

# The Orphans' Friend.

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## THE UNCHANGING.

Friends I love may die or leave me,  
Friends I trust may treacherous prove,  
But Thou never wilt deceive me,  
Oh, my Savior! in thy love.  
Change can never this union sever  
Death its links may never part;  
Yesterday, to-day, for ever,  
Thou the same Redeemer art.

On the cross love made Thee bearer  
Of transgressions not Thine own,  
And that love still makes Thee sharer  
In our sorrows, on the throne.  
From Thy glory Thou art bending  
Still on earth a pitying eye;  
And, mid angel songs ascending  
Hears every mourner's cry.

In the days of worldly gladness  
Cold and proud our hearts may be,  
But to whom, in fear or sadness,  
Can we go but unto Thee?  
From that depth of gloom and sorrow  
Where Thy love to man was shown,  
Every bleeding heart may borrow  
Hope and strength to bear its own.

Though the cup I drink be bitter,  
Yet since Thou hast made it mine,  
This Thy love will make it sweeter  
Than the world's best mingled wine.  
Darker days may yet betide me,  
Sharper sorrows I may prove;  
But the worst will never divide me,  
Oh, my Savior, from Thy love!

—Rev. J. D. Burns.

## ORIGIN OF LANGUAGE.

Speech is the characteristic of man. If culture is indispensable to the contrivance of language, language is not less necessary to the development of culture. If, primarily, language is but vocalized expression, then, in this sense, all animals have each a tongue peculiar to themselves. This consideration overturns the proposition that it is fashioned by rules of men. It grows by rules established in the constitution of mind; it is not created by reason, but by growth. According to Greene, language is a growth, and, like every other growth, is primarily dependent upon an inward vital energy. It has its origin and its development in answer to an instinctive desire of the soul to express its thoughts and feelings. The power of speech is stimulated by the presence of external objects, and takes its actual form by means of an unconscious ability to imitate the vocal symbols which chance to be made the conventional representatives of thought. It matters not to what nation or people the child may belong, the speech which he hears in his childhood becomes his vernacular tongue, and all others are foreign. Place him among the cultivated and refined, and he employs, he knows not why, the pure and polished speech of his guardians and associates. On the contrary, let him fall among the rude and illiterate, and he as readily and as surely accepts for his native language, his mother tongue, their perverted words and incorrect modes of expression. We would infer from this author that he ignores the supernatural tendency to language in man to work itself out, and produce words, or if you please, roots or germs of words; viz., by imitation, by interjection, by sympathy, and by invention.

But the three propositions most generally laid down respecting the origin of language, are; 1. a supernatural revelation of a language already perfect to the first human beings; 2. a power of language given to the first human beings in addition to all their

other peculiar faculties as human beings; 3. merely a superior human development of a general power of language or faculty of expression possessed by the whole animal world, inherent, in fact, in the constitution of all animated beings as well as man. Science repudiates the Bible testimony, takes no note of the supernatural, but adopts the second and third modes of conceiving of the origin of language. If the first proposition be right, the succeeding ones must be incorrect, for how can constitutional bodily senses or faculties be supernatural? Among those who have thought fit to inquire into the prime origin of speech, it has been matter of dispute, whether we ought to consider it a special gift from heaven, or an acquisition of industry—a natural endowment, or an artificial invention. Nor is anything that has ever yet been said upon it, sufficient to set the question permanently at rest. If neither language nor society could precede each other, common sense would suggest that they rise simultaneously. If Adam was "the first," it certainly does not follow that he was "the rudest" of his race. If sin deformed the soul, and soul gives suggestion to thought, and language be the natural offspring of thought, then must our primogenitor's language so far have exceeded ours as pure thoughts must exceed sinful ones, and that Adam had an insight into natural things far beyond the acutest philosopher, may be determined from his giving names to all creatures, according to their different constitutions.

Plato, taking the Christian view regarding the solution of the problem of the origin of language, supposed it to be divinely inspired; but some of the ancients, and most modern scholars favor the natural creation of speech by the innate faculties of man. The records of history give little satisfaction on the subject. Notwithstanding the patriotic narrowness which induced the Greek philosophers to look with contempt on foreign nationalities, disqualifying adequate conceptions of the nature of language, some great principles of glossology are found in Plato's "Cratylus." Cratylus asserts, and not alone, that everything has a name belonging to it by nature, and not by an arbitrary convention. Homer distinguished the names given by the gods from those used by men; "whom the gods call Hantlus, but men Scamander." Influence on the formation of words is attributed to gesticulation; and the vocabularies of some savages or barbarians are justly appreciated for the natural significance of their words. Pythagoras, when asked what being he thought to be the wisest, replied: "First, the number, and secondly, that which has given names to things." By the former he meant the word, by the latter the soul.

Manifold opinions have been advanced concerning the original language. Herodotus relates that Psammetichus, wishing to learn which was the first language, ordered two babes to be brought up without ever hearing a human

sound. They were nurtured on the milk of goats which was brought to them, and after two years pronounced first the word *bekos*, which in Phrygian meant bread. The Egyptians, therefore, according to the historian, admitted that the Phrygians were more ancient than themselves. Setting aside the claims to preeminence advanced by the numberless known languages, Grotius and others find traces of the primitive language in all others, though what language that was can only be conjectured. Obviously, the primordial condition of the language must have corresponded to the physical and mental condition of the human race. If the primordial conditions were inferior to the capacities, then the theory of growth and subsequent development is plausible. The roots of languages shed much light on the operations of the human mind; and their study reveals two important principles, viz., that all so called metaphysical terms are in reality metaphorical expressions of material acts and properties to which the mind likens its own operations; and that languages do not diverge in the expression of the single categories of material things, but only in the application of these primitive expressions as names to other things.

To conclude with the ideas of another, both primitive and cultivated men are impressed by the same peculiarities of things but the latter depend mostly, not on what the mind through its own exertion conceives, but on the passive impress of association. Primitive men, more sensitive and perceptive, almost simultaneously reacted on their experiences; their language, evolved by, coincided with the impressions made by objects. Hence their expressions were true etyma, or imprints on the mind shown externally by vocal sounds. Progressive culture of course modifies the uses of these etyma. As each true word, in its original acceptance, is co-essential with the impress that gave it birth, and as men vary in mind and temperament, the uses of the etymic symbols are various. Language universally, as well as individually, is a symbol of mental activity and a mediator between different minds. Man is a minor of all objects; material furnished by sense is assimilated by mind and communicated by speech. Language is the acme of all human energies, experiences and associations; a memento on the monument of time marking the various phases of intellectual progress or stagnation. Archæology must be of a practical utility to-day. Every experiment and attainment of former ages are but stars in the firmament of progress, affording light and help toward greater achievements. Our present social, religious, political, scientific, and artistic culture is the complicated result of all that has been lived through by our common ancestry; only mixed digested, filtered, modified by the assimilating power of time. If even the works attributed to Orpheus, Homer, Manu, Vyasa, Valmika,

Ossian, Shakespeare, and to the author of the *Nibelungen-Lied*, are each suspected to be the effusions of several men, how could we now disentangle the conglomerate mass of all languages into the several contributions by each nation or genius? Speech, as a necessary function of the human faculties, arose instinctively, and single languages were formed by the peculiar choice or caprice of their speakers, as influenced by various agencies. Every people, according to its own genius, amalgamates the phonetic element with its own feelings and conceptions into an organic unity. The forms of language also react on the mind. Our very thoughts are faint without their union with the symbols of speech; the operations of the brain and heart, the articulations of the vocal organs and the reception of sounds by the ears, being an inseparable synergy. thought crystalizes the momentum of the mind and utters it as a word; and the atmospheric air is made to vibrate with mental energy. Speech is as much a function of thinking as breathing is of living. It is not a mere means of intercommunication, but also of self instruction. The peculiar qualities of objects lead us to distinguish, while their common characteristics lead us to combine. We ever strive after a clearer and more comprehensible unity. The sound is the symbolic representative of the object, of its mental picture, and of the sympathetic effort of the organs both of speech and of hearing. In no other product of mental activity is there a more complicated quantity of well defined modifications, than in this trinity of object, mind, and voice, one and indivisible. The word itself becomes in its turn a new outward, tangible object, linking the world with man and men with each other. Speech is developed only in society, and men can neither understand themselves nor their own ideas fully except by trying the intelligibility of their words on each other. Mutual understanding sharpens the intellectual powers of speakers, so that with the increase of social intercourse the language gains in perfection. The power of thinking needs to be kindled by the homogeneity of general thought, and tested by the heterogeneity of individual thought. By society and by schooling, a whole people, becomes habituated to the limits of the preëxisting language, whatever that may be.—S. M. Frazier, in *Barnes' Educational Monthly*.

## WONDERFUL EFFECT OF IMAGINATION.

During the siege of Breda, in the Netherlands, in 1625, the garrison was dreadfully afflicted with the scurvy. So useless was the medical aid afforded to the soldiers, and so desperate were they in consequence, that they resolved to give up the city to the enemy. This resolution came to the ears of the Prince of Orange; he immediately wrote addresses to the men, assuring them that he possessed remedies that were unknown to physicians, and that he would undertake their cure, pro-

vided they continued in the discharge of their duty. Together with these addresses he sent to the physicians small vials of colored water, which the patients were assured were of immense price, and of unspeakable virtue. Many, who declared that all former remedies had only made them worse, now recovered in a few days. A long and interesting account of the wonderful working of this purely imaginary antidote was drawn up by M. Van der Mye, one of the physicians in the garrison, whose office was thus successfully usurped by the Prince of Orange. A corroborative proof of the well-known power of the imagination in affecting disease is afforded in the following Arabian fable: One day a traveler met the Plague going into Cairo, and accosted it thus: "For what purpose are you entering Cairo?" "To kill 3,000 people," rejoined the Plague. Some time after, the traveler met the Plague on his return, and said: "But you killed 30,000!" "Nay," replied the Plague, "I killed but 3,000; the rest died of fright."—*Leslie's Sunday Magazine*.

The man, who has been to the Black Hills, says the *Bismarck Tribune* and returned, is a big gun at the village drug store, and feels called upon to tell the truth when narrating his adventures. Such a man, named Curt, was telling the other night, how many Indians he had killed during his three months' residence in the Hills.

After he had talked half an hour, one of the listeners, who had kept track of the number killed, exhibited the figures.

"I find," he exclaimed, "that you killed 1,500 savages in three months!"

"Is that all?" exclaimed the unabashed Black Hiller. "Why, I believe you have left out a week's work there somewhere."

"If you had such good luck killing Indians, why didn't you stay there?" demanded another suspicious listener.

"Well, the truth is, gentlemen, I was afraid of ruining my left eye. I squinted along my gun-barrel so much that my face was being drawn out of shape, and the sight was so far gone that I had to be led about by a dog."

"And you killed Indians while in that condition?"

"I did, though I've always felt a little mean about it. I couldn't see to shoot, and so I run 'em down and kicked 'em to death. It wasn't manly in me, and I want to ask the forgiveness of you, gentlemen, right here and now."

There was a long spell of appalling silence, and then some one said that Eph Francis had bought a new coon-dog.

## TRUE COURAGE.

Charles XII, during a memorable siege, was dictating a letter to his secretary. A shell struck the building, and crashing through the adjoining rooms, made great havoc. The frightened scribe dropped his pen and would have fled. "What is the matter," said the king; "why do you not go on with your writing?" "Most gracious sire, the bombshell—the bombshell!" "What has that to do with the letter?" replied the king. "Go on with your writing." Paul was a man of serene and undaunted courage.