THE

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS

AND

ESSENTIAL RELATIONSHIPS

OF THE

LEADING LANGUAGES

OF

ASIA AND EUROPE.

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PREFACE.

THE following pages, which were originally delivered as a Lecture, are designed to furnish an Elementary Introduction to the *Comparative Study of Languages*. With that view they are respectfully commended to the notice of those who are occupied in the instruction of youth; as also to the attention of that important class of young persons, and others of both sexes, who are in the habit of devoting a portion of their leisure time to the honourable task of self-education. The importance of the subject, whether regarded in its bearing on BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION, MISSIONARY QUALIFICATIONS, or GENERAL MENTAL IMPROVEMENT, is such as to justify the effort herein made, to present, in a condensed and popular form, some of the best ascertained results of modern philological enquiry.

H. CRAIK.

Bristol, December 12th, 1860.

ERRATA.

Page 17, line 13, for "exceeds," read "excels."

Page 24, line 26, *dele* "two."

Page 25, line 5, for "Pritchard," read "Prichard."

Page 25, line 18, *dele* "the."

Page 33, last line, for "Geneval," read "Geneva."

Page 38. The following note at the foot of the page has been omitted :—The verb "*to cry*" may be, in its origin, connected with the Saxon, but has come to us through the French "*crier*."

CHARACTERISTICS AND RELATIONSHIPS

OF THE

LEADING LANGUAGES OF ASIA AND EUROPE.

I HAVE undertaken to lay before you an elementary sketch of the characteristic features belonging to some of the leading languages of Asia and Europe, and of the essential relationships subsisting between them. The subject is exceedingly extensive, and capable of affording materials for many volumes, or for several lengthened courses of lectures. In the limited time necessarily allowed me on the present occasion, all I can possibly expect to accomplish must be to furnish you with some very elementary information relative to the first principles of comparative philology. Such information may, perhaps, be of service in guarding you against some popular fallacies, and in directing your own enquiries, as well as in helping you to understand more readily the references to ethnology which you may meet with in your private reading.

I need not dwell, at any length, upon the general subject of language. I would only remind you that, of all the endowments of humanity, the capacity of holding mutual intercourse by speech is confessedly one of the most precious and distinctive. Like all the other gifts of God, the possession of it is fitted to call forth gratitude, as well as to impart enjoyment. It carries along with it the conviction of a corresponding responsibility, and invites to interesting investigation. The consideration of its importance is thus admirably adapted to interest the understanding, and, at the same time, healthfully to exercise the conscience and the heart. It would be well for us all ever to keep before us the legitimate end of our efforts after mental improvement, lest they should degenerate into the means of mere self-gratification, or should tend to foster vanity or high-mindedness. There is a knowledge that puffeth up, and against this evil we must ever watch and pray. But there is also a knowledge that helps its possessor in the cultivation of true lowliness of heart. It were a dangerous inference from the words of the Apostle were they to be regarded as intended to recommend the advantages of ignorance, or as sanctioning that mental inactivity which is so often the precursor and the occasion of very serious evils, especially amongst the young. The notion that ignorance is the mother of devotion has long been exploded among all Protestant communities, and the assertion that ignorance is the

mother of humility may be regarded as equally false and pernicious.

But I must at once enter upon the matters immediately before us. The terms in which this lecture has been announced readily suggest the form in which the subject should be treated. I purpose, then, to notice,—

I. CHARACTERISTIC FEATURES OF SOME OF THE LEADING LANGUAGES OF ASIA AND EUROPE.

II. ESSENTIAL RELATIONS SUBSISTING BETWEEN THEM.

III. THE BEARING OF THE WHOLE SUBJECT ON THE STUDY OF OUR OWN AND OTHER LANGUAGES; ON THE FACTS OF HISTORY; AND ON THE ELUCIDATION OF THE SCRIPTURES.

I. Any particular language may be regarded as superior to any other on the ground of its inherent excellencies, *i.e.*, its adaptation to answer the great ends of speech; or on account of the intrinsic value and widely diffused influence of its literary productions; or by reason of the eminence and importance of the nations using it as their mother tongue. Again, a language may derive importance from the fact of its having been the parent of other languages which have become much more generally prevalent than the original tongue from which they were derived.

Among the leading languages of Asia, we would reckon the following:—The Chinese; the Hebrew, and

other Semitic tongues; also the Sanskrit, as the mother of the most important of the languages current in India.

Of languages belonging to the European Continent, the most distinguished are the Greek and Latin, with their modern representatives; as also those belonging, respectively, to the Celtic, Teutonic, and Slavonic branches of the Indo-European Family.

The Chinese is the vernacular language of more than 300 millions of the human race, and, therefore, if extensive diffusion were to be regarded as the chief claim to distinction, that monosyllabic and undeveloped form of speech would rightfully take precedency of all others.

But, judging from the statements of those who have made it their study, it appears to stand, more than any other of the leading Asiatic tongues, in a position of isolation. Very few, even of our most highly educated scholars, have attempted to master its difficulties, and its structure is so peculiar as to exclude it from comparison with the languages generally studied, either in our own country or on the Continent. Its importance, in relation to diplomatic objects, and, above all, in connexion with Missionary efforts, is inexpressibly great. It is much to be desired, that, in every way, Christian men—endowed with faith and zeal—should be encouraged to devote themselves to its cultivation, so as to be qualified for holding intercourse with the inhabitants of the

vast empire, over the length and breadth of which it is read and understood. You are most of you probably aware that the Chinese has nothing corresponding to what we call an Alphabet; that its 214 original characters are employed to indicate, not sounds, but radical terms; that each derivative term is represented by a modified form of its corresponding radical character; and that the *written* symbols are understood over the whole of the empire, while the *mode of pronunciation* adopted by those who employ the same symbols, is so different, that a native of China, conversing in his ordinary dialect, would not be understood at a distance of 200 miles from the place of his residence. This statement, however, refers only to the uneducated class of the people, inasmuch as the mode of pronunciation adopted by the court is employed in the intercourse of the higher orders all over the empire. The acquisition of the spoken language is exceedingly difficult, partly because the same word—slightly varied in its intonation—is often employed to denote ideas of the most diverse character. The 214 radical symbols have been modified, so as to produce, altogether, 30,000 distinct forms representative of the words which make up the vocabulary of the language. It is some encouragement for the learner to know that Chinese, as written or printed, is far more readily understood than when employed in colloquial intercourse.

The Arabic and Hebrew deserve to be regarded as the leading branches of the Semitic family of languages. Of the two, the Arabic is the more fully developed, and by far the more copious. The Hebrew, however, possesses a peculiar interest to us as Christians, inasmuch as so large a portion of our sacred books were originally written in that language. With the Hebrew, the Aramaic, as it appears in part of Daniel, and in the Jewish Targums, is closely connected. The Biblical Hebrew is remarkable for the simplicity and regularity of its structure, and is well fitted for being employed in the composition of such narratives as are contained in the historic portions of the Old Testament. It is also admirably suited for devotional, aphoristic, poetical, and prophetic compositions. It appears already fully developed in the pages of the Pentateuch. In numerous instances its words present vivid representations of the objects to which they refer. Many of them suggest to the reader a host of interesting associations. It may be said with truth that no translation, in certain cases, could possibly convey to the reader the full signification of that which is expressed or suggested by the Hebrew terms. It contains words so forcible and rich in meaning, and so closely related to other kindred terms, that the most qualified translator will find himself working under an almost depressing sense of his inability adequately to accomplish his task. To render the Psalms of David into any ancient or modern tongue, in

such a manner as that the Version shall convey neither more nor less than that which would be derived from an intelligent perusal of the original, is a task never likely to be accomplished. All that can be done is to seek after something like an approximation to such a Version.

Having thus referred to the general excellencies of Hebrew, as a language, I would briefly describe the essential features of its internal structure.

1. The alphabet consists of twenty-two letters, all of which are regarded as consonants, the vowel sounds being indicated by marks placed above, below, or in the middle of the letters.

2. As in other languages, the terms which compose its vocabulary consist of radicals and derivatives. The radical words are termed *roots*, and, as a general rule, consist of three letters. From these root-words, the derivatives are formed systematically, either by changing the vowels, or by means of prefixing, affixing, or inserting certain letters—denominated serviles—which are employed to modify the meaning of the root.

3. Any letter may be employed in the composition of the roots, but only the eleven serviles are used in the formation of derivatives.

By acquiring the radical terms of most frequent occurrence, and mastering the exact force of each servile letter according to its position, the labour of

learning the language will be greatly facilitated. In every thing, whether of a physical or mental character, arrangement, method, order, are of incalculable moment. This is pre-eminently the case in reference to the acquisition of languages, especially of a language so systematically constructed as the Hebrew. To enter upon the study of it, without having first obtained some information relative to its peculiar structure, would be like attempting to travel through a country without the benefit of a Road-Book. Method is essential, both to the teacher and to the taught, and every qualified instructor will seek to impart to his pupils a general idea of the subject of instruction, so that the learner may understand the object before him, and be thus conscious, from the very first lesson, of making some progress towards the desired end.

Having thus endeavoured to explain some of the leading features characteristic of the Semitic family, and expressed my sense of the importance legitimately belonging to the Hebrew, as the language of the Old Testament, I deem it expedient to add a few words relative to the application of what I have advanced. Some may not unnaturally infer from my remarks on the subject of translation, that I should be disposed to advise the young men, for whose benefit in particular these lectures are designed, to employ a portion of their leisure time in the study of the Sacred tongues. I do not feel justified in indiscriminately

recommending such a course to those whose days are entirely devoted to secular occupation. Many of you have only a very small portion of time which you can call your own. During that brief season of leisure, you have duties to attend to, bearing immediately on your spiritual well-being, and your bodily health. It were deeply to be regretted if even the taste for study should interfere with the secret exercises of devotion and the thoughtful perusal of your English Bible; or should be permitted to prevent your employing the proper means for retaining or improving the inestimable blessings of bodily and mental vigour.

If, on the other hand, without neglecting prayer and practical reading of the Scriptures, and without injury to your health, you can afford leisure for seeking some acquaintance with one or more of the languages of antiquity, I believe that the gratification of such a desire may be, not merely a source of satisfaction, but an important means of self-improvement. In such matters no rule can be laid down of universal application. Much will depend upon the previous mental history, the tastes and capacities of each individual; but my own impression is that, at the close of a laborious day, the minds of the generality of young men are too much exhausted for such studies as make any great demand upon their powers of perception, observation, comparison and memory. If such studies are taken up at all, it might be helpful to combine with them the

stimulus of social intercourse. Like-minded young men—devoted to any good object—mutually assist one another; and thus the progress of each becomes the means of helping forward the advancement of all. If the hours devoted to such pursuits be rescued from unprofitable reading, trifling conversation, or mere animal indulgence, such saving of time will be so much real gain. If the study of Greek or Hebrew should create a distaste for the perusal of such second-rate Serials as aim at no higher object than to amuse the thoughtless, the result would be of lasting benefit. I say nothing respecting a still worse species of literary productions, the tendency of which is to undermine all moral principle, and to contaminate the heart with every species of impurity, because I should appear to be insulting such an audience as the present, were I to assume that my hearers could find any enjoyment in works of so debasing a character. I do not mean that you ought never to read for the sake of mental relaxation, or that because a book is attractive in style, and interesting in matter, it ought to be less heartily welcomed; but I maintain that the habit of reading merely for amusement, is both mentally and morally injurious, and that the number of works in the present day which combine instruction and mental gratification, leaves such readers as only seek to be amused by reading entirely without excuse.

The characteristic features by which the structure of the Hebrew is so distinctly marked, belong also to the Arabic and to the other tongues of the Semitic or Syro-Arabian family. The great majority of Hebrew roots—ninety out of every hundred—are found also in the Arabic, which is by far the most copious and extensively diffused of all those languages with which, by origin and structure, it is connected.

Through the Saracenic conquests, and the influence of the Koran, it has been diffused over a very large portion of the habitable world. We may say, without exaggeration, that

> The Arab tongue is heard in every land
> From Afric's Western Coast to India's Eastern Strand.

This statement is *under* the truth. It extends to the Philippine Islands, which lie about 2000 miles eastward from India. It is spoken in Arabia, Syria, Persia, Tartary, and in certain parts of China, as well as in India. It prevails in Turkey, and along the coasts of the Mediterranean Sea, and throughout a very large portion of the African Continent. Besides other secondary advantages, resulting from an acquaintance with this deeply interesting tongue, its importance in relation to missionary labours is incalculably great. While regretting the dearth of suitable labourers in so extensive a field, every Christian heart must unfeignedly rejoice in the success which has attended the efforts which have been made to circulate Arabic copies of the Scriptures

throughout those countries in which Mahomedanism prevails. For missionary purposes it is requisite that a knowledge of the colloquial dialects should be added to an acquaintance with the ancient form of the language. These colloquial dialects vary in different localities, but everywhere the modern Arabic still retains a close resemblance to the Arabic as used in the Koran, which is universally regarded as the standard of classic purity and literary elegance.

Leaving, for the present, any further reference to the Semitic languages, I proceed to notice some of those which belong to the Indo-European, or Arian family. The term Indo-European serves briefly to express the wide-spread diffusion of the languages to which it is applied; the more recently adopted designation of Arian is derived from the name by which the early ancestors of those among whom those languages are current, were distinguished. The Sanskrit—the learned language of India—may justly be regarded as presenting the most perfect type of that very ancient tongue from which, in common with the other branches, it derived its origin. The researches of modern scholars have clearly established the deeply interesting fact that the Sanskrit and the Persian, the Greek and the Latin, as well as the several distinct tongues belonging to the Teutonic, Sclavonic, and Celtic, must all have been derived from a common origin. Some fifteen centuries before our era—about the time of the Exodus—the Sanskrit

appears to have been a fully developed, and a vernacular tongue. By the Sixth century before Christ it had ceased to be a spoken language, and for very many centuries it has held much the same position among the scholars of India, with that of the Latin language among the learned men of Europe. Those to whom, in very early ages, it was vernacular, seem to have been located in the countries lying to the North West of India, and thence to have transmitted successive waves of emigration, both towards the North and the South. Those who spread themselves towards the North-west, brought with them, probably at different periods separated by long intervals of time, the elementary rudiments of the European tongues; those whose course was directed to the South-east, carried with them the essential principles of the leading dialects now spoken in Hindostan. The evidence of this latter statement is found in the fact that—with the exception of that part denominated the Deccan—the modern languages of India, generally speaking, may be described as more or less closely related to the Sanskrit. Time would fail me were I to attempt to dwell upon the marvellous illumination which the study of the sacred language of India has thus shed upon the connection subsisting between all the more important languages of civilized Europe, and the manifold bearings of such discoveries upon the history of the human species. When we reflect that the philological study of the Indian

languages commences only with the closing part of the last century, and that, within a period so very limited, such extraordinary progress has been already accomplished, we are forcibly reminded of the declaration of prophecy respecting the time of the end—"that many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased." At the close of the last century, the majority of our most distinguished scholars were, for the most part, utterly unacquainted with such facts, relative to the relationship of languages, as are now familiar to many whose attainments in learning are of a very limited character. I am old enough to remember the time when even some of our eminent classical scholars could speak, with something like tolerance, respecting the wild imagination that the resemblance between Sanskrit and Greek might be perhaps the result of the conquests of Alexander the Great. Were any one, in these days, to suggest such an hypothesis, amongst a company of educated men, he would be regarded either as grossly ignorant or as deficient in his mental faculties. The laws of evidence depend upon the constitution of the human mind, and, as long as the mind is in its normal condition, the examination of such evidence as goes to establish the leading facts which comparative philology has arrived at, must produce similar convictions among all unprejudiced enquirers. Those who have devoted their attention to the study of Sanskrit, describe its excellencies in terms of the

warmest admiration. Sir W. Jones describes it as "more perfect than the Greek, more copious than the Latin, and more refined than either." It is said to be distinguished by exquisite regularity of structure, boundless variety of expression, and marvellous capability for the formation of compound terms. It combines together elaborate harmony, definite exactness, and vigorous simplicity. Its vast vocabulary is based upon 1500 radical terms—two-thirds of which have been traced and identified in the other branches of the same great family. The measure in which these radical terms still retain the signification which belongs to them in the sacred language of India, constitutes the evidence of their origin, and of their relation to each other and to a common source.

Among the leading languages of Europe, the Greek and Latin deservedly occupy the foremost place. The Greek claims our attention on the ground of its own inherent excellency—as a vehicle of thought; and also because of its extensive and invaluable literary treasures. As the language of the New Testament it has a still higher claim upon the attention of Christian scholars. The influence exerted upon the educated mind of Christendom, through the study of Greek, since the revival of learning, has been exceedingly important. The great reformation of the sixteenth century was instrumentally assisted, to a very considerable extent, by the impulse derived from the introduction of Greek studies among the

scholars of Italy, Germany, and England; and, at our great schools and universities, very many of our most distinguished statesmen and divines have had their minds disciplined by the perusal of the poets, philosophers, and orators of Greece; and their understandings healthfully exercised by the diligent investigation of the inspired writings of the evangelists and apostles. The Greek is characterised by richness and harmony, flexibility and strength, elegance and precision, and approaches, as near as any European tongue, to the character of a perfect language.

The Latin, in certain features, closely resembles the Greek, but it is decidedly inferior in several important particulars. Admirably adapted for the use of the historian and the orator, it is less suitable than Greek for the loftiest species of poetic composition or exact philosophical discourse. The acute, versatile, speculative, æsthetic character of the Grecian mind moulded, as with a plastic power, the fashion of their form of speech. The genius of the Romans was narrow and contracted; deficient in flexibility and tenderness. They were, emphatically, a military and political people, and their language bears the impress of their national character. In comparison with the Greeks, they were defective in the appreciation of minute distinctions; in the delicate perception of the beautiful; in the speculative and imaginative faculties. Hence the language is far better suited

for treatises on law, or military details, or forensic eloquence, than for subjects of a more elevated character. Still, as wielded by Cicero, Livy, Cæsar, and Tacitus, the old Roman tongue is a most effective instrument of flowing eloquence, graphic description, and sententious narrative; and, in the didactic and epic poetry of Virgil, and in the lyric strains of Horace, it has been moulded, by the hidden efforts of genius, into forms of the most attractive gracefulness. In variety of flexion; in the harmonious formation of compound terms; in the affluence of its verbal forms; and specially in the exquisite precision of its tenses, the Greek far exceeds the Latin.

On the other hand, the rigid regularity of its grammatical structure, and the logical accuracy of its syntax, renders the study of Latin well adapted for beneficially exercising the mental powers of youth, and, if properly pursued, may be very helpful in imparting to the student much insight into the principles of universal grammar. The fact that so many words derived from the Latin are found in the principal tongues of modern Europe, serves also to enhance its importance as a branch of liberal education. The notion, sometimes advanced by well-meaning persons, that the study of what are designated "*dead languages*" is of little practical utility, is founded on ignorance, or prejudice, or want of consideration. The term "*dead*" is fitted to mislead the minds of the uneducated or unreflecting. If we knew of any

language which, after having flourished for a time, had entirely passed away from the earth, leaving no trace behind it, to such a language the term "*dead*" might be legitimately applied. But the poets, orators, historians, and philosophers of Greece and Rome, still live in their productions, and, through those productions, the languages they employed still possess a veritable vitality. Let the study of the Classical Tongues be relinquished only for half a century throughout Europe, and most disastrous consequences would ensue. The evils resulting from such neglect would be of far too serious a character to be compensated by any amount of progress in mechanical inventions, or of increase in mere material wealth. To the keeping of the three languages inscribed by Pilate over the Cross, has been consigned the preservation of those writings which contain the seeds of all divine and human learning. To abandon such studies would not only imperil the interests of civilization, but the higher blessings connected with the possession of revealed truth. The literature of civilized Europe is, in a great measure, based upon the literature of Greece and Rome. The religion of Christendom is founded on those ancient Greek and Hebrew Documents, which derive their origin and authority from the Spirit of the Living God. Those modern innovators who would substitute the daily newspaper or the monthly serial for the study of the ancient Classics, may gather proselytes to their opinions from the ranks

of the inexperienced, the unthinking, and the self-indulgent; but the man whose mind has been braced by the discipline of severer reading is fore-armed against the influence of such sentiments. After listening to the superficial fluency with which such notions are sometimes enforced, he will coolly reply in the words of the Latin proverb, "Narras fabulam surdo" —"Your talk is of no avail, because it is addressed to one who is deaf."

While thus advocating the importance of classical studies in their bearing on mental discipline and as aiding the cultivation of a correct taste, I would earnestly deprecate the notion that such studies can ever rightfully be regarded as capable of supplying that which is required for meeting the deeper necessities of man. It were worse than affectation in me to pretend to any very extended acquaintance with the writers of Greece and Rome. Having been engaged for more than thirty years in the public ministry of the gospel, I freely acknowledge that my opportunities for keeping up familiarity with the favourites of my youth have been, for a long time past, but few and brief For more than a quarter of a century, the Hebrew and Greek Scriptures,—along with those studies which bear directly upon their elucidation,—have principally occupied my hours of studious retirement. I am therefore unable to speak, from any recent experience, of the effects resulting from the attention being chiefly devoted to the productions of pagan authorship. I

am, however, fully persuaded that few earnest Christians, qualified to offer an opinion on such subjects, would deny the assertion that the choicest specimens of Greek or Roman literature fail to furnish food for the spiritual longings of the human heart. In early life I regarded with intense admiration the sublime simplicity, the exhaustless invention, the harmonious numbers, and the delicate tenderness by which the Homeric Poems are so eminently characterized. The flowing versification of Virgil, and exquisite phraseology of Horace, imparted to my youthful tastes a rich gratification. I still retain the record of a time when, after spending hour after hour in the labour of instructing others, I betook myself, in the closing part of the evening, to the pursuit of my own studies, and felt my self-imposed tasks so pleasant that sometimes the midnight hour would pass away before I sought the refreshment of repose. In asserting therefore that the best productions of Greek and Roman genius are sadly defective in spiritual aliment, I am not merely retailing the common-place talk of those whose dislike for learning is sometimes only the recoil of self-satisfied ignorance from that which is unknown and therefore troublesome. I have no sympathy with that class of religionists who, incapable of distinguishing between the use and abuse of learning, condemn indiscriminately all mental cultivation, and speak evil of the things which they do not understand. The man who cannot even read his English Bible may be

a better Christian than the scholar who is familiar with the Original Scriptures; but we are not therefore to regard the ability of reading our own language, or the rarer attainment of familiarity with Greek or Hebrew, as of little or no value. Speaking then as one who highly appreciates all solid learning, I do fearlessly appeal to any Christian scholar,—qualified to read with intelligence the Psalms of David and the Odes of Horace,—whether he has not been repeatedly struck by the wide gulf which separates between the elegant productions of the Roman poet and the songs of the sweet singer of Israel. The Psalms of David and the Lyrical Poems of Horace agree in this, that they furnish some of the most finished specimens of poetic excellence in their respective languages; but in almost everything else they are entirely different. The compositions of the Hebrew King are pervaded by a spirit of faith and purity, penitence and prayer. They habitually express the most ardent longing after the enjoyment of God, and repeatedly swell into strains of exulting triumph in the possession of His favour. The Roman Lyrics, with all their attractions of style, and melody of numbers, contain nothing fitted to elevate the soul above the pleasures of sense, or the interests of a passing world. The mind resembles that upon which it feeds. The mere man of taste possesses sources of gratification far more refined than those which minister to the gross enjoyments of the mere man of pleasure. But while such pursuits

may be made subservient to needful relaxation, they ought ever to be regarded as only of secondary importance, in comparison of those which relate to the promotion of our highest interests. The writings of Horace may improve the taste, and otherwise conduce to mental improvement, but the thoughtful perusal of the Psalms of David is fitted to exercise a purifying and soothing influence upon the heart. Horace seems to have been—even more than some of the other distinguished writers of antiquity—remarkably deficient in all moral earnestness. Too shrewd and sensible to credit the fictions of heathenism, his references to the popular mythology are evidently employed only in the way of poetic ornament; while the references of David to the history of the chosen people reflect the inmost convictions of one who verily believed in the true and living God. In all moral and spiritual efficacy; in everything that directly tends to make men better, wiser, happier; in instrumentally assisting to strengthen those dispositions which fit for the discharge of duty or for the patient endurance of trial, I am fully persuaded that the writings which compose our Sacred Books, even when read in our common Translation, will be found infinitely to excel all the boasted treasures of Greek and Roman learning. While, therefore, to those who have leisure and capacity for such pursuits, I would recommend the study of one or both of the Classical languages, as well adapted for disciplining the intellectual powers, and for

enlarging the field of our mental vision, I should consider such advantages as far too dearly purchased at the expense of the habitual perusal of our English Bible. I would only add that the value of Classical learning consists far more in the exercise which it furnishes to the mental faculties, than in the mere ability to read with intelligence the productions of antiquity. It is of course impossible to study Greek or Latin without reading, to some extent, the books that have been written in those languages. Yet it may be well to bear in mind that, to the philologist, the critic, and the Biblical student, the minute investigation of the structure and syntax of the ancient Tongues is of far more importance than the perusal of many books.

The several grounds on which the learned languages may claim to take a prominent place in any advanced course of education may be summed up in the following particulars. Their claim to this distinction rests upon their own inherent excellencies as instruments of expressing thought; on the value of their Classic, Sacred and Patristic literature; and on the humanizing and invigorating effects which they have produced on the modern mind of Europe. The Latin has peculiar claims arising from its having been—during the millenium of the middle ages—the language of educated men throughout the whole of Christendom; from its having been employed by so many of the Continental philologists and theologians

whose works have been published during the last three centuries; from its having been the parent of the Italian, French, Spanish, and Portuguese; and from its having furnished, either directly, or through the Norman-French, a very considerable portion of the words which make up the vocabulary of our own mother-tongue. No one can possess an exact acquaintance with English philology without some knowledge of that vigorous and muscular form of speech which, like the imperial power of those to whom it was vernacular, once bore sway over the civilised world.

I now go on to notice, very briefly, some of the other ancient languages of Europe. None of these have equal claims upon our attention with the Greek and Latin, yet none of them are without interest to the historian or to the student of comparative philology.

The Celtic branch of the great Indo-European family —consisting mainly of the Welsh, Irish, and Gaelic— may legitimately boast of a very remote antiquity. It appears to have been, in very early times, widely diffused over Europe, although now confined to the British Islands, and a part of Brittany. The form of the Celtic spoken in Wales differs very much from the two dialects spoken in Ireland, and in the Highlands of Scotland, which again bear a close resemblance to each other. The Irish differs from the Welsh about as much as German differs from English; or,

according to some, as widely as Greek differs from Latin. No measure of familiarity with Welsh would enable a native of the Principality to hold intercourse with a Highlander or an Irishman in their vernacular speech. Dr. Pritchard was, I believe, the first to establish the relationship between the Celtic and the other Indo-European tongues. Although, to a superficial observer, the connexion between Welsh on the one hand, and Greek or Latin on the other, might appear very difficult to be discovered, yet, according to those best qualified to judge, the claim of such relationship has been fully made out by the labours of the distinguished philologist to whom I have just referred. The earliest ancestors of the Celts appear to have broken away, at a very remote period, from some Eastern people speaking a language, which afterwards, when more fully developed, took the form of the Sanskrit. It is asserted that, in the structure of the Celtic, may be observed some faint traces of the ancient relationship between the Semitic, on the one hand, and the Indo-European, on the other, Such indications tend to confirm the evidence which goes to establish the very great antiquity of that branch of the Arian Family.

The number of persons resident in the Principality and accustomed to speak the vernacular language is supposed to be about 700,000. To this amount would require to be added the very considerable number of Welshmen resident in our large cities,

who, whether from the habit of their childhood, or from patriotic attachment to their mother tongue, still use it in intercourse with one another. Although I have no practical acquaintance with any form of Celtic, I should deeply regret that any one of its dialects should become utterly extinct; and while appreciating the advantages which would accrue from every Welshman, Highlander, and native Irishman, being taught to understand English, I would advise all such to retain the use of their own mother tongue as well. The characteristic features of the Celtic languages may be thus briefly described. Their system of inflections is less complete than that of the Sanskrit, Greek, or Latin. They resemble the Semitic tongues in employing both separable and inseparable pronouns. Like the Greek, they abound in the number of active tenses. Like the Sanskrit, the initial consonants are, in some instances, altered for purposes of euphony or grammar. Like some of the Teutonic dialects, they delight in guttural sounds. Like the Greek and Latin, the persons of the tenses are indicated by a change of the terminations. The terminations actually used to indicate the persons bear a striking similarity to those employed in Latin. Those who have devoted their attention to the study of Welsh describe it as copious and expressive; energetic and animated; admirably adapted to impress the feelings and stir up strong emotions. The Irish was once the language of literature and

science, and Camden tells us that "the English Saxons anciently flocked to Ireland as to the mart of sacred learning." The admirers of the Gaelic form of the Celtic would probably maintain its right to be classed, in point of antiquity and excellence, with any of the dialects with which it is cognate. In such matters it is no very easy thing to obtain exact and impartial testimony. The Scotch Highlander who, from his childhood, has always regarded the Gaelic with the affection due to his own mother tongue;—the Welshman who looks back with a kind of proud regret upon the days when his native dialect was the language, not of Wales only, but of that which we now call England;—the Irishman who cherishes the traditionary recollections connected with the vanished glory of his native kings;—are, each of them, under very strong temptations to describe, in terms of unconscious exaggeration, the marvellous energy, the expressive force, and the flowing harmony of their vernacular tongue. But, even after making all due allowance for such unintentional and pardonable exaggeration, we may safely accept the evidence of Celtic scholars as to the adaptation of its three leading dialects for the stirring strains of elevated poetry, and for animating and impassioned eloquence.

I now pass on to notice that branch of the Arian family called the Teutonic, to which our own English Tongue belongs. Under this class of languages, according to the best authorities, are included the

Low German, the High German, and the Scandinavian. To the Low German belong the Saxon, the Gothic, the Friesic, the Dutch, and the Flemish dialects. The High German may be classed under three divisions, viz: the old High German prevalent from the seventh to the eleventh century; the middle High German from the twelfth century to the beginning of the sixteenth or the time of Luther; and the modern High German from that period down to the present day. This latter form is the literary language of Germany. Under the term Scandinavian are comprehended the Danish and Swedish, the two modern representatives of the old Norse, which in ancient times was spoken in Norway, and which by emigration was carried to Iceland in the ninth century, where it has been preserved ever since. It is a curious fact, that the dialect spoken in that secluded Island, is substantially that which prevailed in Norway about one thousand years ago; while in Norway, Sweden, and Denmark, it has been very considerably altered.*

The Gothic Translation of the Scriptures, executed by Ulphilas in the fourth century, part of which is still extant, constitutes the oldest specimen of the Low German. The ancient form of the Saxon, formerly spoken in the North of Germany, has been

* For the above classification of the Teutonic languages, I am indebted to "A Survey of Languages," by Professor Max Müller, of Oxford, one of the most advanced of all our comparative philologists, and one of the most accomplished scholars in England.

preserved in a poem of the ninth century. To us as Englishmen the Saxon form of the Low German possesses a peculiar interest, inasmuch as from it our language has been derived. Whatever difference of opinion there may be as to the importance of studying foreign languages, there can be no question of the desirableness of being well-acquainted with our own mother-tongue. In laying before you a brief sketch of the origin, history, progress, and constituent elements of the modern English, I must, of necessity, refer to some of the leading facts in the history of our country, inasmuch as the history of the language cannot be understood without constant reference to that of the people.

At the commencement of the Christian era, the southern part of our Island was inhabited by a people known to the Romans under the name of Britanni, or Britons, who are believed to have spoken a language very similar to that employed by the Gauls. This opinion, which has been adopted on other grounds, derives confirmation from a very interesting statement made by Tacitus in his life of the Roman general Agricola. He informs us that those of the British who occupied the parts nearest to Gaul or France, were probably of Gallic extraction, inasmuch as they resembled the Gauls in several particulars, especially in their form of speech.

The work of Tacitus just referred to was written about the close of the first century, very shortly after

the Romans had succeeded in subjugating a large portion of the Island to their sway. Until the beginning of the fifth century Britain continued to be held as a Roman Colony; and a number of Roman settlements belonging to that period have left traces of their existence down to the present day. The sons of the chiefs, according to Tacitus, were induced by Agricola to give themselves to the pursuit of liberal studies, and appeared to the Roman general to excel in natural genius their Gallic neighbours. Still, during the three or four centuries of the Roman dominion, the old British tongue seems to have kept its place, neither is there any reason to believe that, at any part of that long period, it was ever superseded by the language of the Empire.

About the middle of the fifth century, the British, oppressed by Northern invaders, are said to have called in the aid of the Saxons. The latter having, at first, come over in the character of allies, soon assumed the position of invaders, and, after repeated incursions during nearly a hundred years, they drove the original settlers to Cumberland, Wales, and Cornwall, and took possession of the remaining portion of South Britain. The Saxons thus established themselves in the Island about the middle of the sixth century, and in the more important part of the country corresponding with what we now call England the language of the foreign invaders took the place of the ancient British Tongue. The

harassing attacks and temporary dominion of the Danes in the ninth, tenth, and eleventh centuries, do not seem very materially to have modified the Saxon. This is easily accounted for by the fact that the Northmen—of Scandinavian origin—brought with them a dialect cognate with that which had previously been introduced by the Continental conquerors who preceded them. Thus the two forms of speech readily coalesced into one language.

The Saxon invaders had come from the locality situated between the Eider and the Elbe, and the Northmen or Danes came from the countries round about the Baltic, so that the previous sites of the two classes of invaders were conterminous. Indeed, the modern kingdom of Denmark includes that very portion of Continental Europe whence the several tribes of the Teutonic family poured themselves forth, in rapid succession, upon the original inhabitants of Britain. Those several tribes are generally believed to have brought along with them different dialects of that which had originally been the same language, so that from the time of the Saxon invasion a diversity of dialects prevailed in England. The influence of that diversity may be observed even in our own time, for although the English language, as employed for literary purposes and spoken by educated persons, is nearly the same over the whole Island, yet many of our English counties have terms peculiar to themselves.

Ever since the period of the Saxon occupation of England, their descendants have formed the bulk of its population, and our modern English, although modified in certain particulars, and augmented by additions from other languages, is still, in its structure, construction, and essential elements, only the modern form of that Teutonic dialect which was introduced into England by the conquerors of Britain about thirteen centuries ago.

No event in the history of our country, since the invasion of the Saxons, ever exercised so important an influence upon our language as the Norman Conquest in 1066. From that date down to the close of the fourteenth century, French was the medium of intercourse employed by the sovereign, the nobility, and the higher classes in general. For about three centuries the two distinct languages were current over England; the great mass of the people still retaining their ancestral tongue, while the foreign conquerors employed that which they had brought with them from Normandy. Thus, in the words of Robert, of Gloucester, in his chronicle written about 1300:—

> "Of the Normans beth thys high man that beth of this lond,
> And the lowe men of Saxons."

Down to the middle of the fourteenth century the children of all classes learned French instead of Saxon in the schools. The old language of the common people still, however, kept its ground. For

about 88 years, during the reigns of the Conqueror, his two sons and Stephen, it was kept down by its rival tongue. During the 118 years that intervened between the accession of Henry II. (in 1154), and Edward I. (in 1272), the native language was making continual advances, and by the close of the reign of Edward III., in 1377, or 311 years after the Conquest, the old form of speech was in the ascendant. From that time to the accession of Elizabeth—a period of 181 years—the modified form of the Saxon, which has been termed *middle English*, constituted the language of the nation. Our modern English may be dated from the reign of Elizabeth. Of course no one supposes that the change took place exactly at the dates I have given; all such changes are gradual; but it is convenient to mark, by successive stages, the actual progress.

Saxon being abandoned to the use of the uneducated classes ceased to be the language of literature. The result was, that it lost very much of its inflexional character, and became less elaborate in its structure. After the native dialect had come forth from its successful struggle with the language of the Norman conquerors, it was found to have largely added to its own vocabulary from the French. Thus the mother tongue of Englishmen—although still in its basis, structure, and radical elements essentially Saxon—includes a very considerable number of terms of Latin origin, introduced into our

language through the medium of the Norman French. Such terms abound in the writings of Chaucer—the cotemporary of Wycliffe. As those writings were evidently intended to be understood by the people, we may infer that, previously to the close of the fourteenth century, many words of French derivation must have been generally employed by the native population.

The Saxon, as spoken in the time of King Alfred, in the ninth century, although containing the radical terms of many words current in our modern English, would be entirely unintelligible to us in the present day. The same may be said respecting the language of the Saxon chronicle, written about two hundred years later. Even the semi-English of 1250, during the reign of Henry III., if we should attempt to read it, would be found to most of us an unknown tongue. Still it presents a nearer resemblance to modern English than is exhibited in the Saxon of Alfred. The Chronicle of Robert of Gloucester written about 1300, in the reign of Edward I., will be found partially intelligible, although the words are somewhat disguised by the antique mode of spelling.

In Peter Langtoft's chronicle about 1340, in the reign of Edward III., we still find many words that have now become quite obsolete. Towards the close of the fourteenth century, in Wycliffe's Version of the Scriptures, we find that the majority of the words employed are substantially the same with those now

in use, although there occur many terms that sound altogether strange to our ears.

None of us would like to have no other Translation of the Scriptures than that of which the following extract may be taken as a specimen:—

"Forsothe He seide also to His disciplis, Ther was sum riche man, that hadde a fermour, ether a baily; and this was defamyd anentis him, as he hadde wasted his goodis. And he clepide him and seide to him, What heere I this thing of thee? yeld resoun of thi ferme, for now thou schalt not mowe hold thi ferme."

LUKE xvi. 1, &c.

In a poem by Lydgate written about 1450, or in the closing part of the reign of Henry VI., we find a style quite as far removed from our present English as that of Wycliffe some seventy years before. Probably the language did not make much progress in refinement during the miserable condition of the country consequent upon the struggle between the two rival houses of York and Lancaster. From the time of Henry VII., the resemblance to our ordinary speech is so great as to occasion scarcely any difficulty to the modern reader; and the Translation of the New Testament by Tyndale about 1525, will be found generally intelligible although very different from that of our present English Version. Between 1525 and 1560 the language became much more assimilated to that of the present day. This may be illustrated by a comparison of the Translation executed by Tyndale, with that of the Geneva Translators. I may just notice here that the Geneval

Version of 1557 was very much a revision of Tyndale's, while that of 1560 was, in a great measure, a New and independent Translation. That the two should have been so repeatedly confounded furnishes an instructive lesson of the importance of examining evidence on such subjects instead of implicitly adopting the opinions of others.

In thus laying before you a brief sketch of the several stages through which our language has passed, I have been very much indebted to a little work by my brother, Professor Craik, entitled "Outlines of the History of the English Language," a work alike remarkable for condensation, perspicuity, and completeness.

The chief constituent elements of the English Tongue may be inferred from that which has been already brought before you. The basis of our vocabulary: the terms descriptive of natural relationships, and all such words as are essential to every form of speech, are of Saxon origin; a very large number of words which we could very badly spare have come to us through the Norman-French. The latter class, with scarcely any exception, had been originally derived from the Latin. In addition to such Latin words as have come to us at second-hand, a very considerable number, particularly since the revival of learning in England, have been added directly from the old Roman tongue. Thus *kingly, royal, regal,* although by usage they have come to

express somewhat different shades of meaning, have substantially the same radical signification. *Kingly* —the good old Saxon term—the noblest and most expressive of the three—is employed to describe the disposition or deportment of the one to whom it is applied. *Royal,* from the French *roi,* would fitly be employed to describe the outward state or equipage of the sovereign. *Regal,* from the Latin *regalis,* would be used in speaking of the office or its prerogatives.

According to the calculation of the Dean of Westminster, in his valuable little work on "English: Past and Present," if the English language were to be divided into one hundred parts, about sixty would be Saxon; thirty would be Latin (including the Latin words that have come in through the French); five would be Greek; the other five would be found to have been derived from the Celtic, the Hebrew, the Arabic, Persian, Italian, Spanish, and other tongues.

If, instead of taking account of the language as it is found in dictionaries, we were to restrict our reckoning to the few thousand words in most familiar use, I suspect that a very much larger proportion would require to be assigned to the Saxon. I do not believe that you could find in the whole of our English Bible a single verse of the ordinary length made up of words derived from the Latin; while it would not be difficult to give examples of several verses, even within the compass of one single Psalm,

composed entirely of Saxon words. Thus in Psalm xxxiv. 8:—

"O taste and see that the LORD is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in Him."

Here every word is Saxon. Again, verse 11:—

"Come, ye children, hearken unto Me: I will teach you the fear of the LORD."

Once more in verse 15:—

"The eyes of the LORD are upon the righteous, and His ears are open unto their cry."

In this last instance every word is Saxon but the last.

It would be an interesting and instructive exercise for any one, moderately acquainted with the etymology of English words, to take up such writers as Bunyan, South, Barrow, and Jeremy Taylor, and mark the proportion of Latin terms found, on an average, in a page of each of them. Bunyan, I suspect, would be found to have employed the fewest terms of foreign origin; South, to have fewer than Barrow; Barrow, again, fewer than Taylor. I mention this merely as a general impression which I have never verified by actual experiment.

This composite character of our English Tongue imparts to it great variety of excellence. Its affluent vocabulary derived from such diverse sources, renders it a fitting instrument for every species of composition. It is equally adapted for prose or poetry; for plain

narrative or impressive eloquence; its homely tenderness is seen in the simple lyric, or the popular ballad; and its noble strength and dignity in the epic poetry of Milton. I am not aware that there is any kind of writing for which the English language has been found unadapted, or in which it has not been successfully employed. It is satisfactory to be able to confirm this estimate of the large capabilities inherent in our native tongue, by a reference to the judgment of one of the most distinguished of Continental philologists. Jacob Grimm thus expresses himself:—

"None of the modern languages has, through the very loss and decay of all phonetic laws, and through the dropping of nearly all inflections, acquired greater force and vigour than English, and from the fullness of those vague and indefinite sounds, which may be learned, but can never be taught, it has arrived at a power of expression such as has never been at the command of any human tongue. Begotten by a surprising union of the two noblest languages of Europe, the one Teutonic, the other Romanic, it received that wonderfully happy temper and thorough breeding, where the Teutonic supplied the material strength, the Romanic the suppleness and freedom of expression. He adds: This English language may truly be called a world-language, and seems, like England herself, but in a still higher degree, destined to rule over all the corners of the earth. In wealth, wisdom, and strict economy, none of the living languages can vie with it."

The remaining branch of the Indo-European family has been denominated *Sclavonic*. Professor Müller would prefer the denomination *Windic*, as being one of the most ancient and most comprehensive names descriptive of the tribes among whom the languages of this class were originally current.

To this branch belong the several dialects of modern Russian, also Servian, Slovenian, and Bulgarian, spoken in European Turkey. The Western Slavonic comprises Polish, Bohemian, and the dialect spoken by the Wends of Lusatia, lying to the North of Bohemia. But the limits of this brief sketch forbid my dwelling upon the characteristics of this branch of languages.

II. I NOW PROCEED TO DIRECT YOUR ATTENTION TO THE ESSENTIAL RELATIONSHIPS SUBSISTING BETWEEN SOME OF THE LEADING LANGUAGES OF ASIA AND EUROPE.

And first I would remark that any two or more languages may possess a large number of words in common, and yet may not be *essentially* related. Thus Turkish has, through the influence of Mahomedanism, received into its vocabulary a large number of Arabic terms, but, as a language, it has no essential relationship with any member of the Semitic family. Persian also contains a large infusion of Arabic, but belongs to the Indo-European. Our own language, as I have already said, has derived a very considerable portion of its words from the Latin, but in structure, and all that is essential to a language, it belongs to the Teutonic branch, and not to the Romanic.

Those languages are evidently cognate which resemble each other, more or less closely, in their grammar: in words descriptive of the commonest

acts and objects: as also in their names for the numerals, in their pronouns and particles. Thus the Hebrew and English belong to two entirely different families, while the English and German—as both belonging to the Teutonic branch—have an essential relationship to each other. Sanskrit, and Greek, and Latin, having sprung from a common source, stand to each other in the relation of sisters, while Italian, Portuguese, Spanish, and French, being all substantially derived from the Latin, may be designated nieces of the Greek or Sanskrit.

Taking as the basis of classification the several correspondencies to which I have just referred, comparative philologists have succeeded in reducing almost all known languages (excepting the Chinese) to three great families—

I. SEMITIC. II. INDO-EUROPEAN. III. TURANIAN.

I. Under the Semitic are included:—

(1). Hebrew. (2). Aramaic.

(3). Arabic. (4). Ethiopic.

The scanty remains of the Phœnician, or Punic, belong to the same family.

II. Under the Indo-European are included:—

(1). The Sanskrit, and most of the dialects spoken in modern India.

(2). The Persian, including the Affghan, Armenian, &c.

(3). The Celtic, comprehending Welsh, Armorican, Cornish, Irish, Gælic, and Manx.

(4). The Greek—Ancient and Modern.

(5). The Latin, with its modern Derivatives—Italian, French, Spanish, Portuguese, and Wallachian.

(6). The Teutonic, embracing German, English, Dutch, also Swedish, Danish, and the Norse still spoken in Iceland.

(7). The Slavonic comprehending Russian, Polish, Bohemian, &c.

III. The Turanian or Nomade family of languages includes the following classes:—

(1). The Tungusic spoken in part of Siberia.

(2). The Mongolic spoken in Mongolia.

(3). The Turkic, including the Turkish and its various dialects.

(4). The Samoiedic, spoken near the borders of the Arctic Ocean.

(5). The Finnic, including the languages spoken in Hungary, Finland, and Lapland.

The locality over which the Nomadic family extends may be described, in general terms, as reaching from the North of China to the Arctic Sea, and from the Sea of Okotsk to the Adriatic.

The *grounds* of such classification may, to some extent, be tested by any man of ordinary education,

and average ability. Very many radical words slightly altered in their pronunciation, according to the laws of literal permutation peculiar to each class, are to be found in the several members of the Indo-European family of languages.

Thus the names for *father, mother, brother, sister,* are substantially the same in Sanskrit, Greek, Latin, Teutonic, Celtic, and Slavonic. The terms employed for *son* and *daughter, man* and *woman, eye* and *tear, nose* and *tooth, foot* and *knee, sun* and *moon, star* and *cloud, fire* and *water, day* and *night, earth* and *sea, wine* and *clothing,* are found closely to resemble each other in different branches of the same wide-spread family.

A similar remark applies to many verbs descriptive of acts that are constantly occurring. *To be, to live, to die, to see, to know, to carry, to give, to eat, to drink,* may suffice as specimens of such.

The Sanskrit "patri" (in Persian "pader)," becomes in Greek and Latin, "pater;" in Low German, fader; in Anglo-Saxon, "faeder;" in German, "vater;" in Irish, "athar;" and in English, "father." The word for "man," in Sanskrit is "manu-shya," which in Dutch and German becomes "mensch," and in Anglo-Saxon the same as our present English.

The Zend term for woman, "gena" is retained in Slavonic, and becomes, by a very slight change, γυνη in Greek; "quino" in Gothic and "quean" in Old English. From this we derive the title by which, with

loyal hearts, we describe our Sovereign. The highest of her sex, and one altogether worthy of the name we speak of as *The Queen*, that is, emphatically as *The Woman*; just as we describe the grandest of all our musical instruments as *The Organ*, that is, *The Instrument*, and the best of all our books as *The Bible*, that is, *The Book*.

Such examples might be multiplied abundantly, but I have sufficiently indicated the nature of the evidence on which the deductions of comparative philology are founded. Such deductions do not rest upon fanciful resemblances, and random conjecture, but upon the *kind* of words in which resemblances are found, the *regularity* of the *laws* by which the changes which they exhibit are governed, and by the *varied character* of proof combining to establish the same results.

The instances of correspondency to which your attention has just been directed, have been taken from different branches of the same family; but the resemblances become more obvious and more numerous when we examine the features of relationship between languages belonging to the same branch. Thus, there are certain correspondencies between the Sanskrit, Greek, Latin, Celtic, Teutonic, and Slavonic, as all belonging to the Indo-European family; but there are still closer resemblances between the several languages which are classed under the general term Teutonic.

If we compare the Lord's Prayer in the several Low German dialects, we find a remarkable correspondency in many of the words of which it is composed. The language of the Mœsogoths, in the fourth century, as it appears in so brief a specimen, will be found to exhibit a manifest connexion, not only with the languages of the same stock, spoken on the Continent, but even with our modern English. Thus "thy name" is in Gothic "thein namo;" "earth" is "airthai;" "loaf" is "hlaif;" "day" is "daga;" "thou" is "thu," &c. If, again, the modern Dutch be compared with the Anglo-Saxon, they will be found remarkably similar to each other, and both evidently related to our own tongue. The Faeder of the Saxon is equally near to the Vader of the Dutch, and to our own word Father. The "nama" of the Saxon, and the "naam" of the Dutch, agrees with the English "name." The Saxon "willa," and the Dutch "wil," are only slightly different from the English "will." "Earth" is "eartha" in Saxon, and "aarde" in Dutch. The Dutchman says "vergeef," while the Saxon said "forgyf," and the modern English scarcely differs from either but in the mode of pronouncing the same word.

The specimens I have given might be multiplied indefinitely. A very slight examination will be sufficient to show how the actual characteristics of the various languages classed as German and Scandinavian bear testimony to their common origin. The Icelandic, the Danish, and the Swedish, may be appealed

to in the way of further illustration. The Icelander says "gef thu oss," the Swede "gif oss," and the Dane "giv os." The English "day" is represented in Icelandic, Swedish, and Danish, by the same word "dag."

Were we to be guided by inferences from local proximity, how naturally should we expect that the lauguage spoken 1400 years ago on the Shores of the Black Sea would be very much more unlike our present English than that which, for many centuries down to the present day, has been spoken in the western part of our own England. Yet, while the Gothic of the fourth century bears a manifest resemblance to our present form of speech, the Welsh—spoken in the Principality within a few miles from our own city,—seems entirely unlike English. You may here and there find some slight traces of similarity, but they are few, and widely scattered, so that you may read fifty pages without finding fifty instances of correspondency. The same remark applies to the Gaelic and the Irish, and the other Celtic dialects of Brittany and the Isle of Man. Between that branch of the Indo-European, and the other branches of the same family, there are certain features of resemblance which the patient investigations of the philologist may detect, but which do not readily reveal themselves to less careful and practised enquirers.

Did our limits permit, we could very easily illustrate the evidence of close relationship between the Romanic—or Neo-Latin tongues. The Italian, the French, the Spanish, and the Portuguese, all bear the most marked resemblance to their common mother the Latin, and, by consequence, to each other. In each of them the grammatical structure and the far larger portion of the vocabulary furnish evidence of their common origin. Of all of them Spanish exhibits most of the gravity and dignity by which the language of ancient Rome was distinguished, although it has not refused to borrow many terms both from Gothic and Arabic. In the four hundred years during which Spain constituted an important portion of the Empire, the Latin tongue so rooted itself in the country, that neither the inroads of the Gothic invaders nor the splendid domination of the Saracen conquerors were equal to the task of displacing it. The Goths, in embracing the religion of those whom they had subjugated to their sway, were content to take up with a modified and less rigid form of the language that prevailed before their invasion. The expulsion of the Moors, after centuries of struggle and conflict on the part of the Christian population, issued in the restoration of that modern tongue which had been based upon the language of Catholic Christendom.

One can hardly reflect upon the vicissitudes of Spain, as illustrated by the characteristics of the language, without being led to contrast her present

low condition with her past magnificence and glory. No country of Europe has been, at different periods, so abundantly supplied with the precious metals. Previously to its occupation by the Romans the Phœnicians are said to have derived from it immense quantities of gold and silver. Even after the former had wrested it from the grasp of their Carthaginian rivals, it yielded up to its new masters no inconsiderable amount of wealth. When, at the close of the fifteenth century, the splendid discoveries of Columbus opened up to the Spanish Monarchy the magnificent treasures of the New World, Spain, for a season, rose in national elevation through the influence of vast and suddenly acquired riches. That elevation has long passed away, and the Spain of more recent date occupies a very inferior position to that which belonged to it in the days of Ferdinand and Isabella, or under the imperial rule of Charles V.

In tracing the features of the language, we are reminded of some great facts in the history of the country, of her former eminence, and her present state of depression. Spain enjoys a delightful climate; she has been the seat of more than one splendid empire; chivalry and art, eloquence and poetry—all that which is naturally fitted to foster a high state of civilisation—have exerted their varied influences at several periods of her history, and yet never has Spain enjoyed permanent national prosperity. Two essential blessings—Scriptural Christianity,

and rational freedom—have been wanting. A corrupt form of nominal Christianity, aided by the terrible intolerance of the Inquisition and the tyranny of despotic rulers, has ever sought to crush the efforts put forth by the friends of liberty and truth.

Were I to attempt to describe the difference between the Spanish, Italian, and French, I should say that the first was distinguished for its gravity and dignity. It may be regarded as adapted to a high-minded people, fond of pomp and ceremony and family distinction. It moves slowly and with sonorous pomp of expression. Italian, again, is soft, flowing, and musical. French is far more rapid, and better adapted than either of the others for colloquial intercourse and sprightly correspondence. The Spanish, instead of diminishing the number of syllables in the corresponding Latin, will be found, in many instances, to have increased them; while the French disguises the Latin term by leaving out or slurring over the middle syllable, and by cutting off the termination.

But I must refrain from pursuing any further the interesting subject of the mutual relationships between the Romanic tongues. I only add one more remark, that, at first sight, the Italian seems far more closely related to the Latin than either of the other two, but that when the student once perceives the principles on which the Spanish regularly alters certain letters in the Latin, he will readily discern resemblances which were previously hidden. Thus,

the Spanish "*hacer*," (*hather*) *to make, or do*, is simply the contracted form of the Latin "*facere*," it being the practice of the language to substitute the letter *h* instead of the *f* in the Latin. In fact, "words beginning with *h* in Spanish, may generally be referred to Latin or Italian words, if we substitute *f* for *h*."*

I must now conclude with one or two remarks in reference to some of the practical lessons which may be deduced from the subject to which this lecture has been devoted. Some of those lessons are so obvious that they will only need to be very briefly noticed.

An accurate knowledge of our own language is closely connected with some measure of acquaintance with its history, and some knowledge of the constituent elements of which it is composed. It is well to be able readily to separate, in general, between the terms of Saxon and those of Latin origin. If we are addressing the masses of our countrymen, we should study as much as possible to express our thoughts in words derived from the former; but in addressing ourselves more particularly to the educated class, we shall find that precision, elegance and exactness, as well as elevation and harmony of style, may be greatly assisted by a larger infusion of the latter element. Above all things we must guard against

* See Survey of Languages, by Professor Max Müller, pp. 3, 4, 5, and 6.

the use of high sounding words of which we do not ourselves very clearly understand the meaning. The term *eliminate* is a verb derived from the Latin, and, although not very common, is yet warranted by good authority. I am persuaded that many persons, tolerably well educated, would be puzzled if asked exactly to define its signification. But when once you know its derivation—that it comes from the Latin noun "*limen, a threshold,*" and the preposition "*e,*" "*out of,*" and signifies, literally, "*to put out of doors,*" you can easily apprehend its force in such a sentence as the following:—"It were as unwise as it would be impossible to attempt to eliminate from our English tongue all those words which we have derived from the Latin." Here the Saxon expression "*to put out of doors,*" would not so appropriately express the idea intended to be conveyed. The words of Latin origin are often very serviceable and sometimes indispensable, only let them be used with propriety and intelligence.

The Saxon words have the advantage of making their way more directly to the understandings of the larger portion of Englishmen. Many who have a general notion of what is meant by such terms as "precursor," and "felicity," do yet more clearly apprehend the force of "forerunner," and "happiness." The meaning of the latter class of expressions comes to the mind with the rapidity of lightning, while the former, being more slowly apprehended,

are less effective in making the requisite impression upon the hearer. The habit of examining the exact force of the words we employ; the careful observation of the usages of the best authors; the honest desire to express ourselves exactly in accordance with what we really mean, are all of importance, not merely as bearing on our intellectual progress, but as viewed in relation to our moral and spiritual advancement. While it is always interesting and instructive to trace the etymology of the words we employ, we must never forget that the knowledge of the etymology will not enable us to determine the exact meaning of the word as in preseut use. If we know the *origin* of any particular term, we may infer the meaning which the word originally was designed to bear, but very many words will be found to have greatly altered their meaning. Thus, "*surgeon,*" according to its derivation, signifies literally, "*hand-worker,* or *one who works with his hands;*" hence, "*one who performs surgical operations,*" or more briefly, "*a surgeon.*" The meaning of the Greek word from which "*bishop*" is derived, answers exactly to our word "*overseer,*" yet it would sound very strange if any one were to apply the two terms interchangeably. We speak of the *bishop* of the diocese, but never of the *bishop* of a farm. The vituperative term "*villain,*" is equivalent, in its primary meaning, to the very innocent term "*villager,*" but no one would be warranted in so employing it in

our modern English. It is, therefore, absolutely needful to remember that the meaning of words cannot be determined simply by their etymology, but must be gathered from the manner in which any particular term is used by correct writers.

The views which I have laid before you, in reference to the comparative study of languages and their essential relationships, are full of practical application to the ordinary education of youth, as well as very important for those of both sexes who are engaged in the honourable task of educating themselves. Of the many thousands who are occupied in learning the Latin tongue, how very few boys would be able to give a satisfactory account of the reasons why they are taught that ancient language. No child ought to begin the study of Latin without having first been, in some measure, instructed in the relation which that language bears to other languages, and without some understanding of the important ends to be answered by giving his attention to such studies. How few school-boys know that, in acquiring a fair knowledge of the Latin, they are gaining that which will be found of the utmost value in reference to the attainment of the leading languages now current in modern Europe, and by one course of initiatory effort smoothing the way for other similar acquisitions.

Every attentive hearer must have perceived from what has been said, the very close connection

between the subject of this lecture and the great facts of history. Why, for instance, does our modern English so closely resemble the Low German, and differ so widely from the Welsh—the modern representative of the ancient British tongue? Because the Saxons subjugated and expelled the British instead of mingling with them so as to form one people. Why, on the other hand, has our language such evident traces of similarity to the Norman-French? Because, after the conquest of England by the Normans, the Saxons, although subdued, were not expelled, but in the lapse of time mingled with their conquerors, and became one people with them. Why, again, does the Spanish, while essentially Latin in its basis and structure, contain so many words of Gothic origin, and a still larger number derived from the Arabic? The simple fact that, after it had been for centuries under the rule of the Empire, it fell into the hands of a Gothic people, who again were subdued by the Arabian Moors, sufficiently answers the enquiry. Thus, there will ever be found an intimate connection between families and tongues, and countries and nations. Why do the roving Arabs of the desert employ, at this very day, a language closely related to that spoken by the father of the faithful? Because one of the founders of their nation—the head of one of the leading tribes—was a son of the Patriarch. In Genesis xvi. 12, we have a prediction recorded respecting Ishmael,

which, with the most graphic brevity, describes the character of his descendants down to the present time. "He will be a wild man," or, literally, from the Hebrew, "*a wild-ass man.*" The term translated "*wild,*" in our Authorized Version, is, in every other instance where it occurs, rightly translated "*wild-ass.*" In Job xxxix. 5—8, you may read a description of the animal, admirably corresponding to the habits and dispositions of Ishmael's descendants. Thus, the comparative study of languages and their essential relationships tends to illustrate the facts of history, whether sacred or secular, and to explain the predictions of the prophetic Word. All such studies may more or less directly be made subservient to our progress in the knowledge of Holy Scripture. No Christian ever regretted the time and the pains bestowed upon the acquisition of that tongue in which Moses and the Prophets wrote; and no believing reader of his Greek Testament would relinquish, for any earthly consideration, the privilege of perusing with intelligence the very words of evangelists and apostles. When I think of the time that so many waste in idle amusements or unprofitable reading, and think how many opportunities of self-improvement might be redeemed from trivial pursuits, I am quite satisfied that, although very many intelligent Christians are necessarily prevented from pursuing the study of the sacred writings in the original tongues, yet there is no good reason

why the knowledge of Greek and Hebrew should be, comparatively, so rare.

By the earnest cultivation of right habits, by setting before you high and animating aims, by cherishing a lofty estimate of the preciousness of heavenly wisdom, by subordinating all your attainments to the knowledge, service and enjoyment of God,—you will find yourselves strengthened for mental labour and experimentally rewarded for your toil. Nay, the labour itself will be a delight, because associated with the consciousness of continual progress. If you are unable to afford leisure for any other studies, see that you find opportunity for the reverential perusal of your English Bible. On every account that Book of Books deserves the preference. The choicest productions of Greek and Roman genius are incapable of being translated without grievous loss. They resemble those flowers that, when rooted in their own soil, gladden the senses by their pleasant perfume, and their hues of rich and radiant beauty; but which, when transplanted, soon lose their bloom, vitality and vigour. But the heavenly life that animates the Word of God, does not pass out of it when its divine thoughts are expressed in any faithful Version. There are excellencies in the originals that cannot be retained; felicities of expression which no skill of the translator can reproduce in any other tongue; correspondencies between different passages that the most faithful version fails to preserve; but still, ever

since the days of early christianity, the chief triumphs of the faith have been effected through the instrumentality of *translated* Scriptures. Let no man, therefore, be discouraged or hindered from careful study of the Bible, because of his ignorance of Greek or Hebrew. Read Holy Scripture with habitual prayer; seek secondary help from those who may have had external advantages superior to your own; let its truths sink into your hearts, and influence your tempers, your dispositions, your daily conduct; and assuredly your diligent reading will not be in vain in the Lord. The devout St. Augustine—the most illustrious Light of Latin Christendom—was incapable of reading his Hebrew Bible, and he trusted to translations incomparably less faithful than our own English Version. The translations of the Psalms then current, and used by that distinguished teacher, are full of erroneous renderings. The blunders of the LXX. and Vulgate—in that precious portion of the Old Testament—may be reckoned, not by scores, but by hundreds, or even thousands. Let any one read the cxxxix. Psalm in our ordinary Bible—(which, with tolerable correctness, represents the Hebrew)—and then turn to the same Psalm as given in the Douay Bible from the Greek and Latin, and he will need no further evidence to prove how such a Version must have marred the force and beauty of those Sacred Songs. I say it deliberately, and will undertake to prove my assertion before any competent

tribunal, that those Greek and Latin fathers who were ignorant of Hebrew (and this probably includes all of them except Origen and Jerome), were most unfavourably circumstanced as expositors of the Psalms, and that the intelligent Christian who can only read his Vernacular Bible, occupies, in the possession of that book, a far higher vantage ground as an expositor, than belonged to those who had no better representation of the Psalms than that furnished by the ancient Versions. All honour to the memories of those who, in the prospect of the prison and the stake, studied and prayed, and toiled, that they might leave behind them the Holy Scriptures in the English tongue! All honour to the names of those who, in times of greater quietness, laboured to perfect that which their predecessors had so successfully begun! To Tyndale belongs the pre-eminent distinction of having led the way; to Rogers and Coverdale, the honour of having followed in his steps. To the Geneva translators, to Archbishop Parker and his fellow-labourers, we owe the gratitude due to those who honestly endeavour to make that better which is already well done; while to the revisers appointed by King James, we are indebted for still further improvements. With so admirable a Version in your hands, remember the consequent obligation not to allow the dust to gather on its covers. Better far to live and die ignorant of all other learning, than to find, when your strength decays, that you have made progress in all knowledge except the knowledge of the Saviour.

Happy those who can apply to the writings of prophets and apostles, the language of the poet respecting his favourite authors:—

> With them I take delight in weal,
> And seek relief in woe;
> And while I understand and feel
> How much to them I owe,
> My cheeks have often been bedewed
> With tears of thoughtful gratitude.

Cast off, then, my young friends, the torpor of indifference. Resist the blandishments of sloth and the seductions of unholy pleasure. Be trustful, be pure, be earnest, be manly. Live for some great end. Dignify the obscurest position by the elevation of your motives and the uprightness of your aims. Watch against the withering influences of infidel philosophy, and the intoxicating and polluting power of anti-christian poetry. Men of all conditions are awakening to the calls of duty, and going forth in no irrational crusade against ignorance, misery and sin. Let each man, in his place, help on the holy cause, and let none feel too insignificant to aid in the conflict. Let us remember that our privileges, as Englishmen, enhance the greatness of our responsibilities. Our natural advantages—our righteous laws—our reasonable freedom—our institutions for the relief of the suffering and the recovery of the fallen—our Protestant Christianity—our English tongue, and our open Bible—all serve to elevate us above most other

nations, and to recal the noble lines of our great poet, descriptive of our Island—lines far more applicable now than at the period when they are supposed to have been uttered:—

This other Eden, demi-paradise,
This fortress, built by nature for herself,
Against infection and the hand of war;
This happy breed of men, this little world;
This precious stone, set in the silver sea,
Which serves it in the office of a wall,
Or as a moat defensive to a house,
Against the envy of less happier lands;
This blessed spot, this earth, this realm, this *England.*