

random upon objects, to distinguish them from each other, words would be convenient and valuable. But they are more than this; not only every word, but every syllable, in every language of the earth, represents and describes some idea or some fancy. In it you have a piece of history, in miniature it is true, but still history, and for the most part, more accurate than some of our historians commonly write for us. Whatever language men spoke at the beginning, that language must have undergone remarkable changes, transformations, and 'development,' since men began to use it. In proof we need not go further than our own language. Where was it 900 years ago? What is it now? The High School boy of to-day can read his Milton and Shakespeare without difficulty, and might wade through Wycliffe's black-lettered Testament, with a little painstaking, but give him Chaucer, and where is he without a glossary? And, if we ascend the centuries still further, how many of us would have to learn a new language before we could decipher a manuscript of Alfred's time? Age after age, new words have crept into our speech, until we have the verbal manufactures of all nations now lying side by side in our dictionaries. Gradually, too, these words, in sound and sense, have 'developed' into mere relics of what they were. After passing through a kind of kaleidoscopic history, they are like old coins, still in active service, but with the image and legend worn away. Most of the poetry has filtered out of the old *house-band*, and but few will recognise it in the orthography of the modern *husband*. So of the good old Saxon *Hlafdige*—a bread giver and dispenser of comfort among the poor. Can you recognise her in the modern *lady*, who dodges about like a butterfly, loving the dissipations of folly more than the industrious hum of the busy bee? When we wish to be rhetorical, we speak of the semi-intoxicated man as *maudlin*; but it is necessary to explain that the word is a corruption of *Magdalene*, whom painters have pictured with swollen eyes, and a look of general disorder. Our *grocer* was, originally, the *grosser*, the man who sold by the gross; and when *jaw* was spelt *chaw*, it was not hard to detect its kinship with the verb *to chew*. You little dream of the historical application of *blackguard*, when you fling that epithet at the modern rascal. But it was the official name of a servant, of an impecunious Baron, in the middle ages, who superintended the removal of his master's black, sooty, cooking utensils, from one residence to another. A modern incident may furnish an illustration of the manner in which some of these changes have been brought about. There are some circles in which "Five o'clock tea" is more fashionable