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# INTRODUCTION

"Quot enim verba, et nonnunquam in deterius, hoc, quo vivimus, saeculo, partim aliqa, partim nulla necessitate cogente, mutata sunt?"--ROB. AINSWORTH: Lat. Dict., 4to; Praef., p. xi.

In the use of language, every one chooses his words from that common stock which he has learned, and applies them in practice according to his own habits and notions. If the style of different writers of the same age is various, much greater is the variety which appears in the productions of different ages. Hence the date of a book may often be very plausibly conjectured from the peculiarities of its style. As to what is best in itself, or best adapted to the subject in hand, every writer must endeavour to become his own judge. He who, in any sort of composition, would write with a master's hand, must first apply himself to books with a scholar's diligence. He must think it worth his while to inform himself, that he may be critical. Desiring to give the student all the advantage, entertainment, and satisfaction, that can be expected from a work of this kind, I shall subjoin a few brief specimens in illustration of what has been said in the foregoing chapter. The order of time will be followed inversely; and, as Saxon characters are not very easily obtained, or very apt to be read, the Roman letters will be employed for the few examples to which the others would be more appropriate. But there are some peculiarities of ancient usage in English, which, for the information of the young reader, it is proper in the first place to explain.

With respect to the letters, there are several changes to be mentioned. (1.) The pages of old books are often crowded with capitals: it was at one time the custom to distinguish all nouns, and frequently verbs, or any other important words, by heading them with a great letter. (2.) The letter Ess, of the lower case, had till lately two forms, the long and the short, as [tall-s] and s; the former very nearly resembling the small f, and the latter, its own capital. The short s was used at the end of words, and the long [tall-s], in other places; but the latter is now laid aside, in favour of the more distinctive form. (3.) The letters I and J were formerly considered as one and the same. Hence we find hallelujah for halleluiah, Iohn for John, iudgement for judgement, &c. And in many dictionaries, the words beginning with J are still mixed with those which begin with I. (4.) The letters U and V were mixed in like manner, and for the same reason; the latter being a consonant power given to the former, and at length distinguished from it by a different form. Or rather, the figure of the capital seems to have been at last appropriated to the one, and that of the small letter to the other. But in old books the forms of these two letters are continually confounded or transposed. Hence it is, that our Double-u is composed of two Vees; which, as we see in old books, were sometimes printed separately: as, VV, for W; or vv, for w.

# 1 THE ORTHOGRAPHY OF ENGLISH

The orthography of our language, rude and unsettled as it still is in many respects, was formerly much more variable and diverse. In books a hundred years old or more, we often find the most common words spelled variously by the same writer, and even upon the very same page. With respect to the forms of words, a few particulars may here be noticed: (1.) The article an, from which the n was dropped before words beginning with a consonant sound, is often found in old books where a would be more proper; as, an heart, an help, an hill, an one, an use. (2.) Till the seventeenth century, the possessive case was written without the apostrophe; being formed at different times, in es, is, ys, or s, like the plural; and apparently without rule or uniformity in respect to the doubling of the final consonant: as Goddes, Godes, Godis, Godys, or Gods, for God's; so mannes, mannis, mannys or mans, for man's. Dr. Ash, whose English Grammar was in some repute in the latter part of the eighteenth century, argued against the use of the apostrophe, alleging that it was seldom used to distinguish the possessive case till about the beginning of that century; and he then prophesied that the time would come, when correct writers would lay it aside again, as a strange corruption, an improper "departure from the original formation" of that case of English nouns. And, among the speculations of these latter days, I have somewhere seen an attempt to disparage this useful sign, and explode it, as an unsightly thing never well established. It does not indeed, like a syllabic sign, inform the ear or affect the sound; but still it is useful, because it distinguishes to the eye, not only the case, but the number, of the nouns thus marked. Pronouns, being different in their declension, do not need it, and should therefore always be written without it.

The common usage of those who have spoken English, has always inclined rather to brevity than to melody; contraction and elision of the ancient terminations of words, constitute no small part of the change which has taken place, or of the difference which perhaps always existed between the solemn and the familiar style. In respect to euphony, however, these terminations have certainly nothing to boast; nor does the earliest period of the language appear to be that in which they were the most generally used without contraction. That degree of smoothness of which the tongue was anciently susceptible, had certainly no alliance with these additional syllables. The long sonorous endings which constitute the declensions and conjugations of the most admired languages, and which seem to chime so well with the sublimity of the Greek, the majesty of the Latin, the sweetness of the Italian, the dignity of the Spanish, or the polish of the French, never had any place in English. The inflections given to our words never embraced any other vowel power than that of the short e or i; and even, this we are inclined to dispense with, whenever we can; so that most of our grammatical inflections are, to the ear, nothing but consonants blended with the final syllables of the words to which they are added. Ing for the first participle, er for the comparative degree, and est for the superlative, are indeed added as whole syllables; but the rest, as d or ed for preterits and perfect participles, s or es for the plural number of nouns, or for the third person singular of verbs, and st or est for the second person singular of verbs, nine times in ten, fall into the sound or syllable with which the primitive word terminates. English verbs, as they are now commonly used, run through their entire conjugation without acquiring a single syllable from inflection, except sometimes when the sound of d, s, or st cannot be added to them.

This simplicity, so characteristic of our modern English, as well as of the Saxon tongue, its proper parent, is attended with advantages that go far to compensate for all that is consequently lost in euphony, or in the liberty of transposition. Our formation of the moods and tenses, by means of a few separate auxiliaries, all monosyllabic, and mostly without inflection, is not only simple and easy, but beautiful, chaste, and strong. In my opinion, our grammarians have shown far more affection for the obsolete or obsolescent terminations en, eth, est, and edst, than they really deserve. Till the beginning of the sixteenth century, en was used to mark the plural number of verbs, as, they sayen for they say; after which, it appears to have been dropped. Before the beginning of the seventeenth century, s or es began to dispute with th or eth the right of forming the third person singular of verbs; and, as the Bible and other grave books used only the latter, a clear distinction obtained, between the solemn and the familiar style, which distinction is well known at this day. Thus we have, He runs, walks, rides, reaches, &c., for the one; and, He runneth, walketh, rideth, reacheth, &c., for the other. About the same time, or perhaps earlier, the use of the second person singular began to be avoided in polite conversation, by the substitution of the plural verb and pronoun; and, when used in poetry, it was often contracted, so as to prevent any syllabic increase. In old books, all verbs and participles that were intended to be contracted in pronunciation, were contracted also, in some way, by the writer: as, "call'd, carry'd, sacrific'd;" "fly'st, ascrib'st, cryd'st;" "tost, curst, blest, finisht;" and others innumerable. All these, and such as are like them, we now pronounce in the same way, but usually write differently; as, called,carried, sacrificed; fliest, ascribest, criettst; tossed, cursed, blessed, finished. Most of these topics will be further noticed in the Grammar.

# 2 ENGLISH OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

1.Queen Victoria's Answer to an Address.--Example written in 1837.

"I thank you for your condolence upon the death of his late Majesty, for the justice which you render to his character, and to the measures of his reign, and for your warm congratulations upon my accession to the throne. I join in your prayers for the prosperity of my reign, the best security for which is to be found in reverence for our holy religion, and in the observance of its duties."--VICTORIA, to the Friends' Society.

2.From President Adams's Eulogy on Lafayette.--Written in 1834.

"Pronounce him one of the first men of his age, and you have yet not done him justice. Try him by that test to which he sought in vain to stimulate the vulgar and selfish spirit of Napoleon; class him among the men who, to compare and seat themselves, must take in the compass of all ages; turn back your eyes upon the records of time; summon from the creation of the world to this day the mighty dead of every age and every clime; and where, among the race of merely mortal men, shall one be found, who, as the benefactor of his kind, shall claim to take precedence of Lafayette?"--JOHN QUINCY ADAMS.

3.From President Jackson's Proclamation against Nullification.--1832.

"No, we have not erred! The Constitution is still the object of our reverence, the bond of our Union, our defence in danger, the source of our prosperity in peace. It shall descend, as we have received it, uncorrupted by sophistical construction, to our posterity: and the sacrifices of local interest, of State prejudices, of personal animosities, that were made to bring it into existence, will again be patriotically offered for its support."--ANDREW JACKSON.

4.From a Note on one of Robert Hall's Sermons.--Written about 1831.

"After he had written down the striking apostrophe which occurs at about page 76 of most of the editions--'Eternal God! on what are thine enemies intent! what are those enterprises of guilt and horror, that, for the safety of their performers, require to be enveloped in a darkness which the eye of Heaven must not penetrate!'--he asked, 'Did I say penetrate, sir, when I preached, it?' 'Yes.' 'Do you think, sir, I may venture toalter it? for no man who considered the force of the English language, would use a word of three syllables there, but from absolute necessity.' 'You are doubtless at liberty to alter it, if you think well.' 'Then be so good, sir, as to take your pencil, and for penetrate put pierce; pierce is the word, sir, and the only word to be used there.'"--OLINTHUS GREGORY.

5.King William's Answer to an Address.--Example written in 1830.

"I thank you sincerely for your condolence with me, on account of the loss which I have sustained, in common with my people, by the death of my lamented brother, his late Majesty. The assurances which you have conveyed to me, of loyalty and affectionate attachment to my person, are very gratifying to my feelings. You may rely upon my favour and protection, and upon my anxious endeavours to promote morality and true piety among all classes of my subjects."--WILLIAM IV, to the Friends.

6.Reign of George IV, 1830 back to 1820.--Example written in 1827.

"That morning, thou, that slumbered[48] not before, Nor slept, great Ocean I laid thy waves to rest, And hushed thy mighty minstrelsy. No breath Thy deep composure stirred, no fin, no oar; Like beauty newly dead, so calm, so still, So lovely, thou, beneath the light that fell From angel-chariots sentinelled on high, Reposed, and listened, and saw thy living change, Thy dead arise. Charybdis listened, and Scylla; And savage Euxine on the Thracian beach Lay motionless: and every battle ship Stood still; and every ship of merchandise, And all that sailed, of every name, stood still." ROBERT POLLOK: Course of Time, Book VII, line 634-647.

"There is, it will be confessed, a delicate sensibility to character, a sober desire of reputation, a wish to possess the esteem of the wise and good, felt by the purest minds, which is at the farthest remove from arrogance or vanity. The humility of a noble mind scarcely dares approve of itself, until it has secured the approbation of others. Very different is that restless desire of distinction, that passion for theatrical display, which inflames the heart and occupies the whole attention of vain men. \* \* \* The truly good man is jealous over himself, lest the notoriety of his best actions, by blending itself with their motive, should diminish their value; the vain man performs the same actions for the sake of that notoriety. The good man quietly discharges his duty, and shuns ostentation; the vain man considers every good deed lost that is not publickly displayed. The one is intent upon realities, the other upon semblances: the one aims to be virtuous, the other to appear so."--ROBERT HALL: Sermon on Modern Infidelity.

"Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, Religion and Morality are indispensable supports. In vain would that man claim the tribute of patriotism, who should labour to subvert these great pillars of human happiness, these firmest props of the duties of men and citizens. The mere politician, equally with the pious man, ought to respect and cherish them. A volume could not trace all their connexions with private and publick felicity. Let it simply be asked, where is the security for property, for reputation, for life, if the sense of religious obligation desert the oaths which are the instruments of investigation in courts of justice? And let us with caution indulge the supposition, that morality can be maintained without religion. Whatever may be conceded to the influence of refined education on minds of a peculiar structure; reason and experience both forbid us to expect that national morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principle."--GEORGE WASHINGTON.

"That he always wrote as he would think it necessary to write now, cannot be affirmed; his instructions were such as the character of his readers made proper. That general knowledge which now circulates in common talk, was in his time rarely to be found. Men not professing learning, were not ashamed of ignorance; and in the female world, any acquaintance with books was distinguished only to be censured. His purpose was to infuse literary curiosity, by gentle and unsuspected conveyance, into the gay, the idle, and the wealthy; he therefore presented knowledge in the most alluring form, not lofty and austere, but accessible and familiar. When he shewed them their defects, he shewed them likewise that they might easily be supplied. His attempt succeeded; inquiry was awakened, and comprehension expanded. An emulation of intellectual elegance was excited, and from this time to our own, life has been gradually exalted, and conversation purified and enlarged."--SAMUEL JOHNSON: Lives, p. 321.

Reign of George II, 1760 back to 1727.--Example written in 1751.

"We Britons in our time have been remarkable borrowers, as our multiform Language may sufficiently shew. Our Terms in polite Literature prove, that this came from Greece; our terms in Music and Painting, that these came from Italy; our Phrases in Cookery and War, that we learnt these from the French; and our phrases in Navigation, that we were taught by the Flemings and Low Dutch. These many and very different Sources of our Language may be the cause, why it is so deficient in Regularity and Analogy. Yet we have this advantage to compensate the defect, that what we want in Elegance, we gain in Copiousness, in which last respect few Languages will be found superior to our own."--JAMES HARRIS: Hermes, Book iii, Ch. v, p. 408.

Reign of George I, 1727 back to 1714.--Example written about 1718.

"There is a certain coldness and indifference in the phrases of our European languages, when they are compared with the Oriental forms of speech: and it happens very luckily, that the Hebrew idioms ran into the English tongue, with a particular grace and beauty. Our language has received innumerable elegancies and improvements from that infusion of Hebraisms, which are derived to it out of the poetical passages in holy writ. They give a force and energy to our expressions, warm and animate our language, and convey our thoughts in more ardent and intense phrases, than any that are to be met with in our tongue."--JOSEPH

ADDISON: Evidences, p. 192.

Reign of Queen Anne, 1714 to 1702.--Example written in 1708.

"Some by old words to Fame have made pretence, Ancients in phrase, mere moderns in their sense; Such labour'd nothings, in so strange a style, Amaze th' unlearn'd, and make the learned smile." "In words, as fashions, the same rule will hold; Alike fantastick, if too new or old: Be not the first by whom the new are try'd, Nor yet the last to lay the old aside." ALEXANDER POPE: Essay on Criticism, l. 324-336.

# 3 ENGLISH OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

"And when we see a Man of Milton's Wit Chime in with such a Herd, and Help on the Cry against Hirelings! We find How Easie it is for Folly and Knavery to Meet, and that they are Near of Kin, tho they bear Different Aspects. Therefor since Milton has put himself upon a Level with the Quakers in this, I will let them go together. And take as little Notice of his Buffoonry, as of their Dulness against Tythes. Ther is nothing worth Quoting in his Lampoon against the Hirelings. But what ther is of Argument in it, is fully Consider'd in what follows."--CHARLES LESLIE: Divine Right of Tithes, Pref., p. xi.

Reign of James II, 1689 back to 1685.--Example written in 1685.

"His conversation, wit, and parts, His knowledge in the noblest useful arts, Were such, dead authors could not give; But habitudes of those who live; Who, lighting him, did greater lights receive: He drain'd from all, and all they knew; His apprehension quick, his judgment true: That the most learn'd with shame confess His knowledge more, his reading only less." JOHN DRYDEN: Ode to the Memory of Charles II; Poems, p. 84.

Reign of Charles II, 1685 to 1660.--Example from a Letter to the Earl of Sunderland, dated,

"Philadelphia, 28th 5th mo. July, 1683."

"And I will venture to say, that by the help of God, and such noble Friends, I will show a Province in seven years, equal to her neighbours of forty years planting. I have lay'd out the Province into Countys. Six are begun to be seated; they lye on the great river, and are planted about six miles back. The town platt is a mile long, and two deep,--has a navigable river on each side, the least as broad as the Thames at Woolwych, from three to eight fathom water. There is built about eighty houses, and I have settled at least three hundred farmes contiguous to it."--WILLIAM PENN. The Friend, Vol. vii, p. 179.

From an Address or Dedication to Charles II.--Written in 1675.

"There is no [other] king in the world, who can so experimentally testify of God's providence and goodness; neither is there any [other], who rules so many free people, so many true Christians: which thing renders thy government more honourable, thyself more considerable, than the accession of many nations filled with slavish and superstitious souls."--ROBERT BARCLAY: Apology, p. viii.

The following example, from the commencement of Paradise Lost, first published in 1667, has been cited by several authors, to show how large a proportion of our language is of Saxon origin. The thirteen words in Italics are the only ones in this passage, which seem to have been derived from any other source.

"Of man's first disobedience, and the fruit Of that forbidden tree, whose mortal taste Brought death into the world, and all our woe, With loss of Eden; till one greater Man Restore us, and regain the blissful seat, Sing, heav'nly Muse, that on the secret top Of Oreb, or of Sinai, didst inspire That shepherd, who first taught the chosen seed, In the beginning, how the Heav'ns and Earth Rose out of Chaos."--MILTON: Paradise Lost,

Book I.

Examples written during Cromwell's Protectorate, 1660 to 1650.

"The Queene was pleased to shew me the letter, the seale beinge a Roman eagle, havinge characters about it almost like the Greeke. This day, in the afternoone, the vice-chauncellor came to me and stayed about four hours with me; in which tyme we conversed upon the longe debates."--WHITELOCKE. Bucke's Class. Gram., p. 149.

"I am yet heere, and have the States of Holland ingaged in a more than ordnary maner, to procure me audience of the States Generall. Whatever happen, the effects must needes be good."--STRICKLAND: Bucke's Classical Gram., p. 149.

Reign of Charles I, 1648 to 1625.--Example from Ben Jonson's Grammar, written about 1634; but the orthography is more modern.

"The second and third person singular of the present are made of the first, by adding est and eth; which last is sometimes shortened into s. It seemeth to have been poetical licence which first introduced this abbreviation of the third person into use; but our best grammarians have condemned it upon some occasions, though perhaps not to be absolutely banished the common and familiar style."

"The persons plural keep the termination of the first person singular. In former times, till about the reign of Henry the eighth, they were wont to be formed by adding en; thus, loven, sayen, complainen. But now (whatever is the cause) it hath quite grown out of use, and that other so generally prevailed, that I dare not presume to set this afoot again: albeit (to tell you my opinion) I am persuaded that the lack hereof well considered, will be found a great blemish to our tongue. For seeing time and person be, as it were, the right and left hand of a verb, what can the maiming bring else, but a lameness to the whole body?"--Book i, Chap. xvi.

Reign of James I, 1625 to 1603.--From an Advertisement, dated 1608.

"I svppose it altogether needlesse (Christian Reader) by commending M. William Perkins, the Author of this booke, to wooe your holy affection, which either himselfe in his life time by his Christian conversation hath woon in you, or sithence his death, the neuer-dying memorie of his excellent knowledge, his great humilitie, his sound religion, his feruent zeale, his painefull labours, in the Church of God, doe most iustly challenge at your hands: onely in one word, I dare be bold to say of him as in times past Nazianzen spake of Athanasius. His life was a good definition of a true minister and preacher of the Gospell."--The Printer to the Reader.

Examples written about the end of Elizabeth's reign--1603.

"Some say, That euer 'gainst that season comes Wherein our Saviour's Birth is celebrated, The Bird of Dawning singeth all night long; And then, say they, no Spirit dares walk abroad: The nights are wholsom, then no Planets strike, No Fairy takes, nor Witch hath pow'r to charm; So hallow'd and so gracious is the time." SHAKSPEARE: Hamlet.

"The sea, with such a storme as his bare head In hell-blacke night indur'd, would haue buoy'd up And quench'd the stelled fires. Yet, poore old heart, he holpe the heuens to raine. If wolues had at thy gate howl'd that sterne time, Thou shouldst haue said, Good porter, turne the key." SHAKSPEARE: Lear.

# 4 ENGLISH OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

Reign of Elizabeth, 1603 back to 1558.--Example written in 1592.

"As for the soule, it is no accidentarie qualitie, but a spirituall and inuisible essence or nature, subsisting by it selfe. Which plainely appeares in that the soules of men haue beeing and continuance as well forth of the bodies of men as in the same; and are as wel subiect to torments as the bodie is. And whereas we can and doe put in practise sundrie actions of life, sense, motion, vnderstanding, we doe it onely by the power and vertue of the soule. Hence ariseth the difference betweene the soules of men, and beasts. The soules of men are substances: but the soules of other creatures seeme not to be substances; because they haue no beeing out of the bodies in which they are."--WILLIAM PERKINS: Theol. Works, folio, p. 155.

Examples written about the beginning of Elizabeth's reign.--1558.

"Who can perswade, when treason is aboue reason; and mighte ruleth righte; and it is had for lawfull, whatsoever is lustfull; and commotioners are better than commissioners; and common woe is named common weale?"--SIR JOHN CHEKE. "If a yong jentleman will venture him selfe into the companie of ruffians, it is over great a jeopardie, lest their facions, maners, thoughts, taulke, and dedes, will verie sone be over like."--ROGER ASCHAM.

Reign of Mary the Bigot, 1558 to 1553.--Example written about 1555.

"And after that Philosophy had spoken these wordes the said companye of the musys poeticall beynge rebukyd and sad, caste downe their countenaunce to the grounde, and by blussyng confessed their shamefastnes, and went out of the dores. But I (that had my syght dull and blynd wyth wepyng, so that I knew not what woman this was hauyng soo great aucthoritie) was amasyd or astonyed, and lokyng downeward, towarde the ground, I began pryvyle to look what thyng she would save ferther."--COLVILLE: Version from Boethius: Johnson's Hist. of E. L., p. 29.

Example referred by Dr. Johnson to the year 1553.

"Pronunciation is an apte orderinge bothe of the voyce, countenaunce, and all the whole bodye, accordynge to the worthinea of such woordes and mater as by speache are declared. The vse hereof is suche for anye one that liketh to haue prayse for tellynge his tale in open assemblie, that hauing a good tongue, and a comelye countenaunce, he shal be thought to passe all other that haue not the like vtteraunce: thoughe they have muche better learning."--DR. WILSON: Johnson's Hist. E. L., p. 45.

Reign of Edward VI, 1553 to 1547.--Example written about 1550.

"Who that will followe the graces manyfolde Which are in vertue, shall finde auauncement: Wherefore ye fooles that in your sinne are bolde, Ensue ye wisdome, and leaue your lewde intent, Wisdome is the way of men most excellent: Therefore haue done, and shortly spede your pace, To quaynt your self and company with grace." ALEXANDER BARCLAY: Johnson's Hist. E. L., p. 44.

Reign of Henry VIII, 1547 to 1509.--Example dated 1541.

"Let hym that is angry euen at the fyrste consyder one of these thinges, that like as he is a man, so is also the other, with whom he is angry, and therefore it is as lefull for the other to be angry, as unto hym: and if he so be, than shall that anger be to hym displeasant, and stere hym more to be angrye."--SIR THOMAS ELLIOTT: Castel of Helthe.

Example of the earliest English Blank Verse; written about 1540.

The supposed author died in 1541, aged 38. The piece from which these lines are taken describes the death of Zoroas, an Egyptian astronomer, slain in Alexander's first battle with the Persians.

"The Persians waild such sapience to foregoe; And very sone the Macedonians wisht He would have lived; king Alexander selfe Demde him a man unmete to dye at all; Who wonne like praise for conquest of his yre, As for stoute men in field that day subdued, Who princes taught how to discerne a man, That in his head so rare a jewel beares; But over all those same Camenes,[49] those same Divine Camenes, whose honour he procurde, As tender parent doth his daughters weale, Lamented, and for thankes, all that they can, Do cherish hym deceast, and sett hym free, From dark oblivion of devouring death." Probably written by SIR THOMAS

WYAT.

A Letter written from prison, with a coal. The writer, Sir Thomas More, whose works, both in prose and verse, were considered models of pure and elegant style, had been Chancellor of England, and the familiar confidant of Henry VIII, by whose order he was beheaded in 1535.

"Myne own good doughter, our Lorde be thanked I am in good helthe of bodye, and in good quiet of minde: and of worldly thynges I no more desyer then I haue. I beseche hym make you all mery in the hope of heauen. And such thynges as I somewhat longed to talke with you all, concerning the worlde to come, our Lorde put theim into your myndes, as I truste he doth and better to by hys holy spirite: who blesse you and preserue you all. Written wyth a cole by your tender louing father, who in hys pore prayers forgetteth none of you all, nor your babes, nor your nources, nor your good husbandes, nor your good husbandes shrewde wyues, nor your fathers shrewde wyfe neither, nor our other frendes. And thus fare ye hartely well for lacke of paper. THOMAS MORE, knight."--Johnson's Hist. E. Lang., p. 42.

From More's Description of Richard III.--Probably written about 1520.

"Richarde the third sonne, of whom we nowe entreate, was in witte and courage egall with either of them, in bodye and prowesse farre vnder them bothe, little of stature, ill fetured of limmes, croke backed, his left shoulder much higher than his right, hard fauoured of visage, and such as is in states called warlye, in other menne otherwise, he was malicious, wrathfull, enuious, and from afore his birth euer frowarde. Hee was close and secrete, a deep dissimuler, lowlye of counteynaunce, arrogant of heart--dispitious and cruell, not for euill will alway, but after for ambicion, and either for the suretie and encrease of his estate. Frende and foo was muche what indifferent, where his aduauntage grew, he spared no mans deathe, whose life withstoode his purpose. He slew with his owne handes king Henry the sixt, being prisoner in the Tower.

From his description of Fortune, written about the year 1500.

"Fortune is stately, solemne, prowde, and hye: And rychesse geueth, to haue seruyce therefore. The nedy begger catcheth an half peny: Some manne a thousaude pounde, some lesse some more. But for all that she kepeth euer in store, From euery manne some parcell of his wyll, That he may pray therefore and serve her styll. Some manne hath good, but chyldren hath he none. Some manne hath both, but he can get none health. Some hath al thre, but vp to honours trone, Can he not crepe, by no maner of stelth. To some she sendeth chyldren, ryches, welthe, Honour, woorshyp, and reuerence all hys lyfe: But yet she pyncheth hym with a shrewde wife." SIR THOMAS MORE.

# 5. ENGLISH OF THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY

Example for the reign of Henry VII, who was crowned on Bosworth field, 1485, and who died in 1509.

"Wherefor and forasmoche as we haue sent for our derrest wif, and for our derrest moder, to come unto us, and that we wold have your advis and counsail also in soche matters as we haue to doo for the subduying of the rebelles, we praie you, that, yeving your due attendaunce vppon our said derrest wif and lady moder, ye come with thaym unto us; not failing herof as ye purpose to doo us plaisir. Yeven undre our signett, at our Castell of Kenelworth, the xiii daie of Maye."--HENRY VII: Letter to the Earl of Ormond: Bucke's Classical Gram., p. 147.

Example for the short reign of Richard III,--from 1485 to 1483.

"Right reverend fader in God, right trusty and right wel-beloved, we grete yow wele, and wol and charge you that under oure greate seale, being in your warde, ye do make in all haist our lettres of proclamation severally to be directed unto the shirrefs of everie countie within this oure royaume."--RICHARD III: Letter to his Chancellor.

Reign of Edward IV,--from 1483 to 1461.--Example written in 1463.

"Forasmoche as we by divers meanes bene credebly enformed and undarstand for certyne, that owr greate adversary Henry, naminge hym selfe kynge of England, by the maliceous counseyle and exitacion of Margaret his wife, namynge hir selfe queane of England, have conspired," &c.--EDWARD IV: Letter of Privy Seal.

Examples for the reign of Henry VI,--from 1461 back to 1422.

"When Nembroth [i.e. Nimrod] by Might, for his own Glorye, made and incorporate the first Realme, and subduyd it to hymself by Tyrannye, he would not have it governyd by any other Rule or Lawe, but by his own Will; by which and for th' accomplishment thereof he made it. And therefor, though he had thus made a Realme, holy Scripture denyd to cal hym a Kyng, Quia Rex dicitur a Regendo; Whych thyng he did not, but oppressyd the People by Myght."--SIR JOHN FORTESCUE.

Example from Lydgate, a poetical Monk, who died in 1440.

"Our life here short of wit the great dulnes The heuy soule troubled with trauayle, And of memorye the glasyng brotelnes, Drede and vncunning haue made a strong batail With werines my spirite to assayle, And with their subtil creping in most queint Hath made my spirit in makyng for to feint." JOHN LYDGATE: Fall of Princes, Book III, Prol.

Example for the reign of Henry V,--from 1422 back to 1413.

"I wolle that the Duc of Orliance be kept stille withyn the Castil of Pontefret, with owte goyng to Robertis place, or to any other disport, it is better he lak his disport then we were disceyved. Of all the remanant dothe as ye thenketh."--Letter of HENRY V.

Example for the reign of Henry IV,--from 1413 back to 1400.

"Right heigh and myghty Prynce, my goode and gracious Lorde,-- I recommaund me to you as lowly as I kan or may with all my pouer hert, desiryng to hier goode and gracious tydynges of your worshipful astate and welfare."--LORD GREY: Letter to the Prince of Wales: Bucke's Classical Gram., p. 145.

# 6. ENGLISH OF THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY

Reign of Richard II, 1400 back to 1377.--Example written in 1391. "Lytel Lowys my sonne, I perceve well by certaine evidences thyne abylyte to lerne scyences, touching nombres and proporcions, and also well consydre I thy besye prayer in especyal to lerne the tretyse of the astrolabye. Than for as moche as a philosopher saithe, he wrapeth hym in his frende, that condiscendeth to the ryghtfull prayers of his frende: therefore I have given the a sufficient astrolabye for oure orizont, compowned after the latitude of Oxenforde: vpon the whiche by meditacion of this lytell tretise, I purpose to teche the a certame nombre of conclusions, pertainynge to this same instrument."--GEOFFREY CHAUCER: Of the Astrolabe.

Example written about 1385--to be compared with that of 1555, on p. 87.

"And thus this companie of muses iblamed casten wrothly the chere dounward to the yerth, and shewing by rednesse their shame, thei passeden sorowfully the thresholde. And I of whom the sight plounged in teres was darked, so that I ne might not know what that woman was, of so Imperial aucthoritie, I woxe all abashed and stonied, and cast my sight doune to the yerth, and began still for to abide what she would doen afterward."--CHAUCER: Version from Boethius: Johnson's Hist. of E. L., p. 29.

Poetical Example--probably written before 1380.

"O Socrates, thou stedfast champion; She ne might nevir be thy turmentour, Thou nevir dreddist her oppression, Ne in her chere foundin thou no favour, Thou knewe wele the disceipt of her colour, And that her moste worship is for to lie, I knowe her eke a false dissimulour, For finally Fortune I doe defie."--CHAUCER.

Reign of Edward III, 1377 to 1327.--Example written about 1360.

"And eke full ofte a littell skare Vpon a banke, er men be ware, Let in the streme, whiche with gret peine, If any man it shall restreine. Where lawe failleth, errour groweth; He is not wise, who that ne troweth."--SIR

JOHN GOWER.

Example from Mandeville, the English traveller-written in 1356.

"And this sterre that is toward the Northe, that wee clepen the lode sterre, ne apperethe not to hem. For whiche cause, men may wel perceyve, that the lond and the see ben of rownde schapp and forme. For the partie of the firmament schewethe in o contree, that schewethe not in another contree. And men may well preven be experience and sotyle compassement of wytt, that zif a man fond passages be schippes, that wolde go to serchen the world, men mighte go be schippe all aboute the world, and aboven and benethen. The whiche thing I prove thus, aftre that I have seyn. \* \* \* Be the whiche I seye zou certeynly, that men may envirowne alle the erthe of alle the world, as wel undre as aboven, and turnen azen to his contree, that hadde companye and schippynge and conduyt: and alle weyes he scholde fynde men, londes, and yles, als wel as in this contree."--SIR JOHN MANDEVILLE; Johnson's Hist. of E. L., p. 26.

Example from Rob. Langland's "Vision of Pierce Ploughman," 1350.

"In the somer season, When hot was the Sun, I shope me into shroubs, As I a shepe were; In habit as an harmet, Vnholy of werkes, Went wyde in this world Wonders to heare."

Description of a Ship-referred to the reign of Edward II: 1327-1307.

"Such ne saw they never none, For it was so gay begone, Every nayle with gold ygrave, Of pure gold was his sklave, Her mast was of ivory, Of samyte her sayle wytly, Her robes all of whyte sylk, As whyte as ever was ony mylke. The noble ship was without With clothes of gold spread about And her loft and her wyndlace All of gold depaynted was." ANONYMOUS: Bucke's Gram., p. 143.

From an Elegy on Edward I, who reigned till 1307 from 1272.

"Thah mi tonge were made of stel, Ant min herte yzote of bras, The goodness myht y never telle, That with kyng Edward was: Kyng, as thou art cleped conquerour, In uch battaille thou hadest prys; God bringe thi soule to the honour, That ever wes ant ever ys. Now is Edward of Carnavan Kyng of Engelond al aplyght; God lete him never be worse man Then his fader, ne lasse myht, To holden his pore men to ryht, Ant understonde good counsail, Al Engelond for to wysse and dyht; Of gode knyhtes darh him nout fail." ANON.: Percy's Reliques, Vol. ii, p. 10.

# 7. ENGLISH OF THE THIRTEENTH CENTURY

Reign of Henry III, 1272 to 1216.--Example from an old ballad entitled Richard of Almaigne; which Percy says was "made by one of the adherents of Simon de Montfort, earl of Leicester, soon after the battle of Lewes, which was fought, May 14, 1264."--Percy's Reliques, Vol. ii.

"Sitteth alle stille, and herkneth to me; The kyng of Almaigne, bi mi leaute, Thritti thousent pound askede he For te make the pees in the countre, Ant so he dude more. Richard, thah thou be ever trichard, Trichten shalt thou never more."

In the following examples, I substitute Roman letters for the Saxon. At this period, we find the characters mixed. The style here is that which Johnson calls "a kind of intermediate diction, neither Saxon nor English."

Of these historical rhymes, by Robert of Gloucester, the Doctor gives us more than two hundred lines; but he dates them no further than to say, that the author "is placed by the criticks in the thirteenth century."--Hist. of Eng. Lang., p. 24.

"Alfred thys noble man, as in the ger of grace he nom Eygte hondred and syxty and tuelue the kyndom. Arst he adde at Rome ybe, and, vor ys grete wysdom, The pope Leo hym blessede, tho he thuder com, And the kynges croune of hys lond, that in this lond gut ys: And he led hym to be kyng, ar he kyng were y wys. An he was kyng of Engelond, of alle that ther come, That vorst thus ylad was of the pope of Rome, An suththe other after hym of the erchebyssopes echon."

"Clere he was god ynou, and gut, as me telleth me, He was more than ten ger old, ar he couthe ys abece. Ac ys gode moder ofte smale gyftes hym tok, Vor to byleue other pie, and loky on ys boke. So that by por clergye ys rygt lawes he wonde, That neuere er nere y mad to gouerny ys lond." ROBERT OF GLOUCESTER: Johnson's Hist. of E. L., p. 25.

Reign of John, 1216 back to 1199.--Subject of Christ's Crucifixion.

"I syke when y singe for sorewe that y se When y with wypinge bihold upon the tre, Ant se Jhesu the suete ys hert blod for-lete For the love of me; Ys woundes waxen wete, thei wepen, still and mete, Marie reweth me." ANON.: Bucke's Gram., p. 142.

# 8. ENGLISH, OR ANGLO-SAXON, OF THE TWELFTH CENTURY

Reign of Richard I, 1199 back to 1189.--Owl and Nightingale.

"Ich was in one sumere dale, In one snive digele pale, I herde ich hold grete tale, An hule and one nightingale. That plait was stif I stare and strong, Sum wile softe I lud among. An other again other sval I let that wole mod ut al. I either seide of otheres custe, That alere worste that hi wuste I hure and I hure of others songe Hi hold plaidung futhe stronge." ANON.: Bucke's Gram., p. 142.

Reign of Henry II, 1189 back to 1154.--Example dated 1180.

"And of alle than folke The wuneden ther on folde, Wes thisses landes folke Leodene hendest itald; And alswa the wimmen Wunliche on heowen." GODRIC: Bucke's Gram., p. 141.

Example from the Saxon Chronicle, written about 1160.

"Micel hadde Henri king gadered gold & syluer, and na god ne dide me for his saule thar of. Tha the king Stephne to Engla-land com, tha macod he his gadering set Oxene-ford, & thar he nam the biscop Roger of Seres-beri, and Alexander biscop of Lincoln, & te Canceler Roger hife neues, & dide aelle in prisun, til hi jafen up here castles. Tha the suikes undergaeton that he milde man was & softe & god, & na justise ne dide; tha diden hi alle wunder." See Johnson's Hist. of the Eng. Language, p. 22.

Reign of Stephen, 1154 to 1135.--Example written about this time.

"Fur in see bi west Spaygne. Is a lond ihone Cokaygne. There nis lond under heuenriche. Of wel of godnis hit iliche. Thoy paradis be miri and briyt. Cokaygne is of fairer siyt. What is ther in paradis. Bot grasse and flure and greneris. Thoy ther be ioi and gret dute. Ther nis met bot anlic frute. Ther nis halle bure no bench. Bot watir manis thurst to quench." ANON.: Johnson's Hist. Eng. Lang., p. 23.

Reign of Henry I, 1135 to 1100.--Part of an Anglo-Saxon Hymn.

"Heuene & erthe & all that is, Biloken is on his honde. He deth al that his wille is, On sea and ec on londe.

He is orde albuten orde. And ende albuten ende. He one is eure on eche stede, Wende wer thu wende.

He is buuen us and binethen, Biuoren and ec bihind. Se man that Godes wille deth, He mai hine aihwar uinde.

Eche rune he iherth, And wot eche dede. He durh sighth eches ithanc, Wai hwat sel us to rede.

Se man neure nele don god, Ne neure god lif leden, Er deth & dom come to his dure, He mai him sore adreden.

Hunger & thurst, hete & chele, Ecthe and all unhelthe, Durh deth com on this midelard, And other uniselthe.

Ne mai non herte hit ithenche, Ne no tunge telle, Hu muchele pinum and hu uele, Bieth inne helle.

Louie God mid ure hierte, And mid all ure mihte, And ure emcristene swo us self, Swo us lereth drihte." ANON.: Johnson's Hist. Eng. Lang., p. 21.

# 9. ANGLO-SAXON OF THE ELEVENTH CENTURY, COMPARED WITH ENGLISH

Saxon,--11th Century.[50] LUCE, CAP. I.

" On Herodes dagum Iudea cynincges, was sum sacred on naman Zacharias, of Abian tune: and his wif was of Aarones dohtrum, and hyre nama waas Elizabeth.

Sothlice hig waron butu rihtwise beforan Gode, gangende on eallum his bebodum and rihtwisnessum, butan wrohte.

And hig nafdon nan bearn, fortham the Elizabeth was unberende; and hy on hyra dagum butu forth-eodun.

Sothlice was geworden tha Zacharias hys sacerdhades breac on his gewrixles endebyrdnesse beforan Gode,

Efter gewunan thas sacerdhades hlotes, he eode that he his offrunge sette, tha he on Godes tempel eode.

Eall werod thas folces was ute gebiddende on thare offrunge timan.

Tha atywde him Drihtnes engel standende on thas weofodes swithran healfe.

Tha weard Zacharias gedrefed that geseonde, and him ege onhreas.

Tha cwath se engel him to, Ne ondrad thu the Zacharias; fortham thin ben is gehyred, and thin wif Elizabeth the sunu centh, and thu nemst hys naman Johannes."--Saxon Gospels.

"In the dayes of Eroude kyng of Judee ther was a prest Zacarye by name, of the sort of Abia: and his wyf was of the doughtris of Aaron, and hir name was Elizabeth.

And bothe weren juste bifore God, goynge in alle the maundementis and justifyingis of the Lord, withouten playnt.

And thei hadden no child, for Elizabeth was bareyn; and bothe weren of greet age in her dayes.

And it befel that whanne Zacarye schould do the office of presthod in the ordir of his course to fore God,

Aftir the custom of the presthood, he wente forth by lot, and entride into the temple to encensen.

And al the multitude of the puple was without forth and preyede in the our of encensying.

And an aungel of the Lord apperide to him, and stood on the right half of the auter of encense. 12. And Zacarye seyinge was afrayed, and drede fel upon him.

And the aungel sayde to him, Zacarye, drede thou not; for thy preier is herd, and Elizabeth thi wif schal bere to thee a sone, and his name schal be clepid Jon."

Wickliffe's Bible, 1380.

English.--17th Century.

LUKE, CHAP. I.

" There was in the days of Herod the king of Judea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the course of Abia: and his wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elisabeth.

And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord, blameless.

And they had no child, because that Elisabeth was barren; and they both were now well stricken in years.

And it came to pass, that while he executed the priest's office before God in the order of his course,

According to the custom of the priest's office, his lot was to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord.

And the whole multitude of the people were praying without at the time of incense.

And there appeared unto him an angel of the Lord, standing on the right side of the altar of incense.

And when Zacharias saw him, he was troubled, and fear fell upon him.

But the angel said unto him, Fear not, Zacharias; for thy prayer is heard, and thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shall call his name John."

Common Bible, 1610.

See Dr. Johnson's History of the English Language, in his Quarto Dictionary.

# 10. ANGLO-SAXON IN THE TIME OF KING ALFRED

Alfred the Great, who was the youngest son of Ethelwolf, king of the West Saxons, succeeded to the crown on the death of his brother Ethelred, in the year 871, being then twenty-two years old. He had scarcely time to attend the funeral of his brother, before he was called to the field to defend his country against the Danes. After a reign of more than twenty-eight years, rendered singularly glorious by great achievements under difficult circumstances, he died universally lamented, on the 28th of October, A. D. 900. By this prince the university of Oxford was founded, and provided with able teachers from the continent. His own great proficiency in learning, and his earnest efforts for its promotion, form a striking contrast with the ignorance which prevailed before. "In the ninth century, throughout the whole kingdom of the West Saxons, no man could be found who was scholar enough to instruct the young king Alfred, then a child, even in the first elements of reading: so that he was in his twelfth year before he could name the letters of the alphabet. When that renowned prince ascended the throne, he made it his study to draw his people out of the sloth and stupidity in which they lay; and became, as much by his own example as by the encouragement he gave to learned men, the great restorer of arts in his dominions."--Life of Bacon.

# Conclusion

The language of eulogy must often be taken with some abatement: it does not usually present things in their due proportions. How far the foregoing quotation is true, I will not pretend to say; but what is called "the revival of learning," must not be supposed to have begun at so early a period as that of Alfred. The following is a brief specimen of the language in which that great man wrote; but, printed in Saxon characters, it would appear still less like English.

"On thare tide the Gotan of Siththiu magthe with Romana rice gewin upahofon. and mith heora cyningum. Radgota and Eallerica waron hatne. Romane burig abracon. and eall Italia rice that is betwux tham muntum and Sicilia tham ealonde in anwald gerehton. and tha agter tham foresprecenan cyningum Theodric feng to tham ilcan rice se Theodric was Amulinga. he wass Cristen. theah he on tham Arrianiscan gedwolan durhwunode. He gehet Romanum his freondscype. swa that hi mostan heora ealdrichta wyrthe beon."--KING ALFRED: Johnson's Hist. of E. L., 4to Dict., p. 17.

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