

Q. Write a critical note on the Old English.

— Introduction:— It is a historical fact that the Old English period generally started from 450 A.D. and ~~to~~ came to an end in 1150 A.D. This period is called as the period of full inflection (change the form of a word to show its relationship to another word in a ~~sense~~ sentence). The Old English is totally different from the modern English in terms of spelling, meaning and pronunciation. The English language has been highly influenced by some important historical events namely, The settlement of Britain, by Germanic tribes, the Scandinavian invasion, the Norman conquest and the revival of learning.

The introduction of Christianity by the Romans and a long series of massive (huge) attacks made on England by Viking had a great influence on the English language. It was during this period of Roman rule that Christianity was introduced among the Celts in England. In the beginning these Celts were tormented (painful) with fear that the Anglo Saxons known for their ruthlessness (enthusiasmless) and cruelty might be violent to them. Anglo Saxons were basically militant (dogmatic) and barbaric race (species). Their main occupation was to plunder (loot) Christianity. These tribes now settled in England to spread their linguistic potential and their resourcefulness. It can be said that the Scandinavian borrowings have the permanent

influence on the Old English language. A large number of words which the Anglo Saxons had brought with them from their native land had by now become absolute in North-western Europe. The English language has undergone several changes in the course of time. There are many differences between old and Modern English concerning spelling, vocabulary and grammar. ²⁴⁰¹ The long vowels in particular have undergone considerable modification. The Old English word stands in the same word as the modern English stone.

But the vowel is different. A similar correspondence is apparent in (shown), Halig (Holy), gam (go), ban (bone), rap (rope), bait (boat), words like Heaford (head), faeger (fair), sawal (soul), show forms which have been contracted in later English. The old English made use of two characters to represent the sound of PH, TH and O. As in the word wip (with) OA (then) which we no longer use like wise old English represented the sound of SH by SC as in sceap (sheep) or macod (maked) (old English represented the sound of SH by sc).

There is the absence of the words derived from Latin and French in old English, such words make up more than half of the words now in common use. The vocabulary of old English is almost purely Teutonic. Apart from (separate) pronouns, prepositions, conjunctions, auxiliary verbs, they also express fundamental concepts like man, wif (wife), cild (child), hus (house), gual (good), strong (strong), etan (eat), drincan (drink).

The third and most fundamental feature that distinguishes old English from the language of today is its grammar. It can be said that inflectional languages fall into two classes:— synthetic and analytic.

P.C.

In the case of the Indo-European languages these words take the form of endings on the Noun and pronoun, the Adjective and the verb thus in Latin - the nominative murus (wall) is distinguished from muri of the wall.

Conclusion - Thus we find that Old English was very different even in Grammatical terms. Old English is very obscure today and the readers of the modern English cannot ~~be~~ write and understand this without any reference. The inflection of the noun was more elaborate (to expand) in Old English than it is today. The Old English vocabulary is abundant with the stocks of synonyms. In Beowulf the best serving book of Old English, we find at least 36 words for hero or prince, 12 words for battle, 17 words for sea and 11 words for boat. The Old English word Bread meant fragments and the Old English word bloom meant mass of metal.
