

sharp sound, or *t*. Sometimes this *t* is written, as in swept, wept, but more frequently the *d* is retained in spelling, as stepped, decked.

Milton and some of his contemporaries, and Tennyson in our own time, spell all these words with the *t* for the sake of the symmetry of the rhyming words; but as the advantage is slight, and as it increases the number of irregularities, and ignores the solemn style of pronunciation, it is probably not advisable to make this method general at present.

Owing to the growth of the weak method of conjugation, many verbs originally strong assumed the weak ending as well, such as tell, told. These might very appropriately be called mixed verbs. Others took some of their parts after the weak, but retained the old participle as flow, sow. This was probably owing to the adjective nature of the participle, as we find another class conjugated after the weak, but also retaining the old participle as an adjective, such are molten, cloven, stricken. So great was the tendency to make weak verbs during the transition period of our language, that many verbs were used as weak that have since asserted their strong forms: during the last century many writers attempted to make such verbs as blowed, clinged, frezzed, drawed, etc., but in this the nation has not sanctioned them.

*The form of the past participle* deserves some attention. The termination of the strong participle was *en*; that of the weak was *ed*; in both cases the ending was an adjective affix, denoting possession. The prefix was *ge*, afterwards changed into *i*, and finally dropped altogether. This *ge* is a preposition of similar significance to the Latin *cum*.

The formation of the compound tenses, where the participle is used, is not easily explained. Reasoning from the analogy afforded by other languages

and A. S., it is concluded that when *have* is used, as in "I have written a letter," the participle is in agreement with the object; but that when *is* is used, as in "he is arrived," the participle agrees with the subject. Hence of the two forms "has arrived" and "is arrived," the former is not historically correct, though it is the usual form, since "has" is the general auxiliary of tense now, while "is" is only rarely used as such. The form with 'is,' is said to refer more to the condition of the subject, that with 'has' to the action itself.

*Mood.* No quality of the verb has given rise to more discussion, or presents more difficulty, than mood. Its main feature seems to be to indicate the nature of the speaker's conception of the act. If we make a statement as a fact, we have the indicative; if, as a mere judgment of the mind, the subjunctive; if as a command, the imperative, and if the action is only named, and no assertion at all is made, the infinitive. For these four we have traces of inflection, but for no other. On the ground of inflection, then, we will have to discard the so-called, *potential* mood. Moreover, all the tenses of this mood may be explained separately, and are not uniform in meaning, sometimes asserting positively, at others conditionally, as in "He may come," subjunctive, since there is doubt, but "You may go now," a fact, hence the indicative. There is more difficulty, but also more accuracy in this way of treating verbs.

*The infinitive* is a noun in nature. In A. S., its ending was *an*; in O. E. *en*. The dative ending was *enne*, with *to* before the verb. When the *en* was dropped, *to* was used before the nominative, except in some few verbs, which yet omit it, these are the auxiliaries and some verbs of the tenses. Besides these two forms there is a third form in *ing*, which is simply the old infinitive ending *en*, confounded with the participial. With regard to words ending in