopted the same plan; but the Latin craze with us was too violent to admit of any compromise for the mere sake of the trifling consideration of what might be best adapted to our wants.

The fourth letter is *ós*, a very full broad *o*, almost becoming *oo* in its breadth. The word means an estuary, and the figure is that of the perpendicular stroke with two parallel lines meeting it at an angle of about  $45^\circ$ , pointing downwards, and written on the opposite side of the perpendicular to that on which the marks are drawn in *feoh*. Thus *ós* is the reverse of *feoh* in every way, and quite as difficult to bring under the rubric of pictorial letters; for how it can represent an estuary it is at the present day impossible to conceive.

The fifth letter is called in Old Norse *reið*, meaning a ride; in Anglo-Saxon *rad*, indicating the same thing. Here there is absolutely nothing whatever to indicate the slightest pictorial connection between the letter R and a ride! How are we to represent a ride? It has been suggested that the figure is that of a whip gathered in the centre of the handle, which would be near enough to give the idea to anybody; and this is a very probable solution, being similar in conception to the *modus operandi* in the case of T for the god Tyr. K, with a *ch* power before the soft vowels *e*, *i*, *ö*, *ü*, and *y*, is called *kön*. This means in Norse an ulcer; to this no clue is furnished by the figure, which consists of the principal stroke furnished with a projecting branch or line meeting it on the right-hand of the reader at an angle of  $45^\circ$ . The Anglo-Saxons are said to have called it *cæn*, meaning a pine branch or a burning torch, and this would

certainly correspond to the picture better than the ulcer would.

H is the next letter, and is called in Norse *hagl*, in Anglo-Saxon *hægél*, where, the *g* having the sound of *y*, our own word *hail* appears. The Norse figure is the principal perpendicular stroke crossed by two intersecting lines, forming altogether a kind of star. The Anglo-Saxon picture consists of two perpendicular strokes parallel with each other, connected by two diagonal strokes parallel to each other. This is supposed to represent the slanting direction of hail in falling. It was pronounced with so strong an aspirate as to become almost a guttural. N was represented by the principal stroke, with a branch stroke meeting it in the centre on the reader's right, at an angle of 45°; but this added line is often found projecting over to the other side. This is taken to indicate a knot. It was drawn by the Scandinavian husband on the finger-nail of the bride, to represent the nuptial tie; the crossing of the two lines being taken to represent two ropes connected by a knot. But the actual meaning of the Scandinavian name is need, necessity, tribulation. The word is *nauð* (German *noth*); the Saxon form is *nead*, which also means necessity, compulsion, and subjugation. Some people say that this is no argument against its use as representing the marriage tie! Be this as it may, both interpretations are insisted upon by different authorities. The Rune I, pronounced *is* in Norse, German, and English, but *ees* in Swedish, signifies *ice*, and stands for the full sound of the diphthong *ai* (as in the English pronunciation of long *i*), when accompanied by a slanting mark over it; but when found without such

mark it is short, as in *fit*, *wit*, etc. A, which is the initial of all alphabets derived from the Græco-Phœnician, is the tenth letter of the *Futhork*, but here it occurs with the full diphthongal sound of our *a* in *ball*. The name of the Rune is *ár*, pronounced nearly *oar*, and means the year. The form of the character is the perpendicular stroke, and the distinguishing mark is a line drawn to the right of the figure (the reader's left), slanting downwards, making with the perpendicular, in the centre of the line, an angle of  $45^\circ$ . The Rune for S consists of two perpendicular strokes, shorter than the normal fundamental line as seen in *í*. They are connected by an oblique stroke joining the top of one with the bottom of the other. The name of the letter is *sól* in Norse and *sigel* in Anglo-Saxon, the first indicating the sun, the second probably *sægil*, a sail, which it is much more likely to represent, one stroke being taken for the mast, and the other for the sail. T is represented by a spear-head, as the attribute of the god Tyr, whose name the Rune bears. B is in Norse called *björk*, a birch tree, Anglo-Saxon *beorc*, and it is the same thing as the Latin B, save that the portions meeting the upright in the Rune are angular, not semicircular. This, of course, is due to the circumstance of the Runes being generally, at all events in the earlier times, carved on wood; but as there is no probability, and hardly any possibility, of a single sign in this earlier *Futhork* being borrowed from a classic model, we are led to the conclusion that *there must have been some still more remote system from which both were derived, as from a common ancestor*. L is the principal stroke, with a smaller line drawn from the top to the left (the right of the reader),



at the same angle of inclination as usual. It bears a resemblance to a hook, or half the spear-head used for *Tyr*. The name of the character in Norse is *lógr*, a lake or water; in Anglo-Saxon *lagu*. M is the principal stroke, with two sub-strokes meeting it just above the centre, slanting upwards at an angle of 45°. The name is *maðr* in Norse, a man; in Anglo-Saxon *man*, and it has been supposed to represent the upright figure of a man, with his arms extended. The final letter, *yr*, is the same thing reversed, and represents a bow, *yr*, discharging an arrow. *Yr* is a bow in both languages. The Anglo-Saxons used a figure consisting of two principal strokes parallel to each other, and united by two sub-strokes crossing each other above the centre of the two uprights.

Such is the composition of the more ancient *Futhork*, which was current throughout all Scandinavia; but of all the Germanic tribes the Anglo-Saxons were the most literary. They expanded the *Futhork* to forty letters, by the addition of the following:—*gifu*, a gift, represented by the principal stroke drawn out of the perpendicular, and made to incline to the left of the reader. It is crossed by another stroke finer than the first, forming with it the figure X. Sometimes the lines are curved like two U's joined at their bases and further connected by a circle just large enough to cut off the half of each U; sometimes the part of the circle within the U is omitted; another more common figure is that of the X with the principal stroke drawn perpendicularly through it. There is another figure for *g*, called *geár*, formed of a small circle through which the principal stroke was drawn. The power of this

*g* was that of our *y* in *year*, a power which it possesses in all the Scandinavian languages, and which obtains in North Germany also. I am inclined to believe that the first was occasionally used for the soft sound of *g* in *generous*, because among the modern Russian letters some ancient Runes are preserved, one of which is pronounced in the manner indicated. There is another sign of which this sound is predicated, although it may have been pronounced like the hard *g* in *good*. This letter was called *gár* (*gore*), a javelin, and was rather complicated in form. It consisted of the principal stroke drawn obliquely and crossed by another of the same thickness, so as to form a St. Andrew's cross. To the end of each line there is a kind of foot, and within the cross a square is drawn, so that the sides shall be parallel with those of the letter. The sound of this letter is given as *dzh*, which is nearly as possible identical with our *g* sound in *ingenious*. We have thus three separate signs for the three separate sounds of *g*; and although the various modern writers on Runic-lore seem to be a little confused over it, there is no doubt that our beloved forefathers knew all about the refinement in the difference.

The next sign added to the simpler *Futhork* is *wen*, consisting of the perpendicular stroke and two smaller lines on the left side (the reader's right), forming a triangle with the portion of the upright line cut off, but leaving none of the top projecting, whilst *thorn* leaves a large portion above the triangle. *Wen* is said to represent a waggon; others say that it is the swelling on the neck so called; others again declare it to be *win*—joy. Most likely it is *wain*, a carriage, and represents the hand-

barrow of the early English. The sound is lost all through the North, except in England, and *we* have no sign for it save the two V's of the Roman system, which being also used for U, were capable of thus representing the sound. The *thorn* sound is dead in Germany and Scandinavia, except with us, and in Iceland. Yet we have discarded the indigenous Rune and have adopted the Roman *th*, which cannot represent the sound at all.

*Eoh*, a yew tree, represents *eo*, with the *y* sound *yeo*. It is formed by the perpendicular stroke with feet at each end, joined at angles of  $45^\circ$ , and sloping one to the right, the other to the left.

*Peorth* is P, used by the Anglo-Saxons and Germans in contradistinction to B. It is said by some to represent the pawn in chess; but others are of opinion that a horse is indicated, on account of the similarity with the word *Pferd*. Now, as the odd-looking figure is remarkable for nothing so much as its want of resemblance to either object, it affords no clue to the original idea, and we have to learn elsewhere that the function of the Rune as a letter was P. The Rune *colch*, an elk, is like in form to the Rune *madr*, man, in Norse; the branches supposed to represent the extended arms in the one Rune being regarded as the antlers of the animal in the other system. The power of the letter has been conjectured to be *x*. *Eh*, a horse, consists of two perpendicular parallel strokes with two sub-strokes, drawn one from the top of each, and sloping so as to meet in the centre, forming a figure resembling the modern letter M. The termination *ing* has a Rune to itself, but this has been thought to indicate an enclosed field, called *äng* in Swedish. The appear-

ance of the figure does not throw much light on the matter. The form is  $\text{X}$ , and has been supposed to represent an enclosure. But there certainly was a deity whose specific appellation was *Ing*. He was the reputed ancestor of the Ingævones, and the husband of the fruitful goddess Nerthus or Hertha, now living in the German *Erde* and the English *Earth*. The chief shrine of this goddess was at Heligoland, where she descended to earth in a veiled carriage, and was invisible to all save the high priest. Tacitus says :\* “ He,” the priest, “ becomes sensible of the entrance of the goddess into this secret recess, and, with profound veneration, attends the vehicle, which is drawn by yoked cows. At this season all is joy, and every place which the goddess deigns to visit is a scene of festivity. No wars are undertaken ; arms are untouched, and every hostile weapon is shut up. Peace abroad and at home is then only known, then only loved ; till at length the same priest reconducts the goddess, satiated with mortal intercourse, to her sacred dwelling. The chariot, with its curtain, and, if we may believe it, the goddess herself, then undergo ablution in a secret lake. This office is performed by slaves, whom the same lake instantly swallows up. Hence proceeds a mysterious horror, and a holy ignorance of what that can be which is beheld only by those who are about to perish.” Frea, as the masculine element to which this important goddess is the consort, was a deity of no less importance, and his title “ Ing”, as the type of a field, would be highly appropriate to the spouse of Earth. The mysterious

\* *Germania*, cap. 40.

Rune which bears his name becomes invested with peculiar interest.

The form of *yr*; the bow, differs in the Anglo-Saxon system from the Scandinavian figure. There is nothing bow-like in it. It consists of two upright or perpendicular lines, one on the right (left of the reader) being higher than the other; they are connected by a sloping line, looking like the section of the roof of an out-house; within is a smaller stroke in the centre, between the other two, ending in two curved branches, giving the whole the appearance of a building with two arches.

The Rune *Æthel* means patrimonial land or nobility, and represents an enclosure. It is the *odal*, *edel*, and *ethel* of the Teutons and Anglo-Saxons. The two forms of *a*—one the broad *o* sound in ball, the other the close, flat sound in man, Alfred, can, etc.—were represented by two different Runes, both bearing the names of trees; the first oak, which, in the Anglo-Saxon system, consisted of the perpendicular stroke with two sub-strokes, drawn the one from the top and the other from the centre of the upright; the upper one was furnished with a foot or returning line, the second was a simple stroke. This figure was called *ác*. The second was like it, but without the returning foot, the two sub-lines being simple and parallel. The name of this rune was *æsc*, ash.

*Ear* brings us another question to answer, which, at this distance of time, is a most difficult thing to do—Does the figure represent an ear of corn armed or not? The name “ear” would, in that case, be easily understood, and the reference to it as a weapon would be clear enough for poetical purposes. *Ior* is similar in form to one of the

signs for *g*, having the upright stroke crossed by two diagonal bars, forming a star. The power is said to be *io*, but I am inclined to think it only another reading of the character *g*, with a *y* power.

*Queorn* is comparatively modern. It is the picture of a hand-mill, which the name means. The power is said to be that of *g*. The later writers write *cw* for this sound.

*Calc* is a horse-shoe, used, in my opinion, at least, for the hard sound of *k*, never taking the *tch* sound before *i*, *e*, *æ*, and *æ*, which *cæn* did. There are antiquaries who maintain it to have been a modified *u*, like the German *ü*; but as that was the sound of *yr*, I hardly see the necessity for such a sign. The figure is a half-circle, bisected by a perpendicular; sometimes two half-circles so bisected.

*Stán*, stone, was simply *st*. The figure is something like that of *peorð* doubled, and each portion of the figure placed facing the other. Why this should be a fitting emblem for a stone I cannot say.

The last letter is *gár*, the javelin, which we have already considered.

The Norse, or earlier Scandinavians, seem to have used *Tyr*, *t*, or *Thorn*, *þ*, for *d*, but the Anglo-Saxons aimed at a refinement beyond this, and insisted on a special Rune for *d*. This was called *dæg*, a day; the figure is very like that used for *man*, consisting of two upright strokes with subsidiary strokes crossing each other within and between them. The difference is that in *dæg* the uprights are shorter than in *man*, and the cross lines between the two uprights are in the centre, while in *man* they are near the top of the figure; but it is difficult to distinguish them without looking very narrowly into the

carving. The table gives a comparative view of the Old Norse, the German, and the Anglo-Saxon Runes in order, and it will at once be evident that the Anglo-Saxon or English is the most finished and perfect system. The differences in the sounds of the vowels have no adequate representation in the Latin alphabet, whereas the difference between them is in the Runic system marked by a difference in character.

The simpler and more ancient form of Runes is of high antiquity. They consisted, as we have seen, of simple lines, arranged so as to be readily carved on wood and stone; the mystic or Runic life, lived on in a sort of phantom existence for some time after they had fallen into disuse; they were then employed in charms and spells. But this was a very poor parody on the grand power they possessed in the old old pre-Christian time. Then each figure was redolent of Divine teachings. Twelve of the primitive or fundamental Runes were devoted to various deities, and yet the name of each god could be spelt phonetically by means of several letters combined. The practical and the theoretical met. In the subsequent additions, if we except *Æthel* and *Ing*, there seems to be something like modification, complication, or adaptation of an established type.

The Scandinavian *Futhork* is deficient in many respects, but it is highly interesting to us to notice that the number of signs (16) corresponds with that of the older Phœnician alphabet. One German authority counts only fifteen, F, U, Th, R, K, H, N, I, A, S, T, B, L, M, Y. That these more primitive letters were invested with occult meaning and magic powers I have already told you. The very

name implies magic and mystery, in consequence of the internal or mystic sense attached to each character. This alone would prevent their becoming very common in the earlier stages of the Scandinavian society, when they were kept by the priests and priestesses to themselves, as it were. Subsequently they became known to the great chiefs and leaders of the people, and were in fact more known among the Scandinavians than the Roman letters were among the Romans at the time of Krates. Each of the sixteen letters had correspondential connection with the name of a deity; for although there are but twelve primitive gods in Valhalla, many others are incidentally referred to; and in singular accordance with this seeming inconsistency, the names of Odin are twelve and yet infinite. "No man is wise enough to tell all the names of Odin," says the *Edda*. I do not mean to say that each letter of the Runic series is always the initial of the name of a god, or that the pictured form represents him. The letter T, for example, is the picture of a spear, it is the lighter javelin which was borne by youths, and therefore a fitting emblem for him. The þ or *th* does not "stand for" Thor, but for a giant, Thor's enemy, whom he is supposed to overthrow; *ác* (oak) and *æsc* (ash) are both sacred to Odin, but we have no direct evidence that they were the *geirs odd*, or spear point, carved by a warrior in his own breast, so that he should bleed to death and go to Odin, which he could not do had he died of disease, weakness, or old age. Probably the Rune then carved was the spear-point of Tyr, who led the way to Odin, and whose emblem was therefore a very fitting one for the purpose.

Nothing in the cultus of the Runic service points to



Runes being derived from the Græco-Phœnician source; while the sequence of the letters, agreeing through all the Teutonic races, is quite opposed to the idea of classic influence. That R and B should be similar in form in both series is a coincidence resulting from descent from common ancestry, not from copying, either way. The Greek Ρω is preserved in the Umbrian and Iberian forms, but the tail or lash of the riding whip occurs in the Etruscan and later Roman alphabets.

When the Anglo-Saxons, in receiving Christianity, adopted, like the rest of western Europe, the characters of the Roman alphabet with the teachings of Rome, they did not accept all that Rome required. They refused to accept the doctrine of transubstantiation; they refused to give up their pagan festivals, which, indeed, crept into Rome through them; and they refused to give up *all* the Runes. Notwithstanding all the pother made by priest and monk, the Runes *thorn* and *wain* remained until the further Romanisation of learning banished those letters, together with certain most useful contrivances made by the early fathers from our alphabet, giving us the meagre Roman instead. Thus, when the pagan English had developed the *Futhork* into a very perfect system, well representing the sounds of the language, the Latin disease sets in and destroys it, and we are driven to our wits' ends to know how to pronounce a word if we see it for the first time. We have to know each word by heart, like the Chinese, before we can spell, and we cannot allow the eye to guide us in reading. This is perfectly absurd, and steps should be taken to teach young persons the old English alphabet, at least.

The Romans had no aspirates, consequently the Greek

letters  $\theta$ ,  $\phi$ , and  $\chi$ , were not adopted; they had no H save what was borrowed from the Teutons, and when it was introduced, it was pronounced like *g*, or made to represent the required aspirates by being added to *t*, *p*, and *k*, a more clumsy contrivance being hardly possible. They had no W, so that our national *wain* or *wen* had to be represented by two Vs doing duty for two Us.

But the introduction of Roman letters where they represented like forms in our own alphabet need not have been a severe evil, for it was a means of rendering other languages which might adopt it, less foreign to us. But the crying wrong done to us has been the suppression of our rich stock of vowel sounds. We should have retained the *thorn* and the *wain* and the *cæn* as well as a K. We should have retained our guttural and aspirate; but above all we should have preserved some method of marking the many delicacies of shade in our vowel sounds. The Christian Saxons adopted a modification of the Latin letters: for the full *a* in *father*, the A was employed in its simple form. The *a* in *can* was represented by *a* and *e* joined in a diphthongal form, thus,  $\mathcal{A}E$ ; *a* with the *o* sound in *all*, *ball*, etc., was represented by *a* with an inclined line over it, as in modern Icelandic,  $\overset{\sim}{A}$ ; *e* short was E without a mark, but *e* long had the same mark over it, thus,  $\overset{\sim}{E}$ . I long had the mark  $\overset{\sim}{I}$ , but *i* short had none; O, as an ordinary *o*, had no sign over it, but when pronounced as in *do*, *too*, *boot*, etc., it was written with the sign,  $\overset{\sim}{O}$ ; *u* with the sign seems to have had the diphthongal form of *ou* in our; thus, *bower* was written *búr*, house, *hús*, etc. This was a very wise and very simple expedient, and one that ought to be revived at the present day. We should find it greatly

simplify our orthography, which is very confusing between the Roman sounds for the Roman letters, our own sounds for which they are made to do duty, and the sounds in our language requiring other representation by forms properly suited to our wants, and to which no Roman letters correspond.

It has been said, and it is historically true, that with the religion of Rome we adopted the characters of the Latin alphabet; but although Latin killed the Runes, they lived on into ages more familiar to us than the early times of our own kin. They were not forgotten in the first periods of the Norman usurpation; and at an earlier time, when we should least have expected it, we find a Christian poem cut in stone in Runes. In the very period when we must have supposed that the ecclesiastical fury of the Rome-aping priesthood would have exhibited the greatest repugnance to the use of the forbidden signs, we find a portion of a poem resembling Cædmon's paraphrase, cut in Runes on the celebrated stone cross at Ruthwell in Annandale. This is supposed to be of the seventh century. Another cross at Bewcastle, in Cumberland, was raised in honour of King Alcfrid, who, conjointly with his father Oswin, reigned in the kingdom of Northumbria, and who died in the latter half of the seventh century. The words are:—

+ . This sigbecun  
 Settæ Hwætred  
 em gærfæ boldu  
 æfter baræ  
 Ymb cyning Alcfridæ  
 gicegæd heosum sawlum.

This memorial  
 Hwætred set  
 and carved this monument  
 after the prince  
 after the king Alcfrid  
 pray for their souls.

There is a cross at Collingham (Yorkshire) supposed to have been erected to King Oswine, who died in the middle of the seventh century, when Christianity was fairly established.

The Rune is a plant of northern growth, and flourishes best in northern air. Even in the face of Christianity it held its own longer in the north of England (where these stones and crosses are found), than in the south. It continued in use in Northumbria as late as the tenth century.

The fact of the survival of the Runes in Northumbria at a time when all traces of them had been lost in the southern part of the island, may be due to the more frequent intercourse with Scandinavia from the north than from the south; for this plant of northern growth flourished in Scandinavia long after its entire extinction in England. Therefore, in the poems in the Exeter Book, which are comparatively late, archaic Runes of the Northumbrian type occur.

Another reason for the survival of the Northumbrian *Futhork*, and the destruction of Runic inscriptions in the south, was that Augustine in the south waged a fierce war against paganism, destroying every vestige of the older faith. But in a letter from Pope Gregory to St. Mellitus, he recommended that the symbols only of paganism should be abolished, and the holy places consecrated and made use of for Christian purposes. St. Paulinus carried out these instructions in Northumbria; but after his flight the work was taken up by missionaries of the Irish school, who pursued a different policy altogether, adopting the very symbols of paganism, but turning them to account as vehicles of Christian teaching. These mis-

sionaries permitted Runic writing, and we are able to discover inscriptions in this character down to the time of St. Oswald, when every trace of runic-lore had been stamped out in the south.

In these days of awakening interest in the good of the masses, when knowledge is not to be kept to the few, and learning has not to be hugged as a rare curiosity, jealously guarded by Johnsonian English from vulgar gaze; when an Englishman may talk English, and profess to believe in the cultus of England more than in that of dead Rome and deader Greece; when such men as Mr. Mundella undertake the teaching of the greatest, but, of its own language, most ignorant nation under the sun,—I feel that I may raise my voice, firmly demanding that the wants of the nation should be supplied from our own magnificent stores. Let the want of authority for change in our orthography be supplied by the voice of our own regal classics. Let the people learn the language of their fathers, and then they will speak their own correctly. Among no people is there such bad language (in every sense of the word) as among the English-speaking race; and why?—because our lower classes never learn Greek and Latin, and we never learn anything else. They don't want them, and they are no use to us! Before we indulge in luxuries, we ought to attend to absolute necessities, and one necessity is to teach the English people English. Who is to do it? Among the five millions of men in London there are hardly five men who could take up the scientific story of our glorious speech from its real beginning in Scandinavia.

The actual requirements of modern English might be met by our adopting the plan which the Icelanders find to

answer so well, and it would in English not prove very difficult to introduce. We require something like the following :—

A, Æ, Á, B, C (always = ch in church), D, É, E, F, G (always hard), H, I, Í, J, K, L, M, N, O, Ó, P, R, S, T, U, Ú, V, W, X, Y, Z, þ, Ð.

The lengthening of the vowels is fairly well effected by the final *e* mute, which changes *met* into *mete*, but it might be reduced to a more harmonious system. Such a scheme is wanted, for we see with what difficulties the compilers of pronouncing dictionaries have to contend. I throw this out as a mere suggestion for abler heads than mine to work out.

So much for the Rune as opposed to the letter, and so much for the wisdom of our ancestors in throwing away what was useful for something which has proved the contrary. Like the dog in the fable, we have lost the substance in seeking for a classic shadow. Is it too late to regain it?

My hope is to see the knowledge and love of English revive, and that will pave the way for a more fitting use of ancient Scandinavian roots in forming new combinations. I want Englishmen to abandon the snobbish affectation of giving Greek and Latin names to objects of our every-day necessity. We do not want “pantech-nicons”, “photographs”, and all the host of *graphs*, *ologies*, and *ics*, when we can give the ideas more clearly in our own tongue.

“Out of the fulness of the heart the mouth speaketh”, is a sentence that speaks our doom if our language, in its strange, un-English, tawdry dress, betrays our want of

true English feeling at heart. Let us hope that this is not so; let us trust that it is only a surface-taint which may rub off in time. The voice of the Vala shall be heard again through the welkin, albeit not uttering Odinic commands for wholesale slaughter, but words of hope for the time to come, good will to all in the time that is and Christian love for ever.





LECTURE III.  
THE BOOK.



## LECTURE III.

### THE BOOK.

THE word which gives the title to this afternoon's lecture is Scandinavian-Teutonic. We meet with it in German, in Swedish, Danish, Old Norse, Gothic, Anglo-Saxon, and English. In all forms of this word we are referred, as in the cases of *liber*, *papyrus*, and *biblia*, to the vegetable world. The Teutonic word is the name of the beech tree, German *Buch*, Danish *Bog*, Swedish *Bok*, Old Norse *Bók*, Anglo-Saxon *Bóc*, Gothic *Bók*, all these being but very slight modifications in the orthography of the same word, for the same things, *i.e.*, the Beech tree and the Book. The reason for the name is that, when Rūnes were cut in the staves which were employed by our forefathers as memoranda, those staves were of that wood. The common name throughout the North, including even Russia, for a letter of the Alphabet, is a word compounded of the name for this wood and the staff. In German we find *Buch-stab*, in Swedish *Bók-staf*, in Danish *Bog-stab*, in Russian *Bukva*, in Old Norse *Bók-stafr*, Old English (Anglo-Saxon) *Boc-stæf*.

That we should have adopted the Latin *littera* in our word letter, when we had such a fitting term of our own, seems strange, especially as it is nothing like so telling a word to us as Bookstaff. We know from constant hearing it what *letter* means (or we should do so if we had not

applied it to two very different things), but to tell its remote signification requires some little scholarship, because we have to know the other language from which it comes. So we take down the Latin dictionary, and we find, what certainly is not generally known, that our word letter comes from the verb *linere*, to smear, of which *litus* is the past participle. A letter was so called from being smeared on parchment, and not cut in with a knife. It is not quite such a pleasant word as Bookstaff when we do know its signification.

The Beech tree was well adapted for the purpose of what we may call literary composition. Hard, but not too hard to carve, easily keeping the forms given by the knife, the wood made a capital staff for the reception of Runes. And the Runes were all of them, in the early *Futhork*, readily carved in wood, having no curved lines to be cut. Christianity, in banishing the Runes, gave us a modification of the Roman letters to suit our need, but we retained the *thorn* and the *wæen*, besides some conventional signs in ordinary writing. These at last were forced to yield also to the tyranny of Rome; and our poverty-stricken alphabet, not representing the sounds of the language, is the result; besides which, a system of orthography, incomprehensible to anybody has to be forced into the brain of the rising generation, to the further confusion of the tongue, and a still more dismal prospect for the future.

The word Book is at all events our own; it is delightfully un-Roman, and a man may actually say that he loves his book, without being under the yoke in so doing. And though the Christian Fathers in the first centuries of Christianity succeeded in substituting letters for Runes in

their MSS., at first there was no admixture of the Latin element, save in the names of objects in the Church service, and a few in the translation of the Gospels, which crept in in consequence of the translation having been made from the *Vetus Italica* in the tenth century.

Books, properly so called, seem first to have been written by ecclesiastics in England. Other men were too busy, either in war or in those handicrafts which acted as handmaidens to the one absorbing art of that time, to care for book-learning. The ceorl who tended his flocks or tilled the ground was not to be expected to have much time or any inclination for reading. The skalds, or as we called them, the scóps or *makers*, were not the men they used to be in the "brave days of old", when long stories were committed to memory, or poems on battles extemporised in the great hall of the noble during the time of Yule. The glee wood sounded as of yore, but the old tales had to be modified to suit the new taste, and books are decidedly Christian with us, rather than pagan.

In their cells the monks had time to write, and they wrote much in the vernacular, although they were expected to write chiefly in Latin. By degrees they wrote more and more in Latin (as the language of the Church) for other monks to read. The poor layman was not written for at all! The warlike earl knew little Latin, the toiling ceorl none; and had we not possessed some fine old sturdy English hearts and heads among the clergy, many of the beautiful remains of a far-back past would never have come down to us at all. But the result of this keeping the two languages apart, retaining one for church purposes and the other for conversation with the laity, was, that

English continued uncontaminated by any Latin taint; and such men as Bede, Alcuin, Anselm, and others who wrote Latin, seldom dreamt of lugging Latin words into their English. They—wiser than we—kept their Latin to themselves and their own clique, and when they spoke English, it *was* English, and not the queer mosaic we have made of it now.

The influence of Book-Latin was exerted in the inverse ratio of our proximity in point of time to the living language of Rome. Thus the Latin of the first period left no trace on the language whatever, consisting merely of such names of places as may have been adopted by the first English. The Latin of the second period is that which was introduced by the churchmen in their translations from the Latin. That of the third period consists of Latin words which crept in indirectly through Norman French. Such words as have been added from the sixteenth century down to the present day, are said to be of the fourth period.

I have often alluded to the poem of *Beowulf* in former Lectures, as the earliest Teutonic epic, an English production of the fifth century. The only copy of this priceless gem in literature is, by the kindness of Dr. Bond, placed before you to-day. The actual writing of the copy here preserved is, of course, nothing like so old as the date of the poem. The saga existed in its pagan unwritten state long before it was ever written down, and this copy has evidences of being doctored to suit the Christian taste of the new race of hearers. But the most rabid Latinist never dreamt of ascribing Latin influence to *Beowulf*, or of finding a Latin word in it. I have read the poem many

times, and cannot put my finger on a single Latin expression. The letters are the modification of the Roman character adopted by the Anglo-Saxons, with the retention of the Runes *thorn*, *wæn*, and the sign for the conjunction *and*. The spirit is as pagan as possible, notwithstanding the substitution of the word *Drihten* (the Lord) for the name of Odin or any Odinic deity. We may regard it as specially our own, in that it is so thoroughly English; and we may be proud of the fact that we are the only people in Europe who have a literature dating from the fifth century (some say the fourth) down to the present day without a break. "The link" (as the late Mr. Wright, the antiquary, observes) "may sometimes be slight, but it is *never broken*." Fifteen centuries of glorious literature!—full of names that shine as of the first magnitude in the galaxy of human thought! And shall we, with such models, with such an intellectual past of our own, be referred to Greece and Rome for our models?

Let us learn English. We need not neglect Latin and Greek as luxuries; but our necessity at the present day is English, and here we have it. Here is the germ of all that the other Teutons vaunt in their later *Heldengedichte*. The Dragon of the Niebelungen is here. And as the Dragon of our Beowulf is the parent of the Niebelungen Dragon, so is he himself the offspring of the more remote and misty Fafner, who also watched a treasure.

But *Beowulf* itself is original. It has a freshness, a sort of salt-sea breeze about it, that no other poem in the world possesses. We feel the wind in the sails as we read. We arrive with the joyous Scandinavian English (calling themselves Danes, by-the-by), and we disembark

in Britain; then we place our shields in a ring, put the clinking hauberks of chain armour in order on the ground, and form a forest of ash wood with shining points grey above! Then we tread the road to the Anglo-Saxon hall of Herót, where we expect to find adventures, and we march up the paved road, gay with coloured stones. Hróthgár, the prince whose woes are to be relieved, mourns the loss of his bravest champions by the fell attacks of a cruel monster called by the weird name "The Grendel". The very word is a shudder. From a fearful fen this creature comes at stated times, and destroys the most stalwart of the king's own champions.

Beowulf, our leader, has promised to defeat this horror, and his dreadful combat, after the loss of another warrior, is described in the short, nervous lines that seem so well adapted to describe a fight.

Finding mortal weapons useless against the Grendel, Beowulf attacks him unarmed, and wrenches the monster's arm from his body, sending him howling home to the loathsome lake whence he came. The arm and hand are kept in the hall, and displayed to the retainers and subjects of Hróthgár; but a strange and very ghastly element is introduced in the form of the Grendel's mother coming to avenge her grisly son. She carries off a beloved companion of King Hróthgár, and is pursued by the hero Beowulf to her home at the bottom of the foul fen or loathsome lake where she dwells. The pursuit is well done, and the account of the descent through the waters of the lake (which takes a *whole day* to accomplish, because of the depth of the waters) is unique. The description of the scenery is really poetical, and we become



personally acquainted with the place and the people. A sword named Hrunting (probably from *Hrynja*, to make a din) is given to Beowulf specially for the adventure, wherewith he aims a right good blow at the Grendel's mother. But the stroke is harmless; the edge is turned aside, and for the first time the grand weapon is doomed to failure. Then the hero casts it from him and attacks the lady monster with his bare hands, as he had attacked the son in the Hall Herót. She strikes the warrior with her seax a furious blow; but his chain armour protects him as it had in the battle with the monsters of the lake, which had attacked him furiously in his descent. She flings the hardy hero to the ground, and he is at her mercy, when he discovers an ancient weapon fashioned of old by the giants (*eald sweord etonise*), and making a prodigious effort, seizes it and plunges it into her neck. The mighty blade was so large that no man, save a giant, might wield it in war; but it stood our hero in good stead, for not only did it break "the bone-rings" of the wonderful organism of the lady Grendel, and put an end to her career, but it enabled him to strike off the head of the Grendel himself, who was lying on a couch in the cavern. The blood of the monster, whose corpse leapt from the couch to the water, tinged the whole mere with its crimson dye, so that the warriors standing on the brink thought that their champion had perished. But he himself appeared, having "*dived upwards*", with the sword in his hand melted by contact with the blood of the Grendel family, so that he had nothing left of the wonderful weapon but the hilt in his hand. Laden with the heads of the two monsters, Beowulf gains the bank, where his followers

disarm him of his byrnie and helm. The weight of the Grendel's head required four stout men to carry it on the pole; nor was that of the mother less formidable. The march with these trophies to Herót, and their presentation to the King Hróthgár, are described with a few rapid, nervous touches that bring the picture up glowing in the light of an heroic past.

The conclusion of Beowulf is sad. There is a pathos in his death, resulting from a similar combat with a fire-drake, or dragon. This monster has taken possession of a hoard of treasure, and is famous for the ordinary dragon-like accomplishments of vomiting fire and poisonous breath, to the destruction of all around, and especially of Beowulf's dwelling. Previous adventures are related of the hero, now an aged man, king of that region. All through the poem his goodness and nobility of soul are held up to admiration. At the close of his career, he undertakes the destruction of the fire-drake, by which monster he is himself slain. The hoard is freed, and the people are delivered from the attacks of the fiend, but at the cost of the hero's life. The band of followers who accompany him to the haunt of the dragon are struck with horror and fear before the actual conflict begins, and prefer the shelter of a neighbouring wood to the dangers of fire and poison. One young warrior, a kinsman of the hero, comes to his aid, and really helps him to despatch the dragon; but it is too late to save Beowulf, whom the poisonous vapours have overcome. He dies, after giving directions for his funeral, deciding in favour of cremation.

The side-touches show great skill. The dispute between Hunferth and Beowulf is in pure Scandinavian taste, and

reminds the student of the contest between Atle and Frithioff in the *Frithioffs Saga*. The smaller episodes and by-play, though strangely sounding to us from a far-off past, are deeply interesting from the tones being the same that are latent in our hearts at this day, and it needs only that the right chord should be struck for us to feel that our English Book is not a thing of yesterday.

I will read to you the introductory stanzas of this our priceless epic; and you will see what I mean by the ring and "flavour" of the old English verses.

Hwæt we gár Dena,  
 in gear-dagum,  
 theód-cyninga,  
 thrym gefrunon :  
 hú ̅ða æthlingas  
 ellen fremedon.  
 Oft Scyld Scéfing  
 Sceathena threatum,  
 monegum mægthum  
 meodo-setla of teáh.  
 egsode-eorl[as]  
 syððan ærest wearð  
 feásceaft funden :  
 he thæs frofre gebád,  
 weox under wolcnum,  
 weorthmyntum tháh,  
 oð thæt hym æghwylc  
 mára ymb sittendra  
 ofer hrón-ráda  
 hýran scolde  
 gomban gyldan :  
 Thæt wæs gód cyning.  
 Ðæm eafera wæs  
 æfter cenned,  
 geong in geardum,  
 thone God sende  
 folc tó frofre :

Hurrah ! We spear Danes  
 in the days of yore  
 of the mighty kings'  
 glory have well informed us ;  
 how those princes  
 showed their valour.  
 Often Scyld the son of Scéf  
 from bands of robbers,  
 from many tribes  
 the mead benches tore away,  
 terrified warriors  
 after the time when he first was  
 found all desolate.  
 Thence he found comfort ;  
 flourished under the clouds,  
 throve in dignities  
 until every one  
 of those sitting round\*  
 over the whale path  
 had to obey him  
 and pay him tribute.  
 That was a good king.  
 To him there was a son  
 born after,  
 young in his courts  
 he was sent by God  
 to comfort the people

\* *I.e.*, settled near him.

fyren-thearf ongeat  
 the hie ær drugon  
 alder [le]áse  
 lange hwile.  
 Him thæs Líf-freá,  
 Wuldres Waldend,  
 worold-áre for geaf.  
 Beowulf wæs breme,  
 blæd wíde sprang,  
 Scyldes eaferan  
 Scede landum in.

in the dire need felt,  
 which they formerly suffered  
 being princeless,  
 for a long time.  
 To him the Lord of life,  
 the Prince of Glory,  
 gave worldly honour.  
 Beowulf was celebrated,  
 his glory was widely spread,  
 Son of Scyld  
 In the Scanian lands.

The nerve, the freshness, the life and vigour of this opening, short as it is, draw us to it with strong bands, and we feel the effect of the poetry very differently from that of Hellenic myth or Roman legend, *because it is our own!* The apparent obscurity in the lines, "Syððan ærest wearð, féasceaft funden",\* is cleared up when the description of Scéf's ship-burial is given; when we are told that he was sent forth into the ocean whence he had come. The story is similar to that of King Horn, who is thrown upon a coast, exposed as an infant in an open boat. Scéf came to the country of which he was subsequently king in this unpromising way, *weox under wolcenum*, grew under the clouds, or, as we might say, in the free sight of heaven, became a great chief, and directed that when he died his body should be returned to the deep in his full war panoply on board his dragon ship.

This grand epic, of which so little is generally known, and of which we have so much reason to be proud, had been familiar with our fathers for centuries before their conversion to Christianity. It was one of those pieces which our sires loved to hear from the gleemen or minstrels

\* After that time, when he was found all desolate.

who enlivened the thane's wide hall in the long nights of winter. And here it may not be improper to remark on the tremendous strain on the memory which the recounting *verbatim* such a lay as *Beowulf* must have involved. To enable these gleemen so to narrate in one continuous flow such a tale as this, means special preparation of the mind, special education to the craft. They were assisted by Runic memoranda; that is to say, certain words, the key-notes of a set of ideas, were in all probability carved on Rune staves to aid their memory, so that the staff of beech was to them a book indeed. When, after the introduction of Christianity, monks wrote tales of saints on parchment, this material was called *Bóc-fell*, that is to say, book-skin, the skin on which books were written. But this, at the earliest stage, could not have meant beech-tree skin! Therefore, we see that the term beech had been so inseparably connected with early literature as to pass over to the parchment, and thence, in later times, to paper, much as the name for the driver of the horses in a stage-coach has passed on to the engineer who superintends and directs the motions of our locomotives.

With their true abhorrence of paganism, the early monks, who were the first writers in the characters in which our MSS. are written, were bound to reject the many legends which the pagan scalds had sung; and when they wrote, they either composed lives of saints as wonderful as the heroic tales of the former cultus, or they retained the old story with a change in certain marked features which had stamped it as decidedly pagan, turning them into Christian references. Of such change *Beowulf* was peculiarly capable. The references to a Supreme Being are

either interpolations altogether, or are modifications of the older terms. We find in *Beowulf* the expressions *Drihten*, *Metod*, *Frea*, *God*, *passim*, but no special allusion to any one god in Valhalla, the words being used in the broad theistic sense, equivalent to our own use of the expressions the Lord, the Creator, God. They are, however, decidedly Christian, although there is no term specially applicable to God as the Father, or to the Saviour, as a separate idea. This alone would show that the poem had not been composed in the first instance by Christian scribes; while the simple expression, the Lord, would not have been used by a pagan. Hence it is clear that these new expressions were inserted to save from destruction as pagan, a poem which must have been immensely popular in the pre-Christian times. In a paper communicated by me to the *Antiquary*, for March 1882, I have shown how paganism lived on into Christianity in the names of our days and in our festivals, some of which, as Christmas, have been christianized in name though hardly in observance. Others, like Easter and the Ember weeks, have retained the pagan names but have lost their pagan meaning, save to the antiquary and philologist. On the same principle that prevented the early Fathers from utterly rooting out every trace of the olden faith, the early monks found it quite impossible to do away with and destroy all the old legends, to which the memories of the people clung like ivy round the shattered temples of their gods.

So the people who rejected the *Futhork* and employed the alphabet were compelled to use some Runes still, for which the meagre Latin had no parallel. *Thorn* was retained, and in after times, from its resemblance to the

letter *y* in some black-letter forms, got confounded with it, and *y* was written for it even to the beginning of the last century, and there is no more reason why *th* should represent our *θ* than *y* should! How often do we find in the seventeenth century the definite article represented by *y* and a little *e* over it! This is nothing more or less than þ with an *e*, spelling naturally *the*. So in the case of *w*, the Roman alphabet had no such letter, because the Romans had no such sound as is represented by *wæn*, consequently the expedient was resorted to, after a time, of putting two *Us* for this letter, and as *V* was used for *U*, so two *Vs* were used for two *Us*, as we find even in the first printed copy of Shakespeare's works. It is seen in the quarto of *Romeo and Juliet*, and in many later works, as two *Vs* standing quite separate from each other, and not combined into one type as we use them now. The French call this letter double *vay*, and the Germans *vay*.

So the monks wrote Christian tales with pagan accessories or pagan legends, toned down by the process described into Christian lore; and in both cases the old English leaven was seen, and in both cases it has come down to us. A great writer of the eighth century, Bæda, known more generally by the familiar appellation of the Venerable Bede, tells a singular story of the illumination by a special miracle of a poor herdsman, who was so illiterate as not even to know a song to sing at the ale. The glee wood is passed to him, but he can make no more music out of it than Guildenstern out of Hamlet's pipe. Vexed at the jeers of his companions, and ashamed of his own ignorance, the poor fellow leaves the company,

and rushes to the stall, or sty, of beings less inclined to give themselves airs on the score of erudition. Among these more congenial associates he falls asleep, and a wonderful dream comes to him. A voice calls him by name, "Cædmon, Cædmon, arise and sing!" He answers, "I know nothing to sing, and therefore have I left the ale." "No matter," says the voice; "sing me something." "What shall I sing?" asks the sleeper. "Sing the creation of the world," says the voice. Whereupon the sleeper in his dream sings a charmingly melodious chant of praise to the Creator, in words and in a strain such as he had not heard before. When he awoke he remembered the words of this wonderful hymn, and found that he was not only able to repeat it as he had sung, but that he could add more of the same kind to what he remembered of the dream. Full of wonder and delight, he hastened to the abbess of a convent at Whitby, the Abbess Hilda, attended by the town reeve, to whom he had first communicated the fact of his inspiration. Before this lady he sings his song once more; and she, in awe and wonder, sends for holy men to take down the story from his lips; and the song flows, and the monks write, and the story comes down to us.

But the lay, telling as it does the story of the creation of the world and the fall of man, according to the Mosaic account of the stupendous work, is yet Scandinavian pagan in style, thought, and treatment! The Satan of the poem is the Utgárd Loki of the Edda! Nay, the very name for him—Godes Andsaker, the denier or accuser of God—is the same, only in the Scandinavian poem the word for God is in the plural. This Satan is the Lucifer of our



Milton! The proud one puts on his "grim-helm", or visored helmet, with all the air of a son of Odin, and, like Beowulf, he "*dives upwards* to reach the *middle earth*". In heaven the chain armour rattles and the weapons clash, as in *Beowulf*. The angels present arms as the Archangel passes through the host; and most Scandinavian touch of all is the tender respect with which Eve is treated by the poet—"that tender one", "that light under heaven", with many more epithets of a similar strain.

Beda evidently believed the whole of the story of Cædmon's miraculous illumination, and so did Ælfred, who translated Beda's Latin into English; and it is interesting to see how near Ælfred's version comes to the original from which Beda translates. I will, therefore, read the opening portion in the three versions. The original is in the Bodleian Library at Oxford. It must be borne in mind that the older lay, as dictated by Cædmon, is in Anglo-Saxon; this Saxon was translated by Beda into Latin; and Beda's Latin, again translated by Ælfred, differs remarkably little from the original Saxon of the first poem.

#### EARLY ENGLISH OF CÆDMON.

Us is riht micel.  
 thæt we rodera Weard.  
 Werda Wuldor-cinning.  
 Wordum herigen.  
 Móðum lufien.  
 he is mæгна sped.  
 heofod ealra.  
 heah-gesceafta.  
 frea ælmihtig.  
 næs him fruma æfre.

To us it is right much  
 that we the guardian of heaven,  
 of hosts the glory-king,  
 with words praise  
 and with mind love.  
 He is of might the well spring,  
 the head of all  
 exalted beings  
 Lord Almighty :  
 not to him was ever beginning

ór geworden.  
 ne nú ende cymth.  
 écean drihtnes  
 ac he bith á rice  
 ofer heofen-stólar.

nor became to him origin,  
 nor ever doth end come  
 of the eternal Lord !  
 for he is ever ruling  
 Over the thrones of heaven.

Let us compare these words of the inspired hind, rough, strong, nervous, and grand, with the translation made into the weaker Latin by the polished scholar, the learned writer, the pious priest—the Venerable Bede :

Nunc laudare debemus  
 Auctorem regni cælestis,  
 potentiam Creatoris,  
 et consilium illius,  
 facta Patris gloriæ.  
 Quomodo ille,  
 Cum sit eternus Deus,  
 Omnium miraculorum  
 auctor exstitet  
 qui primo filiis hominum  
 cælum pro culmine tecti,  
 dehinc terram Custos  
 humani generis omnipotens  
 creavit.

Now we ought to praise  
 The maker of the kingdom of  
 heaven,  
 the power of the Creator  
 and his counsel,  
 the deeds of the Father of glory.  
 How he  
 being the eternal God,  
 of all miracles became  
 the author ;  
 who first, as guardian of the sons  
 of men,  
 heaven as the roof of the house  
 and then the earth  
 for the human race, Almighty  
 created.

Bede adds : “ Hic est sensus, non autem ordo ipso verborem quæ dormiens canebat.”

This is again rendered by Ælfred thus :

Nu we sceolan herian.  
 heofon rices weard.  
 metodes milite.  
 and his mod gethonc.  
 wera wuldor-fæder.  
 swa he wundra gewæs.  
 ece dryhten.  
 oord onstealde.  
 he ærst gescóp.

Now we must praise  
 the guardian of heaven's kingdom,  
 the Creator's might,  
 and his mind's thought ;  
 glorious father of men,  
 as of every wonder he  
 Lord eternal,  
 the beginning formed.  
 He first made

eorthum bearnum.  
 heofon to hrófe.  
 hálig scyppend.  
 tha middangeard.  
 moncynnes weard.  
 ece dryhten.  
 æfter teode.  
 firum fóldan.  
 frea ælmilitig.

for the children of men,  
 heáven as a roof.  
 Holy Creator  
 then mid-earth,  
 the guardian of mankind!  
 the Eternal Lord  
 afterwards produced  
 the earth for men,  
 Lord Almighty!

The description of chaos in the original *Cædmon* is from the Edda, but comes in very fittingly in this our first Christian book. And mark the extraordinary continuity of our unbroken thought as Scandinavian Englishmen. The old pagan book of sacred hymns—not to speak irreverently, the bible of our very remote forefathers—contains remnants of some very early manifestation of Divine Truth, then passed away, because overshadowed and clouded by the minds of men, and twisted by them into most strange forms; which still, however, bear some traces of their pristine beauty, though distorted by men's hands, just as the blackened mummies in this wonder hoard\* still carry traces of God's image in their forms. Therefore this old pagan poem was capable of being the pioneer of true religious thought.

Let us compare the description of chaos by the Scandinavian scald with the account of the dawn of creation by the inspired Christian.

The delightful mythic hymn, the *Völuspá*, as quoted in the "Prose Edda", † tells us—

Ár var alda,  
 that er ekki var

It was the first dawn of time  
 Then nothing was

\* *I.e.*, The British Museum.

† *Edda Snorra Sturlusonar*, Copenhagen, 1875; *Gylfaginning*, cap. 4 (page 14).

var-a sandr né sær,  
né svalar unnir,  
jörð fanst eigi,  
né upphiminn ;  
gap var ginnunga  
enn gras ekki.

There were no sands, no seas  
no cooling waves :  
Earth was not there  
nor heaven on high ;  
there was a gaping void,  
But grass was none !

What says Cædmon ?—

Ne wæs hér tha giet,  
nymthe heolsten-sceado  
wiht geworden,  
ac thes wíða grund.  
stód deop and dim.  
drihtene fremde  
ídel and únnyt.  
on thone cagum wlát.  
stith-frihth cinning.  
and tha stowe beheold.  
dreáma lease.  
gesah deorc gesweorc  
semian sinnichte  
swcart under roderum  
wonn and wáste.  
oð that theos woruld-gesceaft  
thurh word gewearth.  
wuldor cyninges.  
hér ærest gesceóp.  
éce drihten.  
helm call-wihta,  
heofon and eorþan  
rodor arærde.  
and this rúme land  
gestathelode.  
strangum mihtum  
frea ælmihtig.  
folde wæs tha gyt  
græs ungréne,  
gársecg theáhte  
swcart synnihte  
side and wide  
wonne wægas.

There had hitherto,  
save cavern-shade,  
nothing existing here,  
but the wide abyss  
stood deep and dim,  
a stranger to its Lord,  
idle and useless ;  
on that with his eyes gazed  
the king firm of mind  
and beheld those places  
joyless,  
saw the dark cloud  
always appearing  
dark under heaven,  
wan and waste ;  
until the creation of worlds  
came into being through the word  
of the king of glory.  
Here first shaped  
the eternal Lord,  
the crown of all beings,  
heaven and earth ;  
the firmament upreared,  
and this roomy land  
established  
by his strong might.  
The Lord Almighty !  
The earth was yet  
with grass not green.  
The ocean covered  
darkling for ever  
far and wide  
the wan (dark) ways.

Both in *Cædmon* and in *Beowulf* the Scandinavian

English element prevails. Saṭan is a warrior, and a Scandinavian mythological personage. The heaven of *Cædmon* is Valhalla, as to its military pomp and clang and clash. So graphic is the word-painting in both, so direct their appeal to our English hearts, that we feel their influence at once. The words thrill through us like an electric shock or the sound of a trumpet, and hardly give us time to reflect (I am speaking now specially of *Cædmon*) where we have heard those strains before. But when the question is asked, when we feel that the ideas presented to us are already known somehow and somewhere, we remember that a certain stern blind Puritan of the seventeenth century sang the same song to another tune not so very long ago. The same military heaven, perhaps even more Scandinavian than that of *Cædmon*, flashes, clashes, blares, and glows through his melodious though stately numbers, that thrilled the good Abbess Hilda more than a thousand years ago; and crashed and thundered and blazed a thousand years before that in the older England in Scandinavia. Yes! it is the same book! a purely thoroughly English book all through, though in *Cædmon* we find words which, thanks to our wretched system of education, are uncouth and strange to us now; but we can, despite the wrong done us, still contrive to decipher the grand old lines, and in spite of the coldness thrown over Milton's phrase by the stilted Latinity of his style, we feel the English pulse beneath.

Thus, in our grand English book we have three epochs. First, certain ideas in a pagan form, derived from some primæval heavenly lore encrusted over with man's folly. Next, a majestic tale in Christian phrase, but pagan strain,

teaching inspired truths. Lastly, an epic framed like Cædmon's lay, but worked up with the lights and shades derived from classic lore. Men say that when our Milton was a man of nearly fifty summers he visited the Hague. Now, in the year of grace 1655, a learned Dutchman, Junius by name, produced the first translation of this lay from the old Saxon tongue into smooth Latin lines. These Milton read, and on this Dutchman's work built his immortal fame. Milton you know as well as I (and better, very likely), but when next you read, and wonder at the martial show in heaven that clangs through all his lines, refer that martial music, not to sounds he heard "when civil dudgeon first grew high", but to remoter times and Scandinavian clangour in Valhalla's plains. This is the soul of Milton, this is the reason why—despite his Latin dictionary words—the Roman race can never well translate him.

When the monks toiled within their lonesome cells, they, in the early days of Christianity, busied themselves with books. These books were multiplied throughout the land; copies of the Gospels were plentiful. The Heptateuch, the Apocrypha, the Book of Job, and the Psalms, seem to have been the favourite books read by the early English. These books were written on vellum, often most splendidly illustrated with pictures representing scenes from the text. Lavishly gilt, glowing with miraculous colours, these books represent long years of patient toil and considerable skill in the art of illuminating MSS. now lost among us. By the kind permission of the Principal Librarian, I am enabled to show you one of these works of ancient art, that speaks for itself more eloquently than

our modern phase of English would permit. Some of the colours are as fresh as though laid on but yesterday, and the gold work is to our hearts—or should be so—"a joy for ever."

Some of these books were so valuable that they were chained to the desks at which they were used. Certain gospels, missals, psalters, and homilies were chained to the pulpit in churches, so as to preclude the possibility of being run away with—a precaution that was continued down to a comparatively late day. And it was evident that the "monks of old" worked with a will at these curious documents, which have thus become records, from the peculiar style of their delineations, of their own manners and customs in the early days of Christianity. The new faith flourished rapidly and healthily on English soil; and the reason was because, as I have been, I believe, the first to point out, the Christianization of the English differed entirely from that of other people. We were the first peaceful converts of Rome. In our case the sword did not precede the Cross, but conquered Rome sent peaceful missionaries to bring us to the faith. Public meetings were held to talk the matter over; charming anecdotes of the freedom of the discussion abound in our annals; and after very mature deliberation by minds well prepared for the reception of the truths of the Gospel, they were adopted, not from coercion, not, from sudden enthusiastic influence, but from calm and sober reflection and conviction that the new light was the true one. There was a solemnity about the English reception of this light which has *never* been pointed out, and this prevented the wild excitement or the darker puritanic mania which

would *destroy* everything that was not in accordance with the new teachings. There was a great freedom of thought, and none of the narrow-mindedness of later times which

“Called fire and sword and desolation  
A thorough Godly reformation.”

Religion could not be injured by the retention of our ancient festivals, - which indeed *were all retained*. Even the names of the days were not changed, save that an attempt was made to call Sunday *Restedæg*, which, however, failed. To the early English Christians this question was rather an external point, having little to do with the actual end and purport of the faith. It was in their eyes more important that men should know the “great God who made the sun”, and be acquainted with the wonderful story of the redemption of man by the Saviour, than that they should be taught fresh exterior observances having in fact but little bearing on practical life. Some observances were done away with, but not many; others *could* not be abolished; and others were regarded as not of consequence either way. Some articles of dress, as the pagan cross brooch, and the bracelet for the warrior’s arms, were abandoned. Runes, as I have before said, were compelled to yield to the alphabet, but, generally speaking, Christianity did not denationalize the English.

The proof of this statement is strikingly afforded by the comparison of the Eddaic Hymns and *Beowulf* with *Cædmon*, and *Cædmon* with *Milton*. We find that the *mind* of the English, which is the life of the *book*, as the soul is of the body, remains pretty much as it was in the



brave days of old, notwithstanding the rude shocks which it has undergone from overstrung fanaticism let loose upon us from two opposite sources.

That the book is an exponent of the mind is evident, although men often write otherwise than they think from various motives. In ancient writings the word *book* is used instead of a word for memory, as may be seen in the sacred scriptures, where it is said that certain acts shall cause men to be "blotted out of the book"—in which case the concrete idea of a book cannot be intended; and the sense of bearing a thing in mind is very frequently rendered by having the object in question "written down".

So far, our English book, as we have regarded it, has been the converse of this proposition, and has represented the English mind by showing the process of its development without becoming another thing than it was. The book crystallised the thought into a tangible and concrete form, so that the ancient relics of parchment before us are interesting not merely from having passed through the hands of the early fathers of our race—actually having been in their possession, and serving for their instruction and delectation a thousand years ago—but their interest is higher, more internal, more real, than that arising from mere relic worship, for the *mind* of the mighty dead is here. We can "call spirits from the vasty deep" of the long centuries ago—and they *do* come when we so call them.

Thus, in the two grand instances I have brought forward, *Beowulf* and *Cædmon*, we have exponents of the mind of our Anglo-Saxon ancestors. But there are other

works, showing that besides abstract thought our fathers were capable of observation into the more touch-like tokens of the outer world. There are books upon astronomy, medicine, religion, geography, philosophy, and history. But as this Lecture is not a history of literature, but only a series of hints regarding the English book, I shall close by directing your attention to perhaps the most important document, next to *Beowulf*, preserved by any European Aryans; a document which is to the external history of the English nation what *Beowulf* is to the history of the English mind. No country, no nation in the world has such an extraordinary series of unbroken annals as we possess in our glorious *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, a book whence most of our knowledge of the history of the race before the Norman invasion, and for some time after, is derived; and though some of the statements are hardly to be received as historical facts at the present day, they must be allowed to be most important, as illustrating the habits and mode of thought of our early ancestors. As *Beowulf* and *Cædmon* are the results of interior or abstract thought brought down to the world of matter, so is the *Chronicle* a transcript of external phenomena of history reduced to mental or abstract conceptions, giving us rather a history of our forefathers as to their minds than as to their mere acts. Thus we have an invaluable record, greatly superior, in its appeals to our heart and love, to those more elaborate works of fiction generally called Histories of England.

The manuscript before us belonged to the Cottonian Library, and is known by the mysterious appellation "Tiberius A. vi." It was originally a small folio, but is

much shrunk by fire. It extends from the Incarnation to the year A.D. 977, and it is written in one uniform hand, apparently of the latter part of the tenth century; but it may be doubted whether the transcript was completed, as the dates after A. 552 are only occasionally marked.\*

In a manuscript now in the British Museum, also preserved in the Cottonian Library, but marked "Tiberius B. iv", the history opens with Bede's account of the Island of Britain.

For us, *some* of the most interesting entries are the following:—For the year 449 we read: "This year Martianus and Valentinus succeeded to the empire, and reigned seven years. And in their days Hengest and Horsa, invited by Wyrtegeorne, king of the Britons, landed in Britain on the shore which is called Wippedsfleet, at first in aid of the Britons, but afterwards they fought against them.—A. CCCCLV. This year Hengest and Horsa fought against King Wyrtegeorn at the place which is called Ægelsthrep (near Aylesford), and his brother Horsa was killed in that place, and after that Hengest obtained the kingdom, and his son Æsc.—A. CCCCLVI. This year Hengest and Æschis son fought against the Britons at the place which is called Creganford (Crayford), and there slew four thousand men; and the Britons then forsook Kent, and in great terror fled to London" (here called Lúndenbyrig, evidently from the Scandinavian *Lund*, a grove).

Now, this plain, simple way of stating facts has been called by many bald, uninteresting, inartistic, etc. But,

\* Thorpe, Introduction to the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*.

in the first place, the desire was merely to notice the facts in as few words as might suffice to relate them. But, because there is not a poetical account of the passage of the ships across the water, their reception on their arrival, etc., etc., the pseudo-critics would actually gainsay the truthfulness of our annalist, and boldly swear that Hengest and Horsa never came over at all! And in another chronicle, of two hundred years' later date, known as the *Brut* of Layamon, the same facts are doubted because the tale is too diffuse! Layamon wrote an English poem on the early history of Britain. His work is founded on a French metrical chronicle, written by a certain Wace (not to be confounded with Walter Mapes, as he has been), and may be termed the "Fabulous History of England", though more instructive than almost any book on history with which I am acquainted. This Layamon is held in discredit for his amplifications by the very class of critics who disbelieve the *Chronicle* for its conciseness. But the *Chronicle* is not always so concise. There are parts of this all-important book where the clang of battle rouses the poet, or rather awakens the memory of old songs long passed away, but recalled to the mind of the scribe by the events chronicled, and so they are written down in their proper places, as telling the story better than he can relate it. These are battle pieces, and have the true Scandinavian ring, the keen zest for the fray that soldiers have. Of these poetic interpolations, the most interesting is a poem descriptive of the victory gained in A.D. 937 by King Athelstán at Brunnanburg. This, of course, was, at the time of the writing of the *Chronicle*, fresh in the minds of most men, but it is almost as Scan-

dinavian as *Beowulf*. I have only space for a very brief extract :—

Her Æthelstan cing.  
 eorla drihten.  
 beorna beaggifa.  
 and his brother eác.  
 Eadmund ætheling  
 ealdorlangne tír.  
 geslógan æt sake.  
 sweorda ecgum.  
 embe Brunnanburh.  
 Bórd weall clufan.  
 heowan heaðlinda.  
 hamora láfum.  
 eaforan Eadweardes.  
 swa him geæthele wæs.  
 fram cneomagum.  
 theet hie æt campe oft.  
 wið laðra gehwane.  
 land ealgodan.  
 hórd and hámas.

Here Æthelstan king,  
 of earls the lord,  
 the giver of rings to nobles  
 and his brother also,  
 Edmund the æthling  
 life-long glory  
 in battle won ;  
 with the edge of swords  
 near Brunanburg.  
 The shield rampart they cleft,  
 they bewed the war-linden  
 with the hammers legacy.  
 Eadward's offspring,  
 as to them was congenial  
 from their ancestors,  
 that they often in battle  
 against foes of all kinds  
 defended their land,  
 their treasure and homes.

I do not call this barbarous poetry, and it is very like *Beowulf*. The expressions, “Bórd weall clufon”, “heowan heað-linda”, “hamora láf”, are all to be found in that pattern for our diction.

But, as I said before, this is not a lecture on literature. I want to draw you to the books in this great book-hoard ; and when you see what a grand literature is marked out by the three beacons, *Beowulf*, *Cædmon*, and the *Chronicle*, you will be led of yourselves to peruse the ringing verse of the “Traveller's Tale”, the weird “Phœnix”, “Judith”, and many other delightful pieces in Thorpe's version of the Exeter book ; the scientific books ; the wonderful hero-like saints, whose biographies take the place of the heroic legends, but are no less full of marvel

and adventure. You will delight in the calm dignity, strength, and sweetness of our Ælfred. You will see in the Saxon laws the germs of much of our own legislation. You will see how charters ought to be made; and in this reference, I am happy to tell you that my friend, Mr. Walter de Gray Birch, is producing an exhaustive book on the plan of Kemble, but much fuller, and within reach of everybody. All these things, and many more, will reward the patient student of his forefathers' *book*.

I have told you that these books are illustrated. The MSS. are adorned with figures drawn in various colours and gold. The gospels are gorgeously decorated, and there are some Psalters in this house of unrivalled beauty. It is to be wished that all the Anglo-Saxon MSS. in the country could be brought together under one roof. I wish I could show you the illuminations of the *Cædmon* which are in the Bodleian. The art of preparing these skins and ornamenting them so splendidly has long been lost, but I can give you one of the recipes used by the Anglo-Saxons for preparing their parchment:—

“Put it under lime, and let it lie for three days, then stretch it, scrape it well on both sides and dry it, and then stain it with the colours you wish.”

To gild their skins, we have these directions:—

“Take the red skin and carefully pumice it, and temper it in tepid water, and pour the water on it till it runs off limpid; stretch it afterwards, and smooth it diligently with clean wood. When it is dry, take the white of eggs and smear it therewith thoroughly. When it is dry, sponge it with water, press it, dry it again, and polish it,

then rub it with a clean skin, and polish it again and gild it."

I may now give you some of the methods of preparing gold for writing which have come down to us. One method:—"File gold very fine, put it in a mortar, and add the sharpest vinegar; rub it till it becomes black, and then pour it out. Put to it some salt or nitre, and so it will dissolve. So you may write with it, and thus all the metals may be dissolved."

"The gold letters of the Anglo-Saxon MSS. are on a white embossment, which is probably a calcareous preparation. Modern gilding is made on an oil size of yellow ochre, or on a water size of gypsum, or white oxide of lead, or on similar substances. For gilding on paper or parchment, gold powder is now used as much as leaf gold. The early English used both."

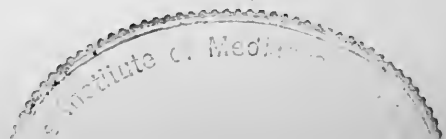
Another method:—"Melt some lead and frequently immerse it in cold water. Melt gold and pour that into the same water, and it will become brittle. Then rub the gold filings carefully with quicksilver, and purge it carefully while it is liquid. Before you write, dip the pen in liquid alum, which is best purified by salt and vinegar."

Another method:—"Take thin plates of gold and silver, rub them in a mortar with Greek salt or nitre till it disappears. Pour on water and repeat it. Then add salt, and so wash it. When the gold remains even, add a moderate portion of the flowers of copper and bullock's gall; rub them together, and write and burnish the letters."

Other methods are mentioned by which even marble and glass may be gilt. The receipts are from a MS. of the

ninth century. I am indebted to Turner's *History of the Anglo-Saxons*, Book IX, chap. vii, for this form of them.

From these remarks on the MSS. now preserved in the British Museum, you may draw another proof of my assertions that we are not descended from savage brutes, but highly civilised men and women, albeit their civilization was not that of Greece or Rome; and further, that as it has pleased God to make us English people—whether of Scandinavia, America, Australia, India, or Belgravia—it behoves us to know something of the great race from which we spring, and of the language which we speak. I raise a feeble voice against the prejudice and folly of many generations who have substituted the language and literature of the race we overcame, for our own loved tongue and noble literature. I want to point out to you where our weakness lies, and I want all who hear my cry to help me to overcome the wrong done us. If I can awaken those who are capable of directing the public mind in the right direction, I shall be glad indeed, and my object in these Lectures will have been gained. I am not setting myself up as the one in England who is to put this wrong right. I complain of it, and I want every man, woman, and child in England to insist on knowing all about England and the English in the first place, keeping Greek and Latin for special purposes of study and interest in the next; not setting them up as necessary helps to the acquirement of English, for they are absolutely useless except in teaching us the meaning of foreign words which only bother us, which we don't want, and which we ought to get rid of. It is the age of examinations, and I want English students, whether "sweet girl graduates" or





members of a sterner sex, to insist on being examined in the tongue of their fathers, as students in Germany and Russia are. In neither country is there such an astounding wealth of indigenious classic literature as here in England, where the chain is unbroken for at least fifteen hundred years; and in no country in the world is the national speech and early classic learning of the people so neglected as amongst ourselves.



LECTURE IV.

THE HORN.



## LECTURE IV.

### THE HORN.

FEW persons are accustomed to think what quantities of articles may be produced from any substance of which some other article which they have before them has been made. Perhaps it would be, as a general rule, waste of time if they did. On the present occasion I trust that it may not be regarded exactly as waste of time if we devote an hour to the consideration of some of the wonders that have been poured out of the Horn. A true Cornucopia it proved to us in the brave days of old. And even now we shall find it full of interest and instruction, and almost inexhaustible in its teachings.

The Anglo-Saxons, which is as much to say the Scandinavian Teutons, had, in their old home in the North, a fierce monster to encounter in the form of the wild bull, or aurochs, which ravaged the plains at seed time and at harvest. It is now extinct in Europe, but for the Goths it was, perhaps, a more formidable enemy than the Romans themselves. It was a foe of no mean reputation, and it was a great boast when a warrior, single-handed, and armed only with his spear, could overcome the monster and show the hide and horns in proof of his valour. The horns were cut, polished, and mounted in gold or silver gilt, and the formidable weapon of the ferocious bull became the drinking cup of the warrior. A curious hyperbolic expres-

sion of the Scandinavian scalds has earned for our haughty ancestors the unenviable reputation of being little removed from cannibals. Allusion being made to their custom of drinking ale and mead from such curling vessels as that glorious relic from Taplow, the poet, instead of saying, like a sensible man, that the warriors in question drank from horns, says that they "drank from the curved adornments of the head of the foe." This, by some people who think it the correct thing to cry out upon their own nation, has been translated to mean the skulls of men, instead of the curved and branching horns of the fearful buffalo.

This is a foul aspersion on the character and habits of our ancestors, who were opposed to any such savagery. It is true that human victims were sacrificed, but that was done in solemn conclave, and the rite was performed by a priest or priestess duly qualified to "send the soul to Odin", to whom it was duly consigned. The rites were grim and horrid enough, but, being connected with the idea of the immortality of the soul, they cannot be regarded as entirely savage. They were neither so cruel nor so savage as the *Christian* custom, not very long ago (compared with the distance back of the ages with which we are dealing), of burning ladies and gentlemen alive at Smithfield, and sending their souls—as was thought—to endless woe and torment. Thought was *free* among our fathers, and men were permitted to say what their opinions were, even of the actions of the gods. Such an act as using a part of any human body as a utensil would have been most repugnant to them. The remains of their victims were either burnt or consigned to the

great deity, by being cast from a rock, called the "Hall of Odin".

The monster, once overcome, his skin was employed to cover the shield, while his horn was made into the ordinary drinking vessel of the race.

Living here in a civilised country, with no vast plains to traverse, and with railways everywhere, we are less sensible of the fear of the horned monster than those nations among whose wilds the bison ranges in a savage state. The terror evidently intended by the expression "bulls of Bashan" loses its effect for us, and the promise of *exalting the horn* has little more in it for our ears than a remote poetical figure; while the command "Set not thine horn on high", has absolutely no sense to us, finds no answering chord to strike, and is, in fact, quite unintelligible.

In former Lectures I have dwelt upon the occult or spiritual sense of the Holy Word, and of a similar interior meaning dwelling in the letter of the myths of antiquity, which, although written according to the mystic science which teaches us that there is an intimate connection between the world of the spirit and the world of the body, between the world of mind and the world of matter, is yet different in the important element of inspiration. The wonderful *rapport* between sound and thought in speech, between figure of speech and moral, between outward form and inward life, has ever been the medium of conveying the truths of inspiration to man. Without such medium there would have been no means of reaching his inward soul; and although the teachings of this science have been drowned in the roar of a more

external and sensuous life than man was created to lead, the voice is still heard as a remote yet earnest whisper calling us to higher things than those of mere external sense. The truths of the Word remain truths, however man in his brief day in this lower sphere of dust, and mud, and dirt, may deny them. The colours in a ray of light may be innumerable, although the prism may teach that there are only seven, and the tourmaline proclaim that there are but two.

When the ferocious monarch of the plain, the terrific bison, is referred to in Scripture, we have a type of unbridled evil, which yet, when tamed and brought into subjection, may be of the highest use to man, as the domestic ox, when contrasted with the devastating wild bull. The weapon with which the creature is furnished is the horn, which is, therefore, taken as an instrument of his power, and as such is employed in the Word of God as a fitting emblem and token of *power*. A beast with ten horns, as referred to in the Apocalypse, is, therefore, such evil endowed with unlimited power. The Lamb of God is described as having ten horns, symbolizing the infinite power of the Divine; and the many allusions throughout Holy Writ to the Horn are all capable of this rendering, inasmuch as the inner sense is what is meant to be conveyed to us, riding, as it were, on the clouds of the letter.

Thus the mythological sense of the word explains its use as a vehicle for higher teachings than the mere letter, and we may find it useful to bear in mind this hidden meaning when we are referred to thoughts evidently transcending those suggested by the mere mention of the concrete substance, horn.



Let us now glance for a few moments at the philological value of the word, and we discover that it exists all through the Aryan family. We find it as in English, without any change of orthography, in German, Icelandic, Danish, and Swedish—*Horn*. In Gothic it appears in the form of *haurn*; in Dutch as *horen*; in Latin we find it as *cornu*. The Kelts seem, as usual, to be as far as possible from the Teutons, and we find them employing the Latin rather than the German form of the word, which in Welsh, Gaelic, and Irish is *corn*. All these, Skeat derives from the base *kar-na*, of which the suffix *na* falls away in the Greek *κέρας*. They are all probably from the root *Kar*, to be hard. It is, in its English form, completely identified with the Teutonic and Scandinavian forms; it retains its sense of power and dignity, being not infrequently applied to heroes to denote their prowess and martial fame.

The celebrated "King Horn", a story of English origin, is an illustration of this. This tale is given entire in the excellent *Specimens of Early English*, by Dr. Morris, a book which ought to be in the possession of every man, woman, and child who may feel proud of the English name. There are three ancient versions of this charming tale: a very good English version, of the end of the thirteenth century, defective at the end, preserved in the Advocates' Library, Edinburgh; a French version, of the twelfth century, complete; and a second English version, of the fourteenth century, defective at the beginning and the end. These two are both among the Harleian MSS. Of this highly interesting poem Conybeare says: "The romance of Horn Childe, published by Ritson in his collection, is evidently derived from a Saxon original." It

is rather more than this, for the term Saxon generally involves the idea of a situation rather more to the south of Europe than the actual place of Horn; while the internal evidence shows that the whole story is more Scandinavian than German in conception and treatment. The sword which is presented to the hero was the work of Wayland, the Scandinavian Völundr; the manner in which the hero is put to sea is Scandinavian all over. The story may be briefly summed up as follows:—

“A certain King Mury had by his wife Godylt a son named Horn. The kingdom is invaded by the Sarcens, who put Horn into a boat with two of his playfellows, Athulf and Fykenyld the traitor. The vessel being driven on to the coast of the kingdom of Westnesse, the young king is found by Aylmer, king of that country, brought to court, and delivered to Athelbrus, his steward, to take care of, and to be educated in all warlike and courtly accomplishments, such as hawking, harping, tilting, etc. Here the Princess Rymenhild falls in love with him, and declares her passion, and is betrothed. Horn, in consequence of this engagement, leaves the princess for seven years, to prove himself worthy of her affection. He proves a most valorous and invincible knight; and at the end of seven years reconquers his father's kingdom, returns and rescues the princess from the hands of the traitor Fykenhyld, and carries her to his own country, where the wedding is celebrated with great splendour.”

Here we see the *power* of true nobility overcoming the treachery of the mean and base, rescuing virtue and defeating vice.

Having considered, though very slightly, the mytho-

logical and poetical bearing of the horn, we must now descend from the seat of the scald and examine somewhat more attentively the concrete substance itself, and the articles with which it furnishes us as materials for English history.

One of the earliest uses to which the horn was applied was that of discoursing most excellent music. The hollow tube, curved as the horn of the larger ox generally is, was perceived at a very early period to be capable of producing sounds when the small end was applied to the mouth, and such sounds as could be intensified and otherwise modulated at the pleasure of the performer. But among the Germans, the use to which the instrument was put was in all probability, at least in the first instance, to collect swine. They had large herds of swine, which were certainly appealed to by the influence of the swineherd's horn.

From this early use of the instrument for so base a purpose, we might have expected to find the early Germans averse to employ it in war, especially as we learn from Tacitus that they marched to battle to the sound of their own voices, singing their war songs on the way. This custom is prevalent among the Russian Cossacks to this day, and the effect produced by vocal music, resulting from the combined exertions of a whole regiment, is extraordinary. Amongst us it prevailed in the navy at the end of the last century, and lives on in the merchant service still. But although such incentives to military ardour as trumpet and drum might not have been required to animate troops already rushing to battle as to the greatest joy which either earth or heaven could

afford, signals were absolutely necessary, and the clear sound made by the horn would naturally point to it as the best instrument with which to make signals; and we constantly meet with allusions to the gate-ward, who announces the approach of travellers by sounding his horn, a feat requiring as little musical skill on his part as the performance of the swineherd would. The object in both instances was the production of noise rather than of sweet sounds, and the early horn was eminently calculated to gain that end. The refinement of "winding" the horn, and producing agreeable modulations of sound, must be ascribed to the ingenuity of the hunter.

The warrior was certainly furnished with this indispensable instrument as far back as our annals lead us, and any doubt on the subject is resolved by the reference to the war-horn in *Beowulf* (line 2850), where it is said:—

Horn stundum song.  
 fúslíc furthón leód.  
 Fetha eal gesæet.  
 gesawon thá æfter wætere  
 wýrm cynnes fela,  
 séllice sæ-dračan,  
 sund cunnian ;  
 swylce on næs-hleothum  
 nicares licgean,  
 ða on undern mæl  
 oft bewitigað  
 sorhfulne sið  
 on segl-ráde,  
 wyrmas and wildeór :  
 hie onweg hruron,  
 bitere and gebolgne,  
 bearhtm ongeáton  
 guð-horn galan.

The horn at times sang out  
 Further a death lay, too.  
 The band all sat :  
 they saw along the water  
 of the worm kind many,  
 strange sea dragons,  
 tempting the deep ;  
 also in the headland clefts  
 nickars lying,  
 which at morning time  
 often keep  
 their sorrowful course  
 on the sail road,  
 worms and wild beasts :  
 they away hurried  
 bitter and angry  
 the instant they heard  
 the war-horn sing.

This is decisive of the fact that in the fifth century

the horn had become an instrument of military music. In the other places in *Beowulf* where the horn is mentioned, it is referred to as a poetical attribute of a dwelling—*horn-reced*, meaning the pinnacled mansion of Herót.

We find mention also of the *Truðhorn*, or war-horn, in the later Anglo-Saxon glossaries; so that we may come to the conclusion that, despite the humble use to which it was applied, the horn was the first and most important musical instrument employed by the Teutons, and that although they undoubtedly did march to battle to the sound of their own voices, the troops were collected in the first instance by the sound of the horn.

And before the date of *Beowulf*, in the old times treated of by the stirring hymns of the "Eddas", we are told that the last day—the day of Surtur or Satur—when he shall come from the south in devouring flames, when the monsters shall break loose and destroy the gods, to be destroyed by them; when heaven and earth shall pass away, to be succeeded by a new heaven and a new earth which shall never pass away—then the gods shall be warned and roused to the grim fight by the sound of "*Gjallar-horn*", the signal horn of Heimdall, the warder of the gods, who guards the bridge Bifröst (the rainbow) from the assaults of the giants. That horn shall announce the end of the world and the commencement of a new heaven above, a new earth below, over which the older monsters shall have no more sway, for they shall have perished for ever; while the gods, purified and perfected by the conflict, shall rise again brighter, purer, *braver* than ever, to enjoy with regenerate mortals an eternity of bliss

in Gimlé the Golden.\* Thus the apparent baseness of its origin is more than balanced by its employment by the gods themselves. And as it was used by the hunter from time immemorial, it must have been employed by the warrior, for he *was* the hunter.

The peculiar compactness of the substance known as horn, renders it extremely well adapted for the purposes of the carver, who has been able to carve in horn and ivory with better success than in wood for a period certainly as far back as our own annals reach. We have before us in this most valuable collection some interesting specimens of the skill of the early English in carving ivory and bone. This skill was not only employed in decorating such choice possessions as the casket presented by Mr. Franks, and other delicate objects: it was used to give the horn a character, or to identify it with the owner in a refined and elegant way. The practice of carving horns continued down to the end of the seventeenth and the beginning of the eighteenth centuries. There is still preserved in the Tower of London a most elaborate specimen of the later days of carved horn; and in this very room in the British Museum there is a vessel of horn, carved in a similar way and in many respects closely resembling the powder-horn of the seventeenth century, though itself intended to be used as a money box.

It is very evident to anyone who looks at a horn, that it possesses a fine end or point, and a thick end or base. If both be open, we have the means of making a noise; if the point be closed and the base open, we have the

\* See Article, at the end of this work, entitled "The Myth of the Weck."

drinking vessel so dear to our remote ancestors; and a thousand years later on, the base closed and the fine end opened, presented the German with the means of carrying in safety the terrible agent of destruction which he invented, and which turned the whole current of military history, and remodelled the art of war. Nothing can be more elaborate than the German carved powder-horns of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

Our immediate ancestors the Anglo-Saxons had no gunpowder, but they had the other Teutonic invention, which, in another way, is quite as much demanded by the soldier. Of this, Tacitus speaks with the quiet, dignified indifference of an historian who states facts which are without any particular interest in his eyes. He says: "Their drink is a liquor prepared from barley or wheat, brought by fermentation to a certain resemblance of wine. Those who border on the Rhine also purchase wine." But Pliny says, with affected indignation (xiv, 22): "The western nations have their intoxicating liquor, made of steeped grain. The Egyptians also invented drinks of the same kind. Thus drunkenness is a stranger in no part of the world, for these liquors are taken pure, and not diluted as wine is. Yet surely the earth thought she was producing corn. Oh, the wonderful sagacity of our vices! We have discovered how to render even water intoxicating."

On the nature of ale and mead I spoke at large in my Lecture on the Earthen Jar, as that was the vessel in which they were stored, and also from which they were distributed to the guests at table. The horn was the vessel from which they were drunk, and being so very necessary to

the champion, was buried with him as part of his "kit" or outfit for Valhalla. A splendid specimen from the famous mound at Taplow is now exhibited in the Anglo-Saxon room at the British Museum. The specimen in question is typical as to form, though exceptional as to amount of ornamentation. The whole length of the horn is taken; the mouth-piece and the extreme point are richly mounted in silver-gilt, which is elaborately ornamented. There are remains of other vessels of the kind, but this is the most perfect. The amount of beer or mead which it would contain is, I presume, about three pints, or perhaps half a gallon, and not being furnished with feet, it could not be set down without spilling all the remaining liquor.

There is no evidence to show that a horn was buried with every champion, although there are plenty of grounds to believe that the little bucket and the wooden spoon were constant elements in a warrior's funeral. It may be that the wealthy chiefs who dispensed the good things of this life to their vassals and retainers, hoping to continue the same kind of hospitality in a future state, went prepared with such huge drinking vessels to serve round to their train such draughts as they were wont to give them in the flesh. I, however, incline to the opinion that it was part of the outfit, and that the horns in other graves, from having been less carefully preserved, or from missing the one particular ingredient required to make them last so many centuries, have decayed, while the others have not; precisely as in choosing leather for sea boots, it is quite impossible to tell, unless an experiment has been made, which leather is really going to prove water-tight, and which not. It is very possible that every grave had its



horn, but only very few have been preserved to us; and if we compare the two specimens from Taplow, we shall find one so much decayed as to have little trace of its original shape remaining, while the grand vessel with the splendid mountings is almost as good as new.

That the horn as a musical instrument finds no place in the warrior's grave is hardly, therefore, a proof either way that it was used by him or not; although, as no trace of it has been found, we may naturally feel inclined to think that it was never there. But we must be careful not to generalise too rashly, as some antiquaries have done, who, because the stone implements interred with the warrior have resisted the tooth of time, while the iron weapons have decayed, have come to the conclusion that there was an age when only stone was used, even at periods when history records the use of iron by those to whom the stone theorists deny it. So with regard to Keltic skulls found in Anglian tumuli where no trace of the Teutonic head was to be discovered, it is too rash to declare that such a grave must be Keltic. History is the guide in this case, and points to the cinerary urn as containing the ashes of the cremated Angle, to assist whom in another life his Keltic slaves had all been slaughtered, and thrown in upon the mound, leaving their skulls as witnesses to their enslaved condition. Saxon graves have been opened where the position only of the weapons has been indicated by a faint red powder, all that remained of the oxidized blades and spear-heads. That these specimens of horn have been found at all is really marvellous, when we consider the many chances against their coming down to us.

Later on, when the Church was a recognised power in

the land, when psalters and missals were so overladen with gold and ornament as to be most precious possessions, we find pictures of the use of the horn in church music. In the MS. marked Vespasian A. 1, there is a grand illumination, representing King David playing on the gleewood, or early English harp, while below are musicians with horns.

In representations of Saxon hunting, the horn plays a prominent part. In one of the ninth century,\* there is a boar-hunt, in which an inferior attendant on the noble (who is in advance) blows a horn of considerable size. The boars are making off to the wood, whilst the noble and his attendant are advancing with some caution. The dogs are restrained by the attendant. The noble is armed with spear and sword; the attendant with a less elaborate spear, and no sword. Both are provided, like all Anglo-Saxons, with very delicate shoes.

The English attachment to field sports and hunting is an inheritance from their Scandinavian ancestors. The Romans did not hunt as an amusement, while the so-called Anglo-Saxons always did. The Roman games in the circus were disgusting displays of cruelty, and have survived in the Spanish bull-fights. The Romans never took the trouble to amuse *themselves* with such dangerous sports, preferring to have the danger incurred by slaves and captives taken in war, while they sat calmly by and enjoyed the miseries inflicted on others for their pastime. The Germans, including the Scandinavians and the English, were referred to hunting for food; and it became the

\* Engraved by Strutt in his *Sports and Pastimes*; London, 1831, page 5.

chief employment and open-air amusement of the race, which it never did of the Romance nations. The Normans, being of Scandinavian origin, were hunters, and, at the time of the usurpation, they became greatly addicted to it in England; one of the first acts of tyranny of the first Norman king of England was to lay waste a whole district to obtain a hunting ground for himself and his nobles. The fantastic affectation of the Normans induced the noble hunters to bestow a number of *termina technica* upon various elements in hunting, and these terms continued to a comparatively late period. What is remarkable, is that, while all such of these terms as are from the Latin source have died out from our vocabulary, some of the English expressions remain. "When beasts went together in companies, there was said to be a pride of lions; a lepe of leopards; an herd of harts, of bucks, and of all sorts of deer; a bevy of roes; a sloth of bears; a singular of boars; a sownder of wild swine; a drift of tame swine; a route of wolves; a harras of horses; a rag of colts; a stud of mares; a pace of asses; a baren of mules; a team of oxen; a drove of kine; a flock of sheep; a tribe of goats; a sculk of foxes: a cete of badgers; a richness of martins; a clowder of cats, and a kendel of young cats; a shrewedness of apes; and a labour of moles."\* The fantastic appellations bestowed by these people on various elements in hunting have passed into oblivion, like the greater part of the slang called Norman-French; and, with the exceptions of a few such words as *recheat*, the expressions now employed in reference to the horn are English: we have the verbs to sound,

\* Strutt's *Sports and Pastimes*, p. 22.

to blow, to wind, to play, etc., all applied to the English Horn.

Sir Francis Palgrave, in his *History of the Anglo-Saxons*, mentions some curious circumstances about the drinking horn of Ulfus, and the account is so appropriate to our subject that I need not apologize for quoting the whole passage, which is, besides, illustrative of statements which I have already advanced, without remembering at the time that he had referred to them. He says:—" . . . At the present day, if you wish to buy a horse, it is sufficient for you to pay the money to the owner; he delivers the horse to you, you ride him to the stable, and the bargain is completed. But if you wish to buy a field, a huge deed must be drawn by a solicitor, and engrossed upon a parchment, which is stamped, money being paid to the Government for the same. This is called a *conveyance*. Now, in early times, the horse and the field might be *conveyed* with equal simplicity, and without any writing whatever. When land was sold, the owner cut a turf from the green sward and cast it into the lap of the purchaser, as a token that the possession of the earth was transferred; or he tore off the branch of a tree, and put it into the hand of the grantee, to show that the latter was to be entitled to all the products of the soil. And when the purchaser of a house received *seizin*, or possession, the key of the door, or a bundle of thatch plucked from the roof, signified that the dwelling had been yielded up to him. These symbols were sometimes varied by the fancy of the grantor. One delivered a knife, with a hair of his beard; another a glove; a third a curry-comb; a fourth his drinking horn.

Ulfus, a noble of Northumbria, disinherited his sons, and granted his lands to the Archbishopric of York in this manner, by laying his mighty ivory drinking horn on the altar at the same time that he declared his intention; and the horn of Ulfus is yet kept in the minster; for such tokens, being the testimonies of the right to property, were preserved with as much care as title-deeds or charters; and a part of the *Terra Ulfi* is yet in the possession of the chapter of the cathedral.\* This ivory horn is delicately carved, and on the evidence of the engraving of it given by Sir Francis, it bears, besides the usual early English scroll work, the semblance of what seems to be intended for a unicorn, an appropriate figure for the embellishment of such a horn. The centre portion is fluted, and there are rings of metal to which a slight chain is attached, in the manner usual for suspending hunting horns. The whole appearance of the vessel is such that, but for the assertion of Sir Francis just quoted, I should have set down the picture as the representation of a hunting horn.

So far we have seen the horn of the ox employed in two different ways, each suggested by its shape—as a musical instrument and as a drinking vessel. We now come to the consideration of its uses when manufactured into articles, having no hint given to them by the shape in which the material is first presented to man.

From the old pagan times, even before the final settlement in Britain, the early English were distinguished for remarkable cleanliness in their persons. They were greatly attached to the use of the warm bath—and here again we

\* *History of the Anglo-Saxons*, by Francis Palgrave; Tegg, 1869.

trace a resemblance between them and the dwellers in Scandinavia and in Russia. In both countries the use of what is called the Russian bath is universal. The whole population of Russia is constant in its adherence to the practice of hot bathing. Nor is it much less universal in Scandinavia. The Russian peasants of both sexes are once a week boiled, and rubbed, and washed in a most extraordinary manner. There are generally three rooms to each bath, one being heated to a greater degree than the other. One side of the building contains the baths for the men, and the other those for the women, the arrangements being the same in each. The body being thoroughly cleansed, the pores of the skin are opened by the steam, and an immense amount of heat gets into the system, and the Russians say that it "keeps them going" for a week. In Sweden, where the cold is still more intense, the use of the bath is perhaps still more imperative. And even our old friend Tacitus speaks of the constant use of the hot bath by the Germans.

Now, the attendants in these baths are accomplished in the depilatory art, and their employment of tweezers may account for the number of these implements found among early English and Scandinavian remains. Our ancestors were dandies in their way, and paid great attention to the cultivation of such hair as fashion decreed should be retained; on the other hand, the custom of depriving the body of such luxurious growth as was interdicted by the whimsical goddess, was as rigorously adhered to. Thus the bath servants had two opposite duties to perform, one of which was accomplished by the aid of the tweezer, and the other by the *comb*. Long,

luxurious hair was the distinctive privilege of the noble to wear a well-divided beard, joining with the whiskers and cut away at the centre of the chin, so as to form a fork, was also a thing to be proud of, and consequently we find the comb a constant companion of the early English gentleman. These combs were of horn, and in their manufacture a great quantity of horn was consumed. In the British Museum we find several kinds of combs:—there is the rougher and larger sort for the flowing locks of the noble; there, too, is the guarded comb, which was carried in the pouch and used after dinner to keep the silken forked beard in due array. Hair-dressing, shaving, and the use of the tweezers are inseparably connected with the warm baths about which so much has been written.

In regarding the pocket-comb, we cannot fail to be struck with the refinement which guards it from injury and dirt by providing a fitting sheath. The comb is shorter than the modern English dressing-comb, but it is a powerful instrument to attack the beard with. The regularity of the teeth is remarkable, and explains the exquisite neatness as to the hair amongst the champions in the early MSS., and the importance of the instrument is attested by one of them bearing a Runic inscription.

The word *comb* is of great interest to us philologically. Like *horn*, it is stoutly Teutonic. We find it in German as *kamm*; in the old Norse it appears as *kambr*, meaning a crest or a ridge; in Danish and Swedish as *kam*, meaning a comb or crest. In old High German it assumes a *ch*, and is written *champe*. In oldest English we read it as *camb*, where it means a comb or crest; *camb on helmes* is

the crest of a helmet; *camb on hætte*, the crest on a hat; *cambiht*, combed or crested. The *comb* crest was the distinguishing mark of the war-bird formerly sacred to Odin, but subsequently made the attendant on Baldur. The pugnacious habits of this bird have marked him as a warrior among the Scandinavians from time immemorial; and the war cap was, as I have elsewhere pointed out, of leather. Where the two hemispherical portions of this cap met and were sewn together, the respective edges were raised above the surface of the cap and cut into a serrated ornament or crest like the comb of a cock, and this was the *camb on hætte* of our forefathers. Nor was this peculiar to the Scandinavians. Wherever the worship of Odin obtained, the crested or combed cap or helmet was found. In various dialects of the same language *b* becomes *p*, and *vice versa*. In Saxony, a German calls a tree (which in other parts of Germany is *baum*), *paum*, and so forth. Hence there is no cause for surprise when we find *camb* sometimes spelt with a *b* and sometimes with a *p*, more especially when we remember that both are but phases of the same sound. That it drops off altogether may be seen in our own word *comb*, where the *b* is mute.

In Swedish and in Anglo-Saxon the consonant *K* changes into *ch*, as in church, before the vowels *i* and *e*, the broken vowels *æ*, *æ*, and sometimes before *y*. This does not obtain in German, and it is a phenomenon which has been unaccountably overlooked both by the German philologers and by our own. Bearing this peculiarity in mind, you will be able to understand my line of argument when I claim for our Scandinavian English sires the word



champion, and utterly deny its connection with *campus* (Latin for a field); and as I am at issue with some of my best friends on this point, I wish to show that there can be absolutely no doubt on the subject, and take this opportunity of publicly proclaiming the truth.

When a man was admitted a warrior, he was allowed to wear the white shield, the javelin, and the crest or comb on his cap. This we find constantly throughout the MSS., but there are some very telling instances of it in the *Cædmon* at the Bodleian. In the representation of the march before the building of Babel, we have the combed cap and the war spear as well; but, before wearing the eagle's wings of the Odin period in a warrior's life, the comb was the distinctive mark. After the introduction of Christianity the eagle's wings, being special badges of the services of Odin, were, of course, discontinued, therefore we do not meet with them in the religious Christian pictures; while the comb from being a part of the very make of the cap, and only a sign of the warlike character, was retained. Now in German, when a man is referred to as habitually performing some trade or office, or as being connected with some special function, the suffix *er* is added, as in English. Thus he who habitually bakes is a baker, he who wears a lance in English is a lancer, and he who wore the *Kamb* would be the *Kamber*. But in such combinations it often happens that the root vowel is broken, or changed into a compound with *e*. Thus, from the verb *backen* we get the substantive *Bäcker*, etc. On this principle, the *Kamber*, as one who wore the comb, or "crested himself," would become *Kämber*, which, according

to the law of Scandinavian pronunciation, would be called *Chember*, while in German proper it would remain *Kämber*. That this word was applied by themselves to denote a combed warrior is clear, from the fact that *cempe* is such a warrior in Anglo-Saxon, with the *c* or *k* pronounced as *ch* before the *e*, and giving us our *champ* in *champion*. In German, to this day, a fight is a *Kampf*, and a warrior a *Kämpfer*. In Swedish, a warrior is called by the same word as in Anglo-Saxon, which is written in Swedish *Kämp*, and pronounced *chempy*. How the Teutons could have been driven to Latin, with which language they were unacquainted, to find a name for their favourite heroes, has always been a puzzle to me. Why had they no word of their own? But our philologists, one and all, *will*, in consequence of the false direction of our studies in early youth, run their heads against *Latin*. "Oh! the Romans had a word remotely like it", is the usual line of argument, 'and, therefore, it *must* come from that." If this word were Latin, why did the Romans not recognize it as easily as our philologists? They did not recognize it, and called the Scandinavians the *Kimbri*, where the broken vowel was run into an *i*, and the usual Latin plural form given, thus adding a new word to the Latin vocabulary. In the face of the evidence of the use of the cock's-comb as a crest—in the face of the philological facts which I have pointed out, with the regular formation from *Kämber* and *Kämpfer* into *Kämp*, *cempe*, and *champion* (*on*), I cannot understand the system which would insist on a series of false deductions merely to please the ear of the learned (?) by a little Latin, or from a fear of losing sight of a chance of hanging on to the skirts of immortal Rome

(dead for ever), even by so distant a quibble as deducing *champion* from *campus*.

Whether the instrument for cleaning the hair was named after the crest of the bird of Odin, or rather of Baldur, or not, has not been fully entered into. But it would seem more probable that the manufactured article should be named after something already existing in nature, than that a familiar object should remain without a name until somebody invented something that resembled it a little, to which manufactured something a name was given, while the living object in nature remained without. This is contrary to all procedure of the kind, and I do not think the case so wonderfully exceptional as to claim exemption from so palpable a rule. The cock wore a comb before man used the implement, and the evidence is certainly in favour of its being known to man by a name; and that this name should be given to the instrument that contributes so much to the pride and adornment of the head is not surprising, while the copying of the adornment of the war-bird by the war-man is patent.

The smaller horns of the domestic ox, the ram, and the goat, furnished many articles for domestic use, as well as for war. There is a strong argument in favour of the assertion that bows were originally made of the horns of the Aurochs, in the curious and horn-like shape of the Saxon bow. Horns were connected in the centre by a handle of wood or bronze to form this bow, and were elastic enough to send forth the arrow on its errand of death. Those old bowmen must have had tremendous muscles to have pulled them as they did. We find bows so depicted in MSS. of the ninth century; and the regular

Anglo-Saxon expression, *horn-bog*, seems fully to bear us out in concluding that they were really of horn, which was elastic enough for the purpose. The notches of the later Anglo-Saxon bow were, as ours are now, of horn, and they were carved into the likeness of a dragon's head and tail. The representations from various MSS. given by Strutt in his *Sports and Pastimes of the English*, are extremely valuable to those who have not had the opportunity of consulting the MSS. themselves. Here they will find the Anglo-Saxon bow represented as I have pointed out; while the long straight bow of wood, such as we use now, occurs after the Norman times.

The hilts of swords were chiefly of wood, while those of knives and seaxes were probably of horn. The chessmen used by our forefathers were of bone, ivory, or horn. There are some interesting specimens of these in the Anglo-Saxon room in the British Museum. They were taken from the tumulus at Taplow, whence the drinking horns and other gems of the olden time have been recovered.

The consideration of the use made of the horn in Anglo-Saxon times, brings us to the most touching, most interesting, and most national figure in the whole course of our history; and yet he is one whom we affect almost to ignore, inasmuch as we generally commence our Histories of England (?) with the fall of the English before the Norman invader, whom we set up for the first of the English kings, wiping out our own true and real history altogether, in favour of the doings of the adventurer, William the First. Other nations are proud of such monarchs as have been distinguished by the

appellation of Great. Russia is proud of her Peter, the Prussians of their Frederick, the Franks of their Charles; but we shut our Great Alfred out in the cold by beginning history with the Normans, whose appearance there is a blot on the scutcheon. I hope to live to see the history of the English fully written, quite independent of the personal squabbles of our successful enemies.

Alfred was really great. He was a great conqueror, because he obtained a conquest over himself, the most difficult victory that man can gain, more especially if the man happen to be a king.

In order to render himself as useful as possible to his people, this great king saw that his time must be divided into equal portions, and these portions of time allotted to special purposes in the welfare of the nation. Nuemburg had not yet invented watches; other methods of marking the flight of time were defective; and on this interesting subject I can do no better than quote the words of the best biographer of Alfred, the learned Dr. Reinhold Pauli. He says:—

“Our attention is now particularly directed towards the minor inventions which were produced in his day, and amongst them to the contrivance for measuring time, discovered by Alfred himself. His biographer (Asser) describes this invention. Only by the help of strict punctuality could the great ruler have succeeded in the accomplishment of such extensive and various duties. But the blue sky with its planets did not indicate the time to him with any regularity. In his country there were

many gloomy clouds and constant showers, which often prevented the calculation of time from the sun and moon. Alfred's inventive genius, however, discovered a remedy for such perplexities. He caused his chaplains, whose names we know were Athelstán and Werewolf, to supply him with sufficient wax to weigh down seventy-two pence in the scales. From this quantity he ordered six candles to be made, each of equal weight and twelve inches long, with twelve divisions marked in each inch. These six candles burnt for twenty-four hours, day and night, before the relics of the saints which always accompanied him on his journeys. But here, too, the weather seems to have interfered with his schemes. The boisterous wind, which often blew without intermission day and night, penetrated the slight doors and windows of the churches, and through the crevices in the walls and planks, and the thin canvas of the tents. The light either became extinguished, leaving the king in darkness, or it burnt the candle down quicker than usual, so as to prevent the observance of the astronomical point with which to begin the daily reckoning. Alfred removed this obstacle in the following manner: he had a lantern carefully made of wood and thin plates of horn; the horn was white, and scraped so thin as to be scarcely less transparent than a vessel of glass. The door of the lantern was also made of horn, and closed so firmly that no breath of wind could enter. In this secure receptacle he could now place his candles without fear of injury; when they burned down they were replaced by others; and without a water-clock, or any other more ingenious contrivance still undiscovered,

he computed the time which to him was so exceedingly precious.”\*

I quote this from Thorpe’s translation of Pauli’s work, not having the original by me. But this translation is defective in many parts, and I regret not being able to give you the original; I must specially note as an error the subdivision of each *inch* into twelve parts, for which I can find no authority in the annals. I will lay before you a portion of the version by Dr. Giles of Asser’s life of Alfred. I quote from the odd collection of tracts published by Dr. Giles in 1863. They were collected in 1849, on the occasion of a festival at Wantage to celebrate the thousandth year since the birth of King Alfred the Great, when the jubilee edition of the works of the king was published in English; and this tract, contributed by Dr. Giles, contains what he called a “Harmony of the Chroniclers, from A.D. 849 to 901”. In this tract he places, in parallel columns, the accounts of Alfred given respectively by the Saxon Chronicle, Asser, Ethelwerd, Florence of Worcester, Henry of Huntingdon, and Simeon of Durham. I give you only that portion of Asser which refers to the invention of the lanterns:—

“ . . . Moreover, he promised, as far as his infirmity and his means would allow, to give up to God the half of his services, bodily and mental, by night and by day, voluntarily and with all his might; but, inasmuch as he could not equally distinguish the length of the hours by night, on account of the darkness, and oft-times of the day,

\* *The Life of Alfred the Great*, translated from the German of Dr. R. Pauli, by B. Thorpe, Esq. London: Bell and Daldy, York Street, Covent Garden, 1873; pages 194, 195.

on account of the storms and clouds, he began to consider by what means and without any difficulty, relying on the mercy of God, he might discharge the promised tenor of his vow until his death. After long reflection on these things, he at length, by a useful and shrewd invention, commanded his chaplains to supply wax in a sufficient quality, and he caused it to be weighed in such a manner that when there was so much of it in the scales as would equal the weight of seventy-two pence, he caused the chaplains to make six candles thereof, each of equal length, so that each candle might have twelve divisions marked longitudinally upon it. By this plan, therefore, those six candles burned for twenty-four hours, a night and a day, without fail, before the sacred relics of many of God's elect, which always accompanied him wherever he went; but sometimes when they would not continue burning a whole day and night till the same hour that they were lighted the preceding evening, from the violence of the wind, which blew night and day without intermission through the doors and windows of the churches, the fissures of the divisions, the plankings of the wall, or the thin canvas of the tents, they then unavoidably burned out, and finished their course before the appointed time; the king, therefore, considered by what means he might shut out the wind, and so, by a useful and cunning invention, he ordered a lantern to be beautifully constructed of wood and white horn, which, when skilfully *planed* till it is thin, is no less transparent than a vessel of glass. This lantern, therefore, was wonderfully made of wood and horn, as we before said, and by night a candle was put into it, which shone as brightly without as within, and was not extinguished by



the wind, for the opening of the lantern was also closed up, according to the king's command, by a door of horn. By this contrivance, then, six candles, lighted in succession, lasted four and twenty hours, neither more nor less, and when these were extinguished others were lighted."\*

The account given by Asser of the sub-divisions on the candles is clear enough, and does not warrant the further refinements of the learned German. I have carefully compared the passage in the *Memorials* with Asser's *Life of Alfred*, and find it correct, the account of the use of the horn is the same in both. I quote both, because Pauli is an authority, and his view of the subject would always be valuable, as giving the view of the question taken by an impartial, painstaking, and very learned author. He calls Alfred a *German*, and says that he translated the works of certain Latin authors (Boethius and Orosius) into *German*! This seems strange to us, but is meant in sober earnest by the honest writer himself.

The attribution of the invention of horn-books to the Anglo-Saxons seems to have been an error. I am not aware of any mention of their existence at an earlier period than the sixteenth century, if so early. I have most carefully consulted all the authorities within my reach on the subject; and finding no notice of this ingenious contrivance either in the vocabularies or in the notices of the requirements for schools, etc., I have come to the conclusion, upon this negative evidence, that the thing

\* *Memorials of King Alfred*, by various authors, edited, and in part written by, the Rev. Dr. Giles. London: J. Russell Smith, 36, Soho Square, 1863.

so called was unknown to our more remote ancestors. The horn-book was in use in the last century in village schools all over the country. It consisted of a small square frame with a handle, somewhat as though intended to contain a mirror, but instead of that a slice or small sheet of horn was enclosed therein, on which the letters of the alphabet were engraved. The book thus presented to the juvenile rustic was approximately indestructible, and seems to have been a very great favourite with the rising generation of the last century. I have seen a handle, and also some portions of the frame of this instrument, in the museum of my old and respected friend Mr. Henry Syer Cuming, who has been so many years before the public as a most accurate and painstaking antiquary.

The horn-book is now extinct, and I believe that there are few persons living who have seen one out of a museum. It would be most interesting to have some positive information about them, as I have only been able to gather circumstantial evidence as to their *not* having existed at more remote times.

Besides the relics from Taplow, which are priceless gems to us, there are many objects of a later date preserved in the British Museum which would well repay the student of archæology to study. There are chessmen of a much later period than these exhibited in the Anglo-Saxon room, but as my work at present is confined to the consideration of such antiquities as date back to the Anglo-Saxon period, I must content myself, in this place, with thus briefly directing your attention to those other interesting speci-

mens of English art which you may examine at any time in this superb Museum.

The chessmen here preserved are not of such varied character as we might have expected. They seem to have been uniform in size, and to have had the specific distinction of each piece depicted on the upper surface; and it is a curious fact that the name *tæfelstán* was applied both to chessmen and dice, both being used for gaming. *Att tæfla* is used throughout Scandinavia for throwing dice; but to play at *tæfel* in England seems to have indicated a game somewhat similar to backgammon, and to have included dicing in general, draughts, and chess. The word backgammon is in all probability *bog-gamen* in a corrupted form, *bog* being a common expression for horn; and the dice, draughts, and chessmen being all of horn, the expression *bog-gamen* would mean the play or amusement (*gamen*) carried on with horn pieces. All sorts of theories have been started to explain this word, Professor Skeat even sanctioning the hybrid *bokk-gamen*, where *bokk* or *bakk* is a comparatively recent Danish word, meaning a tray (from *bak*, a back or side, the tray being furnished with sides), and the Anglo-Saxon *gamen*, an enjoyment, play, or game. Others have suggested a Welsh origin for an English game, which is very properly ridiculed by Skeat. I believe my solution to be the true one. That the earlier chessmen were only cylindrical pieces of horn or bone, may be seen from the name of the king in chess being *cynning-stán*. The pawn was called *peorth*.

It may not be generally known to my audience that among the various companies of the City of London there is one known as the Horners' Company. I was unaware

of its existence until my friend Mr. H. Syer Cuming called my attention to it some two years ago. Acting in the spirit of the age evoked by the late Prince Consort, the Horners got up an "Exhibition", and to this Exhibition Mr. Cuming contributed largely from his museum. And it is surprising to find how many things the Horners *do* make; but the greater number of objects exhibited were of too recent a date to permit of my dwelling at length on them. Among the articles exhibited were several ink-horns, which are well known to have been in use at very early periods. They were either fastened to the dress, and so carried with the scribe, or they were fixed to the "pult", or desk of the writer. Other objects were powder-horns, and such modern implements as could not be taken into consideration in the present Lecture.

Among the literary compositions of the Anglo-Saxons, riddles held a very prominent position. Many of them are extremely ingenious, and one of them, from Cynewulf's collection, is so appropriate to our subject that I cannot forbear presenting it to you in the form given in the excellent work on *Early English Literature*, by the learned Professor Ten-Brink:—

"I was an armed warrior. Now a proud one,  
 A young hero, decks me with gold and silver,  
 And with crooked wire bows. Men sometimes kiss me,  
 Sometimes I call to battle the willing comrades;  
 Now a steed doth bear me over the boundaries,  
 Now a sea courser carries me, bright with jewels,  
 Over the floods. And now there fills my bosom  
 A maiden adorned with rings; or I may be robbed  
 Of my gems, and hard and headless lie; or hang  
 Prettily on the wall where warriors drink,  
 Trimmed with trappings. Sometimes, as an ornament brave,  
 Folk-warriors wear me on horseback; wind

From the bosom of a man must I in gold hues bright  
Swallow then. Sometimes to the wine  
I invite with my voice the valiant men ;  
Or it rescues the stolen from the robbers' grasp,  
Drives away enemies. Ask what my name is."\*

I need not offer you the solution of this enigma.

I regret that the space of time allotted to one Lecture, and the special period to which I have to confine myself, will not permit of my touching upon the myths of the horn among other ancient people. I may, however, be pardoned for adding, in conclusion, that they all point to the symbolization of *power* by the horn; whether for good or ill, depending always on the accessories, or rather upon the circumstances under which it is mentioned; and bearing this in mind, it seems singularly appropriate that the chief use made of the horn by our ancestors was either to refresh the warrior by copious draughts, and urge him on to fresh exertions of power, or to summon him to the play of Hilda, on the Wealstead of Odin, where the might of his arm should justify his claim to be one of Valfather's champions in Valhalla, the military heaven of our brave ancestors.

\* *Early English Literature* (to Wiclif), by Bernhard Ten-Brink. Translated by Horace M. Kennedy. London, 1883, p. 64.



LECTURE V.

THE CASKET.





## LECTURE V.

### THE CASKET.

THE subject of to-day's Lecture is one of which I have often spoken in the present course, as the invaluable gift to the nation of Mr. Franks, the gentleman under whose direction this division of the National Collection is placed. But there are many other objects in the British Museum our possession of which is due to the public spirit of the same gentleman.

The casket in question stands upon a support at the left-hand side of the door of communication between the Anglo-Saxon Room and the Roman-British Room. It is very properly placed under a glass case, being entitled to special honour and special care. And I believe we may be enabled to get out of this wonderful little empty box materials for thought, illustrative of our noble history, of as great value to us as any book that was ever written, and certainly of much more value than one in a thousand of the works now crowding the shelves of our publishers.

At the first glance, the casket is seen to be of horn or bone, and is, in fact, bone of the whale, not to be confounded with *baleen* or *baleine*, the whalebone of commerce, which is in fact not *bone* at all. A casket of the Anglo-Saxon times, as those would say who are loth to allow our ancestry to be so purely and so really English

as they were. But we, who are not ashamed of the brave old men who won this country for us, will agree to call it a fine old English box.

The three sides exposed to the view of the public are carved with very spirited figures, and with right many of them. On the top there is a similar carving, but at the back there is none. On the upper portion of each side there is a Runic inscription of the class which I have before designated as being of the Northumbrian type. The subjects represented by the carvings are very varied in character, being of classical, scriptural, and Scandinavian origin; and from these curious specimens of early English art many lessons are to be learnt of the time when it was made. The front face represents the mythological story of Romulus and Remus, and their miraculous preservation by the wolf, to the better comprehension of which we are largely indebted to the Runic inscription, which runs as follows:—OTHLEUN NEG ROMWALUS AND REUMWALUS TWÆGNI GIBROTHÆRÆ FÆDDÆ HLE WYLIF IN ROMES-CÆSTRI. This may be rendered: "Rom-wal-us and Reum-wal-us (two) twin brothers lay out (were exposed) near together, fed them a wolf in Rome's town." The wolf is clearly shown, but it requires some skill to make out the figures of the young gentlemen so charitably entertained by the animal whose general habits are so at variance with the hospitality attributed to it in the story. But I have to call your attention to a very remarkable piece of philology in the inscription, which is one of the most singular that has hitherto come under my notice. Of course the names of the founders of our ancient enemy, Rome, were, according to the myth, Romulus and Remus. Whence, then,

the extraordinary forms under which they appear—Rom-wal-us and Reum-wal-us? It is certainly not the result of phonetic causes. There is no reason whatever to suppose that the words sounded so oddly to the English ear as to induce so great a change as the interpolation of a syllable. I fear we have to charge our forefathers with the vice of punning. In previous Lectures I have shown that other vices of theirs have come down to us as well as (I hope) some virtues; but to trace the vice in question up to the Anglo-Saxon times may, perhaps, be an argument against my theory of the greater respect in which we ought to hold our direct ancestors.

The employment of the aspirate before the *w* has gone out in the southern part of the island; in writing, however, we see something of the history of the word, the *h* being still retained behind the *w*, or after it, protesting, as it were, against entire rejection, although it has gone out of the sound. But in the North, where southern or Romance influences have not been able to make themselves felt so much as on the south and east coasts, we hear the *h* in *who* and *what*, words which are in that part of England which we now call Scotland, pronounced as they are written in the Anglo-Saxon *hwa* and *hwæt*. *Whale* has undergone this change; and in the two words before us the inveterate punster has, in view of the substance in which he was working being *hwæl bân*, introduced the word *whale* in the classic names of Romulus and Remus, making the vile puns thus consecrated by time, *Romwhaleus* and *Remwhalus*. Mr. Franks, in a letter to me on the subject of the Casket, differs from me in this view of the reason for the insertion of the

syllable, and he informs me that Remulus, instead of Remus, occurs on an Italian ivory diptych, referred to the ninth or tenth century by Professor Westwood, where we find *Romulus et Remulus a lupá nutriti*. He further directs my attention to the circumstance that in the inscription on the casket the word used for whale is the more archæic *hron*, not *hwæl*. But if I be right in my conjecture as to the age of the relic, there would be no objection to the introduction of the syllable *hwæl*, supposing the artist to have been working in the tenth century, and to have assumed the archæic *hron* to suit the Runic character of the inscription. The Italian carving is evidence as to the employment of an intercalary vowel about the date to which I refer the casket, but this does not prove that the *wal* was not used with an *arrière pensée* regarding the *hwæl*.

But for the hypothesis that this was intended as a joke cut on the whale and in his bone, we should be presented with a picture in each Runic name of the decided unfitness of our Scandinavian tongue to receive impressions from a Roman source! The casket is no everyday box, but a dainty receptacle for some choice thing, very precious indeed to be deemed worthy of so grand a case. It is not the haphazard work of a journeyman, but the elaborate production of a master, so that no mere blunder is conceivable. The introduction of the syllable *wal* into both names is a most curious thing either way: as a joke its antiquity makes it respectable; and if it be a blunder, the lesson of the non-adaptability of Roman words to our speech is singularly perfect. Without the whale theory there is no appropriateness in the

representation of the Roman twins on the whalebone casket; with it, the whole thing is clear—it is either witty or not specially appropriate.

The second scene in the casket has nothing in it which seems so “very like a whale” in its allusions. The picture represents the attack on Jerusalem by Titus; a “vision of judgment” further explained by the word DOM or *Doom* = judgment, and a man carried off to prison, who is explained by Runic writing to be a GISEL or hostage. There is a theory to which I cannot subscribe, that these two scenes make up in a rebus the name of the maker, but this is not a likely name for an Anglo-Saxon. *Dom-gísel* would not be suggestive of anything which would occur to the Anglo-Saxon mind. *Gísel-dom*, on the contrary, would mean something—or might have meant something if it had ever been used, of which there are no proofs. It would indicate the state of hostage-ship, or the being a hostage; but there is nothing in the picture beyond the judgment scene and the man going to prison to warrant such a construction. The Runic inscription is very strangely mixed up with ecclesiastical Roman letters. The whole reads;—HER FEGTATH TITUS END GIEUTHEOSU. HIC FUGIANT HIERUSALIM AFITATORES (habitatores). “Here fight Titus and the Jews, here fly the inhabitants of Jerusalem.” The only connection that I can make out in this wonderful work of art between the whale and the picture is this:—In the early Christian time everything in the natural world was viewed as an allegory of some divine teaching. The tendency to symbolisation was very strong among the Scandinavians in their pagan state, hence the use of so many expressions in the hymns of the *Edda*, which, though apparently

referring to external nature, were meant to be the vehicles of higher teachings: just as in the Holy Word we have many terms which must be meant to apply to other and higher regions than those of mud and stone. Among the figures greatly relished by our mysticism-loving, abstract-seeking parents was the whale as the emblem of imprisonment, of hell—consequently of judgment and captivity. In the extraordinary poem on “The Whale” in the *Codex Exoniensis*, we are told that “an agreeable odour proceeds out of its mouth which attracts other fish, who enter his jaws confidently and with delight, but when there are sufficient little fish, the huge jaws are closed, escape is impossible, and the little fish are swallowed. This represents how unthinking man, deceived by the apparently sweet odour of vice, is drawn into the mouth of hell, which is closed upon him and his doom and punishment.” We are also informed in the same poem, that “the whale lies like a big island in the sea, men come in their ship thinking it must be a pleasant little spot to rest on, they fasten the ship to the fancied island, descend to the back of the whale, light their fire, and are happy in their fancied security. But the monster sees that they are all in his power, and dives down to the depths, taking with him ship and men. So with youth, who leave the secure ship of good life, and are tempted by the seeming security of worldly delights or pleasures produced by delusive arts, to abide amongst them. The day comes when they are (too late) undeceived, and drawn down to endless darkness.” It is to be remarked that there is no sympathy with the whale when the fire is lighted, which is evidently aggressive on man’s part, to say nothing of being productive of per-

sonal discomfort to our cetaceous friend. In both these parallels the whale is identified with doom and punishment; while in a later age the story of Jonah was always full of meaning, having reference to imprisonment, etc. In the illuminations to the Cædmon MS., the mouth of hell is represented by the open jaws of the whale. Unless the connection between *Dóm Gísel*, or *Gísel Dóm*, or *Gísel* and *Dóm*, be something of this kind, I cannot see what relation can exist between the picture before us and the whale.

In the next tableau we find the connection readily enough by means of the inscription, but the actual nature of the connection is obscure. We are introduced to scriptural subjects—the presentation of the head of John the Baptist to Herodias and her daughter, and the adoration of the *Magi*. At the first aspect, nothing in common between the whale and these subjects is discernible, but here the Runes step in with a little light. We read them thus: “HRONÆS BÁN FISC FLODU, AHOF ON FERGEN BERIG, WARTH GASRIG GRORN THÆR HE ON GREUT GISWON.” To make sense of these words, we have to substitute in the words GASRIC, GRORN, and FERGEN the letter H for the letter G, giving us HASRIC, HRORN, and FERHAN. The allusion to the whale comes out in the following manner: “The whale’s bone from the fish-flood I raised to the living hill. His dun reign was cast down when he swam on the sands.” In these words are traces, if I read aright, of very exalted abstract thought, affording an instance of a species of poetry of which we may well be proud. The whale was thrown ashore on the Northumbrian coast, therefore the language of the inscriptions is the Northumbrian dialect. The

head was severed from the body, and was exalted or raised to a "living height" or the "soul's hill", by being made the vehicle of scriptural instruction. The livid or dun colour of the animal is meant by the words "his dun reign", which is a condensed way of stating the idea of the sway of a dun or sad-coloured monster; and this marine tyranny is at an end when he flounders ashore. The "raising" him, or "setting him on the hill of the soul", is a very Anglo-Saxon way of saying that he (the whale) was made the vehicle of scriptural teachings. It is just the kind of high-souled periphrasis in which our more remote Northern sires would indulge, especially when speaking of anything connected with Holy Writ.

Another reading translates "FERGEN BERIG"—Fergen Hill. This, of course, if there be such a place, would upset the prettiest part of my theory; and although by no means obstinate in contending for it, I have certain elements on my side which tend greatly to assure me that I am right. In the first place, the G in the words GASRIC GRORN has to be changed into H to get the midland words HASRIC HRORN, or rather HROREN, to appear. Applying the same system to FERGEN, we have FERHEN=soul or life. I am very much inclined to the abstract theory, because of its being so in keeping with the peculiar mode of thought common to our ancestors. Swimming on the gravel, is a charming way of putting the idea of getting aground.

There is another curious element to consider, which is that the whale was decapitated for the sake of his *bán*. This would be quite enough to justify the early English religious man in making a parallel between the beheading



of St. John and the decapitation of the whale. The *elevation* of the head under these circumstances would be readily understood. No irreverence would be seen in such a parallel: most extraordinary figures are common among the early religious writers, and this would seem specially appropriate.

The adoration of the *Magi* is clearly pointed out by the word MÆGI, carved over the group.

On the cover is the representation of a warrior in a house which is attacked by other warriors in Anglo-Saxon armour, and armed with Anglo-Saxon (or rather English) weapons. The name of the warrior is ÆGIL or *Egil*, and the Palæographical Society takes notice of the scene as referring to the warrior named *Egil*. Now the *Egil's Saga* is a terribly long story, relating to events occurring in the ninth and tenth centuries, so that the actual date of the manufacture of the casket must be quite late in the tenth or the beginning of the eleventh century, which would agree with the representation of the arms and armour. The helmet of the warrior attacking *Egil* is such as we meet with in the Norman times, while the representation of chain mail by large contiguous rings is quite a feature of the eleventh century.

To give you the *Egil's Saga* even in abstract I find quite impossible. The story itself occupies a thick quarto volume. *Egil* is identified with English history by a visit which he paid to King Athelstán, during which he became famous for valorous deeds. But the scene on the casket represents his being besieged in a house on an island to which he had escaped from his enemies; but he was taken and bound to a log of wood hands and feet, and left in the

house while his captors find means for conveying him to the court of Harold Hárfagra. By his extreme strength he contrives to get free from the log, and with it to force a hole in the floor, because he heard human voices below. These turn out to be the voices of a Dane and his two sons, imprisoned. They have been cast into a cellar below and cannot escape, but Egil releases them; and here the *saga* is a little indistinct, but I gather that they promise to protect him from his foes while he goes into a loft. The casket shows him with the log in his hand in the *loft*, and the Bowman is the Dane. The attacking warriors are most instructive as to dress and arms, but they are all much later than the date assigned; the events recorded in the *saga* are conscientiously dated 881 to 951, therefore the casket, if representing a scene in that legend, cannot be older than the tenth century. Mr. Franks is of opinion that the whole thing is much more ancient, and that the Egil named on the Casket is not the Scandinavian Egil but a German hero, little known, called Egil the Archer, brother of Wayland Smith,\* and the fore-runner of William Tell. The same gentleman is inclined, with Mr. Haigh, to refer the casket to the eighth century; but, however reluctant I am to venture to differ from such authorities as these gentlemen undoubtedly are, the evidence in this instance of the dress and armour, together with what I gather from the original text of the Icelandic *Saga*, seems to point to the later period as the true date of this interesting relic. The manner in which the bow is held by the Bowman shows a curious mode of holding the weapon, differing from any other with

\* See *Older England*, first series, page 13.

which I am acquainted. The ordinary belief is that the Saxons drew the bow to the breast, while the Normans drew theirs to the ear, whereby they obtained such immense superiority. This warrior draws his to the hip, which is perfectly new to me. The bow is more Danish than Anglo-Saxon.

The value of these figures is incalculable to us in view of the information to be gained as to dress and habits. In the group where the presentation of the head of St. John the Baptist is shown, we see the wimple of the Anglo-Saxon ladies beautifully rendered. The man who is bringing the head wears almost a Highland dress. This is similar to those shown in the *Cædmon MS.*; and on showing the pictures in that MS. to the Colonel of a Highland regiment, he at once identified the "kilt". Doubtless the kilt was an adaptation of the *Roc* or *Pad* of the English, and was, with the broadsword, adopted by the Gael. The cap worn by this person is extremely like the Highland bonnet, for which it unquestionably supplied the hint. He bears a curious instrument, supposed to be a pair of forceps, by which he holds the head. The chief female figure holds a drinking vessel, and the second has a bottle of wine in her pouch from which it has been filled. It is now offered to the man as a reward for his pains. The women both wear the gunna, or long gown, in which their forms are scrupulously draped, as in all representations of Saxon women (excepting the Eve in *Cædmon*, who could not very well be represented draped before the Fall, and she, from the unwonted nature of the drawing, is, I am bound to say, a failure in an artistic point of view). All the female figures on the casket are

draped. In the tableau of the presentation of the head of John, we find a number of fowls allured by proffered food to come in and be prepared for the table, indicating that it is the occasion of a grand feast. The minute carvings are carefully executed, and we are struck by the peculiarity that the whole picture is in outline elevation, in every instance. There is no foreshortening, no attempt at anything beyond this outline drawing in elevation, which imparts an odd and very unfamiliar appearance to the whole. The dresses in this compartment of the casket are civil, and show that our fathers wore a picturesque dress which has been continued by an adverse race, the Gaelic Highlanders, down to the present day, and now forms the most striking, most national, and most admired dress of some of the most celebrated regiments of our own or any other service.

The armour in the Egil's compartment is chain. This is conscientiously represented by rings placed in such a manner as to show that they are whole and round. The number of rings and the small scale of the carving may account for the interior of the rings not being excavated, which gives them the appearance of circular plates sewn on to some under garment, as Meyrick thought was done with the rings by the Normans in their armour. This I have shown to be an error, in a paper published in *The Antiquary*, in March 1882. The shield is the Anglo-Saxon shield, which I have had the pleasure of describing to you on a former occasion. The helmet is that of which I spoke as being a leathern cap, surrounded by metal rings and guarded by half hoops resting on the lower band, and intersecting each other at the apex over the crown of the head. The

gentleman in the tower exhibits a fine specimen of the helmet, but the helmet of the attacking warrior is of the tenth or beginning of the eleventh century. I have seen such in representations of armour as late as Henry the First.

The nasal was originally nothing more than the elongation of one of the hoops over the head, allowed to project in the manner of the nasal in the Oriental helmet which is met with in various parts of India at the present day. And so unchanged in form do these Oriental helmets remain, that what was armour for Bajazet might do for Runjeet Sing. That no Anglo-Saxon helmets have come down to us is easily explained by the very nature of the materials of which they were made. The leather would soon disappear, nor would the iron rings remain long after; although the steel sword, having been perhaps protected in the first stage of decay by the scabbard, has remained. Whatever the cause may have been, such is the effect, and we have neither "Helm nor Hauberk's twisted mail" among the secrets of the tomb.

On the fourth side nothing remains but the word DREGETH, and a portion of a word SWI....., probably swithlice, meaning "endureth exceedingly". Of course, it is vain to conjecture what the carving might have been, or what the whole inscription was.

The arches of the building in the Adoration of the Magi are of the same shape as those in most of the Anglo-Saxon MSS., and they indicate a special school remarkable for its massive simplicity. The round form of the Saxon type is plainly shown, and the peculiar want of proportion between the figures and the buildings found in all Saxon

remains is worthy of somewhat more than a hasty notice, as it is in harmony with what has been said already touching Anglo-Saxon art.

The fact is, our ancestors were extremely conscientious, and contrived to show all that was requisite in a picture or carving, and not only that, but also many details which a modern artist would never dare to introduce. Thus, in many of the interesting pictures in *Cædmon* we are presented with the side view of a trough-like bedstead, and the two ends of the same piece of furniture as well. Here the feeling that the existence of the two ends required special notice, overcame the slight difficulty which would prove too tough an obstacle for our degenerate days. Among these very curious illuminations, there is one representing the outside of Noah's Ark, but giving a view of the persons within at the same time. In the case before us we have only want of proportion, and an absence of all knowledge of the art of perspective drawing. With regard to the question of proportion, we are not quite out of the wood yet, for we see every day wonderful instances of drawing in which proportion is utterly disregarded. If a ship be drawn, for instance, the figures looking over the side are generally much too large; so also in the case of a sea-piece where a shipwreck is shown, the same want of proportion is displayed. In such modern instances the glaring inaccuracy is not so apparent as in these ancient works, because it has come to be conventional in the case of the ship, and was probably so in that of the Saxon house.

A curious feature is observable in most Anglo-Saxon drawings, namely, that there is a tendency to produce a

scroll form wherever it is possible. Thus the setting of the arm and shoulder is made to form a scroll, the inner volute of which is the breast. This is very clearly shown in the Cædmon MS., and is the reason for the odd hump-like appearance of the Anglo-Saxon shoulders in the Bayeux tapestry. It must be confessed that this queer tendency is somewhat confusing, and not altogether pleasing.

The tunic or roc is well shown, a garment unmistakably Teutonic, although most nations of antiquity were accustomed to wear a similar kind of dress. Some of my ingenious friends of the Latin school pretend that even this was supplied by that "universal provider", the Roman. But as the form is so simple, it seems most likely to have been common to the Romans and the Teutons, without there being any implication that either one borrowed from the other. How the early Scandinavians *could* have borrowed from a people with whom they had no intercourse remains a puzzle. They certainly borrowed neither arms nor armour from the Romans, and I cannot see why they should have borrowed the tunic or roc.

When worn as an exterior garment, this tunic was called the *roc*, as a coat is to this day in Germany and Scandinavia. The under garment was called the *pad*, whence, of course, our padding, and the verb to pad. The tunic was worn either as *roc* or *pad*, all through the Saxon period, and continued, in fact, to be rather the badge of the Saxon through the Norman times, although in the short reign of William Rufus even the Normans wore both. The subsequent *jack* seems to have been a Norman name for the *pad*. It has come down to us in its diminutive jacket. The tunic was pretty much the same thing as to

its outward form among all classes of the community, though differing in quality, colour, and richness of ornament. The Norman tunic was much longer.

There was a great similarity in Teutonic dress, as well as in the mode of life, among the whole of the Germanic race, but the Anglo-Saxons, or rather early English, possessed certain peculiarities which distinguish them from the rest of the family; the most singular of these being the forked beard, the delicately pointed shoe, and the short mantle, worn so as to leave the sword-arm free.

I need not tell my archaeological friends that in the Middle Ages it was the custom to represent characters of more remote antiquity in the dress of the period of the artist, so that we can identify the date of an illumination or a carving, not by the subject illustrated (although that has certain negative functions too), but by the dress and surroundings represented. Thus, the representation of a scriptural or classical event produced by an artist of the twelfth century, for instance, would be utterly worthless as an authority on Hebrew or Roman or Greek dress, armour, arms, furniture, or architecture. But it would be invaluable as a guide to the dress, arms, and other matters of the period in which it was executed. Of course it could be no guide for a later period, as the limner could by no means illustrate by anticipation. The Saxon artist could not have depicted a locomotive steam-engine or an umbrella, any more than he could have drawn a man in a Roman toga, or in his lorica and helmet. He was limited entirely to his own time, and this should not provoke our mirth, because it is the most fortunate circumstance for us, as we know by that means what the dresses,



habits, and arms of any given epoch were. There was a queer craze in the latter part of the seventeenth century and beginning of the eighteenth, to erect statues to great men, clad in the dress of Roman generals. There used to be, in a square at Bristol, a statue to William the Third, on horseback, dressed like a Roman. This is more absurd than the other extreme, which caused actors, down to the end of the last century, to act the parts of Romans in the court dress of the day! Addison's *Cato* was performed in this way, hence the lines:—

“What shook the stage, and made the people stare?  
Cato's long wig, flowered gown, and powdered hair!”

Our ancestors may surely be pardoned for adhering strictly to the dress with which they were acquainted, inasmuch as it induced them to give us such reliable pictures of themselves as have come down to us in delineations like those on this casket.

It has been objected by very high authority on the subject of art, that the traces left by the Anglo-Saxons are not of the elevated character, viewed from the art-critic standpoint, which prevails in the beautiful forms and exquisite perception of harmony in colour, size, and other elements of formic art which are held up in triumph by the worshippers of classic schools as the acme of perfection. Without desiring to cry up what is voted ugly by really competent judges, or to decry what is evidently and truly beautiful, merely for the sake of argument, I must be pardoned for saying how glad I am to have this testimony to the fact of our ancestors not having been *copyists*. This is a point on which I have repeatedly insisted, and the truth of this part of my doctrine of the

originality of what is Scandinavian English is corroborated by the critics. But the attainment of external beauty in form is not the highest end that man can achieve; and the very disregard of certain known laws and canons of art by our ancestors is a proof that they took a view of the ultimate object of art which was diametrically opposed to that entertained by the nations of what we are taught to call classic antiquity. There are two opinions as to the aim of art and what it ought to be and what its teachings are. The one lays down the principle that art should be studied for her own sake—*Ars est celere artem*; the other, that she should only be regarded as the handmaiden who opens the door to an inner and a higher world. As the consideration of the arts practised by the Anglo-Saxons forms a portion of the present Lecture, I will take this opportunity of giving you the results of my own reading on the really interesting question of the views of art taken by the Anglo-Saxons, or rather by the much more remote early Scandinavians.

The great aim which the earlier inhabitants of the globe had in making pictures of things in the outer world, was not so much to present the spectator with such pictures as he might equally well have made for himself, or did not require, for the originals were before his eyes, as to form, as it were, a hint or memorandum of certain higher teachings of which those external forms were the fitting and congruous exponents, representatives, types, and correspondential forms. Thus, a Brahmin knows that numbers have an interior or mystic signification quite apart from their arithmetical value. He knows that the number *three* has an interior teaching corresponding to

divinity, in which, like the three angles of an equilateral triangle there are three equal essentials, a trinity of qualities or attributes forming one object. Hence the very solemn and sacred respect paid to the triform word *aum*, itself formed from three mighty words implying creative power. The trinity of Brahma Vishnu and Shiva is a trinity of persons, but the Djans is each and all of these at once. There are many mystic triangular forms carved by Brahmins all through India, to give worshippers the idea of God, which are no more meant to be portraits of a divinity than the letters in the English Bible which spelt the Holy Name. The number four is the first square, being produced by the multiplication into itself of the number two, which itself represents the first resolution of Divinity into its primal elements of Love and Wisdom, which are to the Divine what heat and light are to the sun. For as heat and light make one sun, so do love and wisdom make one God. Now these two elements multiplied into each other produce the *perfect* square, representing that the Divinity is love and wisdom in perfection. According to this wonderful system all the objects in the outer world are representative of objects in the inner or higher world of the spirit. Among other things the hand represents power. Bearing the meaning of the number four in mind, and connecting this with the symbolic teaching of the hand, it would be a most natural way of giving the mind a memorandum, so to speak, of what the Deity was as to His perfect or complete power, to represent him with four hands. Hence the little idol, so familiar to all who have travelled in India, was not originally intended to portray a god, but simply to aid the mind, by

fitting emblems, to think of him, not as a quadrumanous monster, but as a being in whom power existed in its entirety. A further emblem gives us an idol with a hundred arms. Can anyone suppose that the abstrusely learned and deeply philosophical Brahmins ever for a moment gave out that this monstrosity was a true picture of what they conceived their god to be? Let anyone read Max Müller's translation of the *Rig Veda* to obtain a conviction that such nonsense was never intended to be taught. But when the mythic meaning of a *hundred*, as equivalent to infinity, is known, we obtain the assertion in the image that He is mighty or powerful *ad infinitum*. Now the monster ceases to become ugly, and we note that the absence of any special art in the representation is in itself a virtue, for no hand could *paint the Deity*—a sort of memorandum of his attributes was all that was attempted, and the less attempt there was to attract the mind to the idol itself, and so divert it from the *εἶδωλον*, the better was the purpose served. Of course you know all about Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva. But I question whether any one present could tell me of the myths of our own race. We are never taught English in our wretched system, and we never hear anything of our own English mythology, so if I tell you something about your own Odin, I am pretty sure to tell you something new.

Odin, as I have before told you in a former Lecture, was the supreme god of the Odinic creed. His names are twelve, because twelve is composed of the Divine Three and the perfect Four multiplied one into the other. He is called the *Allfather*, the Lord and Giver of Life. To him the souls of the valiant were sacred, and were borne

to him in Valhalla-by bright and beaming maidens, whose duty it was to choose them on the field of battle, and bear them to the plains of Valhalla, where they should serve Odin as they had served him on earth, until the system should pass away to be succeeded by a new heaven and a new earth that shall never pass away. Odin is the All-wise and All-seeing Father. His eye is the sun which takes in all things. But there is a wonderful goddess in the under world, called *Mimer*, "Memory", that is to say, the knowledge of what is past and of what is to come, for *prescience is only the perfection of memory*. In all systems the pure waters of a well signify truth in a lower degree, while wine is truth in a still more exalted form; *Mimer* possesses a marvellous *well*. And Odin, requiring also the external or lower forms of truth, although possessing the higher in the form of wine, proposes to *Mimer* that he shall descend and receive a draught from this well. *Mimer* consents, requiring that Odin shall leave his eye with her as a pledge that the draught shall be paid for. So every night the sun descends into the western waves to show mortals that Odin's eye has descended to *Mimer's* well, or that Divine Truth descends and animates external Truth, which it also assimilates: one is inseparable from the other. Thus the external truths of nature become animated, and teach us god-like myths. I think this myth one of the most beautiful in the whole range of comparative mythology. But what has it to do with the casket? We shall see presently.

One of the pictures of Odin is a human eye in a circle of wavy lines, to represent water. This is abstract painting; this is the appeal to the mind beyond matter. But

who, in drawing the eye, the circle, or the lines for water, would think of descending to the details of the drawing? What matter whether the eye were well or ill drawn? We don't want to think of the *eye*; we want to think of *Odin*. And if a man succeeded in a picture so well as to produce so wonderful an eye as had never been seen before, what would be the result? Why! he would defeat the very object of the drawing, and distract the mind from that to which it was to be led up. The mind would rest on the picture and soar to nothing beyond, and instead of worshipping *Odin*, man would begin to worship the eye. Among abstract people, with simple singleness of heart and purpose, the ancient pictures are rough and inartistic. The object is to tell the story—whether myth or saga—not to arrest the gaze and chain down the mind to externals by the very means that should conduct it to the bright home of the spirit. The picture was a ladder leading to a celestial paradise, though in itself of no great value save as a means to ascend. To lavish the whole resources of the mind on the picture, so as to arrest our senses by its beauty, is like chaining a man to a ladder when he is half-way up.

When Greece sunk into sensuality she took this course. Her myths no longer led the soul on high, but first chained it to the ladder and—as a natural consequence—dragged it down to earth! What should have been Divine teaching became the vehicle of ribald tales, too revolting in many cases for delicate ears to hear, and for eyes with any tender regard for decorum to behold. In our own revealed Word of God the old refined system is manifest. External objects are made to become the vehicles of higher teach-

ing; but if we remain in the letter, it "*killeth, but the spirit giveth life.*"

Now I claim for our Anglo-Saxon forebears descent from very abstract-loving ancestors, among whom the pure Theism of India (itself a relic of a higher Revelation to man—a former dispensation of truth) had become arrested and crystallized into the strange myths which have come down to us, bearing as much resemblance to the truths originally taught by them as a cinerary urn does to the human form divine whose ashes it contains.

Our forefathers, then, before they came to Britain, were not clever sculptors like the Greeks. Their eyes did not rest with delight on the human form unveiled. On the contrary, their pictures of Deity referred chiefly to attributes, and were seldom more than the rude carving of the roof-tree into the quaint semblance of always decently draped humanity, acting as a hint that Divinity should be thought of as guarding the place. The Greek and subsequent Roman portrayed, either in marble or on canvas, a form that fettered the thoughts which should have flown heavenwards, and, turning them into earthly channels, flung them at last below the very flesh they copied but too well. Such a line of action was remote from our ancestors, whose representations of our external nature were mere hints, and whose representations of the human frame were just near enough in their semblance to man for the purposes of the poet.

The Scandinavians, therefore, deeply imbued with the feeling that the gem was of greater value than the casket in which it was enshrined, were indifferent to the accuracy of their pictures of external nature so long as a few

rapidly drawn lines were sufficient to recall to them the inner life which they prized so highly.

The classic nations carved, polished, and painted the type, but lost the inner life in admiration of the work of men's hands. The love of the picture superseded the love of the saint, as the worship of the saint had superseded the worship of Him whom the saint had served. These were steps leading constantly downwards from the Eternal to the corruptible and corrupted, from Heaven to Earth, from immaculate purity to revolting vice. A picture should certainly lead man to something higher than the contemplation of the mere lines, curves, angles, colours, and shades presented to his view. If it does no more than present those colours and lines to his eye, it is useless for higher teachings. The letters in a book are not necessarily forms of beauty; if they were, we should waste our time regarding them and losing the soul of the poem. The less they attract us the better, so that we can read without trouble; and this was the reason why our practical ancestors gave their histories in a plain unvarnished tale. The classic nations did the reverse, and in ecclesiastical Rome the love of the *external* pervaded the very Church itself. The spirit which should have given life was killed by too much letter—was crushed under the weight of ceremonial observances—in other words, more attention was bestowed on polishing, carving, and painting the *casket* than was devoted to the priceless gem within.

The arts known to the Scandinavian conquerors of Britain were, of course, such as were adapted to the wants of a simple people, and we must bear in mind what the



peculiar requirements of that people were likely to have been. The first appearance of the Scandinavians calls up ideas of war, ferocity, indomitable pride, and simplicity of manners, amounting almost to savagery. When we come to know them better, we find that their love of war was enthusiastic devotion to their religious tenets; their ferocity, a contempt of death, originating in their sincere conviction of the reality of the life beyond the tomb; their pride was the result of the conviction of their own superiority; and the simplicity of their Spartan-like habits arose from the very nature of their military pursuits. The strict purity of their lives was either the cause or the result of their indulging in no public theatrical amusements, for on the authority of Tacitus we know the lives of the women to have been irreproachable. He says in his *Germania*, ch. xix:—"They live, therefore, fenced around with chastity, corrupted by no seductive spectacles, no convivial incitements . . . Neither beauty, youth, nor riches can procure her (a woman whose conduct has not been what the strictest virtue might require) a husband, for there none looks on vice with a smile, or calls mutual criminality the way of the world. Still more exemplary is the practice of those States, in which none but virgins marry, and the expectations and wishes of a wife are at once brought to a period. Thus they take one husband as one body and one life, that no thought, no desire, may extend beyond him; and he may be loved not only as their husband, but as their marriage. In every house the children grow up thinly and meanly clad, to that bulk of body and limb which we behold with wonder. Every mother nourishes her own children, and never delivers

them into the hands of servants and nurses. No indulgence distinguishes the young master from the slave, till age separates, and valour marks out the free born."

This shows us that all of those external delights which contributed so largely to the fall of Rome were viewed with contempt by, or else were quite unknown to, our remote ancestors. Consequently the military art was the chief object of instruction and of pleasure; while the smith, as the most important contributor to the requirements of the warrior, held the chief place among the *artists* of that remote period. When the Teutonic or Scandinavian tribes left their northern home for Britain, their life was at first nothing more than a continuation in another land of the habits and customs with which they had identified themselves in the North. But with the great good brought to us by the inestimable blessings of Christianity came also some of the vicious customs which raged among the Romans, whether Christian or pagan. With the lessons of peace came also habits of sloth; for when the generations succeeding the warrior pure and simple, found religious excuse in not going to war, they had nothing to do—their occupation was gone, and there is no vice so enervating as idleness. The decay was somewhat hastened by the national vice of intemperance; the old simplicity passed away; and yet there remained in the blood such stuff as won Crecy and Agincourt in the face of fearful odds—such stuff as won Plassey and Waterloo, as crossed the Tscherneya Riayka and took the Heights at Alma under circumstances that would well have excused, nay, sanctioned, defeat. And despite the enervation caused by this climate, after the bracing airs and clear

skies of Scandinavia—despite the demoralizing influence of the Norman usurpation, we have still remained English to the last. The sun may be obscured by fogs, but it will break through at last clear and resplendent still. Our Scandinavian blood is the gem: and the external adornments of speech and life may be taken as the casket preserving it, though hiding it from ruder influences.

But together with this love of the abstract and contempt for the external forms of art, the monks, who practised the arts of illuminating and painting more than any other members of the community, were addicted to extreme gaiety of colour. And although the colours they used were what we might designate “loud”, they were not unpleasing in their effect when used by them.

Writing, if we except the fragments which have here and there turned up in Runic characters, does not seem to have been much in vogue until after the introduction of Christianity; but when the English *did* begin to write they distanced all the other writers of their time in the clearness and beauty of the letters which they formed. Some of the MSS. are clearer than many of our printed books, and there is no modern typography that can compete with them in their illuminated capital letters. The reading public cannot be aware of the beauty of these works of art, or they would certainly pay more attention to them, study them, and make them their own. But men of learning have no time for such things. They cannot stoop to the study of mere English! and so they pass on to the Greek alphabet—and forget their own kith and kin for the sake of the foreign charmer!

Our MSS. ought not to be foreign; we ought to be

proud of those documents which taught our Alfred to love letters and to slave to learn them so as to set his people free from error and ignorance. You have all of you heard the oft-told tale of how the little boy, the future greatest man England ever produced, was really affected by the sight of these grand writings; but as few of you may have had the opportunity of hearing it direct from his contemporary and friend Asser, I will trespass upon you with an extract from Asser's biography of Alfred, giving you the very story told by him only. As he unfortunately wrote in Latin, I give it you in an English translation.

"On a certain day, therefore, his mother was showing him and his brother a Saxon book of poetry, which she held in her hand, and said: 'Whichever of you shall the soonest learn this volume shall have it for his own.' Stimulated by these words, or rather by the Divine inspiration, and allured by the beautifully illuminated letter at the beginning of the volume, he spoke before all his brothers, who, though his seniors in age, were not so in grace, and answered: 'Will you really give that book to one of us, that is to say, to him who can first understand and repeat it to you?' At this his mother smiled with satisfaction, and confirmed what she had before said. Upon which the boy took the book out of her hand, and went to his master to read it, and in due time brought it to his mother and recited it.

"After this he learned the daily course, that is, the celebration of the hours, and afterwards certain psalms and several prayers contained in a certain book which he kept day and night in his bosom, as we ourselves have seen, and carried about with him to assist his prayers

amid all the bustle and business of this present life. But sad to say! he could not gratify his most ardent wish to learn the liberal arts, because, as he said, there were no good readers at that time in all the kingdom of the West Saxons.\*

In this interesting account of our great king, we must take the "mother" referred to as meaning his stepmother Judith, who was brought from France when Alfred was thirteen years old. His own mother died about 856, before he had reached his seventh year. It is singularly appropriate to our purpose, in that it shows us how the MSS. of Anglo-Saxon poetry were in the ninth century so beautifully illuminated as at once to fetter the gaze of the noble boy. He could hardly believe the promise of his stepmother (who was not much more than fourteen years old herself—some historians make her out even younger) when she said that the book should be his who should first *learn* the volume. This shows us that however greatly the art of illuminating might have been cultivated, that of reading Saxon was but little known. And we must note that the lady does not propose to the boys to *learn to read!* No; she suggests learning the book! From the presence of his stepmother the boy goes to find a reader. *The book is read to him*, and he repeats it. This bears out what I have said in this room on other occasions, namely, that one of the great arts of our forefathers was the cultivation of memory, and also that the plastic arts were but aids to memory. As the Rune staff told by hints to the herald the story that he was to tell,

\* From the version in the *Six Old English Chronicles*, published in Bohn's Antiquarian Library, 1882, page 53.

or to the skald the song he was to sing, so the custom of alliteration helped, in a most surprising way, to add rolling impetus to the tide of song. The word wanted came naturally, succeeding the one just used as one wave follows another on the breast of the ocean; and whereas in rime we are sometimes harassed in committing lines to memory by loss of the final word which should rime with its predecessor, alliteration bears the declaimer along, and adds force to his declamation, while rime weakens it! So Alfred learnt the poem. It was read out to him. Then the fine old English of a thousand years ago flowed from the lips of the child who, even in that very effort, commenced the wonderful career which stamped him as the Great! In after years, his chief trouble was to find good readers and good translators, by whose aid he could translate from Latin, so that his people should enjoy the blessings of some fine thoughts and certain knowledge which they wanted; and he found none. Therefore, he set to work, learnt Latin, and translated the books himself. The idea is *very* grand when we consider what his other work was. He had to organise an army to drive an invader from the very heart of the land; to make fresh laws for his people; to revive their courage, which a long course of agriculture and beer had damped; to raise them from the supine condition in which he found them; to clear the church of vice and profligacy; and, more than all, to subdue the inherited tendency to vicious indulgences in his own heart! As the poet says of Scef Scyldine in *Beowulf*—“*Thæt wæs góð cyning.*” “That was a good king.”

And we see in early illuminations, carvings, and care-

fully executed writings the height of true art. Men are attracted, led on from one thing to another, from the external forms to eternal truths. The MS. that charmed our Alfred is a thing which we ought to love and reverence; but failing our knowledge of the precious relic itself, we should be led to respect all such remains of Anglo-Saxon art, for they all are to the Anglo-Saxon mind like this precious casket, showing an English exterior that ought to lead to—what I believe to be a priceless gem—the English heart.

But there are more teachings in this empty box than I can ever call forth. I only give certain hints, and from those hints more able workmen may see how to act. If I may regard myself in the light of the humble nameless reader who at Alfred's wish read Saxon tales to him, inasmuch as I read Saxon tales to you now, I shall indeed be happy. We, in our pride of grand University life, with our Greek and Latin names for things unknown in Alfred's day, are taught to despise our fathers. Let me ask those who can tell: Have we any *right* to despise them? Are we much in advance of Alfred's time? It is a startling question, and I fancy how many would laugh me indignantly to scorn if they heard it! But that is not answering me! The trouble with Alfred was that the learned monks and abbots, and priests and bishops, in the land could not read Saxon. How many priests, bishops, etc., can do so *now*? They can read Latin. Of course they can—they are learned men; but Saxon! Alfred found his Latin-learned priests useless, so he turned everything for the use of his people into Saxon. What does *he* call the language into which he made his transla-

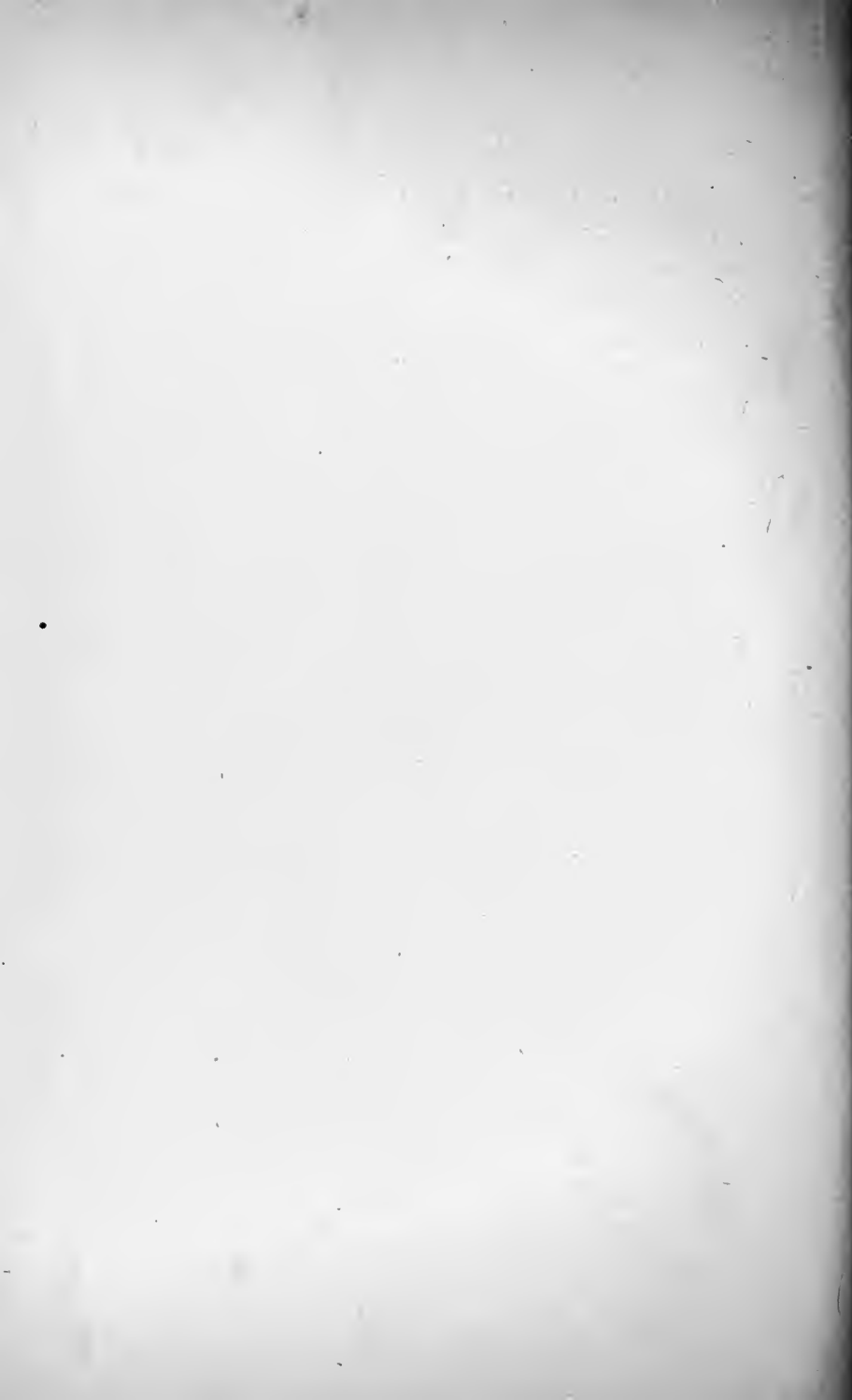
tions? He does not call it Saxon. He says, in his preface to his delightful version of *Boethius*: "*Ælfred Kuning wæs wealstod ðisse bec . and hie of bec Ledene on Englisc wende . swá hio nú is gedón . hwilum he sette word be worde whilum andgit of andgit.*" "King Alfred was the translator of this book, and turned it out of Book Latin into English as is now done. Sometimes he put word for word, sometimes sense for sense." We cannot deny to Alfred the knowledge of what the language is into which he translates; he calls it English, and he ought to have known. But as we try to hustle him out of history, so his glorious speech is neglected on our lips. A second Alfred may look round in this densely populated island, and seek in vain for a reader who shall read to him the writings of the first.

What we have lost by neglecting English may be faintly seen if we take a lesson from the past, and mark the sorrows of the best and greatest man that ever filled a throne, caused by that ignorance of our own tongue which has not been cured in a thousand years!

In conclusion, I may ask you to call the attention of your friends and acquaintances to this valuable gift of Mr. Franks. It is little known outside these walls, save in the meeting rooms of archæological societies; but it should be studied with intelligent love, and instead of being empty, we shall find it very full indeed of the life of our own race. I do not like classical allusions—they are in fact not only out of my line, but using them tells rather against me. Still, there was a box which was thought by classic writers to have been emptied, but Hope



remained behind; and so *I* hope that this little casket and the greater one in which it is confined, the British Museum itself, may become better known, and found to contain not only Pandora's legacy, but present treasure of incalculable value.



LECTURE VI.

THE COIN.



## LECTURE VI.

### THE COIN.

FEW articles of general utility are so well known to a nation as its current coin, and few things pass into oblivion more readily. When the bronze coinage of this country was issued some quarter of a century back, large copper penny pieces were still in existence which had been coined when George the Third first came to the throne. The halfpenny was nearly as big as the penny, and the farthing as the halfpenny of these "degenerate" days. Coppers were "coppers" then, and not "bronzes". Which are ugliest it is difficult to say; but already the older coin, even of the sailor king William IV, is a curiosity now. Crown pieces are out of date, at one end of the scale of silver, and silver pennies are as dead as Queen Anne's sixpences at the other. So fluctuating is a coinage, so capricious in its little life, that we are apt to ask, are coins really so important in the history of a nation as they are generally thought to be? The answer is, that a well-arranged series of coins, chronologically arranged, is most instructive in a great variety of ways. The sequence of the kings is retained, and portraits of them preserved, which, with the date and legend, are great aids to students of history. When we read of a rose noble, or of an angel, we are referred to times when some Norman

taint still lingered in the land. When that died out, the coins had vanished, and appear only in the cabinets of antiquaries and in the British Museum.

I have all through these two series of Lectures insisted on the fact that we are English people, and ought to keep up the knowledge and love of our race. We cannot make ourselves French, Romans, or Kelts by any amount of education, any more than we can educate a Scandinavian pine into a cedar, or a rose into a lily. Unfortunately, we have not taken ourselves as we are, but have, in despair at not being something else, endeavoured to destroy our own identity. Still, however, there are things which we cannot destroy, and others, again, which will not flourish on the Scandinavian soil of the English mind; and these elements have their exponents in such living things as words and phrases, thoughts and motives of action expressed—as it were in spite of us—and certainly independently of us. Thus we try to adopt French, or it is forced upon us, and it dies out. We try to foist Latin words on the people, and from the violent reaction the popular mind flies back like a strong spring released, not to its first position, but to one in exaggeration of the first.

Of this, our coins are examples. Those which are truly ours stand by us to the last; they are a part of our system, and we cannot get rid of them any more than of the days of the week, which are delightfully pagan, and so English that no Latin has the ghost of a chance in their presence. The dead speech scurries off like a frightened spectre before the healthful ring of such a word as Sunday! So all the nobles, crowns, dimes, and whatever else

they may be called, pale, by turns, and pass away before the pound, the shilling, and the penny. They will never die, and though we have adopted the farce of designating them by the letters *£. s. d.*, few persons know that these letters mean *Librá*, *solidus*, and *denarius*. It is absurd that a matter which is for every-day use in life should be so ridiculously ill-fitted for its purpose. It is a remnant of the pedantry of the dark ages, when learning meant Latin, and nothing else. But the pound, the shilling, and the penny can afford to laugh at *£. s. d.*, so long as the sterling pound is good and true. The word pound is Teutonic, occurring in German as *pfund*, in Icelandic or Norse as *pfunt*, in Anglo-Saxon as *pund*. As usual, the word has been referred to the Latin *pondus*, a weight, but I am inclined to trace it, as meaning money, rather to the older Teutonic *pfant*, a pledge, whence *penny* certainly does come. We have *pfænden*, to give a pledge; and in a secondary sense a *pfand* is a *quid pro quo*—something equal to something else—and if that does not mean money, I hardly know what does. I have already drawn your attention to the fact that among all primitive peoples the circulating medium was cattle. Arms were too precious to give away, besides which, the loss of weapons and armour entailed disgrace; but flocks and herds could be moved about at pleasure, and were given as dower with brides, as payment for services, and as black-mail to keep off invaders. The name for cattle in Latin is *pecus*, whence *pecunia*, property, and subsequently money. In the same way, our original name for cattle was *feo*; hence our own word *fee*, money. As the Scandinavians became more

warlike and less agricultural, personal adornment was more important than cattle in the eyes of a warrior, to whom the former was necessary, both as a means of becoming distinguished by his own people and as a means of gratifying his own pride in being rendered conspicuous to the enemy. One of the earliest adornments adopted by our forefathers was the bracelet, of which numerous specimens are preserved in the National Collection. These were given by kings and great earls to their warriors and retainers in payment for any service in war requiring special distinction. It was a grand thing to be called the distributor of rings or giver of bracelets in those iron days. I have noticed how rings of gold, of silver, and of bronze were used in payment by the chiefs, until ring money became a currency, and was adopted by the Britons, on whose coasts the Teutons traded for tin and other metals.

When a German promised to perform any service, or to get through any undertaking for another, he promised on his sword if it were a military matter, on his ring if a civil obligation, on his hand if a matter of friendship. In such cases he pledged or made a *pfant* of his military, moral, or social position, and such an engagement was sufficiently binding among warriors and heroes. But, when they descended to the trickeries of trade, something had to be left with the contracting party of like value with the thing contracted for; and the first or primary sense of the word *pfant* includes the sense of "that other".\* I have before mentioned how, in change of shades of meaning, the root vowel in Teutonic languages (of which

\* Wackernagel, *Alt Hoch Deutsches Wörterbuch.*



it would seem to be a special peculiarity) breaks or is modified into a diphthong. This happens in forming the plural of nouns, diminutives from primaries, and nouns from verbs. Thus, in German, we find, as the best illustration, such substantives as *mann* becoming *männer* in the plural, the diminutive of the same word *mann* being *männlein*. The verb *to bake* is *backen*; the substantive thence derived is *bäcker*. In our own strong plurals we have the remains of this system, as in the change of *man* to *men*. When a substantive is the primary form, and the verb is derived, then we see the broken vowel in the derivative, as in the case before us, where *pfand* becomes *pfänden* and *verpfänden*, and the diminutive is the *pfennig*, corrupted into the modern German *pfennig* on the one hand, and into our own *penny* on the other. In the Scandinavian dialects the word *pænnigar* or *pfænnigar* means money in the abstract, just as in *John Gilpin* Cowper says:—

“So down he came, for loss of time,  
Although it grieved him sore,  
Yet loss of *pence*, full well he knew,  
Would trouble him much more.”

Where *pence* does not mean “coppers”, but *£. s. d.*, I need hardly note that the word *pence* is only a corrupt form of orthography for pennies. In Swedish, a purse is called a *penning pung*, or a money-bag, quasi, *penny-poke*. Now, as *penny* is derived from *pfand*, I believe *pund*, our pound, to be derived from the same word, and not from *pondus* in the first instance. And as this has not been, as far as I know, at least, entered into before, I shall trouble you with the steps of my reasoning.

The Teutons used rings of various sizes, shapes, and metals for money.\* The Romans found these rings in Britain at a time when the Britons were naked savages, and they had taken them from the Scandinavians, as they subsequently took coinage from the Romans. These rings were given as pledges; as they are now to this day, in the tenderest and most awful tie that man can form—a tie that ensures his future weal or woe in this life and the next, as he uses the glorious being who honours him by becoming part of his life, and whom he pledges with a golden ring to love before all the world. Other engagements are to be entered into by means of written parchments, title-deeds, and legal verbosity, costing as much as the things conveyed are worth; but the dearest, highest, completely priceless possession which we receive at the altar, is secured to us by a ring! This ring is also called a pledge, or *pfand*, in German. Now, to retain living property as a pledge of performance of some duty represented by money, is called impounding in English, *verpfänden* in German. Of course this impounding only refers to cattle as property (except the one instance of the immortal Mr. Pickwick), and as clearly means detaining as security as can well be. I do not see why it must come from the Latin *pondus*, although it has acquired the idea of weight by analogy. In German the *f* still exists, in English it fell away early. In the Scandinavian dialects it occurs with *f* occasionally, though rarely. In early English, *pund brice*, pound breach, was breaking a fold, and, figuratively, breach of contract, breach of pledge. Where the Latinists seem to have the advantage, is, that the word

\* *Older England*, First Series, p. 133.

means weight also, a definite weight, our pound; but this would naturally arise after the introduction of definite kinds of pledges or recompenses, and the standard would naturally be the pledge or pound = *pfand*. A pound was equal to 48 scillingas, or 240 peningas, or 960 sceatas; but a Mercian pound was 60 scillingas, or 240 peningas, or 250 sceatas; and a Norman *púnd* was 20 scillingas, or 240 of the smaller peningas. In the Anglo-Saxon Gospel we have the "talent" translated by *pund*, and we find it so rendered in Thorpe's *Glossary*. This is on the authority of the learned Saxonist, Dr. Bosworth,\* who has done so much to raise the tongue of our forefathers to its proper level as a classic form of speech. We see at once that the idea of weight is not by any means uniform, whereas the *money thought* remains the same. This proves that the idea of pledge is the fundamental one with us Scandinavians. The primal meaning of *pondus* was *only* weight, and did not mean a pound until much later times, in that sense; the old and true sense being that of weight in the abstract. In this sense we meet with it frequently. Cicero has: "Pondera ab Gallis allata insiqua."† Cæsar says: "Utunter taleis ferreis ad certum pondus examinatis pro Nummo."‡ The first Latin writer using the word precisely as a pound, is Varro, who wrote after Cæsar, and who was well acquainted with the customs of the Germans. In his work, *De Lingua Latina*, he uses the expression "argenti pondera quinque." Varro died in the year 18 B.C. He was a shrewd observer, and it is from an observation of his that I have

\* Bosworth, *Compendious Anglo-Saxon and English Dictionary*.  
J. R. Smith, 36, Soho Square, London, 1881.

† Cic., *Tusc.*, v, 24, 69.

‡ Cæs., *Bell. Gall.*, v, 12.

been able to trace *lance* to a Gothic origin.\* He was acquainted with Teutonic forms of speech; and to this circumstance I am inclined to attribute the employment of the word in the sense of *libra*, which is the classic name for pound, the initial of which forms the first article in the modern English creed—*£. s. d.* It does not seem that the early English pound as a coin *could* have indicated a pound weight of anything, on account of the different quantity of its component parts in various epochs, in Mercia, and in other parts of England. It is a curious fact, which has not been pointed out in this direction, but it speaks volumes for my theory, and this is, that in no language or dialect of the Romance or Latin branch is the standard either of coinage or of weight a form of *pondus*. All the Romance expressions are forms of *libra*. The *b* changes to *v* according to rule, but we have no pound; while all through the Scandinavian class, or rather through the whole Teutonic family, we have *pound*, *pfund*, *pfand*, etc., but not a trace of *libra* or *livre*!

The *scilling*, again, like the Rune, is a plant of northern growth, and its translation into *solidus* seems a very questionable operation. The ideas are certainly not correspondent. The Latin idea is of something full, round, and the same stuff all through; the name was originally applied to a gold coin under the emperors, worth about twenty-five denarii, but it was afterwards greatly reduced in value, and subsequently applied to a silver coin still worth ten of the reduced denarii. The English shilling does not appear on the Romance side at all, but everywhere among the Teutons. In German proper it exists

\* *Older England*, First Series, p. 69.

with our pronunciation, written *schilling*. In Swedish it takes the *k*, which is pronounced after and before *e*, *i*, *æ*, *œ* and *y*, like our *h* with *s* = *sh* in *shine*; thus *skilling* is pronounced as in Anglo-Saxon *scilling*, modern English shilling. But the Scandinavian and German shillings are small copper coin, although the German word refers to a silver coin containing twelve *pfenings*. Wackernagel deduces it from *shellen*, to sound, thus meaning the sounding coin. But the Icelandic *skil* seems to point to a more remote and abstract idea. *Skilning* means understanding, or reconciliation of a difference. *Skil* also means something which denotes, or by which a difference is capable of being marked. It is also used for what we call *idea*, because an idea is separated and evolved from the mind. Connected with this line of thought is the German expression *scheide münzte*, or difference coin, a coin that should be current through all the German States, although not equal in intrinsic value to the nominal worth as circulating medium. I am inclined to differ from Dr. Wackernagel in ascribing the name to the sounding qualities of the metal, and deduce it from the Norse *skil*, as the standard of thought, or the standpoint whence to reckon.

The *pfænnung*, or *penning*, is clearly the *pfand*, or pledge, and was the original Teutonic money. It was, in the first instance, of silver, and twelve *pfenige* went to the standard *schilling*. And here again is a mark of the genuine Teutonic nature of the system. Had we adopted Roman weights and measures, our shilling would have had ten pence, and the penny would have been a dime, or a denar, or a dummy. But nothing could shake our

duodecimal system, and, however much political economists may grumble, we have it still.

The Roman solidus originally contained twenty-five denarii, and the denarius contained ten asses, each (originally) a pound of copper. These figures are quite in Roman taste. The solidus is the fourth part of a hundred denarii, and the whole scheme is decimal, whereas the English, or rather Teutonic, standard was twelve. This, with the names of coins, has descended to all the offshoots of the Roman stock, appearing in the decimal coinage everywhere adopted; and with regard to the *names*, they remain unaltered in all the languages of the Romance family. We have *denaro* in Italian, *dinero* in Spanish, and *denier* in French.

The early English, commonly called Anglo-Saxons, on their conversion to Christianity abandoned their rings, on the occult and mystic meaning of which I dwelt at some length in my Lecture on "The Ring".\* The many heathenish ideas called up by the sight of the ring were fresh in the minds of the early converts, and to this cause, rather than to any special respect for Rome, are we to attribute the introduction of coins, especially as the early coins were named on Saxon, or rather Teutonic, lines. But there was a transition stage, to which I must presently refer. Certainly, the *pfæning* and the *shilling* were Scandinavian, while the smaller *scatt*, or *sceatt*, although apparently more purely Teutonic than they, is really less so. It is true we find it in the German word *schatz*, a treasure, but it occurs without change in the Scandinavian *skatt*, tribute or treasure. In English it

\* *Older England*, First Series, pp. 125 to 158.

played a very important part indeed in our vocabulary ; so important, as to demand greater consideration than it has hitherto received. It implied, according to Bosworth,\* "A portion, part, division, corner, region ; a portion of metal in an uncoined state, about the fourth part of a pening, or  $2\frac{1}{2}$ d. of our money, for 240 peningas were equal to 960 sceatas. In Mercia, a sceat was not quite equal to a pening, for 240 peningas were equal to 250 sceatas." Bosworth states, also, that the scylling and the scatt seem to have been names of money in the pagan times before the introduction of Christianity, and before the Saxon pagans had acquired the art of coining. This agrees with my own statement, that the names in question refer to very ancient ideas, and were applied to money in the transition stage between rings and coins.

Residence in Britain brought the English into contact with other peoples and other kinds of civilisation. They had not been a commercial race, for the Phœnicians and other ancient trading nations seem to have dreaded the North ; and no wonder, when we reflect that the Scandinavians claimed the sea as their own, and whatever was on it as theirs. The Roman mariners stood no chance against the sea-kings of the North ; and those hardy warriors despised the merchant whom they protected from other sea rovers (for a consideration). There is a modern Swedish version, by Tegnér, of the old Viking laws, which expresses this feeling so fully that I am tempted to give it you :—

"Should a merchant appear, thou shalt guard well his ship,  
But his tribute he shall not withhold ;  
Thou art king on thy wave ! He—the slave of his gain,  
And thy steel is worth more than his gold !"

\* *Anglo-Saxon and English Dictionary.*

Settled in England, trade became necessary. There were certain arts which the English possessed, and in which they greatly excelled the French and Romans. Various articles of filigree work, many productions of the smith, tapestry and certain dyes, were known as being peculiarly well furnished by the English. Many of these merchants, if not all, were Christians, while the English were pagans. The Christian merchants were supplied with gold coins for some articles, for others they bartered productions of their own, while for some of the things they brought they would take rings in payment. Here, the shrewdness of the English came into play, and though they did not stamp coins, they gave pledges of gold and silver and copper, cut into shapes rudely resembling coins, and weighing as much as certain standards which had been established.

To return to the dictionary: *sceat*, further, in Anglo-Saxon, denotes money in the general or collective sense (as *penningar* does in Swedish), price, gain, tribute, interest, a gift, a treasure; and finally, that which is valuable as a covering: a covering, a garment, clothing (which was often given as a valuable gift), and we retain the word, pronounced as written with the *e*, *sceat*, in our modern *sheet*. In nautical parlance, *sceata* was the lower part of a sail, and the *sceat*-line was the rope attached to the clew of a sail, which rope is called a sheet to this day.

Very evidently the word *sceat* was pronounced in two different ways, as it was written with or without the *e*. With the *e* we have the South Teuton or German version, *schatz*; without it, we get the Northern Teuton or Scandi-



navian *skatt*, both meaning tribute-money. Bearing in mind that the true Scandinavian *a* broadened into *ao*, we find it pronounced nearly *scot*; hence the common expression, to "get off scot free", *i.e.*, without paying tribute. Another expression for tribute-money was *lot*.\* Hence another current phrase, "to pay scot and lot", which is as much as to say every kind of tribute, or every obligation. Some of our philologists have sought to derive the expression from paying the Scots black-mail to prevent their inroads, and the tribute which fell to each man's share or *lot* to pay. But we must remember that the word *scot*, at the period of which we are speaking, did not mean a Scotsman at all, but an Irishman, to whom tribute was never paid by the English at any time. To pay one's "shot" is another phrase engendered by this most prolific coin; and as I have often told you, we may trace the progress of Scandinavian civilisation spreading eastward to Russia, through the influence of Rurik, and westward to us, under the auspices of Hengst and Horsa. In Russia, the abacus or counting frame of the Oriental nations is used in every shop, in every counting-house, and in every school. It is called the "shott", and an account is known by the same name, from a very natural connection of ideas.

The little black spots of metal, in the case next to that which contains the "wonder-horn" from Taplow, are specimens of this coin from which so many considerations have been *shot* or *scattered*, and in fact we may read much of our history in these little pagan dumps. The other articles found in the grave proclaim it pagan, and these sceattas

\* Bosworth's *Dictionary*.

accordingly confirm Dr. Bosworth's statement and my opinion, that there was a period of semi-coinage, so to say, between the Ring and the Coin. But there are some writers who incline to the theory that the Anglo-Saxons possessed, in their pagan state, the art of coining, without having derived the idea from any Romance people. Ruding, in his *Annals of the Coinage of Great Britain*,\* observes that: "Those who deny that the Saxons possessed the art of coinage before they came to Britain, will find it extremely difficult to point out the source from whence they derived it after their arrival; for the Anglo-Saxon money bears not, either in form, type, or weight, the least resemblance to those coins which at that time were the current specie of this island."

Ruding, who was an authority on this point, continues, after remarking that "the barbarous workmanship of the British coins could not have excited their attention", to express his surprise that the Britons should have continued their own rude method of coining in preference to the beautiful specimens of Roman art which were constantly before their eyes.

The late learned antiquary, Mr. J. Y. Akerman, in an essay by him on the Anglo-Saxon Mint, comments thus on these statements of Ruding:—

"It is very clear from this that the laborious author of the *Annals* had but slight practical acquaintance with the subject, however valuable his work may be, regarded as a compilation from written documents. To the general reader, a detailed description of the various rude coins

\* Rogers Ruding, *Annals of the Coinage of Great Britain and its Dependencies*. 4 vols. 4to., London, 1817.

which must have been struck and circulated in this country after the departure of the Romans would be tedious, and, without the assistance of illustrations, wholly impracticable. Long ere the once masters of the world withdrew for ever from their island possession, their coins had ceased to be "beautiful specimens of art", and long previous to the introduction of Christianity among the Anglo-Saxons, they attempted to copy the degenerate types of the Roman money."\*

Here, as usual, the modern antiquary will hardly grant his own ancestors anything; even the tact to copy good models is denied them. He will make them out copyists, but not only that, he makes them bad copyists of debased types. Let anybody read a fragment of alliterative poetry, and he will see that the people producing such verse was not a copying nation. Let anybody regard with intelligent attention the illuminations which have come down to us, and he will see that even in the later times, just before the Norman usurpation, there was a strain of originality in the works of our own fathers which, notwithstanding the affectation of Norman manners by the Confessor and his Court, stamps the English as a non-copying race. He who narrowly examines the question may see the development from rings to lumps of metal stamped by hand, which had become standards of value. We may learn also from these two eminent antiquaries that the pagan Saxon had a coin before the reception of Christianity. We learn that the Roman currency died out, that the vile copies of Roman coins by the British never led to any advance in the art of coining among them, while the English de-

\* *Memorials of King Alfred.* Dr. Giles, 1863.

veloped their system in a manner peculiar to them, and un-Roman in every point.

After the introduction of Christianity there is every probability of some amount of copying taking place, but this is not likely to have been quite so slavish as Mr. Akerman supposed. Of the time of Edward, coins are found bearing a very Roman appearance; but this would be a very natural phenomenon at that time, when the art was in the course of development; it would then adopt suggestions from models outside its own life.

After trying, in the way generally pursued by English writers, to show that our ancestors were not worth being descended from, and had nothing in them but what they copied—even in debased and distorted forms—from the Romans, Mr. Akerman, oddly enough, continues to say:—“Notwithstanding this, we find many Saxon coins totally dissimilar in type to those of the Romans; on a considerable number the name of the king and that of the moneyer alone appears, without any attempt to represent an effigy. But this, as before observed, cannot be attributed so much to design as to want of skill.” And from this point he again launches out into the strain of abuse of his forefathers.

In the same strain, and with a wonderful indifference to the language, manners, and mode of thought of the people of whose coins he is writing, the learned Mr. Akerman endeavours to prove that the name for the six-shilling pieces, the *mancus*, must be derived either from an Arabic verb, *nakasha*, because the past participle of the passive voice would be *mancusha*; or from the Latin *manus*, a hand, because coins are handled! I notice both these

derivations as showing how ready authors are to fly off to anything in the nature of an hypothesis, no matter how wild it may be, so that it only serve to show how much we owe to other sources, and what contemptible people we Anglo-Saxons are !

The *manca*s is quite English, being half the standard *twelve*, in containing *six* shillings. It was a most convenient coin for the merchant, being so readily capable of division. It contained, like the Prussian thaler, thirty sub-coins, called *peninge*, five of which made a shilling, as the five *silber groschen* of Prussia make a coin, which, however, has no particular name, save a "piece of five groschen". The name for a tradesman was either *ceapman*, living in our "chapman", or *manc-gore*, living in the modern "monger." If you will look at the first syllable of this word, you will find it identical with the first syllable of our coin, the termination of which varies, occurring as *us* and as *a*. It is so plainly the *monger*, or the tradesman's means of effecting bargains, that I am surprised no antiquary recognised the identity of the root. I am inclined to refer it to the old Scandinavian word *munr* or *mani*, meaning the value of a thing, the coin *showing* the value, and the monger *knowing* it. Again, I am perfectly convinced that our word money is not derived from *moneta*, originally a name for Juno, on the site of a temple to whom the Romans first coined money. Here, too, the jingle of the names has caused our philologists, all round, to point to *moneta* for money ; and the circumstance that in Russia coin is still called *moneta*, is taken as a proof. I think it no proof at all. The Russians have taken everything from foreign models, and from very

different sources—some objects with their names having been borrowed from classical, others from Scandinavian, others from modern German, originals. They took the word *moneta*, and it remains as *moneta*; our word has been made orthographically to resemble it, from our wretched system of orthography being so defective. But the *sound* of the word guides us more safely than the fancifully written form, which is at variance with it. The sound refers us to a *u* form, and the broken *u* to *y*. Accordingly, we find *müntze* in German for coin, and for the place where coins are made. In English this should, by analogy, be *mynt*, and thus in the older English we find it written—*mynt*. In the Scandinavian dialects it is the same, and in the older Norse *mynda* is to *form*, or to give form to anything.

We have now to consider the *mark*, the *ora*, and the *thrymsa*. Fortunately we have no occasion to do battle with the Latinists before going into the examination of the words before us. Nobody has ever claimed them for Roman coin, and so they have been passed over in contempt by the English. Thus, Mr. Akerman, mentioning them in the same line with the *mancus*, is so glad to grasp at the phantom of an explanation of the name offered by the odd Arabic word, that he forgets these and the pound altogether.

*Mark* is Icelandic. It means a division (like shilling) a sign of division, our mark. It is by derivation a field, on account of that being a portion of land divided and *marked off* for a special purpose. It means a coin as the mark of a certain value, and was applied to the coin of weight or distinction. Bosworth considers it the same as the *mancus*.

The *ora* was of two kinds, the one consisting of twenty peningas or fifty modern pence, and the smaller of sixteen peningas or forty pence. In the Older Norse, *örtug* was a small coin the third of an ounce in weight. It seems derived from *ör*, otherwise *örvarr*, an arrow, from being marked with a dart. This is hypothesis only. The name may be derived from *ör*, the beginning, as showing the *commencement* in the system of computing money at the lowest stage. The word is applied to a small copper coin in Sweden at the present day.

The *thrymsa* was a small silver coin of the value of threepence, whence the name. It seems to have been very rarely used.

The result of these investigations would tend to show that, quite independently of any Roman influence, direct or indirect, there was a transition state between *rings* and *myntas*. That the coins were lumps of metal adjusted to certain weights and stamped; that after the introduction of Christianity modifications in the older types were made in consequence of the influence of Rome as exerted through the clergy. Coins already existing were made to resemble those brought over from Rome, and some modification of the names subsequently took place in turning the names of coins and of those who made them into Latin. Thus in the Laws we find *mynet* and *mynetere* translated by *moneta* and *monetarius*. From the similarity in sound, and the use of these Latin words in the later Saxon laws, our antiquaries have been inclined to accuse our forefathers of having taken their words *from* the Latin, instead of translating them into the nearest and most resemblant Latin forms.

In the laws of King Æthelstán we read, in section 14:—"Of *Mynterum* (Moneyers) . . . That there be *one money over all the king's dominion*, and that no man mint except within 'port' (*butan on porte*). And if the moneyer be guilty, let the hand be struck off with which he wrought that offence, and be set up on the money smithy; but if it be an accusation, and he is willing to clear himself, then let him go to the hot iron, and clear the hand therewith with which he is charged that fraud to have wrought. And if at the ordeal he should be guilty, let the like be done as is here before ordained." Then comes the appointment of *myneteras* in the various towns in England.\*

With reference to the workmanship of the Anglo-Saxon coins, the same remark which I made as to other specimens of art may apply. As in their pictures of events they sought to give certain hints to the mind, and cultivated the external art less than the memory on which such art was to act, so in the manufacture of their coins, the object was to put a circulating medium into the hands of the people, rather than to supply them with a portrait-gallery of their kings. Busts certainly do occur later on, and the name of the king represented by the bust is also given, so as to avoid the possibility of a mistake; and besides this, the name of the artist is given too. In the British Museum there is a fine collection of Anglo-Saxon coins, especially of those of Ælfred.

I want you to have the clear idea that the circulating medium was really a coinage, that it was protected by

\* From the *Ancient Laws and Institutes of England*, printed by the Record Office, 1840.



strict laws, and that by its means we are able to build up a sure history of the people, from the warrior Ring-Dane down to the beer-loving idle boor, who lost this land to the Norman. We see in the coin, and in the references to it, all the darker sides of our character come out. Whereas I told you of the joyous martial gleam that glowed from those warriors' swords of the olden time, now I must tell you of a lurid light dimly shining from the filthy lucre which succeeded the beaming blade in the love of the English heart. As we learn in the grand old hymn of the *Völuspá*, "the first war" against the gods is waged by the fell giantess called "The love of Gold". If she be not overcome, the brood of the giants will increase and become too strong for the gods themselves! A short lesson, but a strong and severe one. Let us see how it verified itself.

After the establishment in England, the fruitful land yielded to the restless energy of the warrior. The sword was beaten into a plough-share. Then came a time of wealth and ease. The ring was beaten into money, and money was beloved inordinately, for even Christianity could not quell the giantess. Men, women, and children were sold into captivity for the love of gold! The sword had rusted when the coin was stamped; so, when the warlike Dane—(child of the same proud stock of which our ancestors were scions)—came with his war-ships, spear, and battle-blade and byrnie, the English, instead of presenting serried ranks of polished steel, offered the Vikings gold. A shameful peace was bought and broken over and over again in this way, until our Alfred drew the sword once more and cut the Northmen down. Again came peace and

ease and plenty. The coin of Ælfred's time was stamped like Roman money. The giantess arose again, and the grand blade that gained the island for us hung rusting on the wall, or slept within the tomb. Glory was dead and gain triumphant. Then came the Dane and drenched the land in blood. A Danish king sat on the throne of England, his son succeeded him, and six-and-twenty years this land was ruled by Danes. The yoke was shaken off, and English kings arose. Again fate seemed to smile. But plenty is the bane of Englishmen in England, and English wealth attracted Norman greed, while English swords were blunted. But even when the Norman duke sat on the throne hallowed to English kings, he could not quench the fire of English life in the red streams that flowed! Some sense of shame remained among us still, or England had become a part of Normandy. Duke William, with his mail-clad knights, instead of making England French made Normandy at least a part of England. With all his lust of power and greed of gain, he could not strike a Latin coin! No! "the pennies of the First William were struck on the model of the last of the Anglo-Saxon kings; indeed, many can only be distinguished from the later Saxon coins by the legend—and that is given in the Anglo-Saxon character and language."\*

We have seen the love of glory pale before the greed of gain. And when this vice takes root the people grow demoralized, and fall before some stronger sword than theirs. This is a proof that the well-being of a race does not necessarily advance with the perfection of its coin.

\* Sketch of the Anglo-Saxon Mint, by Akerman, in the *Memorials of Alfred*.

The Roman historian of the Germans attributes to them, amongst their many virtues, one grave vice which seems to have taken root in the very blood of the race—the vice of gambling.\* “What is extraordinary”, he says, “they play at dice, when sober, as a serious business, and that with such a desperate venture of gain or loss, that, when everything else is gone, they set their liberties and persons on the last throw. The loser goes into voluntary servitude; and though the youngest and strongest patiently suffers himself to be bound and sold, such is their obstinacy in a bad practice—they themselves call it honour. The slaves thus acquired are exchanged away in commerce, that the winner may get rid of the scandal of his victory.’

The Roman sneer at German honour in paying a debt of honour by going into voluntary serfdom is very fresh and innocent. It contains a cheerful reflection for us in pointing out that with the vice one virtue still lived on, and is not lost amongst us even now; but the expression, debt of honour, is altogether Roman, and most of our gambling practices are of French and Italian origin. It is sad to think of the amount of misdirected energy which these bad practices occasion; it is still more terrible to reflect on the misery which they cause; and although the implements of moral destruction are not so frequently dice and cards as they used to be, yet it is quite as demoralizing to a man or a nation to bet on the success of a horse race as on the throw of a die. And here the grand old Roman would stare indeed, could he return from Hades on the Derby Day! What would he say then? In that case he would

\* Tacitus, *Germ.* 24.

say that the "Insular Germans had developed the vice into a science, by which the peace of mind of the nobler classes was systematically ruined for their own amusement, and in the lower classes the mental and physical powers were for the same end wantonly destroyed: that on certain days wealth and peace, time and honour were voluntarily offered at the shrine of the goddess of gambling. Such is their obstinacy in a bad practice—they themselves call it pleasure!"

It is most suggestive to us that these little coins, these pennies of a far back past, should have been buried with the owner of the mighty drinking horn, together with the chess men and the usual arms. It shows us the wonderful truth of Gray's charming dictum :

"Even from the tomb the voice of Nature cries,  
Even in our ashes live their native fires."

And we can see that the gentleman whose tomb at Taplow has yielded so much information to his posterity was devoted to the pursuit of the fickle goddess, by being provided with the means of continuing to gratify the ruling passion *after* death. The chessmen show that he was a gamester, because chess was played for money as fiercely as dice were thrown. We see that he was addicted to the good things of this life by the horn. He was wealthy, as is witnessed by the gold buckles, tags, and clasps found in the grave; and the small coins which have given rise to this Lecture were undoubtedly supplied to enable him to indulge in the overmastering Teutonic passion that raged in the hearts of English warriors two thousand years ago, and rages on with unabated fury on the Turf in this year of grace, 1884.

We have seen the chief games, as far as games were played for money, were dice, chess, and backgammon; and doubtless a large portion of the time which in the winter must have hung heavily on the hands of these active warriors, was consumed in these unprofitable pursuits. Strutt, in the Introduction to his most instructive work on the *Sports and Pastimes of the People of England*, lays it down that the nights were spent in such amusements. "In the reign of Canute the Dane", he tells us, "this practice was sanctioned by the example of royalty, and followed by the nobility. Bishop Ætheric, having obtained admission to Canute about midnight upon some urgent business, found the king engaged with his courtiers at play, some at dice and some at chess. The clergy were prohibited from playing at games of chance by the ecclesiastical canons established in the reign of Edgar."\*

It has been the prevailing custom to deduce the name "chess" from the Persian word *Sháh*, a king, and to explain the expression checkmate as being a corruption of *Sháh-mát*. Even the Germans, excellent philologers as they unquestionably are, have sent in their adherence to this theory. So general is it, that I am certain to be laughed at for venturing to oppose it; but I have been led to look into the subject by the appearance of a very able paper in *The Antiquary*, by Mr. Hubert Hall, on the "Exchequer Chess Game", in which he shows that the exchequer game was chess; *ergo*, chess is the exchequer game. He shows how the "board" was covered, not with a cloth of a checked pattern originally, but with one of

\* Strutt, *Sports and Pastimes*, Introduction, page **xxi**.

the same dark colour throughout. This cloth was stretched over the board, and the edges were guarded by raised ridges all round. The pattern was rather striped than chequered, the surface being divided into columns by white wands. The table or "board" is ten feet long by five broad, and is divided into columns by eight stretched wands. The spaces or columns thus produced represent respectively £10,000, £1,000, £100, 20s., £ s. d. On these spaces small cylinders of wood or bone are placed to represent certain monetary units, which, by being transferred from one column to the other, change their values. How the exchequer game, as such, is played may be seen in the interesting paper to which I refer in this month's number of *The Antiquary*.\* The points in the article which have chiefly attracted my attention are the form of the board, its pattern, and that of the pieces. Mr. Hall derives the name from the German *schach*, which he explains to mean a "dummy"; but the probabilities are much more in favour of its being the old High German *schach*, a robber or pursuer. The author of all evil is commonly called the *Schächerer* to this day, and the cheating and low swindling practised by the Jews is called *schächern* all over Germany. In the older Norse it was full of meaning, and generally of a violent import; *skaka* is to shake the spear in a threatening attitude, also to pervert by false judgment, etc. This very word occurs in the older English or Anglo-Saxon as *scacan* and as *sceacan*, the first pronounced *skakan*, the second *shakan*, the meaning being to flit, to depart suddenly, to tremble, whence the English verb of our day, "to shake". But, most curiously, we find the

\* *The Antiquary* for May 1884, p. 206.

word *sceacere* (a shaker) employed to mean a thief. All these circumstances point to the Teutonic names descriptive of the flitting, hurrying, and *taking* in the game.

Now the description of the exchequer game given by Mr. Hall certainly does not agree with any notions of the ordinary game as we have it, nor does the idea correspond with the Indian game with which we are familiar. But the custom of playing at dice and chess with such strange figures as those described agreeing so well with the chessmen found in the tumulus at Taplow, has induced me to form the hypothesis (which I offer very guardedly) that the game played by our ancestors was much more simple than the elaborate and complicated game now played by us, and which is certainly of remote Indian origin. That it was identified with the use of the dice is very curious, and this would perhaps explain the use of the word *skaka*, to shake. The *tæfel* game was our backgammon, and it is interesting to see that the "king-stone" amongst the Anglo-Saxon chessmen is only indicated by a mark. The Rune *Peorð* is used to denote the pawn, and I am strongly inclined to the opinion that the name of the whole game is due either to the throwing of dice, or to the pursuing, robbing, or taking practised.

Mr. Hall points out that the "dummies" are counters, and sometimes foreign coins used as such, as late as the reign of Henry III, when certainly the Indian game had become known to us. The game of *tæfel* was known to the ancient dwellers in Scandinavia, and is referred to in the *Frithioff's Saga*, where red and white pieces are mentioned. In Tegner's modern Swedish version of this ancient saga, he calls the game at which Frithioff and

Biörn are engaged, "chess", but the original Icelandic calls it *tæfel*, and the Germans translate this by *brett spiel*, board-play. The reference to the red and white pieces is made to convey the sense, to a certain King Helgi, that the colours in the charming countenance of the lovely Ingeborg had more attractions for Frithioff at the moment than even the clang of arms. There are other allusions to the game of *tæfel* or dice, which Tegner adroitly changes in the modern Swedish version to expressions used in chess. This translation of the ancient idea into modern thought is so pretty, that I cannot refrain from giving you some verses as a specimen, warning you that they suffer greatly in my own translation of Tegner which I offer:—

Björn and Frithioff sat contending  
O'er a splendid chess-board bending :  
Here, a square of silver shining,

There, the next, a gold one shone.  
Then came Hilding in. To meet him,  
Frithioff rose, on high to seat him :  
"Drain this horn, awhile reclining,  
Till this game is lost and won."

Hilding sang : "The sons of Bélé  
Send me thus for help to pray thee ;  
Rumours dark around are floating,  
All our hopes are fixed on thee !"

Frithioff sang : "The game grows stranger,  
Save, good Björn, thy king from danger,  
A common knight for him devoting,  
Born a sacrifice to be."

Hilding sang : "Son Frithioff, hear me !  
Bélé's sons will never fear thee ;  
Though before King Ring they tremble,  
Stronger far are they than thou !"

"Björn, I see thou art attacking  
My poor castle, succour lacking,  
Let thy care more mine resemble—  
See ! 'tis safe from danger now."



Ingeborg, in Baldur's bower,  
Lonely sits and mourns the hour.  
Can she not to battle move thee,  
Mourner fair, with eyes of blue ?  
" Björn, in vain the queen thou nearest—  
Queen ! of all the game the dearest !  
From boyhood ne'er I've ceased to love thee,  
Thee I'll save whate'er I do."

Such is the strain of the older saga, though not quite so intelligible to our modern ears, in this very free translation, as it is in the original.

That the three special games which have come down to us in annals, lays, and other sources of information, were very similar, there can be little doubt; that they were all played for money, and were identified more or less with the idea of money, is clear to all who read any accounts of our forefathers; but money represented even more than it does with us. It was the exponent of a man's position, and in the laws of the land actually represented portions of his person. The *wer geld* accurately fixed what a man was worth, not as to his actual possessions, as we say Mr. So-and-so is worth thirty thousand pounds, or Mr. What's-his-name is not worth sixpence; but there was a regular sliding scale, which shows us how great a help this monetary system was in those far-off days. Remembering that Alfred had to form his people, to educate them, to legislate for them, and to develop them into a civilised race, we are struck at the sagacity which imposed fines on all sorts of crimes and misdemeanours—an expedient that lives on among us, like many other of Alfred's contrivances, in this Victorian age. That you may understand the system which identified the coin with the

law, I will quote to you some of Alfred's "Domas", which will better explain my meaning than any words which I could employ.

I must, however, premise that the expression *wer*, as applied to a man, has nothing whatever to do with the *vir* of the Romans. The name means defence, war, and lives in the German *wehren*, *Gewehr*, and in other expressions of the kind. So the *wer-geld* was man-money, just as *wer-wolf* was man-wolf. And now, having explained this, we can enjoy a little law.

With touching piety, and with the simple faith of true wisdom, Ælfred commences his code of laws with the Ten Commandments. Accordingly, the first ten laws are those on which all legislature should be founded. The 21st law has to do with money at once, and it reads thus:—

"§ 21. If an ox gore a man or woman, so that they die, let it be stoned, and let not its flesh be eaten. The lord shall not be liable, if the ox were wont to push with its horns for two or three days before, and the lord knew it not; but if he knew it and would not shut it in, and it then shall have slain a man or a woman, let it be stoned; and let the lord be slain, *or the man be paid for*, as the 'Witan' decree to be right. If it gore a son or a daughter, let him be subject to the like judgment. But if it gore a 'theow', or a 'theowmennen', let xxx shillings of silver be given to the lord, and let the ox be stoned."

Then follow certain laws founded on the Mosaic code, after which Ælfred promulgates the special laws of his own ordinance. Of these I take the seventh, as illustrating the relation of man to money very strongly.

## IN CASE A MAN FIGHT IN THE KING'S HALL.

“§ 7. If any one fight in the king's hall, or draw his weapon, and he be taken; be it the king's doom, either death or life, as he may be willing to grant him. If he escape, and be taken again, let him pay for himself according to his “*wer-geld*”, and make *bōt* for the offence as well *wer* as *wite*, according as he may have wrought.”

*Wer* is the sum at which the life of a man is valued, according to the class of society to which he may belong, and the *wer-geld* was the fine which a murderer had to pay to the relations of his victim, while the *wite* was the fine paid to the magistrate for the violation of the law. Thus the *wite* was the fine paid to the public for the breach of the laws, and the *wer* was the private satisfaction to the family for the loss of the individual member slain.

In the latter part of the 9th law of this class we are told:—

“Let the *wite* be always LX shillings, until the *angylde* (*i.e.*, proportionate fine for any special injuries) rise to XXX shillings. After the *angylde* has risen to that, let the *wite* be CXX shillings. Formerly there was a distinct *wite* for a gold thief, and a mare thief, and a bee thief, and many *wites* greater than others; now all are alike except for a man thief, CXX.”

## OF BINDING A CEORLISH MAN.

“§ 95. If any one bind an unoffending ‘*ceorlish*’ man, let him make ‘*bōt*’ with X shillings. If any one scourge him, let him make *bōt* with XX shillings. If he lay him in prison, let him make *bōt* with XXX shillings. If in

insult he shave his head like a homola,\* let him make bōt with x shillings. If, without binding him, he shave him like a priest, let him make bōt with xxx shillings. If he shave off his beard, let him make bōt with xx shillings. If he bind him, and then shave him like a priest, let him make bōt with lx shillings.

“§ 44. For head wound, as bōt, if the bones be both pierced, let xxx shillings be given him. If the outer bone be pierced, let xv shillings be given him as bōt.

“§ 45. If within the hair there be a wound an inch long, let one shilling be given as bōt. If before the hair there be a wound an inch long, two shillings as bōt.

“§ 46. If his other ear be struck off, let xxx shillings be given as bōt. If the hearing be impaired, so that he cannot hear, let lx shillings be given as bōt.”

The series of separate laws for each part of the body, continues to express the law in similar words. I will, however, only just call your attention to the items in a very brief way, as I have already exceeded the ordinary limits of a lecture. It seems an eye was worth six shillings and sixpence, a nose, sixty, a tooth, eight shillings, a grinder fifteen. Breaking the cheeks cost fifteen shillings; a chin-bone, twelve; the windpipe, twelve; the tongue, the same as the eye. A wound on the shoulder causing the “joint-oil” to flow out cost xxx shillings, breaking the arm above the elbow cost xv, a nail, v. To strike a man’s shank (leg) near the knee cost lxxx shillings.

But time will not permit of our following out this curious legislation more fully. I have referred to it as

\* A person who has had his head shaved for the pillory; a fool or a madman.

showing how completely Alfred understood the English nation over which he ruled, by making men feel for the injuries of others, in the place of all others most sacred in the eyes of Englishmen—the pocket! Besides which, we see that the only *standards* are the shilling and the penny. Thirty shillings are spoken of, and not five *manuces*, or “one pound ten”, as we should say. And herein, too, we see the Teutonic feeling in favour of a small standard like the German mark and the Swedish daler. We feel it ourselves, and speak more frequently of fifty shillings than two pounds ten.

It is further worthy of note that we, when speaking of the pound in money are more inclined to use it as an abstract than a concrete, *i.e.*, without a plural. We do not say a five pounds note, but a five pound note, and the tendency is always, among those who speak the vernacular *vulgarly*, to say two pound ten, clearly pointing to a non-plural form; in a word, to the general view of a pledge rather than to the idea of a specific weight.

In concluding the present course of Lectures, I must again direct your attention to the wonderful hoards of wealth within these walls. Our teachers have not taught us a due veneration for our forefathers, but it is not too late to acquire it, and the so-called Anglo-Saxons were our direct ancestors, as much as the ancient sires of any race are the forefathers of that race. I maintain that we have less admixture than any other race; that our language is the most pure, the most beautiful in sound, the best adapted for the purposes of the Dramatist, Poet, Orator, Preacher, and Friend of any language on the face of the globe. I

believe our early literature to be the purest and best of any. And in honouring our fathers, we must honour our mothers too; for if the fatherland be dear to us, and the mother tongue so thrilling, musical, and pure, how must we honour those brave men who made this fatherland our own, and how should we love those dearer beings still, whose gentle tones live in our mother tongue!

THE MYTH OF THE WEEK.





## THE MYTH OF THE WEEK.\*

IN addressing a meeting of skilled and practised archæologists, I feel that anything like an exordium going into the intricate windings of Scandinavian mythology would involve a minuteness of detail which would require months rather than minutes to read. I plunge, therefore, *in medias res*, presuming only that my audience will kindly bear in mind, that the class of mythological ideas now under notice are truly English and have nothing whatever to do with those thrust in upon us by the Latinists, who have stolen them from the contemporary but independent systems of Greece and Rome.

The Scandinavian progenitors of our race believed in a very perfect and highly poetical system of Polytheism, which, however, was a refinement of the monotheism to which reference is constantly made. The various Gods of Valhalla, said to be twelve, but really developing into an indefinite number, are all mere impersonations of the Divine attributes, which, according to the mythical value of *number* in ancient writings, have a sort of "spirit life" within.

As the doctrine of number (the Zahl-Lehre of the German School) has so much to do with the subject before

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us, I may be pardoned for laying before you a brief abstract of this mysterious but highly interesting system.

The first number in all the Germanic family is one, *ein*, *en*, *an*, cognate, though not by any means borrowed from the classic *ens*, familiar to us all as denoting being. This *ens* is the Latin form of the Sanskrit *sat*, being, from *satya*, true ; Greek *ερεός* ; Eng. sooth. With the proofs of the identity of these words the philologist has more to do than the archæologist (though where to draw the line is very difficult), and I must refer the more curious to Max Müller's lectures on *Science of Language*, vol. i, p. 378, of the eighth edition, 1875.

The supreme god of the Scandinavians was called Od-in or Od-en, where "Od" denotes the highest point, the peerless *culmen*, and hence the point of a spear. Our own *odd* is from the same source, meaning peerless, without a fellow, alone, the one *par excellence*. *En* or *in* is the article, or pronoun, or numeral (for it partakes of the character of all three) denoting one. Thus the name of the supreme God is the "Peerless Being". The Scandinavians introducing this word into Russia, it has become the name of the first numeral. In counting, the Russians say *odin*, *dva*, *tre*, etc.

Two is cognate with the second person singular, Sanskrit, *tvam*, and denotes a something other. Now this very word *other* being from the root *oth* (from), proves the force of the argument, showing that in the ordinal the same idea of separation or *from-ness* prevails. It is the result of the resolution of Divinity into two grand essentials, love or being, and wisdom or light. As heat and light make one sun, so do love and wisdom form one god.

Three is the mystic number of the equilateral triangle, heat, light, and the sustaining action or vital energy of the two acting together: hence in all systems there is a decided trinity as well as duality and unity. We have Jupiter, Mars, Apollo; Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva; Odin, Villi, and Ve; or Odin, Tyr, and Thor.

Four being a square is only the same thing as its base or root intensified; and as the two attributes, love and wisdom, form a perfect god, so that union multiplied by itself means perfection greatly intensified. Adding the mystic three to the perfect four, we obtain *seven*, representing, in consequence, a state or condition of holiness or of consummation.

Five is the symbol of power, as representing the hand; Fimbul-tyr, or "five-strong god", being one of the names or qualities of Odin. Ten is the perfection of power; a hundred, infinite power: hence in India we meet with emblematical figures of deity either with four arms, as indicating perfection of power; or with a hundred, denoting power *ad infinitum*. The Brahmins never sought to give a portrait-picture, in this hideous monster, of the god they worshipped. It was a mere memorandum, so to speak, of his attributes, written in the symbolic language of numbers.

As seven is produced by the addition of three and four, so twelve is the result of their multiplication, and gives an idea of *all* the requisites needful to form a church or system: hence the twelve gods in Olympus, the twelve Redschis of the Hindoo system, the twelve gods in Valhalla, the twelve tribes of Israel, the twelve Apostles, the twelve gates of the New Jerusalem, and thousands of similar instances of the power of this number.

Eleven represents a state of imperfection and grief.

Six, as the multiplication of two and three, has the sense of the mystic or divine three intensified by the power of the perfect two, so as to produce a similar idea to that of twelve, but less complete.

When the Scandinavian English took possession of the Island of Britain, they found it inhabited by the half-Romanised Kelts called Britons. These Kelts were still in a more than half-savage condition. They were not very profound or very earnest Christians, for they never took any pains (as their own historian Gildas informs us) to lay the truths of Christianity before the English, who on their part greatly despised the conquered Kelt, who had been unable to hold his own. The English, too, had brought with them from Scandinavia a very perfect system of theology, which suited their requirements better than the more peaceful creed of the Christian. This system, at once simple and complicated, taught them to believe in a superintending Providence, to reverence their word of honour, to despise fraud and lies, to shun immorality as the plague, and to honour and revere woman as a being far above their ruder nature—a being to be regarded almost with awe as partaking of the divine essence.

Their heaven was the abode of the brave, and was situate (as in all systems) on a mountain. Valhalla contained the twelve houses of the gods, who dwelt there in perpetual joy.

The sources of our knowledge of Scandinavian mythology are the two *Eddas*, the *Grågàs*, and the *Hemiskringsla*. The first class contains a series of hymns similar in purport to those of the Indian *Vedas*. We shall confine ourselves,

in treating of the myth of the week, to the relations found in what is known as the poetic *Edda of Sæmund*, also called the *Elder Edda*. I use the edition of the original, published at Copenhagen by Grundtvig in 1874. I shall now give you a rapid sketch or analysis of the system of creation as expounded in the hymn called the *Völuspá*, or *the Vision of the Prophetess*, in which we shall see the potency of the mystic *seven*, bearing rather on the seven stages or eras in the creation, or evolution of the human mind, than on actual physical science. The *days* of a man are seven multiplied by ten, which I have pointed out to be only the same thing as seven in an intensified form or higher degree, and these stages are thus referred to:—

I.—The first activity recorded is that of productive light. It is said “the sun shone round from the south, and the earth brought forth tender green things”. Before, the earth, or condition of man’s mind prior to the influence of the sun from the south, is expressed thus:—

“’Twas Time’s first dawn,  
When naught yet was ;  
Naught save a void  
And yawning gulf.”

II.—The next phase introduces us to the idea of order and government by the hand of a measurer or governor, the moon. Then the moon threw his right arm round the steeds of heaven, and *guided* them in their course.

III.—The third phase shows us intense activity,—the dwarfs are created, then the elves, then man. The dwarfs are a lower form of life, being confined to the earth ; the elves are higher, having power over earth and water ; but man is the crown of all.

iv.—The phase of wisdom is attained. Odin's ash-tree, or the cosmos, is described; and this on Odin's day. Of all the most wonderful relations connected with mythological teaching, this extraordinary ash-tree is the most wonderful. To consider it as it should be considered would require a volume of no mean proportions, and it is utterly out of the question to attempt even a description of it in parenthesis. The three fates are created: Urda, the Past; Verlandi, the Present; and Skuld, the Future. Then arises the fell giantess, "*The Love of Gold.*" To conquer this monster is Odin's first work. This was the first war.

v.—Conflicts with other giants arise, and although, in the prose *Edda*, Thor is represented as the general or leader on the side of the gods, he is not mentioned at this point in the *Völuspá*.

Baldur is represented as being born a son of Odin. He is the god of brightness and purity, often confounded with the sun, who, however, was a female deity. Baldur may, perhaps, be called the sun-god. Twin-born with this deity is the blind god Höder (all evil is born blind, remarks the Sagaman quaintly), to show that good and evil are correlative terms. Those who hold the cosmical theory say that Höder represents the corresponding night as Baldur is the god of day. But good and truth are represented by the outer symbols of heat and light, while evil and falsity find their natural exponents in darkness and night. One series of thought underlies the other as the soul is within the body. Baldur is wedded to a beautiful maiden of mortal mould, Nanna; who, partaking, through her marriage, of the divine nature of her spouse,

is yet able, from the circumstance of her birth, to communicate with men on earth tidings of good from on high—a curious foreshadowing of the functions of the Church in later times.

Among the twelve gods there is one who is a traitor, the calumniator and denier of the gods, the Lucifer of Milton, the Judas of history. Now the Norn of the future (Skuld) had predicted that Baldur should be slain by a weapon of earth, unless every created object, with-out exception, should swear the great oath not to injure Baldur. To obtain this oath Nanna is sent to middle earth, where she succeeds in winning the promise from all things, animate or inanimate, never to injure Baldur, excepting from the mistletoe, which she overlooked or considered as part of the oak on which it grew as a parasite. Some say that Utgård Loke, the calumniator of the gods, who hated Baldur, disguised himself as a crow, and sat on the bough so as to hide the parasite. For this deed the crow, formerly white, was condemned to be thenceforth and for ever black.

The gods, finding that all trees, stones, stocks, fire, water, and metals, had sworn not to injure Baldur, instituted a game in which they all threw their javelins and shot their arrows at Baldur, who was placed with his back against a tree, which has ever since been called "the holy tree" (our holly), and remains ever green. The gods hurl their weapons, and Baldur is uninjured, until Loke represents that Höder, on account of his blindness, has never been permitted to shoot at his brother, and declares that he ought to have his turn with the rest. The gods yield to the seeming justice of this observation, and

Höder is to try his hand. By a stratagem of Loke's, an arrow made of the mistletoe is placed in Höder's hand, and Loke stands behind him to direct his aim. The arrow flies direct to the mark. In vain the golden-combed cock, seeing the weapon flying through the air, flies up and receives it in his breast: the arrow flies on until it sinks in the heart of the white god Baldur.

Hela, sovereign of the lower worlds, to which all who were not killed in battle were sent (whose name is the origin of our modern Hell), now claims Baldur as her right. The gods oppose, when a compromise is suggested, and Hela consents to waive her claim on condition that all created objects shall weep for Baldur. Again is Nanna despatched to the middle earth, and again do her beauty and goodness succeed in winning tears from all created objects. Utgård Loke, however, in the guise of an old woman sitting on a stone, hid, with the skirts of his garment, a little white flower which murmured "Forget me not" as Nanna passed; but being unheeded, no tears were collected from it. This flower became blue from grief. Nanna collected the tears of all other objects on the mistletoe, where they remain to this day. Drops of blood fell from the heart of Baldur on to the holy (holly) tree, and there you will find them to prove what I say.

Hela now triumphed, when Odin interfered, and, on account of the great love borne to Baldur by the gods, decreed that he should pass half his time below with Hela, and half in Valhalla. His return every morning is heralded by the cock, who became his special bird in consequence of the incident just related; and Eostra, the



goddess of the eastern gates, opens the portals to receive the god. The other gods, to reward the cock, throw flowers and presents, which is the origin of our "cock-shy" (*shy* or *shau*, or exhibition) at Easter-tide.

VI.—The sixth phase is devoted to Freya, the goddess of wedded love; and Frigga, the Juno of the North, weeps over the approaching destruction of the race of gods and men.

VII.—The advent of Surtur from the abode of dull flame and lurid fire. He comes, and flames gleam from his sword. The monsters, the progeny of Loke, attack the gods and destroy them, being destroyed in their turn. Heaven and earth pass away, to make room for a new heaven and a new earth that shall not pass away.

Having reduced the teaching of this ancient hymn to so brief a form, it will be easy to deduce from the abstract thus presented that the creation of the world is not meant by the myth at all. The actual teaching being, like Shakespeare's, directed to the progress of human life.

In the first state or phase, the sun, as the mother of all things, shines from the south over the yawning gulf, the *shapeless void*. In consequence of this view, the sun is feminine in all Teutonic forms of speech, including, of course, early English. The sun is the mother of Baldur, who is the God of Truth and Purity, Brilliancy and Joy. Man is therefore born into splendour, and all kinds of perfections are his glorious heritage. But his glory must be chastened by combats, and the sun-child passes out of the paradise of childhood into the unsettled cold and fickle state of youth represented by the warrior Moon.

The moon is masculine in the Teutonic dialects. He is a measurer, a controller, a governor. He rules the tides, and is the special deity of the water; also typifying Truth. Hence youth must *learn*, must acquire truth under the guidance of this deity. But youth partakes of the attributes of his patron; he is unstable, fickle, combative, melancholy. The glory of childhood, sustained by the beams of maternal love, passes away. Cold, hard facts have to be learnt. A discriminating power has to be acquired, and the lesson taught by the mystic number two has to be mastered. It is the second day with man. The moon presents the neophyte with a white unemblazoned shield (the moon's disc), and he may use arrows and javelins, both called in Saxon-English *stree*. And this is the name of the beams that shoot from the heavenly orbs all through the North! In German, a sun or moon beam is a *strahl*; in Swedish, *strål*. In Russian and in early English, *strael* is an arrow. The battle of life begins; it is a bitter black Monday for us. We turn our backs on the pure, holy love of that being whom we ought to honour next to Him whom we are taught to call Father. We rush from the only saint in our calendar, our mother, to war under our new leader, who is so inconstant and fickle that we should be lost did we not pass under the tutelage of Tyr or Tiu (Tacitus calls him Tuiseo). He will lead us from cold, hard facts to higher wisdom. This *third* day, in harmony with the teaching of the mystic *three*, brings us, for the first time, into the actual presence of deity. He will lead us on even higher, fighting onward as the sturdy soldier must; we must climb the mysterious heaven to where Odin sits enthroned.

The period of younger manhood is represented by a young warrior armed with the shorter curved weapon of the Scandinavians called the seax by the Anglo-Saxons, and the young warrior carries the *gär* or spear besides. Still it is not maturity, for maturity is represented by Odin, who sits on the high point—the *summit* of Valhalla. On our way we have to combat the giants, called *Eoten* or Eaters, to represent sensual delights and gratifications. These must be overthrown before we can really attain the wisdom of which Odin is the patron.

Odin or Wodin is the Father of the Gods,—the all-wise, the all-seeing, the patron of manly vigour in maturity, wisdom, and strength. The fourth day is devoted to him, and four denotes perfection! At the time of maturity man is fit to take his place at the council-board, or to lead men on to combat. Warrior and sage, he is in both capacities under the special charge of the all-wise Odin. A brief time is allowed for rejoicing in the “great lights” which arise on the fourth day in the human mind, or illumination both of the external and internal, which the pilgrim warrior at this stage receives. A pause for refreshment and enlightenment is granted, but man in his wisdom clings too much to externals, and the frightful giantess, the cursed “Love of Gold”, arises. She must be subdued, destroyed, and for ever rooted out, or all is over. This is the first war, and brings on other wars with the giants of Frost. With the love of gold come doubting of divine help and coldness to Him whom we should love with heart and soul. These are the frost giants, and they turn us from the high

state we have attained. Divinity must actually descend and fight for us now, and Thor assumes the task of quelling the monsters.

Thursday, our Thundersday, old English Thunnersday, now corrupted into Thursday, comes, and man has a hard fight of it. The Scandinavian warrior, on attaining the Odin state, assumes the eagle's pinions in his helmet, the great war-sword of the North is in his hand, and he is now a son of Odin. The succeeding state is one of constant warfare until he shall have distinguished himself so far as to bear some record on his shield, golden bracelets on his arm, a gold ring on the pommel of his sword and in his belt. Under Thor he showed himself a worthy champion. Like Marmion, he was "in stern fight a champion grim, in camp a leader sage". Five is the expressive number of strength and might, and the fifth day resounds with the thunder of the God of Prowess. Defeated by the mallet of Thor (known to mortals as the lightning), the sensual principles fly overwhelmed and crushed. They are bound in chains until the last day, when they shall be again set loose. This respite gives man time to yield to softer emotions and to choose a mate.

Friday is the period when, after having arrived at full maturity, after having shown himself worthy of so sweet a reward, the love of woman crowns the warrior's career. The sixth day it is complete, in accordance with the mystic value of six, and the completeness of man is his married life. To the fact that the Teutons were not allowed to enter into the married state before full maturity, and that a Scandinavian or German maiden would scorn the addresses of a young untried soldier,

Tacitus attributes the extreme height, strength, vigour, and activity of the northern nations. Their known morality of life and constant exercise were the surest safeguards against effeminacy and luxury.

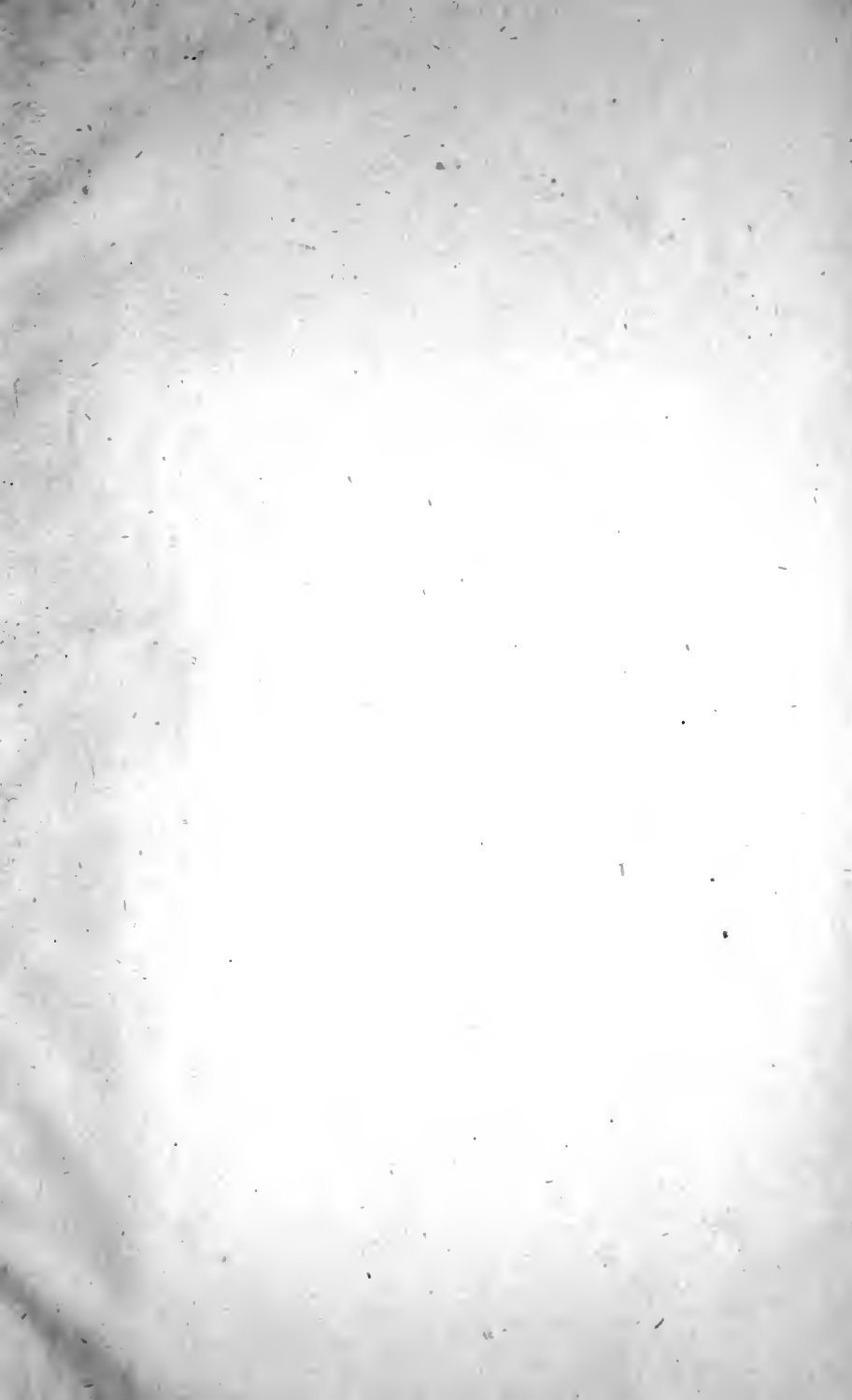
Freya is the Venus of the North, but not the unscrupulous and revolting deity which we are accustomed to connect with the idea of the Goddess of Love. Freya presides over lawful wedlock, and is the patroness of nuptial faith and wedded fidelity. A short time only does her reign prevail, a kindly sorrow is mixed in the cup of joy, and Freya weeps! She sees the end of all things drawing near, and, more in sympathy with the doomed champion than in sorrow, Freya weeps.

I think this myth extremely beautiful, and in it we see the source of many of the ideas of the *Minnesängers* of a much later age, who made love the reward of valour.

But Saturday arrives. Surtur starts from the south. Heimdal seizes his horn to arouse the gods. The last trumpet sounds. The giants storm Valhalla; the monsters seek the gods; the gods slay the monsters, to be slain by them in the death struggle. Flames consume Valhalla, and the middle earth. The ash-tree is shaken to its centre. "Dies iræ, dies illa, solvet sæculum in favilla! Heaven and earth pass away, to be succeeded by a new heaven and a new earth—and they shall never pass away. The new Sunday will be more glorious than the first, and the new gods shall last for ever!

In presenting this wonderful account of the progress of mortal life, although time and the limits assigned to this paper will not permit of my going very fully into detail, I have said enough to show that we English,

although not of the Roman stock, are very far from being descended from a race of illiterate barbarians. And further, I fancy, in the key thus afforded, we may trace a means of understanding mysteries of still higher import, which our ignorance has taken as referring to the creation of the external world of mud and stone, when in reality Divine Arcana are treated of. We are here together on the day of Odin, and I trust to hear some words of comment on my theory, worthy of the patron of the day and the cause of his sons.



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