

bodily and without change, into our own language. But all this time English notation—and even English style—was little cared for. Scholars wrote in Latin; and even as late as the time of Milton and Waller—well on into the seventeenth century, and after the appearance of our great dramatic literature—it was thought the right thing to compose in Latin. Milton thought of writing the works he hoped to live by in Latin; he was Foreign (or Latin) Secretary to Oliver Cromwell; and Waller goes so far as to say:

Poets that lasting marble seek  
Must carve in Latin or in Greek.  
*We* write in sand; our language grows;  
And, like the tide, our work o'erflows.

This merely dialectic character, then, our language has never been able to throw off. It is still, in style, in vocabulary, and above all, in its notation, a conglomerate of dialects—a pudding-stone of local varieties. We possess, in fact, not one notation—but three. These three are the English, the Norman-French, and the Latin. Of these three, the English notation is the worst; the Norman-French is very bad; while the Latin notation is perfect.

But the whole of our language, as it is written down at present, is a blurred palimpsest; and the eye of the child is confused and demoralised by the attempt to decipher it. The page is scored all over with dialectic notations—for the language grew simultaneously from different centres, with

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