

before them, leaving nothing but the red lights and smoking ruins of their pillage. Under such circumstances their language would be naturally of a harsh and common nature. The Romans christianized this savage people, but here their culture and civilization ceased. Beyond this they could not graft upon so barbarous a stock any fruitful or living branch, and the Saxon language outside the church remained unaltered.

This state of affairs continued much the same till after Alfred's time. He, being a good scholar, did much for the advancement and fixing of the language. By him was commenced the Old English *Chronicle* which continued to record events till the reign of Stephen. Soon after Alfred, however, appears Baeda, who, it is said, was the first to attempt to make English prose a literary language.

Glance briefly at the effect of the Norman Conquest and its effects. The Norman-French influence had been felt as early as Edward the Confessor, but after the battle of Hastings though never the language of the mass, yet its supremacy was complete. For years and years the two tongues lived side by side, each striving to conquer, one upheld by the common people, the other by the court. The invasion of Britain by the English made the language English. The invasion of the Danes left it unaltered for they were of our own stock and tongue, therefore by us were absorbed. What happened to the Danes likewise happened to the Normans and for the same reason. The Normans were, in the old country closely allied to the English both in blood and in speech, and in Normandy had become French merely in manners and language. On entering England they felt their kindred in spirit and speech and eventually became Englishmen. We in absorbing the Normans took into our language some of the French elements which in many respects have proved very beneficial. With this union came Chaucer and his contemporaries. The English which Chaucer used is almost the same as that of the present, and in its simplicity shows a language especially fitting a people of that period.

After Chaucer's death not many changes appear to have taken place till Spencer's time; then come a marked development. As people's thoughts deepen and broaden, their language must be correspondingly affected, so Spencer does not show that simplicity of thought and speech which characterizes Chaucer but introduces more complex forms and ideas. But his allegorical production interested the common people and thereby gave a set to their dialect, greatly improving the common speech.

If we consider the growth of language contemporaneous with the growth of literature, English, it is evident, was making rapid strides; for now such artists as Shakespeare and Milton appear on the stage—the former the father of English Drama, the latter the father of English Epic. Shakespeare's Latin and Greek