

TRANSACTIONS
OF THE
YORKSHIRE
DIALECT SOCIETY.

VOLUME I.

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Yorkshire Dialect Society.

INAUGURAL ADDRESS

By the PRESIDENT,

The MOST NOBLE the MARQUIS of RIPON, K.G.

Before I proceed further with the observations I have to offer, I hope you will allow me to express my thanks to the Society for the honour they have done me in electing me as your president. As I came to York it struck me that I ought to address the meeting in one of the Yorkshire dialects, but unfortunately I am, I regret to say, unable to do so, though I understand the dialect a good deal better than many of my friends who come from the South. But I felt when called upon to accept the position of president of the Society that it was my duty not to refuse, and to afford all the assistance I could in pursuing objects which meet entirely with my concurrence and approval. We are not met together to-day for the purpose of forming the society; it is already in existence, and this is the first of its quarterly meetings. Some persons may think that the time has passed for any practical inquiry into the dialects of this or any other part of our country, because, by the rapid progress of education, by the various means which bind us all together much more closely than we used to be bound, and the greater facilities for locomotion and mutual intercourse, those dialects, as spoken dialects, are undoubtedly gradually dying out. I remember that my late friend Archdeacon Watkin, when he was an inspector of schools, used always to tell me that he had no hostility whatever to the Yorkshire dialects, and that he would be very glad that they should continue to

be talked anywhere except in school. In spite of the wishes of that very agreeable and distinguished person, I am afraid that the operations of the Department with which he was connected are very seriously impairing the extent to which those dialects are now spoken. There may be present some enthusiasts for dialectic speech who may regret that such should be the case, but whether we regret it or not, we cannot help it. The thing is inevitable. But those dialects have not altogether departed from us yet. There are amongst us, at all events in the dales of Yorkshire, many persons who speak a language which persons from the South find it still by no means easy to understand.

This state of things seems to call for the establishment of such a society as this, because there are reasons, which I will refer to in a minute, why it is very desirable that these dialects should be studied and mastered and understood, and it is a great advantage that we should still be able, if we chose to do so, to learn something from them as spoken dialects. Dead languages are learned in a very different way from languages that can still be heard, and consequently, though at the present moment they may be dying out, those who are desirous of mastering their meaning and studying their peculiarities have opportunities of doing so. Why should we make a study of those dialects which we admit are departing? The answer is very simple—because they are closely connected with the history of our country and the history of our language. The study of the ancient languages of any country is of the highest value in understanding the national history and the national character. If we want to understand the English language in the real meaning of the word “understand,” to make it fully our own in all its bearings, we must study it, among other things, in its origin, in the sources from which it has been derived, and in the various aspects which, from time to time, it has presented. I feel therefore very strongly that it is a useful and valuable work that those dialects should be studied, that their full meaning should be brought before us, and that we should have the means of bearing them in our recollection and of seeing their connection with the literary language of our own day. If you look at varieties of

dialect you will find that almost every dale in Yorkshire has some little difference from its adjoining neighbour. All these things, small though they may be, have their value. Everything which brings before us the past of our country, what its people were and what they have been, the lives they lived and the tongue they talked—all this is of the deepest interest, especially in days like these, when it has come to be recognised by students of history that the real history of a people does not consist merely in the doings of its sovereign or statesmen, its great soldiers or sailors, but also in all that concerns the lives, the progress, the speech, and the industry of the people.

I believe some persons doubt whether there is room for a Society of this kind, and whether it would not have been better to have affiliated it with some existing society. I am not prepared to say that there is not something to be said for that view of the subject, but we live in a time of specialization. It has its disadvantages, I am quite aware, but if we want closely to study any subject the general tendency seems to be that we should specialize it, and study it in itself. Therefore I think it is consistent with the practice of our time that this Society should have constituted itself as a separate Society, and I do not think that there is any ground for complaint that it is trenching on the province of any other society. I believe that the English Dialect Society has ceased to exist, and if that is so there is a special reason for the establishment of local dialect societies to carry out the study of local dialects, and to aid in that way not merely in laying the foundation of a portion of the historical knowledge we require for the understanding of our past history, but also to aid in the great work now going on of the preparation of the Dialect Dictionary. I have no hesitation in saying that I think those who formed the Society as a separate and distinct body were justified in doing so. In the report it is pointed out that the majority of the members of the Society at present belong to the West Riding. The Society was started in the West Riding, but it was not started as a West Riding Society, but as a Yorkshire Society, and in proof of that fact the metropolis of the County was chosen for the first meeting. I am not unaware that there is a little jealousy, or whole-

some rivalry between the different Ridings. Personally I happen to be connected with at least two or perhaps all the three, so that I am free from any element of jealousy of this kind. I should be extremely sorry if this Yorkshire Society were to become merely a West Riding Society. There are dialects of great interest in the North and East Ridings whose history requires to be considered. It would be a great pity if the work of this Society should be limited so as to exclude the study of those dialects. Yorkshire is quite big enough to satisfy the aspirations of any man, and therefore I do not want to go beyond its borders in this matter, but I hope that our friends in the North and East Ridings will come forward and give us assistance in a work in which they are as much interested as any of us. In conclusion I wish to express my hearty desire that the labours of this Society may be crowned with success, and that it may be worthy the name of those who have established it.

THE DANISH ELEMENT
IN THE NORTHERN FOLK SPEECH.

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By C. A. FEDERER, L.C.P.
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One gratifying result of the existence and labours of the late English Dialect Society has been the fact, that the average public are beginning to allow that there may be something more after all than merely debased English and vicious pronunciation in the folkspeech of the different parts of England. The efforts of societies like our own may perhaps still further educate that same public to the point of understanding that dialects are not deviations from a national language, but that national language itself is but a comparatively modern conglomerate, inheriting the amassed wealth of its progenitors, the dialects, though tending to eliminate their archaic and purely local forms.

For us who delve in the as yet scantily worked mines of genuine mother tongue, there is a rich reward in the shape of domestic, social, and historical lore: lore far more precious, and far truer to life, than the annals and chronicles compiled by a world-abstracted monk in his solitary cell. For what do those chronicles really teach us of the true story of this country from the 4th to the 10th century? Of what documentary value are their records of the transactions even of the time when they were written? What help do they give in the apprehension of the trend of contemporaneous events? It stands to reason that the recluse who takes no personal part in the public transactions of his time must obtain his knowledge of current events solely by hearsay from such individuals as have been more or less remotely connected with those events. Thus, if we transport ourselves back to the times of the Venerable Bede, say the end of the 7th century, amidst the cruel warfare then being waged between Dane and Saxon, need we ask who were the informants to whom the learned monk of Jarrow was indebted for the facts embodied in his history? Was it

the Danes who harried the countryside, or was it the terrified Saxon cottagers who sought refuge within the walls of the monastery? To ask the question is to answer it. How under such circumstances could we expect anything else but that the sympathising annalist would write with warped judgment, and, generalizing on what transpired within a restricted area, distort the real facts of history. And as with the Venerable Bede, thus with all the monastic historians that followed him.

History is so closely bound up with speech that records it, that I may confidently claim the indulgence of this meeting if the nature of my subject leads me to refer still further, though briefly, to an important historical question. Without entering into the details of the protracted warfare between Saxon and Dane, I would draw your attention to the supreme crisis of that secular struggle, the battle of Ethandune in 878. The battle is represented by Anglo-Saxon historians as a complete overthrow of the Danes, resulting in the break up of their government and in their subjection to the rule of King Alfred. Their remaining in England in the enjoyment of their own laws and under their own local government is represented as an act of grace and magnanimity on the part of Alfred: a conception this, which will not bear critical examination. Magnanimity in political matters, especially where racial interests are concerned, may at once be dismissed as an unsubstantial figment: it has never existed and perhaps never will exist. Had the overthrow of the Danes been as decisive and complete as asserted, little doubt could be entertained but that on the then fully established principle of *vere victis* they would have been treated just as aforesaid the Saxons had treated the Kelts whom they had dispossessed, i.e., they would have been hunted out like wild beasts. To an unprejudiced mind, however, the facts present themselves somewhat in this guise:—By the middle of the 9th century, Danish rule and population were as firmly established in the east and north of England as in Denmark and Norway itself. What Anglo-Saxon inhabitants still remained in those parts were practically absorbed in the Danish population. In Wessex the case was different; there the population was still preponderatingly

Saxon and fighting the Danish invaders on something like equal terms. The battle of Ethandune or Edlington in Wiltshire was one of the vicissitudes in this struggle for mastery. The Danish chieftain Gudrun, camping in fancied security in an enemy's country and neglecting every military precaution, allowed himself to be taken by surprise and paid the penalty in the utter rout of the body of troops under his command. This, however, was and is an episode of a kind by no means rare in rude warfare, and would have exerted but little influence upon the ultimate result of the national struggle, but for the circumstances that Gudrun himself was taken prisoner and not slain. Alfred was thereby enabled to secure a treaty by which he was left in undisputed possession of Wessex, the Danish settlers being permitted to depart with bag and baggage to the Danelagh or Danish England.

This brings the period of migrations and transference of tribes, peoples, and races in Great Britain to a final close: thenceforth the ethnographical distribution of the population of this island remains unchanged, untouched even by the most momentous political convulsions. What was Anglo-Saxon at the ushering in of the 10th century is Anglo-Saxon now; what was Danish then is Danish still. The Danelagh which King Alfred was good enough to acknowledge as indisputably Danish territory, and over which he claimed no kind of sovereignty, included all the East coast of Britain from Thames to Forth and the whole of the North from sea to sea, a good two-thirds of modern England, leaving out the Keltic West. It is of course granted that the relative density of the Danish population as compared with the Anglo-Saxon element in its midst varied considerably. It was most accentuated in Lincolnshire and the counties north of the Humber, less so in the more inland counties of Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire, &c.

It is needless to insist upon the bearing which all these circumstances must have had upon the speech of the different parts of England. True, Anglo-Saxon sway ultimately extended over Danish England till the whole was merged in one compact nation; but the influence of this merely political change affected the speech of the Danelagh only to a slight degree. The Danes never learnt a new

language; but, being cast loose from Scandinavia and influenced by their new environments, wants, and aspirations, their own language had to take a development altogether different from that which characterised the Danish of Denmark and Norway. The need of new words to express new things and new ideas necessarily led to the adoption and amalgamation of the terms used by the original Anglo-Saxon inhabitants, and thus a superstructure of a composite character rose on the Danish foundation. Still the proposition is undeniable, that the basis and oldest framework, not only of our northern folk-speech, but even of the English language as a whole, is decidedly Danish, not Saxon. Granted that it gained its admirable fulness by the advent of Literary English, the genesis of which has been so ably described by Latham, Ellis, Professor Skeat, and other eminent authorities, and granted that it was swamped and overlaid by extraneous materials brought from various sources, yet, as the snow-covered hill-side clearly shows its rugged outlines, and trees, boulders, and scars pierce the dense covering, so the Danish landmarks show through the superincumbent Saxon and Norman alluvium even in modern English, much more in our northern dialect or folk speech. In the fair fabric of our English idiom, the warp is Danish, the woof alone is Saxon.

ON THE WORD "OSMOND."

By E. PEACOCK, F.S.A.

Language is a living organism, though it in most cases goes on flourishing for ages; words, which are its component parts, have many of them shorter periods of growth and decay; but words when they are dead, are often from the point of view of the student of language, as important as those which are at the present moment flourishing in all the vigour of healthy life. The local dialects are the natural feeding of what used to be called "Book English." There are many terms now used everywhere and by all classes which were purely dialectic a few generations ago. We may take as an example the word "Shunt"; it has been, as I am informed, all along a term in common use in the far North of England, meaning to shove on one side, or to push away from you. When railways came into being, it was natural that George Stephenson, and those who worked under him, nearly all of whom were North Countrymen, should employ it to indicate the act of pushing trucks or carriages into the siding of a railway line. The word, however, when once generally known proved far too useful to be limited to railway service only; the newspaper men got hold of it, and now it has long been common property. We are told of an unpopular bill in parliament being shunted; and sometimes hear persons of refined diction speak of how they have shunted some tedious companion. Shunt like "boycott" must be classed among our new words; the one taken up from the dialectic speech, the other an adaptation of a family surname.

The dead words in our tongue are very numerous; there are probably more of them than of the new additions which have been made during the present century, if we exclude from the catalogue the scientific terms carried over from Greek and Latin, many of which have little more claim to be recognised as true English words, than have the signs used by the mathematician or the chemist. Words die for more than one reason; sometimes it is because a shorter word, or

one more easy of pronunciation has taken its place; in other instances the word becomes forgotten on account of the thing which it represented having gone out of use. This latter seems to have been the case with the word with which we are at present concerned. Could a gathering such as a meeting of this Society have been assembled in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, there would have been, we imagine, but few persons in the room who would not have been able to interpret the word "Osmond," or "Osmonds," as it was more commonly called.

The word is of common occurrence in account-rolls, inventories and documents of the like kind, but is absent from many English dictionaries, and when it occurs the exact meaning of the term does not seem to have been understood by the compilers. The earliest instance I have been able to find after long search is to be found in a record entitled "Le Domesday de Gippewyz,"¹ where we are told that the custom on Osmond is to be taken as of brass. The word is here interpreted by the editor "a kind of ore or ironstone." This is clearly a mistake as will be seen hereafter.

In an account-roll of the time of Henry the Fourth relating to Kingston-upon-Hull, published by the late Charles Frost, "IX bar. Osmond"² is mentioned. There is little doubt that the contracted word bar. stands for barrels. Mr. Frost did not venture on an explanation of the word.

In *the Libel of English Policy*, a poem which the late Mr. Thomas Wright attributed to 1436-1437, "Osmonde, coppre, bow-staffes, stile [i.e. steel], and wex [wax]"³ occur among a list of commodities. The editor calls it "a sort of iron."⁴

The word occurs also in *The treatyse of fysshunge with an angle*, commonly attributed to Dame Juliana Berners. The reader is there told that fish-hooks must be made "of stele and of Osmonde."⁴

1.—Black Book of the Admiralty, edited by Sir Travers Twiss. II. 190, 191.

2.—Notices relating to Town and Port of Hull. Append. 8.

3.—Political Poems and Songs (Rolls Series) II. 171.

4.—Reprint of 1827. p. 7.

In the *Expenses of Sir John Howard, Kt.*, in 1465, the following entry occurs "Item my mastyr paid for iij sheffe Osmond bout be Pakewode ffor to make arow hedes ijs." ⁵ The editor informs his readers that it was "a species of iron so called."

In a complaint against certain pirates who infested the Humber, which was edited by me some years ago for the *Yorkshire Archaeological and Topographical Journal* from the original among the Star Chamber Records of the Reign of Henry VIII, "one last of "Osmonds" is included among other merchandize that was carried off. ⁶ In a paper contributed to the *Archæologia*, by Viscount Dillon, now President of the Society of Antiquaries, on *Calais and the Pale*, a document of the year 1526 is printed in which mention is made of "a Barrell of Osmondes." ⁷ In the churchwardens' accounts of Louth, Lincolnshire, for 1510-1511, there is a charge of eightpence paid to "Robert Stewynson for Osmondes to bell yokes"; and in 1530, tenpence was paid to "the clock mender for Osmundes" ⁸

The word occurs at least once in the Statutes of the Realm. In the 32, Henry VIII, chap. 14, we read "Item for everie last of Osmondes, accompting xiiij barrilis for a last, viijs" ⁹

In the will of Henry Anderson, a merchant of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, dated 1558, there is a list of metal goods in the "seller on the hyll under the chapell," and among them was a quantity of Osmondes which are distinguished from "Amyshe iron," "Englishe iron," and "Spanishe iron"; parcels of each of which were kept in the same place. ¹⁰

In the inventory of the personal effects of John Nevill, of Faldingworth, Lincolnshire, a manuscript in the British Museum, bearing date the seventh year of Edward VI, two examples of this word occur. In what is called the "neder buttery" he had "a barrel of

5.—Manners and Household Expenses (Roxburgh Club.) p. 301.

6.—II. 248.

7.—Vol. LIII. p. 368.

8.—Vol. I. p. 190. Vol. II. p. 17.

9.—Record Com. Edit. III. 761.

10.—Wills and Invent. of Northern Counties (Surtees Soc.) I. 166.

Osmonds," valued at fourteen shillings, and in the "mylkehouse and bakhouse" there were "certayne Osmonds in a barrell" valued at four shillings.

In Hackluyt's *Voyages* we find "one crayer laden with Osmunds and with divers other merchandises." ¹¹

In the Customs and Valuation of Merchandises for Scotland, 1612, occurs "Spanish spruce, and Sweeden's irne, the stane weght theairof xiijs iiijd.....Osmondes. The stane xiijs iiijd." ¹²

The last instance which I have met with of Osmond used as a living word, occurs in *The Builder's Guide and Gentleman and Traders' Assistant* by William Salmon, junior, carpenter of Colchester. Unfortunately I cannot give the date of this work. The only copy which I have been able to meet with is the one in the British Museum, and this has had the date cut off by the binder. There is not much doubt, however, that the book was issued somewhere about the middle of the last century. Editions of what seem to be the same work were issued in 1736, 1745 and 1752, but I have not been able to examine a copy of any of them. A William Salmon, senior, was living at Colchester, in 1741. *Notes and Queries*, November 13th, 1897, p. 395. In a table of measures in the work referred to the reader is informed that "a last of Osmonds or iron stone is 4,000 weight." ¹³ The word was, we may assume, well nigh obsolete in Salmon's time, or he would not have told his readers that it meant iron stone.

Osmonds does not occur in Spelman's *Glossarium Archæologicum* in the alphabetical arrangement, but may be seen under *Last* where it is left unexplained.

In Thomas Blount's *Law Dictionary* it is given, but the interpretation shews that the compiler was very vague in his ideas concerning what it meant, for he calls it "a kind of ore, or iron-stone, assuming the nature of iron, and it seems was anciently brought into England." Cowel's *Law Dictionary*, edition 1727, repeats these words, and *the*

11.—Edit. 1598. I. 170.

12.—Leiger of Andrew Halyburton, 316.

13.—P. 150

New Law Dictionary of Giles Jacob, 7th edition, 1756, speaks of Osmonds as "a kind of ore of which iron is made, anciently brought into England." James Whishaw's *New Law Dictionary*, 1829, repeats Jacob's with a slight variation in the arrangement of the words.

James Kersey, in the third edition of his Dictionary, and N. Bailey in his thirteenth edition both say that it is "the ore of which iron is made."

Modern dictionary makers, and annotators have, it is clear, gained such information as they possessed from some one or other of the above quoted sources. Halliwell and Wright both appear to have felt that there was some doubt as to the meaning of the word; for the former calls it "a kind of iron," the latter "a sort of iron." They were not inaccurate, only vague; but Admiral W. H. Smyth in his *Sailors' Word Book* was more venturesome, and came to grief in the following fashion, when he informed those who sought enlightenment from his pages, that Osmond was "the old term for pig iron; a great article of lading."

The late Mr. James E. Thorold Rogers in his valuable *History of Agriculture and Prices in England* mentions Osmond on two occasions; he thought that in all likelihood it had "a foreign origin, and that it is probable that in the latter period it indicated a variety of steel." ¹⁴

Mr. T. Hudson Turner in *Some Account of Domestic Architecture* in England seems to have felt the word to be obscure, and expressed himself doubtfully. His suggestion as to the derivation of the term was not an unnatural fancy; it is, however probably wrong. If it be so it furnishes one more example of the futility of guesses unsupported by evidence, regarding questions of philology. His words are "There is also another sort of iron mentioned in accounts of the thirteenth century; it is called Osmund; the signification of the term is not very obvious, though we may presume it to be the name of the place of manufacture." ¹⁵ It is not unlikely that Mr. Turner derived

14.—I. 145. 470.

15.—p. xxxj.

his notion that Osmond had its name from a place, from some foreign work of reference, for in J. Kramer's *Algemeene Kunstwoodentolk* Osemund or Otmund is defined as a sort of Swedish iron bars, called thus from an iron-mill of the same name. A negative in this case cannot be absolutely proved, but from enquiries I have caused to be made in Scandinavia, Germany and Holland, I have come to the conclusion that is in a high degree improbable that any such transference of a local name to a manufactured article has taken place. I cannot hear of any iron-mine or smelting-place which ever bore a name capable of being twisted into Osmond; and it is noteworthy that Hübner and Zincke's *Curieuses und Reales Lexicon* while defining Osemund correctly as "das beste Eisen, so aus Schweden kommt" makes no reference to any place having given it a name.

Osmonds, were, it is evident, not iron-ore, bog-iron or pig-iron, but the very best sort of iron used, and it may be used only, for the finest purposes, such as the heads of arrows, fish-hooks, the works of clocks and the repairs of bell-gear. It appears to have come to this country, not in large pieces, but in small bars. Sheaves of Osmunds are spoken of in 1465; and the Lincolnshire squire, John Nevill, kept his in barrels in the middle of the following century. Dr. Percy in his great work on metallurgy gives a most interesting account of the Osmund process of manufacturing iron, an industry which may still be seen in operation in Finland. The ore treated in the Osmund furnaces was what is called in this country bog-iron ore, which "consists essentially of hydrated sesqui-oxide of iron." It was gathered from the bottoms of lakes and rivers, and is found in large porous brown masses of sponge-like texture. During the summer months the ore was sought for in boats, and gathered by means of drags; and in winter, when the rivers were frozen it was raked up through holes broken in the ice. The manner in which it was collected is fully described by Dr. Percy, as is also the construction of the simple smelting furnaces which were used. ¹⁶

Emanuel Swedenborg, who was widely learned in natural science as well as a religious mystic, in his *Regnum Subterraneum*, has a

16.—Iron and Steel. 320—325.

chapter entitled "*De ferro Svecano Osmond vocata*," in which he gives an account of the process and an engraving of the furnace, and tools used in the manufacture. ¹⁷

The bog-iron which is found in many places near the Frodingham iron-field immediately beneath the surface soil, was smelted during the Roman times and perhaps in days still earlier, and there seems evidence of its continuing to be used to a later period. Probably means not unlike the Osmond process as described by Swedenborg and Percy were employed in preparing it. In conclusion, it may not be out of place to note that there was a proposed treaty with the King of Sweden in 1551, wherein *Ozimus* is mentioned in conjunction with steel and copper. ¹⁸ This is the only time this word occurs, so far that is, as I have been able to ascertain. It is not, as I once thought it might be, a mistake of the historians quoted. Their authority was the autograph manuscript of the diary of King Edward VI, now in the British Museum. I have consulted this original. The word is *ozimus*, clearly written. The King may have misread a memorandum before him or misheard some informant. In the present state of the evidence I cannot but surmise that the word is somehow or other an error for Osmond.

17.—Vol. I. 119—124.

18.—Heylyn, *Ecclesia Restaurata* (Ecl. Hist. Soc.) I. 232.
Burnet, *Hist. Reformation*. Edit. Pocock. V. 16.

Note.—Mr. Peacock informs us that last year, Mr. J. T. Micklethwaite, F.S.A., read at a meeting of the Society of Antiquaries, a paper on Osmond, which he believes contains much new knowledge, but of this he has not been able to avail himself, as the paper has not yet been published.

ANGLO-SAXON AS AN AID TO THE STUDY
OF DIALECTS.

By the REV. THOMAS CLARKE

In the midst of a very busy life in a large town I have given some attention during the last few years to the study of Early and Middle English, and have read with some care some of those early specimens of our English tongue which have come down to us; and because I myself have found so much pleasure in that pursuit, I should be very glad if by the few words which I may say I may be able to induce others, especially from among those who have far more leisure than I have, to work in this field, which was until very recently left almost entirely uncultivated. It is but a few years ago that a really serious movement was made in favour of the study of our language and literature.

It has long seemed to me a matter for regret that comparatively few men of leisure have hitherto engaged in an earnest study of our own language, of which, of course, dialect study is a part, especially in its early form. In several ways this fact may be accounted for. In the first place, many people have supposed that their own tongue needed but little study; that they came to the knowledge of it without effort or were born with that knowledge. In the second place most people seem far more interested in the literature, than in the language itself, and it has been often taken for granted that there is not much that is worthy of attention in our early English writers. In the third place most people who have time for the study of foreign languages at all are more disposed to the study of the modern tongues, as seeming most likely to repay them for the trouble they take to learn them, and because the knowledge of French, German, Spanish and Italian are of great commercial value; and then there is no doubt a large class who are kept from entering upon this study by an unduly high estimate of the difficulty of making themselves able to read Anglo-Saxon and the

earliest forms of English. The time which is allowed to me is too brief to attempt to answer all or any of these objections at any length. We come to learn by a little reading of the older authors how very little we do know of our own tongue. As to the value of our early literature I may refer my hearers to the opinion entertained of it by Professor Ten Brink in his well-known work on that subject. As to the measure of the difficulty involved in learning to read it, I may quote what Professor Skeat says in a little book published a considerable number of years ago. He says "Learning Anglo-Saxon, as it has been called, is not really learning a new language, and a student who has any perseverance in him, who possesses a fair education, and a fair knowledge of French and German may easily make such progress as will very soon astonish himself and excite to further researches." The next sentence which I quote from him is especially important. "There is no difference between modern English and that oldest form of it to which the name of Anglo-Saxon has been given, except such as has been naturally and gradually brought about by mere lapse of time (occasioning the loss of some words and some alterations in the form and meaning of others) and by the enlargement of the vocabulary from foreign sources." "In a word, Old English is the right key to the understanding of the modern language, and those who will not use this key will never open the lock, with all their fumbling." Since this is the case it seems to me a matter for national regret, if not for national shame that, with the exception of a few great English scholars in this country, who are too well known to need mention, we have had to look to foreigners, and to depend upon them to inform and instruct us about our mother tongue. I am thinking of Sievers, in Old English grammar, and Ten Brink, probably our very best authority on our early literature.

Another advantage to be gained from the study of the oldest forms of English is that it makes some, at any rate, of the constructions in modern English easier to understand. Professor Skeat gives some instances of what I mean. He says "It is now common to write up, '*This house to be let.*' Those who do so suppose that '*This house to let*' is not good English. They take it for granted

that '*to let*' is just the infinitive of the verb, whereas, most probably it is the so-called gerund, which is so familiar in Old English. Some will remember the discussion some years ago between Dean Alford and Mr. Moon on the question whether '*It is I*' or '*It is me*' is the more correct English. Now in judging upon this matter it is important to remember that neither is the Old English expression, but '*It am I*,' as every reader of Chaucer knows."

Questions in English grammar admit of a strictly accurate and scientific investigation, in accordance with the known history of the language. The attempt to investigate any doubtful point almost immediately requires that the student should have recourse to the English of an earlier period. It is important to remember that we have not yet a full understanding of the greater of our earlier authors, and that many words found in them still remain to be explained. Certainly the Yorkshire Dialect Society ought also to be interested in Early English for another reason, namely because its study would greatly help to give us an insight into the exact meaning and origin of many dialect words. Many of these are certainly from an Anglo-Saxon source. For the purpose of again giving the authority of a great name to what I say I will make another quotation from the book from which I have already quoted. Professor Skeat says "How extraordinary it seems at first sight that a common Shropshire word which you may hear any day among the lower orders should actually be found in the old poem of William of Palerne; interesting it may be, but surely it ought not to be surprising. The language which they speak in Shropshire is certainly derived from Old English and not Old Chinese, I wish all students would but have confidence in this principle, for I feel assured that nearly all our provincial words can be found either in Old English or in the cognate languages. All that is really necessary is due diligence in searching."

As to the Yorkshire Dialects many of you know them far better than I do. I am not even a Yorkshireman, and yet in the course of twenty years residence in Bradford, I have come to learn the meaning of a few of its local words and to be interested in them, and I have from time to time come upon words in the course of reading some of

the older English authors which I could see at once were the originals of many of the dialect words which I have grown used to hearing the people of Bradford use, but, unfortunately for my present purpose, I have not until recently kept a note of them. I have received some help in recalling some of these words by reading again through the vocabulary at the end of the latest edition of Professor Sweet's Anglo-Saxon Reader, and also from Dr. Wright's Grammar of the Windhill Dialect, but I do not for a moment pretend that the following list is complete. These are a few specimens:—

Hooin—to ill-use, treat badly; A.S. *hienan*, *henan* or *hynan*. “*Hē hynath tha heorde the hē sceoldan healdan.*” “They ill-treat the flock that they ought to keep.” I have perhaps a little special interest in this word, because it was almost the first northern dialect word of which I came to learn the meaning. I had often heard a woman shout to a child in the street “Ah, poor barn the’ list hooined,” but I had not the ghost of an idea what the process of hooining could be. Yet I did not ask for an explanation, lest it should be supposed that I was ignorant of my mother-tongue; for it was evidently thought that no one but a foreigner ought to be excused for not knowing the meaning of that classical word. But as I was one day reading a thirteenth century poem, I came upon the word *heanan*, and I at once saw that this was “hooined” in an older form. I then thought I had made an important discovery. Other words are

Thoyl: put up with, endure, give ungrudgingly; A.S. *tholian* or *tholigean*.

Sam: collect (“sam it up”); A.S. *sammian*: “ *Ic thysne sang fand samnode wide.*” I am the author of this poem; I gathered the material for it from far and wide.”

Tide: a feast, festival; A.S. *tid* a time, anniversary.

Supp: to drink; A.S. *supan*: to drink. “*Gif he that broth syplh.*” “If he drinks that broth.”

Sneak: act deceitfully; *snican*: to creep, crawl: “*thær mon ænigne snicendne wærm ne gesihth.*” “There (in Ireland) no reptile is usually seen.”

Slaip: slippery; A.S. *slypan* or *slēpan*.

Fane: glad. Used as an adjective, it seems confined to the dialects; as an adverb it is found in literary English. Cp. *fægnian*: to be glad; *fægen*: glad; “I’m fane to see the”, I am glad to see you. The sense seems to have been originally “fixed” hence “suited,” “satisfied” (Skeat).

Barn: child, A.S. *bearn*.

Thrape: to quarrel; A.S. *threapian*: to reprove, correct.

Lig: to lie, “liggin’ in bed”; A.S. *licgan*.

Laak: O.E. *lācan*, to play, originally to swing, more about as a ship does in the waves, &c. *Fuglas tha the late thurh lyft lacath fithrum.* “Birds which slowly through the air move with their pinions.” “*Tha ne dorston wæ darethum lacan.*” “Who before had not dared to play with javelins”; Bradford, “Run and laak, doy.”

Addle: to earn (Old Norse) Dr. Wright.

Addle: (as in addled egg) A.S. *adlian*: to be diseased. “*Thæt se ylca biscop æn ædliende mæden gebildende gæhælde.*” so that the same Bishop may heal the sick girl by prayer.”

Leet on: meet with; A.S. *alihtan*: to alight. Latin, *desilire*.

Gate: (out of the gate; get agate, &c.); A.S. *geat*: road; agate, on gate, on the road.

After-math: (Bradford “fog”) second crop of grass. *Mæth*: a mowing. A.S. *æftermath*. M.E. *fogge*: rank grass.

Anent: “opposite” or “regarding.” Middle English *anent*, *anende*, *anentis*, &c.; a contraction for *anefent*, A.S. *on efn* or *on mn*; literally: on an even with, “on a level with,” and thus opposite.

Reight: right, with such words as leet: light, seem to preserve partly the guttural sound of riht, the “h” in Early English, having the sound of the Scotch or German “ch”; A.S. *leoht*: light.

Owt: anything, A.S. *auht* or *āwuht*.

Rigg: back; also used as a verb; one young man says to another “I could rigg thee”: throw on back; A.S. *hryeg*: back.

Wake: sit up with (a sick man): "they waked with him all last week." A.S. *wacian*: to watch, so "Irish wakes."

Wick: lively or alive; "Ah, he's a wick un."

Shoo: she (also nearer Lancashire pronounced hoo); A.S. *hēo*: she, (*he, hēo, hit, he, she, it.*)

Beck: a stream; A.S. *becc*: a brook.

To boot: into the bargain, (used in various parts of the country.) literally: to improve the bargain; A.S. *betan*: to improve; *bot*: help, profit; *Ic hit bete*: I will remedy it; Dutch *baton*: to profit.

Brat: apron; South of England, smock-frock; A.S. *bratt*: coat, cloak.

Claht (dish-claht) cloth; A.S. *clut*: a cloth, a patch, a plate. *Wurdon forthaborene isene clūtas*. "Iron plates were brought forth."

Fligged: fledged ("fligged and flown"); A.S. *fligan*: put to flight; M.E. *fligge* (Latin *fugare*).

Doy: joy; "g" or "j" becoming "d" (See Dr. Wright's Windhill Dialect, page 105-106.)

Doard: George.

Ig: mood, temper ("in a ig"): in a rage; A.S. *lyge*: mind, disposition.

Gate: the space between the looms in a mill; A.S. *geat*: road.

Croft: a home-field; A.S. *croft*: a small inclosed field.

Lead: to convey in cart; A.S. *lædan*.

Let on: let the secret out, "thaw moo'nt let on"; A.S. *lætan*: let, let go, give up. *Gif that he ne mæge, læte on*: If he cannot do that, give it up.

Neb: beak (of a cap), nose; A.S. *nebb*: beak, nose. *Gif mon othrum thæw neb (or nebb) of aslea*: If a man cuts off another's nose.

Deft: neat, clever; A.S. *dæfte*: doestan to put in order.

Fast: in a difficulty; A.S. *fæst*: fixed, stiff (of land). *On fæstum landum*: on stiff lands.

Mël: to meddle; M.E. *mellen*, O.F. *medler*.

Poez: to kick; O.F. *pouiser, possier*.

Midin: dung hill (as-midin); M.E. *midling*.

Avur-meal: oat-meal; (M.E. *havere*, oats.)

Gad: to gossip; A.S. *ge-guda*, companion.

Gam: to gamble; A.S. *gamnian*.

Lap: wrap up; M.E. *lappen*.

Las: a girl; M.E. *lasse*.

Lat: a lath; A.S. *lætt*.

Sackless: simple, silly; A.S. *saclēas*, innocent.

Bef: to cough; M.E. *beffin*.

Mawk: a maggot; M.E. *matk*.

Nēeg: to annoy; to gnaw, A.S. *gnagan*.

Wear: to spend; M.E. *waren*.

Skelp: to fog, beat; M.E. *skelpen*.

Slek: to extinguish (fire); A.S. *gestleccan*.

Sneck: the latch of a door; M.E. *snekke*.

Tlik: catch hold of; A.S. *clyccean*.

Fettle: condition; A.S. *fetel*: a girdle, a belt.

Frame: to set about; A.S. *fremman*: to make, to advance; (Latin *promovere*), *that ic mæge auru gehwylene fremman and fyrthan freonda minra*: that I may advance and further every one of my friends.

Hind: a farm bailiff; A.S. *hina*: servant.

Hing: to hang, suggests hing, hang, hung, like sing, sang, sung; and A.S. *bringan, brang, brungen*: to bring.

Kittle; tickle; A.S. *citelian*; M.E. *kitelen*; tickle (Latin *titillare*).

Kist; chest; A.S. *cyst, cist*: a chest.

Long o': owing to; A.S. *gelang on*: owing to; *that was swithor on tham gelang*: that was rather owing to this reason.

Rick : smoke ; A.S. *rēc* smoke, the *ē* has been shortened in the dialect to *i*. (Dr. Wright.)

Ax : ask ; A.S. *axian*, *acsion* : to ask.

Every one knows that Old English had its dialects, just as modern English has. Among these were the West Saxon, which was regarded as the standard of reference, like the Attic dialect in Greek ; the Mercian, from which most directly modern English has sprung, the Kentish, and the Northumbrian. I am indebted to Sievers' Old English Grammar for the following particulars: "The principal Northumbrian texts, besides a few Runic inscriptions, are an inter-linear Translation of the Gospels, the so-called Durham books, St. Matthew's Gospel and a Translation of the Durham ritual." "The only remains which are certainly and purely Kentish are a metrical Translation of the 50th Psalm, a hymn, and a Collection of Glosses now at the British Museum. The writings in the West Saxon dialect are very numerous, the chief being the works of Alfred the Great, preserved in contemporaneous manuscripts : Translation of Gregory's Pastoral Care, the Chronicle of Orosius, and the old text of the Saxon Chronicle. Old English poetry originated either in Northumbria or Mercia, but it is preserved in copies made by southern scribes ; this poetry represents no one dialect in its purity."

ON THE YORKSHIRE DIALECTS.

By the Rev. R. V. TAYLOR. B.A.

Some people, if not many people, are continually saying, what is the good of the old Yorkshire dialects? They are only relics of the past, and are rapidly dying out, why not let them die, quietly and speedily? They might just as well say, what is the good of the Latin and Greek languages, as they are now obsolete and dead languages, forgetting that other languages are founded upon them, and that these cannot be properly understood, without a knowledge of Latin and Greek, etc. Just so is it with the old dialects, they are the languages of the greater part of the poor people in all counties, and their old authors cannot be properly understood without a knowledge of the meanings of these ancient words. No one can claim to know English thoroughly, who is altogether unacquainted with the leading dialects of the country. It was its literary wealth, wide extension, and the patronage of the Court, that, 500 years ago, gave the Midland form of speech an ascendancy over the various Northern and Southern dialects, an ascendancy which has never since been lost. But many of the dialects contain valuable old words, by no means vulgarisms, and at least as expressive, as those in the National speech. Others, perhaps not so choice, yet nevertheless illustrate the meanings of terms now in daily use. And many facts of local history have their record in odd expressions to be found only in these *patois*. Besides, the history of dialects warns us not to give ourselves airs, or presume that our present English is fixed and perfect. "Growth must continue, changes must supervene even as things are ; but greater may occur. For instance, should the capital of the British Isles ever be removed to Dublin, or Edinburgh, or Glasgow, then Thackeray's jokes about "Garge" for George, "Pork" for Park, &c., would be jokes no longer ; or, if Mother Shipton's saying (herself a Yorkshire worthy) should in its fulness be verified—

'York was, London is, and Lincoln shall be
The greatest city of the three.'

would there not be a manifest change in the English of the courtly and polite."

A good work has been done by the English Dialect Society (which had its headquarters at Manchester), and through the labours of able scholars it investigated the peasant speech and literature of England, carrying on labours somewhat similar to those performed for kindred language at Copenhagen, Upsala, Christiania, Leyden, &c. Among the Yorkshire volumes published recently, is "A Glossary of the Dialect of Almondbury and Huddersfield." Mr. Easther, who compiled it, says, when he came to the neighbourhood he was struck with its peculiar vowel-sounds, and the many words and phrases hitherto unknown to him. He and his friends began to collect lists. Yorkshiremen, according to the author, will not admit that a Southerner, even when fully acclimatise^d, can pronounce their vowel sounds. In the opening 12 pages of "Additions and Illustrations," strange and amusing accounts are given of the introduction of Chemistry into the district, of bull-baiting, by-names, home method of manufacturing cloth, of Xmas and the "letting in" of it or the New Year by a black-haired man, of football, Shrove Tuesday and its: pancake bell, Feckless Fanny, of oatcake and the backstone, of children receiving nicknames, of Joseph o' Nuppits, and the mysterious padfoot like an immense sheep or bear with large eyes as big as cups, &c. The 150 pages of the Glossary are interspersed with many anecdotal illustrations. Ben Morton, who is introduced, was quite a character, and not without wit. He once met a gentleman coming up the Bank or horseback who said to him, "Its a fine morning." He answered, "Aye, maister, it is," adding, "An' its a rare thing for some of us that horses were made." "What for, my man?" said the equestrian. "Wha, if ther had been nooan, sichlauk as me would ha' had to hug sichlauk as thee." A man of Almondbury was determined to become independent, and often said so, but as often was unsuccessful. A friend once met him and said, "Well, are you independent yet?" to which he replied, "Naw! nor nivver mun be, whaul (or till) au can live aat o' door and ate mull" (mould or earth). Some of the words used when speaking of the Supreme Being show a tender regard for the third commandment. He is called the Man aboon, the Man

aoove, the good Man, and the best Man, &c. Again, various days have particular names, as St. Mark's Eve is called Boggard Night, or Ghost Neet, when some of the weddings or funerals of the ensuing year might then be seen. Others are called Mischief Neet (April 30th), Collop Monday, from the rashers of bacon then used, followed by Shrove or Fastens Tuesday, and Ash Wednesday, &c. Also Rush-bearing (the first Monday in August), Wassail Neet (New Year's Eve), and Twentit' E'en, once regarded as the real termination of the Christmas holidays. Also various superstitions are pointed out, such as those connected with the Gabble-ratches or Night Whistlers. Among the words are many which seem more closely connected with foreign languages than with standard English, such as alegar (acidified ale), dorm (a kind of sleep), kinkhost (whooping cough), near (the kidney), and nominy (a tale), &c. Many games are described, also dishes, such as brewis or browis, parkins, pease-calding and lumpy-dicks, &c. It is not easy to see why a long row of cottages is called an "oration" of them, or an abundance expressed by "all nations," or "all nations enough." To talk in a more refined tone is described as talking "Dutch;" or "False," used in the sense of intelligent; or a man addressed as an old Jezebel, or broth or porridge used as plural nouns. Many old Bible and Prayer Book expressions are found here, such as runagate, plat, presently (for immediately), yesternight, and frame (for continue). It is surprising to see what a multitude of words this dialect has derived immediately from the Anglo-Saxon for which there are no equivalents in standard English. Many of these might be used with advantage.

But a great change is now going on in the spoken language of England, among the poorer classes especially. The schoolmaster is much abroad, and is making his presence felt in every household by the changes he is introducing in family speech through the influence of the children. A sort of mongrel speech, which may develop into a *patois*, is growing among the new generation, the result of a curious struggle between the dialect they have learned, from their mothers chiefly, and the correct speech they hear at school from their teachers. This new speech is not very pleasant to the ear. Instead of the broad doric of the local

dialects—distinctive enough and often musical—the talk of the Board School boy is often a hideous mixture of what may be called book-words, or words of the correct standard English, and the words of the local dialect. The book-words, too, are spoken with the local accent or inflection, which is far more tenacious than the special words of the dialect. The result is very unpleasant to the ear, and cannot be produced by any written words. All over the North of England the old, hearty, broad “Aye” of the affirmative is pushed out of the way for “Yis,” which is made to do duty for the correct “Yes” of good English among the new generation.

It will not be an unmixed blessing when dialects are dead, and they are certainly dying. To get one uniform level of speech from John o’ Groats to Land’s End is not so devoutly to be wished. The strongly marked and picturesque distinctions in the spoken language of different parts of the country will soon be among the things of the past. Educational enthusiasts may hail the time when rich and poor, peer and peasant, employer and artisan, speak one perfect speech; when not an “h” is dropped, and never a final “g” forgotten; when no provincialism is heard in the land, and when all the old country-side words and phrases, which have expressed the narrow but sturdy thoughts of the people for centuries, are all in oblivion. But we question whether the scholar, as distinct from the pedant, or whether the philologist will be in rapture over this uniformity of classic speech. They will always hope for some odd corners of the land, here and there, where the old dialect of the country people is still spoken, and where the ancient relics of the language are still preserved. The philologist will no more like to see dialects swept away than the antiquary or historian will care to see our old abbeys and castles vanish from the land. One longs to fancy that in these quiet corners, in generations to come, the dialect brought by the followers of Cerdic or Ella, or may be of Guthrum or Sweyn, may still be preserved as a living speech. Happily there is in nearly every county a local dialect literature, in which, to some extent, the old speech-forms may be preserved for the philologist of the future. The local dialects are really a rich mine where the oldest forms of our words may be found. It is rather a pity that some of these old

words cannot be brought back again into standard speech; and if they ousted some of the long classical words it would be a distinct gain. Take that distinctive word, so much used in the North of England, “gawmless.” It means senseless, stupid—etymologically “knowledgeless.” It can be traced in the Latin *cognosco*, in the Greek *gignosco*, and even in Sanscrit its root appears. Hardly any word has such ancient and respectable associations as this most characteristic word of the Lancashire dialect. And hundreds of these words might be given if we had space and time.

Professor Blackie has taken up the cudgels for his native Doric with great vigour. He maintains that the Lowland Scotch is a classic dialect. Probably there is no speech so delightful as the chastened and tempered dialect of an educated Scotchman. Many people in the South, who pride themselves on their culture, will not take the trouble to master the forms of the Lowland Scotch, and so they shut themselves out of a vast store of enjoyment that comes from the reading of Burns, of Wm. Black, and Geo. Macdonald, &c. A little effort this way brings a rich harvest of old Saxon words besides, lost out of the speech of the Southron. It makes one feel unutterable things to hear Burns’s most characteristic songs done into correct and modern English. We have seen one edition of Burns where this was attempted, and we do not want to see another. But then the Lancashire, the Yorkshire, the Northumbrian, the East Anglian, or the Somersetshire districts, have just as much to say for themselves as the Lowland Scotch. They are just as much classic, in Professor Blackie’s sense of the word. Their special words like *addle* (earn), *boggart* (ghost), *hig* (passion), *gradely* (right, proper), *fettle* (repair), and hundreds more, are simply the older words elbowed out by the scholars of the pre-Elizabethan time to make way for classical abortions. By a careful study of these old forms we may “translate our words back into their primal freshness,” to quote Mr. Russell Lowell, who has used the Yankee dialect with immense effect in the “Biglow Papers,” to rouse the conscience of his countrymen against the iniquity of the Mexican War and against slavery.

What are all our languages but dialects of older forms? The standard English of to-day is simply the Midland or Mercian dialect, which the influence of Chaucer made the literary language, and which afterwards became supreme. Besides this, there were the Northern dialects, spoken variously from the Humber to the Forth, and the Southern dialects, spoken South of the Thames and in the West. The dialects we have previously named, together with the Lincolnshire dialect, are now the chief survivors of these three Anglo-Saxon dialects, modified greatly, of course, by admixture of new words. Dialects are not vulgar, or a sign of coarseness, as some superior persons think. Many of these people will talk the vilest slang, who regard the dialect of their native place as utterly beneath them. The labourer, who speaks his native dialect correctly, speaks really better English than the half-educated people above him who interlard their speech with slang, and are not too certain of their aspirates. Slang is but speech corruption; but a dialect is an old way of speaking good English. Each of the great English dialects of to-day has its literature. The late Poet Laureate (Lord Tennyson) did not deem his native Lincolnshire dialect beneath his muse. Mr. Edwin Waugh, Mr. Brierley, and the late Sir J. Kay Shuttleworth are perhaps the chief literary exponents of the Lancashire dialects. The late Rev. Mr. Barnes has given that of Somersetshire a literary standing. While in Yorkshire, Mr. Ben Preston and Mr. John Hartley, &c., have written poems in that dialect which are read and enjoyed by thousands of Yorkshiremen. It is curious that while the spoken dialects are declining the written dialects are more popular than ever. Scores of educated people who would disdain to speak their native dialects, gladly avail themselves of every chance of reading them.

At the same time, it would only be fair to admit that dialects have their disadvantages. Among Elementary Schoolmasters there are loud complaints that to the pupils drafted into their schools, they have practically to teach a new language, and that in teaching reading the task is made much harder by the dialect their pupils have learnt at home. In one district of North Staffordshire, after a long and patient investigation, one of Her Majesty's Inspectors says he could not find more than 250 words in the vocabulary of the natives, that nearly

half of these words were purely local words, some were slang words, and the rest words of ordinary English. This was soon after the great epoch of 1870. Since then the change has been enormous, the Schoolmaster has enriched the local vocabulary, and we may presume the local ideas have been multiplied as well. The facilities of communication also have greatly changed the intense distinctness of local speech. Yet to this day, most emphatically in Lancashire at least, does a man's speech betray him. Oldham, Bolton, Blackburn, Wigan, have distinct pronunciations and idioms, by which the native can be detected at once, but which baffle all attempts to write them down. In North Lancashire the dialect has a large infusion of words of Danish origin, and the same prevails in the North Riding. It is curious to notice how the Yorkshireman broadens the *a* sounds, and the native of Lancashire softens them, *e.g.*, Yorkshireman, *bahn*, going; Lancashireman, *beawn*. It is interesting to notice how these differences coincide with the mental and moral characteristics of the people. These parallels may be traced, but it would now take too much time to follow them out. There is, no doubt, a great change taking place in the speech of the common people, and these changes are also affecting the speech of the people above them, and we are approaching a time when we shall all probably speak with one tongue and one accent. Whatever advantages may fall from this, it is still a source of regret that we shall lose some of the picturesque distinctions of speech in social life.

The following are a few notes from one of the multitude who still cling to the old forms of speech. There is an unmistakable change being wrought in the language and manners of the people. The old words are rapidly falling into disuse; folk-lore and superstitious observances are fast following them; and to the latter departure we can fervently say "God speed." But we have a soft place in our hearts for many of the old words, and we would gladly see them take a new lease of life. They can ill be spared, for the Queen's English does not furnish words that sound so terse and forcible to the ear. Many a time a person uses half a dozen words to convey a meaning which one or two words of the common idiom would have made more plain. Some of these words are pictures in

themselves. Take the word "Snattled" for instance, and the poor man sees in his mind's eye the rainy day for which he had been providing, and the little savings diminishing copper by copper until all is gone. The word "tew" gives us the idea of prolonged exertion, and what a picture of "follow my leader" is conjured up by the old word "crawden," which signifies to outdo in daring. We now get "dripping wet" where we used to get "sipeing wet." "Smittle" is much more simple than "contagious"; whilst the word "thoil" cannot be adequately expressed by any other single English word, so we cannot thoil its loss. Here are a few more examples of words, teeming with expression to our minds, and for which we find no satisfactory equivalent:—Cant, lively though aged; drate, to drawl out; jorum, a great number; mense, to mend or tidy; nominy, form of words; stalled, tired; sind, to rinse; threap, hot argument; ware, to spend; frame, the setting about doing anything; gauvey, a staring lout without intelligence; bodes, resembles; duft, to turn craven; gumption, sense; mell, to interfere; marrow (verb) to pair; marrow, (noun or adjective) equal; pan, to throw heart into work; sam up, to pick up; wart-days, weekdays; fratch, to quarrel; nantling, making or mending trifling things; dither, to tremble; with thousands more.

Another side to this question has been suggested to my mind. Yorkshire singers are noted for their voices; some ascribe this excellence to the hilly character of our county; but surely there are other counties in England as elevated as Yorkshire. Is it not possible that the broad vowel sounds in our local dialects strengthen the voice and give it "Klang?" I have noticed that some villages which are noted for the broadness of their twang can furnish contralto voices in abundance, whilst other villages, within easy distance, and equally fond of music, have to train altos to take that part. Knowing, as I do, that many here present are interested in all that belongs to the past, I would most earnestly draw their attention to the rapidity with which our vernacular and traditionary lore is being swept into the forgotten past; nothing is now safe unwritten. Out of a list of 200 words spoken in one village twenty years ago, not more than half are now to be heard; and I suppose it is pretty much the same all over the country. Therefore we must all be up and doing, and rescue as many of the old words as possible ere it be too late.

SOME WORK FOR THE SOCIETY.

At a Meeting of the Council, held on December 11th, 1897, Mr. J. Horsfall Turner, J.P., F.R.H.S., read the following scheme which he suggested should be submitted to the members of the Society as a basis on which to work out the objects of the Society. The scheme was approved.

- A. Geographical names.
- B. Personal names.
- C. Popular names of animals, birds, fishes.
- D. Botanical names, popular names of plants, trees.
- E. Technical dialect terms.
- F. Dialect bibliography.
- G. Folk lore.
- H. Dialect words in ordinary speech, phrases.
- I. Comparative etymology, slang.
- J. Ethnological and other scientific deductions.

A. GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES.

The following sub-divisions are recommended to facilitate final classification for etymological purposes:—

- a. Water, rivers, becks, ponds, sea-coast, marshes, swamps, dubbs.
- b. Hills, mountains.
- c. Valleys, dells, cloughs.
- d. Territorial divisions, wapentakes, the Ainsty, forests, (as Hardwick,) shires, (as Hallam.)
- e. Ancient Ecclesiastical Parishes, before 1800.
- f. Index to Doomsday Book.
- g. Lists of townships of the Three Ridings.
- h. Lists of villages and hamlets of the Three Ridings.
- i. Field names.
- j. Woods, roads, etc.

Having broadly defined the classification of these names, I beg to offer a few suggestions as to the sources of information and the methods of work, reminding the members that they need only be regarded as crude suggestions.

- (1) Confine your researches to one of the Ancient Parishes with which you are well acquainted. If the Parish be too large for you to attempt, select such Township in it as you best know, and, that there may be no overlapping, please make your offer known at once to the Secretary who will keep a register.
- (2) Carefully describe the position of each place in its relation to hill or vale, or water.
- (3) Place all your suggested etymologies by figured notes, 1, 2, 3, &c., at the foot of your pages, giving ascertained facts therewith.
- (4) Let no place name nor field name be omitted, however common.
- (5) Give all the spellings of the names, including the local pronunciation. Thus, Bailiffe Bridge is given Daycliffe on a map but the local name is Belleybrig.
- (6) Search all the printed authorities, histories, inclosure acts, local maps, &c., for the locality you work at, and extract every name.
- (7) Copy out all the place-names in your Parish Register, and especially consult the Tithe Commutation and other maps in the custody of the Vicar and Parish Clerk, who will gratuitously give access for so laudable a purpose.
- (8) The old Town's Books are immensely valuable, as are also the new and old Ordnance Maps. These may be bought from any bookseller, but it is almost certain that every parish and district council will have them, and will gladly let you have comfortable access to them.
- (9) Besides local histories, amongst hundreds of similar Yorkshire books may be mentioned the "Yorkshire Gazetteers" by Clarke, Langdale, Tuke; "Yorkshire Directories," old and new

by Baines, Kelly, Parsons, Slater, &c.; Allen's "Yorkshire"; Lawton's "Churches"; county histories by Whitaker, Hunter, etc.; the "Yorkshire Archæological Journal" and the "Record Series," "North Riding Records," "Yorkshire Notes and Queries," "Yorkshire Folk Lore Journal," etc., all of which are accessible at Free Libraries.

(10) I have made a complete index to Doomsday Book from the photo-copy by Sir H. James, compared with Mr. Skaife's transcription in preference to Mr. Bawdwen's. This is now available, and therefore need not be done again. I have given the labour of a long period to add the etymology of each of the thousands of names recorded.

(11) Notwithstanding the hundreds of Yorkshire topographical works that exist, thousands of deeds are to be found in private archives in which field names will be found that have never been printed. I cannot too forcibly advocate the examination of these precious documents, and the importance of stating the date of the charter examined. These, with session rolls, wills, Archbishops' books, Parish Registers, &c., should be open to all historical researchers; or better still, placed in Riding Record Offices.

(12) The most prolific source of information, I venture to assert, will be found in the rich Manor Rolls. At Wakefield they date back to 1300, and embrace most of the Calder Basin from Todmorden to Sandal.

B. PERSONAL NAMES.

I would suggest that investigations be first confined to such names of persons as occur before 1400; and that the date and locality be invariably indicated, as well as the source of information, printed or manuscript. I have suggested the year 1400 as the final date, because surnames had mostly become settled in Yorkshire by that time, and because we have good basis for operation in the Poll Tax printed by the "Yorkshire Archæological Association," which may well be supplemented by the Subsidy Rolls in the "Thoresby Society's Journals," and similar lists in the "Index to York Wills," Ancient

Deeds in the "Yorkshire Genealogist," Plantagenet Harrison's "West Gilling," manor rolls in the Histories of Brighouse, Ilkley, etc.

As general divisions, SURNAMES may be classed under :—

(1) Place-names, with date, locality, source of information. Indicate when John de la Croft becomes John Croft, or William de Leeds is given as William Leeds; and always state his place of residence if possible, or whether a casual witness, etc.

(2) Trades, with date, locality and source. William le Taylor or William le Cissor, John Faber or John le Smith should be recorded exactly in the spelling, Latin or English, in which it appears in the source of information. Vickerman should appear under this heading.

(3) Sirenames, with date, locality, and source. As these were settled names after the other two classes had generally become fixed, they are of very little service unless the date and locality are carefully recorded. The same man may appear in the same year in the rolls as Richard Simms, Richard Simson, Simpson, Symonson, or Richard Sympton Dobson. His wife will appear as Mary Richard-wife, and his daughter as Mary Richard-doughter. The fact should be noted whether such names as Bill o' Jack's o' Sam's, or Luke o' t' Rocks still obtain, or when the custom died out.

(4) Captious or names of doubtful origin, including personally descriptive names, as Jack Blade, Sam Whitehead.

(5) Christian names in the earliest deeds are servicable in denoting nationality, Anglian, Norman, &c. Post-Reformation Christian names may be classified as generally given in such works as Bardsley's, but little local purpose can be served by such recent classification except to shew (i.) where and when Biblical names were adopted; (ii.) Puritanical names; (iii.) Pet diminutives such as Dolly; (iv.) Dates before 1800 where more than one Christian name was given to one person, thus, George Cooper Rushworth, born at Rastrick in April, 1762.

(6) Anglian, Danish, &c., Christian names (as Fek, Grim, Gamel) are so frequently incorporated with our township and village place-names that it is desirable some competent authority should supply from ancient Northern records an alphabetical list.

As to the sources of information, besides those just indicated, the local histories and the ancient manuscripts referred to under topography, particularly old charters and manor rolls, will afford a full and interesting supply. At a subsequent period it may be desirable to compile the list for the interval between 1400 and 1580; when Parish Registers became general. A moderate number of registers date from 1538.

C. ANIMAL KINGDOM.

Popular names of Animals, Birds, etc. Though these names may be found in the Dialect Dictionary, Naturalist Society's Transactions, etc., it is desirable to have a Yorkshire List to itself; and there is room for amplification and localization. Old Churchwarden's books give interesting matter on this head. Some names of animals as the wolf, the tod, and the brock, enter into our place names.

D. VEGETABLE KINGDOM.

Popular names of Plants, etc. As stated in the last paragraph the sources of information are easily accessible, and yet the list may be augmented by reference to various old and modern Herbals. Drake's "Diary" at the siege of Pontefract speaks of "green-sauce," but the editor did not know that sorrel was meant. The Ilkley Manor Rolls state that certain men were fined for stealing "rice" (twigs) from the wood. Such notes, with dates, ought to be recorded.

E. TECHNICAL DIALECT TERMS.

I can but indicate some of the lines that may be pursued by different individuals, to supplement what has been done in the Dialect Dictionary, Archaic Dictionary, &c.

(1) Agricultural words as used by farmers, gardeners, shepherds in sheep counting, land measurements—current and obsolete,

&c. The manor rolls and old deeds are specially valuable for this purpose. Marshall, Tuke, Brown, and other agricultural works must be consulted.

(2) Stone and Mining Trades.

(3) Joiners, Builders, Masons. Such words as "Towzer," a prison, will be found in Bailey's and other old Dictionaries.

(4) Woollen Trades; "snicksnarls" and similar quaint words. Locality should always be denoted. The Sessions Rolls give many obsolete trade terms.

(5) Woodmen, Trenchers, &c.

(6) Land terms, Common Field words, and Law terms may be got as a basis from Jacob's, Blount's and other old Law Dictionaries, and from Seebohm, Lewis, and similar modern works, but such words should only be used for local application in a Yorkshire book.

(7) Physiological terms, animal, including human.

(8) Schoolmasters may be specially asked to supply from their own localities the dialectic words, phrases, pronunciations, &c., with which they are in conflict. Inspectors are asking the teacher of each class to enter such difficulties in the class syllabus, and each year the lists will diminish in force.

(9) Ladies, as well as gentlemen, may be asked to make Dialect Scrap books to be lent or given to the Society. The columns of several newspapers, notably the "Leeds Mercury Supplement" and the "Yorkshire Weekly Post," have contained numerous articles, long or short, that would be a great acquisition if cut out and pasted into a Dialect Scrap book. There is no fear of having too many such books, for they will always be valued in our public as well as private libraries. I have hundreds of these papers ready for cutting up, and would like to know of a volunteer to cut the dialect articles out and mount them for a Society Scrap book.

(10) Our Free Libraries, and also this Society, will welcome any printed or MS. dialect pamphlet.

F. DIALECT BIBLIOGRAPHY.

A new Bibliography of Yorkshire Dialect books and pamphlets is nearly ready for the press. Mr. C. A. Federer, of Bradford, will gladly receive any additions.

G. FOLK LORE.

(i.) The primary object under this heading should be to give an index only of such items as appear in the "Yorkshire Folk Lore Journal," Hope's "Holywells," Heywood's Diaries, Andrew's, Federer's, Baring Gould's and Taylor's works, and Yorkshire books, generally. (ii.) In the second place make special Scrap books of newspaper cuttings. (iii.) Lastly, indicate where and when the custom obtained in this County down to modern instances, and then add new discoveries; otherwise needless repetition will occur.

No attempt is here made to define the lines upon which sections H., I., J., may be accomplished, and whilst the Council have no desire to curtail any voluntary work in any section, they feel that Section A, on Geographical names, claims full and prompt effort, and they urge every member to become responsible, and get outside help where possible, to completely work one parish at least. But it is very desirable that intimation should first be sent to the Secretary.

Two suggestions more I may venture to offer in the hope that persons in various parts of the County may still further aid the work of the Society.

(1) Purchase a cheap ordinary English Dictionary with wide margins, and carefully write opposite the local pronunciation of such words only as occur in ordinary folk speech.

(2) Take an ordinary Grammar, as Lennie's or Murray's, and paraphrase the same into the dialect of your locality.

A score of books in each of these classes, covering the dialects of the County, would be a great boon to present and future students.

REPORT.

A Report, from which the following is an extract, was read to the First Annual Meeting, at York, on September 21st, 1897, by the then Hon. Secretary, Mr. S. K. Craven.

IN October, 1894, a Committee was formed in Bradford, in response to an appeal from Prof. Wright, the editor of the English Dialect Dictionary, having for its object the collecting of further Yorkshire material for the English Dialect Dictionary. This Committee pursued its labours for over two years, and received contributions from some 90 persons who practically exhausted the spoken dialects of the county, contributing in all about 35,000 words and phrases. This body of workers contained the germ of the present Society. Prior to the formal dissolution of the Committee, which took place on the 19th February, 1897, a consultation took place between the Chairman and Secretary as to the practicability of permanently keeping together and turning to some useful purpose a number of people of similar tastes and aspirations. It was also felt that the field of research was by no means exhausted, and in view of the interest in dialect and kindred subjects which had been aroused by the Committee's work, it was resolved that if a sufficient number of persons could be found willing to join, to form a Dialect Society for the county. In response to an appeal about 60 promises of assistance were received. In consequence of this encouraging result a General Meeting was convened by the promoters, at Bradford, on March 27th, when the Society was duly inaugurated. As the Society became more widely known, the adhesion of new members became unexpectedly numerous, and the collaboration of many gentlemen of weight and influence in the County was secured. The Committee did not therefore feel justified in restricting the Society's work and organisation within the limited sphere laid down by the regulations adopted at the period of its formation. It was therefore decided to call together a General Meeting of all the members, in order to lay before them a new scheme of organisation and work more in keeping with the actual importance of the Society. From this meeting, held on the 2nd July, dates the existence of the Society as at present constituted.

The

Yorkshire Dialect Society,

FOUNDED MARCH, 1897.

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