# GROWTH AND STRUCTURE
## OF THE
## ENGLISH LANGUAGE

BY

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

## CHAPTER III

### OLD ENGLISH

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

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[1] R. Thurneysen, *Wann sind die Germanen nach England gekommen?* Englische Studien, XXII, p. 163.

hordes were continually arriving, the question of date is of no great consequence, and we are probably on the safe side if we say that after a long series of Germanic invasions the country was practically in their power in the latter half of the fifth century.

*34. Who* were the invaders, and where did they come from? This, too, has been a point of controversy. According to Bede, the invaders belonged to the three tribes of Angles, Saxons, and Jutes; and linguistic history corroborates his statement in so far as we have really three dialects, or groups of dialects: the Anglian dialects in the North with two subdivisions, Northumbrian and Mercian, the Saxon dialects in the greater part of the South, the most important of which was the dialect of Wessex (West-Saxon), and the Kentish dialect, Kent having been, according to tradition, settled by the Jutes. Bede supposes the district now called Angel (German Angeln), in South Jutland (Slesvig) to have been the home of the Anglians, and identifies the Jutes with the inhabitants of Jutland; but modern philologists have not always been of his opinion.[2] It is not necessary here to enter on this debatable ground; suffice it to say that neither the language of the Anglians nor that of the Kentish people is Danish or shows any signs of closer relationship with Danish than West-Saxon, so that if the settlers came from Angel and other parts of Jutland, these districts cannot then have been inhabited by the same Danish population that has lived there as far

[2] See especially A. Erdmann, *Über die Heimat und den Namen der Angeln*. (Upsala 1890.)—H. Möller, *Anzeiger für deutsches Altertum* XXII, p. 129 ff—G. Schütte, *Var Anglerne Tyskere* (*Sønderjydske aarbøger* 1900.)—O. Bremer, Paul's *Grundriss*, I, pp. [2]115 ff., where other references will be found.—Chambers, *Widsith* (1912), pp. 237, 241.—On the earliest settlements and dialects see now A. Brandl, *Zur Geographie der altenglischen Dialekte* (Berlin, Akademie, 1915).

back as ascertained history reaches. The continental language that shows the greatest similarity to English, is Frisian, and it is interesting to note that Frisian has some points in common with Kentish and some with Anglian, some even with the northernmost division of the Anglian dialect, points in which these OE. dialects differ from literary West-Saxon. Kentish resembles more particularly West Frisian, and Anglian East Frisian,[3] facts which justify us in looking upon the Frisians as the neighbours and relatives of the English before their emigration from the continent. We may therefore speak of an Anglo-Frisian language,[4] forming in some respects a connecting link between German Saxon (Low German) on the one hand and Scandinavian, especially Danish, on the other.

*35.* What language or what languages did the settlers find on their arrival in Britain? The original population was Celtic; but what about the Roman conquest? The Romans had been masters of the country for centuries; had they not succeeded in making the native population learn Latin as they had succeeded in Spain and Gaul? Some years ago Pogatscher[5] took up the view that they had succeeded, and that the Angles and Saxons found a Brito-Roman dialect in full vigour. Pogatscher endorsed Wright's view that 'if the Angles and Saxons had never come, we should have been now a people talking a Neo-Latin tongue, closely resembling French.' But this view was very strongly attacked by Loth,[6] and Pogatscher, in a subsequent article,[7] had to

[3] W. Heuser, *Altfriesisches Lesebuch* (1903), pp. 1–5, and *Indogermanische Forschungen, Anzeiger*, XIV, p. 29.
[4] *Cf.*, however, Morsbach in *Anglia, Beiblatt* VII (1897), p. 323.
[5] *Zur Lautlehre der . . . Lehnworte im Altenglischen.*
[6] *Les mots latins dans les langues brittoniques.* (Paris, 1892.)
[7] *Angelsachsen und Romanen.* Englische Studien XIX, pp. 329·

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

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

352. See also MacGillivray, *The Influence of Christianity on the Vocabulary of Old English* (Halle, 1902), p. XI.

'it is not certain what relation (if any) the Celtic words hold to the English' (NED.). *Cart* is probably a native English word; it is found in Celtic languages, but is there 'palpably a foreign word' (NED.) introduced from English; and *pony,*[8] finally, is Lowland Scotch *powney* from old French *poulenet* 'a little colt,' a diminutive of *poulain* 'a colt.' Similarly, most of the other words of alleged Celtic origin are either Germanic or French words which the Celts have borrowed from English, or else they have not been used in England more than a century or two; in neither of these cases do they teach us anything with regard to the relations between the two nationalities fifteen hundred years ago.[9] The net result of modern investigation seems to be that (apart from numerous place-names) not quite a dozen words did pass over into English from the British aborigines (among them are *ass, bannock, binn, brock*). How may we account for this very small number of loans? Sweet[10] says the reason was that 'the Britons themselves were to a great extent Romanized,' a theory which we seem bound to abandon now (see above). Are we to

[8] Skeat, *Notes on English Etymology,* p. 224.
[9] *Dry* 'magician,' *cross,* and probably *curse* belong to a somewhat later stratum of words taken from Irish. See the able treatment of these questions in M. Förster, *Keltisches Wortgut im Englischen* (Halle, 1921). *Cradle,* OE. *cradol,* seems to be a diminutive of an old Germanic word meaning 'basket' (OHG. *chratto*). See also *hog* in NED. Windisch, in the article quoted below, p. 38, thinks that the Germanic *tun* in English took over the meaning of Celtic *dunum* (Latin *arx*) on account of the numerous old Celtic names of places in *dunum;* but in OE. *tun* had more frequently the meaning of 'enclosure, yard' (*cf.* Dutch *tuin*), 'enclosed land round a dwelling,' 'a single dwelling house or farm' (*cf.* Old Norse *tún;* still in Devonshire and Scotland); it was only gradually that the word acquired its modern meaning of village or town, long after the influence of the Celts must have disappeared.—*Slogan, pibroch, clan,* etc., are modern loans from Celtic.
[10] *New English Grammar,* § 607.

account for it, as some writers would, from the unscrupulous character of the conquest, the English having killed all those Britons who did not run away into the mountainous districts? The supposition of wholesale slaughter is not, however, necessary, for a thorough consideration of the general conditions under which borrowings from one language by another take place will give us a clue to the mystery.[11] And as the whole history of the English language may be described from one point of view as one chain of borrowings, it will be as well at the outset to give a little thought to this general question.

37.   The whole theory of Windisch about mixed languages turns upon this formula: it is not the foreign language a nation learns that turns into a mixed language, but its own native language becomes mixed under the influence of the foreign language. When we try to learn and talk a foreign language we do not intermix it with words taken from our own language; our endeavour will always be to speak the other language as purely as possible, generally we are painfully conscious of every native word that we use in the middle of phrases framed in the other tongue. But what we thus avoid in speaking a foreign language we very often do in our own. One of Windisch's illustrations is taken from Germany in the eighteenth century. It was then the height of fashion to imitate everything French, and Frederick the Great prided himself on speaking and writing good French. In his French writings one finds not a single

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[11] See especially Windisch, *Zur Theorie der Mischsprachen und Lehnwörter* (*Berichte über die Verhandl. d. sächs, Gesellsch. d. Wissensch.* XLIX, 1897), p. 101 ff.—G. Hempl. *Language-Rivalry and Speech-Differentiation in the Case of Race-Mixture.* (Translations of the American Philological Association XXIX. 1898), p. 30 ff.—A full treatment of the question of mixed languages and loan-words is found in my own book *Language,* ch. XI.

German word, but whenever he wrote German, French words and phrases in the middle of German sentences abounded, for French was considered more refined, more *distingué*. Similarly, in the last remains of Cornish, the extinct Celtic language of Cornwall, numerous English loan-words occur, but the English did not mix any Cornish words with their own language, and the inhabitants of Cornwall themselves, whose native language was Cornish, would naturally avoid Cornish words when talking English, because in the first place English was considered the superior tongue, the language of culture and civilization, and second, the English would not understand Cornish words. Similarly in the Brittany of to-day, people will interlard their Breton talk with French words, while their French is pure, without any Breton words. We now see why so few Celtic words were taken over into English.[12] There was nothing to induce the ruling classes to learn the language of the inferior natives; it could never be fashionable for them to show an acquaintance with that despised tongue by using now and then a Celtic word. On the other hand, the Celt would have to learn the language of his masters, and learn it well; he could not think of addressing his superiors in his own unintelligible gibberish, and if the first generation did not learn good English, the second or third would, while the influence they themselves exercised on English would be infinitesimal.—There can be no doubt that this theory of Windisch's is in the main correct, though we shall, perhaps, later on see instances where it holds good only with some qualification. At any rate we need look for no other explanation of the fewness of Celtic words in English.

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[12] And so few Gallic words into French.

*38.* About 600 A. D. England was christianized, and the conversion had far-reaching linguistic consequences. We have no literary remains of the pre-Christian period, but in the great epic of *Beowulf* we see a strange mixture of pagan and Christian elements. It took a long time thoroughly to assimilate the new doctrine, and, in fact, much of the old heathendom survives to this day in the shape of numerous superstitions. On the other hand, we must not suppose that people were wholly unacquainted with Christianity before they were actually converted, and linguistic evidence points to their knowing, and having had names for, the most striking Christian phenomena centuries before they became Christians themselves. One of the earliest loan-words belonging to this sphere is *church*, OE. *cirice, cyrice*, ultimately from Greek *kuriakón* '(house) of the Lord' or rather the plural *kuriaká*. It has been well remarked that 'it is by no means necessary that there should have been a single *kirika* in Germany itself; from 313 onwards, Christian churches with their sacred vessels and ornaments were well-known objects of pillage to the German invaders of the Empire: if the first with which these made acquaintance, wherever situated, were called *kuriaká*, it would be quite sufficient to account for their familiarity with the word.'[13] They knew this word so well that when they became Christians they did not adopt the word universally used in the Latin church and in the Romance languages (*ecclesia, église, chiesa*, etc.), and the English even extended the signification of the word *church* from the building to the congregation, the whole body of

Christians. *Minster*, OE. *mynster* from *monasterium*, belongs also to the pre-Christain period. Other words of very early adoption were *devil* from *diabolus*, Greek *diábolos*, and *angel*, OE. *engel*[14] from *angelus*, Greek *ággelos*. But the great bulk of specifically Christian terms did not enter the language till after the conversion.

*39.* The number of new ideas and things introduced with Christianity was very considerable, and it is interesting to note how the English managed to express them in their language.[15] In the first place they adopted a great many foreign words together with the ideas. Such words are *apostle* OE. *apostol*, *disciple* OF. *discipul*, which has been more of an ecclesiastical word in English than in other languages, where it has the wider Latin sense of 'pupil' or 'scholar,' while in English it is more or less limited to the twelve Disciples of Jesus or to similar applications. Further, the names of the whole scale of dignitaries of the church, from the *Pope*, OE. *papa*, downwards through *archbishop* OE. *ercebiscop*, *bishop* OE. *biscop*, to *priest* OE. *preost;* so also *monk* OE. *munuc*, *nun* OE. *nunna* with *provost* OE. *prafost* (præpositus) and *profost* (propositus), *abbot* OE. *abbod* (*d* from Romance form) and the feminine OE. *abbudisse*. Here belong also such obsolete words as *sacerd* 'priest,' *canonic* 'canon,' *decan* 'dean,' *ancor* or *ancra* 'hermit' (Lat. *anachoreta*). To these names of persons must be added not a few names of things, such as *shrine* OE. *scrin* (scrinium), *cowl* OE. *cugele* (cuculla), *pall* OE. *pæll* or *pell* (pallium); *regol* or *reogol* '(monastic)

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

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[14] See below, § 86, on the relation between the OE. and the modern forms.

[15] See especially MacGillivray, *The Influence of Christianity on the Vocabulary of Old English*. I arrange his material from other points of view and must often pass the limits of his book, of which only one half has appeared.

rule,' *capitul* 'chapter,' *mæsse* 'mass,' and *offrian*, in Old English used only in the sense of 'sacrificing, bringing an offering'; the modern usage in 'he offered his friend a seat and a cigar' is later and from the French.

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

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

At that period the English were not shy of affixing native endings to foreign words; thus we have a great many words in *-had* (mod. *-hood*): *preosthad* 'priesthood,' *clerichad, sacerdhad, biscophad* 'episcopate,' etc.; also such compounds as *biscopsetl* 'episcopal see,' *biscopscir* 'diocese,' and with the same ending *profostscir* 'provostship' and the interesting *scriftscir* 'parish, confessor's district' from *scrift* 'confession,' a derivative of

*scrifan* (*shrive*) from Lat. *scribere* in the sense 'impose penance, hear confession.' Note also such words as *cristendom* 'Christendom, Christianity' (also *cristnes*), and *cristnian* 'christen' or rather 'prepare a candidate for baptism'[16] and *biscopian* 'confirm' with the noun *biscepung* 'confirmation.'

*42.* Existing native words were largely turned to account to express Christian ideas, the sense only being more or less modified. Foremost among these must be mentioned the word *God*. Other words belonging to the same class and surviving to this day are *sin* OE. *synn*, *tithe* OE. *teoða*, the old ordinal for 'tenth'; *easter* OE., *eastron* was the name of an old pagan spring festival, called after Austro, a goddess of spring.[17] Most of the native words adapted to Christian usage have since been superseded by terms taken from Latin or French. Where we now say *saint* from the French, the old word was *halig* (mod. *holy*), preserved in *All-hallows-day* and *Allhallowe'en;* the Lat. *sanct* was very rarely used. *Scaru*, from the verb *scieran* 'shear, cut' has been supplanted by *tonsure*, *had* by *order*, *hadian* by *consecrate* and *ordain*, *gessomnung* by *congregation*, *þegnung* by *service*, *witega* by *prophet*, *þrowere* (from *þrowian* 'to suffer') by *martur*, *þrowerhad* or *þrowung* by *martyrdom*, *niwcumen mann* ('newcome man') by *novice*, *hrycg-hrægel* (from *hrycg* 'back' and *hrægel* 'dress') by *dossal*, and *ealdor* by *prior*. Compounds of the last-mentioned Old English word were also applied to things connected with the new religion, thus *teoðing-ealdor* 'dean' (chief of

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[16] *Cristnian* signifies primarily the 'prima signatio' of the catechumens as distinguished from the baptism proper.' MacGillivray, p. 21.

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

ten monks). *Ealdormann,* the native term for a sort of viceroy or lord-lieutenant, was used to denote the Jewish High-Priests as well as the Pharisees. OE. *husl,* mod. *housel* 'the Eucharist,'[18] was an old pagan word for sacrifice or offering; an older form is seen in Gothic *hunsl.* The OE. word for 'altar,' *weofod,* is an interesting heathen survival, for it goes back to a compound *wigbeod* 'idol-table,' and it was probably only because phonetic development had obscured its connexion with *wig* 'idol' that it was allowed tó remain in use as a Christian technical term.

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

*44.* But in most cases we have no such literal rendering of a foreign term, but excellent words devised exactly as if the framers of them had never heard of any foreign

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

expression for the same conception—as, perhaps, indeed, in some instances they had not. Some of these display not a little ingenuity. The scribes and Pharisees of the New Testament were called *boceras* (from *boc* book) and *sunder-halgan* (from *sundor* 'apart, asunder, separate'); in the north the latter were also called *ælarwas* 'teachers of the Law' or *ældo* 'elders.' A patriarch was called *heahfæder* 'high-father' or *eald-fæder* 'old-father'; the three Magi were called *tungol-witegan* from *tungol* 'star,' and *witega* 'wise man.' For 'chaplain' we have *handpreost* or *hiredpreost* ('family-priest'); for 'acolyte' different words expressive of his several functions; *huslþegn* ('Eucharist-servant'), *taporberend* ('taper-bearer') and *wæxberend* ('wax-bearer'); instead of *ercebiscop* 'archbishop' we sometimes find *heahbiscop* and *ealdorbiscop.* For 'hermit' *ansetla* and *westensetla* ('sole-settler,' 'desert-settler') were used. 'Magic art' was called *scincræft* ('phantom-art'); 'magician' *scincræftiga* or *scinlæca, scinnere,* 'phantom' or 'superstition,' *scinlac.* For the disciples of Christ we find, beside *discipul* mentioned above, no less than ten different English renderings (*cniht, folgere, gingra, hieremon, læringman, leornere, leorning-cniht, leorningman, underþeodda, þegn*).[19] To 'baptize' was expressed by *dyppan* 'dip' (*cf.* German *taufen,* Dan. *døbe*) or more often by *fulwian* (from *ful-wihan* 'to consecrate completely'); 'baptism' by *fulwiht* or, the last syllable being phonetically obscured, *fulluht,* and John the Baptist was called *Johannes se fulluhtere.*

*45.* The power and boldness of these numerous native formations can, perhaps, be best appreciated if we go through the principal compounds of *God: godbot*

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[19] MacGillivray, p. 44.

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

*46.* If now we ask, why did not the Anglo-Saxons adopt more of the ready-made Latin or Greek words, it is easy to see that the conditions here are quite different from those mentioned above when we asked a similar

question with regard to Celtic. There we had a real race-mixture, where people speaking two different languages were living in actual contact in the same country. Here we have no Latin-speaking nation or community in actual intercourse with the English; and though we must suppose that there was a certain mouth-to-mouth influence from missionaries which might familiarize part of the English nation with some of the specifically Christian words, these were certainly at first introduced in far greater number through the medium of writing, exactly as is the case with Latin and Greek importations in recent times. Why, then, do we see such a difference between the practice of that remote period and our own time? One of the reasons seems obviously to be that people then did not know so much Latin as they learnt later, so that these learned words, if introduced, would not have been understood. We have it on King Alfred's authority that in the time immediately preceding his own reign 'there were very few on this side of the Humber who could understand their (Latin) rituals in English, or translate a letter from Latin into English, and I believe that there were not many beyond the Humber. There were so few of them that I cannot remember a single one south of the Thames when I came to the throne . . . and there was also a great multitude of God's servants, but they had very little knowledge of the books, for they could not understand anything of them, because they were not written in their language.'[20] And even in the previous period which Alfred regrets, when 'the sacred orders were zealous in teaching and learning,' and when, as we know from Bede and other

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[20] *King Alfred's West-Saxon Version of Gregory's Pastoral Care.* Preface (Sweet's translation).

sources,[21] Latin and Greek studies were pursued successfully in England, we may be sure that the percentage of those who would have understood the learned words, had they been adopted into English, was not large. There was, therefore, good reason for devising as many popular words as possible. However, the manner in which our question was put was not, perhaps, quite fair, for we seemed to presuppose that it would be natural for a nation to adopt as many foreign terms as its linguistic digestion would admit, and that it would be matter for surprise if a language had fewer foreign elements than Modern English. But on the contrary, it is rather the natural thing for a language to utilize its own resources before drawing on other languages. The Anglo-Saxon principle of adopting only such words as were easily assimilated with the native vocabulary, for the most part names of concrete things, and of turning to the greatest possible account native words and roots, especially for abstract notions,—that principle may be taken as a symptom of a healthful condition of a language and a nation; witness Greek, where we have the most flourishing and vigorous growth of abstract and other scientifically serviceable terms on a native basis that the world has ever seen, and where the highest development of intellectual and artistic activity went hand in hand with the most extensive creation of indigenous words and an extremely limited importation of words from abroad. It is not, then, the Old English system of utilizing the vernacular stock of words, but the modern system of neglecting the native and borrowing from a foreign vocabulary that has to be accounted for as something out of the natural state of things.

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[21] See T. N. Toller, *Outlines of the History of the English Language.* (Cambridge, 1900), p. 68 ff.

A particular case in point will illustrate this better than long explanations.

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

copying this coined word. In 1838 Rogers speaks of the word as a tasteless innovation, and Trench in his 'English Past and Present' (1854; 3rd ed. 1856 p. 71) says, 'we might have been satisfied with "manual," and not put together that very ugly and very unnecessary word "handbook," which is scarcely, I should suppose, ten or fifteen years old.' Of late years, the word seems to have found more favour, but I cannot help thinking that state of language a very unnatural one where such a very simple, intelligible, and expressive word has to fight its way instead of being at once admitted to the very best society.

48. The Old English language, then, was rich in possibilities, and its speakers were fortunate enough to possess a language that might with very little exertion on their part be made to express everything that human speech can be called upon to express. There can be no doubt that if the language had been left to itself, it would easily have remedied the defects that it certainly had, for its resources were abundantly sufficient to provide natural and expressive terms even for such a new world of concrete things and abstract ideas as Christianity meant to the Anglo-Saxons. It is true that we often find Old English prose clumsy and unwieldy, but that is more the fault of the literature than of the language itself. A good prose style is everywhere a late acquirement, and the work of whole generations of good authors is needed to bring about the easy flow of written prose. Neither, perhaps, were the subjects treated of in the extant Old English prose literature those most suitable for the development of the highest literary qualities. But if we look at such a closely connected language as Old Norse, we find in that language a rapid progress to a narrative prose style which is even now justly admired

in its numerous sagas; and I do not see so great a difference between the two languages as would justify a scepticism with regard to the perfectibility of Old English in the same direction. And, indeed, we have positive proof in a few passages that the language had no mean power as a literary medium; I am thinking of Alfred's report of the two great Scandinavian explorers Ohthere and Wulfstan who visited him, of a few passages in the *Saxon Chronicle,* and especially of some pages of the homilies of Wulfstan, where we find an impassioned prose of real merit.

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

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

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

has always many terms for those things that interest the speakers in their daily doings; thus Sweet says: 'if we open an Arabic dictionary at random, we may expect to find something about a camel: 'a young camel,' 'an old camel,' 'a strong camel,' 'to feed a camel on the fifth day,' 'to feel a camel's hump to ascertain its fatness,' all these being not only simple words, but rootwords.' [22] And when we read that the Araucanians (in Chile) distinguished nicely in their languages between a great many shades of hunger, our compassion is excited, as Gabelentz remarks.[23] In the case of the Anglo-Saxons, however, the conclusion we are justified in drawing from their possessing such a great number of words connected with the sea is not, perhaps, that they were a seafaring nation, but rather, as these words are chiefly poetical and not used in prose, that the nation *had been* seafaring, but had given up that life while reminiscences of it were still lingering in their imagination.

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

[22] Sweet, *The Practical Study of Language* (1899), p. 163.
[23] Gabelentz, *Sprachwissenschaft* (1891), 463.

none for 'cow' generally. In Cherokee, instead of one word for 'washing' we find different words, according to what is washed, 'I wash myself,—my head,—the head of somebody else,—my face,—the face of somebody else, —my hands or feet,—my clothes,—dishes,—a child,' etc.[24]

52. Very little has been done hitherto to investigate the exact shades of meaning in Old English words, but I have little doubt that when we now render a number of words indiscriminately by 'sword,' they meant originally distinct kinds of swords, and so in other cases as well. With regard to washing, we find something corresponding, though in a lesser degree, to the exuberance of Cherokee, for we have two words, *wacsan* (*wascan*) and *þwean,* and if we go through all the examples given in Bosworth and Toller's Dictionary, we find that the latter word is always applied to the washing of persons (hands, feet, etc.), never to inanimate objects, while *wascan* is used especially of the washing of clothes, but also of sheep, of 'the inwards' (of the victim, Leviticus i, 9, 13).[25] Observe also that *wascan* was originally used in the present tense only (as Kluge infers from -*sk*-),—a clear instance of that restriction in the use of words which is so common in the old stages of the language, but which so often appears unnatural to us.

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

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[24] *Language,* p. 430 ff.

[25] In a late text (R. Ben. 59, 7) we find the contrast *agðer ge fata þwean ge wæterclaðas wascan,* which does not agree exactly with the distinction made above.—Curiously enough in Old Norse, *vaska* is in the Sagas used only of washing the head with some kind of soap. In Danish, as well as in English, *vaske, wash,* is now the only word in actual use.

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

54. The external form of Old English poetry was in the main the same as that of Old Norse, Old Saxon, and Old High German poetry; besides definite rules of stress and quantity, which were more regular than might at first appear, but which were not so strict as those of classical poetry, the chief words of each line were tied

together by alliteration, that is, they began with the same sound, or, in the case of *sp, st, sc*, with the same sound group. The effect is peculiar, and may be appreciated in such a passage as this (I italicize the alliterative letters) :

> Him þa *e*llenrof *a*ndswarode,
> *w*lanc Wedera leod. *w*ord æfter spræc,
> *h*eard under *h*elme: We synt *H*igelaces
> *b*eod-geneatas, *B*eowulf is min nama.
> Wille ic a-secgan  sunu Healfdenes,
> *m*ærum þeodne  *m*in ærende,
> *a*ldre þinum  gif he us ge-unnan wile,
> þæt we hine swa *g*odne  *g*retan moton.'
> Wulfgar maþelode,  þæt wæs Wendla leod,
> wæs his *m*od-sefa  *m*anegum gecyðed,
> *w*ig ond *w*isdom  'Ic þæs *w*ine Deniga,
> *f*rean Scildinga,  *f*rinan wille,
> *b*eaga *b*ryttan,  swa þu *b*ena eart,
> þeoden mærne  ymb þinne sið.[26]

55. Very rarely, combined with alliteration we find a sort of rime or assonance. In the prose of the last period of Old English the same artistic means were often resorted to to heighten the effect, and we find in Wulfstan's homilies such passages as the following where all tricks of phonetic harmony are brought into play: '*in mordre and on mane, in susle and on sare, in wean and on wyrmslitum betweonan deadum and deoflum, in bryne and on biternesse, in bealewe and on bradum ligge, in yrmþum and on earfeðum, on swyltcwale and sarum sorgum, in fyrenum bryne and on fulnesse, in toða gristbitum and in tintergrum*' or again '*þær is êce and þær is sorgung and sargung, and a singal heof; ðær is benda bite and dynta dyne, þær is wyrma slite and ealra wædla gripe, þær is wanung and granung, þær is yrmða gehwyle and ealra deofla geþring.*'[27]

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[26] *Beowulf* 1. 340 ff.
[27] Wulfstan, *Homilies* (ed. by Napier), pp. 187, 209. It is

56. Nor has this love of alliterative word-combinations ever left the language ; we find it very often in modern poetry, where however it is always subordinate to end-rime, and we find it in such stock phrases as :—it can neither *m*ake nor *m*ar *m*e, as *b*usy as *b*ees (Chaucer, E 2422), *p*art and *p*arcel, *f*aint and *f*eeble, *d*ucks and *d*rakes (sometimes: play dick-duck-drake; Stevenson, *Merry Men*, p. 277), what ain't *m*issed ain't *m*ourned (Pinero, *Magistrate*, p. 5), as *b*old as *b*rass, *f*ree and *f*ranke (Caxton, *Reynard*, p. 41), *b*arnes are *b*lessings (Shakesp., *All's* I. 3. 28), as *c*ool as a *c*ucumber, as *st*ill as (a) *st*one (Chaucer, E 121, as any stoon E 171, he stode stone style, Malory 145), over *st*ile and *st*one (Chaucer B 1988), from *t*op to *t*oe (from the top to toe, Shakesp. *R. 3* III. 1. 155), *m*ight and *m*ain, *f*uss and *f*ume, *m*anners *m*akyth *m*an, care *k*illed a *c*at, *r*ack and *r*uin, *n*ature and *n*urture (Shakesp. *Tp.* IV. 1. 189 ; *English Men of Science, their Nature and Nurture*, the title of a book by Galton), etc., etc., even to Thackeray's 'faint fashionable fiddle-faddle and feeble court slipslop.' Alliteration sometimes modifies the meaning of a word, as when we apply *chick* to human offspring in 'no chick or child,' or when we say 'a *labour* of *love*,' without giving to *labour* the shade of meaning which it generally has as different from *work*. The word *foe*, too, which is generally used in poetry or archaic prose only, is often used in ordinary prose for the sake of alliteration in connexion with *friend* ('Was it an irruption of a friend or a foe?' Meredith, *Egoist*, p. 439 ; 'The Danes of Ireland had changed from foes to friends,' J. R. Green, *Short History of the English People*, p.

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worthy of note that these poetical flights occur in descriptions of hell.

107). Indeed alliteration comes so natural to English people, that Tennyson says that 'when I spout my lines first, they come out so alliteratively that I have sometimes no end of trouble to get rid of the alliteration.' [28] I take up the thread of my narrative after this short digression.

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. [28] *Life,* by his Son (Tauchn. ed.) II, p. 285, *cf.* R. L. Stevenson, *The Art of Writing,* p. 31, and what the Danish poet and metricist E. v. d. Recke says to the same effect, *Principerne for den danske verskuns* (1881), p. 112; see also the amusing note by De Quincey, *Opium Eater,* p. 96 (Macmillan's Library of English Classics): 'Some people are irritated, or even fancy themselves insulted, by overt acts of alliteration, as many people are by puns. On their account let me say, that, although there are here [in the passage to which the note is appended] eight separate f's in less than half a sentence, this is to be held as pure accident. In fact, at one time there were nine f's in the original cast of the sentence, until I, in pity of the affronted people, substituted *female agent* for *female friend.*' The reader need not be reminded of the excessive use of alliteration in Euphuism and of Shakespeare's satire in *Love's Labour's Lost* and *Midsummer Night's Dream.*

# CHAPTER IV

## THE SCANDINAVIANS

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

*58.* The English had resided for about four centuries

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[1] The chief works on these loan-words, most of them treating nearly exclusively phonetic questions, are: Erik Björkman, *Scandinavian Loan-Words in Middle English* (Halle I 1900, II 1902), an excellent book; Erik Brate, *Nordische Lehnwörter im Orrmulum* (*Beiträge zur Gesch. d. deutschen Sprache* X, Halle 1884); Arnold Wall, *A Contribution towards the Study of the Scandinavian Element in the English Dialects* (*Anglia* XX, Halle 1898); G. T. Flom, *Scandinavian Influence on Southern Lowland Scotch* (New York, 1900). The dialectal material of the two last mentioned treatises is necessarily to a great extent of a doubtful character. See also Kluge in Paul's *Grundriss*, II, p. 931 ff., Skeat, *Principles of English Etymology* (Oxford, 1887), p. 453 ff., and some other works mentioned below. I have excluded doubtful material; but a few of the words I give as Scandinavian, have been considered as native by other writers. In most cases I have been convinced by the reasons given by Björkman.

in the country called after them, and during that time they had had no enemies from abroad. The only wars they had been engaged in were internal struggles between kingdoms belonging to, but not yet feeling themselves as, one and the same nation. The Danes were to them not deadly enemies but a brave nation from over the sea, that they felt to be of a kindred race with themselves. The peaceful relations between the two nations may have been more intimate than is now generally supposed. An attempt has been made to show that an interesting, but hitherto mysterious Old English poem which is generally ascribed to the eighth century is a translation of a lost Scandinavian poem dealing with an incident in what was later to become the Volsunga Saga.[2] If this were not rather doubtful it would establish a literary intercourse between England and Scandinavia previous to the viking ages, and therefore accord with the fact that the old Danish legends about King Hrothgar and his beautiful hall Heorot were preserved in England, even more faithfully than by the Danes themselves. Had the poet of *Beowulf* been able to foresee all that his countrymen were destined to suffer at the hands of the Danes, he would have chosen another subject for his great epic, and we should have missed the earliest noble outcome of the sympathy so often displayed by Englishmen for the fortunes of Denmark. But as it is, in *Beowulf* no coming events cast their shadow before,[3] and the English nation seems to have

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

[3] This was written before Schücking (*Beiträge* 43. 347) had called in question the date usually assigned to *Beowulf* (ab. 700). Schücking thinks it was written ab. 900 at a Scandinavian court in England. See against this R. W. Chambers, *Beowulf* (Cambridge, 1921), p. 322.

been taken entirely by surprise when about 790 the long series of inroads began, in which 'Danes' and 'heathens' became synonyms for murderers and plunderers. At first the strangers came in small troops and disappeared as soon as they had filled their boats with gold and other valuables; but from the middle of the ninth century, 'the character of the attack wholly changed. The petty squadrons which had till now harassed the coast of Britain made way for larger hosts than had as yet fallen on any country in the west; while raid and foray were replaced by the regular campaign of armies who marched to conquer, and whose aim was to settle on the land they won.'[4] Battles were fought with various success, but on the whole the Scandinavians proved the stronger race and made good their footing in their new country. In the peace of Wedmore (878), King Alfred, the noblest and staunchest defender of his native soil, was fain to leave them about two thirds of what we now call England; all Northumbria, all East Anglia and one half of Central England made out the district called the Danelaw.

*59.* Still, the relations between the two races were not altogether hostile. King Alfred not only effected the repulse of the Danes; he also gave us the first geographical description of the countries that the fierce invaders came from, in the passage already referred to (§ 48). Under the year 959, one of the chroniclers says of the Northumbrian king that he was widely revered on account of his piety, but in one respect he was blamed: 'he loved foreign vices too much and gave heathen (*i.e.,* Danish) customs a firm footing in this country, alluring mischievous foreigners to come to this land.'

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[4] J. R. Green, *A Short History of the English People* (illustr. ed.), p. 87.

And in the only extant private letter in Old English [5] the unknown correspondent tells his brother Edward that 'it is a shame for all of you to give up the English customs of your fathers and to prefer the customs of heathen men, who grudge you your very life; you show thereby that you despise your race and your forefathers with these bad habits, when you dress shamefully in Danish wise with bared neck and blinded eyes' (with hair falling over the eyes?). We see, then, that the English were ready to learn from, as well as to fight with, the Danes. It is a small, but significant fact that in the glorious patriotic war-poem written shortly after the battle of Maldon (993) which it celebrates, we find for the first time one of the most important Scandinavian loan-words, *to call;* this shows how early the linguistic influence of the Danes began to be felt.

60. A great number of Scandinavian families settled in England never to return, especially in Norfolk, Suffolk and Lincolnshire, but also in Yorkshire, Northumberland, Cumberland, Westmoreland, etc. Numerous names of places, ending in *-by, -thorp (-torp), -beck, -dale, -thwaite,* etc., bear witness to the preponderance of the invaders in great parts of England, as do also many names of persons found in English from about 1000 A. D.[6] But these foreigners were not felt by the natives to be foreigners in the same manner as the English themselves had been looked upon as foreigners by the Celts. As Green has it, 'when the wild burst of the storm was over, land, people, government reappeared unchanged. England still remained England; the conquerors sank

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[5] Edited by Kluge, Englische Studien VIII, p. 62.
[6] Björkman, *Nordische Personennamen in England* (Halle, 1910); H. Lindkwist, *Middle-English Place-Names of Scandinavian Origin* (Upsala, 1912); E. Ekwall, *Scandinavians and Celts in the North-West of England* (Lund, 1918).

quietly into the mass of those around them; and Woden yielded without a struggle to Christ. The secret of this difference between the two invasions was that the battle was no longer between men of different races. It was no longer a fight between Briton and German, between Englishman and Welshman. The life of these northern folk was in the main the life of the earlier Englishmen. Their customs, their religion, their social order were the same; they were in fact kinsmen bringing back to an England that had forgotten its origins the barbaric England of its pirate forefathers. Nowhere over Europe was the fight so fierce, because nowhere else were the combatants men of one blood and one speech. But just for this reason the fusion of the northmen with their foes was nowhere so peaceful and so complete.'[7]—It should be remembered, too, that it was a Dane, King Knut, who achieved what every English ruler had failed to achieve, the union of the whole of England into one peaceful realm.

61. King Knut was a Dane, and in the *Saxon Chronicle* the invaders were always called Danes, but from other sources we know that there were Norwegians, too, among the settlers. Attempts have been made to decide by linguistic tests which of the two nations had the greater influence in England,[8] a question beset with considerable difficulties and which need not detain us here. Suffice it to say that some words, such as ME. *boun,* Mod. *bound* 'ready' (to go to), *busk, boon, addle,* point

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[7] J. R. Green, *A Short History of the English People* (Illustr. ed.), p. 87.
[8] Brate thought the loan-words exclusively Danish; Kluge, Wall, and Björkman consider some of them Danish; others Norwegian, though in details they arrive at different results. See Björkman, *Zur dialektischen Provenienz der nordischen Lehnwörter im Englischen* (Språkvetensk, sällskapets förhandlingar, 1898-1901, Upsala), and his *Scandinavian Loan-Words,* p. 281 ff.

rather to a Norwegian origin, while others, such as *-by* in place-names, *die* (*?*), *booth*, *drown*, ME. *sum* 'as,' agree better with Danish forms. In the great majority of cases, however, the Danish and Norwegian forms were at that time either completely or nearly identical, so that no decision as to the special homeland of the English loans is warranted. In the present work I therefore leave the question open, quoting Danish or ON. (Old Norse, practically = Old Icelandic) forms according as it is most convenient in each case, meaning simply Scandinavian.[9]

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

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

had no English literature before the invasion; nouns such as *man, wife, father, mother, folk, house, thing, life, sorrow, winter, summer,* verbs like *will, can, meet, come, bring, hear, see, think, smile, ride, stand, sit, set, spin,* adjectives and adverbs like *full, wise, well, better, best, mine* and *thine, over* and *under,* etc., etc. The consequence was that an Englishman would have no great difficulty in understanding a viking, nay we have positive evidence that Norse people looked upon the English language as one with their own. On the other hand, Wulfstan speaks of the invaders as 'people who do not know your language' (ed. Napier, p. 295), and in many cases indeed, the words were already so dissimilar that they were easily distinguished, for instance, when they contained an original *ai*, which in OE. had become long *a* (OE. *swan* = ON. *sveinn*), or *au*, which in OE. had become *ea* (OE. *leas* = ON. *lauss, louss*), or *sk*, which in English became *sh* (OE. *scyrte,* now *shirt* = ON. *skyrta*).

*63.* But there are, of course, many words to which no such reliable criteria apply, and the difficulty in deciding the origin of words is further complicated by the fact that the English would often modify a word, when adopting it, according to some more or less vague feeling of the English sound that corresponded generally to this or that Scandinavian sound. Just as the name of the English king Æðelred Eadgares sunu is mentioned in the Norse saga of *Gunnlaugr Ormstunga,* as Aðalráðr Játgeirsson, in the same manner *shift* is an Anglicized form of Norse *skipta;*[10] ON. *brúðlaup* 'wedding' was modified into *brydlop* (*cf.* OE. *bryd* 'bride'; a consistent Anglicizing would be *brydhleap; Tiðende* is un-

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[10] In ME. forms with *sk* are also found: Björkman, p. 126.

changed in *Orrms tiþennde*, but was generally changed into *tiding(s)*, *cf.* OE. *tid* and the common Eng. ending *-ing;* ON. *þjónusta* 'service' appears as *þeonest, þenest,* and *þegnest;* ON. words with the negative prefix *ú* are made into English *un-, e.g., untime* 'unseasonableness,' *unbain* (ON. *úbeinn*) 'not ready,' *unrad* or *unræd* 'bad counsel'; *cf.* also *wæpnagetæc* below, and others.[11]

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

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

66. In some cases both forms survive in standard

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[11] Though the Scandinavian form is also found in a few instances: *oulist* 'listless,' *oumautin* 'swoon.'

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

67. In other cases, the Scandinavian form survives in dialects only, while the other belongs to the literary language: *dew—dag* 'dew, thin rain; vb. to drizzle' | *true—trigg* 'faithful, neat, tidy' | *leap—loup* | *neat— nowt* 'cattle' | *church—kirk* [12] | *churn—kirn* [12] | *chest— kist* [12] | *mouth—mun* | *yard—garth* 'a small piece of enclosed ground.' All these dialectal forms belong to Scotland or the North of England.

68. As a rule, however, one of the forms has in course of time been completely crowded out by the other. The surviving form is often the native form, as in the following instances: *goat—gayte* | *heathen—heythen, haithen* | *loath—laith* | *grey—gra, gro* | *few—fa, fo* | *ash(es)— ask* | *fish—fisk* | *naked—naken* | *yarn—garn* | *bench— bennk* | *star—sterne* | *worse—werre*. Similarly the Scand. *thethen, hethen, hwethen* are generally supposed to have been discarded in favour of the native forms, OE. *þanon, heonan, hwanon,* to which was added an adverbial *s: thence, hence, whence;* but in reality these modern forms seem to be due to the Scandinavian ones,

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[12] These *k*-words are, however, subject to some doubt, as is also *hale* in § 66 (native Northern dialect?).

whose vowels they keep; for the loss of *th cf. since* from *sithence* (*sithens, OE. siþþan + s*).

69. This then leads us on to those instances in which the intruder succeeded in ousting the legitimate heir. Caxton in a well-known passage gives us a graphic description of the struggle between the native *ey* and the Scandinavian *egg:*

And certaynly our langage now used varyeth ferre from that whiche was used and spoken whan I was borne. For we englysshe men ben borne under the domynacyon of the mone, whiche is never stedfaste, but ever waverynge, wexynge one season, and waneth & dyscreaseth another season. And that comyn englysshe that is spoken in one shyre varyeth from a nother. In so moche that in my dayes happened that certayn marchauntes were in a shippe in tamyse, for to have sayled over the see into zelande. And for lacke of wynde, thei taryed atte forlond, and wente to lande for to refreshe them. And one of theym named sheffelde,[13] a mercer, cam in-to an hows and axed for mete; and specyally he axyd after eggys. And the goode wyf answerde, that she coude speke no frensche. And the marchaunt was angry, for he also coude speke no frensche, but wolde have hadde egges, and she understode hym not. And thenne at laste a nother sayd that he wolde have eyren. Then the good wyf sayd that she understood hym wel. Loo, what sholde a man in thyse dayes now wryte, egges or eyren. Certaynly it is harde to playse every man, by cause of dyversite & chaunge of langage.[14]

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

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[13] Probably a north-country man.
[14] Caxton's *Eneydos*, pp. 2, 3. (E.E.T.S. Extra Series 57.)

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

71. In some words the old native form has survived, but has adopted the signification attached in Scandinavian to the corresponding word; thus *dream* in Old English meant 'joy,' but in Middle English the modern meaning of 'dream' was taken over from ON. *draumr*, Dan. *dröm;* analogous cases are *bread* (OE. *bread* 'fragment'), *bloom* (OE. *bloma* 'mass of metal'). In one word, this same process of sense-shifting has historical significance; the OE. *eorl* meant vaguely a 'nobleman' or more loosely 'a brave warrior' or 'man' generally; but under Knut it took over the meaning of the Norse *jarl* 'an under-king' or governor of one of the great divisions of the realm, thus paving the way for the pres-

ent signification of *earl* as one of the grades in the
(French) scale of rank. OE. *freond* meant only
'friend,' whereas ON. *frœndi*, Dan. *frœnde* means 'kins-
man,' but in *Orrm* and other ME. texts the word some-
times has the Scandinavian meaning [15] and so it has to
this day in Scotch and American dialects (see many in-
stances in J. Wright's Dialect Dictionary, *e.g.*, 'We are
near friends, but we don't speak'); the Scotch proverb
'Friends agree best at a distance' corresponds to the
Danish *'Frœnde er frœnde vœrst.'* OE. *dwellan* or
*dwelian* meant only 'to lead astray, lead into error,
thwart' or intr. 'to go astray'; [16] the intransitive mean-
ings, 'to tarry, abide, remain in a place,' which cor-
respond with the Scandinavian meanings, are not found
till the beginning of the 13th century. OE. *ploh* is
found only with the meaning of 'a measure of land'
(still in Scotch *pleuch*), but in Middle English it came
to mean the implement *plough* (OE. *sulh*) as in ON.
*plógr*. OE. *holm* meant 'ocean,' but the modern word
owes its signification of 'islet, flat ground by a river'
to Scand. *holm*.

72. These were cases of native words conforming to
foreign speech habits; in other instances the Scandi-
navians were able to place words at the disposal of the
English which agreed so well with other native words
as to be readily associated with them, nay which were
felt to be fitter expressions for the ideas than the Old
English words and therefore survived. *Death (deaþ)*
and *dead* are Old English words, but the corresponding

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[15] *Saxon Chronicle*, 1135, which is given in the NED. as an in-
stance of this meaning, appears to me to be doubtful.

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

verbs were *steorfan* and *sweltan;* now it is obvious that
Dan. *deya* (now *dø*) was more easily associated with the
noun and the adjective than the old verbs, and accord-
ingly it was soon adopted (*deyen,* now *die*), while
*sweltan* was discarded and the other verb acquired the
more special signification of *starving*. *Sæte*, Mod. E.
*seat*, was adopted because it was at once associated with
the verbs *to sit* and *to set*. The most important importa-
tion of this kind was that of the pronominal forms *they,*
*them* and *their,* which entered readily into the system
of English pronouns beginning with the same sound
(*the, that, this*) and were felt to be more distinct than
the old native forms which they supplanted. Indeed
these were liable to constant confusion with some forms
of the singular number (*he, him, her*) after the vowels
had become obscured, so that *he* and *hie, him* and *heom,*
*her* (*hire*) and *heora* could no longer be kept easily
apart. We thus find the obscured form, which was
written *a* (or *'a*), in use for 'he' till the beginning of
the 16th century (compare the dialectal use, for in-
stance in Tennyson's 'But Parson a cooms an' a goäs'),
and in use for 'she' and for 'they' till the end of the
14th century. Such a state of things would naturally
cause a great number of ambiguities; but although the
*th*-forms must consequently be reckoned a great advan-
tage to the language, it took a long time before the old
forms were finally displaced, nay, the dative *hem* still
survives in the form *'em* ('take 'em'), which is now by
people ignorant of the history of the language taken to
be a shortened *them;* *her* 'their' is the only form for the
possessive of the plural found in Chaucer (who says
*they* in the nominative) and there are two or three in-
stances in Shakespeare. One more Scandinavian pro-
noun is *same,* which was speedily associated with the

native adverb *same* (*swa same* 'similarly'). Other words similarly connected with the native stock are *want* (adj. and vb.), which reminded the English of their own *wan* 'wanting,' *wana* 'want' and *wanian* 'wane, lessen,' and *ill*, which must have appeared like a stunted form of *evil*, especially to a Scotchman who had made his own *devil* into *deil* and *even* into *ein*.

73. If now we try to find out by means of the loan-word test (see above, § 31) what were the spheres of human knowledge or activity in which the Scandinavians were able to teach the English, the first thing that strikes us is that the very earliest stratum of loan-words,[17] words which by the way were soon to disappear again from the language,[18] relate to war and more particularly to the navy: *orrest* 'battle,' *fylcian* 'to collect, marshal,' *lip* 'fleet,' *barda, cnear, scegþ* different sorts of warships, *ha* 'rowlock.' This agrees perfectly well with what the *Saxon Chronicle* relates about the English being inferior to the heathen in ship-building, until King Alfred undertook to construct a new kind of warship.[19]

74. Next, we find a great many Scandinavian law-terms; they have been examined by Professor Steenstrup in his well-known work on *Danelag*.[20] He has there been able, in an astonishing number of cases, to show conclusively that the vikings modified the legal ideas of the Anglo-Saxons, and that numerous new law-terms sprang up at the time of the Scandinavian settlements which had previously been utterly unknown. Most of them were simply the Danish or Norse words, others were Anglicizings, as when ON. *vapnatak* was made into

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17 See Björkman, p. 5.
18 They were naturally supplanted by French words, see below.
19 ON. *bát* (boat) is often supposed to be borrowed from OE. *bāt*, but both were probably borrowed from Frisian.
20 Copenhagen. 1882 ( = Normannerne IV).

*wæpnagetæc* (later *wapentake*) or when ON. *heimsokn* appears as *hamsocn* 'house-breaking or the fine for that offence,' or *saklauss* as *sacleas* 'innocent.' The most important of these juridical imports is the word *law* itself, known in England from the 10th century in the form *lagu*, which must have been the exact Scandinavian form, as it is the direct fore-runner of the ON. form *log*, ODan. *logh*.[21] *By-law* is now felt to be a compound of the preposition *by* and *law*, but originally *by* was the Dan. *by* 'town, village' (found in Derby, Whitby, etc.), and the Danish genitive-ending is preserved in the other English form *byrlaw*. Other words belonging to this class are *niðing* 'criminal, wretch,' *thriding* 'third part,' preserved in the mutilated form *riding*,[22] *carlman* 'man' as opposed to woman, *bonda* or *bunda* 'peasant,' *lysing* 'freedman,' *þræll*, Mod. *thrall*, *mal* 'suit, agreement,' *wiþermal* 'counterplea, defence,' *seht* 'agreement,' *stefnan* 'summon,' *crafian* now *crave*, *landcop* or anglicized *landceap* and *lahcop* or *lahceap* (for the signification see Steenstrup, p. 192 ff.); *ran* 'robbery'; *infangenþeof* later *infangthief* 'jurisdiction over a thief apprehended within the manor.' It will be seen that with the exception of *law, bylaw, thrall* and *crave*—the least juridical of them all—these Danish law-terms have disappeared from the language as a simple consequence of the Norman conquerors taking into their own hands the courts of justice and legal affairs generally. Steenstrup's research, which is largely based on linguistic

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21 The OE. word was *æ* or *æw*, which meant 'marriage' as well and was restricted to that sense in late OE., until it was displaced by the French word.
22 *North-thriding* being heard as *North-riding*; in the case of the two other ridings of Yorkshire, *East-thriding* and *West-thriding*, the *th*-sound was assimilated to the preceding *t*, the result in all three cases being the same misdivision of the word ('metanalysis').

facts, may be thus summarized. The Scandinavian set-
tlers reorganized the administration of the realm and
based it on a uniform and equable division of the coun-
try; taxes were imposed and collected after the Scandi-
navian pattern; instead of the lenient criminal law of
former times, a virile and powerful law was introduced
which was better capable of intimidating fierce and vio-
lent natures. More stress was laid on personal honour,
as when a sharp line was drawn between stealthy or
clandestine crimes and open crimes attributable to ob-
stinacy or vindictiveness. Commerce, too, was regu-
lated so as to secure trade.[23]

75. Apart from these legal words it would be very
difficult to point out any single group of words belonging
to the same sphere from which a superiority of any de-
scription might be concluded. *Window* is borrowed
from *vindauga* ('wind-eye'); but we dare not infer that
the northern settlers taught the English anything in
architecture, for the word stands quite alone; besides
Old English had another word for 'window,' which is
also based on the eye-shape of the windows in the old
wooden houses: *eagþyrel* 'eye-hole' (*cf. nosþyrel* nos-
tril).[24] Nor does the borrowing of *steak*, ME. *steyke*
from ON. *steik* prove any superior cooking on the part
of the vikings. But it is possible that the Scandinavian
*knives* (ME. *knif* from Scand. *knif*) were better than
or at any rate different from those of other nations, for
the word was introduced into French (*canif*) as well as
into English.

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[23] Steenstrup, *Danelag*, p. 391 ff.

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

76. If, then, we go through the lists of loan-words,
looking out for words from which conclusions as to the
state of culture of the two nations might be drawn, we
shall be doomed to disappointment, for they all seem to
denote objects and actions of the most commonplace de-
scription and certainly do not represent any new set of
ideas hitherto unknown to the people adopting them.
We find such everyday nouns as *husband, fellow, sky,
skull, skin, wing, haven, root, skill, anger, gate*,[25] etc.
Among the adjectives adopted from Scandinavian we
find *meek, low, scant, loose, odd*,[26] *wrong, ill, ugly, rotten*.
The impression produced perhaps by this list that only
unpleasant adjectives came into English from Scandi-
navia, is easily shown to be wrong, for *happy* and *seemly*
too are derived from Danish roots, not to speak of *stor*,
which was common in Middle English for 'great,' and
dialectal adjectives like *glegg* 'clear-sighted, clever,'
*heppen* 'neat, tidy,' *gain* 'direct, handy' (Sc. and North
E. the gainest way, ON. *hinn gegnsta veg*, Dan. *den
genneste vej*). The only thing common to the adjec-
tives then, is seen to be their extreme commonplaceness,
and the same impression is confirmed by the verbs, as
for instance, *thrive, die, cast, hit, take, call, want, scare,
scrape, scream, scrub, scowl, skulk, bask, drown, ran-
sack, gape, guess* (doubtful), etc. To these must be
added numerous words preserved only in dialects (north
country and Scotch) such as *lathe* 'barn' Dan. *lade*,
*hoast* 'cough' Dan. *hoste*, *flit* 'move' Dan. *flytte*, *gar*
'make, do' Dan. *göre*, *lait* 'search for' Dan. *lede*, *red up*
'to tidy' Dan. *rydde op*, *keek in* 'peep in,' *ket* 'carrion,

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

[26] *Cf.* North-Jutland dialect (Vendsyssel) *oj* 'odd (number)'.

horseflesh, tainted flesh, rubbish,' originally 'flesh meat' as Dan. *kød*, etc., all of them words belonging to the same familiar sphere, and having nothing about them that might be called technical or indicative of a higher culture. The same is true of that large class of words which have been mentioned above (§ 65–72), where the Scandinavians did not properly bring the word itself, but modified either the form or the signification of a native word; among them we have seen such everyday words as *get, give, sister, loose, birth, awe, bread, dream,* etc.[27] It is precisely the most indispensable elements of the language that have undergone the strongest Scandinavian influence, and this is raised into certainty when we discover that a certain number of those grammatical words, the small coin of language, which Chinese grammarians term 'empty words,' and which are nowhere else transferred from one language to another, have been taken over from Danish into English: pronouns like *they, them, their, the same* and probably *both;* a modal verb like Scotch *maun, mun* (ON. *munu,* Dan. *mon, monne*); comparatives like *minne* 'lesser,' *min* 'less,' *helder* 'rather'; pronominal adverbs like *hethen, thethen, whethen* 'hence, thence, whence,' *samen* 'together'; conjunctions like *though, oc* 'and,' *sum,* which for a long time seemed likely to displace the native *swa* (so) after a comparison, until it was itself displaced by *eallswa >* *as;* prepositions like *fro* and *till* (see above § 64).[28]

77. It is obvious that all these non-technical words can show us nothing about mental or industrial superi-

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

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

ority; they do not bear witness to the currents of civilization; what was denoted by them cannot have been new to the English; we have here no new ideas, only new names. Does that mean, then, that the loan-word test which we are able to apply elsewhere, fails in this one case, and that linguistic facts can tell us nothing about the reciprocal relations of the two races? No; on the contrary, the suggestiveness of these loans leaves nothing to be desired, they are historically significant enough. If the English loan-words in this period extend to spheres where other languages do not borrow, if the Scandinavian and the English languages were woven more intimately together, the reason must be a more intimate fusion of the two nations than is seen anywhere else. They fought like brothers and afterwards settled down peaceably, like brothers, side by side. The numbers of the Danish and Norwegian settlers must have been considerable else they would have disappeared without leaving such traces in the language.

78. It might at the first blush seem reasonable to think that what was going on among Scandinavian settlers in England was parallel to what we see going on now in the United States. But there is really no great similarity between the two cases. The language of Scandinavian and other settlers in America is often a curious mixture, but it is very important to notice that it is Danish or Norwegian, sprinkled with English words: '*han har fencet sin farm og venter en god krop*' he has fenced his farm and expects a good crop; '*lad os krosse streeten*' let us cross the street; '*tag det træ*' take that tray; '*hun suede ham i courten for 25,000 daler,*' etc. But this is *toto cælo* different from the English language of the middle ages. And if we do not take into account those districts where Scandinavians constitute the im-

mense majority of the population and keep up their old speech as pure as circumstances will permit, the children or at any rate the children's children of the immigrants speak English, and very pure English, too, without any Danish admixture. The English language of America has no loan-words worth mentioning from the languages of the thousands and thousands of Germans, Scandinavians, French, Poles and others that have settled there. Nor are the reasons far to seek.[29]   The immigrants come in small groups and find their predecessors half, or more than half, Americanized; those belonging to the same country cannot, accordingly, maintain their nationality collectively; they come in order to gain a livelihood, generally in subordinate positions where it is important to each of them separately to be as little different as possible from his new surroundings, in garb, in manners, and in language. The faults each individual commits in talking English, therefore, can have no consequences of lasting importance, and at any rate his children are in most respects situated like the children of the natives and learn the same language in essentially the same manner. In old times, of course, many a Dane in England would speak his mother-tongue with a large admixture of English, but that has no significance in linguistic history, for in course of time the descendants of the immigrants would no longer learn Scandinavian as their mother-tongue, but English. But that which is important, is the fact of the English themselves intermingling their own native speech with Scandinavian elements.

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

Now the manner in which this is done shows us that the culture or civilization of the Scandinavian settlers cannot have been of a higher order than that of the English, for then we should have seen in the loan-words special groups of technical terms indicative of this superiority. Neither can their state of culture have been much inferior to that of the English, for in that case they would have adopted the languages of the natives without appreciably influencing it. This is what happened with the Goths in Spain, with the Franks in France and with the Danes in Normandy, in all of which cases the Germanic tongues were absorbed into the Romance languages.[30]   It is true that the Scandinavians were, for a short time at least, the rulers of England, and we have found in the juridical loan-words linguistic corroboration of this fact; but the great majority of the settlers did not belong to the ruling class. Their social standing must have been, on the whole, slightly superior to the average of the English, but the difference cannot have been great, for the bulk of Scandinavian words are of a purely democratic character. This is clearly brought out by a comparison with the French words introduced in the following centuries, for here language confirms what history tells us, that the French represent the rich,

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

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

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

**79.** The form in which the words were borrowed occasions very few remarks. Those nouns which in Scan-

dinavian had the nominative ending *-r*, did not keep it, the kernel only of the word (= accus.) being taken over. In one instance the Norse genitive-ending appears in English; the Norse phrase *á náttar þeli* 'in the middle of the night' (*þel* means 'power, strength') was Anglicized into *on nighter tale* (*Cursor Mundi*), or *bi nighter tale* (Havelock, Chaucer, etc.). The *-t* in neuters of adjectives, that distinctive Scandinavian trait, is found in *scant*,[31] *want* and (*a*)*thwart*. Most Norse verbs have the weak inflexion in English, as might be expected (*e.g., die*, which in Old Scandinavian was a strong verb), but there is one noteworthy exception, *take*, that kept its Scandinavian strong inflexion, ON. *taka tók taken*. There are a few interesting words with the Scandinavian passive voice in *-sk* (from the reflexive pronoun *sik*): *bask*[32] and *busk*,[33] but in English they are treated like active forms. The shortness of the *sk*-forms may have led to their being taken over as inseparable wholes, for ON. *oðlask* and *þrívask* lost the reflexive ending in English *addle* 'acquire, earn' and *thrive*.[34]

As the Danes and the English could understand one another without much difficulty it was natural that many niceties of grammar should be sacrificed, the intelligibility of either tongue coming to depend mainly on its mere vocabulary.[35] So when we find that the wearing away

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[31] Properly *skammt*, neuter of *skammer* 'short'; the derived verb *skemta*, Dan. *skemte* 'joke' is found in ME. *skemten*.

[32] ON. *baða-sk* 'bathe oneself' rather than *baka-sk* 'bake oneself.'

[33] ON. *búa-sk* 'prepare oneself.'

[34] On the form of Scandinavian words see also Ekwall, *Anglia Beiblatt*, pp. 21, 47.

[35] Jespersen, *Progress in Language*, p. 173. Compare the explanation of the similar simplification of Dutch in South Africa given by H. Meyer, *Die Sprache der Buren* (Göttingen, 1901), p. 16.—E. Classen, *Modern Language Review*, pp. 14, 94, thinks that the prevalence of the plural ending *-s* over *-n* is due to the Danes, who had no pl. in *-n*, and whose *-r* was similar to *s*.

and levelling of grammatical forms in the regions in which the Danes chiefly settled was a couple of centuries in advance of the same process in the more southern parts of the country, the conclusion does not seem unwarrantable that this is due to the settlers who did not care to learn English correctly in every minute particular and who certainly needed no such accuracy in order to make themselves understood.

80. With regard to syntax our want of adequate early texts in Scandinavia as well as in North England makes it impossible for us to state anything very definite; but the nature of those loans which we are able to verify, warrants the conclusion that the intimate fusion of the two languages must certainly have influenced syntactical relations, and when we find in later times numerous striking correspondences between English and Danish, it seems probable that some at least of them date from the viking settlements. It is true, for instance, that relative clauses without any pronoun are found in very rare cases in Old English; but they do not become common till the Middle English period, when they abound; the use of these clauses is subject to the same restrictions in both languages, so that in ninety out of a hundred instances where an Englishman leaves out the relative pronoun, a Dane would be able to do likewise, and vice versa. The rules for the omission or retention of the conjunction *that* are nearly identical. The use of *will* and *shall* in Middle English corresponds pretty nearly with Scandinavian; if in Old English an auxiliary was used to express futurity, it was generally *sceal*, just as in modern Dutch (*zal*); *wile* was rare. In Modern English the older rules have been greatly modified, but in many cases where English commentators on Shakespeare note divergences from modern usage, a

Dane would have used the same verb as Shakespeare. Furness, in his note to the sentence 'Besides it should appear' (*Merch.* III. 2. 289 = 275 Globe ed.) writes: 'It is not easy to define this 'should' . . . . The Elizabethan use of *should* is to me always difficult to analyse. Compare Stephano's question about Caliban: 'Where the devil should he learn our language?' Now, a Dane would say '*det skulde synes*,' and '*Hvor fanden skulde han lære vort sprag?*' Abbott (*Shakespeare Grammar*, § 319) says 'There is a difficulty in the expression 'perchance I will'; but, from its constant recurrence, it would seem to be a regular idiom'; a Dane, in the three quotations given, would say *vil*. And similarly in other instances. 'He could have done it' agrees with '*han kunde have gjort det*' as against '*er hätte es tun können*' (and French '*il aurait pu le faire*'), and the Scotch idiom '*He wad na wrang'd the vera Deil*' (Burns), 'ye wad thought Sir Arthur had a pleasure in it' (Scott), where Caxton and the Elizabethans could also omit *have*, has an exact parallel in Danish '*vilde gjort*,' etc. Other points in syntax might perhaps be ascribed to Scandinavian influence, such as the universal position of the genitive case before its noun (where Old English like German placed it very often after it); but in these delicate matters it is not safe to assert too much, as in fact many similarities may have been independently developed in both languages.[36]

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[36] On cultural and literary relations between Scandinavia and England see H. G. Leach, *Angevin Britain and Scandinavia* (Harvard University Press, 1921). But when it is said (p. 20) that a Danish farmer from west Jutland has no trouble in keeping up a friendly conversation with a Yorkshireman, credence is given to a popular belief without any basis in facts.

# CHAPTER V

## THE FRENCH

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

85. Besides, there are a good many words that have never become common property, but have been known to jurists only, such as *mainour* (to be taken with the mainour, to be caught in the very act of stealing, from Fr. *manœuvre*), *jeofail* ('an oversight,' the acknowledgement of an error in pleading, from *je faille*), *cestui que trust, cestui* (*a*) *que vie* and other phrases equally shrouded in mystery to the man in the street. *Larceny* has been almost exclusively the property of lawyers, so that it has not ousted *theft* from general use; such words as *thief* and *steal* were of course too popular to be dis-

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[1] From 1362 English was established as the official language spoken in the courts of justice, yet the curious mongrel language known as 'Law French' continued in use there for centuries; Cromwell tried to break its power, but it was not finally abolished till an act of Parliament of 1731.—On the position of the French language in England on the whole see J. Vising, *Anglo-Norman Language and Literature* (London, 1923).

planted by French juridical terms, though *burglar* is probably of French origin. It is also worth observing how many of the phrases in which the adjective is invariably placed after its noun, are law terms, taken over bodily from the French, *e.g., heir male, issue male, fee simple, proof demonstrative, malice prepense* (or, Englished, *malice aforethought*),[2] *letters patent* (formerly also with the adjective inflected, *letters patents*, Shakespeare *R 2* II 1. 202), *attorney general* (and other combinations of *general*, all of which are official, though some of them are not juridical).

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

87. To these words, taken from different domains, may be added other words of more general meaning, which are highly significant as to the relations between

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[2] *Cf.* also *lords spiritual* and *lords temporal;* the *body politic.*

the Normans and the English, such as *sir* and *madam, master* and *mistress* with their contrast *servant* (and the verb to *serve*), further, *command* and *obey, order, rich* and *poor* with the nouns *riches* and *poverty; money, interest, cash, rent,* etc.

88. It is a remark that was first made by John Wallis[3] and that has been very often repeated, especially since Sir Walter Scott made it popular in *Ivanhoe,* that while the names of several animals in their lifetime are English (*ox, cow, calf, sheep, swine, boar, deer*) they appear on the table with French names (*beef, veal, mutton, pork, bacon, brawn, venison*). This is generally explained from the masters leaving the care of the living animals to the lower classes, while they did not leave much of the meat to be eaten by them. But it may with just as much right be contended that the use of the French words here is due to the superiority of the French *cuisine,* which is shown by a great many other words as well, such as *sauce, boil, fry, roast, toast, pasty, pastry, soup, sausage, jelly, dainty;* while the humbler *breakfast* is English, the more sumptuous meals, *dinner* and *supper,* as well as *feasts* generally, are French.

89. We see on the whole that the masters knew how to enjoy life and secure the best things to themselves; note also such words as *joy* and *pleasure, delight, ease* and *comfort; flowers* and *fruits* may be mentioned in the same category. And if we go through the different objects or pastimes that make life enjoyable to people having plenty of leisure (this word, too, is French) we shall find an exceedingly large number of French words. The *chase*[4] of course was one of the favourite pastimes,

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[3] *Grammatica linguae Anglicanae,* 1653.
[4] This is the Central French Form of the word that was taken over in a North French dialectal form as *catch* (Latin *captare*).

and though the native *hunt* was never displaced, yet we find many French terms relating to the chase, such as *brace* and *couple, leash, falcon, quarry, warren, scent, track*. The general term *sport*, too, is of course a French word; it is a shortened form of *desport (disport)*. *Cards* and *dice* are French words, and so are a great many words relating to different games (*partner, suit, trump*), some of the most interesting being the numerals used by card and dice players: *ace, deuce, tray, cater, cinque, size; cf.* Chaucer's 'Sevene is my chaunce, and thyn is cynk and treye' (C 653).

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

91. The French were the teachers of the English in most things relating to art; not only such words as *art, beauty, colour, image, design, figure, ornament, to paint*, but also the greater number of the more special words of technical significance are French; from architecture may be mentioned, by way of specimens: *arch, tower, pillar, vault, porch, column, aisle, choir, reredos, transept, chapel, cloister* (the last of which belong here as well as to our § 86), not to mention *palace, castle, manor, mansion*, etc. If we go through the names of the various kinds of artisans, etc., we cannot fail to be struck with the difference between the more homely or more

elementary occupations which have stuck to their old native names (such as *baker, miller, smith, weaver, saddler, shoemaker, wheelwright, fisherman, shepherd* and others), on the one hand, and on the other those which brought their practitioners into more immediate contact with the upper classes, or in which fashion perhaps played a greater part; these latter have French names, for instance, *tailor, butcher, mason, painter, carpenter*, and *joiner* (note also such words as *furniture, table, chair*, while the native name is reserved for the humbler *stool*, etc.).

92. I am afraid I have tired the reader a little with all these long lists of words. My purpose was to give abundant linguistic evidence for the fact that the French were the rich, the powerful, and the refined classes. It was quite natural that the lower classes should soon begin to imitate such of the expressions of the rich as they could catch the meaning of. They would adopt interjections and exclamations like *alas, certes, sure, adieu;* and perhaps *verray* (later *very*) was at first introduced as an exclamation. Whole phrases were adopted: in the *Ancrene Riwle* (about 1225) we find (p. 268) *Deuleset (Dieu le sait)* in two manuscripts, while a third has *Crist hit wat;* and three hundred years later, we find 'As good is a becke (= a wink), as is a dewe vow garde' (Bale, *Three Lawes* 1. 1470). As John of Salisbury (Johannes Sarisberiensis) says expressly in the twelfth century,[5] it was the fashion to interlard one's speech with French words; they were thought modish, and that will account for the fact that many non-technical words too were taken over, such as *air, age* (juridical?), *arrive* (military?), *beast, change, cheer, cover*,

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5 Quoted by D. Behrens, Paul's *Grundriss*, I, p. [2] 963.

*cry, debt* (juridical?), *feeble, large, letter, manner, matter, nurse* and *nourish, place, point, price, reason, turn, use,* and a great many other everyday words of very extensive employment.

*93.* If, then, the English adopted so many French words because it was the fashion in every respect to imitate their 'betters,' we are allowed to connect this adoption of *non-technical* words with that trait of their character which in its exaggerated form has in modern times been termed snobbism or toadyism, and which has made certain sections of the English people more interested in the births, deaths and especially marriages of dukes and marquises than in anything else outside their own small personal sphere.

*94.* But when we trace this feature of snobbishness back to the first few centuries after the Norman conquest, we must not forget that there were great differences, so that some people would affect many French words and others would stick as far as possible to the native stock of words. We see this difference in the literary works that have come down to us. In Layamon's *Brut,* written very early in the thirteenth century and amounting in all to more than 56,000 short lines, the number of words of Anglo-French origin is only about 150.[6] The *Orrmulum,* which was written perhaps twenty years later, contains more than 20,000 lines, yet even Kluge, who criticizes the view that this very tedious work contains no French words, has not been able to find in it more than twenty odd words of French origin.[7] But in the contemporary prose work *Ancrene Riwle,* we find on

[6] Skeat, *Principles of English Etymology,* II (1891), p. 8; Morris, *Historical Outline of English Accidence* (1885), p. 338.
[7] Kluge, *Das französische Element im Orrmulum,* Englische Studien, XXII, p. 179.

200 pages about 500 French words. A couple of centuries later, it would be a much harder task to count the French words in any author, as so many words had already become part and parcel of the English language; but even then one author used many more than another. Chaucer undoubtedly employs a far greater number of French words than most other writers of his time. Nor would it be fair to ascribe all these borrowings to what I have mentioned as snobbism; the greater a writer's familiarity with French culture and literature, the greater would be his temptation to introduce French words for everything above the commonplaces of daily life.

*95.* The following table shows the strength of the influx of French words at different periods; it comprises one thousand words (the first hundred French words in the New English Dictionary for each of the first nine letters and the first 50 for *j* and *l*) and gives the half-century to which the earliest quotation in that Dictionary belongs [8]—but it should be remembered that many or even most of these words, at any rate the more popular ones, had probably been in use some time before these quotations. Even if, however, the average age of French words is say fifty years greater than here indicated, the table retains its value for the comparative chronology of the language:—

[8] I have followed the authority of the same Dictionary also in regard to the question of the origin of the words, reckoning thus as French some words which I should, perhaps, myself have called Latin. Derivative words that have certainly or probably arisen in English (*e. g., daintily, damageable*) have been excluded, as also those perfectly unimportant words for which the NED. gives less than five quotations. Most of them cannot really be said to have ever belonged to the English language. *Cf.* also R. Mettig, *Die französischen Elemente im Alt- und Mittelenglishche,* Englische Studien XLI, p. 176 ff.

|              |   |   |   |   |     |           |   |   |   |   | carried forward: 581 |
|--------------|---|---|---|---|-----|-----------|---|---|---|---|---|
| Before 1050  | . | . | . | . | 2   | 1451—1500 | . | . | . | . | 76 |
| 1051—1100    | . | . | . | . | 2   | 1501—1550 | . | . | . | . | 84 |
| 1101—1150    | . | . | . | . | 1   | 1551—1600 | . | . | . | . | 91 |
| 1151—1200    | . | . | . | . | 15  | 1601—1650 | . | . | . | . | 69 |
| 1201—1250    | . | . | . | . | 64  | 1651—1700 | . | . | . | . | 34 |
| 1251—1300    | . | . | . | . | 127 | 1701—1750 | . | . | . | . | 24 |
| 1301—1350    | . | . | . | . | 120 | 1751—1800 | . | . | . | . | 16 |
| 1351—1400    | . | . | . | . | 180 | 1801—1850 | . | . | . | . | 23 |
| 1401—1450    | . | . | . | . | 70  | 1851—1900 | . | . | . | . | 2 |
|              |   |   |   |   | 581 |           |   |   |   |   | 1000 |

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

*96.* In a well-known passage, Robert of Gloucester (ab. 1300) speaks about the relation of the two languages in England: 'Thus, he says, England came into Normandy's hand; and the Normans at that time *(þo;* it is important not to overlook this word) could speak only their own language, and spoke French just as they did at home, and had their children taught in the same manner, so that people of rank in this country who came of their blood all stick to the same language that they received of them, for if a man knows no French people will think little of him. But the lower classes still [9] stick to English and to their own language. I imagine there are in all the world no countries that do not keep their own language except England alone. But it is well known that it is the best thing to know both languages, for the more a man knows the more is he

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[9] *yute 'yet'*; sometimes curiously mistranslated, 'hold to their own *good* speech.'

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

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

'stream, river.' [10] There is some confusion between Eng. *rest* (repose) and OF. *rest* (remainder). In grammar, too, there were a few correspondences, as when nouns had the voiceless and the corresponding verbs the voiced consonants; French *us—user*, now *use* sb. pronounced [ju·s], vb. [ju·z] just as Eng. *house* sb. [haus], vb. [hauz]; French *grief—griever*, Eng. *grief—grieve* just as *half—halve*. Note also the formation of nouns in *-er* (*baker*, etc.) which is hardly distinguishable from French formations in words like *carpenter* (Fr. *-ier*), *interpreter* (ME. *interpretour*, Fr. *-eur*), etc. But on the whole such more or. less accidental similarities between the two languages were few in number and could not materially assist the English population in learning the new words that were flooding their language.

*98.* A greater assistance may perhaps have been derived from a habit which may have been common in conversational speech, and which was at any rate not uncommon in writing, that of using a French word side by side with its native synonym, the latter serving more or less openly as an interpretation of the former for the benefit of those who were not yet familiar with the more refined expression. Thus in the *Ancrene Riwle* (ab. 1225): *cherité* þet is *luve* (p. 8) | in *desperaunce*, þet is, in *unhope* & in *unbileave* forte beon iboruwen (p. 8) | Understondeð þet two *manere temptaciuns*—two *kunne vondunges*—beoð (p. 180) | *pacience*, þet is *þolemodnesse* (ibid.) | *lecherie*, þet is, *golnesse* (p. 198) | *ignoraunce*, þet is *unwisdom* & *unwitnesse* (p. 278). I quote from Behrens's collection of similar collocations [11] the following instances that prove conclusively that the

10 This is still the meaning of *lake* in some dialects.
11 *Französische Studien* V, p.[2] 8. *Cf.* also 'of whiche *tribe*, that is to seye, *kynréde* Jesu Crist was born' (Maundeville 67).

native word was then better known than the imported one: *bigamie* is unkinde [unnatural] þing, on engleis tale *twiewifing* (Genesis & Exod. 449) | *twelfe iferan*, þe Freinsce heo cleopeden *dusze pers* (Layamon I. 1. 69) | þat craft: *to lokie in þan lufte*, þe craft his ihote [is called] *astronomie* in oþer kunnes speche [in a speech of a different kind] (ib. II. 2. 598). It is well worth observing that in all these cases the French words are perfectly familiar to a modern reader, while he will probably require an explanation of the native words that served then to interpret the others. In Chaucer we find similar double expressions, but they are now introduced for a totally different purpose; the reader is evidently supposed to be equally familiar with both, and the writer uses them to heighten or strengthen the effect of the style [12]; for instance: He coude songes *make* and wel *endyte* (A 95) — Therto he coude *endyte* and *make* a thing (A 325) | *faire* and *fetisly* (A 124 and 273) | *swinken* with his handes and *laboure* (A 186) | Of studie took he most *cure* and most *hede* (A 303) | *Poynaunt* and *sharp* (A 352) | At sessiouns ther was he *lord* and *sire* (A 355).[13] In Caxton this has become quite a mannerism, see, *e.g.*: I shal so *awreke* and *avenge* this trespace (*Reynard*, p. 56; *cf.* p. 116 *advenge* and *wreke* it) | in *honour* and *worship* (ib. p. 56) | *olde* and *auncyent* doctours (p. 62) | *feblest* and *wekest* (p. 64) | I toke a *glasse* or a *mirrour* (p. 83) | Now ye shal here of

12 This use of two expressions for the same idea is extremely common in the middle ages and the beginning of the modern period, and it is not confined to those cases where one was a native and the other an imported word; see Kellner, *Englische Studien* XX, p. 11 ff.; Greenough and Kittredge, *Words and their Ways*, p. 113 ff.; so also in Danish, see Vilh. Andersen in *Dania*, p. 80 ff. (1890), and *Danske Studier* (1893), p. 7 ff.
13 *Cf.* also, Curteis he was, lowly, and servisable (A 99); Curteys he was, and lowly, of servyse (A 250).

the *mirrour;* the *glas* . . . (p. 84) | *good* ne *proffyt* (p. 86) | *fowle* and *dishonestly* (p. 94) | *prouffyt* and *fordele* (p. 103). It will be observed that with the exception of the last word, the language has preserved in all cases both the synonyms that Caxton uses side by side, so that we may consider this part of the English vocabulary as settled towards the end of the fifteenth century.

*99.* Many of the French words, such as *cry, claim, state, poor, change,* and, indeed, most of the words enumerated above (§ 82–92), and one might say, nearly all the words taken over before 1350 and not a few of those of later importation, have become part and parcel of the English language, so that they appear to us all just as English as the pre-Conquest stock of native words. But a great many others have never become so popular. There are a great many gradations between words of everyday use and such as are not at all understood by the common people, and to the latter class may sometimes belong words which literary people would think familiar to everybody. Hyde Clark relates an anecdote of a clergyman who blamed a brother preacher for using the word *felicity,* 'I do not think all your hearers understood it; I should say *happiness.*' 'I can hardly think,' said the other, 'that any one does not know what *felicity* means, and we will ask this ploughman near us. Come hither, my man! you have been at church and heard the sermon; you heard me speak of *felicity;* do you know what it means?' 'Ees, sir!' 'Well, what does *felicity* mean?' 'Summut in the inside of a pig, but I can't say altogether what.' [14] —Note also the way in which Touchstone addresses the rustic in *As You Like It* (V. 1. 52), 'Therefore, you Clowne, abandon,—which is in the vul-

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[14] *A Grammar of the English Tongue* (4th ed., London, 1879), p. 61.

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

*100.* From what precedes we are now in a position to understand some at least of the differences that have developed in course of time between two synonyms when both have survived, one of them native, the other French. The former is always nearer the nation's heart than the latter, it has the strongest associations with everything primitive, fundamental, popular, while the French word is often more formal, more polite, more refined and has a less strong hold on the emotional side of life. A *cottage* is finer than a *hut,* and fine people often live in a cottage, at any rate in summer. 'The word *bill* was too vulgar and familiar to be applied to a hawk, which had only a *beak* (the French term, whereas *bill* is the A. S. *bile*). 'Ye shall say, this hauke has a large *beke,* or a short *beke* and call it not *bille'; Book of St. Alban's,* fol. a 6, back.' [15] —To *dress* means to adorn, deck, etc., and thus generally presupposes a finer garment than the old word to *clothe,* the wider signification of which it seems, however, to be more and more appropriating to itself. *Amity* means 'friendly relations, especially of a public character between states or individuals,' and thus lacks the warmth of *friendship.* The difference between *help* and *aid* is thus indicated in the *Funk-Wagnalls Dictionary:* '*Help* expresses greater dependence and deeper need than *aid.* In extremity we say 'God *help* me!' rather than 'God *aid* me!' In time of danger we cry '*help! help!*' rather than '*aid! aid!*' To *aid* is to second another's own exertions. We can speak of *helping* the

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[15] Skeat, *The Works of G. Chaucer,* vol. III, p. 261.

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

*101.* In some cases the chief difference between the native word and the French synonym is that the former is more colloquial and the latter more literary, *e.g., begin* —*commence*, *hide*—*conceal*, *feed*—*nourish*, *hinder*— *prevent*, *look for*—*search for*, *inner* and *outer*—*interior* and *exterior*, and many others. In a few cases, however,

the native word is more literary. *Valley* is the everyday word, and *dale* has only lately been introduced into the standard language from the dialects of the hilly northern counties. *Action* has practically supplanted *deed* in ordinary language, so that the latter can be reserved for more dignified speech.

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

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

(OFr. nom. *fiers*, acc. *fier*), *appentice* (*pentice*, corrupted into *penthouse*, OFr. nom. *apentis*, acc. *apentif*), *dace*, earlier *darce* (OFr. nom. *darz*, acc. *dart*), and *James*.[16] In the plural, Old French had a nominative without any ending and an accusative in -*s*, and English popular instinct naturally associated the latter form with the native plural ending in -*es*.[17] In course of time those words which had for a long time, in English as in French, formed their plural without any ending (*e.g., cas*) were made to conform with the general rule (sg. *case*, pl. *cases*).[18] French adjectives had the *s* added to them just like French nouns, and we find a few adjectives with the plural *s*, as in *the goddes celestials* (Chaucer) ; *letters patents* survived as a fixed group till the time of Shakespeare (§ 85). But the general rule was to treat French adjectives exactly like English ones.

*104.* As to the verbs, the rule is that the stem of the French present plural served as basis for the English form ; thus (*je survis*), *nous survivons, vous survivez, ils survivent* became *survive*, (*je résous*) ,*résolvons*, etc., became *resolve*, OFr. (*je desjeun*), *nous disnons*, etc., became *dine;* thus is explained the frequent ending -*ish*, in *punish, finish,* etc. English *bound* (to leap), accordingly,

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[16] But Chaucer has *by seint Jame* (riming with name, D. 1443). A similar vacillation is found in the name *Steven Stephen*, where now the *s* less form has prevailed, but where formerly the Fr. nom. was also found (*seynt stevyns*, Malory 104).—Where the French inflexion was irregular, owing to Latin stress shifting, etc., the accusative was adopted, in *emperor* (-*our*, OFr. nom. *empererə*), *companion* (OFr. nom. *compain*), *neveu, nephew* (OFr. nom. *nies*) and others, but the nom. is kept in *sire* (OFr. acc. *seignor*), *mayor* (OFr. *maire*, acc. *majeur*).

[17] The prevalence of the *s*-plural in English must not be supposed to be due to French influence, see my *Progress in Language,* p. 169 = *Chapters on English,* p. 33.

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

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cannot be the French *bondir*, which would have yielded *bondish*, but is an English formation from the noun *bound*, which is the French *bond*. I think that *levy* is similarly formed on the noun *levy*, which is Fr. *levée;* but in *sally* the *y* represents the *i* which made the Fr. *ll moullié.* Where the French infinitive was imported it was generally in a substantival function, as in *dinner, remainder, attainder, rejoinder, cf.* the verbs *dine, remain, attain, rejoin;* so also the law terms *merger, user,* and *misnomer.* Still we have a few verbs in which the ending -*er* can hardly be anything else but the French infinitive ending: *render* (which is thereby kept distinct from *rend*), *surrender, tender* (where the doublet *tend* also exists), and perhaps *broider* (*embroider*). There is a curious parallel to the Norse *bask* and *busk* (79) in *saunter*, where the French reflective pronoun has become fixed as an inseparable element of the word, from *s'auntrer*, another form for *s'aventurer* 'to adventure oneself.'

*105.* French words have, as a matter of course, participated in all the sound changes that have taken place in English since their adoption. Thus words with the long [i] sound have had it diphthongized into [ai], *e.g., fine, price, lion.* The long [u], written *ou*, has similarly become [au], *e.g.,* OFr. *espouse* (Mod. Fr. *épouse*), M. E. *spouse,* pronounced [spu·zə], now pron. [spauz], Fr. *tour,* Mod. E. *tower.* Compare also the treatment of the vowels in *grace, change, beast* (OFr. *beste*), *ease* (Fr. *aise*), etc. Such changes of loan-words are seen everywhere: they are brought about gradually and insensibly. But there is another change which has often been supposed to have come about in a different manner. A great many words are now stressed on the first syllable which in French were stressed on the final syllable, and this is

often ascribed to the inability of the English to imitate the French accentuation. All English words, it is said, had the stress on the first syllable, and this habit was unconsciously extended to foreign words on their first adoption into the language. We see this manner of treating foreign words in Icelandic at the present day. But the explanation does not hold good in our case. English had a few words with unstressed first syllable (*be-, for-,* etc., see above, § 25), and as matter of fact, French words in English were for centuries accented in the French manner, as shown conclusively by Middle English poetry. It was only gradually that more and more words had their accent shifted on to its present place. The causes of this shifting were the same as are elsewhere at work in the same direction.[19] In many words the first syllable was felt as psychologically the most important one, as in *punish, finish, matter, manner, royal, army* and other words ending with meaningless or formative syllables. The initial syllable very often received the accent of contrast. In modern speech we stress the otherwise unstressed syllables to bring out a contrast clearly, as in 'not *op*pose but *sup*pose' or 'If on the one hand speech gives *ex*pression to ideas, on the other hand it receives *im*pressions from them' (Romanes, *Mental Evolution in Man,* p. 238), and in the same manner we must imagine that in the days when *real, formal, object, subject* and a hundred similar words were normally stressed on the last syllable, they were so often contrasted with each other that the modern accentuation became gradually the habitual one. This will explain the accent of *January, February, cavalry, infantry, primary, orient* and other words. An equally powerful

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[19] See the detailed exposition in my *Modern English Grammar* (Heidelberg, Carl Winter, 1909), I, ch. V.

principle is rhythm, which tends to avoid two consecutive strong syllables; compare modern *go down|stairs,* but the |*downstairs room, St. Paul's church|yard,* but the |*churchyard wall.* Chaucer stresses many words in the French manner, except when they precede a stressed syllable, in which case the accent is shifted, thus *co|syn* (cousin) but |*cosyn myn; in felici|te par|fit,* but a |*verray* |*parfit* |*gentil* |*knight; se|cre* (secret), but *in* |*secre wyse,* etc. An instructive illustration is found in such a line as this (*Canterbury Tales,* D 1486):

In |divers |art and in di|vers fi|gures.

These principles—value-stressing, contrast, rhythm—will explain all or most of the instances in which English has shifted the French stress; but it is evident that it took a very long time before the new forms of the words which arose at first only occasionally through their influence were powerful enough finally to supplant the older forms.[20]

*106.* Not long after the intrusion of the first French words we begin to see the first traces of a phenomenon which was to attain very great proportions and which must now be termed one of the most prominent features of the language, namely hybridism. Strictly speaking, we have a hybrid (a composite word formed of elements from different languages) as soon as an English inflexional ending is added to a French word, as in the genitive *the Duke's children* or the superlative *noblest,* etc., and from such instances we rise by insensible gradations to others, in which the fusion is more surprising. From the very first we find verbal nouns in *-ing* or *-ung* formed from French verbs (indeed, they are found at a

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

time when they could not be formed from every native verb, § 197), *e.g., prechinge; riwlunge (Ancrene Riwle)*; *scornunge* and *servinge* (Layamon); *spusinge* (Owl & N.).    Other instances of English endings added to French words are *faintness* (from the end of the fourteenth century), *closeness* (half a century later), *secretness* (Chaucer secreenesse B 773), *simpleness* (Shakespeare and others), *materialness* (Ruskin), *abnormalness* (Benson), etc.    Further, a great many adjectives in *-ly* (courtly, princely, etc.) and, of course, innumerable adverbs with the same ending (faintly, easily, nobly [21]); adjectives in *-ful* (beautiful, dutiful, powerful, artful) and *-less* (artless, colourless); nouns in *-ship* (courtship, companionship) and *-dom* (dukedom, martyrdom) and so forth.

107.  While hybrid words of this kind are found in comparatively great numbers in most languages, hybrids of the other kind, *i.e.*, composed of a native stem and a foreign ending, are in most languages much rarer than in English.  Before such hybrids could be formed, there must have been already in the language so great a number of foreign words with the same ending that the formation would be felt to be perfectly transparent.  Here are to be mentioned the numerous hybrids in *-ess* (shepherdess, goddess; Wycliffe has *dwelleresse;* in a recent volume I have found '*seeress* and *prophetess*'), in *-ment* (endearment and enlightenment are found from the seventeenth century, but bewilderment not before the nineteenth; wonderment, frequent in Trackeray; odd-

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[21] Also *naïvely*, used by Pope, Ruskin, Leslie Stephen, and many others.  But some have an unwarranted aversion to the word. In the New Statesman (Dec. 19, 1914) I find: 'in Hardy's elegy on Swinburne there occurs the horrid hybrid 'naïvely'—a neologism exactly calculated, one would suppose, to make the classic author of Atalanta turn in his grave' (L. Strachey).

ment, R. Kipling, hutment), in *-age* (mileage, acreage, leakage, shrinkage, wrappage, breakage, cleavage, roughage, shortage, etc.); in *-ance* (hindrance, used in the fifteenth century in the meaning 'injury'; in the signification now usual it is found as early as 1526, and perhaps we may infer from its occurring neither in the Bible, nor in Shakespeare, Milton, and Pope, that it was felt to be a bastard, though Locke, Cowper, Wordsworth, Shelley, and Tennyson admit it; forbearance, originally a legal term; furtherance); in *-ous* (murderous; thunderous; slumberous is used by Keats and Carlyle); in *-ry* (fishery, bakery, etc.; gossipry, Mrs. Browning; Irishry; forgettery jocularly formed after memory); in *-ty* (oddity, womanity nonce-word after humanity); in *-fy* (fishify,[22] Shakespeare; snuggify, Ch. Lamb; Torify, Ch. Darwin; scarify, Fielding; tipsify, Thackeray; funkify; speechify with the corresponding nouns in *-fication:* uglification, Shelley).[23]

108.  One of the most fertile English derivative endings is *-able*, which has been used in a great number of words besides those French ones which were taken over ready made (such as *agreeable, variable, tolerable*).  In comparatively few cases it is added to substantives (*serviceable, companionable, marriageable, peaceable, seasonable*).  Its proper sphere of usefulness is in forming adjectives from verbs, rarely in an active sense (*suitable* = that suits, *unshrinkable*), but generally in a passive sense (*bearable* = that can or may be borne). Thus we have now *drinkable, eatable, steerable* (balloons), *weaveable, unutterable, answerable, punishable, unmistakable*, etc., and hundreds of others, so that every-

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[22] *Cf.* also 'Daphne—before she was happily treeified,' Lowell, *Fable for Critics.*

[23] See below on hybrids with Latin and Greek endings (§ 123).

body has a feeling that he is free to form a new adjective of this kind as soon as there is any necessity for, or convenience in, using it, just as he feels no hesitation in adding *-ing* to any verb, new or old. And of course, no one ever objects to these adjectives (or the corresponding nouns in *-ability*) because they are hybrids or bastards, any more than one would object to forms like *acting* or *remembering* on the same score.

*109.* These adjectives have now become so indispensable that the want is even felt of forming them from composite verbal expressions, such as *get at*. But though *get-at-able* and *come-at-able* are pretty frequently heard in conversation, most people shrink from writing or printing them. Sterne has *come-at-ability*, Congreve *uncomeatable*, Smiles *get-atability*, and George Eliot in a letter *knock-upable*. Tennyson, too, writes in a jocular letter 'thinking of you as no longer the *comeatable, runupableto, smokeablewith* J. S. of old.' Note here the place of the preposition in the last two adjectives, and compare 'enough to make the house *unliveable in* for a month' (*The Idler*, May, 1892, p. 366), 'the husband being fairly good-natured and *livable-with*' (Bernard Shaw, *Ibsenism* 41), and 'she is *unspeakable to*' (Benson, *Dodo the Second* 121). It is obvious that these adjectives are too clumsy to be ever extensively used in serious writing. But there is another way out of the difficulty which is really much more conformable to the genius of the language, namely to leave out the preposition in all those cases where there can be no doubt of the preposition understood. *Unaccountable* (= that cannot be accounted *for*) has long been accepted by everybody; I have found it, for instance, in Congreve, Addison, Swift, Goldsmith, De Quincey, Miss Austen, Dickens and Hawthorne. *Indispensable* has been—well, indispensable,

for two centuries and a half. *Laughable* is used by Shakespeare, Dryden, Carlyle, Thackeray, etc. *Dependable, disposable, objectionable,* and *available* are in general use.[24] All this being granted, it is difficult to see why *reliable* should be the most abused word of the English language. It is certainly formed in accordance with the fundamental laws of the language; it is short and unambiguous, and what more should be needed? Those who measure a word by its age will be glad to hear that Miss Mabel Peacock has found it in a letter, bearing the date of 1624, from the pen of the Rev. Richard Mountagu, who eventually became a bishop. And those who do not like using a word unless it has been accepted by great writers will find a formidable array of the best names in Fitzedward Hall's list[25] of authors who have used the word.[26] It is curious to note that the word which is always extolled at the expense of *reliable* as an older and nobler word, namely *trustworthy*, is really much younger: it has not been traced further back than the beginning of the nineteenth century; besides, any impartial judge will find its sound less agreeable to the ear on account of the consonant group—*stw*—and the

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

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

[26] Coleridge, Sir Robert Peel, John Stuart Mill, Wilberforce, Dickens, Charles Reade, Walter Bagehot, Anthony Trollope, Newman, Gladstone, S. Baring-Gould, Sir Leslie Stephen, H. Maudsley, Saintsbury, Henry Sweet, Thomas Arnold. In America, Washington Irving, Daniel Webster, G. P. Marsh; I leave out, rather arbitrarily I fear, more than a score of the names given by Fitzedward Hall.

heavy second syllable. But then the synonym *trusty* avoids that fault.

*110.* Fitzedward Hall in speaking about the recent word *aggressive* [27] says, 'It is not at all certain whether the French *agressif* suggested *aggressive*, or was suggested by it. They may have appeared independently of each other.' The same remark applies to a great many other formations on a French or Latin basis; even if the several components of a word are Romanic, it by no means follows that the word was first used by a Frenchman. On the contrary, the greater facility and the greater boldness in forming new words and turns of expression, which characterizes English generally in contradistinction to French, would in many cases speak in favour of the assumption that an innovation is due to an English mind. This I take to be true with regard to *dalliance,* which is so frequent in ME. (*dalyaunce,* etc.) while it has not been recorded in French at all. The wide chasm between the most typical English meaning of *sensible* (a sensible man, a sensible proposal) and those meanings which it shares with French *sensible* and Lat. *sensibilis,* probably shows that in the former meaning the word was an independent English formation. *Duration* as used by Chaucer may be a French word; it then went out of the language, and when it reappeared after the time of Shakespeare, it may just as well have been re-formed in England as borrowed; *duratio* does not seem to have existed in Latin. *Intensitas* is not a Latin word, and *intensity* is older than *intensité.*

*111.* In not a few cases, the English soil has proved more fertilizing than the French soil from which words were transplanted. In French, for instance, *mutin* has

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[27] *Modern English,* p. 314.

fewer derivatives than in English, where we have *mutine* sb., *mutine* vb. (Shakespeare), *mutinous, mutinously, mutinousness, mutiny* sb., *mutiny* vb., *mutineer* sb., *mutineer* vb., *mutinize,* of which it is true that *mutine and mutinize* are now extinct. We see the same thing in such a recent borrowing as *clique,* which stands alone in French while in English two centuries have provided us with *cliquedom, cliqueless, cliquery, cliquomania, cliquomaniac, clique,* vb., *cliquish, cliquishness, cliquism, cliquy* or *cliquey.* From *due* we have *duty,* to which no French correspondent word has been found in France itself, although *dueté, duity, deweté* are found in Anglo-French writers; in English *duty* is found from the 13th century, and we have moreover *duteous, dutiable, dutied, dutiful, dutifully, dutifulness, dutiless,* none of which appear to be older than the 16th century. *Aim,* the noun as well as the verb, is now among the most useful and indispensable words in the English vocabulary and it has some derivatives, such as *aimer, aimful,* and *aimless,* but in French the two verbs from which it originates, *esmer* < Lat. *æstimare,* and *aasmer,* < Lat. *adæstimare,* have totally disappeared. Note also the differentiations of the words *strange* and *estrange, state* and *estate,*[28] of entry (< Fr. *entrée* [29]) and *entrance,* while in French *entrance* has been given up; and the less perfect one of *guaranty* (action) and *guarantee* (person), not to speak of *warrant* and *warranty.* The extent to which foreign speech-material has been turned to account is really astonishing, as is seen, perhaps, most clearly in the extensive use of the derivative ending *-ee.* This was originally the

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[28] Compare also the juridical *estray* and the ordinary *stray.*
[29] This word has recently been re-adopted: *entrée* 'made-dish served between the chief courses.'

French participial ending *-é* used in a very few cases such as *apelé*, E. *appellee* as opposed to *apelor*, E. *appellor, nominee, presentee*, etc. and then gradually extended in legal use to words in which such a formation would be prohibited in French by formal as well as syntactical reasons: *vendee* is the man to whom something is sold (*l'homme à qui on a vendu quelque chose*), *cf.* also *referee, lessee, trustee*, etc. Now, these formations are no longer restricted to juridical language, and in general literature there is some disposition to turn this ending to account as a convenient manner of forming passive nouns; Goldsmith and Richardson have *lovee*, Sterne speaks of 'the mortgager and mortgagee . . . the jester and jestee'; further the *gazee* (De Quincey) = the one gazed at, *staree* (Edgeworth), *cursee* and *laughee* (Carlyle), *flirtee, floggee, wishee, bargainee, beatee, examinee, callee* (our callee = the man we call on), etc. Such a word as *trusteeship* is eminently characteristic of the composite character of the language: Scandinavian *trust* + a French ending used in a manner unparalleled in French + an old English ending.

*112.* French influence has not been restricted to one particular period (see § 95), and it is interesting to compare the forms of old loan-words with those of recent ones, in which we can recognize traces of the changes the French language has undergone since mediæval times. Where a *ch* in an originally French word is pronounced as in *change, chaunt*, etc. (with the sound-group tʃ), the loan is an old one; where it is sounded as in *champagne* (with simple ʃ), we have a recent loan. *Chief* is thus shown to belong to the first period, while its doublet *chef* ( = *chef de cuisine*) is much more modern. It is curious that two petnames should now be

spelled in the same way *Charlie*, although they are distinct in pronunciation: the masculine is derived from the old loan *Charles* and has, therefore, the sound [tʃ], the feminine is from the recent loan *Charlotte* with [ʃ]. Similarly *g* as in *age, siege, judge*, pronounced [dʒ], is indicative of old loans, while the pronunciation [ʒ] is only found in modern adoptions, such as *rouge*. Initially, however, [ʒ] is not found in English without a preposed [d]; thus *gentle, genteel* and *jaunty* represent three layers of borrowing from the same word, but they have all of them the same initial sound. Other instances of the same French word appearing in more than one shape according to its age in English are *saloon* and *salon, suit* and *suite, liquor* and *liqueur, rout* 'big party, retreat' and *route* (the diphthong in the former word is an English development of the long [u] § 105), *quart*, pronounced [kwɔt], and *quart* pronounced [kaˑt] 'a sequence of four cards in piquet,' *cf.* also *quarte* or *carte* in fencing.

*113.* In some cases, we witness a curious re-shaping of an early French loan-word, by which it is made more like the form into which the French has meanwhile developed. This, of course, can only be explained by the uninterrupted contact between the two nations. Chaucer had *viage* just as Old French, but now the word is *voyage; leal* has given way to *loyal, marchis* to *marquis;* the noun *flaute* and the verb *floyten* are now made into *flute* like mod. Fr. *flûte*.[30] Similarly the signification of ME. *douten* like that of OFr. *douter* was 'to fear' (*cf. redoubt*), but now in both languages this signification has disappeared. *Danger* was at first adopted in the Old French sense of 'dominion, power,' but the

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[30] *Cf.* below the Latinizing of many French words, § 116.

present meaning was developed in France before it came to England. The many parallelisms in the employment of *cheer* and Fr. *chère* could not very well have arisen independently in both languages at once. This continued contact constitutes a well-marked contrast between the French and the Scandinavian influence, which seems to have broken off somewhat abruptly after the Norman conquest.

## CHAPTER VI

### LATIN AND GREEK

*114.* Although Latin has been read and written in England from the Old English period till our own days, so that there has been an uninterrupted possibility of Latin influence on the English language, yet we may with comparative ease separate the latest stratum of loans from the two strata already considered (in §§ 32, 39). It embodies especially abstract or scientific words, adopted exclusively through the medium of writing and never attaining to the same degree of popularity as words belonging to the older strata. The words adopted are not all of Latin origin, there are perhaps more Greek than Latin elements in them, if we count the words in a big dictionary. Still the more important words are Latin, and most of the Greek words have entered into English through Latin, or have, at any rate, been Latinized in spelling and endings before being used in English, so that we have no occasion here to deal separately with the two stocks. The great historical event, without which this influence would never have assumed such gigantic dimensions, was the revival of learning. Through Italy and France the Renaissance came to be felt in England as early as the fourteenth century, and since then the invasion of classical terms has never stopped, although the multitude of new words introduced was greater, perhaps, in the fourteenth, the sixteenth and the nineteenth than in the intervening centuries. The

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

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

*116.* A curious consequence of the Latin influence during and after the Renaissance was that quite a number of French words were remodelled into closer resem-

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

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

[2] *Juliana,* pp. 78, 79.

more learned form and was used for instance in Chaucer's *Astrolabe,* while in his poems he writes *egal;* Shakespeare generally has *equal,* but *egal* is found a few times in some of the old editions of his plays. Tennyson tries to re-introduce *egality* by the side of *equality,* not as an ordinary word, however, but as applied to France specially ('That cursed France with her egalities!' *Aylmer's Field).* French and Latin forms coexist, more or less differentiated, in *complaisance* and *complacence* (*complacency*), *genie* (rare) and *genius, base* and *basis* (Greek). *Certainty* (Fr.) and *certitude* (Lat.) are often used indiscriminately, but there is now a tendency to restrict the latter to merely subjective certainty, as in Cardinal Newman's 'my argument is: that *certitude* was a habit of mind, that *certainty* was a quality of propositions; that probabilities which did not reach to logical *certainty,* might suffice for a mental *certitude,'* etc.[3] Note also the curious difference made between *critic* with stress on the first syllable, adjective[4] and agent noun (from Latin, or Greek direct? or through French?) and *critique* with stress on the second syllable, action noun (late borrowing from French); Pope uses *critick'd* as a participle (stress on the first), while a verb *critique* with stress on the last syllable is found in recent use; *criticize,* which since Milton has been the usual verb, is a pseudo-Greek formation.

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

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[3] *Apologia pro Vita sua* (London, 1900), p. 20.
[4] With the by-form *critical.*

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

*118.* It would be idle to attempt to indicate the number of Latin and Greek words in the English language, as each new treatise on a scientific subject adds to their number. But it is interesting to see what proportion of the Latin vocabulary has passed into English. Professors J. B. Greenough and G. L. Kittredge have counted the words beginning with A in Harper's Latin Dictionary, excluding proper names, doublets, parts of verbs, and adverbs in *-e* and *-ter.* 'Of the three thousand words there catalogued, one hundred and fifty-four (or about one in twenty) have been adopted bodily into our language in some Latin form, and a little over five hundred have some English representative taken, or supposed to be taken, through the French. Thus we have in the English vocabulary about one in four or five of all the words found in the Latin lexicon under A. There is no reason to suppose that this proportion would not hold good approximately for the whole alphabet.'[5]

*119.* It must not be imagined that all the Latin words as used in English conform exactly with the rules of Latin pronunciation or with the exact classical mean-

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[5] *Words and their Ways,* p. 106.

ings. 'My instructor,' says Fitzedward Hall [6] 'took me
to task for saying |*doctrinal*.' 'Where an English word
is from Latin or Greek, you should always remember the
stress in the original, and the quantity of the vowels
there.' I replied: 'If others, in their solicitude to
*pro|pāgate* refinement, choose to be *ir|ritated* or |*excited*,
because of what they take to be my *genu|īne ig|nōrance*
in *ora|tŏry*, they should at least be sure that their dis-
composure is not *gratu|ītous*.'—Among words used in
English with a different signification from the classical
one, may be mentioned *enormous* (Latin *enormis* 'irreg-
ular,' in English formerly also *enorm* and *enormious*),
*item* (Latin *item* 'also,' used to introduce each article
in a list, except the first), *ponder* (Lat. *ponderare* 'to
weigh, examine, judge,' transitive), *premises* ('adjuncts
of a building,' originally things set forth or mentioned
in the beginning), *climax* (Greek *klîmax* 'a ladder or
gradation'; in the popular sense of culminating point
it is found in Emerson, Dean Stanley, John Morley, Miss
Mitford and other writers of repute), *bathos* (Greek
*báthos* 'depth'; in the sense of 'ludicrous descent from
the elevated to the commonplace' it is due to Pope; the
adjective *bathetic*, formed on the analogy of *pathetic*,
was first used by Coleridge). It should be remembered,
however, that when once a certain pronunciation or sig-
nification has been firmly established in a language, the
word fulfils its purpose in spite of ever so many might-
have-beens, and that, at any rate, correctness in one
language should not be measured by the yard of another
language. *Transpire* is perfectly legitimate in the sense
'to emit, or to be emitted through the pores of the skin'

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[6] Fitzedward Hall, *Two Trifles*. Printed for the Author, 1895.
I have changed his symbol for stress, indicating here as elsewhere
the beginning of the strong syllable by a prefixed |.

and in the derived sense 'to become known, to become
public gradually' although there is no Latin verb
*transpirare* in either of these senses; if, therefore, the
occasional use of the verb in the sense of 'happen'
(pretty frequent in newspapers, but also *e.g.* in Char-
lotte Brontë) is objectionable, it is not on account of
any deviation from Latin usage, but because it has arisen
through a vulgar misunderstanding of the *English* sig-
nification of an English word. Stuart Mill exaggerates
the danger of such innovations, when he writes: 'Vul-
garisms, which creep in nobody knows how, are daily
depriving the English language of valuable modes of
expressing thought. To take a present instance: the
verb *transpire*. . . . Of late a practice has commenced
of employing this word, for the sake of finery, as a mere
synonym of *to happen:* 'the events which have *transpired*
in the Crimea,' meaning the incidents of the war. This
vile specimen of bad English is already seen in the de-
spatches of noblemen and viceroys: and the time is ap-
parently not far distant when nobody will understand
the word if used in its proper sense. . . . The use of
'aggravating' for 'provoking,' in my boyhood a vul-
garism of the nursery, has crept into almost all news-
papers, and into many books; and when writers on
criminal law speak of aggravating and extenuating cir-
cumstances, their meaning, it is probable, is already mis-
understood.' [7] Let me add two small notes to Mill's
remarks. First, that *aggravate* in the sense of 'exas-
perate, provoke' is exemplified in the NED. from Cot-
grave (1611), T. Herbert (1634), Richardson (1748)—
thus some time before Mill heard it in his nursery—
and Thackeray (1848). And secondly, that the verb

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[7] Stuart Mill, *A System of Logic* (People's edition, 1886), p.
451.

which Mill uses to explain it, *provoke*, is here used in a specifically English sense which is nearly as far removed from the classical signification as that of *aggravate* is. But we shall presently see that the English have taken even greater liberties with the classical languages.

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

*121.* This is seen very extensively in the nomenclature of modern science, in which hundreds of chemical, botanical, biological and other terms have been framed from Latin and Greek roots, most of them compound words and some extremely long compounds. It is certainly superfluous here to give instances of such forma-

tions, as a glance at any page of a comprehensive dictionary will supply a sufficient number of them, and as one needs only a smattering of science to be acquainted with technical words from Latin and Greek that would have struck Demosthenes and Cicero as bold, many of them even as indefensible or incomprehensible innovations. It is not, perhaps, so well known that quite a number of words that belong to the vocabulary of ordinary life and that are generally supposed to have the best-ascertained classical pedigree, have really been coined in recent times more or less exactly on classical analogies. Some of them have arisen independently in several European countries. Such modern coinages are, for instance, *eventual* with *eventuality, immoral, fragmental* and *fragmentary, primal, annexation, fixation* and *affixation, climatic.* There are scores of modern formations in *-ism,*[8] *e.g., absenteeism, alienism, classicism, colloquialism, favouritism, individualism, mannerism, realism,* not to speak of those made from proper names, such as *Swinburnism, Zolaism,* etc. Among the innumerable words of recent formation in *-ist* may be mentioned *dentist, economist, florist, jurist, oculist, copyist* (formerly *copist* as in some continental languages), *determinist, economist, ventriloquist, individualist, plagiarist, positivist, socialist, terrorist, nihilist, tourist.* For *calculist* the only author quoted in the NED. is Carlyle. *Scientist* has often been branded as an 'ignoble Americanism' or 'a cheap and vulgar product of trans-Atlantic slang,' but Fitzedward Hall has pointed out that it was fabricated and advocated, in 1840, together with *physicist,* by Dr. Whewell. Whoever objects to such words as *scientist* on the plea that they are not correct Latin

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[8] See Fitzedward Hall, *Modern English*, p. 311. His lists have also been utilized in the rest of this paragraph.

formations, would have to blot out of his vocabulary such well-established words as *suicide, telegram, botany, sociology, tractarian, vegetarian, facsimile* and *orthopedic;* but then, happily, people are not consistent.

*122.* Authors sometimes coin quasi-classic words without finding anybody to pass them on, as when Milton writes 'our *inquisiturient* Bishops' (*Areopagitica* 13). Coleridge speaks of '*logodædaly* or verbal legerdemain,' Thackeray of a lady's '*viduous* mansion' (*The Newcombs,* 794), Dickens of '*vocular* exclamations' (*Oliver Twist*); Tennyson writes in a letter (*Life* I. 254) 'you range no higher in my *andrometer';* Bulwer-Lytton says 'a cat the most *viparious* [meaning evidently 'tenacious of life'] is limited to nine lives'; and Mrs. Humphry Ward 'his air of old-fashioned *punctilium.'*[9] I have here on purpose mixed correct and incorrect forms, jocular and serious words, because my point was to illustrate the love found in most English writers of everything Latin or Greek, however unusual or fanciful. Sometimes jocular 'classicismus' survive and are adopted into everybody's language, such as *omnium gatherum* (whence Thackeray's bold heading of a chapter 'Snobbium Gatherum'), *circumbendibus* (Goldsmith, Coleridge) and *tandem,* which originated in a University pun on the two senses of English 'at length.'

*123.* Hybrids, in which one of the component parts was French and the other native English, have been mentioned above (§ 106 ff.). Here we shall give some examples of the corresponding phenomenon with Latin and Greek elements, some of which may, however, have

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

been imported through French. The ending *-ation* is found in *starvation, backwardation,* and others; note also the American *thunderation* ('It was an accident, sir.' 'Accident the thunderation,' Opie Read, *Toothpick Tales,* Chicago, 1892, p. 35). *Johnsoniana, Miltoniana,* etc., are quite modern; the ending *ana* alone is now also used as a detached noun. In *-ist* we have the American *walkist,* which is interesting as denoting a *professional* walker and therefore distinguished by the more learned ending. Compare also *turfite* and the numerous words in *-ite* derived from proper names: *Irvingite, Ruskinite,* etc. The same ending is frequently used in mineralogy and chemistry, one of the latest additions to these formations being *fumelessite* = smokeless gunpowder. Hybrids in *-ism* (*cf.* § 121) abound; *heathenism* has been used by Bacon, Milton, Addison, Freeman and others; *witticism* was first used by Dryden, who asks pardon for this new word; *blockheadism* is found in Ruskin; further *funnyism, freelovism,* etc.; the curious *wegotism* may be classed with the jocular *drinkitite* on the analogy of *appetite. Girlicide,* after *suicide,* is another jocular formation (Smedley, *Frank Fairlegh* I, p. 190, not in NED.). To the same sphere belong Byron's *weatherology* and some words in *-ocracy,* such as *landocracy, shopocracy, barristerocracy, squattocracy,* Carlyle's *strumpetocracy,* and Meredith's *snipocracy* (*Evan Harrington,* p. 174, from *snip* as a nickname for a tailor). On the other hand *squirearchy* (with *squirearchical*) seems to have quite established itself in serious language. Among verbal formations must be mentioned those in *-ize:* he *womanized his language* (Meredith, *Egoist,* p. 32), *Londonizing* (ibid., p. 80), *soberize,* etc. Adjectives are formed in *-ative: talkative, babblative, scribblative,* and

*soothative,* of which only the first is recognized; in
*-aceous: gossipaceous* (Darwin, *Life and Letters,* I, p.
375), in *-arious: burglarious* (Stevenson, *Dynamiter,* p.
130), and *-iacal: dandiacal* (Carlyle, *Sartor Resartus,* p.
188). Even if many of these words are 'nonce-words,' it
cannot be denied that the process is genuinely English
and perfectly legitimate—within reasonable limits at any
rate.

*124.* Some Latin and Greek prepositions have in re-
cent times been extensively used to form new words.
*Ex-,* as in *ex-king, ex-head-master,* etc.,[10] seems first to
have been used in French, but it is now common to most
or all Germanic languages as well; in English this forma-
tion did not become popular till little more than a cen-
tury ago. *Anti-:* the anti-taxation movement; an anti-
foreign party; 'Mr. Anti-slavery Clarkson' (De Quincey,
*Opium-Eater,* p. 197); 'chairs unpleasant to sit in—
anti-caller chairs they might be named' (H. Spencer,
*Facts and Comments,* p. 85). *Co-:* 'a friend of mine,
co-godfather to Dickens's child with me' (Tennyson, *Life,*
II, p. 114); 'Wallace, the co-formulator of the Darwin-
ian theory '(Clodd, *Pioneers of Evolution,* p. 68). *De-,*
especially with verbs in *-ize:* de-anglicize, de-democra-
tize, deprovincialize, denationalize; less frequently as in
de-tenant, de-miracle (Tennyson). *Inter-:* intermingle,
intermix, intermarriage, interbreed, inter-communicate,
inter-dependence, etc. *International* was coined by
Bentham in 1780; it marks linguistically the first begin-
ning of the era when relations between nations came to
be considered like relations between citizens, capable of
peaceful arrangement according to right rather than
according to might. A great many other similar adjec-
tives have since been formed: *intercollegiate, interracial,*

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10 'A pair of ex-white satin shoes' (Thackeray).

*interparliamentary,* etc. Where no adjective existed, the
substantive is used unchanged, but the combination is
virtually an adjective: *interstate* affairs; an *inter-island*
steamer; *international, inter-club, inter-team, inter-col-
lege or inter-school contests* (quoted in NED.) 'in short
inter-whiff sentences' (Kinglake, *Eothen,* p. 125). *Pre-:*
the pre-Darwinian explanations; pre-nuptial friendships
(Pinero, *Second Mrs. Tanqueray,* p. 6, what are called
on p. 8 'ante-nuptial acquaintances'); 'in the pre-rail-
road, pre-telegraphic period' (G. Eliot); the pre-railway
city; the pre-board school; a bunch of pre-Johannesburg
Transvaals; the pre-mechanical civilized state (all these
are quotations from H. G. Wells); in your pre-smoking
days (Barrie). *Pro-:* the pro-Boers; pro-foreign pro-
clivities; a pro-Belgian, or rather pro-King Leopold
speaker. As any number of such derivatives or com-
pounds can be formed with the greatest facility, the
utility and convenience of these certainly not classical
expedients cannot be reasonably denied, though it may
be questioned whether it would not have been better to
utilize English prepositions for the same purposes, as
is done with *after-* (an *after-dinner* speech) and some-
times, with *before-* ('the before Alfred remains of our
language,' Sweet; 'smoking his before-breakfast pipe,'
Conan Doyle).[11] A few words must be added on *re-,*
which is used in a similar manner in any number of free
compounds, such as *rebirth,* and especially verbs: *re-or-
ganize, re-sterilize, re-submit, re-pocket, re-leather, re-
case,* etc. Here *re-* is always strongly stressed and pro-
nounced with a long vowel [i·], and by that means these
recent words are in the spoken language easily distin-
guished from the older set of *re*-words, where *re* is either
weakly stressed or else pronounced with short [e]. We

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11 *Cf.* my *Modern English Grammar,* II, p. 343.

have therefore such pairs as *recollect* = to remember, and *re-collect* = to collect again; he *recovered* the lost umbrella and had it *re-covered; reform* and *re-form* (reformation and re-formation), *recreate* and *re-create, remark* and *re-mark, resign* and *re-sign, resound* and *re-sound, resort* and *re-sort*. In the written language the distinction is not always observed.

*125.* Latin has influenced English not only in vocabulary, but also in style and syntax. The absolute participle (as in 'everything considered,' or 'this being the case') was introduced at a very early period in imitation of the Latin construction.[12] It is comparatively rare in Old English, where it occurs chiefly in close translations from Latin. In the first period of Middle English it is equally rare, but in the second period it becomes a little more frequent. Chaucer seems to have used it chiefly in imitation of the Italian construction, but this Italian influence died out with him, and French influence did very little to increase the frequency of the construction. In the beginning of the Modern English period the absolute participle, though occurring more often than formerly, 'had not become thoroughly naturalized. It limited itself to certain favorite authors where the classical element largely predominated, and was used but sparingly by authors whose style was essentially English.' (Ross, p. 38.) But after 1660, when English prose style developed a new phase, which was saturated with classical elements, the construction rapidly gained ground and was finally fixed and naturalized in the language. There are some other Latin idioms which authors tried to imitate, but which

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[12] Morgan Callaway, *The Absolute Participle in Anglo-Saxon* (Baltimore, 1889).—Charles Hunter Ross, *The Absolute Participle in Middle and Modern English* (Baltimore, 1893).

have always been felt as unnatural, so that now they have been dropped, for instance *who* for *he who* or *those who* as in 'sleeping found by whom they dread' (Milton, *Paradise Lost*, 1. L. 1333), further such interrogative and relative constructions as those found in the following quotations. 'To do what service am I sent for hither?' (Shakespeare, *R 2* IV. 1. 176) and 'a right noble and pious lord, who had he not sacrific'd his life . . . we had not now mist and bewayl'd a worthy patron' (Milton, *Areopagitica*, p. 51).

*126.* Latin grammar was the only grammar taught in those days, and the only grammar found worthy of study and imitation. 'That highly disciplined syntax which Milton favoured from the first, and to which he tended more and more, was in fact, the classical syntax, or, to be more exact, an adaptation of the syntax of the Latin tongue,' says D. Masson,[13] and when he adds, 'It could hardly fail to be so . . . Even now, questions in English syntax are often settled best practically, if a settlement is wanted, by a reference to Latin construction,' he expresses a totally erroneous conception which has been, and is, unfortunately too common, although very little linguistic culture would seem to be needed to expose its fallacy. Nowhere, perhaps, has this misconception been more strongly expressed than in Dryden's preface to *Troilus and Cressida*, where he writes: 'How barbarously we yet write and speak your Lordship knows, and I am sufficiently sensible in my own English. For I am often put to a stand in considering whether what I write be the idiom of the tongue, or false grammar and nonsense couched beneath that specious name of Anglicism, and have no other way to clear

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[13] Poetical Works of Milton (1890), vol. III, pp. 74-5.

my doubts but by translating my English into Latin, and thereby trying what sense the words will bear in a more stable language.'  I am afraid that Dryden would never have become the famous writer he is, had he employed this practice as often as he would have us imagine.  But it was certainly in deference to Latin syntax that in the later editions of his Essay on *Dramatic Poesy* he changed such phrases as 'I cannot think so contemptibly of the age I live in' to 'the age in which I live'; he speaks somewhere [14] of the preposition at the end of the sentence as a common fault with Ben Jonson 'and which I have but lately observed in my own writings.'  The construction Dryden here reprehends is not a 'fault,' and is not confined to Ben Jonson, but is a genuine English idiom of long standing in the language and found very frequently in all writers of natural prose and verse.  The omission of the relative pronoun, which Dr. Johnson terms 'a colloquial barbarism' and which is found only seven or eight times in all the writings of Milton, and (according to Thum) only twice in the whole of Macaulay's History, abounds in the writings of such authors as Shakespeare, Bunyan, Swift, Fielding, Goldsmith, Sterne, Byron, Shelley, Dickens, Thackeray, Tennyson, Ruskin, etc., etc.  In Addison's well-known 'Humble Petition of Who and Which' [15] these two pronouns complain of the injury done to them by the recent extension of the use of *that*.  'We are descended of ancient Families, and kept up our Dignity and Honour many Years till the Jacksprat *that* supplanted us.'  Addison here turns all historical truth topsy-turvy, for *that* is much older as relative pronoun than either *who*

[14] I quote this second-hand, see J. Earle, *English Prose*, p. 267; Hales, Notes to Milton's *Areopagitica*, p. 103.
[15] *The Spectator*, No. 78 (May 30, 1711).

or *which;* but the real reason of his predilection for the latter two was certainly their conformance to Latin relative pronouns, and there can be no doubt that his article, assisted by English grammars and the teaching given in schoolrooms, has contributed very much to restricting the use of *that* as a relative pronoun—in writing at least.  Addison himself, when editing the *Spectator* in book-form, corrected many a natural *that* into a less natural *who* or *which*.

*127*.  As to the more general effect of classical studies on English style, I am very much inclined to think that Darwin and Huxley are right as against most schoolmasters.  'Ch. Darwin had the strongest disbelief in the common idea that a classical scholar must write good English; indeed he thought that the contrary was the case.' [16]  Huxley wrote to the *Times*, Aug. 5, 1890: [17] 'My impression has been that the Genius of the English language is widely different from that of Latin; and that the worst and the most debased kinds of English style are those which ape Latinity.  I know of no purer English prose than that of John Bunyan and Daniel Defoe; I doubt if the music of Keats's verse has ever been surpassed; it has not been my fortune to hear any orator who approached the powerful simplicity, the limpid sincerity, of the speech of John Bright.  Yet Latin literature and these masters of English had little to do with one another.'  As *in diesem Bund der dritte* might be mentioned Herbert Spencer, who expressed himself strongly to the same effect in his last book. [18]

*128*.  To return to the vocabulary.  We may now consider the question: Is the Latin element on the whole

[16] *Life and Letters* of Ch. Darwin (1887), I, p. 155.
[17] Quoted by J. Earle, *English Prose*, p. 487.
[18] *Facts and Comments* (1902), p. 70.

beneficial to the English tongue or would it have been
better if the free adoption of words from the classical
languages had been kept within much narrower limits?
A perfectly impartial decision is not easy, but it is hoped
that the following may be considered a fair statement
of the most important *pros* and *cons*. The first advan-
tage that strikes the observer is the enormous addition
to the English vocabulary. If the English boast that
their language is richer than any other, and that their
dictionaries contain a far greater number of words than
German and French ones, the chief reason is, of course,
the greater number of foreign and especially of French
and Latin words adopted. 'I trade,' says Dryden, 'both
with the living and the dead for the enrichment of our
native language.'

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

130. It will be argued in favour of the classical ele-
ments that many of them fill up gaps in the native stock
of words, so that they serve to express ideas which
would have been nameless but for them. To this it may
be objected that the resources of the original language
should not be underrated. In most, perhaps in all cases,
it would have been possible to find an adequate expres-
sion in the vernacular or to coin one. The tendency
to such economy in Old English and the ease with which
felicitous terms for new ideas were then framed by
means of native speech-material, have been mentioned
above. But little by little English speakers lost the
habit of looking first to their own language and utilizing
it to the utmost before going abroad for new expres-
sions. People who had had their whole education in
Latin and had thought all their best thoughts in that
language to an extent which is not easy for us moderns
to realize, often found it easier to write on abstract or
learned subjects in Latin than in their own vernacular,
and when they tried to write on these things in English,
Latin words would constantly come first to their minds.
Mental laziness and regard to their own momentary con-
venience therefore led them to retain the Latin word
and give it only an English termination. Little did
they care for the convenience of their readers, if they
should happen to be ignorant of the classics, or for that
of unborn generations, whom they forced by their dis-
regard for their own language to carry on the burden
of committing to memory words and expressions which
were really foreign to their idiom. If they have not
actually dried up the natural sources of speech—for
these run on as fresh as ever—yet they have accustomed
their countrymen to cross the stream in search of water,
to borrow an expressive Danish locution.

*131.* There is one class of words which seems to be rather sparingly represented in the native vocabulary, so that classical formations are extremely often resorted to, namely the adjectives. It is, in fact, surprising how many pairs we have of native nouns and foreign adjectives, *e.g.,* mouth: *oral;* nose: *nasal;* eye: *ocular;* mind: *mental;* son: *filial;* ox: *bovine;* worm: *vermicular;* house: *domestic;* the middle ages: *mediæval;* book: *literary;* moon: *lunar;* sun: *solar;* star: *stellar;* town: *urban;* man: *human, virile,* etc., etc. In the same category we may class such pairs as money: *monetary, pecuniary;* letter: *epistolary;* school: *scholastic,* as the nouns, though originally foreign, are now for all practical purposes to be considered native. We may note here English proper names and their Latinized adjectives, *e.g.,* Dorset: *Dorsetian;* Oxford: *Oxonian;* Cambridge: *Cantabrigian;* Gladstone: *Gladstonian.* Lancaster has even two adjectives, *Lancastrian* (in mediæval history) and *Lancasterian* (schools, Joseph Lancaster, 1771–1838). It cannot be pretended that all these adjectives are used on account of any real deficiency in the English language, as it has quite a number of endings by which to turn substantives into adjectives: *-en* (silken), *-y* (flowery), *-ish* (girlish), *-ly* (fatherly), *-like* (fishlike), *-some* (burdensome), *-ful* (sinful), and these might easily have been utilized still more than they actually have been. In point of fact, we possess not a few native adjectives by the side of more learned ones, *e.g., fatherly: paternal; motherly: maternal; brotherly: fraternal* (but only *sisterly,* as *sororal* is so rare as to be left out of account); further *watery: aquatic* or *aqueous; heavenly: celestial; earthy, earthly, earthen: terrestrial; timely: temporal; daily: diurnal; truthful: veracious;* etc. In some cases the meanings

of these have become more or less differentiated, the English words having often lost an abstract sense which they formerly had and which might have been retained with advantage. If the word *sanguinary* is now extensively used it is due to the curious twisting of the meaning of *bloody* in vulgar speech (*cf.* 244). *Kingly, royal,* and *regal:* who is able to tell exactly how these adjectives differ in signification? And might not English like other languages (*royal* in French, *kongelig* in Danish, *königlich* in German) have been content with one word instead of three?

*132.* Besides, in a great many cases it is really contrary to the genius of the language to use an adjective at all. Where Romanic and Slavonic languages very often prefer a combination of a noun and an adjective the Germanic languages combine the two ideas into a compound noun. *Birthday* is much more English than *natal day* (which is used, for instance, in Wordsworth's 75th Sonnet), and *eyeball* than *ocular globe,* but physiologists think it more dignified to speak of the *gustatory nerve* than of the *taste nerve* and will even say *mental nerve* (Lat. *mentum* 'chin') instead of *chin nerve* in spite of the unavoidable confusion with the familiar adjective *mental.* Mere position before another noun is really the most English way of turning a noun into an adjective, *e.g.,* the *London* market, a *Wessex* man, *Yorkshire* pudding, a strong *Edinburgh* accent, a *Japan* table, *Venice* glasses, the *Chaucer* Society, the *Droeshout* picture, a *Gladstone* bag, *imitation* Astrakhan, 'Every *tiger* madness muzzled, every *serpent* passion kill'd' (Tennyson).[19] It is worth noting that the English ad-

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[19] Shakespeare did not scruple to write 'the Carthage queen,' 'Rome gates,' 'Tiber banks,' even 'through faire Verona streets.' *Cf.* below, § 194, and *Modern English Grammar,* II, ch. XIII.

jective corresponding to *family* is not *familiar*, which has been somewhat estranged from its kindred, but *family*: family reasons, family affairs, family questions, etc. The unnaturalness of forming Latin adjectives is, perhaps, also shown by the vacillation often found between different endings, as in *feudatary* and *feudatory*, *festal* and *festive*. From *labyrinth* no less than six adjectives have been found: *labyrinthal*, *labyrinthean*, *labyrinthian*, *labyrinthic*, *labyrinthical* and *labyrinthine*. Many adjectives are quite superfluous; Shakespeare never used either *autumnal*, *hibernal*, *vernal*, or *estival*, and he probably never missed them. Instead of *hodiernal* and *hesternal* we have luckily other expressions (to-day's post; the questions of the day; yesterday's news). Most of us can certainly do without *gressorial* (birds), *avuncular* (a favourite with Thackeray: 'Clive, in the avuncular gig'; 'the avuncular banking house'; 'the avuncular quarrel,' all from *The Newcomes*), *osculatory* (processes = kissing; *ib.*), *lachrymatory* (he is great in the l. line; *ib.*), *aquiline* ('What! am I an eagle, too? I have no aquiline pretensions at all,' *ib.*) [20]—and a great many similarly purposeless adjectives.

*133.* More than in anything else the richness of the English language manifests itself in its great number of synonyms, whether we take this word in its strict sense of words of exactly the same meaning or in the looser sense of words with nearly the same meaning. It is evident that the latter class must be the most valuable, as it allows speakers to express subtle shades of thought. *Juvenile* does not signify the same thing as *youthful*, *ponderous* as *weighty*, *portion* as *share*, *miserable* as *wretched*. *Legible* means 'that can be read,' *readable*

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

generally 'worth reading.' Sometimes the Latin word is used in a more limited, special or precise sense than the English, as is seen by a comparison of *identical* and *same*, *science* and *knowledge*, *sentence* and *saying*, *latent* or *occult* and *hidden*. *Breath* can hardly now be called a synonym of *spirit* ('The spirit does not mean the breath,' Tennyson), and similarly *edify*, which is still used by Spenser in the concrete sense of 'building up,' is now used exclusively with a spiritual signification, which its former synonym *build* can never have. *Homicide* is the learned, abstract, colourless word, while *murder* denotes only one kind of *manslaughter*, and *killing* is the everyday word with a much vaguer signification (being applicable also to animals); there is a very apposite quotation from Coleridge in the NED.: '(He) is acquitted of murder—the act was manslaughter only, or it was justifiable homicide.' The learned word *magnitude* is more specialized than *greatness* or *size* (which is now thoroughly English, but is a very recent development of *assize* in a curiously modified sense). *Popish* has an element of contempt which the learned *papal* does not share. The Latin *masculine* is more abstract than the English *manly*, which generally implies an emotional element of praise, the French *male* has not exactly the same import as either, and the Latin *virile* represents a fourth shade, while for the other sex we have *female*, *feminine*, *womanly* and *womanish*, the differences between which are not parallel to those between the first series of synonyms.

*134.* These examples will suffice to illustrate the synonymic relations between classical and other words. It will be seen that it is not always easy to draw a line or to determine exactly the different shades of meaning attached to each word; indeed, a comparison of the

definitions given in various essays on synonyms and in dictionaries, and especially a comparison of these definitions with the use as actually found in various writers, will show that it is in many cases a hopeless task to assign definite spheres of signification to these words. Sometimes the only real difference is that one term is preferred in certain collocations and another in others. Still, it is indubitable that very often the existence of a double or triple assortment of expressions will allow a writer to express his thoughts with the greatest precision imaginable. But on the other hand, only those whose thoughts are accurate and well disciplined attain to the highest degree of linguistic precision, and the use in speech and writing of the same set of words by loose and inexact thinkers will always tend to blur out any sharp lines of demarcation that may exist between such synonymous terms as do not belong to their everyday stock of language.

*135.* However, even where there is no real difference in the value of two words or where the difference is momentarily disregarded, their existence may not be entirely worthless, as it enables an author to avoid a trivial repetition of the same word, and variety of expressions is generally considered one of the felicities of style. We very often see English authors use a native and a borrowed word side by side simply, it would seem, to amplify the expression, without modifying its meaning. Thus 'of blind *forgetfulnesse* and dark *oblivion*' (Shakespeare, in Buckingham's strongly rhetorical speech, *R 3* III. 7. 129). 'The *manifold multiform* flower' (Swinburne, *Songs before Sunrise*, 106). A perfectly natural variation of three expressions is seen in: 'the Bushman story is just the *sort* of *story* we *expect* from Bushmen, whereas the Hesiodic story is not at all the

*kind* of *tale* we *look for* from Greeks.' (A. Lang, *Custom and Myth,* p. 54.) Further examples: 'I *went up-stairs* with my candle directly. It appeared to my childish fancy, as I *ascended* to the bedroom . . .' 'He asked me if it would suit my convenience to have the light *put out;* and on my answering 'yes,' instantly *extinguished* it.' 'The phantom slowly *approached*. When it *came near* him, Scrooge bent down'; 'they are *exactly unlike*. They are *utterly dissimilar* in all respects' (all these from Dickens). 'We who boast of our *land* of *freedom,* we who live in the *country of liberty*.' 'I could not repress a *half smile* as he said this; a similar *demi-manifestation of feeling* appeared at the same moment on Hunsden's lips.' This kind of variation evidently does not *always* lead to the highest excellence of style. I quote from Minto [21] Samuel Johnson's comparison between punch and conversation: 'The spirit, volatile and fiery, is *the proper emblem* of vivacity and wit; the acidity of the lemon will very *aptly figure* pungency of raillery and acrimony of censure; sugar is the *natural representative* of luscious adulation and gentle complaisance; and water is the *proper hieroglyphic* of easy prattle, innocent and tasteless.' This is not far from Mr. Micawber's piling up of words ('to the best of my knowledge, information, and belief . . . to wit, in manner following, that is to say'), which gives Dickens the occasion for the following outburst:

'In the taking of legal oaths, for instance, deponents seem to enjoy themselves mightily when they come to several good words in succession, for the expression of one idea; as, that they utterly detest, abominate, and abjure, or so forth; and the old anathemas were made

[21] *Manual of English Prose Literature* (3rd ed., 1896), p. 418.

relishing on the same principle. We talk about the tyranny of words, but we like to tyrannize over them too; we are fond of having a large superfluous establishment of words to wait upon us on great occasions; we think it looks important, and sounds well. As we are not particular about the meanings of our liveries on state occasions, if they be but fine and numerous enough, so the meaning or necessity of our words is a secondary consideration if there be but a great parade of them. And as individuals get into trouble by making too great a show of liveries, or as slaves when they are too numerous rise against their masters, so I think I could mention a nation that has got into many great difficulties, and will get into many greater, from maintaining too large a retinue of words.' (*David Copperfield*, p. 702.) [22]

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

*137.* Apart from the advantage of being able constantly to make a choice between words possessing a different number of syllables and often also presenting a difference in the place of the accent, poets will often find the sonorous Latin words better for their purposes than the short native ones. In some kinds of prose

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[22] Mr. Micawber also has the following delightful piece of bathos: 'It is not an avocation of a remunerative description—in other words, it does *not* pay.'

writing too, they are felt to heighten the tone, and add dignity, even majesty, to the structure of the sentence. The chief reason of this seems to be that the long word takes up more time. Instead of hurrying the reader or listener on to the next idea, it allows his mind to dwell for a longer time upon the same idea; it gives time for his reflexion to be deeper and especially for his emotion to be stronger. This seems to me more important than the two other reasons given by H. Spencer (*Essays*, II, p. 14) that 'a voluminous, mouth-filling epithet is, by its very size, suggestive of largeness or strength' and that 'a word of several syllables admits of more emphatic articulation (?); and as emphatic articulation is a sign of emotion, the unusual impressiveness of the thing named is implied by it.' Let me quote here also a quaint passage (not to be taken too seriously) from Howell (*New English Grammar*, 1662, p. 40): 'The Spanish abound and delight in words of many syllables, and where the English expresseth himself in one syllable, he doth in 5 or 6, as thoughts *pensamientos*, fray *levantamiento* &c, which is held a part of wisdom, for while they speak they take time to consider of the matter.'

*138.* It is often said that the classical elements are commendable on the score of international intelligibility, and it is certain that many of them, even of those formed during the last century on more or less exact Latin and Greek analogy, are used in many other civilized countries as well as in England. The utility of this is evident in our days of easy communication between the nations; but on the whole its utility should not be valued beyond measure. If the thing to be named is one of everyday importance, national convenience should certainly be considered before international ease; therefore *to wire* and *a wire* are preferable to *telegraph* and *tele-*

*gram.*[23]   Scientific nomenclature is to a great extent universal, and there is no reason why each nation should have its own name for *foraminifera* or *monocotyledones.* But so much of science is now becoming more and more the property of everybody and influences daily life so deeply that the endeavour should rather be to have popular than learned names for whatever in science is not intended exclusively for the specialist. *Sleeplessness* is a better name than *insomnia,* and foreigners who know English enough to read a medical treatise in it will be no more perplexed by the word than an Englishman reading German is by *Schlaflosigkeit.* Foreign phoneticians have had no difficulty in understanding Melville Bell's excellent nomenclature and have even to a great extent adopted the English terms of *front, mixed, back,* etc. in preference to the more cumbersome *palatal, gutturo-palatal,* and *guttural.* It is a pity that *half-vowel* (Googe, 1577) and *half-vowelish* (Ben Jonson) should have been superseded by *semi-vowel* and *semi-vowel-like.* Among English words that have been in recent times adopted by many foreign languages may be mentioned *cheque, box* (in a bank), *trust, film* (in photography), *sport, jockey, sulky, gig, handicap, dock, waterproof, tender, coke* (German and Danish *koks* or sometimes with Pseudo-English spelling *coaks*), so that even to obtain international currency a word need not have a learned appearance or be derived from Greek and Latin roots. Besides, many of the latter class are not quite so international as might be supposed, as their English significations are unknown on the continent (*pathos, physic, concurrent, competition, actual, eventual, injury*); sometimes, also, the ending is different, as in

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[23] Nowadays also *wireless* both as a noun and as a verb: 'I sent him a wireless'; 'they wirelessed for help.'

*principle* (Fr. *principe,* etc.), *individual* (Fr. *individu,* Dan. *individ,* German *Individuum*), *chemistry* (*chimie, chemie*), *botany* (*botanique*), *fanaticism* (*fanatisme*).

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

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

same is true of *illusion* and *elusion*.[24]  A still greater
drawback arises from the two meanings of initial *in*,
which is sometimes the negative prefix and sometimes
the preposition.  According to dictionaries *investigable*
means (1) that may be investigated, (2) incapable of
being investigated, and *infusible* (1) that may be infused
or poured in, (2) incapable of being fused or melted.
*Importable,* which is now only used as derived from
*import* (capable of being imported) had formerly also
the meaning 'unbearable,' and *improvable* similarly had
the meaning of 'incapable of being proved,' though it
only retains that of 'capable of being improved.'  What
Shakespeare in one passage (*Temp.* II. 1. 37) expresses
in accordance with modern usage by the word *unin-
habitable* he elsewhere calls *inhabitable* (Even to the
frozen ridges of the Alpes, Or any other ground in-
habitable, *R 2* I. 1. 65), and the ambiguity of the later
word has now led to the curious result that the positive
adjective corresponding to *inhabit* is *habitable* and the
negative *uninhabitable.*  The first syllable of *inebriety*
is the preposition *in-*, so that it means the same thing
as the rare *ebriety* 'drunkenness,' but T. Hook mistook
it for the negative prefix and so, subtracting *in-*, made
*ebriety* mean 'sobriety.'[25]  *Illustrious* is used in Shake-
speare's *Cymb.* I. 6. 109 as the negative of *lustrous,* while
elsewhere it has the exactly opposite signification.  For-
tunately this ambiguity is limited to a comparatively
small portion of the vocabulary.[26]

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

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

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

*141.*  Loan-words do not necessarily make a language
inharmonious.  In Finnish, for instance, in spite of
numerous loans from a variety of languages, the pre-
vailing impression is one of unity, apart perhaps from
some of the most recent Swedish words.  The foreign
elements have been so assimilated in sound and inflexion
as to be recognizable as foreign only to the eye of a
philologist.  The same may be said of the pre-Conquest
borrowings from Latin into English, of the Scandi-
navian and of the most important among the French
loans, nay even of a great many recent loans from
exotic languages.  *Wine* and *tea, bacon* and *eggs, orange*
and *sugar, plunder* and *war, prison* and *judge*—all are
not only indispensable, but harmonious elements of Eng-
lish.  But while most people are astonished on first hear-
ing that such words have not always belonged to their
language, no philological training is required to discover
that *phenomenon* or *diphtheria* or *intellectual* or *lati-
tudinarian* are out of harmony with the real core or cen-
tral part of the language.  Every one must feel the
incongruity of such sets of words as *father—paternal—
parricide* or of the abnormal plurals which break the
beautiful regularity of nearly all English substantives—
*phenomena, nuclei, larvæ, chrysalides, indices,* etc.
The occasional occurrence of such blundering plurals
as *animalculæ* and *ignorami* is an unconscious protest
against the prevalent pedantry of schoolmasters in this
respect.[27]

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[27] 'He may also see giraffes, lions or rhinoceros.  The mention
of this last word reminds me of a problem, which has tormented
me all the time that I have been in East Africa, namely, what
is the plural of rhinoceros?  The conversational abbreviations,
'rhino,' 'rhinos,' seem beneath the dignity of literature, and to
use the sporting idiom by which the singular is always put for
the plural is merely to avoid the difficulty.  Liddell and Scott
seem to authorize 'rhinocerotes' which is pedantic, but 'rhinocer-

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

*143.* The worst thing, however, that can be said against the words that are occupying us here is their difficulty and the undemocratic character which is a natural outcome of their difficulty. A great many of them will never be used or understood by anybody that has not had a classical education.[28]   There are usually

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oses' is not euphonious.'  Sir Charles Eliot, *The East Africa Protectorate* (1905), p. 266.  *Cf. Modern English Grammar,* II, ch. III.

[28] Sometimes they are not even understood by the erudite themselves. *Gestic* in Goldsmith's 'skill'd in gestic lore' (*Traveller,* 253) is taken in all dictionaries as meaning 'legendary, historical' as if from *gest,* OFr. *geste* 'story, romance'; but the context shows conclusively that 'pertaining to bodily movement, esp.

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

*144.* Different authors vary greatly with regard to the extent to which they make use of such 'choice words, and measured phrase above the reach of ordinary men.' So much is said on this head in easily accessible textbooks on literature that I need not repeat it here.  Unfortunately the statistical calculations given there of the percentage of native and of foreign words in differ-

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dancing' (NED.) must be the meaning; *cf. Lat. gestus* 'gesture.' *Aristarchy* has been wrongly interpreted in most dictionaries as 'a body of good men in power,' while it is derived from the proper name Aristarch and means 'a body of severe critics.'  (Fitzedward Hall, *Modern English,* p. 143.)

ent writers are not quite to the point, for while they generally include Scandinavian loans among native words, they reckon together all words of classical origin, although such popular words as *cry* or *crown* have evidently quite a different standing in the language from learned words like *auditory* or *hymenoptera*. The culmination with regard to the use of learned words in ordinary literary style was reached in the time of Dr. Samuel Johnson. I can find no better example to illustrate the effect of extreme 'Johnsonese' than the following:—

'The proverbial oracles of our parsimonious ancestors have informed us, that the fatal waste of our fortune is by small expenses, by the profusion of sums too little singly to alarm our caution, and which we never suffer ourselves to consider together. Of the same kind is the prodigality of life; he that hopes to look back hereafter with satisfaction upon past years, must learn to know the present value of single minutes, and endeavour to let no particle of time fall useless to the ground.'[29]

145. In his Essay on Madame D'Arblay Macaulay gives some delightful samples of this style as developed by that ardent admirer of Dr. Johnson. Sheridan refused to permit his lovely wife to sing in public, and was warmly praised on this account by Johnson. 'The last of men,' says Madame D'Arblay, 'was Doctor Johnson to have abetted squandering the delicacy of integrity by nullifying the labours of talent.' To be starved to death is 'to sink from inanition into nonentity.' Sir Isaac Newton is 'the developer of the skies in their em-

[29] Minto (*Manual of English Prose Literature*, p. 422) translates this as follows: 'Take care of the pennies,' says the thrifty old proverb, 'and the pounds will take care of themselves.' In like manner we might say, 'Take care of the minutes, and the years will take care of themselves.'

bodied movements,' and Mrs. Thrale, when a party of clever people sat silent, is said to have been 'provoked by the dulness of a taciturnity that, in the midst of such renowned interlocutors, produced as narcotic a torpor as could have been caused by a death the most barren of all human faculties.' (Macaulay, *Essays,* Tauchn. ed. V, p. 65.)

146. In the nineteenth century a most happy reaction set in in favour of 'Saxon' words and natural expressions; and it is highly significant that Tennyson, for instance, prides himself on having in the *Idylls of the King* used Latin words more sparingly than any other poet. But still the malady lingers on, especially with the half-educated. I quote from a newspaper the following story: The young lady home from school was explaining. 'Take an egg,' she said, 'and make a perforation in the base and a corresponding one in the apex. Then apply the lips to the aperture, and by forcibly inhaling the breath the shell is entirely discharged of its contents.' An old lady who was listening exclaimed: 'It beats all how folks do things nowadays. When I was a gal they made a hole in each end and sucked.'—To a different class belongs that master of Saxon English, Charles Lamb, who begins his 'Chapter on Ears' in the following way: 'I have no ear. Mistake me not, reader,—nor imagine that I am by nature destitute of those exterior twin appendages, hanging ornaments, and (architecturally speaking) handsome volutes to the human capital. Better my mother had never borne me. I am, I think, rather delicately than copiously provided with those conduits; and I feel no disposition to envy the mule for his plenty, or the mole for her exactness, in those labyrinthine inlets—those indispensable side-intelligencers.' O. W. Holmes, in his 'Our Hundred

Days in Europe' avoids the simple expression 'a shaving machine' and 'beard,' and writes instead 'a reaping machine which gathered the capillary harvest of the past twenty-four hours . . . in short, a lawn-mower for the masculine growth of which the proprietor wishes to rid his countenance.'

*147.* Of course, the authors of these two samples aim in them at a certain humorous effect, and very often similar circumlocutions are consciously resorted to in conversation to obtain a ludicrous effect, as 'he amputated his mahogany' (cut his stick, went off), 'to agitate the communicator' (ring the bell), 'a sanguinary nasal protuberance,' 'the Recent Incision' (the New Cut, a street in London), 'the Grove of the Evangelist' (St. John's Wood in London), etc. When Mr. Bob Sawyer asked 'I say, old boy, where do you hang out?' Mr. Pickwick replied that he was at present *suspended* at the George and Vulture. (Dickens, *Pickwick Papers,* II, 13.) *Punch* somewhere gives the following paraphrases of well-known proverbs: 'Iniquitous intercourses contaminate proper habits. In the absence of the feline race, the mice give themselves up to various pastimes. Casualties will take place in the most excellently conducted family circles. More confectioners than are absolutely necessary are apt to ruin the potage.' (Quoted in Fitzgerald's *Miscellanies,* p. 166). Similarly 'A rolling stone gathers no moss' is paraphrased 'Cryptogamous concretion never grows on mineral fragments that decline repose.' Some Latin and Greek words will scarcely ever be used except in jocular or ironical speech, such as, *sapient* (wise), *histrion* (actor), *a virgin aunt* (maiden aunt), *hylactism* (barking), *edacious* (greedy), the *genus Homo* (mankind), etc.

*148.* But how many words are there not which belong

virtually to the same class, but are used in dead earnest by people who know that many big words are found in the best authors and who want to show off their education by avoiding plain everyday expressions and couching their thoughts in a would-be refined style? When Canning wrote the inscription graven on Pitt's monument in the London Guildhall, an Alderman felt much disgust at the grand phrase, 'he died poor,' and wished to substitute 'he expired in indigent circumstances.' Mr. Kington Oliphant, who relates this (*The New English* II. 232), justly remarks, 'Could the difference between the scholarlike and the vulgar be more happily marked?'[30] James Russell Lowell, in the Introduction to the Second Series of his *Biglow Papers,* has a list of what he calls the old and the new styles of newspaper writing, which I find so characteristic that I select a few samples :—

| OLD STYLE | NEW STYLE |
| --- | --- |
| A great crowd came to see. | A vast concourse was assembled to witness. |
| Great fire. | Disastrous conflagration. |
| The fire spread. | The conflagration extended its devastating career. |
| Man fell. | Individual was precipitated. |
| Sent for the doctor. | Called into requisition the services of the family physician. |
| Began his answer. | Commenced his rejoinder. |
| He died. | He deceased, he passed out of existence, his spirit quitted its earthly habitation, winged its way to eternity, shook off its burden, etc. |

*149.* I do not deny that somewhat parallel instances of stilted language might be culled from the daily press

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[30] *Cf.* the following passage from Arnold Bennett's *Clayhanger:* —Edwin began to write: 'Dear James, my father passed peacefully away at—' Then, with an abrupt movement, he tore the sheet in two and began again: 'Dear James, my father died quietly at eight o'clock to-night.'

of most other nations, but nowhere else are they found in such plenty as in English, and no other language lends itself by its very structure to such vile stylistic tricks as English does.  Wordsworth writes: 'And sitting on the grass partook The fragrant beverage drawn from China's herb,' to which Tennyson remarked: 'Why could he not have said 'And sitting on the grass had tea'?' [31] Gissing in one of his novels says of a clergyman: 'One might have suspected that he had made a list of uncommon words wherewith to adorn his discourse, for certain of these frequently recurred.  *Nullifidian, mortific, renascent,* were among his favourites.  Once or twice he spoke of *psychogenesis,* with an emphatic enunciation which seemed to invite respectful wonder.' [32]  And did not little Thomas Babington Macaulay, when four years old, reply to a lady who took pity on him after he had spilt some hot coffee over his legs, 'Thank you, madam, the agony is abated'?  And does not a language which possesses, besides the natural expression for each thing, two or three sonorous equivalents, tempt a writer into what Lecky hits off so well when he says of Gladstone: 'He seemed sometimes to be labouring to show with how many words a simple thought could be expressed or obscured'? [33]

*150.*  To sum up: the classical words adopted since the Renaissance have enriched the English language very greatly and have especially increased its number of synonyms.  But it is not every 'enrichment' that is an advantage, and this one comprises much that is really superfluous, or worse than superfluous, and has, moreover, stunted the growth of native formations.  The in-

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[31] *Life and Letters,* III, p. 60.
[32] *Born in Exile,* p. 380.
[33] *Democracy and Liberty,* I, p. XXI.

ternational currency of many words is not a full compensation for their want of harmony with the core of the language and for the undemocratic character they give to the vocabulary.  While the composite character of the language gives variety and to some extent precision to the style of the greatest masters, on the other hand it encourages an inflated turgidity of style.  Without siding completely with Milton's teacher Alexander Gill, who says that classical studies have done the English language more harm than ever the cruelties of the Danes or the devastations of the Normans, [34] we shall probably be near the truth if we recognize in the latest influence from the classical languages 'something between a hindrance and a help.'

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

## CHAPTER VII

### VARIOUS SOURCES

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

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

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

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

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