

TO BE SOCIABLE OR SOLITARY

William Hazlett Tells of Times When He Wants to Be Left Alone With His Thoughts.

Give me the dear blue sky over my head, and the green turf beneath my feet, a winding road before me, and a three hours' march to dinner—and then to thinking! It is hard if I cannot start some game on these lone heaths. I laugh, I run, I leap, I sing for joy. From the point of yonder rolling cloud I plunge into my past being, and revel there, as the sunburnt Indian plunges headlong into the wave that wafts him to his native village shore. Then long forgotten things, like "sunken wreck and sunless treasures," burst upon my eager sight. . . . Instead of an awkward silence, broken by attempts at wit or dull commonplaces, mine is that undisturbed silence of the heart which alone is perfect eloquence. No one likes puns, alliterations, antithesis, argument and analysis better than I do; but I sometimes had rather be without them. "Leave, oh, leave me to my repose!" I have just now other business in hand which would seem idle to you, but is with me "very stuff of the conscience." Is not this wild rose sweet without a comment? Does not this daisy leap to my heart set in its coat of emerald? Yet if I were to explain to you the circumstance that has so endeared it to me, you would only smile. Had I not better then keep it to myself and let it serve me to brood over, from here to yonder crazy point, and from thence onward to the far distant horizon? I should be but bad company all that way, and therefore, prefer being alone. I have heard it said that you may, when the moody fit comes on, walk or ride on by yourself and indulge your reveries. But this looks like a breach of manners, a neglect of others, and you are thinking all the time that you ought to rejoin your party. "Out upon such half-faced fellowship," say I. I like to be either entirely to myself or entirely at the disposal of others; to talk or be silent, to walk or sit, to be sociable or solitary.—Table Talk by William Hazlett.

FRENCH USE ENGLISH WORD

Academy Which Keeps Language Correct Decides to Admit "Gentleman" to the Dictionary.

The French academy, which devotes long sittings to the task of keeping the French language absolutely correct, and which regards all foreign words introduced into the language with horror, has just made an exception in favor of an English word, which is henceforward to have a place in the official dictionary of France, says the London Telegraph. This is the word "gentleman," which is very frequently used in modern writing and conversation rather than the time-honored gentilhomme, which ordinarily means nobleman, but which, in the new edition of the dictionary, is to be described as meaning "a man who without being noble by race, has lofty sentiments, elegant manners, and does noble acts." With regard to the word "gentleman," it is to be described in the dictionary as "an English word sometimes employed in French in the metaphorical and moral sense of the word gentilhomme."

This is undoubtedly not the last time the French academy will be called upon to give an official welcome to an English word which has become current in the French language; for example, the word "home" is becoming a great favorite, and the misuse of the words "smoking" and "dancing" for "smoking jacket" and "dance hall" has become so usual that the English origin of the words is quite forgotten.

The Alley Dog.

An alley dog they called him, a tramp and worse things still. Stones they flung at him. On their porches in the evening they abused him and plotted against his life. And all because he was ownerless and unkempt in his shaggy shagginess. But, with all their stone throwing and brandishing of sticks, he ambled good-naturedly along and sought the company of the children, who knew not his reputation among righteous citizens and loved him in spite of his dirty coat. He played with them until unappreciative grownups chased him away.

And then one day his whole life changed. With a group of his child mates he went to the nearby river. He watched them prepare for a swim. Suddenly he noticed that one was struggling hard. He leaped into the river. What happened after that he no longer knows. He knows only that the little boy was saved and that he is now a respected member of the little boy's family.

No longer to be called an alley dog, more do tramps men plot his death, he used to wonder why. Now he has ceased to wonder. He merely rests his cool, moist nose on contemplative paws—content at last at having come into his own.—Milwaukee Journal.

Vanishing Indian Language.

Nowhere in America has there been such a diversity of Indian languages as in California. But these languages are now rapidly disappearing. Several of them are known only by five or six, and others by only 20 or 30 living persons, and hardly a year passes without some dialect, or even language, ceasing to exist, through the death of the last individual able to speak it. Efforts are being made to record all these languages for the sake of the light they throw on the ancient history of the Pacific coast.—San and New York Herald.

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Anger Poison.

"Advancing years have caused me to forego the luxury of temper," a middle-aged woman said. "The slow to wrath" might well be one's guide at every period of life, but it is absolutely essential in the middle years, when fits of anger set up a positive poison in the system. Twice in the last year I have been made seriously ill by giving way to my temper. Now, for my health's sake, I endeavor to restrain it."—Exchange.

Asbestos.

The earliest use of asbestos was for spinning and weaving, to make incombustible thread and yarn rope and cloth, and this has continued to be the most important use of asbestos ever since the days of the Greeks and Romans. Only the best grades can be used for this purpose, according to the United States geological survey, department of the interior. Thread can now be spun so fine that it will run about 32,000 feet to the pound.

Opal Shows Colorful When Warm.

The opal shows its exquisite colors best when warm, and dealers aware of this peculiarity will hold an opal in the hand before showing it, in order to enhance its changing luster.

What Next?

A New York man suggests the idea of training apes as bootblacks. That might go in New York, but Boston would never stand for such monkey show.—Boston Transcript

Like a Naughty Child.

When a Tartar invites an honored guest to eat and drink he will take him by the ear and lead him up to the table.

Modern Revision.

Some men are born economical, others acquire economical habits, but the majority of us have economy forced down our throats.—Philadelphia Inquirer.

Sparks and Bathrobes.

In lighting a match when wearing a bathrobe, be more than ordinarily careful, as a spark will set the surface of the robe blazing with the rapidity of an explosion.

Approaching the Millennium.

Jud Tunkins says there can't be any universal property until a man is willing to work as hard for a square meal as he is for a circus ticket.