

meeting a foreign tongue, and they are constantly visited by the Polyglot inhabitants of the continent. Their own people, on the other hand, migrate every year, by thousands, to the neighbouring shores of France, by which means, as I have shown you, their language has already begun to be corrupted, and will so continue, until the old English tongue shall have been merged into some other: here it will be preserved pure, or if, as cannot be avoided, it undergoes changes, those will be only variations of the original tongue, unmixed with foreign dialects, and it will, as long as it lasts, remain an English branch of an English stock.

In the mean time it is the duty and the interest of both nations, to retard as much as possible the dissolution of the English language in any part of the world. It is not for me to point out what Great Britain ought to do to attain that most desirable end; but I am at liberty to say what I think ought to be done in this country, with a view to the same object; we ought, in the first place, to adopt no new words or phrases from the other side of the Atlantic, but such as are English in their sound and in their structure; such as bear a close analogy to our language, and are in harmony with it; nor ought we to adopt even those, without evident necessity, or where they really add beauty or force to the expression of ideas. We should hold up a mirror to Great Britain, in which she might see her beautiful language reflected in its purity, and free from the barbarisms which of late years she has too easily suffered to be introduced into it. The greatest defect in the English idiom is its anomalies, and they ought not to be increased.

The study of the languages of continental Europe, instead of impeding, will aid you in this design. In the French, German, Italian and Spanish, as in the Latin and Greek, you will see homogeneous idioms, and you will learn to mould your own, as much as possible, on the same plan. You will always keep before your eyes the great models of a former age, and you will let modern British writers strike whatever devious course they may think proper. It is not words, but ideas, that you will look for in foreign writers; the latter will enrich and elevate your minds, the former could serve but as masquerade dresses to your own thoughts, and those, I hope,