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· OUR MOTHER TONGUE.

(From a Lecture by the Rev. Dr. Edgar, of Belfast.)

This is a very unpretending title, but there were many very happy associations connected with it; and the words of every tongue had a permanence and force few ever thought of. It was from the words used to express ideas that one man formed his estimate of the character of another; and who could tell but that every word uttered by every man since the creation went with the currents of the air, and were written thereon in one continuous stream in a manner that would be legible to angelic eyes when the great records of eternity were unfolded? After giving some examples of emphatic words—words which from their very sound told their own meaning—Dr. Edgar gave some beautiful and forcible illustrations of the uses of certain words in assisting a nation in learning its own history, inasmuch as the language of a nation underwent a change coeval with the changes in a nation's history. Among others, the lecturer instanced "ox," "cow," and "calf" as Saxon words, and which still retained their original meaning; but now they had "beef" and "veal"—Norman words—changed from "cow" and "calf" because their Norman masters made the Saxon rear the cattle until they were fit for use, when they saved them the trouble of killing them, and of course had a right to change the name when the animal changed owners. "Pig" and "bacon" were both Saxon words, but that was because when they had killed the pig they got leave to eat it. The words "poltroon" (a man who cut his thumb