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The Growth of Language.

No committee can tell whether a word is a good word or a bad word, or whether it is wanted or not. Old fashioned people will always tell you that a new word is not wanted and that there are plenty of exact equivalents for it already in the language. This seems conclusive, yet experience often proves that they were wrong and that there was a shade of meaning which they did not perceive, but which was nevertheless pressing eagerly for expression. Thousands of words which we now consider absolutely essential to the language were, when they were first introduced, described as quite unnecessary and the mere surplusage of pedantry or affectation. Let any one turn to that most humorous of Elizabethan plays, "The Poetaster," and read the scene in which the poet (Marston is the subject of the satire) is given an emetic and made to bring up all the newfangled words which he has used in his works. The character who is watching the results keeps on calling out that such and such a monstrosity "has newly come up."

This was thought a brilliant piece of satire at the time, and yet now half the condemned words are admitted by all readers and writers. In truth, there can be no censorship in literature. The only possible plan is to give every word its chance and allow the fittest to survive. It was in this sense that Dryden declared that he proposed new words, and if the public approved "the bill passed" and the word became law. Instead of a writer being on the lookout to throttle and destroy any and every new word or phrase that may be suggested, it ought to be his business to encourage all true and fitting developments of his native tongue. Dryden, in the admirable passage from which we have quoted already, uses the memorable phrase, "I trade both with the living and the dead for the enrichment of our tongue."—London Spectator.

Literary Evolution of America.

We are passing through the same stage of literary evolution as the French, only that with them the habit of literary criticism and self criticism makes the tendency more marked and more easily studied. Here, as there, it might seem that for the time the minus of men had overleaped themselves, as though in this strange fin du siecle we were pausing in our letters and art, uncertain of the onward way, and seeking in more acute apprehension deeper penetration and keener analysis of what has been and is an answer to our perplexity of what shall be. Here, as there, originality, never absent, manifests itself too often in a studied eccentricity and wastes its energy in a search for the novel and bizarre—a search that is most futile when most successful.

But as one reviews the field of American letters one may take heart of brace to say that our development in no way lags behind that of England, that it has in it the promise of an evolution as brilliant, as varied and perhaps more critically sound. Above all, it is independent, and so is contributing an important, perhaps an essential, part to the growth of a distinctly national literature.—Professor B. W. Wells in Forum.

He Knew Chickens.

Mr. Suburb—What on earth are you trying to do, neighbor?

Mr. Nexdoor—Merely taking down a little of this fence, so that I can move my chicken house over into your yard.

"Eh? My yard?"

"Yes, I like to be neighborly and considerate to other people's feelings, you know."

"But—er"—

"Yes, you shan't have any more cause to complain about my chickens scratching up your yard."

"But you are moving your whole house over on to my property!"

"That's the idea. As soon as the chickens find their house in your yard, they'll conclude that you own them, and will spend the rest of their natural lives scratching in my yard, you know."—Pearson's Weekly.

A Tiger With a Glass Eye.

This isn't a "stuffed" tiger, but a real live one, ferocious and strong. He is at present in the menagerie at Stuttgart and looks as fierce with his glass eye as with the real one.

A serious affection of the muscles caused the beast to lose the sight of one eye. As the public didn't appreciate a one eyed tiger, the beast was put under cocaine and the useless optic removed. This was a ticklish operation, several strong keepers holding the beast down while the eye was taken out.

He was measured for a new eye, which had to be made with a special degree of ferocity. For the first week he tried hard to rub it out, but he now rests contented as the only wild animal with a glass eye.

Not the Stomach's Fault.

"Doctor," said the patient, "I believe there is something wrong with my stomach."

"Not a bit," replied the medical man very promptly. "God made your stomach, and he knows how to make them. There's something wrong with the stuff you put in it, maybe, and something wrong in the way you stuff it in and stamp it down, but your stomach itself is all right."

And then the patient immediately went out to find a physician who understood his business.—New Orleans Times-Democrat.

Light Restored.

"There are many more women living than I used to think."

"Is that so?"

"Yes. Before I married I used to think my wife was the only woman in the world."—Columbus (O.) Journal.

Every Chinese implement has its deity. There is a god of knives, another of spades, another of hatchets, another of swords. Every kind of animal has its deity.

Costumes For the New Year.

"Nowadays the woman who has 20 friends or she who has 200 receives them on a special day. The tea gown, no matter how handsome it may be, is not intended for wear even by the hostess at an afternoon 'at home.' Instead a pretty, well fitting frock is assumed," writes Isabel A. Mallon in The Ladies' Home Journal. "The combination of stuffs with velvet or satin gives to the visiting toilet a rich appearance and makes possible artistic contrasts in color as well as in materials. There is a decided liking for moire. Usually the moire is watered in the broad fashion and has large figures or designs in the same color as the background brocaded in silk, not velvet, upon it. Brocaded moire is almost invariably combined with velvet. The moire is used for the skirt and the velvet for the bodice, although some part of the bodice, the back, the waistcoat, the draped corselet, or perhaps only the belt and collar, must be of the same material as the skirt.

"Black, in velvet, silk and wool, is more popular than ever before, and dressmakers endeavor to gain novel effects by using the magpie colors—i. e., black and white. A new material which bids fair to gain great popularity is called 'soleil cloth.' Lace and passementerie of jet, steel, gold, pearl and that rich kind formed of imitation precious stones are used upon street and house gowns."

Dress Accessories.

The various fanciful accessories involved in many of the new fashions, says a fashion writer, are well calculated to fulfill their mission, which is to give variety without material change in the dress. Unusually interesting and artistic conceits are shown and they are most lavishly used, the effect of excess being easily avoided by good taste and clever disposal. With other fancy waists it is always well to have a black satin bodice plain, stylish and close fitting, with a skirt to match. This may be quite high in the neck, or otherwise, cut square with one or two semitransparent chemisettes provided—black and white severally, for instance; also one of black satin trimmed in some pretty fashion.

A majority of the new neck trimmings are made to simulate a square neck or very broad deep yoke bordered with lace or plaited chiffon frills, and these, worn with a high necked bodice, can be varied indefinitely. A strap of ribbon passing over the shoulders forms a short brace on each side, and these straps are joined by a ribbon that crosses the figure horizontally. Rosettes of ribbon conceal the joining, and thus the pompadour collarette is formed, and insertions of ribbon and lace are added to the yoke part and frills of chiffon or lace to its edge.

Jennie June on Women's Clubs.

There is one aspect of the work of women's clubs that will be more apparent during 1897 than ever before. Formerly a distinct class of women joined together in clubs. Now almost all classes of women have caught the spirit. Society women have shown that they appreciate the value of the club idea. Young college women are forming clubs as fast as they can, and all manner of women who have never been identified with a club in their lives are now manifesting a gratifying desire to join the movement. What the leaders of the clubs throughout the country are planning to do during the coming year, what we who have been with the movement from the beginning hope for it, is too long a story to be told in a few words. Our ambition, however, is heightened rather than otherwise, and encouragement is most abundant.—Mrs. J. C. Croly in New York World.

To Reduce Infant Mortality.

The city fathers of Buffalo, at the instigation of Dr. Wende, backed by the medical fraternity, have passed an ordinance prohibiting the use of tube nursing bottles. Dr. Wende is the efficient health officer who by his sensible methods reduced the death rate of Buffalo about one-half in two or three years. He expects to reduce it still more by means of this ordinance.

France long ago did away with this deadly nursing contrivance, and her physicians claim that thereby the lives of about 100,000 infants have been saved annually. The danger of the tube bottle lies in the impossibility of keeping the tube clean; microbes breed in it and quickly find their way into the infant's stomach and intestines, when the little one soon succumbs to "bowel trouble."

A Quaint Necklace.

One of the most unique necklaces worn this winter with an evening gown was made or combined after an original idea of the wearer. She had a beautiful chain of silver, of a fine design. In a shop in the city where antiques are to be found she discovered some beautiful old Spanish paste brilliants. They were a beautiful, rich crimson, almost like carbuncles. Some of them were on quaint Spanish bracelets. She secured a number of them, had them fastened as pendants to her chain, and the effect has been the admiration and envy of her friends.—New York Letter.

The Hot Water Pipe.

A plumber, called in to thaw out pipes frozen up in a cold snap, gave us this piece of advice with his bill: As it is the hot water pipe that is the first and surest to freeze, it is better not to use the hot water at all late in the evening. Keep it out of the treacherous pipes, and you will lessen the danger of a stoppage there before morning.—Philadelphia Press.

Canvas Cloth.

The canvaslike materials are in great demand. Meshes of every size and style are seen, both in solid hued and figured canvas. One of the most open of canvas weaves is suggestive of a fish net and demands a silk lining, which will be distinctly visible through the large squares. There are plaid canvases in fancy color combinations, covered with fine fibers of black.

A Fireman's Fall.

An incident that happened in a large cotton fire in the lower part of New York some years ago had its comic side and was the means of the firemen discovering the main body of the fire, which for some time they had been endeavoring in vain to locate.

The smoke was pouring out of nearly every part of the building, and although several entrances had been made it had been impossible to find the seat of the fire. The chief in charge ordered some windows on the third floor to be "opened up," and a ladder was accordingly raised and a fireman ascended. With the aid of a hook he pried open the iron shutters, and, lamp in hand, stepped in—and disappeared. His companion upon the ladder, wondering why he had so suddenly vanished from sight, peered in, and found that he had stepped into the elevator shaft that was directly under this window and had fallen through to the basement. Hastily descending, he alarmed the others, and, forcing an entrance, they made their way to the cellar. Here they found their comrade in a sitting position upon a bale of cotton, partly stunned and dazed from the shock of the fall, but otherwise uninjured. In his hand he still held the wire handle of his lamp—all that remained of it—while in front of him, farther in the basement, blazing merrily, was the fire they had been endeavoring to find. His fall had led him directly to it. On afterward examining the hatchway, or shaft, through which he had fallen, they found that it had bars running diagonally across at each floor, and in some marvelous way he had escaped each one in his downward flight.—Charles T. Hill in St. Nicholas.

British and American Business Integrity.

It is in trade especially that the superiority of British honesty is averred to show itself. The British are the greatest traders on earth and have been traders long enough and extensively enough to have learned what standards of commercial honesty pay best in the long run. An American who had traveled in southwestern Europe, in South America and other parts of the world that are somewhat out of the beaten path lately admitted to the present writer that in the countries he had visited the reputation of Americans seemed to him to be low and that of the British very high. In Buenos Ayres, he said, an English merchant's word inspired confidence, but an American merchant's assurances were received with a good deal of skepticism.

This sort of testimony is mortifying to American ears; but, if we believe it, we must look for the remedy to spring not from moral reform, but simply from increased knowledge. We expect those who bring this reproach upon us to learn, from information and reflection if possible, but if necessary from experience, that, though an individual rogue may steal or cheat and escape punishment, for a people who can neither hide nor run away from the consequences of their acts honesty is the most sagacious and remunerative course.—Scribner's.

A Theosophical Courtship.

"So you love me, George?"

"With all my heart."

"Love me for myself alone?"

"Yes, my darling, for yourself alone.'"

"You never loved another?"

"Never. You are the first girl I ever loved."

"You will always be true to me?"

"For ever and ever."

"George, don't think that I doubt you, but please stand here a moment between me and the light. I want to take a look at your aura. Oh, what strange colors! Blue and black, with blotches of red. George, you have been lying to me. I see that you don't love me for myself at all, but that you're after my money. That sea green tells me that you love another. That purple streak is undeniable evidence that you have proposed to at least a dozen girls and have been a bad, bad man. That venetian red indicates that if we were married you wouldn't be true to me three months. Algernon George Nit, you are a base deceiver. Hence from my sight, villain! I haven't studied up theosophy for nothing."—Town Topics.

A Strong Beard.

Three brothers bearing a remarkable resemblance to one another are in the habit of shaving at the same barber's shop. Not long since one of the brothers entered the shop early in the morning and was shaved by a German who had been at work in the shop only a few days. About noon another brother came in and underwent a similar operation at the hands of the same barber. In the evening the third brother made his appearance, when the German, dropping his razor in astonishment, exclaimed: "Vell, upon my vord, dat man hash de fashtest beard I never saw. I shaves him dis morning, shaves him at dinner time, and he comes back now mit his beard so long as it never vash."—Exchange.

Herring Gull Swallows a Sparrow.

Half a dozen English sparrows flew into the wild fowl inclosure in Central park and began pecking at some grain set out for the white crane's use. The crane's long and slender neck shot out, and a fluttering sparrow was grasped in its bill, while the others flew away in alarm. A herring gull ran to the crane, seized the sparrow, elevated its head and gulped down the live bird with evident satisfaction. Then it went to the basin, took two sups of water and scanned the skies to see if there were any more too trustful birds in sight.—New York Sun.

Just Friendly.

"There is such a thing as neighbors getting too intimate."

"What's the instance?"

"Why, my next door neighbor borrows my paper from the doorstep before I am up, and his wife cuts out all the poetry for her scrapbook."—Washington Star.