

2. There is no topic so deep or abstruse that the homely Saxon is not qualified to express it. If the brain is shallow and obtuse, the language will be vague in any case; but if the brain is clear and strong, the loftiest theme can be thrown into the Saxon tongue. It is serviceable for exact definition, for keen argument, for high thought.

3. Saxon words have, to a singular degree, poetry in their very sound. Their pronunciation is partly their dictionary. There is music in their ring. It is the language formed originally in the German fatherland, where colors, shapes, sounds, outward objects were the clumsy vehicles of barbarian syllogisms and thoughts, and the Norman inflow of words only softened its pristine cadence and melody. It is certainly the language of passion, of emotion; it is the vernacular of the soul; the heart speaks Saxon.

It is a delusion to dream that the use of a strong and choice Saxon relieves from labor in the employment of words. A select vocabulary is the result of labor. For the student suffers under the disadvantage that he must *unlearn* as well as *learn*; because the familiar use of terms in a slipshod and slovenly style must be checked. His first business will therefore be to shake off those careless idioms, and his next business will be to lay up a stock of correct expressions. This double duty means untiring study, and it also disarms the prejudice against the Saxon, to the effect that a speaker or writer can lazily throw out the first words that come to his mouth and yet speak or write with suitable force. A gentleman once told Tennyson that a certain line he had composed was so smooth that it must have cost him little trouble. The reply was, "Sir, I smoked three pipes over that line."

II. *Imagery*.—There are two extremes: the one is when the style is altogether devoid of figure and which, even when lucid, is cold and bald: the other is when the style is overloaded with slushy sentiment and gaudy ornament, when flashing similes are crowded so as to darken and obscure the meaning. This last style is often the cheap proof of power, but is slowly dying away. The sober world secretly laughs at it and does not waste the time by spending criticism on what is not worth it. These are two extremes, however, and both are partly wrong. The gift of chaste and graceful imagery which floods light suddenly upon a difficult subject is to be coveted; oratory is crippled without it, especially oratory that treats spiritual things. It is an art that can be gained very largely by a course of critical reading in our literature.

III. *Culture*.—It is a bygone conviction that religion demands asceticism, that it scowls upon elegance and polish as painted evils. While, however, this conception, which underlay Puritanism in its most unfortunate phases, has practically vanished, still culture is not too common even among the clergy. It stands to reason that if civilization has produced finer tastes and sentiments (which is unquestionably a fact, and a gain too!) the pulpit cannot either directly or indirectly shock this growing refinement without seriously hurting the cause of that gospel which, while its genius is to draw out the higher sympathies, never leans to what is coarse and vulgar. It is exceedingly unhappy when there is a divorce between pure religion and polite culture: they are congenial.

Our English standard authorship is the completest school for educating this faculty. For example, the appreciation of nature is a rare but splendid talent. It is a fine quality that lingers upon the brown ploughed fields of early Autumn; the scream of the wild bird; the irreverent mountains flinging out their savage shapes into the sky; the gale shrieking among the rocks; the