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PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

(Words or letters inserted in square brackets are intended as a guide to the pronunciation of the words preceding.)

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, — It is possible at times for one who has to address an audience upon a subject selected either for him or by himself to approach his task with a degree of enthusiasm that makes him somewhat impatient of prefatory matters: he longs to rush at once *in media res*. Such is my case this evening. As a Devonshire man, and one who has for many years devoted to philological pursuits such scanty scraps of leisure as could be secured amid the duties and cares or an arduous profession, I have hoped to interest my hearers in a topic that blends and intertwines the fascinations of Devon and Philology—the Devonshire Dialect as illustrating and illustrated by other dialects and languages. And though to the splendid beacon-light which here in the West of England has been kindled and maintained by Members of this Association and former Presidents it is but a *yaffle o' ude* [*laugh* and Fr. *eu* nearly] that I am able to contribute, and that too without any attempt at eloquence, any endeavour to charm the ear with

periods polished and rotund, I yet claim and demand that you shall share my enthusiasm in studying the language of our forefathers. For, to judge from the analogy of the northern part of the island, it was not only the peasantry in former days who spoke the special dialect of our county, but more or less it was used by all classes. In our own time indeed even the peasantry are forgetting the local mode of speech; but if in Scotland of old learned clergymen such as William Lauder and Barbour, bishops of noble family like Gawain Douglas, heralds like Sir David Lindesay, Lyon King of Armes, wrote in "braid Scots," which we know our Scottish king James I. familiarly understood, it is at least probable in a very high degree that our ancestors, if they had bequeathed to us a

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local literature for early times, would have left it arrayed in some such linguistic cotume as the *Exmoor Scolding and Courtship*, Mrs. Gwatkin's *Devonshire Dialogues*, or Nathan Hogg's *Poems*.

Now when we read these little volumes, but especially the clever and humorous productions of the late Mr. Baird, the peculiarity that most forcibly arrests our attention is perhaps the PRONUNCIATION, so widely different from that which is current in good modern society throughout the island. Let us therefore deal first with Pronunciation. And giving precedence to the vowels, we at once notice that notwithstanding our familiarly speaking of the "broad" Devonshire Dialect, changes that have been made—corruptions, if you please—have really been in the direction, not of broadening, but of narrowing the sounds.

Take *vorrid* for example (=forward). The original sound of this word I take to have been *foreward* [store, hard]. Here the *ward*, which is current English has undergone a slight narrowing [cord], and in German has become *wärts* [care], has in Devonshire Dialect thinned off into *wid*, from which finally the *w* has disappeared.

Take the verb *would*, the past tense of *will*. This is one of the Mixed Verbs in which besides change of vowel as in the Strong Verbs the Weak Termination *d* was also added, and *wolde* [Ger. *wollte*], or with the *u* sound [bulldog], as is the usual modern sound, was the result. That the vowel was short as in the German *wollte* we know from

the *Ormulum* to have been the fact for at least six centuries and a half: it was not long as in *told, sold*, from *tell* and *sell*. But in the Devonshire Dialect this *wolde*, besides losing the final vowel and the *l*, has, like the second syllable of *forward*, dwindled away to *wid*; nay, it becomes thinner still sometimes—*weed*, made by Nathan Hogg to rhyme with the participle *zeed*.

In like manner the O.Fr. *juste* [dzh, now zh] has given us *just* [dzh, rust] but is the Dev. Dial, *jist*; *nonsense* is *nonsins*; *can, kin*; *must, miss*; *from, vrim*; *that, thit*; *whoever, uiver*; *upon, apin*; *yes, yiss* or *iss*; *curious, kuryiss* [Fr. *queue* nearly]; *purchase*, the second syllable of which was the O.Fr. *chacer* [tsh], now *chasser*, is *purchis*. It is unnecessary to multiply examples, but it is right to add that *zich* for *such* is not one. This word preserves the true ancient vowel of the AS. and E.E. *swilc*, though every other element of the word has been modified or thrown away.

Another thin sound that is very frequent in the Devonshire

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Dialect is *u* as in *butes* and *shuz*. The true Devonshire sound of this vowel seems to me to be more nearly the French *eu* than *u*. Prince L. L. Bonaparte considers it to lie between the two. Mr. A. J. Ellis affirms that he has heard both sounds in different parts of Devonshire, and as he possesses wonderful accuracy of ear, I suspect he is right, though his observation is not confirmed by my own. Well, this sound in a large number of words is substituted for the fuller *oo* [Fr. *ou*, Ital. and Ger. *u*]. Thus, to quote a few examples only, the A.S. *bóc* (book), *dó* (do), *móna* (moon), *nón* (noon), *gós, lócian* (look), *eów* (you), which I believe to have been sounded as in modern English, except that all of them had a long vowel, have become in Devonshire *buk, du, mune, nune, guse, luk, yu*; the O.N. *tók* [cloke], which is our *took*, has become *tuk*; the Fr. *prouver, mouvoir, coussin*, have become *pruve, muve, cushin*. In words derived from earlier French forms with *u* such as *user, cruel, flûte, curieux*, the vowel in Devonshire in all probability has remained almost unchanged, as in *yuz, cruel, vlut, curyiss*; for it was at a very early period that the French changed the full Italian *u*, with which these words were doubtless sounded in the Latin originals, into the thin *u* which is now so familiar.

But it may be urged that there is certainly one large class of words in which the Devonshire Dialect gives a broader sound, as in *taich, aich, clain, baist, ait yer mait, laive, pursaive, &c.* True these are broader sounds, that is, you have to open your mouth wider in sounding them than *teach, each, eat your meat*, and so on; but it is these latter forms which are the corruptions, though fashion has set her seal upon them, and Devonshire has preserved the genuine older pronunciation. If I may be pardoned for alluding to my own investigations, I may claim to have proved this—and the proof is admitted by some who were very unwilling to accept it—in my work on *Early English Pronunciation*. It is there shown that though in Chaucer and other early English poets words may be spelt with the same termination, they may yet be sounded differently, just as even now *here* and *there* end in the same three letters, but the sound is not the same. In those poets we find *queene, kene, grene, bene* (part.), *sene* (part.), *wene, bitwene, &c.*, rhyme together, all of these being spelt with *een* in modern English, while *lene, mene* (noun and verb), *bene* (noun), *clene, &c.*, all of which we now spell with *ea*, also rhyme together, but as a rule refuse to rhyme with the former class. So it is with words in *eke*: *cheke, leke, seke, biseke* (now *beseech*), *weke* (noun), *meke*, are one class yielding

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a large number of rhymes, while *speke, breke, wreke* form a second; and these latter, now spelt with *ea*, retain in Devonshire their former sound, as indeed *breke* does universally. But I will not weary my hearers with further details on this point, or inflict on them the whole of my thin octavo just now.

In a few instances no doubt a vowel is broadened in the Devonshire Dialect. Thus *i* is made *ai* [Fr. *haïr*] in *oblaige, v(a)ine = fine, l(a)ive = life*; or *a* [fate] becomes *ai* as in *aight = eight*. And so the negative prefix *un*, which in earlier times was apparently sounded as in German, and as the short *u* is habitually sounded now in our midland and northern counties, is broadened in Devonshire into *on*, as in *onjist, ondu, onlike*; the change being precisely the same as seems to have taken place in the Friesic *onwillich* for *unwillich*, *onwaxen* for *unwaxen*, *onriucht* for *unriucht, &c.*, such forms being very common in that Low German dialect.

Still I contend that in the Devonshire Dialect vowels are much more frequently thinned than broadened. And this is nothing rare. To quote a few examples. The word for *mother* in Skt is *mâtri*, Zend *mâtâ*, Lat. *mater*, Grk. *ματηρ* in the dialect most widely spoken, but in Ionic and Attic Greek it was *μητηρ* [*may, tare*], which again in Modern Greek is attenuated into *meteer*. And uniformly in Modern Greek *η* which was *e* [there] is now *e* [here]. Again *star* is found in its true form apparently only in the oldest Skt., that of the Vedas, and in Zend, but has reverted to it in Modern English. In later Skt it has lost the initial sibilant, and become *târâ*. In Greek and Latin it prefixes an *a*, *αστηρ*, *astrum*, or, in Latin, takes the termination *-la*, *stella* for *ster-la*. But the root vowel is altered from *a* to the thinner *e* both in *αστηρ* [there] and *stella*, and so also in the Goth. *stairno* and Ger. *stern*, and is thinner still in the Germ. derivative *Gestirn*. The root of the Latin *simi-lis* (=same-like) is found in the Skt. *sama*, Engl. *same*. The not unfamiliar name *Aldis* appears in the eastern counties as *Aldus*, and is originally *Eald-hús*. And the locative case plur. in Skt. regularly ends in *-shu*, which in Greek is represented by *-σι*, the Skt. *naushú* for example being letter for letter the Greek *ναυσι*. And in a very large class of words in our language the change of *a* [father] into *e* [fate] has taken place, as *name* from A.S. *nama*, *take* from O.N. *taka*, *prepare* from Fr. *préparer*, *landgrave* from Ger. *Landgraf*, *parade* from Spanish *parada*, *volcano* from Ital. *volcano*, and so on.

In many cases (as in the Latin *similis*) the attenuation of

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the vowel is due to the addition of a syllable containing a thin vowel, and to the tendency then to assimilate the former vowel to the latter (the change which in German we call *umlaut*). Thus when *-kin* is added to *John*, the derivative is not *Johnkin*, but *Jenkin* or even *Jinkin*; and as when to *Angle*, which seems to be the earliest form of our national name, is added the termination *-isc*, the adjective so formed is not *Anglisc* or *Anglish*, but *English*, or, as it has been widely pronounced for several centuries, and is now almost universally sounded, *Inglisch*.- To add yet two examples, *firkin* stands for *fourth-kin*, as being the fourth part of a barrel or chaldron, and *kilder-kin* (of which I

cannot accept Wedgwood and Skeat's etymology) is really a diminutive of *cauldron* or *chaldron*, these being only different forms of the same word, which is derived from the Latin *caldarium* with an augmentative ending.

How the Devonshire Dialect tolerates the hiatus that occurs when the shortened form of the indefinite article is used before a vowel, as *a egg*, *a ail*, (i.e. *an eel*), *a angel*, *a evil eye*, it does not seem easy to explain; but one may remark that in Spanish and Italian, which differ from French in this particular, the same hiatus is permitted: as in Spanish *una espada*, *una aguja*; in Italian *una armata*, *una ala*.

But one phenomenon occurs in the Devonshire Dialect, as also in that of Wiltshire and Sussex, and probably other southern counties, which must not be lost sight of. It is the division of a long vowel so as to form two syllables; as in *oür*, *häre*, *boäns*, *intiër*, *myell*. In the *Exmoor Courtship* we find *me-al*, *me-an*, *me-at*. In *Mucksy Lane*, one of Nathan Hogg's "Po-ams," we have the distich:

"Wull, now I think I shant be wrong

Ta zay et ez a *myell* long."

And again:

"Tha last now lives pin *ower* heel."

Why this is of interest is that the same division of a long vowel occurs every now and then in Chaucer. For example:

"Of *fiers* Mars to don his sacrificise";

"Ne how that *lych* waké was yholde."

And in later poets too at times; as:

"And what his father fifty *years* told,"

which occurs in Tourneur's *Revenger's Tragedy*. And in Shakspeare's *Tempest*, Prospero says to his daughter Miranda—

"Twelve *ye-ar* since, Miranda, twelve year since,

Thy father was the duke of Milan,"

it being impossible to scan the former of these lines except by dividing the first "year" into two syllables. So also in the *Two Gentlemen of Verona*—

"But qualify *the fire's* extreme rage."

In Marlowe's *Edward the Second*, *aye* must be made two syllables to scan the line—

"*Aye*, if words will serve, if not, I must;"

and *hands* in each of the consecutive lines,

"EDW. Lay *ha-and*s on that traitor Mortimer!

E. MORT. Lay *ha-and*s on that traitor Gaveston!"

It is to a similar division that we owe the curious pronunciation of the first numeral *one* as *wun*, and in Devonshire also *oats* is sounded *wuts*. The change is this: the A.S. *án* [*lawn*] having closed into *one* [Fr. *aumône*], and then assuming the close English *o* [*bone*], the sound which the word still retains in the three compounds *alone*, *atone*, and *only*, then dividing, like Nathan Hogg's *bo-an*, becomes *o-on*, and so *wun*.

Lastly as to vowels, *e* sometimes assumes a kindred semi-vowel to precede it, while *u* absorbs its preceding semivowel. Thus *here* becomes *jur*; *hearing*, *yurring*; *evening*, *yevlin*; *heathfield*, *yeffel*. Similar to this is the change of *i* [*marine*] in Skt. into the semivowel in composition when another vowel follows, as when *iti* + *âha* becomes *ityâha* [Ger. *Ja*]. Analogous to the words in which an initial *w* is absorbed by an *u* [*too*] following, as *ude* for *wood*, *umman* for *woman*, are numerous words in Icelandic. Thus *ulfr* (where the *r* is only the nom. masculine termination) is the Gothic *wulfs*, A.S. *wulf* Engl. *wolf* &c. The verbs *varða*, which is the A.S. *wadan*, Engl. *wade*, and *vefa*, which is the A.S. *wefan*, Engl. *weave*, have as their past tenses first per. plur. *óðum* [*loathe*] and *ófum* [*over*] respectively; and *vella* [*wedlock*] and *verða* in like manner, which are the German *wallen* and *werden*, make *ullum* and *urðum*; the initial *w*, which in Modern Icelandic is sounded like our *v*, but was probably our *w* at an earlier stage of the language, has disappeared.

Next to refer briefly to the aspirate. This, as everybody knows, has almost vanished from French, Italian, and Romansch, and is quite unknown in Spain, Portugal, and Greece. The true Devonian follows these excellent precedents to a great extent, very commonly omitting the *h* where it ought to be sounded, while elsewhere it inserts it when unauthorized for the sake of emphasis. It is on the distinguished

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authority of Mr. Baird that I affirm, that if a friend of yours seems to *hinterveer* way you, and *tu hack* in a manner that you deem *honjist*, it is perfectly *haup'n an haisy* to you to administer a gentle and dignified rebuke by calling him a *hass* /

In the consonants we find a tendency to prefer the sonant or flat to the surd or sharp, especially in the three classes of words represented by *vlower* for *flower*, *zyder* for *cider*, and *zhure* for *sure*. This preference for the sonant letter seems to have been formerly characteristic of all the Southern dialects. It is not so with the sibilants—to judge from the spelling—in Robert of Gloucester's *Chronicle*, written about the close of the thirteenth century; but such forms as *vor*, *byvore*, *vayr*, *vorst* (=first), *vast* (=fast), *lyve* (=life), *wyve* (=wife), *vour*, *vourty*, &c., are found on every page. In the *Ayenbite of Inwyt*, written in the Kentish dialect in the fourteenth century, the flat sibilants also are as common as in the West of England, though Dr. Morris states that "the modern Kentish vernacular has dropped this peculiarity." But it is curious to observe that the substitution of *v* for *f* characterizes one of the old Greek dialects—the Macedonian. The Greek β [veeta] is almost identical with our *v*; and in the names Βιλιππος for Φιλιππος, and Βερνικη (the name of Herod Agrippa's queen, as given in Acts xxv.) for Φερηνικη, we have just the same phenomenon as is exhibited in the Devonshire *vour* and *vive* for *four* and *five*.

The guttural or gutturals formerly existing in English, and still familiar in German, Scotch, Welsh, Spanish, Modern Greek, &c., have been variously dealt with in Devonshire as in other parts of the island. As in *laughter*, AS. *hleahtor*, Pl. Du. *lach*, Ger. *Lache* and *Gelächter*, the now recognised pronunciation substitutes an *f* for the guttural; so in Devonshire we have *auf* for *ought*, and *sife* for *sigh*. But in many instances for the guttural, and in one word (*after*) for *f*, an *r* is substituted; of course pronounced with well reverted tongue—*arter*, *darter*, *ort* (*aught*), *nort*, *thort*, *cort*, "*wit bort ez wit tort*," and so on. I have only noticed one instance of an *r* simply intrusive; namely, *wisterd* for *worsted*. For *worsted*, according to both Wedgwood and Skeat, takes its name from the village *Worsted* (that is, *Worth-stead*), in Norfolk; and the

second syllable contains neither an *r* nor any sound that an *r* could replace. Of a simply intrusive *d* in conjunction with the kindred consonants there are several examples—*cornder*, *twirdlin*, *purdlin uv a cat*, *quardlin* (i.e. quarrelling), and so on. Apparently also there is an intrusive *l* in *aulburn*

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as an epithet of hair; but in fact the *l* is radical, the word being derived (as Dr. Murray will show in Part II. of his great *Dictionary*) from the Lat. *alburnus*; so that it means originally not golden, but whitish.

But one instance of the addition of a consonant must not be passed over. It is found in the phrase "vor enny keendest theng" (*Exmoor Courtship*). This *keendest*, which has assumed an illicit final *t* (such as we find in *amidst*, *amongst*, *whilst*), was in its earlier form *kynnes*, the genitive of *kin*; i.e. *kind* or *sort*. The literal meaning of "vor enny keendest theng" is therefore "for a thing of any kind." Many such phrases are to be found in our Early English writers, the word *kin* being spelt either with a *y* (the earliest form), or a *u*, or an *i*, and not infrequently the adjective preceding was also in the genitive to agree with its noun. Thus in *Layamon* we have "a summes kinnes wisen;" that is, "in a fashion of some kind," or, as we should now say, "in some kind of fashion;" "nones kunnes assaylyng" (*Castle of Love*)—"assault of no kind," or, in the modern idiom, "no kind of assault."*

More common however than either the addition or the insertion of consonants is their omission. Thus *v* is dropped in *zar* for *serve*, *l* in *unny* for *only*; thus also *r* is dropped in *foce*, *scace*, *heace* (=hearse), *pass'n*, *weth a wile*, *Thesday* and *cus*, [Fr. *curieux*, nearly] as standing both for *course* and *coarse*, the two words being confounded. The omission of *r* in all these words is before the sharp sibilant, and differs in that particular from the use in the Langue d' Oc of *nost' home* for *notre homme*, that is, *mon mari*; and from such forms in the dialect of Gascony, as *aute* for *autre*, *rénde* for *rendre*, *live* for *livre*, *poude* for *potere*, late Latin for *posse*. But in *hoce* (=hoarse) it is current English that is corrupt, as shown by A.S. *hás* [*hawl*], O.N. *háss* [Ital. *au*], O.H.G. *heis*, Swed. *hes*, Da. *hæs* [*face*], Dutch, *heesch*. Similarly, where there is apparently a *b* lost in *rammle* for

ramble, as in various English dialects, the *b* does not originally belong to the word, but is, as Prof. Skeat shows, a euphonic insertion like the β in $\alpha\mu\beta\rho\sigma\sigma$. † *Ramble* is in fact derived from *roam* by

* This idiom is pretty fully discussed in a note in my edition of the *Castle of Love*, on 1. 855.

† It is now just thirty years—so the years fly away—since I wrote a paper for the Philological Society, explanatory of such insertions, to show how there is almost a physiological necessity for them. Dr. Richard Morris has justly remarked that "the seat of euphony is in the vocal, not in the acoustic organs;" and it requires but little study of these vocal organs to discover that the breath is stopped from passing through the nose by the elevation of the *velum palati* in sounding all letters, both vowels and consonants, except only the three nasal liquids *m*, *ng*, *n*, which differ only in this particular from *b*, *g* (hard), and *d*. If therefore we are passing from one of these consonants to another, as in going from *m* to *l* or from *n* to *r*, among other changes we have to close the passage through the nostrils. This at once changes *m* into *b*, and when for *rammle* we say *ramble*, we have in reality effected the transition from *m* to *l* more easily when we have made it in two steps instead of one. So $\alpha\nu\text{-}\rho\sigma$ becomes $\alpha\nu\delta\rho\sigma$, and the Fr. *épin* (for *épine*) with the diminutive *-le* added becomes *épingle*.

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the addition of an *l*, which conveys at once a diminutive and a frequentative sense—to keep on roaming a little. The same termination is found in *sprinkle* from A.S. *sprencan*, *justle* or *jostle* from *joust*, *trample* from the Germ. and Platt-Deutsch *trampen*, *hustle* from the Old Dutch *husten*, *gruntle* (a word found in Villiers's *Rehearsal*) from *grunt*. And as to the intrusive *b* we find it also in *mumble* from *mum*, *shambles* from A.S. *scamel* = stool, and in *tremble*, Fr. *trembler* from late Latin *tremulare*.

The Devonshire Dialect drops a *t* occasionally, as in *ack*, *fack*, *nex*, *bess*, *ackshly*, *ginelvoks*, *kurrek*; but much more frequently a *d*, as in *behine*, *vine* (=find), *roun'*,

poun', han', lan', harly, hannel, &c. Just so the Fr. pronoun *en* had in early times a final *t*, *ent*, which *t* represents the *d* of the Latin *inde*, from which the word is derived.

Numerous other instances of euphonic change are furnished by our native dialect—*lebn, zebn, lebner* for *eleven, seven, levener* (= luncheon), *bumbye* for *bye and bye*, *hapmy* for *halfpenny*, *dree happerd a nits* for *three ha'p'orth of nuts*, *drippy bit* for *threepenny bit*, *wiss'n* for *wouldst not*, *kiss bring* for *canst brin*—but time will not admit of my dwelling on these. But the forms *idd'n* for *is not*, and *wadd'n* for *was not* must be alluded to as closely analogous to certain changes of letter in Greek, where Homer, Pindar, and Herodotus give us *οδμη, κεκαδμενον, and ιδμεν* for *οσμη, κεκασμενον, and ισμεν*; only here it is the *δ* that is radical, and the change has been in the other direction.

There is, however, one curious metathesis that must detain us a little longer. It is where *r* changes places with an adjacent vowel. Examples are *urch, urd, curst, burches* for *rich, red, crust, breeches*; *firnt, pirnt, pirnce* for *front, print, prince*; *urgment* for *regiment*; *burd and cheese*; *burmstoan, purty, apurn, girt* (i.e. great), *purtect, pursayve, purmote*; and so on. But in Greek in like manner we have side by side *κρατερος, θρασος* and *θρασος, ημβροτον* (with the euphonic *β*) and *ημαρτον, κραδια* and *καρδια*. Nor is it very easy to determine which is the older form. Take the last pair. The form *καρδια* is supported by the Latin *cor, cordis*, Goth. *hairto*, O.H.G. *herza*, A.S. *heorte*, Icel. *hjarta*,

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Pl. Du. *kart*, Engl. *heart*. But the Skt. is *hrid*, and in Old Irish Dr. Whiteley Stokes gives us the two forms *cride* and *cradion*. One thing only is clear, that not Devonians alone, but the Indo-European races generally (for I believe *r* is found in all Indo-European alphabets), have found it somewhat easy to mix up this letter with its vowel. But it is specially notable that in Sanskrit, and in Bengali also, this transposition is fully recognised. In that part of Sanskrit grammar which treats of *Sandhi* (that is, Euphonic Combination) rules are given on the subject. I will not trouble you with the rules, but here are a few examples. *Ri*, to go, gives *richchhati*, he goes, but *archchhat*, he went. *Kri*, to do or make, *jrî*, to grow old, give us the futures *kartâ*, he will do, and *jaritâ*, he

will grow old. *Kri*, to make, and *krî*, to scatter, both form the causal *kârayati*, he causes to make, or he causes to scatter. So *drish* forms a verbal adjective *darshanîyah*, *chrit chartyah*, *krît kîrtyah*, *vrish vrishyah* or *varshyah*. And *pitri*, father, *mâtri*, mother, *nri*, man, form the plurals *pitarah*, *mâtarah*, *narah*, or in the older form with *s*, *pitaras*, *mâtaras*, *naras*, identical with the Greek *πατερες. ματερες* (Æol.), *ανερες*. But the resemblance of the Devonshire Dialect to these Indian languages is all the more striking if the opinion is correct, which is held by modern philologists, that the phenomenon is to be ascribed to the peculiar sound of the Sanskrit *r* in this class of words. It was not, according to this view, the trilled dental *r*, as in *ride*, *rapid*, or the guttural *r*, as in French and the Northumbrian *burr*, but just the same *reverted r* as is so familiar in our county, the tongue being curled back towards the back of the palate, as in *their*, *lord*, *Dartmoor*.

But it is time to leave Pronunciation, though the subject is far from exhausted, and proceed to the Accidence of Devonian grammar.

Here turning first to the pronouns, *zum aumin*, especially that last syllable, present a considerable difficulty. My old friend, Mr. Elworthy, has it in his very competent hands, and *zoce* I am strongly tempted to leave it there, and yet may summon courage to deal with it *vurder aun*.

Now Nathan Hogg has left it on record that *wan awm com'd to ware I zot*. The history is interesting, but it is the form of expression *awm*, that needs one brief remark. It is of course equivalent to *of them*, but it does not stand for *of them*. The final *m* stands for *hem*, the dative plural of *he*, which came to be used indifferently as dative or accusative.

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And if we read—

"A vigger jump'd, ha zeed'n du't,

An naw'd'n"—

what is this *'n* that occurs twice? The question admits of a brief answer. It was originally a word of four letters, *hine* [*linnet*], the accus. masc. sing. of *he*, for which in ordinary

English the dative *him* is now substituted. This *hine* lost the final *e*, lost the aspirate, lost its first vowel (these two constituting the root in a modified form), and 'n alone remained, a fragment of the termination. This tempts one to a brief digression. We have one word in the language of five letters, of which, as some philologists have supposed, only one is radical—the word *drake*. The Latin *anas*, of which the stem is *anat*, claims kindred with *drake* as to the first letter *d* only; the *-rake*, Ger. *-rich*, as in *Täuberich*, indicates the male bird. So Latham and others have anatomized *drake*, not satisfactorily; but it remained for an ingenious Frenchman, Pellissier, to point out in a work on the French language a French noun, in which not a single letter of the root remains—the word *oncle*. But this is an absurd mistake. The word is derived from the Latin *avunculus*, itself a diminutive from *avus*. In *avunculus*, if the *v* was sounded like our *w*, its disappearance before the kindred *u* is just similar to the formation of our Devonshire *ude* and *umman* already discussed. If it was sounded like our *v*, we again find analogies in *head* (Devonshire *haid*) for Middle English *heved*, from A.S. *heafod*, and *lord* (Devonshire *loard*), from M.E. *loverd*, A.S. *hláford*. At all events the *v* slips out, and *aunculus* remains. Then the change that takes place is just the same as when *Claudius* assumed the form of *Clodius*, *plaustrum* that of *plostrum*, or when the Latin *cauda* became the Italian *coda*, and the Latin *causa*, the Italian *cosa*, and the French *chose*. And so when we compare the standard French of the present day with that which is still called the Langue d'Oc and spoken in the South of France, we find the dative of the article *au* is in Langue d'Oc *aou*, *gauche* is *gaoucho*, and so on. In fact the *o* in *oncle* is the root, all three letters of the root compressed into one.

Now it is familiarly known that a variety of terminations consisting of or beginning with vowels, that were in constant use in AS. (as in *steorr-a* star, *tung-e* tongue, *wud-u* wood, *lufi-an* to love), all, like *hine* which we have just dealt with, in M.E. became a simple *e*, and finally this also was lost at least in the spoken language, as in these very words, *star*,

tongue, wood, love. But in Devonshire we find one word, a demonstrative adjective, which to this day preserves the M.E. ending, the word *thicky*. This was in A.S. the def. art. followed by *ilca* for the mase, *ilce* [caper] for the fem. and neuter. Hence *thilke* [caper], which losing the *l* and thinning, as so commonly, the final vowel, becomes *thicky*. There is, we all know, existing by the side of this, another form in which the final vowel is abraded, *thic* (or *thek*, as it appears in the *Exmoor Courtship*).

In the adjectives it is notable that we have a few double comparatives and double superlatives. To students of language it is of course a familiar fact that *near* is really the comparative of the A.S. *neáh* or *neh*, which we now pronounce *nigh*; so that *nearer* is a double comparative. More obviously still *biggerer* is such. And *forma* in A.S. and O.Friesic is a superlative meaning *first*, the *m* having the force of a superlative exactly as in the equivalent Latin *primus*. But to this *forma* a second superlative termination *-ost* is added, and so *fore-m-ost* is formed, a double superlative. We have in standard English several such forms; and Devonshire can boast one of its own—*leastest*.

This doubling of a termination to convey the same force twice over is happily named by Dr. Latham "excess of expression." We find it not only in double comparatives and double superlatives, and in forms more complicated still, like *innermost*, *nethermost*; we have also double feminines like *song-str-ess*; participles with a double termination in vulgar English, as *drownded*, and the newfangled abomination *sod-dened*; double diminutives, like the Scotch *lassiekin*, which is exactly the Latin *puellula*; and double plurals. For example, analogous to *mouse mice*, *cow* changes its vowel, and forms the plural *ky* (A.S. *cý*). To this an *n* is added as in *ox oxen*, and the double plural *kine* appears. Analogous to *goose geese*, and *foot feet*, was *bróðor* [brew], *bréðer* which in A.S. was a dative sing., but in E.E. was used as a nom. plur.; but it seems to have been forgotten in course of time that *brēther* was plural, so "to make assurance doubly sure" an *n* was added, and the double plural *brētheren* or *brethren* was the result. But what is curious is that in one of the commonest of these words Devonshire claims to possess a keener insight into language, and commonly rejects the superfluous letter. For the noun *child*, like a large class of words in German and in Icelandic, forms the plural by adding *-er*. In ordinary English *-en* is superadded, as in numerous forms in Dutch, and in M.E. there existed *lambren*,

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calveren, eyren (eggs); but Devonshire, like the Northern Dialect of English, which it very rarely follows, usually prefers the simple plural *childer*, though *childern* is also used.

This plural termination *-en*, which was much used in M.E., as *unclen, sustren* [Ger. *süss*] (sisters), *hosen, fon* (foes), *been* (bees), &c., has almost died out in Devonshire. Yet there is one such in Mrs. Gwatkin's *Devonshire Dialogues*, and with the termination added not to a word originally English, but to one of French origin, *rosen: a tetty o' rosen* (a bunch of roses), and *pots o' rosen*.

But we have not yet done with "excess of expression." In A.S. were certain genitives of pronouns which in Modern English have become *her, our, your, their*. To all of these we add, when we use them (as the French grammarians would say) disjunctively, another genitive termination, *s*. The final *r* was already a sign of the genitive, as often in German, and to a small extent in Dutch and Icelandic; but we have made double genitives, *hers, ours, yours, theirs*.

Now let us return to *min*. The ground is sufficiently cleared; it will be enough that I simply state the conclusion at which I have arrived. The word is equivalent to *them*, or to the *hem* which, as we have seen, is often represented only by '*m*', as in *aul aw 'm*. Then, as we now know that pronouns may take a double inflexión, such as the double genitives just dealt with, and that nouns may form double plurals, like *childern*, my theory is that in *min* we have a double plural, though it is termination only. The word probably never existed in its full form, which would be *hemen* or *hemin*; but the last two letters were added after the first two had already disappeared.

(Several days after the last paragraph was written I made a discovery, and in the course of writing this paper I have made more than one such, with mingled surprise, amusement, and vexation. What to the writer seemed original has after all not been original. Experience shows that it is very easy to have ideas lodged in the mind, the source of which we have utterly forgotten, and in course of time the thoughts themselves are lost sight of, overlaid—as though by Darwin's earthworms—with a layer

of other matter; and then some day when we are digging we come upon some substance a little beneath the surface which we fancy we have never seen before, and we plume ourselves, it may be, on the happy result of our ingenious and painstaking search; when after all it is only a mineral that is already known and described in the books. Four years ago Mr. Elworthby read a paper

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before this Association, in which he maintained—on the basis of facts furnished by my learned friend and late colleague, Dr. Murray—the very view for which I have just been contending. He was so kind as to send me a copy, and, with a greater or less degree of attention, I read it, and in course of time utterly forgot it! Ought then the last few paragraphs to have been entirely struck out? I think not; for to the very best of my consciousness and belief I was exploring on wholly untrodden ground, and any argument becomes the more cogent when it is thoroughly re-examined and remodelled, with old facts marshalled in a new array, and fresh facts introduced. But this must be clearly avowed, that whatever merit there may be in this little discovery belongs to Mr. Elworthy and Dr. Murray, to be divided between them in whatever proportions are just. I disclaim it altogether. Besides, in the paper referred to it is shown by several quotations from the old poem of Sir Ferumbras that the form *hemen*, or *hymen*, that seemed so necessary as an earlier form of *min*, actually did exist; nay, in one passage the very word *men* itself; and this old poem too is in the Devonshire dialect. So the argument is clenched, and the origin of this curious form remains in the region of conjecture no longer.)

Passing on now to the verbs, we notice first, in the verb *to be*, how pure the Devonshire dialect has remained from northern admixture. In A. S., as in German and Latin, two defective verbs, partly overlapping, unite to form the verb substantive (not to mention a third *was*, *wes*, or *wis*, which supplies some of the past tenses). The root of one of these two appears in Skt. in the form *as*, in Grk. ες (as in εστι, εσμεν), in Latin as *es* (as in *est*, *estis*, *essem*), in Gothic as *is*, in A. S. as *is*, and so on. The root of the other is in Skt. *bhú*, Grk. φυ, Latin *fū*, and so on. The former of these often loses the initial

vowel, as in Lat. *sum* for *esum*, *sim* for *esim* ; and it is from this root that the pres. ind. in A. S. forms the plur. *we synd* or *syndon*, *ge synd* or *syndon*, *hí synd* or *syndon*. From the other root the plur. *we*, *ge*, *hí*, *beód*, or *beó*, is derived, which in M. E. became *we*, *ye*, *they*, *been*, or *be*. But the former root *es* often, under certain circumstances dependent on the place of the accent in the Old Teutonic, changes its final sibilant into an *r*, as in the Latin *eram*, and, pray observe, in the pres. ind. in *Icelandic*, which runs thus: *em* (or *er*), *ert*, *er*; plur. *erum*, *eruð*, *eru*. Now the Icelandic, which when we speak of times long ago we usually call Old Norse (though the changes in the language during nearly a thousand

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years have been so slight as hardly to justify the use of a distinct name), was the native tongue of those invaders who, under the name of Northmen or Danes, carried on so long and bitter a conflict with our Saxon and Anglian forefathers. The Angles, at least those who occupied the district north of the Humber, probably already spoke a dialect not very remote from the O. N.; and when a large body of Scandinavian invaders came and settled in their midst, these could not but impress a marked character on the Northern English dialect as a whole—the dialect, that is, which was spoken from the Humber to the Forth—confirming it in its resemblance to the Norse. Hence, to specify only a single detail, the *Northern* English has for the plur. of the pres. ind. of the verb *to be*, *aron*, or *aren*, or *arn*, or *are*. Devonshire is loyal to the *Southern* mode of speech, and says always *es be*, *yu be*, *they be*.

Again, in the A. S. verb the plur. of the pres. ind. regularly ended in *-að*. As the centuries rolled on, they brought changes, which I need not weary you with, except to say that in the Southern English this simply changed into *-eth*, or lost the vowel, still retaining the *-th*. In Robert of Gloucester, of the thirteenth century, and in the Kentish *Ayenbite of Inwit*, of the fourteenth, this is the regular termination. In Chaucer this does not occur; for he wrote in the Midland dialect, in which the *-að* was overpowered and expelled by the *-on* of the imperf. and of both tenses of the subj. Chaucer's plur. was *we*, *ye*, *they*, *tellen*, or *tellé*, or *telle* with the final *e* mute. But in the Devonshire dialect the

ancient ending has not wholly vanished, and thus we can account for the apparent solecism in "*like giants ait 'th.*"

Now when some of us went to school, we were taught to divide verbs into Regular, such as *love loved*; and Irregular, such as *run ran, shine shone*. It is the fashion now to call those that form the past tense by a change of vowel Strong Verbs, and those that add *d* or *ed* Weak Verbs. Just so in Greek there was a strong and a weak past tense, the strong called the Second Aorist, the weak the First Aorist. In both ancient Greek and modern English we find all newly-formed verbs follow the weak inflexión—*φιλοσοφωω, επιλοσοφηρα,* and *electrify electrified*. And in many instances in Greek a verb in the early writers used the strong aorist, and in later the weak. The same tendency is found in the Devonshire dialect. Instead of *knew, threw, drew, ran, sang, stuck, shook, fell, &c,* we find *naw'd, draw'd, drade, rin'd, zing'd, stik'd, shak'd, vall'd* [Fr. *pâle*], and so on.

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In Dutch, Flemish, and High Germ. there was and is to most past participles a prefix *ge-*, which is not found in the Scandinavian languages. In like manner it appears never to have existed in Northumbrian English; while it was commonly, not always, used in Midland and Southern Early English. Now the vulgar pronunciation of this prefix at Berlin is not *ge-*, but *ye-*; and doubtless at some period the English *ge-* underwent a like change, after which it was further simplified into *y-* or *i-* (as constantly in Chaucer and his contemporaries), and next into a mere *a-* [America] before it finally vanishes. This as a participial prefix has entirely disappeared from the now current English; but in Devonshire there are innumerable such forms—*a-com'd, a-got, a-told, a-vound, a-skalded* [Fr. *pâle*], and so on. But I need not enlarge the list. Your Committee on Devonshire Verbal Provincialisms is diligently collecting examples.

It was remarked just now that the old infinitive ended in *-n*, which in Chaucer's time was obsolescent. In like manner *ago* is the later form of *agone*; and so in many instances a final *n* is lost in Devonshire. Thus we find *a-be* for *been*, *a-lade* for *laden*, *I'm mistake, ef I'd a-like, where can they be go to?* *n* being omitted. Similar to these are in Early English writers *y-do* for *done*, *i-falle* for *fallen*, *unknowe* for *unknowm*, *he*

The Salamanca Corpus: "President's Address ["The Devonshire dialect: a study in comparative grammar"]" (1885)

hadde be for *he had been*, *to have take* for *to have taken*, *i-schreve* for *shriven*, and so on. But while we notice this peculiarity in a few Devonianisms or in a fourteenth century poet like Chaucer or prose writer like the author of *Merlin*, we perhaps fail to notice that there are in current English many instances of the very same apocope. This may be accompanied by a change of vowel, or the past indicative may be used as a participle; but the *-n* is thrown away, as in *let*, *hung*, *run* (Chaucer's *i-ronne*), *sung*, *swum*, *burst*, *shone*, for *læten* or *gelæten*, *hangen* or *gehangen*, &c.

But there is another participial form that claims attention, which is commonly denounced as a vulgarism in whatever part of England it is met with, and nevertheless is by no means so corrupt a form as that which fashion has long sanctioned: I mean *-in* for *-ing* in the pres. participle. In Skt. the pres. and fut. participles active form their Anga base— you will forgive my not stopping to define the term—in *-ant*, as *tudant* striking, *adant* eating. In Greek the pres. act. part. and certain others form their stem in *ντ*, pronounced *nd*, as—I quote the genitive—*τυπτοντος*, pronounced by the Modern Greeks *teep'tondos*, *δεικνοντος* pronounced *dheeknee'ndos*. In Latin we find *nt* in the pres. part. act., and *nd* in what

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some grammarians, I think justly, regard as the pres. part. pass., as *amans amantis*, *amandus amanda amandum*. In Germ. the termination is *-end*, in A.S. *-ende*; while in Icel. it was and is *-andi* (as *kallandi* [paddling] calling, *brennandi* burning); and hence in the Northern dialect of Early English we find *-ande*, while in the Southern *-inde* became a common form, of which, as in all other words ending in an unaccented *e*, that *e* became mute. But notice that in all these forms the *n* is followed by a *d*. At this point therefore the verbs *give*, *bear*, *love* [loop] have for their participles *givind*, *bearind*, *lovind* [loop]; and obviously it is a smaller change merely to omit the *d* and so get *givin'*, *bearin'*, *lovin'*, than both to omit the *d* and also change the nasal liquid *nâ* (to adopt the Skt. method of naming the letter) into *ngâ* [sing]. Yet the *ngâ* form, *giving*, *bearing*, *loving*, is now deemed correct, and is authorized and alone tolerated by that

"usus

Quem penes arbitrium est et jus et norma loquendi."

The dialect of our county has gallantly fought for five centuries or more for the less corrupt form, but has fought in vain. One cause which has favoured the change of *-ind* into *-ing* is no doubt the fact that there existed at the same time two considerable classes of nouns, chiefly verbal nouns, ending one in *-ung* (which is also so common a termination in German) and the other in *-ing*, and a confusion of the three terminations was the result; just as in Devonshire we find *vrite* used not only for the verb *write* and the noun *fright*, but also for the adjective *right*.

Before taking leave of this class of words—*meetin*, *veelin*, *warmin* [hard], *tinkrin*, *hammerin*, *walkin* [Fr. *pâle*], *axin*, *watchin* [father], *drappin*, *larnin*, and so on through all the verbs in the language—it may be permitted to observe how easy it is for anyone who attempts to write in a local dialect to adopt erroneously the customary mode of spelling, either from mere force of habit, or from failing to observe some of the local peculiarities. Mrs. Gwatkin always writes these words with *-ing*; Mr. Baird does so occasionally, but much less frequently in his Second Series (1864) than in the earlier Letters and Poems (1860). I suspect his later observation was the more correct. In like manner Mrs. Gwatkin writes *why*, *when*, *where*, etc.: Mr. Baird never does, and I venture to think he is right. The *wh* which is so distinctly sounded by the Irishman or the Scotchman, but for which the majority of Englishmen now substitute the simple *w*, is, I believe,

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never pronounced by the class of whom Nathan Hogg is so brilliant a representative.

From Accidence we pass on to SYNTAX. And here the first point to be noted is that the familiar rule which demands a nominative case for the subject of a verb seems to be in Devonshire honoured almost as much in the breach as in the observance. The accusative seems actually to be preferred, but not those forms now used as accusatives, but which were original!y datives, *him*, *them*, *whom*; nor has *me* ousted *I*, that modest uniliteral pronoun, which is always conscious of standing for number one, and can assert its individuality under the most inauspicious circumstances. For *we* Devonshire uses *us* or

es; for example, "Well, thort I, *us* shall ha 't bam-bye, and zo *es* had, with a sissarary." And again, Rab is telling Bett of some of his domestic wealth that may serve ere long to promote their nuptial bliss: "I 've a gude doust bed-tye, and a tester-bed, and a banging brass kittle that *es* may swap for what gudes *es* may lack." But *we* is also used, as in the same connexion, "Well than, *we* 'll zee to raise the wind to buy a pig." *She*, as a nominative, gives place to *hur*: "*Her* squat down upon the bank, and *her* put back her head, and made fast her eyes: 'How delightsome,' *her* zaid, 'is the soft wind that blows 'pon my vace.'" *Thee* is substituted for *thou*: " 'Sweet lamb,' her zaid, 'art *thee* dead? Wilt *thee* never open thee eyes again?' " But in Nathan Hogg's *Sairyiss Poems* we find *thou* also.

"Wat dist *thow* yer, *thow* litt'l vlow'r?
Why zich a spot dist crave?"

And again-

"Iss! litt'l vlow'r, I'll iver think,
As *thow* rayturn'st aych yur,
Thit *thow* beest zent ta bare ta mee
A zmile uv luv vrim hur."

But, as in current English and in French, the plural pronoun is more commonly used than the singular, even when addressed to a single person, being sometimes *yu* [nearly Fr. *yeux*], sometimes *ee*. Here is *you* as a nominative—

"*Yu*'l vine et tha gurtist mistake *yu*'ve a-meade,
Ef *yu* git hinterveerin way wan tuther's treade."

And *ee* is familiar in "du *ee*" and "doan't *ee*." And as an accusative we have *you* in, "Gaffer, did I iver tell *you* that measter was drunk lass Vriday, and vall'd into the mud-pool,

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and that Dame and I lugg'd en out?" But the pronoun here is emphatic, otherwise *ee*—which of course stands for *ye*—would be preferred, at least after a verb, as in "I zeed *ee* du 't."

But *you* is originally accusative and dative: *ye* alone is the nominative. We have therefore in the sentences just quoted a complete confusion of cases, which, I need hardly observe, obtains very generally in standard English, as well as in the Devonshire Dialect. Is any such confusion to be found in other languages? The French *je*, in Old Fr. *jeo* or *jo*, is simply another form of *ego*; but when the pronoun is separated from the verb, it is not *je* that is used (except in the solitary phrase *je soussigné*), but *moi*, derived from the Latin accusative *me*. The change of vowel is the same as when the Latin *regem*, after being cut down to *re*, as in Italian and Spanish, then, like a large class of similar words, admits the sound of *o* or *ou* [Fr. *sou*], and becomes *rouè* [were], and afterwards *roi*, as now pronounced. *Moi* then is clearly accusative, and yet used as a nominative, disjunctively, as the grammarians call it. The reverse of this is found in Languedoc, where *iéou* (which is the Latin *ego*, Portuguese *eu*, Italian *io*, Spanish *yo*, and French *je*) is regularly used for *moi*, and not as *je*. In like manner in O.Fr. *que*, and in Italian *che*, though derived from the accusative *quem*, are often used as nominatives; and in Portuguese *quem* [Fr. *quintuple*] may be a nominative, as, *Quem era eu?* Who was I? So the Latin *med* for *me*, which the analogy of the Sanskrit ablatives *mat*, "from me," and *twat*, "from thee," shows to be originally an ablative, is used in Plautus more commonly as an accusative than as an ablative. A like confusion, not of cases but of genders, is found in the French *leur*. The Latin genitive plural, *illorum illarum illorum*, is the origin of the O.Fr. *lor*, which became *leur*. The feminine form is lost, and *leur*, like the Italian *loro* also, is used for both genders. When *eus* [It. *Europa*] is used in O.Fr. as a feminine, this is only an apparent confusion of genders, the modern *eux* being masculine; for, as Orelli has well shown in his *Altfranzösische Grammatik*, the Latin feminine singular *illa* becomes *ele* (later *elle*); this *ele* loses the final *e*, then assumes an *s* to form the plural, and the *els* that results becomes *eus* [It. *Europa*], as the liquid *l* becomes *u* in innumerable instances.

But from the language of Ville-Hardouin, and the *Roman de la Rose*, let us come back to our Devonian forms of speech. And before leaving the pronouns, it is worth while to observe that in many other cases besides the one expresion

already quoted emphasis decides the form to be used. *Him*, when unemphatic, is *en* or *'n*, as we have already seen: "Why, the mother and darter rag *en* and scan *en* whenever they come atwart *en*." But if emphasis is needed, Devonshire uses *he*: "I wish zumbody wid mawl *he*;" "Hur drade sheep's eyes *ta he*;" "Hur defied *he* and his law;" "Jist ax a *he*." So for the feminine: Betty describes old Mall, who was a terrible termagant, as "trimming up my Measter," and then describes him in turn as "wringing up his vist to *her*, and swearing he 'd have *her* before her betters, and trounce *her*"—the pronoun *her* three times. But if emphatic—

" I'll wurk a charm to tackle *she*."

Now just as there is confusion in the use of pronouns, so we find when we turn to the verbs. From the Sanskrit verbal root *as* = *be*, which I have already had occasion to mention, is formed the present indicative 1st singular *asmi* = I am, where the additional syllable is obviously connected with the oblique cases of the 1st personal pronoun, *my*, *me* in English, *mā*, *me*, *mat*, etc. in Sanskrit. The same root *as* assumes the forms *es* in Greek and Latin; and in Greek we might therefore expect *esmi* = Sanskrit *asmi*; but instead of this—just as in Icelandic *vaðmál* is pronounced *vammál*— we have *εμμυ* = *I am* in the Doric dialect, which, undergoing a slight additional change, became *εμυ* [*Amy*] in other parts of Greece. In Latin the same *es*, with the same consonant *m* added, becomes *esum*, and then (as above remarked) loses the initial vowel. In Icelandic we get the same biliteral root; but in the 1st person singular of the present indicative, where Latin drops the *e* and keeps the *s*, Icelandic drops the *s* and keeps the *e*. Hence we get Icel. *ek em*=Lat. *sum*. Similarly in Mæso-Gothic we have *ik im*, and in A.S. *ic eom*, which in modern times has become modified into *I am*. The analogy then of these other languages makes it plain that of the two letters of the word *am*, the first is the modified root of the verb, the second is the modified pronoun of the first person. Apart from such analogy the word would be incapable of explanation, there being no other instance in English of this termination *m*, familiar as it is in the Latin verb. But what of the Devonshire Dialect? As above pointed out, it prefers to use *be* in the present tense, and it is doubtless because *am* was less familiar that its exact significance was forgotten, and

so it came to be used with other pronouns besides *I*, as *thow'm*, *we'm*, *yu'm*, *they'm*. I suspect that an entirely different explanation would have to

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be given of such French provincialisms as *j'avons* for *j'ai* in *Le Médecin Malgré Lui* and elsewhere.

A different account must be given of the addition of the final *s* in verbs, not only in the third person singular, but in other parts also of the present tense, as *I writes* for *I write*; *Zais I*; *In es gose*; *Yu bares et up wull both in body an min'*; *Tha drums wis a bating*; *They lukes in my veace*; *How they laffs to be zure*. Now in A.S. four parts out of the six of the present tense end in *ð* (th). Thus the tense *I love* in A.S. is in full as follows:

ic lufige	we lufiað
ðú lufast	ge lufiað
he lufað	hi lufiað

This *ð* (th) very readily changes into *s* (precisely the process which is reversed by persons who lisp), and thus we have the three persons of the plural ending in the same *s* as the third person singular. Every one remembers how Shakspeare uses this old form in the beautiful song—

"Hark, hark, the lark at heaven's gate sings,
And Phoebua gins arise
His steeds to water at those springs,
On chalic'd flowers that *lies*."

This use is not rare in the Folio Shakspeare, though commonly altered by modern editors. Numerous examples are quoted in Dr. Abbott's *Shakespearian Grammar*, and it is common in Devonshire also.

Various IDIOMS, some of which hover on the borders of Syntax, next claim attention.

One of these is the use of the conjunction *that* to strengthen and confirm another conjunction. It is usually thinned off to *thit*, and in the use referred to it forms the phrases *how thit*, *wen thit*, *ware thit*, *ef thit*, *in case thit* (like the Fr. *en cas que* or *dans*

le cas que), *thin thit*. Our friend Nathan Hogg will furnish an example or two. "I ax'd 'n *ware thit* he wiz gwayn." And Prince Louis Lucien Bonaparte, who I am in a position to assure you does not habitually employ our western mode of speech, when enquiring of Nathan in what village or town he could hear the broad Devonshire Dialect for himself, puts his question thus: " Bit cud yu tul ma *wur thit* I cud yer et spauk? Again—

"Tiz strange wat vules there bee in live,
Now thic thare vulish zex'n's wive,
Zed Roger'd drink'd a cupple quart
A zyder moar *thin thit* ha ort."

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Again, Nathan went to see "The Wile Baists," and among them observed some pelicans swallowing fish—

"An the man zed as *how thit* auff'n they can,
Wen they veels vury hungary, zwaller a man."

And elsewhere, "Aiv'n *if thit* I cude." Now exactly the same usage is found in Early English. The very first line, for example, of the prologue to the *Canterbury Tales* begins with such a reduplicate conjunction—

"*Whan that* Aprille with hise shoures soote
The droghte of March hath perced to the roote" *

The Schipman is described, who had a large spice of the pirate in his composition, and we are told how he made his unfortunate prisoners "walk the plank"—

"*If* ðat he faught and hadde the hyer hond
By water he sente hem hoom to euery lond "

In the description of the Pardoner we read—

"Ne was ther swich another Pardoner
For in his male he hadde a pilwe beer†
Which ðat he seyde was oure lady veyl
He seyde he hadde a gobet of the seyl
That seint Peter hadde *whan* ðat he wente

Up on the see til Ihesu crist hym hente"

Elsewhere in Chaucer we find *how that*, *what that*, *though that*, *why that*, *er that*, &c. It would be easy to multiply examples of a form of expression that was common 500 years ago.

But indeed we find *how that* even in the English Bible of 1611, as in 1 Cor. i. 26, "For ye see your calling, brethren, *how that* not many wise men after the flesh... are called;" and the Revised Version retains this archaism. The Devonshire Dialect however goes a step further than *how thit*, for we also find *as how thit*, and sometimes *thit as how*, a form that Nathan Hogg uses.

The *that* in all these cases seems redundant, but words habitually omitted are also to be met with. A pronoun is occasionally dropped, as in "Iss, did," for "Yes, he did;" but most commonly it is *it* whose services are dispensed with. At the beginning of a letter expressed in the elegant simplicity for which our friend Nathan is so celebrated we read:

* The quotations are made from the Ellesmere MS.

† That is, "in his trunk he had a *pillow-case*." The word occurs also in the *Devonshire Dialogues*, where Robin is boasting of his possessions—"A tester bed, peel, and *peel-bears*, a pair of canvas sheets, bran new," and so on. But in Chaucer's time the word rhymed with *here*, not with *there*.

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"This com'th haupin et 'll vind 'ee in gud hulth, ez *layves mee* at presint," that is, *as it leaves me*. In *Mucksy Lane*—

"Pin tap the hadges hud's a-graw'd

Za thick thit hang'th across tha rawd;"

that is, "so thick that *it* hangs across the road." And akin to *Mucksy Lane* I may quote the famous definition once given in court to enlighten the Bench and the Bar as to the nature of *pilm*: "Mucks a-drowed and zo vleeth," that is, "mud dried, and so *it* flies about"—not a bad definition of *pilm*, which everybody here knows means dust. Again in the little poem *Gwayn Hom* we read—

"Bit wat thic hom turn'th out yu zee

Uv cus 'tis hard ta tul; Tho wan thing's saf ez saf kin be—

Depend'th apin yerzul:"

that is, "it depends." So *zimmith* is used for *it seems*, *yer go'th* for *here it goes*. And it happens that this again is an ancient idiom. It is found in Icelandic, as *mik ðyrstir*, *it thirsts me*, *i.e.* I thirst, *mèr* [Fr. *manière*] *ofbýðr*, *it is horrible to me*, *mèr heyrist* [they] *it is audible to me*, *i.e.* I hear. It is found in English as early as King Alfred, in whose translation of *Orosius* (Sweet's edition, Part i. p. 42) we read, "On ðæm dagum wæs ðætte," "in those days *it* was that," &c. And it is not infrequent in Chaucer, at least with impersonal verbs. We now say *it happened*, like Fr. *il arriva*, the Ger. *es geschah*, the Old Saxon *it shag*; but Chaucer writes—

"Bifil that in that seson on a day."

So *him was lever* means "it was more agreeable to him;" or as King Alfred phrases it, "ðæt him leofre wære." (Sweet's *Oros.*, Part i. p. 44.) "Love if the *list*," is "love if *it* pleases thee." "Foyne if hym *list*," "let him fence if *it* pleases him." So in the *Morte Arth.*, *wonder thought me*, "*it* seemed a marvel to me." *Methinks* is the only word in Modern English in which the same idiom appears, the exact meaning being "*it* seems to me." Those of my hearers who are versed in this branch of linguistic study will, I am sure, pardon my explaining for the sake of those who are less familiar with the subject, that there were in A.S. two verbs *ðincan* and *ðencan*, of which *ðincan* means to appear, *ðencan* to think; the latter (which is identical with the German and Dutch *denken*) having changed its vowel from *e* to *i*, while

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the former has undergone no vowel-change in the solitary expression in which it still survives, namely, *methinks*. These impersonals are now largely obsolete, being superseded by some other form of expression, or by the personal use of the verb. Thus Chaucer's "What *nedeth* wordes mo?" would now be, "What *need is there for* more words?" The *nedeth*, or later *nedes*, being transmuted from the *verb need* with the termination *-es* into the *noun need* with the verb *is*, and two previously superfluous

words being inserted. Spenser's sentence, "*It would pity* any living eye," would now be, "Any living eye *would pity*." *It repents me* has quite given way to "I repent" "It likes me," "it dislikes me," are now "I like," "I dislike." "If it please you"—an expression which is the literal translation both of the French "s'il vous plaît" and (as the position of the *ist* shows) of the German "ge-falligt"—is now only used in formal speech: the familiar use makes the *you* nominative instead of accusative, and the verb personal instead of impersonal—"If you please." This change was already beginning in Shakspeare's time, for (as Dr. Abbott has pointed out) both forms exist—"So please *him* come," and "If *they* please;" and while the common phrase was "Woe is me," we find in the *Tempest*, "I am woe for 't." Where a noun is used instead of a pronoun, as in "So please your highness," there is no inflexion of the noun to guide us, but from the antiquated form of the expression one cannot but infer an antiquated syntax also, and that "highness" is meant to be the dative case.

But we have not yet done with this *zimmith*, or the verb *zim*, or (as I myself have more commonly heard it pronounced) *sim*; that is, *seem*. This verb is used not only in the sense of to *appear*, but also to *think*. Can this be explained? Yes; the change of "It sims to me" into "I sim" is precisely of the same character as the change of "It pleases me" into "I please," only this latter is fashionable in modern times, the other is provincial and unfashionable. But there is one point more. In Greek (as every Greek scholar knows) there is one verb that bears exactly this same double meaning, and signifies both *I think* and *I seem*; but in this case we cannot be sure that the history of the meaning is the same as in the Devonian *I sim*, for both senses of $\deltaοκεω$ are found in the earliest literature of Greece; namely, in Homer's *Iliad*. In $αρκω$ however, as used by Æschylus in *Prom. Vinc.*, 639 for $αρκει$ —"I suffice" for "It suffices that I"—we have a clear case of the personal use of the verb substituted for the impersonal, such as one cannot but suspect in

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$\deltaοκεω$, and find unquestionably in many of the expressions cited just above.

Let us next turn to a certain expression of time. We all remember how in the Gospels our Lord says, "I have compassion on the multitude because they have continued"—I take the liberty of translating with the true English idiom here, rather than follow the Greek idiom in using the present tense "they continu"—"with me now three days." This word "days " is of course the accus. in English, as indicating duration of time; the rule is the same also in Latin and Greek. But, strange to say, in both Matt xv. 32 and Mark viii. 2, where these words of our Lord are recorded, the majority of the most ancient MSS. give the "days" in the nom. *ημεραι*; not, as in later MSS., *ημερας*. About the meaning there can be no question; simply the phrase is elliptical. We need to supply some part of the verb *to be* and a relative pronoun: "*There are three days during which they have continued with me.*" Can then our western dialect exhibit any usage at all analogous to this? Yes, imperfectly analogous; that is to say, with a partial ellipsis, the ellipsis being partly supplied. It is a form of expression I have often heard; but I prefer as usual to fall back on the authority of printed books. Nathan Hogg writes—

" Last Thesday wiz week, as you naws, brither Jan,
The yung squire ta Tor Abbey becom'd twenty wan;"

that is, "Last Thursday was a week *since the day on which* the young squire," &c. Both here and in the Greek in the Gospels a phrase of the nature of a relative adverb needs to be supplied.

One remark leads to another. "Tha yung squire *ta* Tor Abbey," for "*at* Tor Abbey." Here we have a genuine Devonianism. "Ur 'th a-been stayin *ta* Plympton;" "*ta* lass" for "at last;" "aul *ta* wance;"

"Thin thare wid turn up zich a rattle,
As ef whole urgmints waz *ta* battle."

Of this use of *to*—or in Devonshire *ta** [Henrietta]—for *at*, we have just the converse in Icelandic and the other Scandinavian languages, as compared with A.S. and English, in the use of *at* instead of *to* with the infinitive mood of verbs; as *to make*, or as the Scotch say *to gar*, is in Icel. *at gera*, Dan. *atgjöre*, Swed. *at göra* [g = Engl. y; ö as in German].

* With the change of vowel here, and in the Dutch and Flemish *te*, we may compare *se* for *so* in *Hali Meidenhad*.

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But in other Teutonic languages *to* is in many instances employed where we use *at*, no motion being implied. Thus in German, *zu Hofe dienen*, to serve at court; *das Waisenhaus zu Halle*, the Orphans' Home at Halle; and corresponding to the Devonshire *ta lass* we have *zuletzt*. So also *zu Hause*, at home, which in Old Saxon is *to hūs*, in Du. *te huis*, and in Old Flemish *te huus* [goose].

The mention of this Dutch *huis* compels me to return for a few moments to Pronunciation. For who of us does not know the peculiar Devonshire mode of sounding *how*, *now*, *cow*? The recognized pronunciation of these words is with a sound which it is very difficult to analyse, but it seems to begin with *ō* [hot] and glide into *oo* [boot]. The same diphthong (as it is commonly but inaccurately called) in Essex, and commonly in London, begins with *ee* [there] and finishes with *oo*. But in London another mode of sounding it is with *ā* [hat] to start with, gliding as before into *oo*. Similar is the Dutch sound in beginning with *ā*, but it finishes with *u* [Fr. *tu*]. But what of our Devonshire *ow*? As well as I can analyse it, it begins with *æu* [Fr. *sæur*] and glides into the Devonshire *u*. It is the most remarkable sound in our dialect.

And in several of these expressions there is yet another point of resemblance to Devonshire—the omission of the article. In current English we say "to court" when we mean "to the king's court," and so in German and the kindred dialects, as in the Old Saxon of Reineke de Fos—

"Ok kwemen *to hove* fele stolten gesellen;"

that is, "Also there came to court many proud people," and in Old Flemish *te hove* in exactly the same sense. But in Devonshire, if a man speaks of going out of a house into the court adjoining, he will say "*ta kuart*:" "Ha went *ta kuart* ta vetch tha hood." So also *inta howze*, into the house; "hom *ta vawr dore*," home to the fore door; "hur went and kimmited tha wier *ta vlame*."

Again, in current English we use the verb *tell* always as a transitive verb with the thing told (that is to say, the information communicated) as its direct object, expressed or understood (very often in the form of a noun sentence), and with the person to whom

the thing is told as the indirect object, expressed or understood. But in Devonshire *tell* is often intransitive, as, "Go owt an yer min tul;" *i.e.* talk. And in the *Devonshire Dialogue*, "Her used to *tell* to her flowers." Precisely analogous to this is the use of *λεγω* for *λαλω* in late Greek; as for example in the Gospel of John, c. xiv. 10, in

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the best MSS. *λεγω* is so used, accompanied indeed by a cognate accusative, but intransitive. So also in the forensic use of the word, as in Soph. *O.T.* 545, and Acts xxvi. 1.

There remain yet a few points that ought not to be passed over in silence. The origin of prepositions is one of the most difficult problems the philologist has to deal with. In seeking to trace their earliest history the investigator soon finds himself involved in a thick mist, where it is impossible to see any object clearly and well defined. In such a mist it avails little to throw the reins on the neck of imagination, and gallop madly along the path of wild conjecture. The species of legerdemain practised by some etymologists really justifies Voltaire's sarcasm when he wrote that *Ki* and *Atoës* were names of an ancient emperor of China, or rather they were different forms of one and the same name; for a philologist would simply change the *K* into *A*, and the *i* into *toës*, and the transmutation is complete. Now suppose a reader of the *Ayenbite of Inwyt* meets with the sentence, "*ðis we bezechið toppe alle ðing*," he may see clearly that the meaning is, "This we pray above all things;" but how can *toppe* come to mean above? He may go to Donaldson's *New Cratylus*, and learn the force and significance of every letter of every preposition in Greek, Latin, and Sanskrit, and may perhaps believe what he reads; and he may plod through the chapter in which the use of certain nouns as prepositions is discussed, where he will find it proved to demonstration that *δικη* and *χαρις* are only different forms of the same word, like Voltaire's *Ki* and *Atoës*, and much truly will he have learnt about the Old Kentish phrase "*toppe alle thing*." Suppose now, when he has recovered from his bewilderment, he betakes himself to Nathan Hogg by way of *distraction* (as the French say) after his Donaldsonian toils, he will find on the first page, "*Tha Daysy tap tha Grave*," and will recognize the word at once. Elsewhere he

will find "*pin tap* the hadges," and again "*pin tap uv* tha vier," the phrases *tap*, *pin tap*, and *pin tap uv* being evidently equivalent to one another and to the thrice-recurring *toppe* of the *Ayenbite of Inwyt*. But moreover he finds *pin* used without *tap*, as "*pin* me wurd;" "*pin* axin tha vally;" and he also notices *apin* similarly used, as in "*apin* crassin tha strayt." He now has no difficulty in discerning that *apin* is the Devonian form of *upon*, that the definite article is understood, and that *tap* or *toppe* when used as a preposition is really the familiar noun *top* with an ellipse—*upon the top of* being the full and complete phrase.

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Another elliptical expression is *outel dores*. Here, as with *tap*, *of* is understood, as it is also in *out doors* and *indel doors*. But what does *outel* mean? It means "the out deal of;" that is to say, "on the outer side of." In *outel* the *d* has disappeared, absorbed in the final *t* of *out*, while in *indel* it remains. *Deal*, from A.S. *dælan*, to divide, signifies primarily a *part*, and from this radical notion all the other senses of the word can be easily traced. In this case a part of the door comes to signify one side of the door as opposed to the other, and then the portion of space which is on the one side or the other side of the door.

Certain verbal forms are worth a brief notice. From the French *ho-là* we have derived the verb to *holla*, which is sometimes confounded with the adj. *hollow* on the one hand and with the interjection and verb *halloo*, A.S. *ealá*, on the other. Such is Professor Skeat's view. But in Devonshire *holla* is cut down to *holl*. From the adj. *stiff* we have the verb to *stiffen*. In Scotch the adj. has the form *steeve*, as in the lines—

" A fiery ettercop,
A fractious chiel,
As het as pepper,
An as *steeve* as steel;"

and this very form *steeve* is used in Devonshire as a verb, the verbal termination being dropped. So in Scotch in the adj. and verb *deave* = *deaf* and *deafen*. We have all heard how the notorious Viscount Dundee found time one day amidst his cruel persecution of

the Covenanters to call, as a matter of curiosity, upon an old lady whose age far exceeded the ordinary limits of human longevity. His name Claverhouse was commonly contracted in the Scottish mode of speech into *Claver'se*, and *clavers* means noise or din. So when he asked the old lady, who seems to have entertained as little affection for Presbyterian zeal as she had respect for persecuting fury, what difference she observed between the days of her childhood and those of her age, she replied, "Then there was ane Knox that deaved us a' wi' his clavers, an noo there is ane Claver'se that deaves us a' wi' his knocks." But we can find an analogue to this *steeve* for *stiffen* without travelling north of the Tweed. For do not our poets familiarly cut off the termination of *open* and use *ope* as a verb? In two other instances indeed a termination is dropped by which we change a noun into a verb, and the Dev. Dial. uses the noun itself as a verb. Thus *hap* is used for *happen*, and *carr* for *carry*. But while we now think these vulgarisms, they are more

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defensible than *ope* for *open*; for *ope* has no separate existence either as adjective or noun. And when again *naw* (*i.e.* know) is used for *knowledge*, the verb for the abstract noun, as when we read of Tom Chidley in *Mucksy Lane*—

" Tam's *naw* et wadd'n quite za smal
Ez nat ta tul a bite vrim scal,"

may we not adduce most respectable authority in favour of such a form? In French, *le manger et le boire*; in German, *das Lesen und das Schreiben*, who does not know the idiom? and what Greek scholar is not familiar with the use of an infinitive as a noun? The ladies present know how unnecessary it is to quote examples. They are to be found in Thucydides and Demosthenes *passim*: *ergo* let Nathan Hogg be bracketed with Thucydides and Demosthenes henceforth and for evermore!

A few words about *tother*. The pronoun *that* is originally the neuter of the definite article. It ceased to be confined to the neuter long before its use simply as the article was discontinued. For instance, in the Authorized Version of the New Testament we find "that Christ" and "that prophet" (John i. 21, 25) for "*the* Christ" and "*the* prophet." It is

obvious therefore that "that other" is merely an old form for "the other;" and the "that" in this phrase, when its meaning as a mere article became obsolete, simply transferred its final *t* to the next word, and so we have "the tother." But occasionally we have "tother" with no "the" preceding it, as "wan go'th yer, and tother go'th there," and "they zeed wan tother." In this case we have the "other" retaining as an initial the solitary letter which was the neuter termination of "that." Just so in the Old Flemish of Reinaert de Vos— that is, Reynard the Fox—we find such forms as *by twater* for *by the water*, and *int water* for *in the water*, the *t* written sometimes with the former word, sometimes with the latter, but being in any case just the final letter still surviving out of the neuter article *dat*.

Before concluding this Address, it seems desirable to say a few words on an objection that may have arisen in some minds to the proposition, so ably defended by my learned friend Mr. Elworthy, that numerous peculiarities of our dialect are of high antiquity, relics of the ancient mode of speech, rather than mere corruptions of standard English. The notion that they are all corruptions certainly has the charm of simplicity; it cuts through every difficulty, like

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the sword of Alexander through the famed Gordian knot. And then do not eminent philologists affirm the great rapidity with which language changes, unless stability is imparted to it by a literature and a somewhat advanced civilization ?

In Max Müller's *Lectures on Language* we read: "The historical changes of language . . . have transformed the language of Virgil into that of Dante, the language of Ulfilas into that of Charlemagne, the language of Charlemagne into that of Goethe. We have reason to believe that the same changes take place with even greater violence and rapidity in the dialects of savage tribes. . . . In the few instances where careful observations have been made, it has been found that among the wild and illiterate tribes of Siberia, África, and Siam two or three generations are sufficient to change the whole aspect of their dialects."

But is not this statement somewhat highly coloured? "The whole aspect of their dialects" is obviously a vague expression, and it is a perfectly ascertained fact that there are great families of languages in África, the members of each of which, though it may be many centuries since their forefathers formed little communities living side by side and speaking the same language, yet retain the same general characteristics, with strong resemblances of grammar and vocabulary. Nay, as to one such characteristic, namely, syllabation, the Professor himself says, "In South África all the members of the great family of speech, called by Dr. Bleek the Bâ-ntu family, agree in general with regard to the simplicity of their syllables. Their syllables can only begin with one consonant," &c. I learn also from one of the missionaries of the Baptist Congo Mission, that in all these languages, extending as far north as Cameroons, and eastward as far as the Indian Ocean, "there are certain *family marks*" in inflection and construction. One of these languages, the Kishikongo, is spoken over an area of some 50,000 square miles, and yet continues one and the same language for generations, and that too without the aid of any literature. It by no means illustrates the "violence and rapidity" of change of which Max Müller speaks.

And then the southern dialect of English was spoken over a much smaller area than 50,000 miles—less than half that extent of country—and had in its favour the antiseptic force of both civilization and literature from the time of King Alfred downwards. There was also the powerful influence of the witenagemót (or parliament in later times), the scír-gemót, and the weekly market; for whenever people periodically

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assemble, they must of necessity maintain the use of the same language in order to be mutually intelligible. In one word—for time forbids me to enlarge—I believe the changes which our language has undergone have been very slow, and nothing is more certain than that the local speech of our country preserves a large number of genuine archaisms. And these are well worth recording. The English Dialect Society is doing good work in trying to embalm these linguistic curiosities before the spread of national education has utterly blotted them out; and I congratulate this Society on the ability as



The Salamanca Corpus: *"President's Address ["The Devonshire dialect: a study in comparative grammar"]"* (1885)

well as zeal with which several of its members are labouring in the same direction. They will assuredly get their meed of praise from future generations.

