

On the Science of Language and its Study, with  
special regard to South Africa.

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## ADDRESS

DELIVERED BY

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COLONIAL PHILOLOGIST,

AT THE

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ON

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## ADDRESS.

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LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,—

The Committee of Management of the South African Public Library has conferred upon me the honour of taking the chair at its fifty-third annual meeting, and in accordance with the traditions of this Institution, of addressing you on some scientific or literary subject.

Although born under the English flag, my lot in early life unfortunately did not put me in the position of enjoying the literary treasures which during six centuries had been accumulated by your poets, historians and philosophers. When far away from my native land, I became acquainted with the English language and literature, in that country where your Beowulf, Shakespeare and Byron found their greatest and most eloquent interpreters, their most competent translators and their most enthusiastic admirers.

In Germany I had learnt to understand English and to enjoy an English book; but it is still a great step from reading to writing a language. And when eleven years ago I came back to my native shores, I at once proceeded to the Transgaripian territories, where, during my seven years of wanderings, I never had an opportunity of cultivating English conversation and style. And it is only since my return from there, four years ago, that I have been able to devote myself to a more careful practice of the English idiom.

But I had experience enough of the English character to know that the difficulties arising from my imperfect know-

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ledge of the language would be balanced by your generous forbearance, and at the same time I thought it most opportune to speak to you on a branch of Science which I have been appointed to cultivate in South Africa, especially as my first year's experience in the Grey Library had taught me that the conceptions of "Language and its Study" prevailing in this Colony were still very crude and embryonic. I felt assured that this science deserved a greater share of our sympathy than it had hitherto received.

These were the reasons which prompted me to accept the call of your Committee.

The realm of the Science of Language, however, is so extensive, that I shall hardly be able, in the narrow compass of one hour, to give more than a very superficial outline of its history, principles and results, and a short comment on the question of language with regard to our colonial intellectual and literary life.

I shall therefore proceed to address you "On the Science of Language and its Study, with special regard to South Africa."

It is a curious fact that people have a very fair insight into the structure and nature of things surrounding them, but know little or nothing of themselves.

We can explain the changes of the moon and its eclipses, we can classify animals or plants, we can analyse minerals and can foretell the changes of the weather, but very rarely do we meet a person who is able to give us a fair description of the functions of his own body, or of those organs which alone enable us to communicate with the world without, and make us really worthy of the name *men, i.e. thinkers*, by which our ancestors called themselves, when first they awoke to self-consciousness—I mean the organs of speech.

And still further the greatest and most unwarrantable misconceptions prevail with regard to language itself and its nature.

There seems to be a horror, an innate prejudice, against

a deep study of language, and I believe I can account for it.

Many a one thinks of the days when *typto*, *typteis*, *typtomen*, and, especially, *typtomai* and *typtometha*, were practically demonstrated to him by his schoolmaster, and when *amo* and *amabo* or *amor* and *amabor* were empty and utopian sounds.

And yet everybody thinks he has a right to talk about language, and considers it an easy thing to discuss the most difficult problems of language and its origin.

The Science of Language is a child of the nineteenth century ; it is a production of the cosmopolitan genius of our times. In ancient Greece, whose masterpieces in Art and Literature will serve for ever as standards of intellectual culture and taste, this science was unknown ; the Hellenic spirit lacked all sense and understanding of ethnology and comparative psychology (*Völkerkunde*). They understood nothing which was not essentially Greek. All other nations were either *barbaroi*, *barbarophonoi*, or *allothrooi*. The language of the Persians for instance was compared to the twittering of birds. Herodotus and Æschylus speak with contempt of the Persians, their own Indo-Germanic kith and kin. The Romans, copying the Greeks, spoke of all other nations as barbarians and brutes. They very little dreamt that the descendants of those very gladiators, who were butchered for the amusement and expired under the deafening applause of a Roman mob, would be the ablest and most ingenious commentators on the Language of Latium.

The Jews were not a bit better. They divided all mankind into two sections : the first, formed by themselves, the worshippers of Jahveh ; all the rest were Gojim.

The Indians called all nations of the world *Mletshtshas*, *i.e.* Stammerers, and the ancestors of the present Parsis knew only the worshippers of Ahuramazdao, and the worshippers of the evil spirits.

What would we not give, if Cæsar or some other educated Roman had taken down from the lips of German or British or Gallic gladiators the stories of their gods and heroes, or if Ovid, while living in banishment, had preserved us some Gothic mythology? And we, if we neglect to do such work, with regard to the natives of South Africa, show the same narrowmindedness of which we accuse the ancient nations.

The Christian doctrine of equality broke the spell which hitherto had made outcasts of other nations, and the spread of the Gospel demanded a study of the languages of those nations to which the Holy Scriptures were carried. Hieronymus and Augustine knew Latin, Greek and Hebrew. And no sooner had Christoforo Colombo and Vasco da Gama thrown new worlds open to the commercial enterprise of Europe than Roman Catholic missionaries, especially of the order of the Jesuits, followed the steps of the traders, and gave us learned works on the customs, manners, religions and languages of Japan, China, Africa and America, works which even now call forth our admiration, and from which we humbly have to learn that, with regard to our own continent, the course of the Zambesi, the position of lake Ukerewe with its islands, of lake Mwutan, and of the mighty Congo River, were two and three hundred years ago established geographical facts, and that Livingstone, Cameron, Stanley and Elton have only rediscovered what the 18th century had forgotten.

The names of Athanasius Kircher, Eduardo Lopez, Father Paëz, Cavazzi, and Hervas, will live in the History of the Science of Language, Ethnology, and Geography, of our Continent. Hervas claims the honour of having first pointed out *that Language relationship is based on grammatical structure, and not on mere word similarity*. He also established the fact that the so-called Malayo-Polynesian languages, extending from Madagascar to the Easter Island in the Pacific, claim one parentage, and Wilhelm von Hum-

boldt merely repeated it. And if we mention Hervas we should not forget the Empress Catherine of Russia, the great German philosopher Leibniz, and his friend Witsen, the Burgomaster of Amsterdam, at whose instigation the first specimens of the Hottentot language were written down by Wreede and Greevenbroek at the Cape, in the times of Governor van der Stell. (1691).

But, however much we may admire the arduous labour, the zeal and the energy of those persons who made language the study of their life, we cannot speak of a Science of Language yet, because the workers in that field had no method.

It was not until the year 1808, in which Fred. Schlegel published his work on *The Language and Wisdom of the Indians*, that the veil hanging over the eyes of philologists was torn to pieces, a work which, according to Max Müller, was like the wand of the magician: "It pointed out a place where a mine should be opened." And the miner who blasted the rock and produced the first ore was Francis Bopp, a native of Mayence.

Here I must digress a little and lead you away to India. In 1600 the so-called East India Company was established by a body of London merchants. A second Company was formed 98 years later, and after some vexatious rivalry, in 1708 both combined under the name of the United East India Company. Their increasing wealth and power drew the attention of the Home Government, who tried to appropriate to themselves a part of the power and property of this illustrious Company. These and other circumstances brought about the publication of the so-called *Code of Gentoo Law*, a collection of Native Laws, in 1776, by order of Warren Hastings, the then Governor of India.

I may mention that we have commenced a similar work, which will undoubtedly, if scientifically and methodically executed, have the beneficial effect of making the natives of British South Africa more reconciled to our rule.

In the preface to this *Code of Gentoo Law*, Halhed, a Dane, gave the first full account of Sanscrit, the sacred language of India, in which the Vedas and other books were written. Sir William Jones, who was appointed Chief Justice of Calcutta, laid the foundation of the Asiatic Society in 1784. His attention was drawn to the article on Sanscrit in the *Code of Gentoo Law*, and he at once took earnestly and successfully to the study of the sacred language and literature of the Brahmins. Another pupil of the priests was the merchant James Wilkins, who translated a part of the epic poem Mahabaratta, and, later on, the Hitopadesa. Both Wilkins and Jones, especially the latter, were struck with the wonderful identity of grammatical structure in Sanscrit and the classical languages. In 1789 the first Latin Translation of Kalidasa's Sakuntala was published by Jones, and, shortly before his death in 1794, the Law Book or Code of Manu. His beautiful and rare collection of Sanscrit manuscripts passed into the hands of Henry Thomas Colebrooke, then British Resident at Berar. This scholar issued many valuable editions of Sanscrit literature, texts as well as grammars and dictionaries.

Thus to enlightened Englishmen is due the honour of having introduced and facilitated to European scholars the study of the Sanscrit language.

Without these helps and preparations Fred. Schlegel would never have been able to write his famous book on *The Language and Wisdom of the Indians*, and though a German scholar, he could not but attribute to Sir William Jones the priority of the ideas expounded in his work. August Wilhelm Schlegel and Lassen followed in revealing the wonderful mysteries of Indian literature, until Francis Bopp in 1816 gave us the first outline sketch of an *Indo-Germanic* Grammar, the precursor of his masterpiece, the Comparative Grammar of Sanscrit, Zend, Armenian, Greek, Latin, Lithuanian, Old Slavonian and German.



Next to him must be mentioned Wilhelm von Humboldt, the brother of the great naturalist, Alexander von Humboldt. He laid the foundation of the "Philosophy of Language" in the introduction to his great work on the Kawi Language.

And the ring of the founders of Comparative Philology would be incomplete were we to omit August Frederick Pott, whose *Etymological Researches* appeared first in 1833 and 1836, and have seen since a second and considerably enlarged edition. As we turn over the leaves of this truly gigantic work, we find difficulty in believing that one mortal alone could have written it; and I suppose, if we were to live another two hundred years, some clever and ingenious philologist will tell the world that these *Etymological Researches* were the work of different authors, and that *Pott* is but a collective name for the various contributors.

Bopp and Pott's method was successfully applied to the Teutonic tongues, in a truly grand and colossal work, the *Deutsche Grammatik*, by Jacob Grimm. He is at the same time the discoverer of the *Law of Consonantal Change*, called after him *Grimm's Law*.

On the method and principles laid down by these men, is based the Classification of the Languages of Mankind. Let us pause for a moment to learn something about the principles of this method.

What is language, we ask? How easily the question is put, but how difficult to answer it.

Language is a creation of society, or, better, of a community. It is the touchstone of the perceptive power of the community by which it is spoken, and it contains the intellectual characteristics and mental peculiarities of that community. It is the mirror which reflects the picture and impression made by the outer world on man's soul, and it is the medium by which the mind communicates its inner life to the outer world.

Under the same conditions, the outer world will make on any community the same impression, and the language of that community will reflect this impression in a way which corresponds to the general impression made on the mind of the community.

Now all languages, even the unwritten idioms of savages, consist of grammar and words. A community, to make itself understood, that is, to communicate its impressions of the outer world, uses these words not in an arbitrary and capricious manner, but arranging them into sentences according to certain laws and principles. This arrangement constitutes what we call grammar. Words uttered without being pressed into the mould of grammar are empty sounds without reason.

The articulate sounds, of which words consist, are changeable. Dialects belonging to the same parentage have laws of phonetic change of their own, which do not apply to dialects of another stock.

Grammar, however, that is, the mode in which the mind expresses the impressions of the outer world, remains unchanged.

In order, therefore, *to compare two languages and to fix the degree of their affinity, we can only be guided by the result of grammatical i.e. structural comparison.* Consequently, nothing is more deceptive than superficial word comparison.

The dialects of savages—I only refer to the Bushman dialects of our own continent, to the dialects of the Indians of America and the Aborigines of Australia—are submitted to a continual change. If they hardly allow word comparisons among themselves, we cannot claim for them relationship with the dialects of communities divided from times immemorial by the vast ocean, on account of superficial and accidental verbal similarities. According to such a mode of comparison there would be no difficulty of proving a primeval relationship of all languages.

But you will say, "Did you not tell us just now that Professor Pott has become famous through his Etymological Researches?" Quite right, and I could add the names of Kuhn, Curtius, Grimm, Delbrück, Fick and many more. Therefore to prevent the conception that Etymology is to be rejected, I must add a few remarks on this point.

There is a real Science of Etymology, but it finds its application in Comparative Philology, after grammatical relationship has been established, and then only. Etymology cannot be regarded as a science unless it is based entirely on sound phonological research. Both Phonology and Etymology are instruments of the Science of Language and Comparative Philology, but they are not themselves Comparative Philology.

The laws of Etymology can only be established by the medium of Phonology, and unless every *jot and tittle* is conscientiously observed the laws of Etymology are of no avail. The laws of phonetic change are the only guide in the comparison of words and forms, and without these laws it is simply impossible to reason scientifically on the common origin and history of words. *It is on the strength of phonetic laws once established that, in various dialects, words which had not one single letter in common, were with mathematical exactness reconstructed and traced back to the same root.* Beyond roots we cannot go, any more than the biologist can go beyond the protoplasma of organic life.

Grammatical structure, *i.e.* the conception which a community has of the sentence formed by language and the arrangement of the component parts of the sentence, is the supreme criterion for the relationship of two idioms; without this criterion we cannot go a step further. *But, at the same time, if words and forms put under the phonetic and etymological microscope do not show any substantial relationship, the strongest evidence of structural similarity will never entitle us to vindicate for two languages a common parentage.*

The modern Science of Language, like all inductive sciences, viz., Biology, Comparative Anatomy, etc., is based on *accurate knowledge*. The comparative method requires for its operations historically proved and scientifically tested facts. And it cannot do otherwise. A fact is something *accurate*, something of which the quantity is clearly circumscribed and defined, and the quality and ingredient parts minutely analyzed. Moreover, the cause and effect and the relation of a fact to other facts, and the numerous agencies based on eternal, unchangeable laws, which produce as the end-result a new fact from the combination of already established facts, must be clear and transparent. Only by means of facts are we in the position to draw conclusions which lead to scientific results. And if the comparative and inductive method is worth anything, if it has led to scientific results in one branch of human knowledge, we are justified in expecting that it will lead to results in Comparative Philology. This science, however, deals with the morphological or formal conditions of language; everything that is formal is the result of rational combination.

Scientific method and investigation are strictly against spinning theories in accordance with our wishes or fancies. It is not unusual for scientific investigation to tear to pieces our pet theories, and tell us truths which are not very palatable. The history of culture and civilization and the annals recording the progress of science in the 19th century prove this in a thousand instances. Thus it is in Comparative Philology. The principles and method of comparison for all languages are alike. *There is—and I must repeat it again—only one standard by which we can measure all languages, and that standard is grammatical structure.* We cannot, without being justly accused of want of method, apply this standard in one case, and in the next, when we find this mode of comparison not agreeing with what we wish the result to be, apply superficial word comparisons, based on doubtful phonetic resemblances, Phonetic com-

parison can only then be admitted when relationship and coincidence of grammatical structure have been proved.

I spoke of Phonology and Etymology, and I take this opportunity of remarking that all those who work in the field of South African Languages should apply a uniform phonetic alphabet, say for instance the Standard Alphabet of Professor Lepsius, in a modified form. Travellers and missionaries especially, if they wish to serve the cause of South African Philology, should be well acquainted with the principles of Phonology before they venture to write down texts in the languages of savages. No missionary should be sent to the heathen without having acquired as thorough a knowledge of phonetics as he has of the Gospel; and he should be taught to respect every accent, every consonant, in fact every *jot and tittle in any, even the most barbarous, dialect he may hereafter have to analyse*. Here I sincerely regret to say that much of what has been published in the native literature of South Africa, especially in the Bantu languages, offers but small help to scientific Etymology, on account of the orthography, I might rather say, Kakography. The clicks and their relation to the consonants and vowels are very unsatisfactorily expressed. They seem to puzzle people, and yet their origin, nature and physiology can be as easily and clearly described as that of any consonant. In fact the clicks group with the consonants, they are produced by the same organs,—lips, tongue, teeth, gum, etc., as the consonants. And surely if the **||K**hosa or Zulu language were really phonetically written, there would be no difficulty in showing as regards the greater number of words containing clicks, especially in **||K**hosa, that they are importations from the Hottentot, especially the Khoikhoi. And being thus able to trace the true etymology of Kafir words, we should be able to read the past history of battles and friendly intercourse between the Khoikhoi and **||K**hosa, as well as if it were handed down to us in written records.

It is therefore an urgent want for us here in South Africa that a Standard Orthography for the Native Languages should be introduced in all official, educational and public departments. The task is not as difficult as it may appear at first sight. I hope that, for instance, our land surveyors in their future examinations will have to show a thorough efficiency in the application of a phonetic alphabet, when mapping native territories. At present much confusion is caused simply by employing different modes of spelling the same name.

Taking up again the thread of our discourse on the principles of comparative philology, we saw that grammatical structure formed the standard of language affinity. Languages accordingly are classified into

1. Isolating languages,
2. Agglutinating languages,
3. Inflecting languages.

This mode of classification is called the morphological classification. We shall afterwards have to say something on the genealogical classification.

Of all groups of languages, the isolating class presents the simplest form. There are no word classes, such as substantive, adjective, numeral, preposition or postposition and adverb; nor are time, mood, person, gender or number formally expressed by suffix, prefix or infix. Accordingly there can be no declensions, no conjugations, no degrees of comparison as we have them in the second, and still more in the third class of languages.

The root in the isolating class remains unchanged. *Tu* in Chinese may mean *great, greatness, greatly*; *Pi* again *equal, equality, to be equal, equally*. And it is solely by the position of the root in the sentence that its class nature is ascertained. And still this class of languages is not less fit for literary purposes than our Indo-European languages, which belong to the third stage. The rich Chinese literature

proves that every shade of thought has been expressed by their philosophers and great thinkers.

The Annamese, Siamese, Burmese and Tibetan languages belong to this stage.

I may at once mention that all languages belonging to the second and third stage once passed through this monosyllabic or isolating stage. Our own Indo-Germanic languages with their complicated inflections show unmistakable traces of a monosyllabic origin.

And, again, the second class, of which we shall directly give an illustration, has been the channel through which our own language had to pass to its present development. Thus in language, as in all other organic growths, we see the working of the principle of evolution.

If we mark the root with **R**, we may express the morphological composition of this first stage by the formula **R + R + R**, etc.

Next, we have the agglutinative languages, which attach or glue to the bare root particles at the beginning or at the end or in the middle, or beginning and end, etc., etc., and are called accordingly prefix, suffix, infix, etc., languages. The root remains entirely unchangeable, and these particles, generally, not always, of a pronominal nature, modify the meaning of the root. Thus in Hottentot we have **KHOI** as root of the word man; *Khoi-b* man, *Khoi-s* woman, *Khoi-gu* men, *Khoi-ti* women, *Khoi-si* (adj.) or *Khoi-χa* humane, friendly, *Khoi-χa-se* (adv.) friendly, *Khoi-si-ga-gu* to marry each other, verbally to be towards each other friends. **IAU** to flow, *lau-b* blood, *i.e.* that which flows, *lau-χa* bloody. From these specimens we infer that the Hottentot is a suffix language. And from the specimens in Bantu we shall learn that the latter is a prefix language.

Herero : Sing. *omu-ndu* man, plur. *ova-ndu* ; sing. *e-yuru* heaven, plur. *oma-yuru*.

Tsuana : Sing. *lo-ru* cloud, plur. *ma-ru* ; sing. *se-fuba* breast, plur. *li-fuba*.

Herero : zepa to kill, ri-zepa Reflex.

Tswana : bona to see, i-pona Reflex.

Kafir : tanda to love, zi-tanda Reflex.

These prefixes are all of a pronominal nature, while the suffixes in Bantu are of a nominal origin.

Khosa : in-taka bird, in-tak-ana little bird, um-fo man, um-f-ana little man, youth. Or *teta*, ||Khosa to *speak*, forms the following derivatives : tet-ela Relat., tet-isa Causat., tet-eka Rel. Caus.

In this agglutinative group we first meet with the various categories of words, such as substantives, adjectives, numerals, prepositions or postpositions, adverbs and conjunctions.

Here we first have derivatives in the true sense of the word, also the embryonic germs of declension and conjugation, though not in the full sense of the inflecting languages ; and therefore these terms should be used with reserve. Mood and tense are well developed, and generally, for instance in Turkish and Hottentot, surpass in this respect anything known in the next fullgrown Indo-Germanic tongues, such as Sanscrit, Greek or Lithuanian.

Suppose we mark the root again with R, and the various particles, which are prefixed, suffixed or infixes with *p*, *s*, *i*, we get for the agglutinative or agglomerating stage the following formulas : 1. pR ; 2. Rs ; 3. R ; 4. pR ; 5. Rs, 6. pRs. *etc.*, Thus we see that two characteristic facts distinguish the agglutinating from the isolating class.

In the former the word is no longer composed from the root alone, but is formed by the union of several roots. In the second place, one only of these roots thus agglomerated retains its real value ; in the others the individual meaning becomes obscured and passes into the second rank. The primary root being thus retained in its primitive form, the others lose their independence, and fall into their place side by side of each other. These prefixes and suffixes are loosely connected, so that they may be easily removed with-



out impairing the original meaning of the root. The fissures are still clearly to be seen where they are connected with the root. And this exactly is called *Agglutination*.

The tongues belonging to this class are the most numerous on the earth. All the languages of Africa, the Egyptian and its kindred, the Hamitic excepted, the Malayo-Polynesian, the languages of Australia and America, the Ural-Altaiic or Finnish-Tataric, and the Dravidian or Dekhan, not to forget the Basque in Spain, are reckoned in this class.

But it must be distinctly understood that they are not genealogically related, and that this classification is entirely based on their formal or anatomical appearance.

It will therefore be necessary here to say something on the so-called *Turanian* theory of Professor Max Müller.

A certain venerable old patriarch in Central Asia is supposed to have given birth to a race, whose idiom became the common language of the so-called *Turanian* tribes. Professor Max Müller is the godfather of this theory, which is now represented by three different schools, each with some amendment to it.

The first school holds that all languages, with the exception of Indo-Germanic, Semitic and Hamitic, form this *Turanian* group. Thus they not only claim for this family all the abovementioned agglutinative tongues of mankind, but also the monosyllabic or isolating languages of the first class.

The second school confines the name to the Uralo-Altaiic, Dravidian, Malayo-Polynesian, Tibetan and Siamese, leaving out other very important agglutinative tongues, such as the Nuba, Bantu, Central and West African Negro languages, Hottentot, Japanese, etc., and dragging in the Siamese and Thai, belonging to the isolating class.

The third school, for the same or other reasons, does not like to do away with the name altogether, although they feel the mischief it has in its train, and apply it now entirely to the Uralo-Altaiic family.

The greater part of these pretended Turanian languages have only this one point in common, that they are agglutinating. But their mode of agglutinating and the phonetic composition of their roots defy every effort to prove them genealogically related. Professors Pott, Schleicher and Whitney have very successfully refuted the Turanian theory, and we may consider the question a settled one.

Let us now proceed to inspect the third stage of language development, the *Inflecting Stage*. At the outset we have to answer the question, "What is Inflection?"

First: The roots of inflected languages have this peculiarity, that the various modifications of the root are not only expressed by suffix and prefix, but by phonetic change; thus we have *sing, sang, sung*; *think, thought*; *man, men*; *goose, geese*; *leipo, leloipa*; *fangen, fang*; *cuno, cecini*; *pario, peperì*, etc.

Secondly: The root so grows together with a second root, or with a formal element (suffix or prefix), that no fissure can be seen, and that neither root nor formal part, if cut off from each other, has any meaning. In short *Root and Affix amalgamate into a new organism*. Sometimes the root, as we have seen in the agglutinative languages, remains unchanged.

If we now represent this power of phonetic change in the root, by the index  $x$ , we get for the inflecting stage the following formulas:  $R_i^x$ ,  $R_i^x s$ ,  $R_i^x ss$ ,  $R_i^x sss$ , etc.,  $p R_i^x$ , etc., and  $p R_i^x s$ .

The inflecting languages are represented by two large families:

1. The so-called Aryan or Indo-Germanic Languages, and
2. The Semitic Tongues, amongst which some count the Hamitic or North-East African Languages.

Be it enough to state that the methods of inflecting in these three families vary so much from each other, that all attempts to bring them under one genealogical heading have hitherto proved abortive:

Schleicher and Whitney have most carefully analysed these differences, but it would lead us too far, in our limited time, to discuss their analysis.

I have repeatedly mentioned the term "genealogical classification," and shall have briefly to say something about it.

Languages may group morphologically together without belonging to the same genealogical class. But languages cannot be genealogically related, without belonging to the same morphological group. The genealogical classification has been hitherto applied only to the Indo-Germanic, Semitic and Hamitic languages. In all other languages it has not yet been undertaken, though here and there some feeble attempts have been made, viz., with the Bantu and Polynesian.

The genealogical classification is mainly based on the real substance of a language, it has to do with its Grammar and Dictionary, and besides grammatical structure compares the roots of words. Its main instrument is Etymology: but as I said before, Etymology is only a secondary element in Comparative Philology, and can then only be applied when *Grammatical* and *Morphological* relationship has been established.

Thus morphologically Hottentot (Khoikhoi and Sá [Bushman]) and Bantu (Tsuana, Khosa, Zulu, Herero, Mbo) are agglutinative languages, but, comparing them again grammatically, the one is exclusively suffixing, and all the suffixes show the same root, being of a pronominal nature, while the latter is prefix-suffixing, the prefix being the main characteristic. The prefixes in Bantu show among themselves the same origin, and are also of a pronominal nature. Derivatives in Hottentot are formed by pronominal suffixes, but in Bantu by nominal elements, now for the most part worn down to particles, which are suffixed, viz.:

Moreover, Sá and Khoikhoi have this peculiarity, that all

roots are *monosyllabic* and *end in a vowel* (Auslaut vocalisch), viz., *khoi, a, !gu, yai, i*, etc.), while in Bantu the roots as a rule are *not monosyllabic*, and though ending in a vowel, this vowel always is an *a*, thus we have *rata, herara, tona, kora*, etc.

But I must reserve a detailed examination of the languages of South Africa for another occasion. I shall now proceed to show what the study of Comparative Philology has done to unveil to us the primeval history of our own ancestors. I said that language is the telescope with which we can look into the very dawn of man's life. Let us turn over the leaves of Pictet's *Origines Indo-Européennes*, of Pott's *Etymological Researches* and Fick's *Comparative Dictionary of the Indo-Germanic Languages*, and we shall be able to draw a fair picture of the social condition and daily life of our ancestors, before they left their primitive home, and migrated to the South, North, East and West.

The primitive Aryans lived in a country well watered, mountainous and very rugged. The mountains were in the winter capped with snow, their slopes covered with thick forests in which oaks formed a prominent feature. The forests offered cool shade to the hunter and traveller, for in summer, again, it could be very hot. For travelling purposes, boats as well as other vehicles were used. But travelling was extremely dangerous; wolves, bears and smaller carnivorous animals kept the traveller constantly on the alert, and the poisonous bites of snakes were known, but also the beneficial and healing effects of herbs and other antidotes.

Family life was well developed. Our ancestors were monogamists, and the father was the lord and head of the family. He was called *patis* (Greek *posis*), the ruler. His helpmate the wife was the mistress *patni* (Greek *potnia*). The various degrees of relationship were well distinguished, and there were such differences as wife's sister (*syâli*) and the wife of a brother (*yataras*). The father was supreme

judge of controversies, and had the lives of those he protected in his hands. The brother was the helping one, the bearing one, while the sister was the provider or the caring one. The daughter (*duhitar*) had her name from her main household duty, namely, the milking of the cows. The community was a family, but on a larger base, and governed on the same principles. The eldest man of the ruling family was the chief. He again stood under the head of the tribe, the king or *râgan*. The king's council consisted of the various heads of the clans and families. The communities lived in villages, which were surrounded by fences, in order to protect them against the attacks of the beasts of the forests. The pasturage was the property of the community, while the lands for agricultural purposes were allotted to the fathers of the families, according to stipulated rules and regulations. Houses, cattle and movables belonged to the individual; the houses were strongly built of wood and had thatched roofs. The chief's or *râgan's* house was built on a larger scale than those of others, it had large lofty halls for convivial purposes, where the bowl was often sent round and music was made on shells and reed pipes.

Among the domestic animals we find the bull, cows, oxen, horses, goats, sheep and pigs. Milk formed the chief drink, but black broth, a sort of hodgepodge, was also made. Dogs accompanied the herdsmen to the pasturage and kept watch during the night. The mistress of the house had to guard her stores against the aggressions of the mice, which had the significant name of *thieves*.

Among the feathery, tribe we find the cock announcing the day. Pigeons, geese and ducks were kept in the fowl yard.

The cuckoo was the messenger of the spring. Priests watched the flight of birds, and the future was divined from their movements, especially those of the falcon.

For the cultivation of the soil, ploughs were in use; and the main work on which men prided themselves most, next

to being brave in battle, was the cultivation of the soil, hence the name Aryans, *i.e.* Agriculturists.

Among the cereals, we find chiefly wheat and barley ; and flour was prepared for their meals in the shape of porridge or bread.

The metals, gold, silver and bronze were best known ; and lovers in those days already presented each other with jewellery. The dagger was originally made of stone, afterwards of bronze ; battle axes, swords and other arms and implements were manufactured by a certain class of men, the smiths, who were held in high estimation on account of their skill.

Pottery, not only dried in the sun, but baked in the fire, was of great variety. We read of vases, jars, pots, cups and dishes. And there is every reason to believe that the richer classes had their vases ornamented by skilful painters.

For their daily intercourse and commercial dealings they had a decimal system developed up to one hundred. Clothing was made of wool and hemp, and sandals of the hides of large game and oxen.

Besides the smaller communities or villages, there were townships, *vastu* or *puris* (Greek *asty* and *polis*), connected by roads, on which caravans as well as single hawkers carried merchandize ; and vehicles and animals served as the means of conveyance.

These early Aryans were able horsemen, and made inroads into the territory of other tribes, on horseback, and carried away in hasty flight their *spolia opima*. In battle the axe, sword, lance, bow, arrow, club and shield were used ; also stones, in the heat of the conflict, when other weapons were broken or lost.

The chief led his people in battle, he had to be the foremost ; in peace he ruled and protected them and was their supreme judge.

The moon was called the measurer of time, for according

to its changes they calculated their chronological dates. Among the stars we find the Great Bear mentioned and the Pleiades. The heavenly vault, *Varuna*, was worshipped as All-Father. The religion of the primitive ancestors of our race consisted of a purely natural worship of the various heavenly bodies and phenomena, such as the Sun, Dawn, Moon and other bright powers, which were all considered to be the manifestations of the one Father of Heaven, *Dyauspitar*, who with his immortal children, stars and moon, dwelt on a glorious and magnificent Olympus.

Opposed to *Dyauspitar* there were the evil spirits of the dark night. There was the gloomy god of the clouds, *Vritra*, who was supposed to steal the golden herds of heaven, the cows of the clouds, and kept back from the earth the fertilising rain, until he was slain by the lightning arrow of Indra.

It was in the midst of the dark night when the winds were howling, and crashing thunder deafening the ear, that the ancient Aryan believed the evil spirits were lurking about. Then and there awoke in his breast the feeling of guilt, and he sought forgiveness in prayer, offering and self-penance.

There was an idea of a life after this; the souls of the deceased had to pass through a broad river, that is the atmosphere, and they were led by a faithful dog to the abodes of their friends and relations.

There were legends and myths of a common ancestor, *Manu*, and of a great deluge which destroyed everything except *Manu*.

I could have drawn this picture of the social and daily life of our ancestors more elaborately and minutely, but this little sketch will give us a sufficiently good idea of the state of culture and civilisation among the old Aryans. My object has been to show how, with the aid of language, we may read the records of the past; and in a similar manner we shall be able to read the history of the Hottentot and

Bantu races, as soon as we have succeeded in restoring the records of their languages.

Having taken this short and very superficial survey of the *History, Principles and Results of Comparative Philology*, we will proceed to the consideration of Language in its bearings on Education.

There is indeed no branch of education which demands our attention so much and is of such vital importance to the *intellectual* and *ethical* development, both of the individual and of the nation, as the study of language.

In fact nothing is done in the dark workshop of our mind without the aid of language. As the shadow follows the body, the articulate sound is attached and linked to the thought, and, while the mind is in full action though in silent meditation, the greatest thoughts which ever thronged on the brow of an Alexander, Cæsar, Homer or Shakespere, would never have been realized without language: *Whether we speak, or whether we are silent, as soon as we think, we really speak. All thinking is silent conversation, either with ourselves or with others; for words, whether they are pronounced, or whether they are thought, are the inseparable form, the natural mould of the substance of thought and of reason itself. Language is the embodiment of the mind!*

Therefore, if we want to understand our own psychological life, if we wish to study the minds of others or to watch the progress of culture and intellect in whole nations, in order to ascertain the mutual working of the laws which brought about this development, we must study language itself.

Leibniz, accordingly, and very appropriately, called language *the mirror of the soul*; because only by the medium of language can we grasp and digest the ingredient substances of thought and reason.

Language, again, in itself has a retroverse action on our thought; it has the widest and most wonderful bearing on the development of our mind, on account of its relation to our inner life. The orator addresses a meeting from the



platform. From his mouth issues a breath ; by a peculiar action of the tongue and other organs of speech, this breath in a continual flow and rotation offers like a kaleidoscope a series of phonetic pictures, and these pictures impress themselves on the minds of his audience and produce there new thoughts and emotions. The Promethean spark from his mind flies on the wings of these articulate sounds to his audience, and nestles itself in the secret recesses and abodes of the souls of the hearers, creating there new feelings, new emotions, new ideas, ever acting as an invigorating and propelling force. The boldest and highest speculations of the philosopher ; the cravings and yearnings of our heart after the Infinite ; the deepest devotional feelings with which the grandeur of Nature impresses itself on our soul ; what we praise as the Divine primeval revelation ; the out-cry and protest of Liberty against Despotism ; the despair and convulsions of the wicked conscience ; the soothing and balmy consolation which flows from the lips of a sympathising friend ; the smarting of a cruelly wronged heart, and its craving for justice and revenge ; the sweet whisperings of the lover ; the first accents of endearment the infant stammers at the mother's breast : in short, whatever has stirred, still fills, and will for ever move the human heart, all these feelings have but one willing messenger and eloquent interpreter .  
*Articulate Speech!*

Language, thus, is not only one of the various instruments of thought for communicating with the outer world, but the only legitimate and therefore natural mediator of social and intellectual life.

To connect the succession of periods in the history and development of mankind in an unbroken chain ; to describe the natural influence and connection of the great geniuses who imprinted their mark on the face of their times ; to trace the intellectual growth and decay of nations, their action and reaction on each other ; all these grand heirlooms of history and civilisation are chiefly handed down from generation to

generation by this volatile and spiritual production of man. And even monuments, tools, implements, and other archaeological relics of ages past, however valuable they may be for the student who attempts to lift the veil from prehistoric times, would remain sealed records were it not for the position of language.

But why should we speak of ideas so high and treasures so precious? Even the most simple, absurd and common events of daily life can be communicated by language only. Artists may transform their ideal beauties into marble, the painter may throw the combinations of his rich fancy on canvas: but can the sculptor or painter also express by his art such a simple sentence as the following: "In 1882 Parliament met on the seventeenth of March. The most important part in the Governor's opening speech dealt with the Basuto question"—Never!—This peculiarity of language, that it offers to thought the only facility for combining time and circumstance, necessarily makes it, as I said before, the only natural and legitimate interpreter of thought. Without language we should stand on a level with the brute, and mankind never would be called the crowning work and masterpiece of Creation.

Thus, if language is the form, tie, embodiment and mirror of the mind, the natural interpreter of man's inner life, and the most important instrument for its development, it is manifest *that in education* the study of language is the most important and congenial occupation not only of the scholar, but of every man who aspires to a higher education, and being both of a psychological and ethical character, claims our most earnest attention and most persevering energy.

Studying language is studying psychology, *i.e.* the creation and origin of thought, in its very workshop.

The task of education is, first to show the process and practice of transforming thought into speech, the life and development of the former by the latter, and secondly, to

explain the origin, life and development of language in the mind.

All men who have made their mark in the history of education have forcibly demanded the mastering of language as the first step in the intellectual and moral training of each individual, and claimed for a thorough acquisition of the mother tongue a careful and deep study of foreign languages and literatures. Our own mother tongue remains a sealed book without the knowledge of some other language. For we are so organized that we cannot understand our own nature without having put it in the full light and reflex of the nature of others.

In the sweat of our brow we are condemned to eat our bread, and the lower wants of our own nature are clamorous for satisfaction. But we do not live by bread alone; language, next to bread, serves the demands of our practical life. And above the drudgery of daily life there remains a yearning and craving after an ideal, and the interpreter of these feelings is, and for ever will remain, language. And as the possession of our native idiom gives us access to other minds, so the acquisition of languages widens our sphere of mental intercourse, lays open additional sources of enlightenment and increases the number of our instructors.

The easiest and most successful way of cultivating our intellectual faculties is philological study. This supplies us with one needed ground of comparison, and brings characteristic qualities to our conscious comprehension. Nothing else develops the faculty of literary criticism, and leads to that skilled and artistic handling of our mother tongue, which is the highest adornment of a cultivated mind.

This seemingly roundabout course through other tongues, in order to master effectively the resources of our own vernacular, is after all the shortest and cheapest. Again, nothing else so effectively trains the capacity of penetrating into the minds and hearts of men, of reading aright the records of the past, and leads us into so many new avenues of the

social and intellectual life of ancient races, and teaches us so clearly that we are linked to the past in an unbroken chain. The pulse of our present civilisation beats in the heart of the past; and not one atom of our modern culture can boast of independence and originality. The history of nations bygone may be read in the pages of language.

Those, especially, who aspire to the highest culture of intellect, who make philosophical and historical studies their lifelong occupation, require a sound study of a philology that reaches far beyond that of modern languages, for not one single part of our modern languages and their literatures has an entirely independent growth. In everything, socially and intellectually, we have to follow up its roots in the life of nations belonging to the past. Much, it is true, has been made accessible by translations of the ancient classics. But, how tame and lifeless the best translations are compared with the classical original, those only understand who have mastered Greek and Latin so as thoroughly to enjoy an ancient author.

In Athens and Rome are the beginnings of nearly all that we value most. Greek and Latin stand incontestably first as our mental drill masters. They are like the twin-lakes Victoria and Albert Nyanza in which the Nile has its origin; the mountain torrents which centre in these, to issue in that majestic stream, are by comparison hardly worth our attention. *There* is, as I said before, the very heart of the great past, and it is through these classical languages that the glorious days of Thermopylæ and Salamis, the golden age of Pericles and Augustus, speak to us.

In no other literature of the world do we meet with such pregnancy of expression, such radiant beauty of thought, such vigour and fertility of fancy, such plastic and elegant form of diction. Greek and Latin, therefore, will for ever remain the models of our education, and the antiquity they unveil before our astonished eyes will be studied in spite of

the objections raised in modern times by men who are considered to have the first word in educational matters.

And of the two classical languages I can recommend, without fear of contradiction, the Greek as the most perfect and best preserved example of the synthetic type, a type through which our own English had to pass. But as you know, besides this genealogical affiliation there is a direct connection between Greek and Latin on the one side, and the German, English and French on the other side. Especially with regard to English, the rich stores of words, technical terms and phrases came partly through the channel of French, partly direct from the ancient languages. And in our daily work we continually have to return to them to satisfy our growing wants of expression.

The languages most nearly allied to ours by common parentage are German and French. The former, belonging to the same Teutonic stock as English, is genealogically our next of kin. It is most nearly connected with our own circumstances and character. And the mutual intellectual influence of the two nations, and their love and admiration for each other, have made the Germanic race politically supreme. For culture breeds culture, and intellect is the supreme power with which mankind will conquer even the forces of nature.

As I said in the introduction, there is really no country in the world where England's great poets are more admired and better translated than in Germany. Your Shakespere is ours. In Germany we have the best Shakespere Society. Germans learn English for the sole purpose of reading Shakespere in his mother tongue. Tieck and Schlegel's translation of the works of the Swan of Avon is acknowledged to be an improvement on the poet's own original. German actors like Schröder, Devrient and Dawison have successfully rivalled Garrick, Kean and Kemble, and other English celebrities of the stage, in reproducing the grand characters of Shakespere's plays, Delius, Bodenstedt,

Gervinus, Genée, Ulrici, Elze, have for ever linked their names with that of the great Briton by their classical commentaries and essays on his works, and their excellent biographies of the interpreter of the human heart. Shakespere has become in Germany a household name. If one wishes to know Shakespere, let him study modern German classics from Göthe down to the present time. Every word of Shakespere re-echoes in the heart of every German who reads his works. We call him the *Herzenskündiger*. The Germans truly love, admire and worship Shakespere, and quote him as they do the three heroes of modern German literature, Lessing, Göthe and Schiller. In fact the last classical period of German literature roots partly in the study of Shakespere, and many a beautiful blossom of Göthe's genius bears an indisputable family likeness to those of Shakespere's Muse. The songs and melodies of Heine, the poet of the *Weltschmerz*, are saturated with the gloomy grandeur of Byronism.

At German gymnasiums, the boys have their English societies or *Kränzchen*, in which they read, either in translation or in the original, the plays of Shakespere, and enjoy the poems of Moore and Byron, and even attempt to translate the English authors in their original metre and verse.

There is no other foreign poet with whom the Germans are equally familiar, except Homer, the genius *par excellence*. All other foreigners—Virgil, Ovid, Horace, Dante, Tasso, Racine, Corneille, Cervantes and Camoens—are admired as we admire a marble statue.

Your Beowulf is better studied and known in Germany than in England. Macaulay's History has been translated and reprinted in the original at Leipsic, and we learn that it had a larger sale in Germany than the works of any German historian. Scott, Bulwer, Dickens and Thackeray are to be found in every German Public Library as well as in every private collection, and the productions of the

best English writers are expected with the same impatience at Berlin and Leipsic as they are in London.

How extensively English is cultivated and studied is clearly proved by the fact that we have in Germany four different scientific periodicals; two, the *Anglia* edited by Wüleker and Trautmann, and the *Englische Studien* edited by Kölbing, exclusively for English language and literature; and two, for modern languages, Herrig's *Archiv für das Studium der neueren Sprachen*, and Ebert and Lemcke's *Jahrbuch für Romanische und Englische Literatur*. But even in these latter publications English occupies the greater space. And in every Realschule English is compulsory as is French. More than 100,000 young Germans are annually instructed in these schools in English, not to speak of the number of those who learn the language by private tuition.

The English language and literature has so many admirers in Germany that they are to be numbered—I may safely say without fear of exaggeration—by millions, and the prophesy of the great Teutonic philologist, Jacob Grimm, is being verified from day to day, that the Anglo-Saxon tongue of Great Britain will become a cosmopolitan language, the medium of commercial and intellectual communication for the Races of Mankind.

And the same tribute has been paid to German poets and philosophers by the enlightened public of England. Göthe and Schiller are well known through Carlyle, Lewes and others. The famous illustrations of Kaulbach's *Frauen-gestalten* of Göthe's works have been republished with English text, and are the delight of the best of the English nation. And if we look at the weekly issues of English periodicals, like the *Academy* and *Athenæum*, we are sure to see notices of some new translation of German works; and every book of importance published in Germany, no matter to what science it belongs, is carefully reviewed in English periodicals. The works of German genius find

almost as many thoughtful readers in the colleges of England as they find in their Fatherland. The study and thorough knowledge of German is now considered, in England one of the most important attainments of a higher education. The most candid acknowledgment is given of the invigorating and refreshing influence of the German mind on the English. Now, in this Colony, where the greater part of the white community speak a vernacular so closely related to the literary Dutch of the Netherlands, one would think it a matter of course that German should be easily taught and learnt, especially as Dutch is only one of the many Low German idioms.

French, again, which is unsurpassed for its elegance in form and diction, and which has had such a deep influence on English, Dutch and German language and literature, should not be neglected. Although there is a strong national line of demarcation drawn between France and Germany, French is taught in every German Gymnasium, Realschule and Rectoratschule. A German student reads with ease the great French classics, and expresses himself without difficulty in conversation and writing in the language of France. To show the importance the French attach to good and elegant expression, I may remind you of the French proverb "Le style c'est l'homme." In spite of his pressing duties, the great French naturalist Cuvier regularly attended lectures on style and rhetorics. In the elegant and classic style of Alexander von Humboldt we easily discover the influence of French diction. Everywhere in European Society the social qualification of a man is measured by his power of expressing himself in French.

Not only can the Germans pride themselves in having laid the foundation of the Comparative Grammar of the Indo-Germanic languages, but a German professor, Diez, wrote the best Comparative Grammar and Etymological Dictionary of the Romance languages. These two facts bear sufficient testimony to the great stress and value put on the



study of French, and its cognate dialects in Germany Brachet's French grammar, based on Diez's work, should be introduced in every Government school in this Colony.

Some of the most prominent branches of thought, in English as well as in Dutch, have to be followed up to their roots in the French and German literatures. They, by their beauties and peculiarities, are admirably fitted to furnish the ground of comparative literary study; and the same advantage is possessed by the structure and usages of the languages themselves, an advantage heightened by the historical relation they sustain in English. *Had we nothing else with yet stronger recommendations to apply to, the German and French, especially the former, would answer for us all the essential disciplinary purposes of philological study; as indeed to many they are and must be made to answer those purposes.* (Whitney). As the case stands they are among the indispensable parts of a disciplinary education. *He who quits school and enters on the arena of life without mastering either or both of them cannot claim to have enjoyed the benefit of a thorough liberal and intellectual training. Whatever natural attainments he may possess his work will always betray a peculiar clumsiness, the work of an unskilled mind!*

Among the other cultivated languages of modern Europe, Dutch stands in nearest relation to us here in South Africa, from purely ethnical and historical reasons, Italian, Portuguese, Spanish and Swedish lying more in the special sphere of the student of literature and modern philology. As to the cultivation of Dutch in this Colony, however, it is more than questionable whether it will ever command the position English takes as the medium of intellectual and commercial intercourse.

Both literatures, Dutch and English, are of the same age; both nations had trials of the same nature, both had great political catastrophes and events, the forerunners of literary life; the vessels of both nations crossed the seas, and brought a store of new ideas and views from transatlantic

countries : and still, how differently have they utilized the times. The English shows such blossoms and ripe fruits of a highly developed intellectual type, and stands foremost with the German in the literatures of our age ; *while with all love of justice we cannot claim for Dutch even a secondary position in modern Europe, lest we should appear to be partial, and unfair to other nations.* Look at the large and select number of English poets of world-wide fame and the few men of real Olympian genius in the ranks of the Dutch. *We can count them on the fingers of one hand !*

One must be Dutch to appreciate the home-made, or as we say in German, home-baked (hausbacken) niceties of Dutch writers and poets, with that stale, tame and philistine flavour of the clay pipe with which their literature is saturated. One has to undertake a special voyage to Holland and retire into those quiet country villages famous as pictures of Dutch still life, and enveloped in a gaudy dressing gown of rich but artless pattern smoke canaster, to enjoy a Dutch author. There is with the exception of two or three poets no originality, the characteristic of true genius ; no romance and emphasis, the golden gloss of true poetry ; in fact no passion, feeling or sentiment. Homer, Shakespere, Dante and Göthe you can read on the wild ocean and in the arid desert ; no matter where you are, you feel at home with them. Byron, Lenau, Pushkin and Lermontow will have an echo in the heart of every feeling and thinking man, to whatever civilised nation he may belong.

In comparing Dutch with German, French and English, it is a most remarkable fact, that the three latter have produced the greatest comparative philologists, and that the Dutch just here are very backward. With the exception of the works in their own language, what they really have produced in other languages comes, as far as *general and foreign* philology is concerned, through an impulse from without.

Duteh writers can be so prolix, that the reader's mind

becomes thoroughly wearied with the amount to be gone over, and at length loses its power of comprehending the dilated thought. Their lavishness in writing is something appalling, being exercised with no thought that the power of attention and the eyesight of the world are limited. There is no instinct of selection, "an instinct which seems almost entirely confined to the French and English mind." We find just the polar opposite of what is now sometimes called, by a misunderstood application of the term, exhaustiveness, and consisting in a certain manner of *writing the subject to dregs*.

Göthe, whom our Dutch friends cannot accuse of partiality, for he acknowledged readily the natural formal richness of the Dutch language, says:—"The English, as a rule, *all write well*, as practical men, with eye diverted to the real. The French do not deny their general character in their style. They are of a social nature, and so never forget the public they address; they try to be clear, to convince the reader, and charming to please him." On the Dutch, which was not unknown to him, he says nothing, and this speaks volumes.

The besetting defect of Dutch writers has been sufficiently considered. It is an obscurity, proceeding from a certain unconscionable slowness and philistine circuitousness, sometimes from a wilful imitation of the conduct of the cuttlefish; sometimes from want of the sense of proportion. "There is too much of the verbose, ponderous, roundabout and inane, caused by the want of the pressure of a great national life, with its practical discipline, and its ever active traditions."

I do not deny for one single moment that the Dutch have done excellent work in other sciences; but, first of all, scientific men are not always models in style and diction, and secondly, the Dutch like Boerhavius, Agricola, Erasmus, Lipsius, Scaliger, Spanheim, Hemsterhuis, Huyghens, Grotius, Valkenaer and others wrote more or less in Latin.

Spinoza, I must remark, is \*no Dutchman, however much our Dutch consins may wish to claim him as their own.

And why did the Dutch write in Latin? They knew very well that if they wrote in their own tongue, they would not be read and understood; and Latin was up to 150 years ago, and even later, the medium of scientific intercourse. Now English, on account of its cosmopolitan nature, gains daily more and more ground among the civilised nations, *and there is no reason whatsoever why we should try to retard its glorious world-cultivating mission, or supplant it by a language which has not shown vigour and original strength enough to take its place in the foremost ranks of the literatures of the world.* In learning English, German, French and the ancient classical languages, we open to our mind rich storehouses, brimful with spiritual food. In enforcing a language unwieldy, clumsy and poor in productions of intellect, we cut ourselves off from the intercourse of the civilised world at large, and leave the highroad of culture and progress, and have to walk in the fashion of the crawfish; nay, we are guilty of intellectual suicide, for which our children and grandchildren will bless our memory.

One word about the Dutch *patois* of this Colony. It can be traced back to a fusion of the county dialects of the Netherlands and North-Western Germany, and although phonetically Teutonic, it is psychologically an essentially Hottentot idiom. For we learn this *patois* first from our nurses and ayahs. The young Africander on his solitary farm has no other playmates than the children of the Bastard Hottentot servants of his father, and even the grown-up farmer cannot easily escape the deteriorating effect of his servant's *patois*. It can hardly be expected that the descendants of Malayo-Polynesian slaves and Hottentot servants, who originally spoke an agglutinative tongue, will have any improving influence on an inflecting language. Take, for instance, the variety of words to express in English the different shades of what we call *beautiful*. We have hand-

some, pretty, fine, shapely, graceful, lovely, elegant, comely, seemly, beauteous, splendid, glorious, fair, and various other synonyms, too numerous to mention. But if we speak in the *patois* of a handsome young man, a pretty girl, a fine pig, beautiful weather, a splendid sky, an elegant form, a glorious sight, a noble looking animal, a graceful attitude, a gaudy dress, a brilliant production, a lovely face, a delicate colour, there stands the broad sounding adjective “*MOOI*” which has to fit into every possible shape. We have *en mooie jong kerel*, *en mooie juffrouw*, *en mooie vark*, *en mooie pampoen*, *mooie weer*, *mooie luch*, *en mooie leif*, *en mooie bees*, *en mooie houding*, *en mooie tawertje*, *en mooie voorstelling*, *en mooie gezig*, *en mooie aap*, *en mooie kleur*. Everything is monotonously *mooi*!

There is no literature in it deserving the name, and it is still awaiting its Chaucer, Shakespere and Byron. But true poetry roots in a vigorous national and intellectual life.

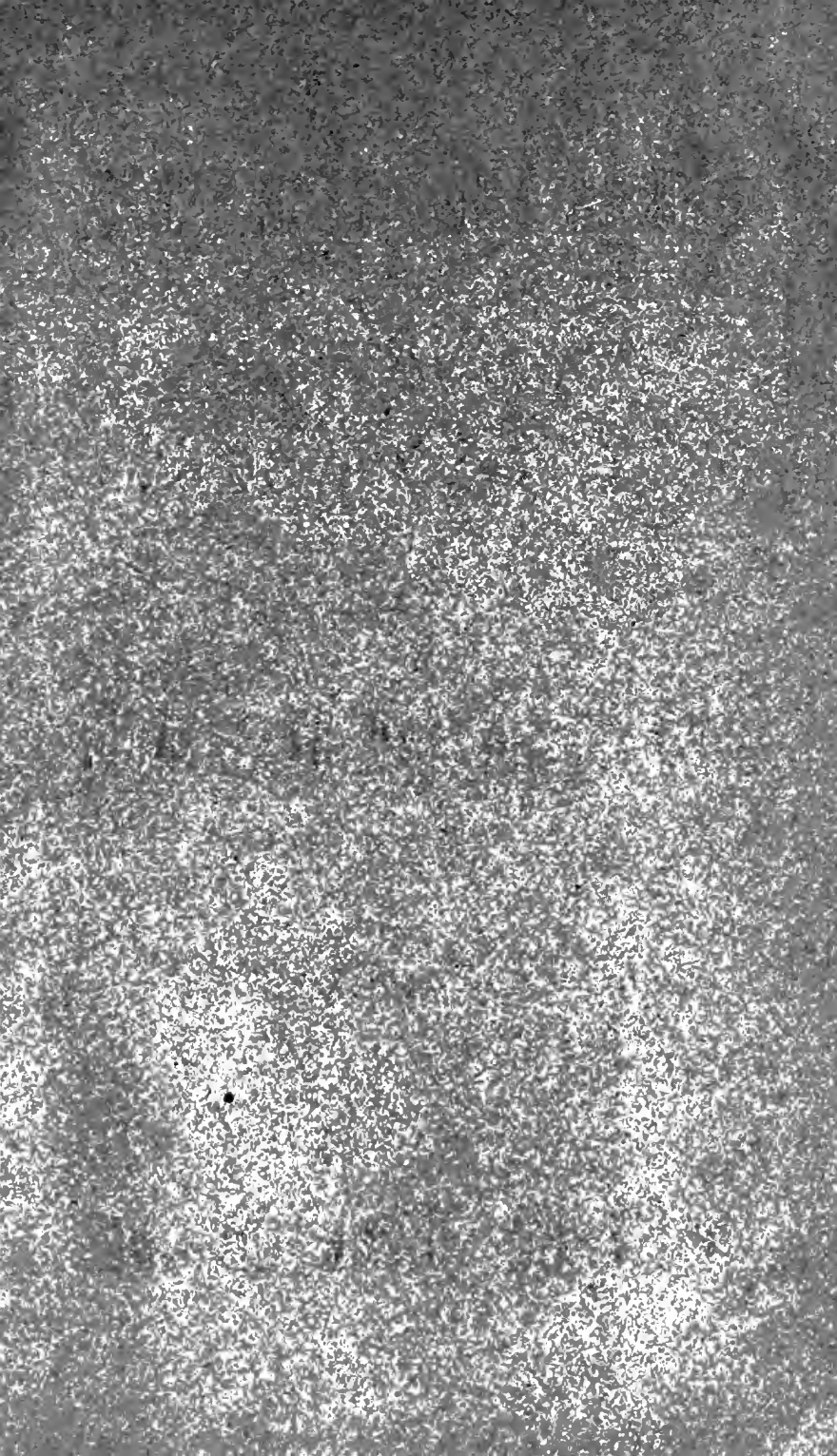
Ladies and Gentlemen,—In concluding this discourse, I feel how little justice I have done to the matter I brought before you. I could say nothing on the Native Languages of South Africa, I could not touch on the influence of Comparative Philology on the Science of Religion, and of its bearings on Ethnology, and the special study this Science claims from us here in South Africa. But I hope that on some other occasion I shall have an opportunity of bringing these subjects before you. Still I am thankful that you have done me the honour of listening to me, and I shall feel amply rewarded if I have succeeded in securing some share of your sympathy for a science which, as I believe, will have a great future here in South Africa.











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