

elements enter into the general vocabulary, estimates vary. Probably not more than a third of the words registered in our largest dictionaries are of strict Anglo-Saxon origin. However, no just idea can be derived from the most exact *numerical* comparison. The character and use of the words must be taken into account. A vast number of the imported terms are purely special, used, perhaps, by a single author, or confined to a single science. However necessary to the higher styles of literature, to scientific exposition, to philosophical discussion, words of foreign origin enter but slightly into the rudimentary structure of the language. In a preceding paragraph in which the essential identity of earlier and later English was discussed, the *fundamental* character of the Anglo-Saxon element of our language has been set forth.*

If, however, the question asked refers not to the origin of the vocabulary, but to the construction and governing principles of the language, the answer must be widely different. In that sense, English is *not* a composite language. Indeed few, if any, languages surpass it in structural simplicity and unity. Apart from a few exceptional cases of foreign nouns allowed temporarily to retain their native forms, it puts its own decisive mark on every term which it appropriates. Indeed it may be said that the vast influx of words of foreign origin during the past 400 years has been absolutely without influence on the *grammar* of the language.

CONCLUSION.—In the grammatical text to which this sketch is subjoined, the results of that critical

* "We must recollect that in ordinary conversation our vocabulary is limited, and that we do not employ more than from three to five thousand words, while our best writers make use of about twice that number. Now it is possible to carry on conversation, and write numerous sentences without any borrowed terms; but if we endeavor to speak or write without making use of the native element (grammar or vocabulary) we shall find that such a thing is impossible. In our talk, in the works of our greatest writers, the English element greatly preponderates."—Morris.