

**SELF-EXPLANATORY WORDS**

From an exchange we derive the following interesting article which we hope may incite our student readers to ponder the matter and search for other words—there are many other words, too, some being coined all the time:

Probably most persons who have learned to be observant have noted that certain words of our language are peculiarly self-explanatory; that is, their sounds are expressive or suggestive of their meanings. It seems likely, indeed, that a goodly portion of words, new and old, pertaining to sounds were originally nothing more than vocal imitations, each of the sound to which it applies.

It is interesting and instructive to inquire into the sounds and meanings of words in this respect but one should be constantly on his guard in order to avoid drawing conclusions in a manner analogous to that of the gentle old lady who, according to the ancient story, remarked after studying a hog and his habits a short time, that "the beast certainly had been most appropriately named."

The word "roar," for example, seems to approximate the loud voluminous sound to which it is applied about as closely as anything short of an actual roar could. Similarly, "croak," it seems, would suggest even to one quite ignorant of English a low, hoarse, coarse sound. "Gobble" is almost a perfect imitation of the cry of the turkey to which it is applied and "cackle" is quite similar to the cry of a hen to which it is applied.

"Toot" fits the sound made by a steam or other whistle as no other word could and "boom" is eloquently descriptive of the sound of a gun. Could any word better than "pop" be found as the name of the short, smart, quick sound that accompanies the sudden opening of a bottle or the bursting of a grain of corn under the influence of heat?

No dictionary is needed to explain that "bang" is a loud, sudden noise or a sharp, heavy blow producing such a noise or that "whack" is a sharp, resounding blow. Nothing could be more appropriate than "clash" for the name of the loud, harsh noise resulting when two bodies strike violently together and nothing would fit so well as "slam" the loud noise resulting when a door is violently closed.

"Sneak" at once conveys the idea of creeping or stealing away meanly or of a mean underhanded person; according to some etymologists, it has been derived from "snake." Here are a few more of the numerous "speaking" words that might be mentioned: Splash, clip, buzz, gurgle, tinkle, drawl, brisk, whine, snip, rip, drip, snap.

**MUST HAVE BEEN TRUE**

It is related that on one occasion a man who disliked President Lincoln's secretary of war, Mr. Stanton, went to the president and told him that Stanton had called him a baboon. Much to the satisfaction of the mischief-maker, Lincoln appeared to be deeply interested and asked if he could prove that such a statement had been made by the secretary. The tale-bearer replied that Stanton had spoken of Mr. Lincoln as a baboon in the hearing of one Judge Holt and that the latter was just then approaching the White House.

When Judge Holt came in Lincoln asked him if Stanton had made the remark attributed to him. The judge tried to evade the question but Lincoln pinned him down and he finally admitted that the secretary had spoken of the president as a big baboon but declared it to have been merely a cursory remark and advised the president to pay no attention to it.

"But I must pay attention to it," said Mr. Lincoln. "If you had said such a thing or if our friend here had done so I might let it drop and forget it, but if Stanton said it, it is something serious, for I tell you, gentlemen, Stanton is generally right."

**PEN USED IN SIGNING THE DECLARATION**

Peculiar historical interest and value attach to pens used in signing important documents and many of them are carefully preserved and treasured. In recent times more than a single pen has been used for affixing the presidential signature to each of several bills and documents regarded as of extraordinary importance and all are prized as historical mementos.

But a single pen was used in signing the declaration of independence, however, we are told, and it was made from a goose quill—satisfactory steel pens were not produced until more than 40 years later. Each of the 56 men who affixed their signatures to this immortal document in turn took up the pen and used it.

**HE WOULDN'T RISK IT**

A man who was trying a rest cure in a small village developed "flu" symptoms and went to the local druggist to get a preventive. "I've the very thing for you," exclaimed the druggist triumphantly. "Thompson's Topcuro; 60 cents a bottle."

"No, no, no!" said the customer energetically.

"But it's the very thing for your case. All the doctors are recommending it. We can't sell it fast enough."

"I believe you but I'd prefer something else."

"Nonsense! What's your objection?"

"Only that I'm Thompson." And the customer beat a hasty retreat.