On West Somerset Patois.

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NOT very long ago, if an educated man had troubled himself about the talk of peasantry and common folk, he would have been as shocking to people of refined ideas as touching pitch would have been to the dandyism of the last century. Even now this feeling is not quite extinct.

Science, however, in these days has found in loathsome tar some of our richest dyes, and so from the much despised ploughman's patois modern investigation is distilling the no less rich ingredients with which to build up the history of the words we now utter and of the way we sound them.

To an Archæological Society no facts can be more in accord with its objects than those which relate to archaic speech. We may by a careful study of the handiwork our forefathers have left behind them, be able in some measure to read their history, their culture, and even their feelings ; but from their speech may be best constructed that chapter of their history which precedes and ends with the times of distinct tradition or written document.

Our two Somersetshire dialects are the living memorial of two races now completely amalgamated ; but by the differences of speech as still heard among their descendants we are carried back to the times when they were at deadly feud with each other; to a time far beyond that when, as we know from written history, the Saxon of the plains at last drove back the Briton to the hills and strongholds of the west. These differences still sharply mark the limits to which the right of might confined them, and not all the subsequent mixture with immigrant

Normans or Danes, nor the lapse of long centuries upon centuries has been able to obliterate the boundaries or to reduce the language to a dead level.

Though the Saxon tongue has at last conquered and become supreme, though proud Normans have trampled upon us, though French cookery was even in those days so much better than theirs, that our ancestors soon learnt to call every eatable animal by a French name the moment it was slaughtered; though no distinctly perceptible feature remains of their physical type, yet withal, our Celtic ancestors still speak in the west, and still insist on dressing the Saxo-Norman body of their speech in a clothing of their own fashion.

The difference between east and west in Somerset dialect, though noticed by nearly all who have written upon the subject, has not had its full weight given to it, probably because the western has not yet attracted attention at all in proportion to the eastern. Indeed it seems in comparison to be very little known, while many who have noticed it must have taken their facts at second hand.

The line dividing the districts of East and West Somerset, so far as dialect is concerned, has, I maintain, been wrongly placed at the river Parret, nor can the historical notice quoted from the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle in the interesting introduction to the *Glossary*, published a year or two ago by this Society, be held to prove the present limits of the diverse speaking peoples. I have shown elsewhere that the Quantocks are what they might be expected to be, the natural boundary, and that the fortress of Taunton is the military post (built for the purpose of defending the Saxons of the plains from the Britons of the hills), which still sharply marks the line where the conquering Saxon tongue becomes modified in its sounds by the conquered, but not extinquished British. The west has adopted almost all the Saxon of the east, while it has retained a great deal of what was exclusively its own, and hence we have a dialect peculiarly rich and archaic.

Time would not permit, nor am I competent to enter into a comparison of the two dialects, but I will endeavour to lay before you a few of the principal features of the West Somerset, which though they may not be peculiar to it, have not so far been much noticed. Our chief characteristic is our delight in vowels and our indistinctness as to consonants. Mr. Melville Bell only reckons thirty-six vowels in his visible speech, but in West Somerset we have no less than forty-three or forty-four distinct vowel or diphthongal sounds, while probably many of these might be still further divided and classified.

Before going further it may be well to try to make it clear what is meant by dialect. In talking with people who take an interest in the subject, almost the first question is certain to be, "Do you know such or such a word?" Now these quaint local words are of great value, and so are the glossaries which enshrine them, but there will still be very distinct dialects when every one of these is forgotten by the "oldest inhabitant." If I ask a Yorkshire man where he comes from, the answer is short—direct, "*Aa koom fra Hool.*" I ask a west-country man the question in the same words—"*Wur due aay leev tue dee main? Wuul hon I be haum, I du leev tu Widheepeol.*" There are no glossary words here, but there is clearly dialect. Again, it is usual to remark upon any impolite mode of expression—a double or treble negative, for instance—such as "*I niver dedn zee no jis dhing avoar.*" "O, that is merely bad grammar." It is not bad grammar any more than the French double form of negative is bad grammar—it is another language from written English, with its own grammar and its own unwritten rules, both for conjugation, pronunciation, and inflexion. Moreover, these rules are adhered to with an exactness incredible to those who have not studied them, and altogether different from the chaos of polite English.

I was much edified the other day in reading in a biography of a certain non-conformist minister, that "he was invited to supply the pulpit, which he did with acceptance for a month." Surely

a future biographer would be justified in asserting of this good man, that he added to his vocation of preaching, that of a joiner, for he supplied a pulpit, and was paid by an acceptance at a month. This last is not dialect, but slang of a kind now much in use, and it is important to keep the distinction well in mind. When we hear a man reply to an enquiry as to whether a certain person had passed by, "*I ant azeed nort o'un,*" we are at once aware of something peculiar and altogether different to the answer we should get to the same question in the streets of London ; yet in it are none of the quaint words to be found in glossaries, and if analysed we find nothing but a pronouncing, conjugating, and combining of common English words, yet differing from our written English, and especially differing from the way in which the same words would be pronounced and combined elsewhere to convey the same meaning. What, then, we mean by dialect is the divergence of speech, as found in different localities, whether in construction of sentences or pronunciation of words, from literary English. I may, perhaps, illlustrate further what I mean, by taking the word *come*, which I shall have occasion to refer to later on. If a crop of hay or corn has been cut, it is usual with us in West Somerset to speak of the time when it will be fit to stack, as *Dhikĕe vee-ŭl ŭl kaum tumaa-rŭ*—(That field will come to-morrow). Again, *Bee yoa-ur paiz ukaum?* means, Are your peas fit to gather? Halliwell is mistaken in giving "to be ripe" as a meaning for this word ; it simply means fit or ready, and is used in this sense in connection with all kinds of garden or field produce. Again, *Uur-ul kaum oa-ut*, means, She will recover, and might be said of a person in sickness ; but *Uur-ul kaum o dhaat*, would imply that she had been very angry, but that in time she would get the better of her temper. *Yue haa-n kaum ut*, is a very frequent expression, and means, You are not able to do it. *Ee keod-n kaum ut*—(He could not manage it.) In these instances we have no words but what are found in the most correct English, but their pronuncia-

tion, and the very fine shades of meaning here given to them, mark a wide divergence, and go to show that real dialect consists less of the quaint words found in the glossaries, than in the various and peculiar senses and sounds given to what we now consider as ordinary English words.

A man would say to another, *Aai zeed a sheeps aid* (I saw a sheep's head); or he might say, *Aai zeed dhŭ aid o a sheep* (I saw the head of a sheep); in the first case his hearer would clearly understand that the sheep was dead, in the second that it was living. We admit our prolixity in general, but could Bacon himself have made so great a distinction in so few words?

Our dialect does not contain very much that can be certainly attributed to our Norman conquerors, yet some distinct traces of their influence are to be found; not so much in the words themselves, as in the way in which we still pronounce many, long since adopted into common English. Words now spelt with *ay*, are in polite society all sounded as long *a—may, day, play, way, pay*, &c. But we in West Somerset have two very distinct ways of sounding these words, and our sound pretty generally corresponds with what we may safely call the origin of the word. We say *paay, plaay, maay, praay, graay, kwaaint* and *kwaaintuns*; but, on the other hand, we almost invariably say *dai, way, zai.* Again, to weigh is with us to *wauy*—certainly very suggestive of *poids.* We *kunvauy* and *survauy*—but never convey or survey. We *bwoyl*, and *spwoyl*, and *pwoynt.* Our mangers are *maunjurs.* We *paiz* up our heavy weights with a *paizur.* We always say *faut* for fault, though we may be sure our forefathers would have said *faul*, dropping the *t* if they had heard an *l.* For rank we say *raunk*; while our *gilaufur* is surely a nearer approach to *giroflée* than the gilliflower of the grade a little above us, and who have been to school. If our floor is of wood we call it the *planch-een*, and a single board a *planch.* A brewing vat is a *keeve*, and wool waste from the comb is called *pinions.* A black cock is a *poolt*, and a wheel-track is a *rout*, not a rut. We *rape* our skin if we get scratched, and we pound our

cider apples into *pomĕs.* The round sieve-like implement formerly used in winnowing we call a *zimmut, i.e., sem-metre.* A very common exclamation is *ees fai!* which is nearly identical with the old form of *foi.* *Noa-un o yur uyzĕe pruyzĕez* is another common expression, which being interpreted means an objection to such quibbling and tricks as are associated in the bucolic mind with lawyers' proceedings at *nisi prius.* I do not cite this last so much as an instance of Norman, as an example of how words are moulded in being imported into a dialect. Besides these, there are the well known *su-ant* and *soce,* with doubtless many more words, which more or less faithfully represent the French words learnt by our ancestors from their Norman masters.

With respect to this word *soa-ŭs,* which is quite peculiar to the south-western counties—if a quotation showing its use in any old French author could be found, its origin would be set at rest; but, in default of such a distinct proof, its meaning and pronunciation seem to point to the French root *soce*—from the Latin socius—and we must accept it, therefore, as a legacy from our Norman conquerors, until better evidence can be found. It has been suggested to me by my friend Mr. Kerslake, that this word is a relic of the monkish preaching of the middle ages, when their Latin sermons were as thickly interlarded with *socii* as those of their modern successors are with "dear brethren." This is plausible, but not decisive.

In Forby's *Glossary of East Anglia, How now Sars!* is given as a form of address. This may mean *Sirs,* but the coincidence is strange, that in West Somerset we pronounce *sauce, Fr. sauce, saars. Roa-ŭs duk-n aapl saars* (Roast duck and apple sauce); *Noa-un o' yur saars* (None of your sauce). Here it is plain that we have worn the word *sauce* into *saars*; possibly the East Angles wore a word with a similar sound, but with a different meaning, in the same direction. If this be so, *How now Sars?* would be with us *How now so-us,* and would mean, How now friends—companions.

Not long ago I saw in a shop window an article marked *Distangy.*

Now this was not a very bad attempt, and it precisely represents what I wish to show. The draper had heard the word, knew its meaning, and imitated its sound as nearly as he could, in his own phonetics. So our ancestors must have learnt Norman words from the conquering people who came to settle among them, and in many cases must have handed down to us the very same sounds they seemed to hear, while in modern English the words have now become very greatly altered. That we should find some distinctly French words in our west country vocabulary, such as those I have given, is to be expected, for we have many undoubted Norman settlements in our district. We see this from the names of places, such as Huish Champflower, Quarm Monceaux, Molland Bottreaux, Wotton Courtenay, Langford Budville, Brompton Ralph, and others. It will be noticed that these are all double names, and their very form implies conquest—for the surname of the new lord is in each case added to the original name of the place; and we may take it for granted that the pronunciation of these Norman names has come down to us approximately as our forefathers heard them and imitated their sound, with much the same sort of accuracy as the Potomac, Wooloomooloo, Waitaki, and other native names are now sounded by us.

This Norman element in our dialect is curiously confirmed by the list of names discovered at Old Cleeve Abbey, in the very heart of our district, and given in the interesting paper read to us last year at Frome—such as Pointz, Trivet, Bardolf, Cary, Beauchamp, Fitz Nicholas, Furnaux, Peverill, Palton, Boteler, Mohun, &c.

Again, among our more educated people the ordinary idiom would be, "I took the both." I submit that the use of the article here may be a relic of French influence.

In preparing a list of words to illustrate our peculiar pronunciation,[1] I found that certain modes occur so regularly that a

(1). *West Somerset Dialect*, published by Philological and English Dialect Societies.

law may be very fairly induced from them. It is usual to charge us with always sounding *f* as *v* and *s* as *z*; nothing can be further from the truth. In those words with initial *f*—which have unquestionably come to us from Norman-French, or other distinctly foreign sources—we retain the *f* as sharply as in the politest talk, while if it be a Saxon word we as surely and invariably pronounce it as though spelt with *v*. The same rule applies with equal force to *s*-sounds. The French words retain the *s*, and the Saxon sound it as *z*. Although I have treated this at greater length elsewhere, yet I may venture to give here one or two examples by way of illustration. *Fan*, the verb and noun, is always *van*; but in *fancy*, both verb and noun have invariably the sharp *f*. Who ever heard a west-country man say *vace*, or *vaiver*, or *vaam-ley* (family); these are always, *fae-us, faivur*, and *faam-lee*. But, on the other hand, fall, fast, far, four, are as invariably—*vaul, vaas, vaar, vauw-ur*. Again, who ever heard of a *zarpunt* or a *zoa-urt*, or of our old friend, as *Zoa-ŭs*; but, nevertheless, we always *zay* that we *zeed geod zee-ŭd ŭzoa-ŭd wuy zand* (good seed sown with sand). 'Tis true that in caricaturing us, our *fs* and *s* s are all *vs* and *z* s; but those who laugh at us for this, only proclaim their own ignorance.

These few examples serve to show that we have a very distinct Norman ingredient in our talk, and I venture to bring it before you as a fit subject for further discussion and investigation.

Of the old Vikings we have scarcely a trace in our speech, or in our names. The gill, however, of Cumberland, is with us a *goy-ul*; and, as the meaning is nearly the same, I presume the words are synonymous.

In considering the various external influences which have come to bear upon our dialect, and which, at length, have brought it to be what it now is, we have to take full account of the conservatism and "*sae-um z faa-dhur saed avoar me*" (same as father said before me) spirit of the uneducated people; and this has undoubtedly been the means of handing down to us, in an unaltered state, the changes—the reforms, if you will—the

additions to their vocabulary, which our forefathers adopted long ago. I repeat that we may, I think, take it for granted that, in the case of words, new to them, our ancestors adopted approximately the sounds given to those words by the people from whom they received them—just as we, now-a-days, have adopted *aun-velopes, porte monaies, sheeniongs,* and all the drapery stuffs by which we try to copy—and often succeed in caricaturing—both our neighbour's fashions, and his names for them.

In the preface to the glossary before referred to, the author ventures to hope that, while omitting mere peculiarities of pronunciation, not much of interest has been overlooked. Now, while admitting the great value and interest of the glossary as a collection of archaic words, yet, with all deference, I submit that the way in which those words are pronounced is just the point which, as a subject of study and analysis, gives them their value. I may, perhaps, make clearer what I mean by an illustration. I again take one of the commonest of English words—come. In received English we sound it *kum.* In the northern counties it is *koom* ; but we in West Somerset say *kaum.* Now, there must first have been but one way of pronouncing it, afterwards a divergence in one or more directions. Of the origin of this word there is no doubt; and our west-country way of uttering it is strikingly like its modern German equivalent—proving either that the sound has remained unchanged since Saxon times, both here and in Germany, or that both we in the west and the races now inhabiting Germany have been subject to the same linguistic influences, and hence the sound denoting the same action has arrived in two widely divided countries at the same pitch. This latter alternative is so improbable that we must revert to the former, and hence we conclude that we in the west have maintained the original, and still pronounce the word correctly—while our London cousins are somewhat, and our Lancashire ones a great deal, wrong. This illustration, however, does not show any sign of Celtic influence, unless we find that this particular sound is thoroughly in harmony with it.

If that were so, this influence would be conservative; and hence we may account for this particular sound having been kept unchanged by us Celto-Saxons, while from other influences, people in other localities have wandered more or less away from the original. This naturally brings us to the enquiry, what have been the exact causes for these divergences into *Kum* and *koom*, but into them I must not now enter; yet this and similar enquiries seem to me to point the true way to the proper study of a dialect, and thereby to construct the links in the chain of the history of the people speaking it.

Our vowel sounds, or rather our pronunciation of vowels, is very greatly and constantly modified by the consonants immediately adjoining—sometimes by that preceeding, sometimes by that following: while, in their turn, the consonants are no less modified, labialized, or even changed by neighbouring vowels. I confess, however, that although there must certainly be laws by which these modifications occur, I have not yet been able to find the changes sufficiently regular to apply any process of induction to them. The word field we pronounce *vee-ul*, with a very distinct *v*; but in combination with heath—which we call *yeth*—we do not say *yeth vee-ul*, but *yef-l*—a distinct return to the hard *f*, while the long broken dipthong in *vee-ul* is whittled away to almost nothing. Again, we find the letter *r* very frequently transposed when joined to a *u* or *u* sound—*urd* (red), *gurt* (great), *burchez* (breeches), *bursh* (brush), *purty* (pretty), and many more are all well known, while the well worn example *urn* is no transposition at all, but a sample of true west-country conservatism—a correct sounding of the original—whilst the received English is the corruption and transposition. We, in our turn, as I must admit, have corrupted curds into *kridz*, curb-chain into *krub-chain*, tea-urn into *tai-run*, perspiration into *presfurae-ushun*; all of which corruptions are the usual forms with us.

Again, in polite English the periphrastic form of the verb is the emphatic. "I do know," "She does flirt," implies that

some one doubts, and that a stronger mode of assertion is needful. With us, however, all this is reversed. *Aai dă plowеĕ* (I do ploughy), *Aai dă keokeĕ* (I do cooky), *Ai da pangkeĕ*, (he pants), are the simple forms; the emphatic being—*aai plowus, aai keokus, ai pangkus, ur waukus.* "*Ai kweed-us,*" a well known farrier gave to me as his decided diagnosis of a pony's ailment. Had he any doubt, he would have said *he do queedy* or *chow his queed, i.e.,* chew the cud. (The pony had a sore gum, and so seemed to be chewing.)

Mr. Skeat reminds me that the form here given is found in William of Palerme, and is written *es, e.g., fall-es.* That the ending *es* is found both in singular and plural—as *thei fall-es.* I keep to the spelling *us* for the singular, because it correctly represents our pronunciation of the inflexion, which is quite as distinct as in the pronoun *us.* In the plural we should generally say *dhai da vaaleĕ*, but often *dhai vaalz.*

When short *e* comes before *s*, it is almost always sounded like *a*, while before *l* it becomes *u*. Here one seemed to have found something like a law, and I determined to test it, by getting a native to speak a word that probably he heard for the first time. In conversation I used the word tesselated, pronouncing it very carefully; and, as I expected, when I got the man to speak it he called it *tasulae-ŭtid.* So vest is always *vas*, west-country is *was-kuntreĕ;* while everyone knows that a telegram is a *tuligraam*, a bell a *bul*, and a well a *wul.*

To many it may seem a paradox to speak of the grammar of a dialect; but we in West Somerset have many peculiarities of grammar remaining in a perfect form, while they have become obsolete—even if they ever existed—in what is now called good English. For instance, the well known termination *ĕe*—as in *ai da kwee-dĕe*—which is found in all the south-western dialects, is in West Somerset and Devon the invariable sign or inflexion of the neuter infinitive. *Kut dha dhaachez avoar-an eens thai mid kwĕeleĕ.* In this sentence, one of the commonest orders of a farmer to his men, we have two or three peculiarities which

it may be well to examine. First we find an example of the interchange of *v* and *th*, common to all languages; and in this case—vetches into *dhaachez*—we have the exact counterpart and opposite of the instance mentioned in Dr. Prior's paper, before referred to, where "thatch" is pronounced "fatch." I have often heard *vaa-ch* for thatch, but I do not ever remember hearing *fach*. *Dhury* for very, is to be heard daily; and a turning lathe is always called a *lae-uv*. An instance of this change, first of *b* into *v*, and then of *v* or *f* into *th*, is found in polite English. The plant febre fuge, or, Anglicised, fever fuge, then becomes *feather few*, while in West Somerset it is *vadhur voa*. *Eens* signifies in the sentence given above, "in order that," but it is very often used to express the manner or "how." *Yur! lat mĕe shoaw ĕe eens taiz*. "Here! let me show you how it is." *Lat un buyd eens ĕe aiz*. "Let it stay as it is." Since writing this I overheard a woman say, *'Ta aulur aatur anybaudĕe eens dhai bĕe ŭgwain oam kwei-ŭt leik wai dhur aarŭns! tez shee-ŭm-feol*. "To call after one, whilst one is quietly going home with one's errands! 'tis shameful." Here *eens* clearly means "whilst," or at the "time when." This must not be confounded with the same word given in the glossary before referred to. In West Somerset we should say *een-to* for "except," "all but." *Dhae-ŭr wuz a dizn een ta waun ur teo*. "There was a dozen, all but one or two." We should never say *eens-to* in any case. I should think the *een-to* might mean even-to, or perhaps "in," for we always pronounce the preposition "in" as *een*—"Could he not get in?" *Keod-n ur git een?* Halliwell has *een—into, within, short of*, as a *Herefordshire* word; so this latter is not peculiar to our west country, while *eens* is. To return, *Kweeŭlĕe* is the neuter infinitive of the verb to *kwĕel* or quill—that is, to dry up like hay. In the transitive form we should say, *Dha zin-l zuen kweel aup dhai flauwurz*. "The sun will soon quill up those flowers." But we should never say *Kweelĕe aup dhai flauwurz*. Whether this word is in any way related to quell, I leave to etymologists, but as regards the inflexion—I mean this neuter

infinitive termination *ĕe*—Prince Lucien Bonaparte, than whom I presume there is no higher authority, says, that an inflexion specially denoting the intransitive infinitive of verbs is found in only three languages, whether ancient or modern—*e.g.*, in the dialects of the south-western counties of England, in Basque, and in Hungarian. Now, we know that these two last are nearly related; and, moreover, they are among the most ancient of all languages, probably containing many elements of primeval speech, or what is known an non-Aryan; and the fact of our having now, in this 19th century, a peculiar grammatical inflexion in common with them, but not to be found in any, not even the most grammatical of ancient literary dead languages, surely points to some very early connection between their forefathers and ours, which has lasted in a living form down to our day. We have one or two other peculiarities which the same authority pronounces non-Aryan; and since writing this paper I have been informed that Professor Huxley stated in a lecture, I believe, on physical types, that there was an undoubted non-Aryan settlement on the south-western coast of England. (I have been unable to procure this lecture.) If this be so, we have here a monument, beside which the most ancient piece of builder's work to be found in this country becomes a thing of yesterday—a monument which may perhaps be anterior to Stonehenge and co-eval with flint weapons.

On the other hand Mr. Skeat says of this inflexion *ĕe*, "that it was originally the mark of a secondary or derived verb, and oddly that it was generally transitive." This however assumes it for granted that this termination is the remains of the Anglo-Saxon inflexion *igan* or *ian*, and Mr. Skeat quotes Piers Plowman in support of this. I must, however, leave this to be decided by savants. It is strange nevertheless that word-wear should have got rid of a termination which is grateful to our ears, and have retained one which is less so. It is true we say *dhikĕe*, and the termination moreover is with us a kind of endearative or diminutive, as in all other districts, as *Bee-ulĕe, Maa-lĕe, Saa-lĕe*;

yet on the other hand in some words where it is found in English we drop it, as *kaar* for carry, *stoar* for story, *kwaur* for quarry.

Another grammatical inflexion is the well known participial prefix *a* or *ŭ*, corresponding to the German *ge*, and which Chaucer, Shakspeare, and many old writers wrote *y*. With us the peculiarity is that we use it with all past participles and participial adjectives, whatever may have been their origin—*Eev-ŭbin an ŭtaord dhe weendur, aan ur?* "He has been and broken the window has he not?" Here we have the prefix to the past participles of both the auxiliary and the principal verb, while in the word *ŭtaord* we have a reminder that we tear our crockery and break our clothes. The same word is a good example of a pleonasm where the strong conjugation is supplemented by the inflexion of the weak. There are many other instances of this, as *ŭteokt*, *ŭbroakt*, &c. I remember well an accident to a cart, and the account given by the man who was driving was, being interpreted, "the horse ran away, threw me out, tore the wall, and my breeches were broken to pieces." *Dha aus urnd awai, an droa-ud mĕe out, taord dha waal, an mi oal burchez wuz ŭbroakt aul tue liputs.* With all our present participles we use a similar sounding prefix—"She is going to be married to John Fouracre." *Urz ŭgwaain tŭ waid wae Jan Vauu-ur-ae-ŭkur.* "I am living at home with mother." *Ei be ŭbeidin oam laung wae maudhur.* I do not assert that this is the same as the prefix to the past participle, but I venture to doubt the usual explanation, *e.g.* that it is a corruption or contraction of *on*.

The use of *ize* or *ice* for I, which is said by Halliwell to be a characteristic of West Somerset, and by Jennings to be found in the south of the county, has never come within my pretty long experience. It is common to say "I am almost too late am I not?" *Ei be maus tue lae-ŭt, bae-un ĕes?* "I can carry it, can I not?" *Kan haar-n kaa-n ĕes?* But this is clearly the use of *us* for I in the interrogative form. This interrogative is the only

way in West Somerset in which we use *us* as a nominative, while in North Devon *us* is the rule and not the exception. The other forms of *I*, as *utchy* and *ch*, as given by Jennings and others as Somersetshire, do not occur in our district, and I can find no trace of them.

Again, *ur* is said to be used for *he*, but it is only so used interrogatively and in a limited way, as "He is not going, is he?" *ĕe idn ŭgwaain ez ur?* *Ur* is however used for the indefinite pronoun *one*, and also for *you*—"One must not go in there must one." *Mus-n geen dhae-ŭr mus ur?* "Take hold of it will you? *Dhee vangun wul ur?* *Ur* is most generally used for the nominative "she," but *he* is very often used for she, as also it is nearly always for "it." The usual indefinite pronoun is *Aneĕ baudĕe*. *Aneĕ baudĕe keod-n voo-urd tŭ due ut vur dha monĕe.* "*I* or *one* could not āfford to do it for the money." *Anĕe-baudĕe mid wurk dhaer ving-gurz tŭ boa-ŭnz an neet git thankĕe vaur ut.* "One may work their fingers to bones and not get thank you for it." *Tid-n-z auf anĕe-baudee wuz ŭgwaain vur tŭ be ŭpaaid vur ŭdue-ĕen o-ŭt.* "It is not as though one were going to be paid for doing it." It is a noticeable feature that with this indefinite pronoun—anybody—we always construe in the plural, as in the example just given, *i.e.*, their fingers. Mr. Skeat remarks that *ur* occurs in Trevisa, who spells it *a*. Halliwell also give *a* for he, but I do not think this *a* and our *ur* are the same. We too use *a*, or rather short *ŭ*, for he. *Zoa ŭ zaed*, or *Zoa ur zaed.* "So he said," is the usual adjunct to each sentence when two people are repeating what a third has spoken. If a farmer wishes to praise a man for industry or good work, he usually says, *Wul zaeds Jim*, meaning *well done.* Here we have a curious change of word, almost implying that amongst us saying and doing are equivalents. I may remark here that none of these I have been using are made up sentences for the purpose of example, but they may be heard daily among the people.

In our adjectives and epithets we are more quaint, but quite as peculiar as the slangy "awfully jolly," though some are

merely old words which we retain while their meanings have changed or become conventional in ordinary English. *Coarse*, though now seldom applied except to express a quality the opposite of fine, in texture or in some article of use, is still with us commonly applied to the weather. The ordinary salutations would be, "Fine day, Thomas," or *Kuss waedhur, Jim*, according to circumstances. A man said to me the other day of another's treatment of his wife, *Ee due saar-ur maur-tul kues.* "He do serve her mortal coarse." In the *Gentleman's Magazine* of April 25th, 1770, we find a "coarse, wet day." This would show that the present limited meaning of the word is rather a recent "development." Expressions like—cruel kind, mortal good, dreadful sweet, terrible pretty, are of daily use. In forms of speech great redundancy of words seems our chief characteristic; we use a phrase where a preposition serves other people. Under, is *Down een under*; upon, is *Aup pon taap*; stand aside, is *Stan a waun side.*

I feel that I have but very briefly and imperfectly hinted at the subject I have tried to deal with, but if this paper should in anywise be the means of drawing out more of the attention of this Society, and of those competent to deal with the rich treasures embedded in our western dialect—always hitherto held up as the very type of clown-dom, the very dregs of language—I shall feel that no apology is needful from me for having occupied so much of your time with what is not perhaps very interesting to a mixed audience, but which nevertheless will very amply repay all the labour that can be bestowed upon it.