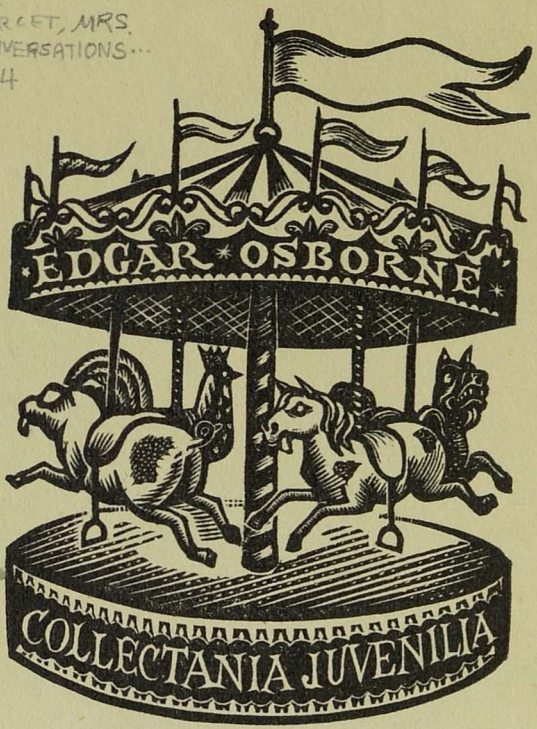

CONVERSATIONS

ON

LANGUAGE.

NOTICE.

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CONVERSATIONS

ON

LANGUAGE,

FOR CHILDREN.

BY MRS. MARCET,

AUTHOR OF

"CONVERSATIONS ON CHEMISTRY,"

&c. &c.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR

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PREFACE.

THROUGH the course of a long life the author has acquired confidence from the indulgence with which her elementary works have been received; yet she cannot present this small volume to the public without some apprehension lest the subject treated of should be considered as above the capacity of the young readers for whom it is intended.

When she first entered upon the subject, she was far from being aware of the difficulties which she would have to encounter in bringing it down to the level of a child's mind; but the interest increas-

ing upon her as she proceeded, she was induced to persevere in her attempt to awaken in the minds of her young readers a similar interest to that which she herself felt. If she should have succeeded in this endeavour, she hopes that parents will have no reason to complain that their children have been led into a pursuit which might at first sight be supposed unsuited to their tender age.

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CONVERSATIONS

ON

LANGUAGE.

CONVERSATION I.

ON THE USE OF LANGUAGE AND THE ORGANS OF SPEECH.

"Now that you have acquired some knowledge of grammar," said Mrs. B. to her children, "it is fit that I should give you a notion of the nature of language. Can you tell me what the use of language is? What do we do when we speak?"

Edward replied; "We tell the people we are speaking to, what we are thinking about."

"That is true," said his mother; "the use of language is to express our thoughts

to each other. Mary tells her thoughts to Sophy when she is talking to her, and Sophy in return tells her thoughts to Mary. But in order to be able to tell our thoughts we must understand well the meaning of the words we use; for words are the signs of our thoughts. Do you always understand what you say?"

"To be sure we do," said Willy, "else we should talk nonsense."

"Now tell me," continued his mother, "can brute animals speak?"

"No," replied Sophy, "but they can make noises."

"They make a variety of noises," observed their mother, "either when they are in pain, or are frightened, or when they want to frighten away other animals they are afraid of. But these are only cries, not distinct words, such as we use when we speak."

"But," remarked Sophy, "some birds can speak. Nurse's mother has a parrot which says 'Pretty Poll,' all day long,

and sometimes, 'What's o'clock?' It amuses us so much when we go to see her!"

"The parrot," said Mrs. B., "does not understand one word that he says. He does not know what 'Poll' means, nor 'pretty,' nor 'clock;' he only repeats the sounds of those words, because he has heard them very often. Now, even little Charley, though he is scarcely three years old, and can speak but imperfectly, understands what he says. Charley, what are you doing there?" said his mother to him.

"Playing with my little cart," answered the child.

"You see," continued Mrs. B., "that Charley understands both what is said to him, and what he answers. If I were to ask the parrot what he was doing, he would not understand what I meant, and if he answered me, it would be some nonsense or other that he had learnt by rote, such as 'Pretty Poll.'"

" You see, my dear children, that God has made no living creatures able to speak, and to understand, except man; and it is this which makes man so much superior to all other animals, who have no means of making known their thoughts to each other. Without reason, to understand what is said to us, speaking would be of little use. Children are born with reason, otherwise they could not understand what they are taught. We have the power, by means of our reason, to rule over the brute creation, and to master their strength: we can tame the powerful elephant, we can make the fiery horse obey his rider, and the strong ox plough the fields. But if God has permitted us to rule over animals, in order that they may be of use to us, it is our bounden duty to take care of them, and treat them kindly."

" Now, tell me what part of the body it is that speaks."

" The mouth," exclaimed both the

children. "Then," added Sophy, "we can eat, too, with the mouth."

"Yes, the mouth is a very useful organ of the human body," replied Mrs. B., "for, besides speaking and eating, we breathe through the mouth; and we could make no sound without breathing."

"We can breathe through the nose too," said Sophy, "but not so well as through the mouth."

"Very true," said her mother; "then there is something within the mouth which helps you to speak—what is it?"

"The tongue," answered Willy; "it is always moving about when we talk, sometimes one way, sometimes another, and then our lips move too."

"Yes, but they are organs of less importance than the tongue."

"Mamma, what do you mean by calling all those things organs?" asked Sophy; "I never heard of any organs but those which play about the streets, and the organ at church."

"You are quite right," said her mother, "to inquire about what you do not understand; for if you did not know the meaning of what I said, it would be very much like teaching the horse, or the cow I was speaking of; you would not be at all the wiser for it. An organ which plays in the streets is an instrument so contrived, that when the handle is turned it makes those sweet sounds we call music. The organs of speech, such as the mouth, the tongue, and the lips, are also so contrived by their Almighty Creator, that they produce sounds. In brute animals these sounds are such as the roaring of the lion, the barking of the dog, the bleating of the sheep, the lowing of the cow; but in man, who is a rational animal, the mouth is made to form distinct sounds, which we call articulate. Of these sounds we make words, and of these words we make speech."

"So then," said Willy, "the musical organ, and the organs of speech, are alike

in some things, though they seem so very different."

"Yes," replied his mother, "they are all organs; and an organ is something so contrived as to answer a particular purpose. There are several organs belonging to the human body, besides those of speech: can you find out any of them?"

"Yes," said Sophy, "I dare say that the eyes are the organs of sight, for they are so contrived as to make us see."

"Then," said Willy, "the ears must be the organs of hearing, because we hear with our ears. We could never learn to speak if we could not hear."

"That is true," said his mother, "for deaf and dumb people are generally only deaf, and grow up dumb because they cannot hear."

"And," added Sophy, "the nose must be the organ of smell; but that has nothing to do with speech?"

"No," replied her mother. "The organs of the brute creation are often

more acute than those of men. Dogs, for instance, have a much keener sense of smell than we have. But now let us return to the organs of speech, and more especially the tongue, which is the principal one. It is for this reason the words we speak are called *tongue*. Have you never heard of the *vulgar tongue?*"

"Oh yes," said Sophy; "it is the same as the mother tongue, and it means the language of the country."

"Language," continued her mother, "means the same thing; *langue*, you know, being the French word for tongue."

"But," said Sophy, "the French people do not speak the same language that we do. They speak French, and we speak English."

"Certainly," replied her mother; "there are a great many different countries in the world, and the people of each of those countries speak a different language. In England, we speak English; in France, the people speak French; in Spain, they

speak Spanish; in Germany, German, and so on: each country has its own national or vulgar tongue. I must show you what this difference of tongue or language is. In England, we say a *house;* in France they call a house *maison*, in Italy, *casa:* so you see that in different countries different words are used which mean the same thing. Now did you ever think what a great number of words there must be in a language?"

"No," said Willy, "I never thought about it: but I know how many letters there are in the alphabet; there are twenty-six."

"True," replied his mother, "in the English alphabet; but there is a much greater number of words in a language than there is of letters."

"Yes, there is, certainly," said Willy; "and yet it seems as if it ought to be quite the contrary, for, as it takes several letters to make one word, there ought to be much fewer words than letters."

"You do not consider," replied his mother, "that the six-and-twenty letters may be put together in so many different ways, that there is no end to the number of words which can be made by their different combinations."

"Oh yes," said Sophy, "we know that well, in our spelling lessons; and some of the words are so long and so hard, that it is very difficult to understand them."

"True; but this art of spelling is a very wonderful discovery, yet unknown to some nations. The Chinese, for instance, have separate marks, or letters, for each word, and do not divide sounds, or syllables into letters; and the savage nations of America, and of many other countries, have no method of writing at all. The long words you mention are generally made up of one or two words put together, and are often borrowed from other languages. They have by degrees been introduced into the languages of different nations intermixing with each other. I

cannot well explain to you how this happened without giving you some account of these nations, and of the manner of their becoming intermixed; but we have not time to enter upon this subject to-day. I will not, however, conclude without telling you the greatest advantage which we gain from speech. It is the knowledge of God! Without speech we should never have heard of Him. We should have enjoyed the blessings He has sent us, merely as the beasts of the field or the fowls of the air do, without any thought of whence they came. A child has no more knowledge of God than a brute animal before he has learnt to speak, and to understand what is said to him. But when his parents or teachers have talked to him of the wonderful power and great goodness of God, the child learns to know Him as his creator, to love Him as his benefactor, and to fear Him as his judge, to be grateful for all his blessings, to pray to Him, to obey his commands, and to grow a wiser and a better creature."

CONVERSATION II.

OUTLINE OF GENERAL HISTORY. — HISTORY OF THE JEWS, OF THE ASSYRIAN, PERSIAN, AND GRECIAN EMPIRES.

At the next lesson Mrs. B. began her sketch of general history in the following words: —

"The beginning of all history is found in the Bible; we learn from it how God first created the world, and all that is upon the face of the earth, whether animal, vegetable, or mineral; and that, last of all, God created Adam and Eve, who, after living a life of innocence and happiness in the garden of Eden, were driven out of it upon the wide world, because they had disobeyed the commands of their Creator. Their children, and children's children, increased, and in the course of time peopled all the surrounding countries; but they forgot the true God, and worshipped idols, and became very wicked; so God sent the

deluge of waters which destroyed them all, except Noah and his family, who were saved in the ark. The world was then peopled a second time by the children of Noah, who, as they grew and increased, spread themselves over the face of the earth, and in the course of time built towns, and became great nations."

"It must have taken a great many years," said Sophy, "for them to do all that."

"Yes, indeed, many hundred years before the descendants of Noah multiplied so much as to become great nations. But these nations also forgot the true religion, and worshipped false gods, all excepting the Israelites. Can you tell me who was the father of the Israelites?"

"Israel or Jacob," said William. "He had twelve sons, who were the fathers of the twelve tribes of Israel."

"And who was the father of Jacob?" asked Mrs. B.

"Isaac," replied Sophy; "and his father

was Abraham: they were therefore all descended from Abraham."

"And what country did the Israelites live in?"

"In the land of Canaan, in Asia. Abraham lived in tents, and wandered about the land."

"This mode of living," observed their mother, "is followed by some tribes in Arabia to this very day. His son Isaac, however, learned to till the earth; and when he had sown corn, and planted trees, and made a garden, he naturally wished to remain there to gather in his crops, and eat the fruit of his garden."

"Then," said Sophy, "I dare say that, when he determined to settle there, he thought it worth while to build a house to live in, which is much more convenient than a tent, and shelters you better from the bad weather."

"Very probably," replied her mother. "So you see that when men began to till the ground, they settled in the spot they

cultivated, instead of wandering about and living in tents."

"I wonder," said Willy, "that any of the Arabs should still wander about, and live in tents; it must be much more comfortable to live in a house, and have a farm, and a garden full of fruit and vegetables."

"There are some parts of Arabia," said his mother, "where the soil, at particular seasons, is so sandy that it cannot be cultivated; these spots form deserts, with only patches of grass growing here and there, and where water is only to be found at certain times of the year: so the few Arabs who inhabit these deserts wander about from one green spot to another, feeding their cattle on these patches of vegetation. The spot on which Isaac settled was not in the desert, but in a good soil near the land of Canaan."

"Pray," said Sophy, "was it not into Arabia that Hagar fled with her son Ishmael, when Abraham sent her away?"

"Yes, it was," replied her mother; "and the Arabians are said to be the descendants of Ishmael. How far this is true it would be difficult to ascertain; but there is one good reason for believing it, which is, that the Arabic language is very similar to the Hebrew spoken by Abraham and his descendants."

"And if," said Sophy, "the Arabs were descended from Ishmael, they would naturally have learnt that language from him."

"But to return to Canaan," resumed her mother; "many years afterwards there was a famine in that land, and the Israelites went into Egypt to buy corn, and Joseph became the favourite of Pharaoh the king."

"Oh! what a pretty story that is," cried Sophy, "of Joseph's brethren going to buy corn in Egypt, and not knowing their brother. But after Pharaoh, and Joseph, and all his brethren were dead, the Bible says there was another Pha-

raoh, who knew not Joseph, and who treated the Israelites very cruelly."

"Do you know what then became of them?" inquired her mother.

"God raised up a great Prophet, whose name was Moses," said Sophy; "and there is a beautiful story about him, too, in the Bible. Pharaoh's daughter saved his life, when he was laid in the bulrushes; and then, when he was grown up, he led the twelve tribes of Israel out of Egypt, through the Red Sea, and they travelled during forty years, and at last reached the land of Canaan, or the land of Promise, as they called it, and there they settled, and became a nation."

"And how were they governed?" asked her mother.

"For a long time," said Sophy, "they were governed by judges; but afterwards they wished for a king; so Samuel, their chief priest, anointed Saul king over the twelve tribes of Israel."

"And who reigned after Saul?" inquired her mother.

"David," replied Willy, "who conquered Jerusalem, and made it the capital city of Judea, which was the kingdom of the Jews. And after him came his son Solomon, who built the beautiful Temple, where the Jews came from all parts to worship the true God."

"You have each of you answered very well," said their mother. "We have a more particular account of the early history of the Jews than we have of any other ancient people, because it is written in the Bible, and there also we find most of what we know of the early history of Egypt. But I must now tell you, that during this time a great nation was rising up in Asia, not very far distant from Judea. It was founded by Nimrod, and called the Assyrian Empire. Its chief towns were two celebrated cities, Nineveh and Babylon, of which you read a great deal in the Bible. The Assyrians were a

very warlike people, and, as they increased in numbers and in strength, they went about conquering all the surrounding countries; and during the reign of their king Nebuchadnezzar they came with a large army and attacked Jerusalem, and took it, and destroyed it, together with its beautiful Temple; and they led the Jews in captivity to Babylon, where they suffered great hardships during the seventy years that they remained in bondage. At that period another great nation arose in Asia, called the Persian: it was very frequently at war with the Assyrians; and at last Cyrus, king of the Persians, conquered Babylon, and put an end to the Assyrian Empire."

"Oh! then," exclaimed Sophy, "I hope Cyrus set the Israelites free?"

"He did so," replied Mrs. B., "and allowed them to return to Judea, and rebuild Jerusalem, and the Temple, which the Assyrians had destroyed. The Persians also conquered Egypt, and many

other countries, so that they became the most powerful nation in the world; but some years afterwards there arose a third great empire, called the Greek or Macedonian Empire. Its founder was Alexander, surnamed the Great: he was so fond of war that he spent his whole life in roaming about with his armies, in search of nations, to fight and conquer; and at last, when he had subdued all the countries he met with, and his troops were tired out and would go no further, he wept that he could make no more conquests."

"But did he really conquer the whole world?" asked Willy.

"Oh! no," answered Mrs. B.; "he, perhaps, fancied so, because he had conquered all the countries the Greeks had ever heard of: but there were a great many nations that he had never seen and knew nothing about."

"Did he conquer the Jews?" inquired Sophy.

"No," replied Mrs. B.; "fortunately for the Jews, he showed them great respect. It is even said by them, that, passing through Jerusalem with his army, he went and worshipped in the Temple: and he certainly did them no injury. As Alexander left no children, his possessions, after his death, were divided amongst his generals; and about 300 years afterwards were swallowed up in the Roman Empire."

"I suppose," said Sophy, "Alexander was called the Great because he was so great a conqueror; but I think it would have been more true if they had called him Alexander the Wicked: it was so cruel to go into countries that had never done him any harm, fighting and killing the poor people wherever he went."

"Alexander does not deserve the title of Wicked," said Mrs. B.; "for, in those times of ignorance, men thought nothing so glorious as conquest. Thank God, they

are grown wiser and better now. Since they have become Christians they have learnt that it is right to forgive injuries instead of avenging them, and that it is their duty to live in peace and charity with all mankind. I am sorry to say that they do not always act up to these Christian precepts; yet, upon the whole, mankind are much less revengeful, bloody, and cruel than they were in those barbarous times."

CONVERSATION III.

ON THE ROMAN EMPIRE.

"In our former conversation, I gave you some account of the Israelites and Egyptians, and also of the three great empires, the Assyrian, the Persian, and the Macedonian, and I come now to the fourth. This is the Roman Empire; it was more powerful and extensive than any of the others.

"Rome was built about 700 years before the birth of Christ. For above 200 years it was a small state in Italy, governed by kings; but it increased rapidly, and the people, who were great lovers of freedom, would not submit to be ruled by kings; so they changed the form of their government into that of a Republic, which during a period of above 400 years flourished extremely. At the end of this

time, Julius Cæsar, the most famous of the Roman generals, who had conquered many countries, being at the head of a large army, again changed the form of government, and made himself Emperor of Rome; and from that time the Republic was changed into an Empire. This Empire extended its dominions so as to become master of nearly the whole of the world then known. The Roman Empire, at the time of its greatest prosperity, extended about 3000 miles in length and 2000 in breadth."

"What an immense way that must be!" exclaimed Sophy.

"It was certainly much larger than any of the former empires," replied her mother; "yet its extent was but trifling compared with the size of the world which is now known."

"And did the Romans conquer the Jews?" inquired Sophy.

"They did," replied her mother; "but they allowed them to remain in Judea,

and follow their own religion. They were compelled, however, to have a Roman governor, and to pay a tax, or tribute, to the emperors, who were all called Cæsars after Julius Cæsar."

"Oh, yes," said Willy; "the tribute to Cæsar is often spoken of in the New Testament."

"It was during the reign of Augustus Cæsar," resumed his mother, "the second of the emperors, that our Saviour Jesus Christ was born, and in the reign of his successor Tiberius that he was crucified. The Jews, after having been guilty of this dreadful crime, became more and more wicked; they frequently revolted from the Romans, who at length, incensed by their misconduct, seventy years after the death of our Saviour, sent an army against Jerusalem, took it, and utterly destroyed it, according to the prophecy of our Lord. Ever since that period the Jews have been a wandering people, dispersed over the face of the

earth, and living in foreign countries, without ever being able to regain their independence. This was also the fulfilment of a prophecy. The Jews spoke Hebrew, one of the most ancient languages we know of. It was that spoken by Israel, and his twelve sons, and that in which the Old Testament was written."

"And was not the New Testament also written in Hebrew, mamma?" said Sophy.

"No," replied her mother; "it was first written in Greek, the language most employed in writing at that period. When subject to the Romans, the Jews learnt to speak Latin, for the Romans introduced their language into every country they conquered."

"And, I suppose," said Willy, "that the Jews, who are now dispersed over so many countries, each speak the language of the country they live in?"

"Yes," replied his mother; "those who are settled in England speak English; those

in France, French, and so on. It is only the well-educated Jews who learn Hebrew; but all their religious rites are still performed in that language."

"Then the common people among the Jews cannot understand them?" said Sophy.

"No," replied her mother, "no more than the Roman Catholics can understand their religious service, which continues to this day to be performed in Latin."

"What! ever since the time of the Romans?" inquired Willy. "How extraordinary!"

"Yes, so it is," replied his mother. "In the course of time the common people glean some little knowledge of the meaning of their Latin prayers; and many of their prayer-books are furnished with translations: but surely it would be better that the whole of the service should be performed in the vulgar tongue."

"But," said Sophy, "why did the

Romans speak Latin? I should have thought that they would have talked Roman, or something of that sort?"

"The language of the Romans was called Latin," replied her mother, "because Rome was built in a country called Latium, the inhabitants of which were called Latins, and their language Latin, after the name of their country."

"Oh! yes," cried Sophy, "it is like us: we do not call our language London, after the name of our capital city, but English, after the name of our country. I hope, mamma," continued she, "that, though the Romans conquered so many countries, they never conquered us?"

"Yes, but they did," replied her mother: "Britain was conquered by that very same general, Julius Cæsar, who afterwards became the first Roman emperor. The ancient Britons, who then inhabited the island, were in such a state of rude barbarism that they were little better than savages; and, though they at

first suffered great hardships from the dominion of the Romans, in the end they were gainers, for the Romans taught them a great many things; and in the course of about 500 years, during which the Britons remained subject to them, they became changed from a barbarous to a civilised people."

"Oh, then, I am not sorry that the Romans conquered our country," cried Willy. "But did they teach the ancient Britons to speak Latin, as they did the Jews?"

"The Latin language," replied his mother, "was commonly spoken among the Romans who were settled in Britain: it may have been learnt also by some of the superior classes of Britons, but it was never generally spoken by them."

"And what language," inquired Sophy, "did the Britons speak?"

"Why, English, to be sure," said Willy.

"No," replied his mother; "there you are mistaken. The ancient Britons spoke

a language called the Celtic: it was a very ancient and very simple tongue, suited to people who lived in woods and forests; and we know this was their mode of life from the signification of the word Celtic, which means inhabitants of woods or forests. Their language, at this remote period, consisted of little more than such words as were required to express the common wants of life."

"I should have liked that language," said Sophy, "for there could be no hard words in it. Then I suppose they did not know how to read or write?"

"Oh, no," replied her mother, "they were in a state of great ignorance and barbarism; and we should not have known any thing about them if it had not been for the Romans, who read and wrote perfectly well. So Julius Cæsar, when he conquered Britain, wrote an account of the ancient Britons in a book called 'Cæsar's Commentaries,' in which he gives a long account of the manners and

customs of the Celtic nations which he found established, not only in Britain, but in Gaul and several other countries of Europe, all of whom spoke the Celtic tongue : but as Julius Cæsar spoke Latin, he also wrote in that language; so that only those who understand Latin can read his book in the original."

" That is just the book I am to construe after the holydays, mamma," said Willy; " and I dare say that it will amuse me."

" When you understand it well, no doubt it will," replied his mother; " for this purpose you will have to take pains."

CONVERSATION IV.

IRRUPTION OF THE BARBARIANS. — SARACEN EMPIRE. — DARK AGES. — CHRISTIANITY. — PRINTING.

"We now come to a new epoch in history," said Mrs. B. to her children. "About 400 years after the conquest of Britain by the Romans a great calamity befell the world. Immense hordes of rude barbarians, who lived almost like savages in the forests and caverns of unknown countries in the North of Europe, came to seek their fortune in the more civilised parts of Europe, where the people enjoyed more comforts and plenty, and a milder climate.

"During many years, whenever these fierce barbarians ventured to invade any of the Roman provinces, they were put to the rout, and driven back to their

own wild and desolate countries; but having once tasted the comforts of plenty in a better climate, they returned again and again with larger armies. The frequent battles they fought with the Romans taught them the art of war; and their numbers being superior, by degrees they began to beat the Romans; and in the course of some hundred years they conquered, one after the other, all the countries which belonged to the Romans, till at last they arrived at the city of Rome itself, when Alaric, king of the Visigoths, took it, plundered it, and massacred a great number of the Romans."

"Then," said Willy, "they destroyed the famous Roman Empire?"

"Not permanently," replied his mother; "for the Visigoths afterwards left Italy, and wandered as far as Spain, which they conquered, and established themselves in that country. Rome, however, before it could well recover from this blow, was attacked and conquered by the Ostrogoths,

another tribe of barbarians, who finally settled in Italy."

"Oh, what a sad thing that was!" exclaimed Sophy; "for I dare say these rude barbarians did not govern the countries they conquered half so well as the Romans had done before."

"Certainly not," replied her mother; "for though many of the Roman governors were bad and cruel men, yet in general the provinces were governed by wise laws; whilst the barbarians took pleasure in the destruction of the learning and civilisation which the Romans had taught the people."

"Is it not very extraordinary," inquired Sophy, "that these ignorant barbarians should be able to conquer a nation so powerful and so civilised as the Romans?"

"Perhaps they would not have accomplished it if the Romans had then been as good soldiers as they were in earlier times; but the power and wealth of the

Romans had corrupted them, and they thought more of enjoying all sorts of pleasures than of devoting themselves to the defence of their country; their armies were therefore no longer invincible: still it took the barbarians several centuries to complete so great a conquest."

"And pray," asked Willy, "what were the names of these fierce and ignorant barbarians?"

"They emigrated from various countries, and bore different names," said his mother; "but those most interesting to us came from Germany, and were called Goths. There were two races of these Goths, distinguished by the names of Ostrogoths and Visigoths. These people in very remote times came from the most northern parts of Europe; but they had been many years settled in Germany before they began to attack the Roman Empire. Whilst the Goths were overrunning the Roman provinces a new power arose in Arabia. A false prophet, whose name

was Mahomet, propagated a new religion. He taught the Arabs that there was but one God; and so far his religion was much better than the idolatrous worship they had before followed. But instead of teaching them the meek and peaceful virtues of the Christian religion, Mahomet taught that God commanded them to establish this new religion in all countries by the power of the sword; and that those who died fighting in so holy a cause would go immediately to heaven, where they would be rewarded by the enjoyment of every blessing they could desire. Such promises made the Arabs fight with so much bravery that they were every where victorious. Under the banner of their prophet they conquered the surrounding countries with surprising rapidity; and wherever they conquered they compelled the people to adopt the Mahomedan religion. Thus, in the space of a few years they established a considerable empire, which was afterwards

called the Saracen Empire; and its sovereigns, who resided at Bagdad, bore the name of Caliphs. The stories in the *Arabian Nights* are all relative to these Caliphs and their subjects. The Saracen Empire, after flourishing above 500 years, was at last conquered by the Turks: but, though the empire was subdued, the Mahomedan religion still prevailed; for the Turks, who were a horde of idolatrous barbarians, became converts to it. This religion, false as it is, was so much superior to the worship of idols, that it spread itself with facility over the greater part of Asia and the North of Africa; and was even introduced into Europe; in Spain, when it was conquered by the Moors; and in Turkey, when Constantinople was taken by the Turks."

"But to return to the Northern barbarians. After a long period of time these Gothic tribes began to soften in their manners, and acquire the habits of the more

civilised people whom they had conquered. What chiefly tended to change the ferocity of their character was their becoming Christians, the Christian religion having now spread itself over great part of the world. This pure religion improved their morals: but it was not till the art of printing was invented that the people could make much progress in learning. In the middle or dark ages there were no books but those which were written with the pen; but no sooner were books printed than they increased prodigiously in number, being produced so much cheaper; and in course of time people once more became civilised."

"When they got books I dare say they soon got schools," said Willy.

"They had schools long before the invention of printing," replied his mother. "Alfred, King of England, and Charlemagne, of France, instituted two celebrated schools, in which the children were taught from manuscript books; and a number of schools were introduced upon the same

plan. There was then no longer, as in ancient times, any great empire that subjugated the world. It was divided, much as it is now, into the various countries of England, France, Italy, Spain, and so on; but many countries which formerly were unknown have since been discovered: the principal of these is America, a country of such extent that it forms one of the four quarters of the world. Though it has not been discovered much above three hundred and fifty years, it now contains many millions of inhabitants. In order to fix this outline of the history of the world in your minds, I have made a sort of map or table of it. It is, you see, divided into three parts. The first represents ancient history, comprehending that of the Jews, of Egypt, and of the four great empires which flourished in those ancient times. I have placed the names of the capital cities of these countries, and that of one of their most celebrated men, below the name of the country.

GENERAL OUTLINE OF THE HISTORY OF THE WORLD.

ANCIENT HISTORY.

The Israelites or Jews.	Egypt.	1st. The Assyrian Empire.	2d. Persian Empire.	3d. Grecian or Macedonian Empire.	4th. Roman Empire.
Jerusalem.	Memphis, Thebes, Alexandria.	Babylon and Nineveh.	Persepolis.	Philippi.	Rome.
Israel or Jacob.	The Pharaohs.	Nebuchadnezzar	Cyrus.	Alexander the Great.	The Cæsars.

THE MIDDLE OR DARK AGES.

Irruption of the Barbarians, who conquered and put an end to the Roman Empire. Alaric, king of the Visigoths, took Rome in the year 410.

The Saracen Empire in Arabia.

Mecca,

Bagdad.

Mahomet.

MODERN HISTORY.

Portugal,	Italy,	Poland,	Denmark,	And the various countries in
Spain,	Germany,	Prussia,	England,	Asia,
France,	Turkey,	Norway,	Scotland,	Africa, and America.
Switzerland,	Russia,	Sweden,	Ireland,	

"Now can you guess what the second division represents?"

"Oh, yes," cried Willy, "it must be the dark ages, for you have painted it over to make it look dark."

"I thought," continued his mother, "that the dark stripe would catch your eye, and would therefore be a good way of making you remember it. But you must observe that the darkness does not mean a darkness from want of daylight, but darkness of the mind from want of knowledge — from ignorance and barbarity."

"Oh, yes, certainly," said Sophy; "it is the time when those rude barbarians conquered all the civilised world, and destroyed learning."

"This period," observed Mrs. B., "you see, divides ancient from modern history; and it is for this reason it is also called the *middle ages*, because it is in the middle, between the two."

"I see," said Sophy, "that the shade is less dark as it gets nearer to modern

history. I suppose that is to show that people became more and more enlightened by getting more and more learned."

"Just so," replied her mother. "The last division, which describes modern history, is very imperfectly represented, for I could not possibly get in the names of all the countries that exist in modern times. However, this table or map will give you such an insight into history, that whenever you read any history you will easily find out to which of these periods it belongs."

"Pray, how many years did these different periods last?" asked Sophy.

"The duration of the first period," said Mrs. B., "beginning with the creation of man, and ending with the destruction of the Roman Empire by the barbarians, is supposed to have been between four and five thousand years. The second period, or the middle ages, I reckon about 1000 years, from the taking of Rome by the barbarians to

the invention of printing. And the third period, or modern history, reckoned from the invention of printing to the present time, is nearly 400 years."

CONVERSATION V.

ON THE FORMATION OF MODERN LANGUAGES.

"LET us now return to the study of language," said Mrs. B. to her children. "What language do you suppose these modern nations, of which I have been talking, speak?"

"You told us," replied Sophy, "that each country has a language of its own; — that in England we speak English; in France they speak French; in Italy, Italian, and so forth."

"Very true," replied her mother; "but all these modern languages are very much intermixed with Latin words. Can you guess the reason of this?"

"I suppose," said Willy, "that as all those countries were once conquered by the Romans, the people must have learnt

their language. But, if so, why did they not continue to speak Latin?"

"Because," replied his mother, "when the barbarians became masters of the world, the people whom they subdued naturally learnt to speak their language; and as these barbarians emigrated from different countries they introduced a number of different languages. All those who inhabited Germany bore the common name of Teutones, and spoke the Teutonic language; for they did not acquire the name of Germans till, having distinguished themselves as great warriors, they were called Guerre-mans, or war-men, 'guerre' meaning war. Their country hence obtained the name of Germany, and the Teutonic language was called German. But though the Germans all spoke one language, they had a variety of different dialects."

"What is the meaning of dialect?" inquired Sophy.

"It means," replied her mother, "a

different manner of speaking the same language. People do not speak English in every part of England exactly alike."

"No, that they do not," returned Willy. "The farmer who came from Yorkshire spoke so oddly that we could not always understand him."

"And when," said Sophy, "nurse's brother came to see her from Somersetshire, he spoke so strangely that we could hardly help laughing."

"They both spoke English," resumed her mother, "but in a different dialect; that is, in a different manner: sometimes the words vary, sometimes the manner of putting them together in a phrase is not the same, and then the accent often differs. Now the dialects amongst the various hordes of barbarians which came from Germany are so unlike each other, that it was supposed each horde spoke a different language. But when learned men studied them, they discovered that they were only different dialects of the same language."

"And did each of these Gothic hordes," asked Sophy, "oblige the people they subdued to learn their language?"

"They did not oblige them," replied her mother: "it was rather the natural consequence of the conquerors and the conquered people living together, and forming one nation. In their intercourse with each other, they could not but more or less learn each other's language; and in the course of time these languages became so blended and intermingled as to form one single tongue."

"What a strange mixture that must have made," observed Willy; "for the people conquered by the Goths had first their original Celtic language, then the Latin they learnt of the Romans, and lastly the dialects of their German conquerors."

"I wish you would tell us, mamma," said Sophy, "how these languages became mixed in England?"

"For that purpose," observed her mo-

ther, "it is necessary I should give you a little further insight into the early times of the history of England; for though you have both read the history of England, I am afraid you have almost forgotten the beginning of it. The Ancient Britons, I told you, first spoke the Celtic language; then after the Roman conquest, though some few of them may have learnt to speak Latin, that language was no doubt chiefly confined to the Romans: the Britons among themelves still continued the use of their own, that is, of the Celtic tongue; but when the irruption of the Goths reached Italy, the Romans being obliged to abandon Britain in order to protect their own country, Britain was left defenceless, and was soon after conquered by a tribe of the German barbarians, called the Anglo-Saxons, who came from the northern part of Germany. These fierce invaders either killed or drove away nearly the whole of the an-

cient Britons, and took possession of the country for themselves."

"And where did the poor Britons go," said Sophy, "who were so cruelly driven away?"

"Some of them," replied her mother, "fled into Wales, where they settled, and continued speaking the Celtic language, which they called Welsh; others took refuge in a province of France, where they established themselves, and called it Brittany, after their own country; and they also continued speaking the Celtic language."

"Then," said Willy, "if the people of Brittany and the people of Wales both speak Celtic, they must be able to understand each other?"

"Though their language was the same," replied Mrs. B., "when they first settled in those countries, it has undergone considerable changes during the length of time that has since passed."

"Oh, then!" cried Willy, "they must

now speak two different dialects of the same language."

"The difference, however, is not so great," replied his mother, "but that inhabitants of both these countries can still understand many of the words used by each. Some years after the conquest of Britain by the Saxons, it was invaded by another race of northern barbarians from Denmark, who for a number of years disputed the possession of the country with the Saxons, so that the people suffered much from the continual wars between these two nations."

"And did the Danes introduce their language into England?" asked Sophy.

"No," replied her mother; "they were too busy fighting to think of teaching languages. There are, however, some few words in the English language derived from the Danish. Some hundred years later, when the Saxons and the Danes were both in possession of England, it was attacked and conquered by the Normans,

or North-men, so called from their inhabiting the most northern parts of Europe, Norway, and Sweden, which in those remote times bore the name of Scandinavia."

"These, I suppose," said Willy, "were another horde of barbarians?"

"Originally they were," replied his mother, and of Gothic extraction; "but 150 years before they came to England they had conquered and settled themselves in a northern province of France, which they called after their own name Normandy. In that country they had gradually become civilised, and had learned the French language, when William Duke of Normandy, as you may remember, crossed the channel which separates France from England, with a great army, fought and killed Harold the king of England, and was proclaimed in his stead under the title of William the Conqueror: he of course introduced the French language into this country; and for many years two lan-

guages were spoken in England — the English by the Saxons, and the French by the Normans. In the course of time these two languages were blended together, and the English language is now composed of the old Saxon, with a great mixture of Norman or French words; for instance, the Normans called *bœuf* and *mouton* the animals which the Saxons called ox and sheep; and from thence are derived the English words beef and mutton, which are now generally used for the meat of those animals. It is supposed that the animals themselves retained the old Saxon name because the poor Saxons tended them in the field; whilst the meat, which they seldom tasted, fell to the share of their conquerors.

Sophy asked whether French was one of the languages of the barbarians brought by the Goths into France.

"Not the French language as it is now spoken," said her mother; "but one of the German tribes, called the Franks, which

means a free people, spoke a dialect which bore the name of the *Frankish dialect.* This tribe conquered Gaul, then in possession of the Romans, and gave it the name of France; they at the same time introduced the *Frankish dialect:* but the inhabitants of Gaul, having been long subjected to the Romans, had nearly forgotten their original Celtic language, and were so much accustomed to speak Latin that they mixed this language with the Frankish dialect; and it is this mixed language which is called French, and which the Normans introduced into England."

"Oh dear!" exclaimed Sophy, "what a confusion of languages!"

"The history of modern languages is indeed very complicated," observed her mother: "and I wish to give you some little knowledge of it, in order to prevent confusion. It is fit also that you should understand from what other languages your own is derived. Let us therefore return to the composition of the English

language. It is less complicated than it would have been if the Celtic language, which the Britons originally spoke, could be said to have formed any part of it."

"No doubt," observed Willy; "when the Saxons drove them out of their country they could not leave their language behind them."

"The Saxon language," continued Mrs. B., "is the foundation of ours, and forms the most considerable part of it; the remainder consists of French introduced by the Normans at the time of William the Conqueror: and this French, we have already observed, is a mixed language, because it includes a great number of Latin and Greek words."

"Well," said Sophy, "I hope there will be no more conquerors to come and teach us new languages!"

"No; there is no chance of that," replied her mother. "Our English tongue is, however, constantly changing, by the addition of foreign words which we adopt,

and from some of the old Saxon terms falling into disuse and becoming obsolete. Travellers often bring home new words, which are found to be so useful and expressive that they are repeated, till they at last get engrafted into our language. Then, in trading with foreign countries, the sailors sometimes pick up new words, which in the course of time become incorporated with the English. Besides, in the progress of civilisation, we invent new arts, and learn new sciences, and then we must have new words to name the new objects of which they treat; but these we generally take from the Greek and Latin languages."

"Are Greek and Latin spoken any where now?" asked Willy.

"No," replied his mother; "and because they are no longer spoken they are called the dead languages. It is true, however, that in Greece, modern Greek, which bears considerable resemblance to the ancient language, is now spoken, and the inhabit-

ants, having lately established their independence, are endeavouring to restore their language to its ancient purity. I should also tell you, that in some parts of Hungary an imperfect kind of Latin is still spoken."

"And what is now spoken at Rome?" inquired Sophy.

"Italian," said her mother, "which is spoken in many parts of Italy, and, like other modern tongues, consists of a mixture of the various languages which the Italians have acquired from the different nations by which they have been conquered. But if the ancient Greek and Latin are no longer the common or vulgar tongue of any living people, they are taught in the schools of all civilised countries, because they are more pure and perfect than any of the modern languages; and the books written in those languages are held in such high estimation that they are distinguished by the name of *Classics*, meaning that they are classed above, that is, are superior to all other books."

"No wonder those languages were more pure," observed Sophy, "for they were not made up of a number of other tongues, as all the modern languages are."

"The Greek," said Mrs. B., "is, I believe, very free from admixture of that kind; but the Latin bears a strong resemblance to the Greek, and contains a great number of Greek words, which the Romans took from that nation."

"Yet you told us that the Romans subdued the Greeks," observed Willy: "I wonder, therefore, that they did not oblige them to speak Latin instead of adopting their Greek words."

"The Romans were a highly-civilised nation," replied his mother: "and though they conquered the Greeks, they admired them so much, both for their excellence in the fine arts and for the perfection of their language, that they willingly learnt from them those things in which they thought the Greeks were their superiors."

"The Romans did not do so when they conquered Britain," observed Sophy.

"No," said her mother, "nor when they subdued any other barbarous people; because there was nothing worth learning from them, the Romans being in all respects their superiors. But, as I observed to you before, when the conquerors and the conquered intermingle, so as to form but one nation, their two languages also become interwoven so as to form but one tongue."

CONVERSATION VI.

ON THE ORIGIN OF MODERN LANGUAGES.

"I SHOULD like extremely to know," said Willy, "how all the different nations, each of which speak a different language, got those languages; for the children of Noah, who peopled the earth, must all have spoken the same language when they came out of the ark."

"It would be difficult to answer your question," replied his mother; "for as in those early times people did not read or write, there remains little or no record of what happened to them when they were gradually dispersed over the face of the earth. But it seems to me very natural to suppose that as men increased and multiplied they should find it necessary to separate, as we learn from the Bible Lot did from Abraham: when their

families, and flocks, and herds became too numerous to occupy the same district, one of them went to the right, and the other to the left. Then, when in the course of time, these families again became too many to inhabit the same spot, they again separated, till by degrees they were spread over large tracts of land, and at length learnt to till the ground, and build cities, and in the end became great nations. Now, as they improved in knowledge and civilisation, they would require new words to name the new objects they saw and the new things they made. Thus, when they learned to till the ground, they must invent names for a spade or a plough, or any implement they used in husbandry; and when they brought in their crops they required a name for each of them ; and also for harvest, and sowing, and reaping, and I know not how many other things."

" And when they built a house," said Sophy, " they must not only give it a

name, but name also the doors, and windows, and staircase, and every part of it, and all the furniture they put into it besides."

"In the progress of civilisation," continued her mother, "the number of new words that are required is inconceivable; and as these new words would differ in the different countries, the language of each would become more and more unlike."

"I should have thought," said Willy, "that this would have produced different dialects, but not a new language."

"If," replied his mother, "the several hordes of German barbarians, though living in the same country, spoke dialects so unlike each other that it was supposed they spoke different languages, it is not surprising that tribes which had been for centuries wandering over the face of the earth, and had finally settled in various parts of the globe, should speak different languages."

"Even so early as the time of Joseph," observed Sophy, "the Egyptians spoke a language unlike the Hebrew of the Israelites; for you know Joseph spoke to his brothers by an interpreter, making them believe that he did not understand Hebrew, in order that they might not find out who he was."

"And when the Jews were carried in captivity to Babylon," observed Mrs. B., "they found that the Assyrians also had a language of their own. Then in Asia, the Persians, the Indians, and the Chinese, each had their several distinct languages. So had the Greeks and the Romans, in the southern part of Europe."

"And in the northern part of Europe,' said Willy, "they spoke the Celtic language."

"And in the centre of Europe," added Sophy, "the Gothic barbarians spoke the Teutonic or German dialects. What an immense number of languages!"

"I am far from having enumerated

them all," observed their mother; "but I think I have named a sufficient number to give you some idea of the origin and construction of languages in general. It is not my intention, nor would it be in my power, to make you acquainted with any of these ancient tongues; I only wish to point out to you the several sources to which we may trace our own language. All of them," continued Mrs. B., "we may consider as coming from some one language spoken by our common ancestors, and quite unknown to us. Like children of one parent, they might be called sister-languages."

"Well!" said Sophy, "though it is very natural that, after so great a number of years, languages should differ from each other, yet it seems to me that if, like children, they were all descended from the same parent, there would remain some few words in each of them which would be alike, or at least so strongly resemble each other as to make us think

they once belonged to the same language."

"That is true," said her mother: "and learned men, who have studied these ancient languages, have discovered in each of them words in which there is so remarkable a resemblance that they conclude they must have originally belonged to the same language."

"Oh, pray tell us some of them!" exclaimed the children.

"I can give you some curious examples of this in the Sanscrit and the German, languages which were spoken by two nations situated in very different parts of the globe, and many thousand miles distant from each other. The Sanscrit was once spoken in India, but it is so very ancient that it became a dead language before we ever heard of it. We do not even know by what people, and in what part, of India it was last spoken, but we suppose it to have been in Hindoostan, before it fell under the empire of the

Great Mogul, which, between two and three hundred years ago, extended over the greater part of the peninsula of India, and over all the country from the river Indus to beyond the Ganges. The reason for this conjecture is, that the laws and religious books of that part of India, which are called the Vedas, are written in Sanscrit, and that this language is held in the highest estimation by the Indians even at the present day, though that which they now speak is as different as Italian from the ancient Latin. There are two words in the Sanscrit language remarkable for their likeness to the German, and these are *father* and *daughter*. The word daughter is indeed the same in both languages, being similar both in sound and in sense, and pointing out not only the relationship to the father and mother, but also signifying, in both languages, a girl who acts as milk-maid."

"I suppose," said Sophy, "when there were no rich people living in fine

houses, and keeping servants to do their work, that the daughters of the family milked the cows."

"I am not sure that the animals milked were cows," replied her mother, "for buffaloes and goats are kept for milk as well as cows in Hindoostan. The cow, however, was always most esteemed, and is still considered a sacred animal by the Hindoos."

"Well, mamma," returned Sophy, "the German milk-maids, at any rate, I suppose, milked cows."

"And, probably, goats too," resumed her mother.

"I hope," said Willy, "that the word *father* showed what work he did as well as *daughter*."

"Yes," replied his mother; "the word father in both languages signified that he protected and fed the family."

"Well," said Sophy, "I think the likeness between these words shows clearly that the people who spoke the Sanscrit

language, whoever they were, must have had some connexion with the ancient Germans; and yet, what connexion could there be between the Indians, who lived in the middle of Asia, and the Germans, who lived in the middle of Europe. The distance between them must be immense!"

"It is very great, no doubt," replied her mother; "but as the world was first peopled in Asia, when mankind spread themselves over the face of the globe, some of them came into Europe, bringing their language along with them: this language might, as we observed, in the course of ages become totally changed; yet still it is probable that some few words would remain unaltered; and by these words the origin of the people might be discovered. Thus you see that the derivation of words is not only useful in teaching us their signification, but that it assists us to trace the origin of those ancient nations of which no written history remains."

"But," said Sophy, "are there not resemblances of the same kind in other languages besides the Sanscrit and the German?"

"Yes, there are," replied her mother. "The terms of near relationship, such as those I have already mentioned, must have been amongst the earliest words invented, and the least liable to change; for father and mother, son and daughter, have exactly the same meaning, both in savage and in civilised life: a closer resemblance has, therefore, been discovered amongst the terms of relationship than amongst any other words. I have an account of some of these resemblances given me by the same friend* who furnished me with the examples I have already explained to you, and who is writing a book on the subject."

"Oh, then, you did not find out these resemblances yourself, mamma?" said Sophy.

* M. Adolphe Pictet of Geneva.

"Certainly not," replied her mother. "I am as ignorant of these ancient languages as you are."

WORDS RESEMBLING EACH OTHER IN ASIATIC AND EUROPEAN LANGUAGES.

Father is in
- Sanscrit...Patrĕ, from the root to protect.
- German...Vater, Vater.
- Persian....Pedor.
- Latin ...Pater.
- Greek ...Pater, πατηρ.
- English...Father.
- Irish.....Aithair.

Mother is in
- Sanscrit...Matri, from the root to create.
- German...Mutter, Mütter.
- Persian...Mader.
- Greek ...Mētēr, μητηρ.
- Latin ...Mater.
- English...Mother.
- Irish.....Mothair.
- Russian...Moterj.

Brother is in
- Sanscrit...Bhrâtri, from the root Bhrĭ, to nourish, or sustain. He who nourishes and maintains his sister.
- German...Bruder, Bruder.
- Persian....Brâdor.
- Latin.....Frater.
- English....Brother.
- Irish.....Brothair.
- Russian...Brot.

Sister is in
- Sanscrit...Svasri, from the root vas, she who lives with her brother.
- German...Schwester, Schweſter.
- Latin ...Soror.
- Russian...Sestra.
- English....Sister.
- Irish .....Suir.

Daughter is in
- Sanscrit...Duhatrĭ, from the root Duh, to milk.
- German...Tochter, Tochter.
- Persian...Dokhtrĭ.
- Greek ...Thugatēr, θυγατηρ.
- English....Daughter.
- Russian...Dschtherj.
- Irish..... Dear.

Son is in
- Sanscrit ...Putra, from the root sû, to purify.
- German ...Sohn, Sohn. He who cleans
- Latin .....Puer. the stables or
- English ...Son. the house.
- Bas Breton Paotr.

"But are there not resemblances between other words in these languages?" asked Sophy.

"Yes," replied her mother, "a great number: but, as I said before, my intention not being to teach you these languages, but merely to satisfy you as to their resemblance, I think the examples I have already given you are sufficient for that purpose. I will, however, add five more: the words *know*, *lick*, *break*, *yoke*, *sit*, are the same in the Sanscrit, the Greek, Latin, English, and Sclavonian tongues."

CONVERSATION VII.

ON THE DIFFUSION OF LANGUAGES IN DIFFERENT COUNTRIES.

"WELL," said Sophy, "I feel now quite satisfied that all these words came originally from the same language, and that that language must have been first spoken in Asia, from whence mankind dispersed over the world. Then those who first came to Europe found it uninhabited ?"

"No doubt," said Mrs. B.; "but we are quite ignorant who those people were, what language they spoke, or at what period they arrived in Europe. All we know is, that the Celtic and the Teutonic languages were the two first spoken in the North of Europe."

"Then, I suppose," said Willy, "that both the Celtic and the Teutonic languages were brought from Asia by dif-

ferent tribes of people who came to inhabit Europe ?"

"They probably were," replied his mother; "but in the course of ages these languages must have undergone very great alterations."

"And is the Celtic become a dead language, like the Sanscrit ?" inquired Sophy.

"No, not entirely," said Mrs. B.: "the Welsh language is a remnant of the Celtic; and so is the dialect spoken in Lower Brittany."

"Oh, yes," observed Willy; "it was to those countries that the Ancient Britons, who spoke Celtic, fled for refuge from the Saxons."

"Then," continued Mrs. B., "the Gaelic and the Erse, which are also dialects of the Celtic, are still spoken in parts of Scotland and Ireland. These districts, having escaped conquest either by the Romans or the Saxons, have retained their primitive language."

"The German language," observed Willy, "seems to be the only one that has not undergone any great change."

"That," said Sophy, "is the natural consequence of their not having been subjugated, either by the Romans or by the barbarians; for they were, themselves, some of the barbarians who conquered the rest of Europe."

"It is true," said Mrs. B., "that the Germans were never subdued by the Romans, yet they have undergone many warlike revolutions since they have become civilised, which have produced considerable changes in their language. The Teutonic language, originally spoken by the barbarians, was more simple and rude than the several dialects these hordes spoke when they invaded Europe. In after-ages, as the barbarians became civilised, their language improved; and the modern German is very different from its ancestor, the Teutonic language; for, independently of the effects

of wars and conquests, their friendly intercourse with foreign nations led to the same consequences."

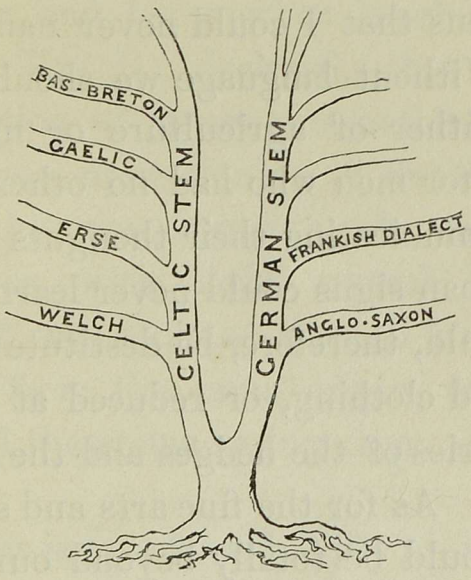
"Well!" exclaimed Sophy, with a sigh, "I confess that I feel a little disheartened by the immense number of languages branching out from one another. I fear that I shall never be able to remember them all."

"Nor is it essential that you should," replied her mother: "I only wish you to bear in mind the general relationship of languages, which leads us to form an idea of the origin of our own."

"Oh!" cried Willy, "I have just thought of a way of making us remember them. You talk of the branches: why should we not make a whole tree of languages — roots, and stem, and branches, and all? This is the way I would do it. I would draw a tree, with a double stem, to represent the Celtic and the German languages, both shooting up from one root; and then all their different dialects

should be branches sprouting out from these stems."

"Not a bad idea," replied his mother; who took up a pencil and sketched the design as Willy had described it.



"Oh, yes!" exclaimed Sophy, "we shall easily remember them now. But, mamma, is it always winter with this poor tree; does it bear no leaves, or flowers, or fruit?"

"I will venture to say," replied Mrs.

B., "that it bears more than any tree that ever grew. Eloquence, rhetoric, poetry, are proverbially called the flowers of speech, because they are the beauties of language; and then the fruits, that is the more solid advantages, are so numerous that I could never name them all. Without language we should know little either of agriculture or manufactures; for men who had no other means of communicating their thoughts to each other than signs could never learn much: we should, therefore, be destitute both of food and clothing, or reduced at least to the berries of the hedges and the skins of beasts. As for the fine arts and sciences, they would be totally beyond our reach; and of religion we should not have the faintest idea. Therefore all kinds of knowledge may fairly be considered as the *fruits* of language."

"Then I am sure our tree is well furnished with fruit and flowers," said Sophy. "But where are we to get the leaves?"

"Oh! as for the leaves," cried Willy, laughing, and taking up a book, "here are leaves in plenty; and I should like to know how we could get any learning if we had not leaves to write or to print on?"

Sophy and her mother laughed also, though Mrs. B. declared, that Willy's explanation of leaves was nothing more than a pun upon words. "But," added she, "this tree comprehends only two languages, with their several dialects. Now, if we suppose that all languages sprang from the same origin, we must make all the stems spring from the same root."

"That is true," said Willy: "we shall have a whole row of trees at last."

"No," returned his sister, "do not flatter yourself; for if all the stems grow from one root you cannot have more than one tree."

"But then what a giant of a tree it will be!" exclaimed Willy.

" Nothing more than a bush," retorted Sophy, affecting a look of contempt; " for having so great a number of stems, it cannot be called a tree."

" And so confused a bush," observed his mother, " that we must not attempt to represent it; so you must be satisfied with one sketch of a tree, which gives but a very imperfect idea of the Celtic and German languages, with some of their dialects ; for I am far from having named them all to you. I have added one or two branches to the German dialects, in order to show you that they are numerous; but I have purposely left them in blank, not to puzzle you with so many names."

" Germany must be an immensely large country," said Sophy, " to have produced so great a number of barbarians."

" Germany, I have already told you, took its name from the Teutonic tribes who inhabited it, being called Germans on account of their warlike character.

In those ancient times the boundaries of Germany were not well marked out; there were no maps, and geography was almost unknown; so that countries adjacent to Germany sometimes went by that name. Then you must remember that the hordes who emigrated from Germany originally came to that country from more distant northern regions, who still continued pouring in fresh tribes. Those, therefore, who were settled in Germany had a double motive for emigrating southwards; they were pressed for room by invasions from the north, and they had learnt, from their wars with the Romans, that there were more fruitful countries and a warmer climate farther south."

"And pray, how were the southern and more civilised parts of Europe first inhabited," asked Willy: "it must, I suppose, have been from Asia?"

"The southern parts of Europe," replied Mrs. B., "were first inhabited by

hordes of barbarians from Asia, and colonies from Phœnicia and Egypt — countries which were very populous and very early civilised; so that the South of Europe became civilised long before the northern part."

"And is the world now peopled in every part?" asked Sophy.

"There are very few districts, I believe," replied Mrs. B., "that are quite uninhabited, excepting sandy deserts and barren mountains; for land that can produce no food can maintain no inhabitants. But there are many countries which are as yet but very thinly peopled. In some parts of Africa and America there are extensive tracts of land inhabited by savages, who, not having learnt to cultivate the ground, live chiefly on game, which they kill in hunting. Very few people can be fed by such means, and these districts are consequently but thinly peopled. But in proportion as civilisation spreads, and the cultivation

of land improves, more food being produced, more people can be fed, and therefore the population of the earth increases from year to year.

I must, however, observe to you, that if all languages proceed from one original tongue, they do not all stand in an equal degree of relationship to each other; for it is natural to suppose that such nations as were nearest neighbours, having the greatest intercourse, should preserve a closer similitude of words than those more widely separated, and which had little or no connexion."

"Then, I suppose," said Sophy, laughing, "some of the languages were sisters, and others only cousins?"

"They are kindred languages," replied her mother, "though I cannot exactly say in what degree they are related. I have already pointed out to you the relationship between the languages which we have derived from India, and which

are called the Indo-European languages; but there are resemblances, equally remarkable, between other languages. Those spoken in Assyria, in Mesopotamia, and in Syria, abound in words resembling the Hebrew."

"That is very natural," said Willy; "because Palestine was situated in the neighbourhood of those countries."

"Then," continued his mother, "the Phœnician language, spoken in Tyre and Sidon, is said to be a dialect of the Hebrew; and the same language was introduced into Africa when Queen Dido founded the colony of Carthage. The Hebrew and the Arabic are extremely alike."

"That is easily accounted for also," said Sophy, "if Ishmael, as the Bible says, took the Hebrew language into Arabia."

"The Greek and Roman languages," said Mrs. B., "have also a strong resemblance to each other. But it is true these people did not live far apart; and both of them being civilised nations, they

had more intercourse with each other than barbarians would have had."

"And pray, mamma, what are the languages of Africa and America?"

"We know but little about them," replied Mrs. B.: "but it appears that there is so great a resemblance between the languages of the various savage tribes of America, that they might be considered rather as different dialects than as distinct languages; and these dialects vary less in the northern parts of America than in the central and southern parts. This leads one to suppose that America was first inhabited by emigrants from the North of Asia."

"Yes," said Willy, who was still thinking of his tree, "then the trunk of the American tree would have been in the north, and its roots have stretched out eastward towards Asia, while all the branching dialects would grow southward."

CONVERSATION VIII.

ON THE DERIVATION OF WORDS FROM THE GREEK.

"BESIDES the mixture of languages," said Mrs. B., addressing her children, "which has taken place in all modern countries, there was another cause which produced very considerable changes in those languages. When, after a great length of time, the barbarians became civilised, and the people began to read and write, some of the cleverest of the men devoted themselves to learning: but in the pursuit of their studies they found themselves much at a loss for words in which to express their ideas; it was therefore necessary for them to invent new words."

"Yes, I remember," said Sophy, "you told us that they made names for the

tools they used to till the ground, and for the houses they built—in short, for every thing new they made."

"True," replied Mrs. B.; "but these terms were invented in very early times, long before reading, or writing, or learned men were heard of. I am now speaking of a more advanced period of civilisation, when new words were required to express the new inventions of the arts and sciences. As the Greeks and the Romans were the people who had made the greatest progress in those studies, and as the Greek and Latin languages were held in the highest repute, the new words required were generally taken from them."

"And how did they do this?" asked Sophy.

"I will give you an example," replied her mother, "which will make you understand it. When learned men first began to make maps, to show the different situations of places on the face of the globe, and to mark out the towns, and seas, and

rivers, there was no name for this study; and it could not be taught in schools without having a name to call it by Then the learned men who understood Greek said, let us make a name from the Greek language. Now *ge* is Greek for the earth, and *graphē* is Greek for writing or picturing; so they put these two words together, and made an English word of it: this is the derivation of the word *geography*, which means writing about the earth. From that time all that was written or taught describing the surface of the earth was called geography."

"Oh! that was very clever," said Sophy. "We shall always remember what geography means now that we know the words it comes from."

"The study of the derivation of words," said Mrs. B., "is called etymology, and its chief use is to make us understand the meaning of those words; for it is of little importance to us to know from

what language words are taken, whilst it is of the greatest consequence to understand their right signification; for unless that be well understood we cannot express our ideas clearly and distinctly. I must, however, tell you, that the meaning of words does not always agree exactly with their derivation, for in the course of time they sometimes get corrupted, and change their signification. Thus the word *hypocrite* is derived from a Greek word, denoting an actor on the stage, but was afterwards applied as a term of reproach to any one who feigns in order to deceive in real life."

"Yes," said Sophy; "if a man pretends to be good, when he is not, he is called a hypocrite."

"Then the word *talent*," continued her mother, "which comes from the Greek, originally meant a weight of gold or silver, or a sum of money; but we apply it to abilities or natural acquirements."

"In one of the parables of the New Testament," said Sophy, "talent, I remember, is used as a sum of money; while we now use it to speak of a man's cleverness and abilities, not of his wealth."

"Then," said Willy, "in such cases the derivation of words would rather mislead than be of use to us."

"That is true," replied his mother; "fortunately they are of not very frequent occurrence. But there are some examples of the corruption of words, arising from the common people misunderstanding their derivation, which are quite ludicrous. There is an inn in London, the sign of which is a bull and a mouth, and it is called the 'Bull and Mouth.' Now the origin of this strange sign was the mouth of the seaport of Boulogne in France, and it ought to have been represented by the painting of a seaport town."

"How very droll," cried Sophy; "no-

thing could be more unlike the true meaning."

"There is another sign," continued her mother, "representing a bell and a savage, the derivation of which was from the French, *La Belle Sauvage*, but which the ignorant sign-painter mistook for a bell and a savage. But now let us return to the words taken from the Greek, which will be useful to you. After the term geography had been invented to name the study of the outside or surface of the globe, learned men began to examine how the inside was formed; how many different sorts of earth it consisted of; what the rocks and stones were made of; and of what nature were the metals which were mixed up with the earths — in short, about every thing under ground: and then they began to consider what name they should give to this study. *Ge*, they said, would do very well for the first syllable, because it meant the earth."

"And *graphy* would do for the second syllable too," said Willy, "for it means writing or teaching about the earth."

"Oh, no!" cried Sophy, "that would never do, for it would be having the same word, geography, for two very different meanings. You must invent a word to distinguish between the study of the inside and the outside of the earth."

"Well," retorted Willy, "but the ground which is earth, and the rocks and stones, are outside as well as inside of the globe."

"That is true," replied Mrs. B.; "yet you must conceive these studies to be of a very different nature. Geography treats of the situation of places on the surface of the globe; whilst this new study treats of the formation of the earth itself, and of the nature of the various materials of which it is composed. This new science, therefore, belongs, as Willy observed, both to the outside and the

inside of the earth; and yet its meaning is totally different from geography."

"Then what word was chosen," inquired Sophy, "to name this new science?"

"After a great deal of reflection," resumed Mrs. B., "they chose the word *logos* to finish the new word. *Logos*, in Greek, means a discourse, or talking about any particular subject; and the new word was *geology*, which signifies the study of the formation of the globe. I shall give you a list of some of the most useful English words which are derived from the Greek."

"Oh! but pray explain a few more of them first," said Sophy.

"Well, then," continued her mother, "there was once a very clever man, who invented an instrument, which, when you looked through it, made objects at a great distance appear very near you; it was therefore necessary to give a name to this instrument."

"I guess that it was a spy-glass," said Sophy.

"It was," replied Mrs. B.; "but its proper name, derived from the Greek, is *telescope*. It comes from two Greek words, *têle*, which signifies 'very far off,' and *scopeo*, 'to see.' So it means that you see through this instrument to a very great distance. Now are you satisfied?"

No, indeed!" cried Sophy; "these explanations are so amusing — pray give us some more of them."

"It is not many years," continued her mother, "since a machine was invented which was called a *telegraph*. This machine makes signals, by means of which we know immediately what has happened at a great distance."

"There is one on the hill," said Willy; "it has long arms; and I have seen them move."

"Try," said his mother, "whether you can explain the derivation of the name telegraph."

"The first syllable is like *tele*scope," said Willy, "meaning far off; and the last is like the last syllable of geography, that is graphy, to write; because the telegraph, with its long arms, writes something that can be read a great way off."

"Very well," replied his mother. "But the telegraph does not write itself, but by the motion of its arms it makes signals, which are understood and written down by the man who manages it. The next word I shall give you is *zoology*."

"Oh! I know the meaning of the latter part of that word," said Sophy; "*logy* comes from *logos*, a discourse about some study: but what zoo signifies I am sure I cannot guess."

"*Zoë* is Greek for life," said Mrs. B., "and *zoön* for animal: zoology is, therefore, the study of living creatures or animals."

"Then I dare say that the gardens in the Regent's Park are called the Zoological

Gardens because there are so many wild beasts and living creatures of all sorts in them."

"You have guessed rightly," replied his mother. "All the English words which end in *logy* come from the Greek root *logos;* and whenever several words are derived from one word, that word is called a root. Can you discover why?"

"Because," said Willy, "the words spring from it as the stem and branches of a plant spring from a root. That reminds me of my tree, mamma."

"You will find in the list of words I have selected for you, taken from the Greek, that *ge* the earth, is the root of a number of English words, and so is *graphy*, to write. The next word I shall give you," continued Mrs. B., "is *chronology*, which comes from the words *chronos*, time ——"

"And *logos*, a discourse," interrupted Sophy. "But I don't understand what the two words put together mean?"

"Chronology means," said her mother, "something relative to time: thus a chronological table is a table of dates of time, showing the year in which events happened."

"Yes, I remember having seen such a table," said Sophy.

"But, my dear Sophy," continued her mother, "I must tell you that your own name comes from the Greek; and I hope you will be pleased with it, for Sophia signifies *wisdom*."

"Indeed, mamma!" cried Sophy, highly gratified that her name should have so ancient and so honourable a derivation.

"And what do you think the word *philosopher* comes from?"

"The two last syllables, *sopher*," said Willy, "I suppose is wisdom; but what *philo* means I cannot tell."

"*Phileo* is the Greek of to love; so philosopher means a lover of wisdom," replied Mrs. B.

"Then," said Sophy, "Charley must

be a little philosopher, because he is so fond of me."

"No," replied her mother; "*Sophia* in Greek is not the name of a person, but of wisdom: it is very possible, therefore, for all your brothers and sisters to love you without loving wisdom; for they may love the English Sophia without loving the Greek one. *Alphabet* is another word derived from the Greek, which will interest you, for it comes from the two first letters of the Greek alphabet, *alpha* and *beta*, which in English is A and B."

"So then," said Willy, "alphabet is nothing more than the A B C, as children call it?"

"The meaning is the same in both languages, though in Greek it is expressed by the two first letters, and in English by the three first; for both of them mean the whole alphabet, from A to Z."

"Pray, mamma," said Sophy, "why were the Grecians so celebrated; for they

never conquered the world like the Romans?"

"No," replied her mother; "their ambition was of a much higher nature. They employed themselves in the study of the arts and sciences, in which they excelled all other nations. It is true that the universal empire of Alexander the Great is commonly called the Grecian Empire; but it is merely because the kingdom of Macedonia, over which he reigned, was adjoining to Greece, and that he began his ravages by subduing Greece; so that he was sovereign of that country before he conquered other countries. Until this period the Greeks had always maintained their independence: they were the bravest people in the world when they fought in defence of their own country, but were not ambitious of foreign conquests. Instead of depopulating the world, as Alexander did, they extended civilisation by sending out colonies, who settled in various countries on

the borders of the Mediterranean, both in Africa and in Europe."

"That is what all countries ought to do," said Willy,—"never go to war if they can help it; but if they are attacked at home, shed the last drop of their blood in defence of their country."

"The Greeks were chiefly celebrated," said his mother, "for the fine arts. They built the most magnificent temples, and carved the finest statues to ornament them; they painted the most beautiful pictures, and wrote the most celebrated verses. Thus they were famous in architecture, sculpture, painting, and poetry; all of which are called the fine arts, to distinguish them from the common arts of life. When Greece was conquered by the Romans many of the Greeks became slaves in the houses of the Romans: but instead of setting them about household work, they employed them to teach their children these fine arts, and their beautiful language; and

these slaves, far from being ill used, became the friends and favourites of their masters, and were sometimes adopted by them as their children. Thus the Greeks, though in servitude, improved and refined the Romans. A great many Greek words were taken into the Latin language, and have through that means come down to us."

CONVERSATION IX.

THE SAME SUBJECT CONTINUED.

The next day Mrs. B. gave her children a list of English words derived from the Greek, desiring them to observe that the Greek word placed at the head of each class was the root of all the words in that class. "Thus," said she, "the word *demagogue* comes from *demos*, the people, and *agogos*, a leader; demagogue meaning a leader of the people."

The children began with great eagerness to examine this list; but they soon found that it required some study to understand it. Sophy asked for the explanation of one word, Willy of another; and they were not sorry when their mother, after having satisfied several of their inquiries, said, "I do not expect

you to learn all these words by heart, or even to read them through at present; you may examine them so far as they interest you, but no farther."

"Oh! mamma," cried Sophy, "here is *phileo*, to love, that we have been talking about in the word philosopher; but here it makes part of this long hard word philanthropy, which I know not how to pronounce rightly."

"The root," observed her mother, "is *anthrôpos*, a man; so philanthropy is to love man, which means to love mankind."

"Then," said Willy, "there is the word *geometry*, which you see comes from the root *ge*, the earth, and it ends in *metreo*, to measure; so geometry is to measure the earth."

ENGLISH WORDS DERIVED FROM THE GREEK.

AGO, I guide, — AGÔGOS, a Leader.

Demagogue. — *Demos,* the people; *ago,* I guide. The leader of a faction.

Pedagogue. — *Pais,* a boy; *ago,* I guide. A schoolmaster.

Synagogue. — *Syn,* with; *ago,* I guide. Temple of the Jews.

AGON, a Contest. Agônia.

Antagonist. — *Anti,* against; *agonistes,* a boxer. One who strives against another.

ALLOS, another.

Parallel. — *Para,* side by side; *allos,* another. One [line] by the side of another.

ANTHROPOS, a Man.

Anthropophagi. — *Anthropos,* a man; *phago,* I eat. Cannibals, or men-eaters.

Misanthropy. — *Miseo,* I hate; *anthropos,* a man. Hatred of mankind.

Philanthropy. — *Phileo,* I love; *anthropos,* a man. Love of mankind.

ARCHE, Government, — ARCHOS, a Chief.

Anarchy. — *A*, not; *arche*, government. Want of government.

Heptarchy. — *Hepta*, seven; *arche*, government. A government of seven chiefs.

Hierarchy. — *Hieros*, holy; *arche*, government. An ecclesiastical government.

Monarchy. — *Monos*, one; *arche*, government. A government under one chief.

Oligarchy. — *Oligos*, a few; *arche*, government. A government of a few chiefs.

Patriarch. — *Pater*, father; *archos*, chief government. The ruler of a family or tribe.

BALLO, I throw or put.

Parable. — *Para*, side by side; *ballo*, I put. One thing compared to another.

BIOS, Life.

Amphibious. — *Amphi*, both; *bios*, life. Animals that live both on land and in water.

Biographer. — *Bios*, life; *grapho*, I write. A writer of memoirs.

CHRONOS, Time.

Chronic. — *Chronos,* time. A term applied to diseases of long duration.

Chronicles. — *Chronos,* time. A history of the times.

Chronology. — *Chronos,* time; *logos,* a discourse. Dates of time.

Anachronism. — *Ana,* without; *chronos,* time. An incongruity of time.

DEMOS, People.

Demagogue. — *Demos,* people; *agogos,* leader. Leader of a faction.

Democracy. — *Demos,* people; *krateo,* I rule. Government of the people.

Epidemic. — *Epi,* upon or among; *demos,* people. Infectious diseases.

DIDOMI, I give. — DOTOS, a thing given.

Antidote. — *Anti,* against; *dotos,* a thing given. A medicine given to counteract poison.

GONIA, an Angle or Corner.

Decagon. — *Deka,* ten; *gonia,* an angle. A figure having ten equal angles and sides.

Diagonal. — *Dia,* through or across; *gonia,* an angle. A line drawn from angle to angle.

Dodecagon. — *Dodeka,* twelve; *gonia,* an angle. A figure having twelve equal angles and sides.

Heptagon. — *Hepta,* seven; *gonia,* an angle. A figure having seven equal angles and sides.

Hexagon. — *Hex,* six; *gonia,* an angle. A figure having six equal angles and sides.

Octagon. — *Octo,* eight; *gonia,* an angle. A figure having eight equal angles and sides.

Pentagon. — *Pente,* five; *gonia,* an angle. A figure having five equal angles and sides.

GE, the Earth.

Geography. — *Ge,* the earth; *grapho,* I write. Description of the earth.

Geology. — *Ge,* the earth; *logos,* a discourse. Description of the interior of the earth.

Geometry. — *Ge,* the earth; *metreo,* I measure. Measurement of the earth.

GRAMMA, a letter.

Grammar. — *Gramma,* a letter. The study of language.

Epigram. — *Epi,* upon; *gramma,* a letter. A short poem on a word.

Programme. — *Pro,* before; *gramma,* a letter. An advertisement.

Graphe, a Description, — Grapho, I write.

Autograph. — *Auto,* self; *grapho,* I write. The original hand-writing of any person.

Biography. — *Bios,* life; *grapho,* I write. Writing of memoirs.

Cosmography. — *Kosmos,* the world; *grapho,* I write. A description of the world.

Geography. — *Ge,* the earth; *grapho,* I write. A description of the earth.

Lithography. — *Lithos,* a stone; *grapho,* I write. Writing on stone.

Orthography. — *Orthos,* correct; *grapho,* I write. The art of spelling.

Photography. — *Phôs,* light; *grapho,* I write. Painting with light.

Paragraph. — *Para,* different; *grapho,* I write. A distinct part of a discourse.

Stenography. — *Stenos,* short; *grapho,* I write. Short-hand writing.

Telegraph. — *Tele,* distant; *grapho,* I write. An instrument to convey intelligence to a distance.

Topography.—*Topos,* a place; *grapho,* I write. A description of particular places.

HEMERA, a Day.

Ephemeral.—*Ep,* upon; *hemera,* a day. Something of very short duration.

KRATOS, Power, — KRATEO, I rule.

Aristocracy. — *Aristos,* the best or noblest; *krateo,* I rule. A government of the nobles.

Autocrat. — *Auto,* self; *krateo,* I rule. One who governs by himself — an absolute monarch.

Democracy. — *Demos,* people; *krateo,* I rule. Government of the people.

Theocracy. — *Theos,* God; *krateo,* I rule. Divine government.

LOGOS, a Word, Reason, a Discourse.

LEGO, I say, I tell, I speak.

Analogy. — *Ana,* with; *logos,* a discourse. An agreement, a resemblance.

Apologue. — *Apo,* from; *logos,* a discourse. A story to teach some moral truth.

Apology. — *Apo,* from; *logos,* a reason. An excuse.

Astrology. — *Astron,* a star; *logos,* a discourse. Foretelling by the stars.

Catalogue. — *Kata,* against; *logos,* a word. A list of things.

Chronology. — *Chronos,* time; *logos,* a discourse. A discourse relating to time.

Craniology. — *Kranion,* the skull; *logos,* a discourse. Study of the skull.

Decalogue. — *Deka,* ten; *logos,* a discourse. The ten Commandments.

Dialogue. — *Dia,* through; *logos,* a discourse. A discourse between two persons.

Eulogy. — *Eu,* well; *logos,* a discourse. Praise, panegyric.

Genealogy. — *Genea,* a generation; *logos,* a discourse. The race of a family.

Geology. — *Ge,* the earth; *logos,* a discourse. Study of the structure of the earth.

Monologue. — *Monos,* single; *logos,* a discourse. A soliloquy.

Mythology. — *Muthos,* a fable; *logos,* a discourse. History of the Heathen divinities.

Philology. — *Phileo,* I love; *logos,* a discourse. The study of language.

Prologue. — *Pro,* before; *logos,* a discourse. A speech before a play.

Epilogue. — *Epi,* upon; *logos,* a discourse. A speech made upon or after a play.

Theology. — *Theos,* God; *logos,* a discourse. The study of God and divine things.

Zoology. — *Zoos,* life; *logos,* a discourse. The study of living creatures.

Metron, a Measure, — Metreo, I measure.

Anemometer. — *Anemos,* the wind; *metreo,* I measure. An instrument to measure the velocity of the wind.

Arithmetic. — *Arithmos,* a number; *metreo,* I measure. The science of numbers.

Barometric. — *Baros,* a weight; *metreo,* I measure. An instrument to measure the weight of the air.

Chronometer. — *Chronos,* time; *metreo,* I measure. An instrument to measure time.

Diameter. — *Dia,* through; *metreo,* I measure. A line through the centre of a circle.

Geometry. — *Ge,* the earth; *metreo,* I measure. The science of measurement.

Hydrometer. — *Hudor,* water; *metreo,* I measure. An instrument for measuring the specific gravity of water.

Metre. — *Metron,* a measure. A measure of verse.

Thermometer. — *Thermē,* heat; *metreo,* I measure. An instrument to measure heat.

MORPHE, a Form.

Metamorphosis. — *Meta,* a change; *morphē,* a form. A change of form.

NOMOS, a Law or Rule.

Anomaly. — *A,* not; *nomos,* a rule. A departure from established rules.

Astronomer. — *Astron,* a star; *nomos,* a rule. One who studies the stars.

Economy. — *Oikos,* a house; *nomos,* a rule. Regulation of housekeeping.

ONOMA, a Name.

Anonymous. — *A,* not; *onoma,* a name. Nameless, without signature.

Synonymous. — *Syn,* with; *onoma,* a name. Word of the same signification.

ORAO, I see.

Diorama. — *Dia,* through; *orao,* I see. A picture in which effects are produced by passing light through any substance.

Panorama. — *Pan,* every thing; *orao,* I see. A painting exhibiting every side.

PATHOS, feeling.

Antipathy. — *Anti,* against; *pathos,* feeling. An aversion or dislike.

Apathy. — *A,* not; *pathos,* feeling. Want of passion or feeling.

Sympathy. — *Syn,* with; *pathos,* feeling. A fellow or mutual feeling.

PHAGO, I eat.

Anthropophagi. — *Anthropos,* a man; *phago,* I eat. Cannibals, men-eaters.

Sarcophagi. — *Sarkos,* flesh; *phago,* I eat. A name given to a tomb because flesh is consumed therein.

PHONE, Speech,— Phoneo, I sound.

Aphony. — *A,* not; *phone,* speech. The loss of speech.

Cacophony. — *Kakos,* bad; *phone,* speech. Bad pronunciation.

Euphony. — *Eu,* well; *phone,* sound. An agreeable sound; the contrary of harshness in speaking.

Symphony. — *Sym,* with; *phone,* sound. Harmony of sound. That part of a tune played between the singing.

PHRASIS, a Speech.

Paraphrase. — *Para,* similar; *phrasis,* a speech. An interpretation according to the sense, and not merely according to the words.

RHÊSSO, I dash against.

Cataract. — *Kata,* down; *rhêsso,* I dash against. A waterfall.

SKOPEO, I see.

Episcopal. — *Epi,* over or upon; *skopeo,* I see. Belonging to the office of a bishop.

Hygroscope. — *Hugros,* moist; *skopeo,* I see. An instrument to show the degree of moisture in the air.

Kaleidoscope. — *Kalos,* beautiful; *eidos,* a form; *skopeo,* I see. An instrument which creates and exhibits a variety of beautiful forms.

Microscope. — *Mikros,* small; *skopeo,* I see. An instrument to view small things.

Telescope. — *Tele,* distant; *skopeo,* I see. An instrument to view distant objects.

SPHAIRA, a Sphere or Globe.

Atmosphere. — *Atmos,* vapour; *sphaira,* a globe. The aerial fluid which surrounds the earth.

Hemisphere. — *Hemisa,* half; *sphaira,* a sphere. The half of a sphere.

STELLO, I send.

Apostle. — *Apo,* from; *stello,* I send. One of the twelve men our Saviour sent forth to preach the Gospel.

Epistle. — *Epi,* upon; *stello,* I send. A written communication sent to a person at a distance.

STICHOS, a Line or Verse.

Acrostic. — *Akros,* the top; *stichos,* a line. A poetical composition, of which the initials form a name.

Distich. — *Dis,* twice; *stichos,* a line. A couplet.

STREPHO, I turn.

Catastrophe. — *Kata,* against; *strepho,* I turn. The change which produces the final event in a dramatic poem or tragedy.

SULLABE, a Syllable.

Syllable.—*Sun,* with; *lambano,* I take together. As much of a word as is comprised in one articulation.

Monosyllable. — *Monos,* single; *sullabe,* a syllable. A word of one syllable.

Polysyllable. — *Polus,* many; *sullabe,* a syllable. A word of many syllables.

TAPHOS, a Tomb.

Epitaph. — *Epi,* upon; *taphos,* a tomb. An inscription on a tomb-stone.

TECHNE, Art or Science.

Technical. — *Techne,* art. Belonging to arts.

Polytechnic. — *Polus,* many; *techne,* art or science. The study of many arts or sciences.

TEMNO, I cut.

Anatomy. — *Ana,* apart; *temno,* I cut. Dissection.

THEOS, God.

Apotheosis. — *Apo,* from; *Theos,* God. A deification.

Atheist. — *A,* not; *Theos,* God. A disbeliever in God.

Pantheon. — *Pan,* all, *Theos,* God. A heathen temple dedicated to all the gods.

Polytheism. — *Polus,* many; *Theos,* God. Plurality of gods.

Theology. — *Theos,* God; *logos,* a discourse. The science of divine things.

Theocracy. — *Theos,* God; *krateo,* I govern. A government under the immediate direction of God, like that of the Jews.

TITHEMI, I put.

Synthesis. — *Syn,* together; *tithemi,* I put. A placing together.

"You may have observed that in this list the root does not always form the beginning of the English word derived from it, but is often preceded by another word, as in *micros*cope and *tele*scope, where *mikros* and *tele* are placed before

the root *skopeo*, I see. But the roots are more frequently preceded by a small word or syllable, which is called a prefix: these generally consist of prepositions. I shall give you a separate list of some of these, though many of them have been mentioned before in the former one."

LIST OF GREEK PREFIXES.

A or *an, without:* whence come the words *A*pathy, without feeling; *An*archy, without government; *A*theist, without God; *An*onymous, without name.

Amphi, round or *both:* as, *Amphi*theatre, a circular theatre: *Amphi*bious, both lives; meaning an animal that can live both on land and in water.

Ana, again or *up:* as, *Ana*lyse, to dissolve again: the separation of a compound into the parts of which it consists: *Ana*tomy; from *ana*, apart, *temno*, I cut; dissection.

Anti, sometimes contracted into *ant, against:* as, *Anti*pathy, aversion or dislike; from *anti*, against, and *pathos*, feeling: *Anti*dote;

from *anti*, against, *dotine*, a thing given; a medicine given to counteract poison: *Ant*agonist; *anti*, against, *agonistes*, a combatant; one who opposes another.

Apo, sometimes contracted into *ap*, signifies *from:* as, *Apo*gee; *apo*, from, *gee*, the earth.

Cata, sometimes contracted into *cat*, *down*, or *from:* as, *Cata*ract, a waterfall; from *kata*, down, *rhêsso*, I dash against: *Cata*strophe, the change which produces the final event in a dramatic poem or tragedy; from *kata*, against, *strepho*, I turn.

Dia, *through:* as, *Dia*meter, a line passing through; from *dia*, through, *metron*, a measure: *Dia*logue, a discourse between two persons; from *dia*, through, *logos*, a discourse: *Dia*gonal, a line drawn through an angle; from *dia*, through, *gonia*, an angle.

Epi, sometimes contracted into *ep*, *upon:* as, *Epi*taph, an inscription on a tombstone; from *epi*, upon, *taphos*, a tomb: *Epi*demic, a term applied to contagious diseases; from *epi*, upon, *demos*, the people: *Eph*emeral, something of very short duration; from *ep*, upon, *hemera*, a day.

Hypo, under: as, *Hypo*thesis, a system formed on principles not absolutely certain; from *hypo,* under, *thesis,* a position.

Meta denotes *change:* as, *Meta*morphosis, a change of form; from *meta,* change, *morphe,* a form.

Para, sometimes contracted into *par, side by side, equal:* as, *Para*ble, a similitude, or one thing compared to another; from *para,* side by side, *ballo,* I put: *Para*phrase, an interpretation according to the sense, and not merely according to the words; from *para,* similar, *phrasis,* a speech: *Para*llel, extended in the same direction; from *para,* by the side of, *allos,* another.

Syn signifies with or together, and occasionally changes into *syl,* or *sym:* as *Syn*thesis, a placing together; from *syn,* together, *tithemi,* I put: *Sym*pathy, a mutual feeling; from *sym,* with, *pathos,* feeling: *Syl*lable, as much of a word as is comprised in one articulation; from *syl,* with, *labe,* I take together: *Sym*phony, harmony of sound; from *sym,* with, *phone,* sound.

CONVERSATION X.

ON THE DERIVATION OF WORDS FROM THE LATIN.

"I MUST now," said Mrs. B., "tell you something about the English words which are derived from the Latin: they are much more numerous than those taken from the Greek."

"That is very natural," observed Willy; "for as the Romans conquered the world, or very nearly so, every body must have learnt, more or less, to speak Latin."

"And when," continued his mother, "the barbarians were masters of the world, the languages they introduced became all of them more or less mixed up with the Latin tongue spoken by the nations which they subdued. This, you have heard, was the case with the *Frankish dialect*, which the Franks introduced into Gaul. Besides this, I must tell you

that a great many of the words we derive from the Greek come to us through the Latin language, the Romans having first incorporated them into their language, and we, in later times, taken them from thence."

"Then," observed Sophy, "it must be difficult sometimes to know whether an English word is derived from the Latin or the Greek."

"Very difficult," replied Mrs. B. "Fortunately it is but of little importance for us to know whether a word comes to us straight from Greece, or has passed through Rome in its way hither. The word *calamity*, for instance, was originally derived from the Greek word *calamos*, which means the stalks of corn; and it implied that the corn could not get out of the stalks, thus producing a failure of the crop. From the Greek this word passed into the Latin language, where the word is *calamitas*, and means a storm which destroys the corn by breaking the stalks.

From the Latin it passed into the French language, under the name *calamité;* and from thence became the English word calamity. In these two modern languages you will observe it has lost its special meaning relative to corn, and is used to express any sudden and severe misfortune."

"So, then," said Sophy, "this word has travelled from Greece through Italy and France, and staid a long time in each country before it came to us: no wonder, therefore, that its meaning should be changed."

"I suppose," said Willy, "that the word calamity became Latin when the Romans subdued Greece; and then it must have been used in Italy and Gaul, and all the Roman provinces. Then when the barbarians conquered Gaul ——"

"That was a terrible *calamity*," interrupted Sophy.

"Then," resumed her brother, "I conclude that the word was adopted in the

Frankish dialect which they introduced, and so it became a French word; and from France it came over to England, I make no doubt, with William the Conqueror."

"Well," said their mother, laughing, "I think, between you, you have traced the geography and the chronology of the word calamity with tolerable accuracy."

"Geography and chronology of the word," repeated Sophy: "I do not understand that; and yet I ought, because you have explained the derivation of those words from the Greek."

"Oh, I understand it," cried Willy: "the geography means all the countries the word passed through; and the chronology means the period of time at which it passed through them. Is it not so, mamma?"

"Yes," replied his mother. "Now for some examples of Latin words adopted in the English language. The word *manuscript*, which means written by the

hand, is derived from two Latin words — *manus*, which is Latin for the hand, and *scriptum*, written."

"Then, I dare say," cried Willy, "that manufacture also comes from *manus*, the hand. But what does *facture* mean?"

"It is," replied his mother, "derived from the Latin word *factus*, made; so that manufacture means something made by the hand — that is, made by man (he being the only animal which has hands), to distinguish it from what is produced by nature."

"And nature," said Sophy, "makes all the trees, and fruit, and flowers, and grass, that grow on the earth, and all the animals which feed on them."

"Then every thing that grows," said Willy, "such as animals and vegetables, are made by nature; and every thing that is manufactured is made by man?"

"Every thing that grows is certainly the work of nature," replied her mother: "but it is more common to say pro-

duced or created by nature, than made by nature: it is more proper to confine the word *made* to things which are the work of man, either by his manual labour, as ploughing the ground, building houses, making shoes, or by means of manufactories, which are also the work of man, with this difference only, that machines are generally substituted, or put in the place, for the labour of his hands. Observe, also, that the productions of nature are not confined to things which grow; for the earth itself, and all that is contained within it, are equally the productions of nature."

"Then," observed Willy, "all that belongs either to geology or geography are natural productions?"

"No," replied Mrs. B.; "for towns belong to geography, and they are built by men. Now you must always remember, that when we talk of the works of nature we mean the works of God. It is our Almighty Father who made the laws

of nature for our good. What would become of us if when we sowed corn in the ground nature did not make it grow; or if nature did not produce animals to supply us with food?"

"But then," inquired Sophy, "what is it that men do?"

"They manufacture the productions of nature," replied her mother; "they cut down trees, and with the wood they make tables and chairs. They shear the sheep of their wool, and spin and weave it into cloth for clothing. They make metals into saucepans and kettles, clay into bricks for building, and into pottery for plates and dishes. It would be endless to say how much men do in changing the productions of nature into works of art. But who is it gave them the power of doing this? Who is it that made them so clever?"

"It is God!" said Sophy.

"There are, therefore, two classes of things," continued her mother; "the one

the work of nature, the other that of man: but they equally proceed from God; it is to him that we are indebted for both. When a man takes a hatchet and cuts down a tree, it is not the man who cuts the wood, but the hatchet; but the instrument could not do it if the man did not guide and direct the stroke. So man, like the hatchet, is an instrument in the hands of God, who has given him strength and skill and understanding to enable him to change the works of nature into works of art by manufacturing them.

The words derived from the Latin you will not find so amusing as those from the Greek, because they are in general taken from one Latin word instead of being composed from two, as in Greek. The Latin word *arma*, for instance, is the root from which the English words arms, armory, army, are all derived."

WORDS TAKEN FROM THE LATIN.

Aqua, Water.

Aqueous. — Watery.
Aquatic. — Living in or on the water.
Aqueduct. — A channel for water; from *aqua*, water, and *duco*, I lead.

Arma, Arms, Weapons.

Arms. — Weapons of war.
Disarm. — To unarm.
Army. — A number of armed men.
Armory. — A collection of arms.

Bellum, War.

Belligerent. — Waging war; from *bellum*, war, and *gero*, I bring.
Rebel. — One who revolts.
Rebellion. — Insurrection.

Caput, Capitis, the Head.

Capital. — Chief, principal, the head.
Capitation. — Counting by heads.
Cape. — A headland.
Captain. — A chief commander.
Chapter. — A division or head.
Decapitate. — To behead.

Caro, Carnis, Flesh.

Carnal. — Fleshy, not spiritual.
Carnage. — Slaughter.
Carrion. — Corrupted flesh.
Carcass. — A dead body.
Carnivorous. — To eat flesh or meat.

Cædo, I cut or kill.

Con-cise. — Cut into short periods.
In-cision. — A cut inwards.
Pre-cise — Is applied to that which has determinate limitations.
Fratri-cide. — One who kills a brother.
Homi-cide. „ man.
Infanti-cide. „ infant.
Matri-cide. „ mother.
Parri-cide. „ parent.
Patri-cide. „ father.
Regi-cide. „ king.
Sui-cide „ one's self.

Civis, a Citizen.

Civil. — Gentle, well-bred, as a citizen is above a savage.
City. — A large corporate town.
Civilize. — To reclaim from savageness.

Fors, Fortis, Chance.

Fortune. — Good or ill luck.
Fortunate. — Successful, lucky.
Unfortunate. — Unlucky.
Misfortune. — Ill luck, calamity.
Fortuitous. — Accidental, by chance.

Homo, a Man.

Human. — Belonging to mankind.
Humane. — Kind, benevolent.
Inhuman. — Barbarous, cruel.

Ignis, Fire.

Ignite. — To set on fire.
Ignition. — The act of burning.

Jus, Juris, Right.

Just. — Honest, equitable, upright.
Unjust. — Iniquitous, dishonest.
Justice. — A magistrate; one whose duty it is to do justice.
Judge. — Ditto.
Judicial. — Relating to public justice.
Jurisprudence. — The science of law.
Jury. — A set of men sworn to give a true verdict.

LEX, LEGIS, a Law.

Legal. — Lawful.
Legislate. — To make laws.
Legislature. — Those who enact laws.
Allegiance. — Loyalty.
Legitimate. — Just, right.

LIBER, the inner bark of a tree, which used to be employed to write on.

Library. — A collection of books.
Libel. — A defamatory writing.
Librarian. — He who takes care of a library.

LITERA, a Letter.

Letter. — Of the alphabet.
Letter. — An epistle.
Literal. — Exact to a letter.
Literature. — Learning.
Literati. — The learned.
Illiterate. — Unlearned.
Obliterate. — To rub out.

MATER, Mother.

Maternal. — Motherly.
Matron. — A married woman.
Matrimony. — Marriage.

MINISTER. One acting under superior authority.

Minister. — A servant of God, a clergyman.

Minister. — A servant of the king, to assist him to govern.

MORS, MORTIS, Death.

Mortal. — Deadly.
Mortality. — Death.
Immortal. — Exempt from death.
Immortalise. — To last for ever.
Mortify. — To die away.

OPUS, OPERIS, a Work.

Operate. — To act, to work.
Co-operate. — To work conjointly with others.
Operation. — Action; effect.
Opera. — A musical play.

PATER, PATRIS, a Father.

Paternal. — Fatherly.
Patrimony. — An inheritance.
Patriot. — A lover of his country.
Patron. — Protector.
Expatriate. — To banish from one's country.

POPULUS, the People, a Nation.

People. — Persons, a nation.
Population. — The number of people in a country.
Populace. — The common people.
Popular. — Suitable to people in general.

Depopulate. — To lay waste, to destroy the people.
Public. — General, national, the people at large.
Publish. — To make known to the public.

SIGNUM, a Sign, a Seal.

A Sign. — A token, a mark.
To sign. — To write one's name to any thing.
To signify. — To express, to mean.
Signalise. — To make remarkable.
Insignificant. — Wanting meaning.
Assign. — To appoint.
Consign. — To make over.
Design. — To purpose, to plan.
Ensign. — A flag, or he that bears it.
Resign. — To yield, to give up.

SOCIUS, a Companion.

Sociable. — Friendly, familiar.
Society. — Union in one interest.
Association. — Union, alliance.

SONUS, a Sound.

Sound. — A noise.
Sonorous. — High sounding.
Consonant. — A letter that can be sounded only with a vowel.

Dissonance. — Harsh sounds.
Resound. — To sound again.

SPECIO, or SPECTO, I view, I see.

Species. — Appearance to the senses, any visible or sensible representation.
Specimen. —A part of any thing shown, to enable us to judge of the rest.
Specious. — Pleasing to the view; apparently right, though not actually so.
Spectacles. — Glasses employed to assist the sight.
Spectator. — One who looks on.
Spectre. — Something made preternaturally visible.
Speculate. —To take a view of any thing with the mind.

This root, with the following prepositions prefixed, forms the words a-spect, circum-spect, con-spicuous, de-spise, ex-pect, in-spect, pros-pect, re-spect, sus-pect.

TERRA, the Earth.

Terrestrial. — Earthly.
Terraqueous. — Composed of land and water.
Terrace. — A mound of earth.
Terrier. — A dog that hunts under ground.
Territory. — Country, a district.

Inter. — To bury or put under ground.
Mediterranean. — A sea surrounded by land.
Subterranean. — Underground.

LATIN PREFIXES.

A, ab, abs, signify *from* or *away:* as, *Ab*sent, being away; from *sum,* I am: *A*vert, to turn away; from *verto,* to turn.

Ad, and its forms, *a, ac, af, ag, al, an, ap, ar, as, at,* signify *to:* as, *Ac*cede, to give up to; from *cedo,* to give up: *As*sume, to take to; from *sumo,* to take: *An*nex, to tie to; from *necto,* to tie: *Ac*cept; from *capio,* to take.

Ante, before: as, *Ante*cedent, going before; from *cedo,* to go: *Ante*chamber, a room before the chamber.

Circum, or *circa, round about:* as, *Circum*locution, round-about speaking; from *loquor,* to speak: *Circum*vent, to come round about; from *venio,* to come.

Con, together with, to, against, and assumes the forms of *co, cog, col, com, cor:* as, *Con*tend, to hold against; from *teneo,* to hold. *Cor*rect, to guide together; from *rego,* to guide.

Contra, sometimes changed into *contro* or *counter*, *against:* as, *Contro*vert, to dispute; from *verto*, to turn: *Contra*dict, to oppose verbally; from *dico*, to say: *Counter*-poise, to weigh against.

De, *down:* as, *De*pose, to place down; from *pono*, to place: *De*press, to press down: *De*cry, to cry down.

Dis, sometimes changed into *di* or *dif*, *asunder*, *from*, *not:* as, *Dis*seminate, to scatter seeds asunder; from *semen*, seed: *Dis*believe, not to believe: *Di*vert, to turn from; from *verto*, to turn.

Ex, and its forms *e*, *ec*, *ef*, signify *out:* as, *Ex*pel, to drive out; from *pello*, to drive: *E*mit, to send out; from *mitto*, to send: *E*gress, going out; from *gradior*, to go.

Extra, *beyond:* as, *Extra*vagant, wandering beyond bounds; from *vagor*, to wander: *Extra*ordinary, beyond ordinary.

In, before an adjective, signifies *not*, and takes the forms of *ig*, *il*, *im*, *ir:* as, *In*visible, not visible: *In*attentive, not attentive.

In, before a verb, signifies *in*, *into*, *on*, *upon:* as, *In*clude, to shut in; from *cludo*, to shut: *Im*pel, to drive on; from *pello*, to

drive: *Ir*radiate, to beam upon; from *radius*, a beam.

Inter, between: as, *Inter*pose, to place between; from *pono*, to place: *Inter*sect, to cut between; from *seco*, to cut.

Intro, within: as, *Intro*duce, to lead within; from *duco*, to lead: *Intro*mit, to put within; from *mitto*, to put.

Ne or *neg, not:* as *Ne*farious, not to be spoken of; from *fari*, to speak.

Non, not: as, *Non*sense, not sense: *Non*description, not described.

Ob, and its forms, *o, oc, of, op, os*, signify *in front, in the way of, against, in*, or *on:* as, to *Ob*ject, to throw in the way of; from *jacio*, to throw: *Ob*struct, to build in the way of; from *struo*, to build: *Op*pose, to place against; from *pono*, to place.

Per, through or *thorough, fully, by:* as, *Per*fect, to make thorough; from *facio*, to make: *Per*vade, to go through; from *vado*, to go.

Post, after: as, *Post*script, written after; from *scribo*, to write: *Post*-meridian, after the meridian, or noon.

Pre, before: as, *Pre*fix, to fix before: *Pre*dict,

to say before; from *dico*, to say: *Pre*cede, to go before; from *cedo*, to go.

Pro, for, forth, forward: as, *Pro*mote, to move forward; from *moveo*, to move: *Pro*noun, for a noun: *Pro*ceed, to go forward; from *cedo*, to go.

Re, back, again: as, *Re*sume, to take back; from *sumo*, to take: *Re*pel, to drive back; from *pello*, to drive: *Re*publish, to publish again.

Retro, backward, back: as, *Retro*grade, to go backward; from *gradior*, to go: *Retro*spect, a looking backward; from *specio*, to see.

Se, aside, apart, from: as, *Se*cede, to go apart; from *cedo*, to go: *Se*duce, to lead aside; from *duco*, to lead.

Sine, and its forms, *sim*, *sin*, signify *without:* as, *Sine*cure, without care; from *cura*, care: *Sim*ple, without folds; from *plico*, to fold.

Sub, and its forms, *su*, *suc*, *suf*, *sug*, *sum*, *sup*, *sus*, signify *under, after, from under, up:* as, *Sub*scribe, to write under; from *scribo*, to write: *Sus*tain, to hold up; from *teneo*, to hold: *Suc*cumb, to lie under; from *cumbo*, to lie.

Super or *sur*, *above* or *over*: *Super*scribe, to write above; from *scribo*, to write: *Sur*mount, to mount over: *Super*fine, over fine.

Trans, and its forms, *tra*, *tran*, signify *beyond*, *carrying across* or *passing over*: as, *Trans*fer, to carry over; from *fero*, to carry: *Trans*port, to carry over; from *porto*, to carry: *Trans*alpine, across the Alps.

Ultra, *beyond*: as, *Ultra*marine, beyond the sea; from *mare*, the sea.

"The Latin prefixes," said Mrs. B., "are much more numerous than the Greek. If you look in your Spelling Book you will find whole columns of words beginning with *con*, *contra*, *in*, *ex*, &c. These words we generally derive from the French, who had previously taken them from the Latin language."

"What a great number of words, then, we have from the French," observed Sophy.

"A very great number, indeed," replied her mother; "for, besides these, nearly all the words ending in *tion* come from

the French, and are the same in French as in English, as —

Action,	Destruction,
Conservation,	Fiction,
Contraction,	Formation,
Conversation,	Position,
Definition,	Potion;

and an immense number of others, which you may also find in the columns of your Spelling Book."

CONVERSATION XI.

ON THE SAXON LANGUAGE.

"I SUPPOSE, mamma," said Willy, "you will now give us an account of the words derived from the German language?"

"The Saxon, which you know is a dialect of the German," replied his mother, "is the foundation of our own mother-tongue; therefore we cannot say that we derive words from the Saxon, but we adopt the Saxon words themselves. They constitute our national tongue, to which the French, Greek, Latin, and all other foreign words which are to be found in our language have been added."

"Oh! but, mamma," cried Willy, "you do not mean to say that if all these foreign words were left out, we should speak Saxon like the Germans?"

"No," replied his mother; "you must recollect that more than one thousand years have passed since the Saxons conquered Britain, and introduced their language. From that period the German-Saxon and the English-Saxon have been separated, and each of those languages have gradually been undergoing great changes, from the various causes which I have before explained to you; and which have rendered them more and more dissimilar; so that we should not now speak the German-Saxon, even if we had not intermixed so many other languages with our own.

"The construction of the German and the English-Saxon languages is very different. The Germans have also retained their ancient characters in writing, whilst we have adopted the Roman characters, which are more easy both to write and to read.

"But though we consider the Saxon as primitive words in our language, by

which I mean that they are not derived from any other language, yet we often form compound words by adding a Saxon particle or syllable, either at the beginning or the end of another word, whether Saxon, French, Greek, or Latin: thus the words *tempt*, *sweet*, *soft*, by adding the particles *at* and *en*, become *at*tempt, sweet*en*, soft*en*. As these particles (which are usually prepositions) enter into the composition of our most familiar words, I will give you an account of some of them.

"We will begin with the particles prefixed: —

A signifies *on, in, to, at:* as, *A*board, *A*foot, *A*shore, *A*sleep, *A*field, *A*far.

After signifies *posterior* in time or place: as, *After*noon, *After*all, *After*thought, *After*part, *After*times.

Be means *about, by, near, close, for:* as, *Be*set, *Be*smear, *Be*dewed, *Be*decked, *Be*siege, *Be*stirred, *Be*grimed.

"*En* or *em* signifies *in, on, make,*" said Mrs. B., "as, height*en*, strength*en*; from the words *height, strength.* It is also often prefixed to a word: as, *En*able, that is, to make able: *En*act: *En*courage, to inspire courage: *En*tangle, *En*rich, *En*throne, *En*tomb, *Em*bank, *Em*bark, *En*lighten."

"Oh, mamma," said Willy, "*en*light*en* has the *en* at the beginning and also at the end of the word."

"That is true," replied his mother: "it is both prefixed to and terminates the word. And in several instances you will observe, that the Saxon particle *en* corresponds with the Latin *in*, or the French *en*.

For means *before, against, from, back:* as, *For*bid, *For*bear, *For*sake, *For*swear.

Fore signifies *before:* as, *Fore*man, *Fore*noon, *Fore*see, *Fore*taste, *Fore*father, *Fore*stall.

Mis denotes *ill, defect,* or *error:* as *Mis*take, *Mis*represent, *Mis*demeanour, *Mis*place, *Mis*rule, *Mis*report.

Over signifies *above, excess, beyond, superiority:* as, *Over*throw, *Over*take, *Over*flow, *Over*run, *Over*come, *Over*look, *Over*hear.

Out means *beyond, excess, superiority:* as, *Out*run, *Out*live, *Out*do, *Out*cry, *Out*bid, *Out*break, *Out*cast.

Un, before an adjective, signifies *not:* as, *Un*able, *Un*seen, *Un*worthy, *Un*even.

Un, before a verb, signifies *undo:* as, *Un*dress, *Un*fetter, *Un*say, *Un*lock.

Under means *beneath, inferiority,* or *defect:* as, *Under*rate, *Under*work, *Under*value, *Under*sell.

Up signifies *aloft, high, over:* as, *Up*start, *Up*bear, *Up*land, *Up*hold, *Up*set.

With means *from, back,* or *against:* as, *With*stand, to stand against: *With*hold, to hold from.

"I will now give you some of the Saxon terminations," continued Mrs. B.

Ard signifies *one who:* as, Drunk*ard,* Slug*gard.*

Dom means *place, power, state:* as, King*dom,* Free*dom,* Duke*dom.*

En signifies *made of:* as, Earth*en*, Lead*en*, Gold*en*.

"You will observe," said Mrs. B., "that the syllable *en* changes the words which it terminates from nouns into adjectives.

Et means *little:* as, Tabl*et*.

Ful signifies *full of:* as, Hope*ful*, Fit*ful*, Aw*ful*, Hate*ful*, Joy*ful*, Sorrow*ful*.

"Here, again, the termination *ful* converts the nouns into adjectives; and, as you will perceive, it is the same with *ish*, *less*, *like*, *ly*, and *some*.

Hood denotes *state, office:* as, Child*hood*, Man*hood*, Priest*hood*.

Ish means *belonging to, like:* as, Woman*ish*, Baby*ish*, Engl*ish*.

Kin signifies *little:* as, Lamb*kin*, Pip*kin*.

Less means *without:* as, Faith*less*, Child*less*, Strength*less*, Wit*less*.

Let signifies *little:* as, Stream*let*, Ham*let*, Ring*let*, Cut*let*.

Like denotes *resembling:* as, King*like*, War*like*, Child*like*, God*like*.

Ly, for *like*, means *like:* as, Heaven*ly*, Man*ly*, World*ly*.

Ly signifies also *like in quality:* as, Wicked*ly*, Bad*ly*, Joyful*ly*, Sorrowful*ly*."

"O!" said Sophy, "I remember that *ly* is at the end of most of our adverbs."

"That is true," said Mrs. B.; "but, you see, it also terminates some adjectives: as, Man*ly*, Heaven*ly*, &c.

Ness means *being, state of, quality:* as, Childish*ness*, Blessed*ness*, Happi*ness*.

Ship denotes *office, state:* as, Consul*ship*, Rector*ship*, Dictator*ship*.

Some signifies *full of:* as, Frolic*some*, Tire*some*, Weari*some*.

T, Th, means *thing, being:* as, Gif*t*, Streng*th*, Height*h*.

Ward denotes *in the direction of:* as, Up*ward*, Heaven*ward*, For*ward*."

"And pray," said Willy, "from what other languages do we derive words?"

"We have taken a few from the Arabic," replied his mother; "such as *Alcoran*, *Alcohol*, *Alchemy*. The syllable *al* signifies *the*: thus, *Al*coran is *the* religious book written by Mahomet; meaning, according to the Mahometans, that it is better than, or superior to, all other books: *Al*cohol means *the* spirit; implying that it is the strongest and purest spirit of wine that exists: and *Al*chemy means the most occult and profound branch of Chemistry; for it was pretended by means of it to discover what is called the Philosopher's Stone, through which it was expected to transform the inferior metals into gold, and to preserve life from all diseases or accidents."

"Was not that great nonsense, mamma?" said Sophy.

"Certainly," replied her mother, "and in these days the science of alchemy no longer obtains any credit; but in former times it was in great repute, especially among the Arabs.

"We have also taken a few words from the Welsh and Gaelic."

"If so," observed Sophy, "we have Celtic words in the English language, for you know that the Welsh speak the Celtic tongue."

"They did so a thousand years ago," replied her mother, "when driven into Wales by the Saxon invasion; but since that period, as I have before observed to you, their language has undergone considerable alterations, so that the modern Welsh differs essentially from the ancient Celtic.

"Then we have some few words derived from the languages of the Dutch, the Danish, and even the Icelandic people, all of whom are of Gothic origin."

CONVERSATION XII.

ON THE FORMATION OF LANGUAGE.

"I WONDER, mamma," said Sophy to her mother, "if men invented a language, what words they would make first? I suppose it would be the smallest and easiest words of two or three letters, such as we teach children when first they learn to read, as *by*, *to*, *in*, *it*, *he*," &c.

"If men," said her mother, "ever invented a language, it must have proceeded from the desire they felt to communicate their ideas to each other. Now I should like to know what ideas could be conveyed by the little words *by*, *to*, *in*, *it*, *he*," &c.

"That is true," said Sophy: "we teach them to children because they are easy to pronounce and to spell; but they are very difficult to understand unless they are joined to words of more importance."

"In the origin of language, therefore,"

observed her mother, "it is much more probable that men began with words of greater importance, and gave names to objects which they wished to point out to those they were speaking to, such as *a lion*, *a man*, *a canoe*," &c.

"Oh, then," said Willy, "they invented noun-substantives first. That is what a baby does when he learns to talk. The first words he says are *mamma* and *papa*, to point out the persons whom he sees most and loves best."

"Children," resumed his mother, "are the only uncivilised beings we are acquainted with; for before they have received any education they are perfectly in a state of nature, and therefore we may infer that they would invent words in the same manner that savages would, that is, nouns pointing out the objects which interest them most. I have known infants call their nurse *Na*, *Na*, or *Ta*, *Ta*, syllables which were easiest for them to speak, though they had no resemblance to the

name of their nurse. This is something like invention: whilst the words papa and mamma they learnt by imitation."

"Oh, mamma," cried Sophy, "how can you compare a poor little baby to a savage?"

"An infant," replied her mother, "whether born of civilised or savage parents, has just the same degree of intelligence. It is education which afterwards makes the difference. In the one the mind of the child is developed; in the other he remains more in the state of animal nature."

"Is it not strange," said Sophy, "that children should begin by speaking words of two syllables, as papa and mamma?"

"It would be," replied her mother, "if those syllables differed from each other. But *pa-pa* and *ma-ma* are each of them words formed by the repetition of one syllable; and the child, in first beginning to speak, often repeats the syllable more than twice. For when his little tongue

has learned to pronounce the sound he loves to repeat it; and it is not till afterwards that he learns that it should be repeated only once.

"There is a curious story concerning the origin of language related by Herodotus, which I will tell you.

"When Psammetichus was king of Egypt, a dispute arose between the Egyptians and some of the neighbouring nations respecting the antiquity of their language. In order to settle the point, Psammetichus took two infants, and shut them up with a goat."

"Oh! poor little creatures," cried Sophy; "without a nurse to take care of them?"

"The goat was their nurse," replied her mother; "but they were also given to the care of a shepherd, with orders to watch over them, but never to speak to them. When they were about two years old the shepherd one day opened the door, and went in to the children, who stretched

out their hands towards him, crying *Bekos*. This word they repeated every time he saw them: it was at length reported to Psammetichus, who had the children brought to him, and hearing the word from them, inquired whether it was to be found in any language. He was told that the word Bekos signified bread in the Phœnician language; and, in consequence of this, the Egyptians admitted the Phœnicians to have a more ancient language than themselves."

"And is this story true, mamma?" asked Willy.

"Indeed I cannot tell," replied his mother — "at all events, it proves nothing; for the articulate sounds which the children uttered were no doubt in imitation of the goat's cry, *baa*, *baa*, or that of sounds they might have heard from some other animal.

"But to return to the formation of language. What words do you suppose

would be invented after noun-substantives?"

"I should think," said Willy, "the next words would express what the nouns did; as, the lion *roars*, the man *runs*, the canoe *floats*. So verbs would be the next part of speech invented."

"Then," said Sophy, "the savage would like to tell his companions whether it was a large lion he had heard roar, a strong man whom he had seen running, or a small canoe that was floating on the river. So adjectives would be the next part of speech."

"Afterwards," said Willy, "they would want to know in what part of the wood the lion roared, where the man ran, and how the boat floated; and all those would be adverbs. As for pronouns, I am afraid the savages left them quite in the lurch; for, as they could not be great talkers, having so few words, it would be less trouble to them to repeat the nouns than

to invent new words to stand in their places."

"Well, then, after all," said Sophy, "my poor little words consisting of two letters, instead of being first, will come in last."

"That is not surprising," replied her mother, "if you consider that *by*, *to*, and *in*, are prepositions, showing the relation of two nouns; which is very difficult for a savage to comprehend."

"Oh, yes, I remember," replied Sophy, "how much trouble I had to understand prepositions when first I learnt grammar. But, mamma, the most difficult of all were those tiresome little auxiliary verbs, *should*, *would*, *could*, *might*, and especially *to have*, and *to be*. And yet you think that verbs were probably used next after nouns."

"I did," replied her mother; "but I did not mean to include the auxiliary verbs, which, it is true, are so difficult to understand that we rarely find them used

in the ancient languages, even when the people who spoke those languages became civilised. The chief difference between ancient and modern languages is, that the moderns used prepositions and auxiliary verbs much more commonly in the construction of their phrases than the ancients did. You will observe this, Willy, when you are farther advanced in Latin and Greek."

"But you said that Greek and Latin were such pure and beautiful languages, mamma," said Willy; "and yet I do not see how the Greeks and Romans could make their meaning understood without the use of prepositions or auxiliary verbs."

"I did not say that their language had no prepositions, but that they used them less frequently than we do. Instead of using prepositions they declined the nouns; so that the noun and the preposition formed but one word: then, instead of using an auxiliary verb, they conjugated the principal verb."

"But, mamma," said Sophy, "we conjugate the principal verbs also."

"Yes," replied her mother, "but not without the assistance of the auxiliary verbs, whilst they did so by merely changing the termination of the principal verb; by which means they pointed out the time, the number, and the person, in the same way as we do by the help of our auxiliary verbs, *might*, *would*, *will*, *shall*," &c.

"Then, mamma," observed Willy, "the Greeks and Romans had not so many words in their languages as we have."

"No, certainly; and this is what forms one of the beauties of those languages. When we write, the sentences are made up of a number of small words intermixed with those of a greater importance, which renders our style weak and diffuse. When they wrote they expressed the same meaning with perhaps half the number of words, which makes their style much more vigorous and energetic."

"But, mamma," said Sophy, "why

do we use prepositions and auxiliary verbs if it is better to do without them?"

"Because it is much more convenient," replied her mother; "and the great intercourse there is between civilised people in the way of speech renders it necessary, in some respects, to sacrifice the beauties of language to its utility. In modern languages some few little auxiliary verbs answer the purpose of modifying all the principal verbs, and some few prepositions serve for the declension of all nouns; but the terseness, the expression, and energy of the language suffers much from the introduction of so many small words. In the modern languages they are universally used. The Italian differs chiefly from the Latin, and the modern Greek from the ancient, by the introduction of these small words."

"I suppose, mamma," said Sophy, "that the Christian names of men and women were amongst the first words that

were invented. But when were surnames first used?"

"You are not accurate in calling the first names Christian names, for these belong exclusively to Christians, and could not be so called till the Christian era."

"That is very true," said Sophy, "for children receive their Christian name only when they are christened. And Jews and Mahometans never have Christian names."

"They have names, however," said Willy; "for people have had names to distinguish them ever since the time of Adam and Eve."

"Yes," replied his mother; "every individual, whether savage or civilised, has a personal name. In regard to surnames, I do not know when they were first introduced. We read of them very early in the Roman History: Numa Pompilius and Tullus Hostilius had, you see, each of them two names, the latter of which became the surnames of their families. The Romans had often more than two

personal names, as is the case with us, and sometimes a name of honour was given besides, as for instance, Caius Marcius, who acquired the name of Coriolanus, after taking the town of Corioli; and Scipio that of Africanus, from his conquests in Africa." *

"Did surnames always come from some famous exploit which men performed?" asked Willy.

"Not always," replied his mother, "but very frequently. The surname was often derived from some remarkable characteristic, or even personal defect, in the individual. Thus the surname of Cicero, the Roman orator, was owing to a wart on the nose of one of his ancestors, resembling in shape a vetch, the Latin of which is *cicer*."

"Then, I suppose, mamma," said Willy,

* The Romans called the family or surname *nomen*, the distinguishing equivalent for our Christian name the *cognomen*; and the acquired name of honour, like Coriolanus and Africanus, the *agnomen*.

"that Cæsar was a surname given to all the Roman emperors?"

"No," replied his mother; "it became the title of the sovereign ruler of the country; derived from the first emperor, Julius Cæsar, whose surname it was."

"And what do the modern names come from?" inquired Sophy; "are they also derived from some circumstance relative to our ancestors?"

"We cannot always trace their etymology," replied her mother; "but I think I can give you a clue to many of them. When population became numerous there were not a sufficient number of personal names to distinguish individuals. Supposing, for instance, there were two or three lads called William: in speaking of one of them, how would you point out which you meant?"

"I think," said Willy, "I should say whose son he was; and call him William the son of John, or William the son of Harry."

"That was, no doubt, the mode they adopted," said his mother: "but they soon found it much shorter to say *John's son* and *Harry's son;* and to save time and trouble these were abbreviated into the surnames Johnson and Harrison."

"And I dare say Robertson, Richardson, and Jackson, all became surnames in the same manner," Sophy added.

"In Ireland," continued Mrs. B., "Fitz means son; and the Irish names Fitz-James, Fitz-Hugh, Fitz-Patrick, mean the son of James, of Hugh, and of Patrick. In the Scotch language Mac stands for son; so Mac-Donald, Mac-Culloch, Mac-Gregor, Mac-Cauley, mean the sons of Donald, Culloch, Gregor, and Cauley. But this is not the only source of surnames. Men were sometimes distinguished by the names of their trade or employment: thus Mr. Smith probably derived his name from his ancestors having been once smiths; and Mr. Baker, from being descended from a baker."

"Oh, yes," said Willy; "that is a very good way of distinguishing them: and I dare say that the ancestors of Mr. Cooper and Mr. Carpenter were once coopers and carpenters."

"The surnames," observed Mrs. B., "are sometimes derived from the place of abode of the individual: thus Mr. Wood and Mr. Forester may be supposed to have resided in some beautiful wood or forest."

"Or, perhaps, mamma," said Sophy, laughing, "they were only descended from the Celtæ, who, you know, lived in woods and forests."

"Then," said Willy, "I dare say that Mr. Heath lived on a common, Mr. Banks by the river-side, and Mr. Shore on the sea-coast."

CONVERSATION XIII.

ON THE INVENTION OF WRITING.

"PRAY, mamma," said Willy, "who was it that first invented writing; for no book could be written till people knew how to write?"

"It is difficult to say," replied his mother; "so many different countries lay claim to the invention of this art. The Greeks, who, you know, flourished at a very early period, attribute it to Cadmus, a Phœnician, who settled a colony in Bœotia, where he built the town of Thebes, and became king of all the surrounding country. I remember some pretty lines on the subject, which I will repeat to you:—

'The noble art to Cadmus owes its rise,
Of painting words and speaking to the eyes:
He first, to trace the magic figures, taught
Which colour form, and body give to thought.'"

"Oh, yes, to be sure," observed Willy. "When we talk we speak to the ears of people; but when we write we speak to their eyes: and so we make the deaf hear with their eyes."

"And," said Sophy, "when we write with pen and ink we give a shape and colour to the letters; and then they tell our thoughts. Well, but after all, was not Cadmus the inventor of writing?"

"Cadmus," replied her mother, "lived in the fabulous age of Grecian history, when more than half of what is related is mere fiction; indeed we are not quite sure that such a king ever existed — still less that he was the inventor of writing. The Egyptians and the Indians also lay claim to this invention; but the general opinion seems now to be in favour of the Phœnicians. They were at that period the greatest manufacturers and merchants in the world; and I therefore think it likely they should have invented an art so particularly useful in trade."

"To be sure," said Sophy: "how could they keep their accounts without being able to write? And you know we read in the Bible that the Phœnicians sent their fine linen and purple cloths from Tyre and Sidon as far as Jerusalem."

"And," added her mother, "it is believed they carried their traffic to much more distant countries; for there is some record of their having sailed as far as Britain, and traded in Cornwall for tin."

"Well, then," said Willy, "if they were such clever people, let us give them the credit of inventing writing. The Indians may well be satisfied with that of language which, after all, is the most important."

"We must not, however, decide the point," said his mother, "whilst learned men are still disputing upon it; for I understand that within a few years ancient inscriptions in India have been deciphered which seem to favour the contrary opinion, for the letters bear a very

remarkable affinity to the most ancient Greek. At all events, if the Indians are not the authors of the alphabet, they very soon acquired a knowledge of it from the Phœnicians; for in very early times they possessed a Sanscrit alphabet, with which they wrote their celebrated Vedas; and one thing is certain, that the Indians were the first to use figures for the decimal notation of numbers. The Greeks and Romans used letters, which were not half so convenient."

"I do not see," said Willy, "any thing so wonderful in the invention of an alphabet. I could very easily draw twenty-six different-shaped figures, and give them what names I chose. And when once you have an alphabet there can be no difficulty in putting the letters together to make words; for we may spell them just as we please when there are no books to teach us."

"There is no difficulty in making an alphabet, so far as the mere invention of

characters or letters is concerned, but the division of words and syllables into letters was a wonderful discovery. And even suppose this done, it would not be so easy to get others to adopt your alphabet. The formation of an alphabet must be the work of time; and a long course of improvement is required before you arrive at such a point of civilisation. I should be inclined to think that the first step towards it was the invention of drawing and painting."

"Oh, mamma!" exclaimed Sophy, "you are turning education topsy-turvy, to teach people to draw before they write!"

"In order to form some notion of what our ancestors did in their first state of ignorance," replied Mrs. B., "we must examine what is done now by the inhabitants of savage countries, where the arts of writing and reading are yet unknown. Suppose you and Willy were two young savages, living in such a

country, and one morning, sitting against a rock, he observed the sun shining upon you, so as to cast a shadow of the profile of your face upon the rock, I dare say he would be struck with the likeness, savage as he is; and if he could pick up a piece of chalk or slate, or any thing that would draw a line, he would try to trace the outline of the face on the rock. Is not that drawing?"

"Yes," said Willy; "but it is not writing."

"Have a little more patience, and we shall come to it by degrees. Suppose you could find nothing to draw with, but had your bow and arrows with you — for a savage, you know, always carries them about him, — you would, with the sharp point of your arrow, cut an outline in the rock: and this is engraving. Nay, I should not be surprised," continued Mrs. B., "if, after having succeeded in your enterprise, your mind should grow so eager after imita-

tion that you might one day take up a piece of clay, and try to model some object, such as a fox or a rabbit; and if you could accomplish the head, and four legs capable of supporting the body (however hideous the form might be), I dare say you would show it off with as much pride and exultation as a first-rate sculptor."

"All this seems very natural," said Sophy; "but I do not see how drawing and modelling can bring us to the invention of letters."

"I told you it would be a long time," resumed Mrs. B.; "and I will endeavour to trace the steps which probably led to it. Men in a savage state have always been found ignorant of the art of writing. They had no alphabet, and consequently could not form written words; but they employed various rude methods of preserving the memory of important events, and of communicating their thoughts to those at a distance. They raised altars, or heaps of

stones, in commemoration of battles or other remarkable events."

"Such as those we saw last summer at Stonehenge, I dare say, mamma?" said Sophy.

"No," replied her mother; "those are supposed to be the remains of druidical temples; but as there is neither carving nor engraving on those stones to lead us to an explanation of them, we are not certain for what purpose they were erected. Savages sometimes planted groves in commemoration of great events, which were considered sacred; they also instituted games and festivals for the same purpose. But what answered best to commemorate remarkable events were historical songs, though these cannot be wholly relied on, as in the origin they probably much exaggerated the events they recorded; and in process of time, passing from one generation to another, they were doubtless often altered by those who sang them. The first attempt of

savages towards writing was the representation of objects by painting. When Mexico was conquered by the Spaniards the poor Mexicans, in order to describe to their king, Montezuma, the appearance of the Spaniards, some of whom they said were half men and half horses, and that their ships had mouths all round them which vomited fire, painted pictures describing these wonderful people; and these rude paintings were many years afterwards brought to England, and still exist in the British Museum."

"How very curious!" exclaimed Sophy. "I should like extremely to see them."

"Well," continued Mrs. B., "you observe that when men began to desire to give an account of something that should last they either drew or painted it, or engraved or sculptured it. Thus, on the tombs of the Egyptians, there was a time when they could not write the name of the king or warrior whose body the tomb contained, but they carved a stone figure,

so ill shaped that you could hardly make out the human form; then they would engrave his bows and arrows, to show that he was a warrior, or a crown and sceptre, if he were a king."

"But surely, mamma," said Sophy, "the Egyptians, who were in ancient times so celebrated for their learning, must have known how to write when the Israelites were in Egypt?"

"They could not write as we do," replied Mrs. B., "for they had no letters; but they recorded the deeds of their kings and heroes by a rude mixture of drawing, painting, and carving, by which they represented the different objects commemorated; and which is called hieroglyphics, from *hiera*, sacred things, and *glupho*, to carve."

"Oh, yes," said Sophy, "this was a name taken from the Greek."

"When," observed her mother, "the Egyptians invented this new art they required a new word to name it; and they

took it from the Greek language, as you have already seen was often done in more modern times, when new words were required."

"Then hieroglyphics was rather engraving than writing," said Willy.

"That is true," replied his mother; "and the most ancient materials used for writing in this manner were stones and bricks. Thus the Decalogue, or Ten Commandments, as well as the Law of Moses, were engraved upon tablets of stone. As the art of writing was very little known, and of great importance, it was necessary that the materials should be of a durable nature."

"How very tedious and difficult a way of writing that must have been," observed Willy, "if every time you use the word *man* or *dog*, you have to draw a picture of a man or dog."

"That was originally the case," replied Mrs. B.: "but soon, to save trouble, they sketched only a part of the figure; and in the course of time, only just enough to

make known what it represented: till at last the likeness degenerated into forms, which had little or no resemblance with the objects represented, but were understood to stand for them. Thus you see that a language, originally hieroglyphic, would naturally wear away, until the characters had lost all trace of their original formation. From these characters arose a method of writing like that still used by the Chinese, in which each character stood for a word. It is said that the letter *alph*, in the Phœnician alphabet, once represented an ox; *beth*, a house; *gaml*, a camel; and *delth*, a door;—and that some traces of these forms still remain in that alphabet. The dividing of words and sounds into letters was an after invention."

"Oh, mamma," exclaimed Sophy, "Willy and I have often written in hieroglyphics: and I will give you a sentence to unriddle now, if you like it." She then drew an eye, a saw, a yew-tree, and a swing.

Willy, who was used to the game, read at once, "I saw you swing."

"There is some similitude to hieroglyphics in your game," said his mother; "but with this great difference, that you do not represent the real meaning of the words you use. However, though the Egyptians did not write in riddles, they sometimes used an object symbolically to express their meaning: for example, a lion was drawn by the side of a warrior, to show that he was brave; and a lamb by the side of a girl, to show that she was innocent and gentle: two hands clasped together signified peace; arrows represented war; an eye, the divinity; and a sceptre, royalty. The alphabet, when once invented, was copied by various nations, who varied the form, and sometimes the number and arrangement, of the letters. In Sanscrit there are no less than fifty letters, and above thirty in Persian and Arabic. At first the alphabet was most commonly written from right to left."

"That is just the contrary of what we do now, mamma," said Sophy.

"Yes," replied her mother. "The Greeks," continued she, "had several modes of writing; one of which went alternately from right to left, and then from left to right, as the course of a plough in a field backward and forward; and it was thence called the 'ox-turning-wise.' When each letter was written separately, and there was no running hand, it did not much signify which way they were written. The Chinese write in lines downwards from the top of the page to the bottom."

"Well, I think, the alternate right and left must have been the best way, mamma," said Sophy; "for I am sure I have sometimes found it troublesome in small print at the end of one line to get back to the beginning of the next; and a little child can never find its way to the right line without having it pointed out to him. I suppose there is no nation who now write in the old-

fashioned hieroglyphic manner without an alphabet."

"Not exactly in hieroglyphics, but the Chinese and Japanese have no alphabet; every character in their language stands for a word instead of a letter."

"And do these characters represent objects, as in hieroglyphics?" inquired Willy.

"They probably did originally," said his mother; "but no traces of resemblance to objects now remain."

"What a great number of characters they must have," said Willy, "if they have a different one for each word, instead of making the words up as we do out of the twenty-six letters of the alphabet. And how difficult it must be to learn their language."

"Why, if there are no letters there can be no spelling," exclaimed Sophy: "only think how much trouble that must save. I should like to learn the Chinese language."

"You would find it much more diffi-

cult than any other," replied Mrs. B., "although you would not have the trouble of spelling; for I have heard that there are 80,000 characters in the Chinese language, each of which represents a word."

"And pray, mamma, how many words are there in our language?"

"Not above half that number. However there are not more than ten or twelve thousand of the Chinese characters that are in common use."

"And are not the Chinese and the Egyptian languages very much alike," said Willy; "since the characters of both represent whole words instead of letters? If these two nations were not situated at such a great distance from each other, I should have thought that in very ancient times they might perhaps have been the same people, and spoken the same language."

"No," replied Mrs. B.; "the characters they use are totally different, and little or

no resemblance can be traced between any words in the Chinese and the Egyptian languages; whilst the similarity between the Sanscrit, the Greek, the German, and several other languages we have observed, is so remarkable. The Chinese, however, must have travelled over the many thousand miles which separate their country from Egypt, and have held communications with the Egyptians as early as the time of the Pharaohs, if, as it is asserted, Chinese characters are painted on certain small China vases, which have been found in the pyramids of Egypt."

"We have heard of the pyramids," said Willy: "are they not the famous tombs in which the Pharaohs are said to have been buried, and are supposed to have been built by the Israelites, when they were so hardly tasked by the Egyptians?"

"It was formerly thought so," replied his mother; "but as we are told in the Bible that the works the Israelites erected were of brick, and the Pyramids are of

stone, that probably is not the case; nor were these pyramids built as mausoleums for the Pharaohs. These sovereigns, together with the celebrated Egyptians, were usually buried in catacombs in the neighbourhood; the pyramids themselves, we have recently discovered, were destined for a higher purpose. Since they have been opened, it is found that they contain only one small chamber each, in which is interred, not a man, but a brute animal, or rather, I should say, one of their gods. When the celebrated antiquarian, Belzoni, some years ago, opened the great pyramid near Cairo, and penetrated into the inmost chamber, he beheld a sarcophagus, containing the bones of an animal, which proved to be that of a cow. Lord Munster, who was present at the opening of this tomb, brought one of the bones to England, and it is now in the British Museum. This cow was no doubt their god Apis.

CONVERSATION XIV.

THE ART OF WRITING CONTINUED.

"PRAY, mamma," said Sophy, "did the ancients know how to make writing paper?"

"The art of making paper from linen rags was not known in remote times," replied Mrs. B. "The materials first used for common writing were the leaves or the inner bark of trees. The leaves of plants still answer this purpose in several nations of India. A great improvement in this art took place about the time of Alexander the Great. The Egyptians began to manufacture paper from a plant called Papyrus, the stem of which has several coats, one above another, like an onion, which were separated with a needle. One of these membranes was spread upon

a table, and another put crosswise over it. They were then moistened with the muddy water of the Nile, put under a press, and afterwards dried in the sun. They wrote on this paper with a reed, sharpened and split at the point like our pens; and they used for ink the sepia of the cuttle-fish — a dark liquid which this animal emits, to conceal itself when it is afraid of being caught. This paper was used by the Romans, the Greeks, the Phœnicians, and all countries then civilised, until one of the Ptolemys, king of Egypt, was so foolish as to forbid its exportation; and as the papyrus did not grow in other countries, parchment, which is made of skins of sheep prepared for writing, was used by the Romans instead. A more delicate species of parchment, called vellum, was made from the skins of calves."

"Then, I dare say, mamma," said Sophy, "that vellum comes from veal, which, you know, is the meat of calves."

"You are a little mistaken, Sophy," said Mrs. B., "in making the ancients derive from the moderns, instead of the moderns from the ancients. The fact is, that veal comes from the Latin *vitulus*— a calf."

"And, I dare say," said Willy, "that the word paper came from papyrus—did it not?"

"No doubt," replied his mother. "Parchment, however, is still used for writings which require great durability, such as deeds, wills, and so forth. The Romans had also tablets covered with wax, on which they engraved, rather than wrote, with a sharp instrument called Stilus. Not being allowed to wear a sword or dagger in the city, upon a sudden provocation they often used the stilus as a weapon, and the stiletto, which is the dagger of the Italians, derives its name from this instrument. During the time of the Republic the Romans wrote on one long sheet of paper, which, when

finished, was rolled up, tied with a thread, and wax put on the knot, and sealed. Julius Cæsar was the first who introduced the custom of dividing his letters into pages, and folding them in the form of a book."

"Our paper is made from a plant too," said Willy, "for linen, you know, is made of flax; only we are more clever than the Egyptians, for we wear the linen first, and do not turn it into paper till it is in rags."

"Pray who was it invented our letters?" asked Sophy.

"The Romans," replied Mrs. B. "They are called the Roman characters, and are used by most modern nations. We occasionally also make use of the Roman letters as numerals, which you may remember is the case in the dial-plates of clocks, and in the chapters of the Bible, and many other books."

"Yes, indeed," exclaimed Sophy; "and they are very puzzling. I think it is

something like hieroglyphics to use letters for numbers instead of the common ciphers, 1, 2, 3, 4, &c."

"I will explain to you," said Mrs. B., "what is supposed to be the origin of the Roman numerals. The Romans, who had no ciphers, naturally put down a single line thus, I, for one, as is still the practice of those who score with chalk. This stroke they doubled II, trebled III, and quadrupled IIII, to express 2, 3, and 4. So far they could easily number the strokes with a glance of the eye. But they soon found that if more were added it would be necessary to count the strokes one by one. When, therefore, they came to 5 they expressed it by joining two strokes together in an acute angle, thus, V."

"After that, mamma," said Willy, "I know they added the single strokes till they made VI, VII, VIII, &c.; but I do not understand why X stands for 10."

"Do you not see," replied Mrs. B., "that X is formed of two Vs joined together in the middle?"

"I should have thought it would have been more natural to join them side by side," observed Sophy, "and then it would have looked like W."

"But," said Mrs. B., "it is much quicker to make an X, which requires only two strokes, instead of a W, which requires four. After this they doubled, trebled, and quadrupled X, and when they had thus designated as far as 40 by XXXX, they invented a new character for 50. They placed two lines at right angles, thus, ⅃, which forms an L, and, as you know, stands for 50; and when they wanted to double 50 they put another line at right angles, and formed this character ⊏."

"But C stands for 100," said Willy, "and not this odd figure, which is not a letter."

"It is very natural to suppose," replied Mrs. B., "that in the hurry of writing the angles became rounded off, and the form of the character then was a C."

"That is very true," said Sophy. "I know when I write quickly my letters are not half formed; and as my pen runs on it makes round much more easily than angular letters."

"Well," continued her mother, "this mark C they repeated two, three, and four times, till they came to CCCC for 400, and then for the same reason as before they invented a fresh character for 500, by inverting C, and putting I before it, thus, IↃ."

"And," said Sophy, "if you round off the angles as they did in C, that makes the letter D, which stands for 500."

"And when they had to double this for 1000," resumed her mother, "they wrote it thus CIↃ, which, by wearing off the angles, became ↀ, and then in the

course of time this was farther changed into an M."

"But, mamma," said Willy, "I have never seen XXXX for 40, or CCCC for 400."

"No," said his mother: "to avoid too great a repetition of letters, when the number reaches 40, instead of XXXX, it is now written thus XL. By placing the X before the L it is meant that X is substracted from L, and so on in the same way with hundreds and thousands."

"And not only with hundreds and thousands," said Willy, "but with units and tens, for I placed before V makes it 4, and I placed before X makes it 9."

"Very true," replied Mrs. B., "and also with the number 19, which is written thus, XIX. I have given you this explanation of the origin of the characters V, X, C, D, M, as the one which seems to me the most simple; but there are different opinions on the subject; some people

imagine that V represents 5 because it is the fifth vowel, and X 10 because it is the tenth consonant, in the Greek alphabet."

"And where do the ciphers, 1, 2, 3, &c. come from?" inquired Sophy.

"They are called the Arabic numerals, because they were first introduced into Europe by the Arabs; but they brought them from India; and what is very remarkable is, that though they were the means of these numbers being used throughout Europe, the Arabs never employed them themselves, but used letters to count with like the Romans.

"I have now concluded all I have to tell you on the subject of languages, and I should be glad to hear if you could repeat to me, in a few words, what you remember of it."

"First," said Willy, "you told us that all languages are supposed to be descended from one tongue, as all men are descended from one man."

"And," added Sophy, "that mankind and their language in the course of time spread over the face of the earth, but that both the people and their language gradually became more and more unlike each other, from their change of situation, of climate, their wars, their trade, their becoming more civilised, and a variety of other circumstances."

"Then, when they became more civilised," resumed Willy, "they began to learn to read and write, or rather, I should say, to write and read, for you know they wrote first."

"If you remember all mamma told us," said Sophy, "they began to draw, to carve, to engrave, and to write in hieroglyphics, before they invented an alphabet; but when once they knew how to write and read, they had schools, and got on pretty well."

"Not so well as they did after the invention of printing," said Willy. "That

is a great discovery, which, you know, marks the beginning of modern history, and from that time we are no longer becoming civilised, but growing learned, and improving in every thing."

"You have answered very well," said Mrs. B.; "and as at the present day you possess all these advantages, I hope you will profit by them in becoming more learned, and improving in every respect."

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