distinct languages, whatever may have been their origin, the definition above suggested might be of practical use, and enable the teacher to proceed with his argument.

He might begin by undertaking to prove that none of the languages of modern Europe were a thousand years old. No English scholar, he might say, who has not specially given himself up to the study of Anglo-Saxon, can interpret the documents in which the chronicles and laws of England were written in the days of King Alfred, so that we may be sure that none of the English of the nineteenth century could converse with the subjects of that monarch if these last could now be restored to life. The difficulties encountered would not arise merely from the intrusion of French terms, in consequence of the Norman conquest, because that large portion of our language (including the articles, pronouns, &c.), which is Saxon has also undergone great transformations by abbreviation, new modes of pronunciation, spelling, and various corruptions, so as to be unlike both ancient and modern German. They who now speak German, if brought into contact with their Teutonic ancestors of the ninth century, would be quite unable to converse with them, and, in like manner, the subjects of Charlemagne could not have exchanged ideas with the Goths of Alaric's army, or with the soldiers of Arminius in the days of Augustus Cæsar. So rapid indeed has been the change in Germany, that the epic poem called the Nibelungen Lied, once so popular, and only seven centuries old, cannot now be enjoyed, except by the erudite.

If we then turn to France, we meet again with similar evidence of ceaseless change. There is a treaty of peace still extant a thousand years old, between Charles the Bald and King Louis of Germany (dated A.D. 841), in which the German king takes an oath in what was the French tongue of that day, while the French king swears in the German of the same era, and neither of these oaths would now