

the others. The latter are in fact almost all *names*,—the vast majority names of *things* (nouns), a smaller number names of *attributes* and *actions* (adjectives and verbs), and, from their very nature, names of the things, attributes, and actions which come less usually or very rarely under our notice. Thus in an ordinary book, a novel or story, the foreign elements will amount to from 10 to 15 per cent. of the whole; as the subject becomes more recondite or technical their number will increase; till in a work on chemistry or abstruse mathematics the proportion may be 40 per cent. But after all, it is not the question whence words *may* have been taken, but *how they are used* in a language that settles its character. If new words when adopted conform themselves to the manner and usage of the adopting language, it makes absolutely no difference whether they are transferred from some other language, or invented off at the ground. In either case they are *new* words to begin with; in either case also, if they are needed, they will become as thoroughly native, *i.e.*, familiar from childhood to those who use them, as those that possess the longest native pedigree. In this respect English is still strictly the same language it was in the days of Alfred; and comparing its history with that of other Low German dialects, there is no reason to believe that its grammar or structure would have been different, however different its vocabulary might have been, if the Norman Conquest had never taken place.

The preceding sketch has had reference mainly to the inflexional changes which the language has undergone; distinct from, though intimately connected with these (as where the confusion or loss of inflexions was a consequence of the weakening of final sounds) are the great phonetic changes which have taken place between the 8th and 19th centuries, and which result in making modern English words very different from their Anglo-Saxon originals, even where no element has been lost, as in words like *stone, mine, doom, day, child, bridge, shoot*, A. S. *stán, mán, dóm, dæg, cild, brycg, scéot*. The history of English sounds has been treated at length by Mr A. J. Ellis and Mr Henry Sweet¹ (with whose results those of Dr Weymouth² should be compared); and it is only necessary here to indicate the broad facts, which are the following. (1) In an accented closed syllable, original short vowels have remained nearly unchanged; thus the words *at, men, bill, God, dust*, are pronounced now nearly as in O. E., though the last two were more like the Scotch *o* and North English *u* respectively, and in most words the short *a* had a broader sound like the provincial *a* in *man*. (2) Long accented vowels and diphthongs have undergone a regular *laut-verschiebung* or shift towards higher and more advanced positions, so that the words *bán, hær, soece* or *séce, stól* (*i.e.*, *bahn* or *bawen, hær, sök* and *saik, stóle*) are now *bóne, hair, seek, stool*; while the two high vowels *ú* (= *oo*) and *í* (= *ee*) have become diphthongs, as *hús, scír*, now *house, shire*, though the old sound of *u* remains in the north (*hoose*), and the original *i* in the pronunciation *sheer*, approved by Walker, "as in machine, and shire, and magazine." (3) Short vowels in an open syllable have usually been lengthened, as in *ná-ma, cō-fa*, now *name, cove*; but to this there are many exceptions. (4) Vowels in terminal unaccented syllables have all sunk into short obscure *ē*, and then, if final, disappeared; so *oxa, séo, wudu*, became *ox-e, se-e, wood-e*, and then *ox, see, wood; oxan, lufod*, now *oxen, loved, lov'd; writan, writon*, later *writ-en, writ-e*, now *write, i.e., writ*. (5) The back con-

¹ See list of works at the end of this article. An important work by Mr Henry Nicol, on the history of "French Sounds in English," is in course of publication for the Philological Society.

² On *Early English Pronunciation*, &c., by R. F. Weymouth, D. Lit., M.A., London, 1874, and paper On "Here" and "There" in *Chaucer*, Phil. Soc., 1877.

sonants, *c, g, sc*, in connection with front vowels, have often become palatalized to *ch, j, sh*, as *circe, ryeg, fisc*, now *church, ridge, fish*. A final *g* has passed through a guttural or palatal continuant to *w* or *y*, forming a diphthong or new vowel, as in *boga, laga, dæg, heg, drig*, now *bow, law, day, hay, dry*. *W* and *h* have disappeared before *r* and *l*, as in *write, whisp*; *h* final (= *gh*) has become *f, k, w*, or nothing, as *ruh, hoh, boh, deah, heah*, now *rough, hough, bough, dough, high* = *ruf, hok, böw, dō, hī*. *R* after a vowel has practically disappeared in standard English, or at most become vocalized, or combined with the vowel, as in *hear, bar, more, her*. These and other changes have taken place gradually, and in accordance with well-known phonetic laws; the details as to time and mode may be studied in the special works already named. It may be mentioned that the total loss of grammatical *gender* in English, and the almost complete disappearance of *cases*, are purely phonetic phenomena. *Gender* was practically (whatever its remote origin) the use of adjectives and pronouns with certain distinctive terminations, in accordance with the *kind* of nouns to which they were attached; when these distinctive terminations were uniformly levelled to final *ē*, or other weak sounds, and thus ceased to distinguish nouns into kinds, the distinction into kinds having no other existence disappeared. Thus when *pæt gode hors, pone godan hund, þa godan bōc*, became, by phonetic weakening, *þe goode hors, þe goode hound, þe goode boke*, the words *horse, hound, book* were no longer different *kinds* of nouns; grammatical *gender* had ceased to exist. The concord of the pronouns is now regulated by *rationality* and *sex*, instead of *gender*, which has no existence in English. The man *who* lost *his* life; the bird *which* built *its* nest.

Our remarks from the end of the 14th century have been confined to the standard or literary form of English, for of the other dialects from that date (with the exception of the northern English in Scotland, where it became in a social and literary sense a distinct language), we have no history. We know, however, that they continued to exist as local and popular forms of speech, as well from the fact that they exist still as from the statements of writers during the interval. Thus Puttenham in his *Arte of English Poesie*, 1589, says—

"Our maker [*i.e.*, poet] therefore at these dayes shall not follow Piers Plowman, nor Gower, nor Lydgate, nor yet Chaucer, for their language is now not of use with us: neither shall he take the termes of Northern-men, such as they use in dayly talke, whether they be noble men or gentle men or of their best clarkes, all is a [= one] matter; nor in effect any speach used beyond the river of Trent, though no man can deny but that theirs is the purer English Saxon at this day, yet it is not so Courtyly nor so currant as our Southerne English is, no more is the far Westerne mans speach: ye shall therefore take the usual speach of the Court, and that of London and the shires iying about London within lx myles, and not much above. I say not this but that in every shyre of England there be gentlemen and others that speake but specially write as good Southerne as we of Middlesex or Surrey do, but not the common people of every shire, to whom the gentlemen, and also their learned clarkes do for the most part condescend, but herein we are already ruled by the English Dictionaries and other bookes written by learned men."—*Arber's Reprint*, p. 157.

In comparatively modern times, there has been a revival of interest in these long-neglected forms of English, several of which, following in the wake of the revival of Lowland Scotch last century, have produced a considerable literature in the form of local poems, tales, and "folk-lore." In these respects Lancashire, Cumberland, Yorkshire, Devonshire, and Dorsetshire, the "far north" and "far west" of Puttenham, where the dialect was felt to be so independent of literary English as not to be branded as a vulgar corruption of it, stand prominent. More recently the dialects have been investigated philologically, a department in which, as in English philology generally, the name of Richard Garnett takes the lead. The work has been

carried out zealously by Prince Louis Lucien Bonaparte, Mr A. J. Ellis, and the Rev. W. W. Skeat, to whom is due the foundation of a Dialect Society for the investigation of this branch of philology. The researches of Prince L. L. Bonaparte and Mr Ellis have resulted in the classification and mapping of the existing dialects.¹ They recognize a *Northern* dialect lying north of a line drawn from Morecambe Bay to the Humber, which, with the kindred Scottish dialects (already investigated and classed),² is the direct descendant of early northern English, and a *South-western* dialect occupying Somerset, Wilts, Dorset, Gloucester, and western Hampshire, which, with the *Devonian* dialect beyond it, are the descendants of early southern English and the still older West-Saxon of Alfred. This dialect must in the 14th century have been spoken everywhere south of Thames; but the influence of London caused its extinction in Surrey, Sussex, and Kent, so that already in Puttenham it had become "far western." An *East Midland* dialect, extending from south Lincolnshire to London, occupies the cradle-land of the standard English speech, and still shows least variation from it. Between and around these typical dialects are ten others, representing the old Midland proper, or dialects between it and the others already mentioned. Thus "north of Trent" the *North-western* dialect of south Lancashire, Cheshire, Derby, and Stafford, with that of *Shropshire*, represents the early West Midland English, of which several specimens remain; while the *North-eastern* of Nottingham and north Lincolnshire represents the dialect of the *Lay of Havelok*. With the *North Midland* dialect of south-west Yorkshire, these represent forms of speech which to the modern Londoner, as to Puttenham, are still decidedly northern, though properly intermediate between northern and midland, and preserving interesting traces of the midland pronouns and verbal inflexions. There is an *Eastern* dialect in the East Anglian counties; a *Midland* in Leicester and Warwick shires; a *Western* in Hereford, Worcester, and north Gloucestershire, intermediate between south-western and north-western, and representing the dialect of *Piers Plowman*. Finally, between the east midland and south-western, in the counties of Buckingham, Oxford, Berks, Hants, Surrey, and Sussex, there is a dialect which must have once been south-western, but of which the most salient characters have been rubbed off by proximity to London and the East Midland speech. In east Sussex and Kent this *South-eastern* dialect attains to a more distinctive character. The *Kentish* form of early Southern English evidently maintained its existence more toughly than that of the counties immediately south of London. If we can trust the fidelity of the dialect attributed to Edgar in *Lear*, it was still strongly marked in the days of Shakespeare. In the south-eastern corner of Ireland, in the baronies of Forth and Bargo, in county Wexford, a very archaic form of English, of which specimens have been preserved,³ was still spoken in the present century. In all probability it dated from the first English invasion. In many parts of Ulster forms of Lowland Scotch dating to the settlement under James I. are still spoken; but the English of Ireland generally seems to represent 16th and 17th century English, as in the pronunciation of *tea, wheat* (*tay, whait*), largely affected of course by the native Celtic. Beyond the limits of the

¹ See description and map in *Trans. of Philol. Soc.*, 1875-6, p. 570.

² *The Dialect of the Southern Counties of Scotland, its Pronunciation, Grammar, and Historical Relations, with an Appendix on the present limits of the Gaelic and Lowland Scotch, and the Dialectal Divisions of the Lowland Tongue; and a Linguistical Map of Scotland*, by James A. H. Murray, London, 1878.

³ *A Glossary (with some pieces of Verse) of the Old Dialect of the English Colony of Forth and Bargo*, collected by Jacob Poole, edited by W. Barnes, B.D., London, 1867.

British Isles, English is the language of extensive regions, now or formerly colonies. In all these countries the presence of numerous new objects and new conditions of life has led to the supplementing of the vocabulary by the adoption of words from native languages, and special adaptation of English words. The use of a common literature, however, prevents the overgrowth of these local peculiarities, and also makes them familiar to Englishmen. It is only in the older states of the American Union that anything like a local dialect has been produced; and even there the so-called Yankee dialect, and Americanisms, are much more archaic English forms which have been lost or have become dialectal in England than a development of the American soil.

The steps by which English, from being the language of a few thousand invaders along the eastern and southern seaboard of Britain, has been diffused by conquest and colonization over its present area form a subject too large for the limits of this article. It need only be remarked that within the confines of Britain itself the process is not yet complete. Representatives of earlier languages survive in Wales and the Scottish Highlands, though in neither case can the substitution of English be remote. In Ireland, where English was introduced by conquest much later, Irish is still spoken in patches all over the country; though English is understood, and probably spoken after a fashion, everywhere. At opposite extremities of Britain the Cornish of Cornwall and the Norse dialects of Orkney and Shetland died out very gradually in the course of last century. The Manx, or Celtic of Man, is even now in the last stage of dissolution; and in the Channel Isles the Norman *patois* of Jersey and Guernsey have largely yielded to English within the last thirty years.

The accompanying table (page 402) will graphically represent the chronological and dialectal development of English.⁴ Various names have been proposed for the different stages; it seems only necessary to add to those in the table the descriptive names of Dr Abbott, who has proposed (*How to Parse*, p. 298) to call the Old English, or Anglo-Saxon, the "Synthetical or Inflexional Period;" the Old English Transition (Late Anglo-Saxon of Mr Skeat), the "Period of Confusion;" the Early Middle English, "Analytical Period" (1250-1350); the Late Middle English, "National Period" (1350-1500); the Tudor English, "Period of Licence;" and the Modern English, "Period of Settlement."

As the study of English has made immense advances within the last twelve years, it is only in works recently published that the student will find the subject satisfactorily handled. Among those treating of the whole subject or parts of it may be mentioned—*A History of English Rhythms*, by Edwin Guest, London, 1838; the *Philological Essays* of Richard Garnett [1835-1848], edited by his son, London, 1859; *The English Language*, by R. G. Latham, 5th ed., London, 1862; *Origin and History of the English Language*, by G. P. Marsh, London, 1862; *Lectures on the English Language*, by the same, New York and London, 1863; *Historische Grammatik der englischen Sprache*, by C. F. Koch, Weimar, 1863, &c.; *Englische Grammatik*, by Eduard Mätzner, Berlin, 1860-65 (an English translation by C. J. Grece, LL.B., London, 1874); *The Philology of the English Tongue*, by John Earle, M.A., Oxford, 1866; *Comparative Grammar of the Anglo-Saxon Language*, by F. A. March, New York, 1870; *Historical Outlines of English Accidence*, by the Rev. R. Morris, LL.D., London, 1873; *Elementary Lessons in Historical English Grammar*, by the same, London, 1874; *The Sources of Standard English*, by T. L. Kington Oliphant, M.A., London, 1873; *Modern English*, by F. Hall, London, 1873; *A Shakespearean Grammar*, by E. A. Abbott, D.D., London, 1872; *How to Parse*, by the same, London, 1875; *Early English Pronunciation*, &c., by A. J. Ellis, London, 1869-75, and still in progress; *The History of English Sounds*, by Henry Sweet, London, 1874; *King Alfred's Translation of Gregory's Pastoral Care*, by the same, Early Eng. Text Soc., 1871-72; *On Dialects and Prehistoric Forms of English*, by the same, Philolog. Soc., 1877; as well as many separate papers by various authors in the *Transactions of the Philological Society*, and the publications of the Early English Text Society.

⁴ Brought before the Philological Society in January 1876.

CHRONOLOGICAL NOMENCLATURE.		LITERARY DEVELOPMENT OF THE LEADING DIALECTS.				
Divisions.	Subdivisions.	Dates.	Northern English.	Midland English.	Southern English.	
OLD ENGLISH (Full Inflexions.)	OLD ENGLISH OF ANGLO-SAXON.	500	Old Anglian.		Old Saxon and Kentish.	
		600			(<i>Laws of Ethelbert</i> , 600.)	
		700	Old Northumbrian.	Cædmon, 660. Cynewulf? Bæda, 724.		(<i>Laws of Ine</i> , 700.) <i>Epinal Glossary</i> ?
		800				Literary West-Saxon or Anglo-Saxon.
MIDDLE ENGLISH (Levelled Inflexions.)	OLD ENGLISH TRANSITION (SEMI-SAXON.)	900		Old Mercian.	Alfred, 885.	
		1000		Durham Glosses, 950-975.	Rushworth Gloss, 975-1000.	<i>Rhymes in Saxon Chron.</i> , 937-979. Elfric, 1000. Wulfstan, 1016. <i>Worcester Chronicle</i> , 1042-79.
	EARLY MIDDLE ENGLISH, (EARLY ENGLISH.)	1100				
		1200	Early Northern English.		Early English.	Early Southern English.
MODERN ENGLISH (Lost Inflexions.)	LATE MIDDLE ENGLISH.	1200				
		1300		Cursor Mundi.		
	MIDDLE ENGLISH TRANSITION.	1300				
		1400	Early Southern Middle Scotch.	Hampole, 1350. Barbour, 1375.	Wycliffe, Chaucer.	Trevisa, 1387.
MODERN ENGLISH.	EARLY MODERN ENGLISH TUDOR ENGLISH.	1400				
		1485		Wyntoun, 1420.	Lydgate, 1425.	Caxton, 1477-90.
	MODERN ENGLISH.	1500		Dunbar, 1500. Lyndesay.	Tyndal, 1525.	
		1611		James VI., 1590.	Shakespeare, 1590-1618.	(Edgar in <i>Lear</i> .)
MODERN ENGLISH.	MODERN ENGLISH.	1700				
		1700		Allan Ramsay, 1717.	Milton, 1626-71. Dryden, 1663-1700. Addison, 1717. Johnson, 1750.	
		1800		Burns, 1790. Scott.	Coleridge, 1805. Macaulay. Tennyson.	<i>Ezmoor Scolding</i> , 1746. Barnes, 1844.

The three vertical lines represent the three leading forms of English, Northern, Midland, and Southern, and the names occurring down the course of each are those of writers and works in that form of English at the given date. The thickness of the line shows the comparative literary position of this form of speech at the time, thick indicating a literary language, medium a literary dialect, thin a popular dialect or patois; a dotted line shows that this period is unrepresented by specimens. The horizontal lines divide the periods; these (after the first two) refer mainly to the Midland English; in inflexional decay the Northern English was at least a century in advance of the Midland, and the Southern nearly as much behind it. (J. A. H. M.)

ENGLISH LITERATURE

I. *Anglo-Saxon Period, 596-1066.*—The early history of literature in England might lend some countenance to the theory that the development of a nation's literature is, at bottom, but a chapter of its religious history. While the religion of our fathers was in the main a rude awe-struck worship of the forces of nature, literature either had no existence for them, or was in a state not less elementary, consisting of a few songs and oracles, and nothing more. With the advent of the religion of Christ—the only faith which at once recognizes the original dignity of human nature and repairs its fall—came an intellectual as well as a spiritual awakening to the Teutonic nations—for into such the original tribes or clans of the invaders had now grown—that were planted in the old provinces of Roman Britain. Fortified by gospel precept for the present life, and thrilled with the hope of the life to come, the Saxon mind, released from disquietude, felt free to range discursively through such regions of human knowledge as its teachers opened before it, and the Saxon heart was fain to pour out many a rude but vigorous song. Pope Gregory himself, who, according to the old phraseology, sent baptism to the English, is said indeed to have spoken disparagingly of human learning. But the missionaries could not fail to bring with them from Rome the intellectual culture of the countries bordering on the Mediterranean, so far as it had survived the fall of the Western empire and the irruption of the barbarians. The Roman alphabet, paper or parchment, and pen and ink, drove out the Northern runes, the beechen tablet, and the scratching implement. The necessity of the preservation, and at least partial translation, of the Scriptures, the varied exigencies of the Catholic ritual, the demand for so much knowledge of astronomy as would enable the clergy to fix beforehand the date of Easter, all favoured, or rather compelled, the promotion of learning and education up to a certain point, and led to continual discussion and interchange of ideas. Gratefully and eagerly our forefathers drew in the warm and genial breath which came to them from the intenser life and higher enlightenment of the south. Bæda dates his history by the indictions of the Eastern emperors; and while in practice he obeyed his native king descended from Woden, in theory he recognized the larger and more rational sway of the Cæsar enthroned at Constantinople.

On a closer examination, we find that there were two principal centres, during the first two centuries after the conversion, where learning was honoured and literature flourished. These centres were Wessex and Northumbria. For although Christianity was first preached in Kent, and the great monastery at Canterbury was long a valuable school of theology and history (witness the liberal praise awarded by Bæda to Abbot Albinus in the preface to his *Ecclesiastical History*), yet the limited size of the kingdom, and the ill fortune which befell it in its wars with Mercia and Wessex, seem to have checked its intellectual growth. When we have named the oldest form of the Saxon Chronicle,—that represented by the Parker MS. A,—and the not very interesting works of Abbot Ælfric, there is little left in the shape of extant writings, dating before the Conquest, for which we have to thank the men of Kent. But in Wessex and Northumbria alike, the size of the territory, the presence of numerous monasteries, perhaps also the proximity of Celtic peoples or societies endowed with many literary gifts,—the Britons in the case of Wessex, the Culdees of Iona in the case of Northumbria,—co-operated to produce a long period of literary activity, the

monuments of which it must now be our endeavour briefly to review and characterize.

But before we consider the Anglo-Saxon literature which was founded on Christianity, the question whether any Anglo-Saxon literature exists of date prior to the conversion demands an answer. It was formerly thought that the important poem of *Beowulf* was in the main a pagan work, and must have been produced before the Angles and Saxons quitted their German homes; but closer investigation has shown that it is permeated almost everywhere by Christian ideas, and that it cannot be dated earlier than the first quarter of the 8th century. But two poems remain, presenting problems of great difficulty, many of which have not yet been satisfactorily solved, which so far as appears must have been composed in Germany while our forefathers were still in their German seats. These are *The Traveller's Song* and *Deor's Complaint*. In the first, Widsith, a poet of Myrking race (the Myrkingings were a tribe dwelling near the Eider), recounts the nations that he had visited as a travelling gleeman, names the kings who ruled over them, and singles out two or three whose open-handed generosity he had experienced, and to whom he accordingly awards the tribute of a poet's praise. This poem may perhaps be dated from the second half of the 6th century. Though written in or near Anglen, after the migration of most of the Angles to Britain, the language of the poem seems to have been accommodated to the ordinary West-Saxon dialect, for in this respect it differs in no degree from the other poems which stand before and after it in the Exeter Codex. *Deor's Complaint* mentions Weland, the Teutonic demi-god corresponding to Vulcan, Theodric, Eormanric, &c.; it is the lament of a bard supplanted by a rival in his lord's favour. In date it is probably not far distant from the *Traveller's Song*.

We may now return to the literary development in Wessex. Christianity was introduced into Wessex by Bishop Birinus in 634, and spread over the whole kingdom with marvellous celerity. The bishop's see was fixed at first at Dorchester, near Oxford; thence it was moved to Winchester; before the end of the century it was necessary to carve out another bishopric farther to the west, and the see was fixed at Sherborne. Winchester, Malmesbury, and Glastonbury were great and famous monasteries early in the 8th century. The heroic Winfrid (better known as St Boniface), trained in a monastery at Exeter, could not rest contented that Wessex should have received the faith, but carried Christianity to the Germans. Great spiritual fervour, ardent zeal, great intellectual activity, seems to have prevailed in every part of the little kingdom. The interesting letters of St Boniface give us tantalizing glimpses of a busy life, social and monastic, in the west of England, no detailed picture of which it is now possible to reconstruct. The most distinguished known writer was St Aldhelm, a monk of Malmesbury, and, for a few years before his death in 709, bishop of Sherborne. His extant works in Latin are chiefly in praise of virginity, that form of self-mastery which, difficult as it was for a people teeming with undeveloped power and unexhausted passion, included, he might think, and made possible every other kind of self-mastery. The Saxon writings of St Aldhelm are lost, unless we accept a conjecture of Grimm that he was the author of *Andreas*, one of the poems in the Vercelli Codex. Cynewulf, the author of *Crist*, *Elene*, and *Juliana*, though to us unhappily no more than a name, was a poet of no mean powers. Mr Kemble was disposed to identify him with an abbot of Peterborough who lived