

of the two classes occasioned a dialect, blending the speech of the vanquished and victor. Thus was the French thrown in with the English and gradually made an integral part of it. To a certain degree this was a real gain to the language, bringing in new ideas or furnishing a new garb for old ideas; hence we have freedom and liberty, help and assistance, begin and commence, forgive and pardon, and a host of others. But on the other hand this incursion of Norman-French caused an excess over the needs of practical use and, in consequence, a multitude of Saxon words was consigned to oblivion.

Digressing for a moment, let us consider a peculiar phase of this inroad of the French tongue, viz., the strongly contrasting uses to which the native speech of the Saxons and the imported language of the Normans were respectively put, uses which distinctly mark the social condition of the two peoples. Scott illustrates this point very beautifully in the conversation between Gurth and Wamba in *Ivanhoe*:—

"Pork, I think, is good Norman-French; and so when the brute lives and is in charge of a Saxon slave, she goes by her Saxon name (sow); but becomes a Norman, and is called *pork*, when she is carried to the castle-hall to feast among the nobles; what dost thou think of this, friend Gurth, ha?"

"Nay, I can tell you more," said Wamba in the same tone; "there is old Alderman *Ox* continues to hold his Saxon epithet while he is under the charge of serfs and bondsmen, such as thou, but becomes a *Beef*, a fiery French gallant, when he arrives before the worshipful jaws that are destined to consume him. Mynheer *Calf*, too, becomes Monsieur *de Veau* (Veal) in the like manner; he is Saxon when he requires tendance; and takes a Norman name when he becomes matter of enjoyment."

A matter of no mean importance in the process of reduction of language is the abandonment of grammatical distinctions. English is, perhaps, of all spoken languages the one that has suffered most in this respect. In the short space of a few centuries she has had a wealth of grammatical forms dwindle away, leaving her in a state of practical poverty. Many of the forms in the inflection of the verb have been lost. Of the inflection of the adjective nothing remains but comparison. Cases have been virtually thrown overboard. Grammatical gender has been dis-