

## ANSWERS TO THE ENGLISH PAPER IN THE UNIVERSITY OF LONDON.

(Continued from Last Number.)

X. The chief difference between the strong, and the weak conjugations is in the manner of forming the past tense. In verbs of the strong conjugation, the past tense and past participle are denoted by a change in the radical vowel, whilst the termination "*d*" or "*ed*" is added to the root in the weak.

The only inflections for person in the weak conjugation, are "*st*" or "*eth*" in the second, and "*s*" "*as*" in the third person singular. These terminations were originally personal pronouns, added to the verb "*t*" in "*est*," being an outgrowth of the "*s*" while "*s*" in the third person is a softened form of "*th*" derived from the demonstrative pronoun "*thæt*," or some cognate form. The ending "*d*" or "*ed*" in the past tense, which is a contracted form of "*did*," the preterite of do, was joined to the verb by the connecting vowel "*e*." The perfect participle was formed by prefixing "*ge*" and adding "*d*" or "*s*" for the weak, and "*en*" for the strong. Probably adjective forms, the prefix *ge* has now disappeared, but "*d*" or "*t*" is still retained.

XI. Shall was an old preterite of sculan to kill, and as in Anglo-saxon the past tense had no terminations to denote person, in its use as a present tense, these are wanting. Should formed from shall by the weak conjugation, is now used to supply its place in the past. As killing involved the payment of a fine, "I shall," came to mean, I owe the fine, and then simply I owe, thence it was employed to denote compulsion arising from some external force, which meaning it still

retains in commands. Shall as now used is a verb of incomplete predication, followed by the infinitive without "*to*."

Will has been formed after the analogy of shall, though it is strictly a present tense. In addition to its use in the 2nd and 3rd persons as an auxiliary for forming future tenses, will is also employed to denote determination. Will also expresses the frequent repetition of an act.

Can, a preterite of the verb cunnan, to know, is now used with a present meaning, whilst could supplies its place as a past tense. The "*l*" in could does not belong to the root, but was inserted after the analogy of would and should. Can is now employed as a verb of incomplete predication and is followed by the infinitive without *to*.

May was originally mag, an old-preterite of magan, and had a perfect meaning, which passed into a secondary present sense denoting the abiding result of an action, hence it is used to denote wish. May is also employed as an auxiliary instead of the subjunctive mood after "*that*" and "*lest*" and is followed by the infinitive without *to*.

XII. Tense is a variation of form in verbs or a compound verbal phrase, indicating partly the time to which an action or event is referred, and partly the completeness or incompleteness of the event at the time indicated. Moods are certain variations of form in verbs, by means of which we can show the mode or manner in which the attribute or fact indicated by the verb is connected in thought with the thing that is spoken of.

In Anglo-saxon the present tense