

Language Arts

Well-Educated Mother's Heart Learning Library

Libraries Of Hope

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Compiled by
Marlene Peterson

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Hints for Young Writers

Orison Swett Marden

The Writer Today

For centuries it was thought that oratory was the greatest human achievement, the most perfect expression of personal power. It was long supposed that no other form of self-expression developed a man so thoroughly and so effectively, or unfolded his powers so quickly, as the effort to think upon his feet and to express himself before an audience. But many of the laurels that formerly went to the orator are now going to the writer, and I doubt whether there is any other form of self-expression or of achievement which gives such complete satisfaction as the writer's profession.

I know of nothing which so tends to accuracy of thinking and self-expression as the writing habit. It increases one's vocabulary and one's facility of expression. The very act of writing a thing tends to fasten it upon the memory, to impress it, to clutch it in the mind.

It is a process of perpetual discovery and surprises. No writer can know just what is coming into his thoughts.

He is always tapping new veins, new ores of resourcefulness, for there is no limit to the visualizing, picturing powers of the imagination. Writing is a perpetual delight, a constant tonic. Though the creative process tires the brain, after he has rested, the author returns to his work with

the same zest, the same enthusiasm and love as before.

The writer has many advantages over the public speaker. He can wait upon his moods; he can write when he feels like it; and he knows that he can burn as many manuscripts as he likes if they do not suit him. There are not a thousand eyes upon him. He does not have a great audience criticizing every sentence, weighing every thought. He does not have to step upon the scales of every listener's judgment to be weighed, as does the orator. A man may write as listlessly as he pleases, use as much or as little of his brain energy as he likes; no one is watching him. His pride and vanity are not touched, and what he writes may never be seen by any one; also there is always a chance for revision.

While the literary profession is perhaps the most poorly paid of any professional calling to-day, and those who rise to such eminence that their names command attention and possess advertising value for their publishers, are few and far between, yet we do not measure the value of a vocation by the amount of money that one gets out of it. Many of the best things in life are not remunerative from the money standpoint, but are of immense value to society.

Live, Then Write

When Harriet Beecher Stowe captured the world with "Uncle Tom's Cabin" her publishers demanded a new tale, and she wrote "Dred," a tale of the Dismal Swamp. Some witty paragrapher said: "Mrs. Stowe wrote 'Uncle Tom's Cabin' because she had a book to write, but she wrote 'Dred' because she had to write a book,"

It makes all the difference in the world, whether you write because you must express yourself or because you are ordered to go and produce. Nothing is immortal which does not throb with eternal principle. No manuscript will live which has not first lived vigorously in the author.

Do you expect your reader to thrill with emotion? You cannot set the cords of his heart vibrating when your own were still and dumb. You can only create in the reader the duplicate of your own emotions. Action and reaction are equal. There is no art by which you can produce in the reader what you did not experience in yourself. If you have nothing to give, no life or beauty or truth, what you write will not be read. It all depends upon the fullness, the sweetness, the human interest, which you can inject into it; and it must be your own — you must be yourself, or die in your book.

The world is hungry for life, more life; it is interested in realities, in human experiences, in human struggles. There is

nothing that interests man like man — personalities, human nature. If you are ambitious to be a great writer keep in touch with life. Do not allow the great veins of practical affairs to be cut off. The blood must come warm from the great heart of humanity. You must keep in touch with the great life arena. Mere theories do not go very far; it is life that counts.

If editors were asked what, in a word, is the greatest defect, the fatal weakness in the majority of manuscripts which come to them, they would say their lack of life, — and, lacking life, they lack interest, vivacity, charm, and fascination. One may outline the sentences and they analyze perfectly; they balance; the words are well chosen, but there is no great underlying throbbing pulse of life.

"Wouldst thou write a living book thou must first live."

Do you put yourself into what you write? Does it take hold upon the very center of your life? Have you ground all your experience into paint, and projected it into the picture? You must live your story before you write it. Good composition throbs with life wherever you touch it. There is not a word too many or too few. Wherever you cut it, it bleeds, — it is so full of life-blood. Every word you come to is electric, like the touch of a live wire.

"I do not want to write literature, I want to write life," said the late Frank Norris. Most young writers try to write literature when the world wants life. It is that which must always be uppermost, it must dominate the mind. The motive must pulsate with the warm life-blood, or the book, the article will be cold, mechanical, and lifeless.

The compositions of many writers so lack incident, color, character, interest, that nobody wants to read them. They leave the Hamlet out of their play and then wonder why people do not come to see it.

The explanation of how some writers — like the late Owen Kildare, author of "My Mamie Rose" — who have had no training whatever in the schools, and who are ignorant of books, have written that which will live, is that they have written because they could not help it. There was something pent up within them which they simply had to tell, and they told it with all the energy and naturalness which they possessed, without trying to see how well they could balance their sentences. It was a spontaneous expression of that which they could not keep in any longer. This is the difference between writing life and writing literature. If the people who have written things which the world will not let die had tried to write literature, their works would have been dead long ago.

We are, most of us, straining to effect some great thing: something far off and unusual, and we do not see the wonders at our very door. The simplest and the commonest things in life fail to captivate us, just as the stars remain unknown to the majority and uninvestigated because we can see them nearly every night.

Many unknown writers would find fame and fortune, if, like Bunyan and Milton and Dickens and George Eliot and Scott and Emerson, they would write out of their own lives, if they would put into their manuscripts the things they have seen, common, everyday things, things that thej r have felt,

that they have known. It is life thoughts that stir and convince, that move and persuade, that carry their iron particles into the blood.

Young writers often make the mistake of choosing unusual topics. But the human heart loves the common things, the things which touch the every-day life. It is the daily experience, the commonplace glorified, which interest people most. The human heart never tires of friendship, love, suffering, struggle, victory and human happiness. The author who has that subtle quality that can see the uncommonness in the common, is the author that lives.

No one can put into his book anything greater than that which lives within himself. Most writers are dry and uninteresting, because their lives are pinched and lean and starved.

When they give their books to the world they are like a lean, cadaverous professor advertising to give lectures on physical culture. Their poverty of thought and stinginess of soul are poor advertisements of their wares.

It is the rich life that makes the rich book, the rich picture. Michael Angelo's pictures are immortal, because his life had immortality in it. Raphael can never die, because there was immortality in his character; he spread his life on his canvas.

An author's spontaneous production partakes of his very life's blood. He is painting himself, just as the great artist paints himself into his picture, — spreads his thoughts, his feelings, his experiences, upon the canvas.

You cannot write immortal things unless there is

immortality in your character; you cannot write inspiringly unless you are giving yourself; you must ring true yourself or there will be a false, jarring note in your writings.

I have listened to preachers and orators who had a beautiful flow of language and great charm of speech, but they never convinced me; they could not get my confidence. There was lack of character, lack of a real man, behind the eloquence.

We often feel the same thing regarding a writer. We may enjoy reading him, but there is something lacking in the suggestion left in our consciousness — a lack of character in the man. We may never have seen him, never have heard anything against him, but we instinctively feel his deficiencies. The author can only write into the book what is in himself. We can only radiate our reality, express the truth of ourselves.

Character is the very foundationstone of a great author. There must be a great man back of the pen or he will never carry weight in the world.

If you expect to interest the world in your book, you must be interesting yourself; your mind must be balanced, disciplined, stored with all that is rich and beautiful. It must be an electric battery, or you can never thrill your readers. It is the mind behind the words that makes a great book. Your mental larder must be stored with an abundance of rich things, or you cannot expect your guests to enjoy the feast; they will not come a second time to feed on husks.

It would be very helpful to young writers if they could know the thoughts which run through an editor's brain as he reads their manuscripts. "Poor fellow," he often says to

himself, as he glances through the dry, dreary desert pages, "he has mistaken his calling. There is nothing but dust in this man. He has no message for the world. There is nothing in this writer that is struggling for expression. He does not write because he cannot help it, because there is something in him which *will* speak, which *must* speak; he is merely trying to make himself say something; he is not effervescing with ideas that will not down, with emotions that he cannot repress, or with thoughts that will not stay."

An experienced editor knows that it is not necessary to eat an entire ox to test the quality of the beef. A single paragraph anywhere in a manuscript gives him a clue to the quality of the whole. If the blood courses freely through that paragraph, he knows that there is something in the rest of it. If, however, the pulse of the writing is so faint that he cannot detect it after he feels for it in several places; if the vitality is so low, its circulation so feeble that he can scarcely tell whether it is dead or alive, he will drop the manuscript and turn to some other. The editor or reader is always feeling for the bounding pulse which indicates a strong, robust vitality.

An experienced, analytical reader could reproduce you from your book. He could pick out the countries you have visited, the experiences you have had, the extent of your education; he could give you a picture of your environment; he could tell whether necessity had been your spur, or whether you had been reared in luxury. He could tell by the poverty or the wealth of your language, by the extent of your vocabulary, what degree of culture you had obtained. He could pick out

your associates and give a picture of your intimates, for all you can do is to put yourself into your book, whether your ideals are high or low flying; he does not need to see you in person, he sees you in your book.

The Personality in Your Book

In a certain author's recent work we can detect a decided tired feeling. The work is evidently the result of a forced brain. There is in it a lack of spontaneity, an absence of sharp, clean-cut sentences and the grasping thought. It gives evidence of a flabby brain. There is in the whole book a lack of vigor, of robustness of thought. In an interview with Theodore Roosevelt he told me that he owes everything to his active life and vigorous outdoor exercise. He said that his career would have been absolutely impossible without this training; that he owes much of his success to his experience as a cowboy in the West, and that he believes thoroughly in building up the body in every possible way; not especially in order to become an athlete — he said that he never did anything well in the athletic line, except, possibly, wrestling — but rather to become strong for the sake of the reflex influence upon the mind.

A strong mind must be backed up by a strong physique — by an overflow of animal spirits. Great things must appear to have been done easily. The straining of a weak, low vitality to do great things is not effective. The tracks of effort — the evidences of strain and stress — must not be in any commanding achievement.

You may be sure that your weakness, whatever it is, will crop out in your writing. The best thing you will ever do will

be done by your vital or healthy side. No amount of will power can compensate for a fagged mind in a weak body. A vigorous pen must be guided by a vigorous nature. Weak, bloodless composition will never stir a reader. There must be a great, strong pulse back of it all. If you have not the grit in yourself it will not flow from your pen.

No one likes to read the vaporings of a feeble thinker. The average reader can tell very quickly whether a writer is in strong, vigorous condition, or jaded from dissipation, overworked or has a weak constitution. The public is merciless; it demands that a man be ever at the top of his condition. Readers do not take any excuses; that you were out late nights, that you overloaded your stomach at a banquet, or that you have some physical weakness.

Many writers do not appreciate the great fact that readers will draw out of every book just what the writer put into it — his moods, his physical condition, his mental and moral status, his melancholy or his mirth, his joy or his sorrow, his uplifting optimism or his blackening pessimism, the tonic of his courage, or the depression of his despair. Each reader has the same feeling which the author had ; that is, if he is tired and jaded— if his brain is fagged when he writes — no matter how weighty his words or how brilliant his thought, the reader has the tired feeling, too. In other words, we have no power to communicate anything except what we feel ourselves. We radiate our own feelings. Others about us feel what we are — not what we pretend to be, but the truth about us.

The moment the mind begins to tire, and you feel your

faculties begin to lag, stop writing. I do not believe in the "midnight oil" business for writers. The man who, with a wet towel about his head, forces himself to produce thoughts for a book or an article, must expect the reader to resort to the same means to keep himself awake while reading it.

Freshness, spontaneity and vigor are absolutely essential to all good composition. No amount of ability or learning in an author can take their place. There must be a crispness, or freshness, together with the vigor of thought which fascinates and holds the reader, or he will lose interest.

Often an author fails because his writings lack these essential qualities. Many of the most instructive books ever written lie on the shelves unread because they are labored or heavy. Learn to express yourself forcibly and yet with a certain lightness of touch, which takes a subtle and yet firm hold on every reader. You may never have had a chance at him before. Hold on to him. Let him feel, when he strikes a thought of yours in a book or an article, that there is a gripping power back of it. Let him feel the sentences bite.

If your personality is to be felt in its maximum force in your writing, you must be at your best physically when at work. A tired, jaded, weak, exhausted man does not radiate force or power. Neither he nor his work will make a deep or lasting impression.

The writer's mental health is not only dependent on his physical condition but, more than in less temperamental persons, it rests upon environmental influences. People with artistic temperaments, writers, and minds that create, are, as a

rule, affected more, crushed more, by little annoyances, than people with a matter-of-fact temperament. This is the price that the artistic nature pays for its special talent.

There are plenty of literary workers who think that they are already doing all that they can stand, who could double their mental output, if they would only learn the art of protecting the faculties they are using. If they are using creative faculties, they should avoid confusion in their environment, which destroys the power to concentrate. The mind that is creative must be free from anxiety, from worry. Things which would not disturb others will often throw them completely off their balance. Too much detail injures the creative mind. The man who is doing creative work must have harmony. Discord is fatal to originality.

Many an author with ability fails because he does not put himself in a position where he can get absolute freedom from constant interruptions, from little domestic worries and annoyances. Many authors make the mistake of trying to write at home, without having a secluded den or room which is away from noise and interruptions from children or servants.

In other words, the man who is to succeed in literature, who would do anything distinctive, must put himself in a position to use his creative faculties to the best possible advantage. An attractive, harmonious environment is a great stimulus to the creative mind.

Fixed Habit of Work

The creative process is the mind's gymnasium. To set aside a certain time or times each day, when you marshal to the front the best that is in you, when you fling the weight of your whole ambition into your concentrated thought and try to express it with power by your pen, your brush, or your oratory, will cause you to grow. You will feel yourself expanding, your horizon receding. You will feel a thrill of satisfaction which never comes from copying, imitating, or reproducing from memory.

Such constant exercise is essential to facility, dexterity, ease, freedom in composition, which are everything to the writer. If he does not keep in perpetual practice, the art will slip away from him. There will be something lacking in his composition. It will be stiff, unpolished; traces of effort will be visible — and true art erases every vestige of effort.

People who only work when they feel like it, lose a great deal of inspiration, because when the mind has formed the habit of doing the same things at about the same time every day it usually drops into the right mood for it at the appointed hour, and no time is lost in waiting for favorable moods.

I know a successful writer who once wrote with the greatest irregularity, because he said he could not work except when the fit was on him, when he was just in the right mood. The result was that sometimes he would wait for weeks for this

mood. After a while he became discouraged by having to wait on the vagaries of his mood, and resolved that, come what would, he was going to sit down at his desk, take his pen and begin to write at just such a time every day, whether he felt like doing so or not. In a few months he found that when the time came for writing he was usually in the mood, and his power of concentration grew with the regularity of his habit.

Previous to this he would sometimes sit up all night writing when the mood was upon him, fearing that it might be a long time before it would come again; and the irregular life began to tell upon his health, The fixed habit of regular work soon restored his nervous energy.

As a rule, the brain, if kept healthy, will measure up pretty nearly to what is expected of it. There is everything in expecting it to work at an appointed time. When the writer has formed a fixed habit of work the mind ought to go to its task as fresh, as enthusiastic and expectant as a vigorous athlete in superb condition goes to a race.

There is no happiness or satisfaction quite equal to the normal exercise of a splendidly trained mind at work, whether it is planning business, writing a book, or painting a picture.

Choosing the Right Word

"I have found it at last!" exclaimed a famous writer, one day, while walking in company with a friend. "Found what?" asked his friend. "Why, that word I have been hunting for days."

Luther said: "Words are living creatures with hands and feet," and French's lectures on words make one realize that they are not mere symbols, but are vital. As Emerson has said: "Words are fossil history." For a given idea there is only one right word to use; all others are merely near right, and fail by just so much in expressing the real thought.

It is strict attention to the choice of words and their arrangement and the greatest care in bringing out the delicate shades of meaning that make polished writers and orators. A great writer or speaker uses words as a great artist uses colors and tints. A word which does not precisely fit the thought offends his taste as much as green where blue is required would offend the taste of an artist. Some authors wait for hours or days — leaving blanks in their manuscripts — for the right words to convey the exact shading of their thoughts. When Kipling does not find a word just suited to his meaning, he invents one, usually so expressive that it becomes a permanent addition to our language.

The language even of educated people often bears the

marks of a pinched vocabulary, which indicates the lack of a wide range of reading or a large experience in the practise of elegant conversation. I have in mind a man who failed to reach the success for which he had undoubted ability because of a restricted, narrow, limited vocabulary. He was constantly repeating himself. He thought in a circle, and could not express his ideas in fresh, vigorous language, because of his poverty of words.

The best writers seem to appreciate the fact that words have distinct flavors, that they are not merely mechanical blocks for language building, but that they have a liquidity through which the thought flows.

The picture drawn by Barrie, in "Sentimental Tommy," of his hero hunting for a particular word is not overdrawn. It shows the budding genius of a future writer. Tommy Sandys is given a last chance to win a scholarship. He failed at the regular examination, but in this second contest — the writing of the best essay on a given subject — Tommy's friends were confident of his success, his fame as a writer of letters and compositions having spread far beyond the village of Thrums. Tommy's heart beat joyfully. He already counted the scholarship his. He began to write, and his pen traveled on without pause to about the middle of his second page. Then he paused. He wanted a single word in the Scotch dialect to express an idea. He thought of several which would pass muster, and which, indeed, the examiners would not question, but the one which expressed the exact shade of meaning he wished to convey would not come. It was "on the tip of his tongue," as he

afterward explained, but still evaded him. An hour went by almost before the boy was conscious of it. Everything was forgotten — the examination and the consequences hanging on its results, the time, the place, the people, all but the missing word. With a gasp he came to a realization of conditions around him when he was asked to hand in his essay. It was only begun. It could not even be considered in the competition. Yet Tommy could have outdistanced all competitors had he been satisfied to use a word that would do fairly well. But the artist, the genius in him, could be satisfied with nothing but the exact one, and after being dismissed in disgrace he returned to poke his head inside the door and exclaim, triumphantly, "I ken it noo; it's *puckle*."

Slipshod writers who use any word which happens to come to them, regardless of whether or not it conveys the precise shade of thought they have in mind, because they are too careless or indolent to search for the right word, never become great authors. Many articles in newspapers and periodicals are contributed by writers of this class. Many of the "best-selling" books, even if lauded by reviewers, more enthusiastic than critical, as "great books," often contain glaring inaccuracies and misapplied words.

"On a single word," said Wendell Phillips, "has hung the destiny of nations." No one knows better than he did the exact value of words. He was easily the foremost forensic orator America has produced, and his eminence was due to the high standard he set for himself. Every word exactly expressed the shade of his thought; every phrase was of due length and

cadence; every sentence was perfectly balanced.

A man who can express his thoughts in simple, transparent language — in words that exactly fit his ideas — no more, no less — is a rare being. Accuracy of detail is one of the characteristic traits of a genius, whom Dickens has somewhere described as "a being who pays attention to trifles."

But remember that no synonym taken from Roget or from Soule belongs to you until it is a vital part of your vocabulary. You cannot select a word and use it, because you are told that it is a synonym, while your knowledge of the word lacks intimacy and your use of it lacks flexibility.

As a matter of fact the English language has no exact synonyms. Inevitably if there were two words in English expressing exactly the same meaning, one of them would be taken and the other left. You will find the study of the rise and decay of words a most fascinating one. Who uses the word nocent? And yet nocent, or harmful, existed before the word innocent, or not harmful, but was crowded out to give place to a more positive word.

Young people are often too much in a hurry to discriminate finely and choose delicately the words which exactly express their thoughts. Yet the words should exactly fit the idea. Clean-cut fittingness and aptness strike an editor immediately. He can tell quickly whether a writer is an artist or a sloven. He knows whether or not you have picked up your words without fully understanding their meaning. Make a practise of looking up in a good dictionary every word you do not thoroughly understand. Learn to go to the bottom of

things yourself. A habit of investigating the meaning of words, by looking up their synonyms in dictionaries or thesauruses, does not involve a waste of time, for a rich, well-rounded vocabulary is one of the finest possessions of life.

Use Simple Language

It was Horace Greeley's method to wield the blue pencil on all fancy writing. A reporter's story read: "The conflagration painted the heavens a flaming yellow." Mr. Greeley said: "Mr. Smith, what you meant to say was, 'the flames lit up the sky,' wasn't it?" "Yes, sir." "Then say what you meant to say," and jab went the blue pencil.

A beginner in the art of writing or speaking often aims at great ornamentation and elaboration, thinking that much filigree-work and many words of great length and sonorousness make a stronger impression than plain, simple language. It is quite the reverse. Simplicity, as well as precision, is essential to the best speaking or writing. As masterpieces of literature, the Bible and the works of Shakespeare are preeminent. A young writer who aims at perfection can do no better than take these as his models. To show how elaboration or ornamentation would destroy the sublimity and effectiveness of Bible narration, G. P. Quackenbos transforms the verse in Genesis which describes the creation of light — "And God said, Let there be light; and there was light" — into "The sovereign arbiter of nature, by the potent energy of a single word, commanded light to exist, and immediately it sprang into being." The stately lines of "Paradise Lost" are simplicity itself.

In many of the manuscripts that go to editors to-day the

thought of the writer is subterranean. It seldom comes to the surface. The editor has a feeling that there is something there if he could only get it out; but the writer's mind was clouded; the style is involved and overwrought; the expression is not clear, the language is obscure.

The trouble with most writers is that they are "addicted to language" — their thought is covered up with words, words, words. They should take the advice of Tryon Edwards: "Have something to say, and stop when you're done."

You may be really conscious that you have a message for the world, but disappointed because you have failed to work your thought out on the surface sufficiently to enable readers, who have not been trained to think deeply, to grasp it. Many writers burrow into their theme. They do not realize that the casual reader does not follow them in their burrowing into the depths of the subjects in which they have been absorbed for months and perhaps years. The result is, they shoot over their heads. Clergymen are constantly doing the same thing in their sermons. We are too apt to think that people are in the same position as ourselves, that they see things from the same viewpoint as we do.

Play-writers often fail because their plots are too complicated for their audience. The majority of people who visit the theaters are not great thinkers; they are hard workers, and in their leisure hours they want to be amused, and not made to think. Very few people go to the theater to be improved or to stimulate their brains. They want recreation. Nature is seeking compensation for the strain, for the wear and

tear of the day's work.

Easy reading comes from hard writing. It is not an easy thing to work one's thought out from the depths of his mind and bring it to the surface and express it so simply and so forcefully that the reader cannot help taking in the idea at a glance.

Authors have died wretchedly disappointed, of broken hearts, because ideas which enraptured their own souls fell flat upon the public mind. They were never able to understand the tremendous difference between the interest they themselves felt in their books and their cold, indifferent reception by the public.

Many of the best books that have ever been written, containing much of the finest philosophy, the profoundest reasoning, lie dusty on book-shelves and in libraries, simply because the writers did not work their thought out upon the surface sufficiently to be taken in at a glance by the casual reader. The thought is buried under verbiage. There are plenty of good ideas in these volumes but the thought has never been mined; it is still in the ore. The thought-nuggets are still unsmelted. A few profound thinkers read these buried-thought books and set great value upon them, but unfortunately the average reader, in this age of superficial thinking, only grasps the meaning that lies on the surface. If these great but unpopular writers would spend more time in expressing their thought simply, it would popularize their writings wonderfully.

The greatest writers economize the reader's attention.

They do not leave anything for the reader to do that they can possibly do for him. They do not cover up their thought by useless words or by circumlocution. It lies on the surface in clear, simple, limpid language.

The ever-living authors have expressed their thoughts in transparent language. They have stripped the expression of their ideas of wordiness, of all superfluity. They have chosen words which exactly fit the thought. They have left no traces of anything perishable which time can corrode or affect, and this is why they live always.

If I were to start out again as a writer, I would practise several hours every day for many months — in fact, I would keep this practise up for years, to see how much I could express, and how clearly, in the fewest words and in the simplest possible language. I would take several subjects which interested me. I would turn each over in my mind for a long time, and then, after I had thoroughly considered and mastered it, I would write with as much expression, strength and interest as I possibly could, and in the fewest words. In order to get the value of a fresh impression again, I would lay my manuscript aside for awhile and then take it up, read it over, think it over, and rewrite it, to see if I could not express the same thing more forcefully and interestingly, and in simpler, more transparent language. I would repeat this exercise many times for all my different subjects until I could not improve any one of my manuscripts in any single word.

It is said that David Belasco's great success as a producer of plays comes from his remarkable skill in theatrical surgery.

He dissects every new play that comes to him as an anatomist would dissect the human body. He weighs every word, every sentence, every speech, eliminating every bit of dead-wood, every phrase and paragraph that does not have a definite bearing on the end in view. A playwright, referring to Belasco's examination of his plays, says: "From ten in the morning frequently till three the next morning we went through the play with microscopic care. Often we spent hours on a few lines, or a single speech."

Conciseness

When some one told Mark Twain that he had a long story to submit to him, Twain replied that he did not care how much a man said, if he said it in a few words.

Conciseness, brevity of expression are characteristic of a great mind. Weak people use twice as many words as strong people. General Grant was a man of few words. Lincoln could put a great proposition into a brief sentence. Read the eighty lines of his Gettysburg speech. Not a single word could be eliminated without crippling the thought. It has the conciseness of condensation. Great minds have ever been simple in their language and concise in their expression.

There are comparatively few volumes which could not be compressed into a tenth of the space they fill and thus improve the expression of the thought without injury to the subject. Padded books do not live. It is only the pure thought that stands the test of years; that survives the, remorseless ravages of time which consigns to oblivion everything that is superficial, that is spurious, shoddy or sham. Only that which is genuine will live.

Certain writers have what corresponds to loquaciousness in some conversationalists. They talk on forever without saying much of anything.

Many are like some of our railroads which have very poor

terminal facilities. They string out their thoughts endlessly, until they tire out the reader and he loses all interest. The preface of some writers reminds one of a man who begins to run so far back from the ditch he is trying to jump across, that when he reaches it he is tired out, and has not strength enough to jump over. The reader is exhausted before he has finished the introduction.

The young writer should not only aim, but should also strive for short words, short sentences, short paragraphs, short articles, short books. He should learn to condense every sentence to the minimum.

I know of no experience so valuable to a young writer as writing advertisements. It is an excellent training in brevity, conciseness and clearness of expression. Here is where one learns to get rid of all superfluous words, to choose words with discrimination and with fine shades of meaning.

It is a splendid practise for young writers to imagine that what they write they are to cable across the sea at a shilling a word. They will be sure to be surprised to see how many ideas a few words can express.

One of the best possible drills for the young writer is experience on a great daily. This involves actual contact with the thing itself; not theory, but realistic description of an accident, or whatever it may be, that he is sent to report. Here he touches life for the first time. Long words and complex sentences are mercilessly blue-penciled by the practical editor. The "cub" reporter soon learns to come down to pure principles — simplicity and accuracy of observation. He learns,

perhaps for the first time, that he must not only look but must also see; that he must not only listen, but also hear. He must reproduce the thing as it occurs in the most simple, compact language; his word-painting must be done in a few effective strokes. He must take the shortest cut to effectiveness; all redundancy, all superfluous language, all meaningless words, no matter how high sounding or how beautiful they may ring in his ear, he must cut down to the utmost brevity and simplicity.

He may not recognize his first manuscripts when the hard-headed, practical editor finishes with them, but he will learn a lesson which he will never forget.

A young reporter wired a New York editor that he had a good story but that it would take a couple of columns of space. The editor wired back, "See the story of creation told in about eight hundred words." The old-time reporter wrote to fill space; the new reporter writes to save it. This motto appears in the editorial office of a great newspaper: "Terseness, accuracy, terseness." There is no room to-day for the long-drawn-out writer. This is a boiling-down age. There is no room for the round-about man. Directness is the watchword of our time. Remember that this is a strenuous time-saving age. People are too busy to wade through a lot of chaff to get a few kernels of wheat. Get the chaff out of your thought. Winnow your ideas. Only give your pure wheat thoughts to the public. If a young writer would only start out holding constantly in mind the determination to save the reader's time, to economize his attention by cutting out every useless word, condensing

everywhere, not only would he give himself a most helpful training in composition, but also his articles and books would be read and praised.

It costs some magazines about two hundred and fifty dollars a page to place before the reader their literary material. A publisher cannot afford to spend two hundred and fifty dollars to market ten dollars' worth of ideas spread over a whole page, when they could have been expressed in a paragraph. If you are wondering why your articles come back from publishers, just try the experiment of rewriting them in the shortest, sharpest, clearest, simplest, most effective way possible, and send them again. The chances are that you will receive a check, instead of "Returned with thanks."

The literary aspirant can form no better habit than that of first writing down his ideas in the most concise language possible, afterward letting the manuscript stand long enough to enable the writer to get a fresh impression, then rewriting it until condensation can be carried no farther without loss.

Readers know, when they see the signature of a writer who has the reputation of boiling down his thoughts, that they will not waste time.

Many a young writer has made a reputation by his first article or his first book, because, while he was in doubt whether the public would read what he wrote, he condensed, rewrote, recast, and cut out all superfluous matter; but later, when the demand for his work increased, he let hurried manuscripts go out of his hands, thinking that people would read anything he might write, and soon he realized that his

books remained unsold.

Nothing else will kill a writer more quickly than an idea that the public will take anything he writes.

Great writers and great orators have always developed the power of focusing their ideas in the simplest and most telling language. What a model of elegance is Lincoln's Gettysburg speech, which has the simplicity of Bunyan, the forceful imagination of Burns, and the sound reason of Washington!

If you want to do substantial work, concentrate; and if you want to give others the benefit of your work, condense.

"Would a pound of feathers fall to the ground as quickly as a pound of lead?" was the question asked a class, of which Gail Hamilton was a member. "Yes, if the feathers were rolled just as tightly," replied the future author. Roll your arguments "tightly," that they may have weight. The leaden bullet is more fatal than when multiplied into shot.

"Genuine good taste," says Fenelon, "consists in saying much in a few words, in choosing among our thoughts, in having order and arrangement in what we say, and in speaking with composure."

"If you would be pungent," says Southey, "be brief; for it is with words as with sunbeams — the more they are condensed, the deeper they burn."

"When one has no design but to speak plain truth," says Steele, "he may say a great deal in a very narrow compass."

The fame of the Seven Wise Men of Greece rested largely upon a single sentence by each, of only two or three words.

"The wisdom of nations lies in their proverbs."

Gems are not reckoned by gross weight. The common air we beat aside with our breath, compressed, has the force of gunpowder, and will rend the solid rock. A gentle stream of persuasiveness may flow through the mind, and leave no sediment; let it come at a blow, as a cataract, and it sweeps all before it. Mere words are cheap and plenty enough; but ideas that rouse, and set multitudes thinking, come as gold from the mine.

Begin very near where you mean to leave off. Brevity is the soul of wisdom as well as of wit.

Readability

It is useless to say that people *ought* to read good matter. If it does not interest them, they will refuse it. You can lead a horse to the water but you cannot make him drink. We can put the best reading into a man's hand but we cannot make him read unless it appeals to him.

Many a would-be lecturer has failed because he did not make a study of his audiences. He gave the same lecture to a cultivated audience, in a community where the standard of education was high, as he gave to an audience of working people in a manufacturing town. The writer likewise needs to know his audience. No author is big enough to make such a broad appeal as to be universally read. The writer, like the successful orator or editor, should enter into close fellowship with his public. He should understand his readers' predilections, their requirements, and publish things which will inspire them and interest them vitally.

The great trouble with many aspirants in literature is that their words lack force and fire. They do not carry conviction. They do not make vivid pictures. They are characterless and energyless, like those who use them. The forceful writer must have the courage of his convictions. The timid person who veers this way and that, for fear of what people will think of his work, never makes a vigorous writer. The element of

timidity, hesitation, or fear in the mind of the writer will crop out in his writings. Fearlessness, however, must be accompanied by good judgment, saneness; otherwise one will say rash, foolish, tactless and untimely things. When courage is combined with common sense, and the writer has facility of expression, he will not lack for readers.

Few writers are able to inject such intellectual power and such vigor and force into their composition as to arouse and electrify the readers, so that they will become absorbed in their reading and forget everything else, even that they are on the earth. The really successful writer will infuse such life and enthusiasm into his writings that the reader will feel their magic spell for weeks or months.

Some great man said that he was so affected by his reading of Homer, so carried away with the marvelous heroes of the story that they haunted him when he walked the city streets. Men and women looked to him like giants ten feet high. Everything seemed to be bigger, to take on larger proportions. It is the writer's problem, as much as the orator's, to arouse the ambition, to stimulate men and women to higher and better ideals, to new resolutions to live the life worth while.

In one respect, especially, the writer is in the same predicament as the orator. He must first put his audience in a good humor, he has to entertain them, interest them or they will sneak out through the back door and disturb the meeting. If an article does not begin well, if it does not catch your attention at once, if the reader has to wade through a lot of verbiage and deadwood, it will not be popular.

There is everything in not only getting a striking title for your book or article, but in getting striking titles for your chapter heads or divisions.

Many a really great book has gone unread and the author has died disappointed, because of a dead title, a title which has no snap, no life; the title should pique the curiosity.

"What's in a name?" is a very suggestive phrase. For the writer there is everything in a name; that is, if the writer has anything worth while to say. If not, even the best title will not save his work from oblivion.

Some writers are like some salesmen, who can interest a prospective buyer, arouse and hold his enthusiasm and carry him along beautifully until he has almost persuaded him to buy, but they can't close, and they lose the customer. So some authors can introduce a subject beautifully, stir up the reader and arouse all his enthusiasm, until he resolves that he is going to do something and be somebody worth while. When he puts down such a stirring book he feels many times larger than when he began it; he feels certain that he is going to do great things. But his enthusiasm and zeal gradually cool and he finds himself dropping into his old lethargy. Many of these writers who stir the blood and inspire to heroic resolution leave the reader helpless to carry out their resolves, because they have not given the "how," they do not point out to the reader the ways and means of getting results; they leave him in the air.

A great writer ought to be able to take a common, dry subject and make it vibrate with life and thrill the reader. He ought to be able to clothe it in language so fascinating that the

reader could not close the book until he had finished it.

Some writers are tantalizers. Every time we lay down a book of theirs we do so with regret; we want more. Authors like Dickens make us hungry for more. They are like a delicious, temptingly served dinner to a hungry man. They are appetizing writers. Others weary us, bore us. We read them from a sense of duty because they are instructive. We think they will be helpful, will add to our culture or enlightenment, but they do not leave any impress on the mind.

The test of a good book or a good article is that there is something in it that compels you to read it to the end. On many a winter's evening I have started to read a book with the determination to stop reading at about nine or ten o'clock and retire for a good night's rest, but have forgotten all about my resolution. The book was so intensely interesting, so fascinating, that I forgot all about my own existence, and lived with the characters portrayed by the author in his work, conversed with the vivacious heroine, intrigued with the plotting villain, warned the hero of some terrible calamity, and saw the hero and heroine happily married. When I reached the climax of the story, I would often find that the hands of the clock pointed to two or three in the morning. This shows how charmed one may become through the reading of a book that is actually alive. The characters seem to walk forth from its pages; the birds sing; we hear the babbling of the brook, the puffing of the train; we travel into foreign parts and visit historic places, view works of art ; speak to a Webster, a Washington, a Plato, or a Ruskin. The king and queen of a

monarchical government confide their most intimate secrets to us; we take counsel with them; we receive the last word of advice from a dying hero, as if it were actually intended for us.

The author who can put this spirit of life into his writings will not seek in vain for an audience.

Dion Boucicault, the playwright, in a lecture on writing for the stage, said: "There are just three things that I desire to emphasize as essential to the writing of a good play — the first is *action*, the second is *action*, and the third is *action*," It is the same in fiction. People do not want long-drawn-out descriptions of scenery, they do not want protracted monologues by hero or heroine, they want action, movement, life; and, in so far as the writer holds the mirror up to nature, in so far he will succeed and win his public.

Keep Close to Life

The writer's main power comes from two sources — out of the depths of his own nature and from his experience with others, his contact with the world. If you would write for life you must not shut yourself out from life ; nor must you always live in it, for you will lose something in either extreme.

No matter how hard a writer may study or how hard he may work, if he excludes himself too much from the world, he becomes one-sided, theoretical, impractical. He is apt to run into fads and all sorts of vagaries. His knowledge lacks breadth, practicability, and is too reflective. If, on the other hand, he lives too much with others, if he does not reflect enough, if he spends most of his time in social life, or in travel, his writings will lack that depth and richness which come from reflection, that mental power which is generated from great concentration.

Yet intellect alone, however masterly, will not preserve a book from oblivion. Jonathan Edwards was an intellectual giant, but his works have never been read to any great extent, except by scholars. They are too massive, too cumbersome, too involved. He lived too much in his study, he did not mingle with the world, did not touch human life at enough points.

The old-time writer of the Middle Ages, who secluded himself in his study and never saw much of the world, has gone

by. The demand today is for the practical as well as for the reflective. Any book to be popular must pulsate with warm human interest or, however deep and scholarly, it will be dry and uninteresting. The writings of some of the greatest minds that have ever lived are to-day unread because their authors lived secluded lives, did not mingle with the world at large. They were not students of human nature. There was not enough life, not enough human interest in their books to preserve them from decay. They were too heavy, too ponderous, too reflective, too subjective.

A really great book must appeal to the masses, must be written in simple language. The author must mingle with men; he must be familiar with their life, with their aspirations, their hopes, their trials, their struggles. Dickens never grows old because he lived with the people.

One could name several authors who have been very popular for a long time, but who are rapidly deteriorating because their very success has tempted them to get out of the swim of things into semi-retirement, and they are gradually running out of raw stock without knowing it. They feel sure that their first books were not nearly as good as those that they have written since, but somehow there has not been the same vitality in their later books as in their former ones.

One reason why the sermons of so many of our clergymen are tame and insipid is because their authors lack experience in life. Sermons produced in studies are colorless unless the preacher during the week has been saturated with human experience, has been in close touch with human life. The

secret of Beecher's marvelous oratorical powers lay largely in his keenness of observation. Nothing escaped his eye, and he translated everything he saw into life and expressed it in his sermons. I believe it would be a great thing for the churches if many of their pastors' studies were abolished, and the pastors were forced to draw their sermons from life, and to discard manuscripts. If they could give in their sermons the lessons drawn from the week's experience, their contact with life, spontaneously, directly, they would electrify their congregations.

Observation and Self-Expression

We reflect all our life experience in our self-expression — in our writing or speaking — and this self-expression is rich and forceful, or poor and weak, according to the richness or the poverty of our lives. We can only give out that which we have taken in, *plus* what little we have inherited, and our inheritance is very small in comparison with what we have absorbed from life, from our training, from experience, what has been aroused in us, awakened in us, by the attrition of mind with mind. A writer of power should be trained from childhood to see things as they are, and to see them in detail. Professor Agassiz used to leave a class for an hour observing a single fish scale, and then return and ask each member what he had seen.

If you attempt to write a story on a subject with which you are unfamiliar, it will lack atmosphere, exactness, accuracy; the description will be mechanical, warmed-over, it will not breathe life and truth, which can only come from personal observation. Unless the writer is a keen observer, unless he has been trained to see things accurately and to describe them graphically his book will be dry and insipid. He cannot help spinning out purely subjective matter from his own brain unless this be constantly fed with a stream of rich experience from without and close observation of life. All writers ought

to have the observation of Ruskin, who saw a thousand thrilling beauties in the simplest object in nature. To him nature, largely closed to most people, was an open book. In the commonest weeds by the roadside he could see visions of beauty, traceries of design which would ravish the soul of an angel. Things which failed to attract the attention of others, would awaken a marvelous response in his soul and start trains of the richest thought.

The habit of carrying a notebook and treasuring up suggestive, unusual things improves the powers of observation wonderfully. We often wonder where some authors find all the interesting things they write about. They find them because they are always on the lookout for them. They are always hunting for material. Just think how many curious, interesting things you have forgotten or lost during your life simply because you did not make them permanently yours by taking the pains to jot them down!

Few writers realize what a tremendous loss they sustain by neglecting to hold in some way their flashes of ideas that often come like lightning in the most unexpected moments, and that never come again in just the same form. They come fresh-made, clean-cut, out of the creative faculties, standing out with great clearness, and if you do not fashion them with your pen when they come or jot them down in a notebook so that you can recall them at will, the chances are that they will never come back to you, certainly not with anything like their first vividness and distinctness.

I remember hearing a writer tell how, when he was

climbing the precipitous face of an Alpine crag, he was seized with an idea which he could not afford to lose. When he reached the top, he tried to transfer the idea to his notebook, but, try as he would, he could not reproduce it with the same vividness of first inspiration.

Many writers never carry a notebook in their pockets, and oftentimes their best thoughts, their most striking ideas come to them like flashes of lightning when they least expect them. These may arise from unrecognized associations of ideas that may be suggested to them, or they may have been called out of their subconsciousness from a suggestion, the source of which they cannot trace, but the same conbinations, the same conditions which produce them are never likely to occur again; hence the importance of stopping short, no matter what you are doing, when such revelation flashes come, and making them permanent. By doing so you will attract more.

Even if you never write, the notebook habit would enrich your life wonderfully, and make you a much fuller, a more complete, more worth while man or woman.

A writer ought to have a splendid training from childhood, both in observation and in the art of self-expression. He should be trained in visualizing, in vividly picturing his thoughts and ideas. The imagination should be constantly encouraged and cultivated from earliest years. He should come to feel the indomitable necessity of self-expression.

A summer neighbor of mine amazed me recently by telling of the great variety of birds in our vicinity, and the remarkable things which they did. This lady is familiar with all the varieties

of birds in that part of the country, and she says she picked up most of her information during her summer vacations, when tramping through the woods and across the country, and by reading about bird life. I had never imagined there were more than a dozen different kinds of birds in that vicinity, although I had lived in that section for years. I had never noticed more, perhaps, because I had not been looking for them. But this lady kept her eyes open ; she was interested in these happy feathered creatures and studied them at every opportunity.

We often wonder when reading a book how an author could think of so many incidents, or how he could possibly have had such a varied experience. Much of this knowledge has come from the author's ability to use his eyes. He has learned not only to look but to see things, and to draw inferences and conclusions from his observations.

Agassiz would see more significance in a fish scale or a grain of sand, or a tiny fossil bone, than many men would see in a whole menagerie. Ruskin would see more of the real meaning, would read more out of a blade of grass or a single flower than many other people would see in an entire landscape.

A man is great in proportion to the use he makes of his senses; to his power to see things, to use his eyes, his ears.

When, my young writer friend, you think you have gotten all out of a subject that it contains, that you have exhausted its possibilities, just try to imagine what Edgar Allan Poe would have gotten out of it. Think of the long reaches of distance in every direction he would have penetrated beyond your limits.

What sort of an interview do you think De Voix, the greatest interviewer of the last century, would have brought back had he been sent to interview some great potentate or historic character? Go, compare your own efforts, your own narrow, limited, uninteresting article with one of his.

The Capacity for Taking Pains

When Louisa M. Alcott was first dreaming of her power, her father handed her a manuscript, one day, that had been rejected by James T. Fields, editor of the "Atlantic Monthly," with the message:

"Tell Louisa to stick to her teaching; she can never succeed as a writer."

"Tell him I *will* succeed as a writer, and some day I shall write for the 'Atlantic,'" said the young girl. The day came when work of hers was gladly accepted by that magazine. She earned two hundred thousand dollars by her pen. "Twenty years ago," she wrote in her diary, "I resolved to make the family independent, if I could. At forty, that is done. My debts are all paid, even the outlawed ones, and we have enough to be comfortable."

The conclusion of "An Old-Fashioned Girl" was written when Miss Alcott's left arm was in a sling, one foot bandaged, her head aching, and her voice gone. Her splendid will knew no defeat.

The art of expressing one's self on paper is one of the greatest accomplishments, but one of the most difficult to acquire. Yet people who would not think of attempting to play a piano in public until they had practised for weeks, or even months, will sit down, and in a few hours throw off an article,

send it to a leading publication, and then be surprised when it is returned!

Our great musicians tell us that eternal vigilance, eternal practise, is the price they must pay for their skill. Constant, everlasting mental creation is the writer's gymnasium, where he must practise daily in order to keep his mind athletic, strong and vigorous; otherwise, it will lose its productive power.

To attain the power to express your heart's longings, your soul's aspirations, to describe life as you see it, is the work of years of hard and persistent practise, just as musical excellence is dependent upon constant application.

Of all the foolish things that any young person can ever do, taking up writing temporarily, just as a stepping-stone to something else, or till they can get a better job, is the most foolish. You might just as well try to be an artist temporarily, or a statesman, while you are waiting for a job. In the first place, you must be sure that you are fit for this work, for journalists and authors are born, not made. If you do not love the work, if it does not strike at the very center and marrow of your ambition, if you are lukewarm, indifferent, if it seems drudgery to you, you have made a mistake, drop it at all costs. No man ever succeeds in anything until he is proud of his work, until it tugs away at every nerve of his purpose. If you are not enthusiastic in your work, if you do not love it so well that you long to get to it in the morning just as quickly as possible, and dread the hour for leaving it, you may know that you are not born to wield the pen. The first test of authorship or journalism is an overwhelming love for it. If your heart is in

it, and you work ceaselessly for success, you will succeed, but if it is a matter merely of mind or judgment, you will not make a great success of it.

Most young writers are too impatient to take the preliminary drill, to learn the fundamental principle which underlies all great composition. They are too anxious to appear in print; they want immediately to see their articles under glaring headlines, with their name in large letters.

But success in any great art demands long and patient practise. It is related of D'Aubray, the French actor, that when he was playing a butcher's part in a piece, he rose early every morning for weeks to visit the markets and watch the butchers cut their meats. People who saw him in the play wondered at his familiarity with the butcher's art. In those early morning visits lay the secret.

The beginning of all vocations that are worth while are tedious; full of drudgery and perplexities, because everything is new and untried.

What years of patience and drudgery the ancient masters put into their foundations! Then men did not write for money but for art's sake. Our writers to-day are too much in a hurry to pay the price in any such painstaking.

"He was in too great a hurry to take pains," would make a splendid epitaph for hundreds of failures to-day.

The editors of many magazines return "with thanks" about ninety-nine articles and stories out of every hundred submitted. The young writer cannot understand why his article is returned, as it seems to him so complete, so well-

balanced, and his fine thoughts so beautifully expressed. But the experienced editor sees that the novice has been writing in a circle; he notes the narrowness of experience, the paucity of thought, the poverty of language, the limitations of vocabulary. He sees how little the writer has traveled, how ignorant he is of human nature, of the philosophy of life. Many of the articles sent to magazines would disgrace a high-school pupil. They lack style, not to mention continuity of thought, and are totally without point or purpose. The great majority of them lack individuality. Incompetence is apparent in every line. Good articles are often returned because of the bad arrangement of material. While the thought is good, the material is not logically arranged and blended, so that the current of the thought is frequently broken, when it should be continuous, thus greatly weakening and impoverishing the whole. The paragraphs should blend, should shade into one another, instead of being put together like a crazy quilt, with squares of entirely different colors side by side.

It is just about as reasonable for the writers of such articles to expect to sell their wares as it would be for a drygoods merchant to expect to sell goods by tumbling them helter-skelter all about his store, regardless of order or arrangement, with shoes and thread, silks and blankets all mixed, on the theory that the customer would find what he wanted.

A progressive storekeeper knows that an attractive display of goods in his store is of immense importance, because of the impression it will make upon his customers. He will not say that he has splendid goods and the manner of their

arrangement will not make much difference. On the contrary, he pays a big salary to men of artistic ability just to arrange his show window in the most effective and striking manner.

Editors are too busy to rewrite articles, no matter how promising the material, and so must reject even good matter if badly presented. An effective writer must have artistic ability. He must have a good sense of proportion, of logical order; he must have a good idea of perspective, so as not to bring in the foreground a subordinate thought which belongs in the background, and vice versa.

There are many canvases that show great ability, but the artist did not have sufficient patience, was not sufficiently painstaking to do the little things, to give the infinite number of little touches, to make the little Mendings, which characterize the work of the great masters. When some one told Michael Angelo that his long, laborious touching up of his masterpieces, after they seemed perfect to an amateur, were trifles, he replied, "Yes, but trifles make perfection."

In a great masterpiece we find a center, to which all other objects and figures on the canvas are subordinated, so that if your eye catches any object, except that which expresses the central idea, it will seem to say to you, "This canvas was not painted to show me off;

I am subordinated here in the perspective, in order to emphasize and to bring out with greater vividness and prominence the central thought, the central idea. Every figure and object on this canvas, outside of that one which expresses the supreme purpose of the artist, is but a signboard pointing

the beholder to the central figure."

Literary masterpieces are constructed in the same way. Many a writer of great artistic ability along certain lines has fallen short of fame because of his lack of perspective and because of his disregard of details.

Young writers attribute Kipling's fame to unusual genius. No doubt he has a great deal of natural ability, yet many of these young writers would not deign to rewrite a story from eight to ten times, as Kipling does, in order to express his thought in the most forceful, clear and concise manner before giving it to the public. They expect, without his genius, with a tithe of his experience and carefulness, to write a story in a few hours, and then they feel injured because it is returned.

There are writers to-day whose names are only occasionally seen in print, who ten years ago were in the forefront of the literary world. They have dwindled and disappeared because they were careless writers. Their early success made them over-confident and they thought the world was waiting for whatever they could produce; so they wrote anything that came along without much consideration, but merely to fill the required space, until they found both the demand and the price for their productions lessening.

Few people realize the labor with which literary success is generally attained. Richard Brinsley Sheridan, the famous English wit, left a reputation for his bon mots, which seemed absolutely impromptu. Yet, after his death, looking over his memorandum books, it was found that his wittiest sayings had been carefully worked up, written and rewritten, until they

attained the perfect epigrammatic form which made him famous.

Many a writer would give all of his books for Gray's "Elegy" of only a few stanzas, but what that "Elegy" meant to Gray in work and endeavor no one can ever estimate. It was the concentration of a life's endeavor. It has been the despair of many a writer since, for in that "Elegy" he set the pace for all the writers that came after him. Even the stanzas he excluded seem to us as complete and beautiful as those which compose the exquisite poem. Study his choice and use of words. Study Tennyson and Wordsworth. The restrictions imposed by poetry call out the finest efforts of the mind. Read Tennyson's "Palace of Art," and see how much he expresses in a single line. Consider the picture painted in the six words, "Lit by a low, large moon," all words of one syllable. How simple the words! How complete the picture!

In order to write effectively it is necessary to study simple writers. Take the Bible, Shakespeare, Bunyan, Franklin, Emerson, Thoreau, Mark Twain. Copy sentences from them — not for the purpose of imitating, but to become familiar with their anatomy. Writing has its machinery. Only by literal copying can this machinery be seen perfectly. When sentences are taken apart in this manner their entire construction is laid bare. "How wholesome," says Walter Pater, "to consider the bones of the structure!" The student sees by analysis how words have been transposed to lend force, how one or two words have been manipulated in a way that makes them do duty for five or six or ten. Short cuts suggest themselves. Copy

prolix writing as well. Take the gossip of stilted newspaper writers — editorials, "topics of the day," "feminine fads and frills." This sort of writing is done against space, and the object of the writers is to make a little thought go a long way toward filling a column. The copying of such writing is a most excellent lesson in "how not," just as the analyzing of "Pilgrim's Progress," or the Book of Ruth, is a lesson in "how."

Few young writers are willing to pay the price that the master authors have paid for their fame — years of training and practise, infinite patience in mastering the details of their art.

Just as young musicians always want to learn a "piece" to play or sing before they become grounded in the principles of music and master its technique, young writers are always anxious to see their writings in print before they have mastered the first principles of composition.

Buffon rewrote one of his books fifteen times before he would give it to the public. De Maupassant toiled for seven years under one of the masters of French literature before he became famous as a writer of short stories. Every manuscript he submitted during that time, his master destroyed. Then came a day when he was permitted to publish a story, and he stepped at one stride into the front row of authors. Every successful writer serves an apprenticeship, and his first attempts are frequently returned as "unavailable." But some day a story is accepted, and the striving writer realizes that through all rebuffs and discouragements he has been learning how to write acceptably to publishers and the public.

When disgusted and discouraged and tempted to throw

your composition into the waste-paper basket, put it aside. Many a writer has been tempted to throw things into the waste basket which have afterward made him immortal. The manuscript you now condemn may be one of the best you have ever written. Wait until you can bring to it a fresh mind, a cool, impartial judgment. I doubt if any writer has not been tempted at times to throw aside his writings and begin anew. Never decide anything of importance when discouraged, "blue," or tired. The faculties are not then in a condition to exercise good judgment. They must be fresh, spontaneous, and vigorous, or the decision will be defective.

Do not be discouraged because your manuscript is rejected. Rejected manuscripts have made many a writer. Ella Wheeler Wilcox says that at the beginning of her literary career she sent one article to nineteen different editors before it was accepted. James Whitcomb Riley had a great struggle for recognition. It took A. Conan Doyle many years to get a foothold. This has been the experience of many of our greatest and most successful writers.

Style and Spirit

Many writers do not give sufficient attention to style. They think that the main thing is to get the thought into the composition, to fill it with ideas or sensations, and that manner or form requires little consideration. They are like people who look upon attention to style in dress as frivolous, as not in keeping with the solid, the substantial; who regard those who spend any time in improving their appearance as superficial; they think that style in an author is affectation.

The fact is, style is the soul of writing. It is not mere ornamentation, not decoration, not affectation. There is a character quality in it. It is more than dress to the individual. It is a part of the thing itself.

If a writer disdains style he will lack all charm and forcefulness of appeal. What superb ability and splendid talent are often lost in awkward, bungling, slipshod expressions! It is useless for a would-be writer to try to learn the art of portraying things if he lacks the artistic sense and the ambition to acquire a fine literary technique.

On the other hand, there is such a thing as over-straining artistically. Some writers strain so hard for effect that their writing is unnatural, cramped, over-done. Woodenness spoils many writers who are too painfully methodical in the construction of their sentences, in the arrangement of their

thoughts, too precise and angular in their composition. They lack flexibleness, limpidity.

If you try too hard to look pretty, you will look ugly. I know women who strain so hard to look pretty in the photographer's chair that their pictures turn out to be positively hideous. Self-consciousness is one of the writer's greatest foes. It keeps him from being natural. It makes him stilted. The self-conscious person is always posing; if he is a writer, he is always thinking of the effect of his sentences, wondering what people will say or think of his book. We do our great things unconsciously.

Absorption in the theme, spontaneity, naturalness, are imperative to a high order of literary production.

When the musician forgets self, there is something in his music that awakens the very depths of the soul, and you are lifted to a fairer world than you ever before knew. When the artist forgets himself, his pictures are given immortal life, and every touch reveals a universe of indescribable beauty. When the orator forgets himself, he speaks as one having authority, and you inwardly feel that every word he says is truth. When the writer forgets his personal self and the greater interior self is given full possession of both the mentality and the personality — it is then that his greatest work is done. It is then only that real ability, genuine talent, even genius can appear.

Dead-in-earnestness is a very vital quality in a writer. It does not matter how large his vocabulary, how elegant his style, how painstakingly he balances his sentences or turns his paragraphs, if he lacks earnestness, absorption, if he is hollow-hearted, affected, the reader will feel it.

Many writers sacrifice their ideas to smooth English. They lose the vigor of statement, robustness of expression, the effectiveness they might have by trimming too much, trying to smooth, to polish their language into a too conventional form. The individuality is squeezed out of it.

A writer or an orator who really has something to say "masters the English language" in the sense that he does not permit it to master him.

"How many errors did you find in this sermon of mine?" asked Mr. Beecher of his stenographer.

"Just two hundred and sixteen," was the reply.

"Young man," said the great Beecher, "when the English language gets in my way, it does not stand much of a chance."

Young writers ought to study the style of a man like Carlyle, who, perhaps, went to the other extreme from the over-polishers. A really great writer merely has signs or vehicles to convey his ideas to the reader. His ideas are larger than the word-vehicles. A great writer does not convey his thoughts in words that are only half-filled with ideas. The words fit the ideas; they are filled full to overflowing.

Facility of expression is one of the most difficult things to acquire. *True art is to conceal art.* The great actor must be such a master of his technique that you cannot trace any vestige of effort in his acting. Apparently, he is absolutely lost in the character he assumes. The writer also must acquire such a facile pen by long experience that the reader cannot discern the tracks of his years of hard work. His style and expression must seem as natural and easy as his breathing.

An author says, "I can paint any thought-landscape my brain can picture." This writer doubtless has developed a rich technique; he commands language as an artist controls colors. Doubtless, too, he produces while the inspiration is active.

Commercialization of the Literary Profession

John Oliver Hobbs (Mrs. Craigie), when lecturing in this country, said: "The latter-day American writers exhibit a tendency toward the slipshod in their work, a sacrifice of style in the effort to realize the general impression sought to be created."

There certainly is truth in this criticism. The rush and strife of our strenuous life is undoubtedly reflected in the composition of our writers.

Everything to-day is hurried up. Instead of studying the plot or the subject for months and years, and traveling to get material and atmosphere, many of our writers work from hurry-up orders. The book or the article must be finished at such a time. The articles must be ready for a certain issue of a magazine, or the book must meet the demand of the publisher.

The result is that the composition of many American writers has the tracks of hurry, or nervous haste, in it. The average American writer thinks comparatively little of style, in the sense in which the old English writers regarded it.

The explanation of the difference in their viewpoint is evident. The old classical writer did not have the great money temptation that the present-day writer has. He worked more as

the masters of painting did — for posterity. The love of his work and the desire to find in it his immortality was his impelling motive, whereas to-day our literature is tainted with commercialism.

When a modern writer is discussed, almost the first question people ask is, "What is his income from his writings?" Such great emphasis is placed to-day upon money that everybody thinks he must have it, and if he does not have it, he is a nobody. The result is that in every profession the great struggle is to produce dollars. The dollar-marks are all over much of our literature and art. Think of a modern Milton working for years upon a poem and selling it for fifteen pounds, a modern Oliver Goldsmith selling a "Deserted Village" for three hundred dollars! Why, some of our magazine writers to-day will not put a pen to paper for any kind of an article for less than five hundred dollars; some of them a thousand, some twelve hundred and fifty — more than Emerson's entire income for a year!

Many writers have a fixed price, so much per word. The idea of writing for so much a word is all wrong. As if quantity could be of more importance than quality! Every little while writers notify their publishers that thereafter their prices will be raised to so much a word; then, after a few months, there is notice of another raise. Think of estimating in dollars and cents the value of an article or story before it is written!

Quality alone should fix the standard of compensation. A thousand words of one writer may be worth more than a thousand of another; or a thousand of the same writer in one

article may be worth more than ten thousand of his words in another article.

Now, think of any one trying to reach fame and immortality by writing on this basis! An artist might as well try to fix the price of his masterpiece before he bought his canvas. If he is going to paint his soul into his picture, if he is going to put himself into it, he cannot tell how long it will take him or how much it will be worth when it is done.

It is doubtful whether America can produce much literature that will live during this money-mad age, when everything is measured by the dollar.

In the golden age of English literature, the writer who had produced something for immortality, if it were no more than a dozen verses, no matter how poor or how seedy his clothes, no matter if he lived in an attic in dire poverty, was a more welcome guest upon any important occasion than a man, however rich in money, who had produced nothing immortal.

The Reserve Behind Expression

When a lady was complimenting Turner upon one of his wonderful masterpieces, he said, touching his forehead: "Ah, madam, you ought to see the painting in here." When the painter compares that ineffable picture, that indescribable beauty of coloring in his imagination with the actual picture he has put on the canvas, he feels that he has mistaken his calling. The difficulty of adequately expressing oneself by the painter's brush or the sculptor's chisel, or by written words, cannot be fully appreciated by those who simply look at the picture or the statue, or read the printed page. But in the artist himself imagination is so strong and vivid that he sees and feels infinitely more than he can express in any tangible form. He is powerless to translate into any sensuous form the elusiveness of pure beauty of feeling and of thought which enraptures his soul.

"I wonder if ever a song was sung,
    But the singer's heart sang sweeter!
I wonder if ever a hymn was rung,
    But the thought surpassed the meter!
I wonder if ever a sculptor wrought
Till the cold stone echoed his ardent thought!
Or if ever a painter, with light and shade,
The dream of his inmost heart portrayed?"

Words are so inadequate to express the exact shades of thought, at best they are such awkward, bungling thought vehicles, that the delicate tints, the exquisite shading of ideas, are often lost in transit from the writer's mind to his readers.

Herbert Spencer says that language is inevitably a compromise with thought, that we must always reckon that no idea can be expressed in words without loss. No language is expressive or delicate enough to convey perfectly our thought or feeling. This cannot be done through any material media, but only through some species of wireless mental transmission or telepathy, as in the case of some souls who are so closely akin that they almost think in unison. The great, universal human emotions transcend in their expression all limitations of language. Sarah Bernhardt moves her audience to the depths in any part of the world, even where people do not know a word of French; just as great throngs listen with laughter and tears to an opera when they do not know a word the singers utter.

When a writer expresses himself as truthfully, as feelingly, as fervidly, and as richly as possible, the reader receives a great deal more from him than the mere language conveys. There is an overplus of thought, of emotions, a deep suggestiveness, between the lines. Indeed, the best things some writers say are not in their actual words, but in the richness of their suggestion, in the overrun of the words.

No one can ever exhaust the meaning between the lines of Emerson's writings. No matter how many times he reads his essays, no one feels that he has drawn out all their significance.

We know that the words themselves are only signboards which point us to the real thing that Emerson had in mind. The words only suggest the larger, superber idea which Emerson struggled to convey imperfectly through words. It is this reserve which we call suggestion in any art.

There are pictures which you never care to look at more than once. They may be very pretty, very attractive, but you see all there is in them at a glance. But you may look at Raphael's Sistine Madonna or Millet's Angelus a thousand times, and yet always see something new; for you feel the great power back of them which says infinitely more than is expressed in the tints on the canvas.

The best thing is not what the great orator says, but what he makes you feel. People who heard Webster and Phillips tell us that even in their greatest flights of oratory they could not help feeling that there was something infinitely greater behind what they said, that these men had a superhuman reserve power and could do marvelous things if put to the test. So there must be a sense of reserve in all great writing. This is the quality which is tested by the continued interest which a piece of composition calls out in the reader, no matter how many times he reads it.

If you feel, when reading a book, that the author has said the greatest thing possible to him, you will not be impressed with his power; but if the matter comes so naturally and so easily that it suggests something infinitely greater back of it all, then you feel the power of the man back of his pen; you know that he has written a great book; that he is a literary artist.

We get an impression from meeting a person which is independent of the words he speaks — a subtle something which radiates from his person, his manner, his character. It is said that people who saw Lincoln, even though they did not hear him speak or know who he was, felt somehow that they were in the presence of a great man.

Just so, there is an indescribable atmosphere about a great book which is not in the words, but in that which it makes the reader feel. There is something in every author's writings which eludes analysis, but which the reader feels, just as he feels an impalpable emanation from the presence of a man whom he meets face to face.

It is not so much what the great writer says as what he shows you, what he makes you feel. You walk with him on the mountain tops and he gives you a glimpse of beauty which fascinates you. He allows you to look into the unfathomable depths of thought; a sense of unutterable wonder overwhelms you, though he cannot himself express to you all you feel.

The immortal writer and artist are merely mediums for omnipotent power to work through. We make the connection with this power through the mind when we read their books, through the eyes when we behold their masterpieces, and we feel the divine thrill, the immortal shock of our contact with it.

This suggestive or reserve power behind the artist, be he painter, poet, musician or writer, is a highly composite man. A great self-mastery — a powerful concentration — a marvelous life-focusing ability — must be back of it all. There are a

hundred elements, countless rich experiences, remarkable gifts of nature, which go to make up this reserve.

His own "composite man" is every person's genius. The greater the writer's personality, the greater the work he will produce. Out of the richness of his own life, his knowledge, his sympathy, his earnestness and courage for hard work, his ability to feel and express the pulsing life all around him, must his creations come. If you would be a writer, say the biggest thing you have in you to say; say it with all your might, feeling no sacrifice too great for the realization of its expression; overflow your words with the reserve of your soul. Then you will have given your best, and your writings will live.

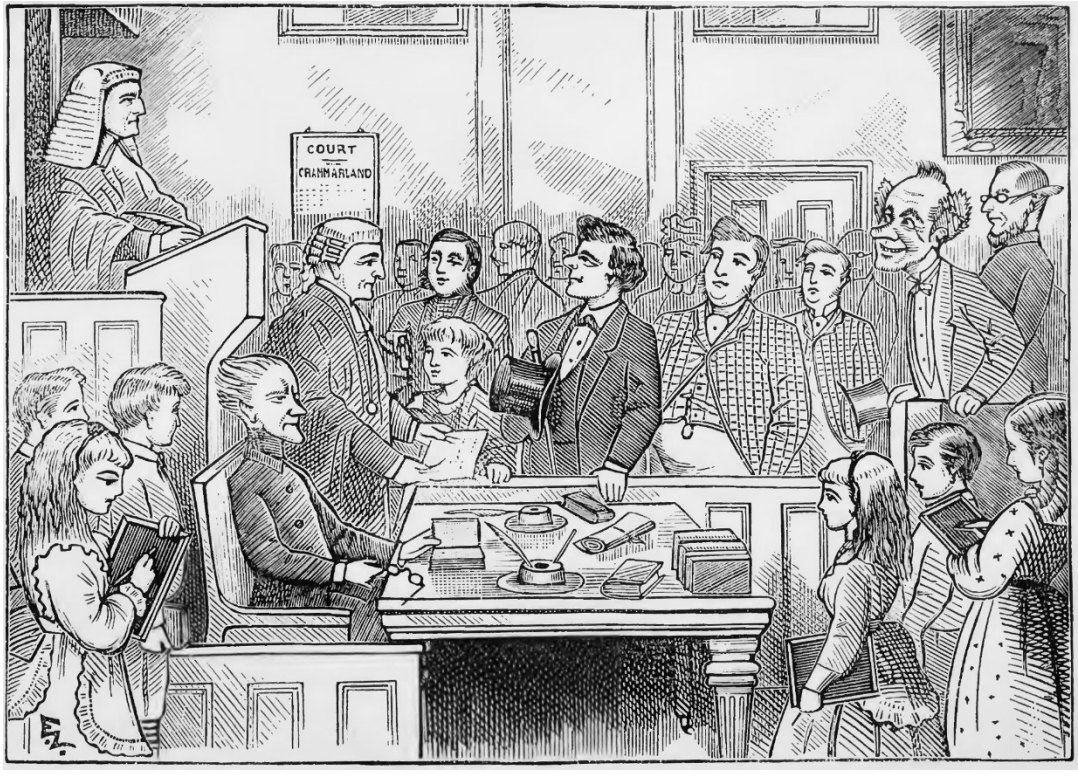
Grammar-Land

or

Grammar in Fun for the Children of Schoolroom-Shire

M. L. Nesbit




COURT
OF
CRANHARLAND

Introduction

Judge Grammar and His Subjects



What is Grammar-land? Where is Grammar-land? Have you ever been to Grammar-land? Wait a minute and you shall hear. You will not find Grammar-land marked on the globe, and I never saw a map of it; but then, who ever saw a map of Fairy-land? and yet you have all heard of that, and know a great deal about it, of course. Well, Grammar-land is a place every bit as real as Fairy-land, and much more important. The Fairy Queen is all very well, and a very great little queen in her way; but Judge Grammar! great, stern, old Judge Grammar, is far mightier than any Fairy Queen, for he rules over real kings and queens down here in Matter-of-fact-land. Our kings and queens, and emperors too,

have all to obey

Judge Grammar's laws, or else they would talk what is called *bad grammar*; and then, even their own subjects would laugh at them, and would say: "Poor things! When they were children, and lived in Schoolroom- shire, they can never have been taken to Grammar-land! How shocking! "

And Judge Grammar himself — well, I cannot say what he would do, as I suppose such a thing never really happened; for who could imagine a king or queen saying, *"I is"* or *"you was,"* or *"it wasn't me"* No one speaks in that way except people who have never heard of Judge Grammar.

Ah! I wish you could see him — this great Judge — sitting on his throne in his court, and giving orders about his precious words, which are the riches of Grammar-land. For Judge Grammar says that all the words that you can say belong really to him, and he can do what he likes with them; he is, in fact, King as well as Judge over Grammar-land. Now, you know that when William the Conqueror conquered England he divided the land among his nobles, and they had it for their own so long as they obeyed the king and helped him in his wars. It was just the same with Judge Grammar when he took possession of Grammar-land; he gave all the words to his nine followers, to take for their very own as long as they obeyed him. These nine followers he called the nine Parts-of-Speech, and to one or other of them every word in Grammar-land was given.

They are funny fellows, these nine Parts-of-Speech. You will find out by-and-by which you like best amongst them all. There is rich Mr. Noun, and his useful friend Pronoun; little

ragged Article, and talkative Adjective; busy Dr. Verb, and Adverb; perky Preposition, convenient Conjunction, and that tiresome Interjection, the oddest of them all.

Now, as some of these Parts-of-Speech are richer, that is, have more words than others, and as they all like to have as many as they can get, it follows, I am sorry to say, that they are rather given to quarrelling ; and so it fell out that one day, when my story begins, they made so much noise, wrangling and jangling in the court, that they woke Judge Grammar up from a long and very comfortable nap.

"What is all this about?" he growled out, angrily. "Brother Parsing! Dr. Syntax! here!"

In an instant the Judge's two learned counsellors were by his side.

Serjeant Parsing (Brother Parsing, the Judge calls him) has a sharp nose, bright eyes, a little round wig with a tail to it, and an eye-glass. He is very quick and cunning in finding out who people are and what they mean, and making them tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth." It is of no use to say "I don't know" to Serjeant Parsing. He will question you, and question you, till somehow or other he makes you know, and finds out all about you. When I say he will question *you*, of course I mean he will question the Parts-of-Speech, for that is his business, and that is why Judge Grammar summoned him. For whenever there is a fuss in Grammar-land, Serjeant Parsing has to find out all about it, and Dr. Syntax has to say what is right or wrong, according to the law.

"Brother Parsing," said the Judge, "this racket must be

stopped. What are they fighting about? I divided the words clearly enough once amongst the nine Parts-of-Speech. Why cannot they keep the peace?"

"My lord," answered Serjeant Parsing, "the fact is that it is a long time since you portioned out the words, and the Parts-of Speech since then have been left to do pretty much as they like. Some of them are greedy, and have stolen their neighbours' words. Some of them have got hold of new words, which the others say they had no right to make; and some of them are even inclined to think that Dr. Syntax is old-fashioned, and need not be obeyed. In fact, unless your lordship takes the matter in hand at once, I am afraid the good old laws of Grammar-land will all go to wreck and ruin."

"That must never be," said the Judge, solemnly shaking his wig: "that must never be. We must stop it at once. Go and summon all my court before me."

"Certainly, my lord," answered Serjeant Parsing; "but may I ask if there is any Part-of-Speech you wish for in particular?"

"I wish for them all, sir, every one," replied the Judge. "They shall all come before me, and you shall question them in turn, and make them say what right they have to the titles and the words which they claim; and then if there is any disagreement between them, I will settle the matter once for all."

"Quite so, my lord," said Serjeant Parsing; "and shall I invite our friends in Schoolroom-shire?"

"Our friends in Schoolroom-shire? By all means let them come," replied the Judge. "If we wish to have peace among the

Parts-of-Speech it is most important that the people of Matter-of-fact-land should know how to use them well. And as the people of Matter-of-fact-land generally spend at least a part of their lives in Schoolroom-shire, we cannot do better than send our invitation there. Go, Brother Parsing, and request them to come, and to bring their slates and pencils with them, that they may keep an account of what we do, and let our Parts-of-Speech prepare to come before us at once."

Away went Serjeant Parsing, as quick as thought, and soon the whole court was assembled. There was Judge Grammar on his throne, with a long flowing wig and gorgeous robes. At the table below him sat his two counsellors, Serjeant Parsing and Dr. Syntax. Dr. Syntax is very tall and thin and dark. He has a long thin neck covered up with a stiff black tie, which looks as though it nearly choked him. When he speaks he stands up, looks straight through his spectacles, sticks out his chin, and says his say in a gruff and melancholy voice, as if he were repeating a lesson. He is the terror of all little boys, for he never smiles, and he is so very, very old, that people say he never was young like other folks; that when he was a baby he always cried in Greek, and that his first attempt at talking was in Latin. However that may be, there he sat, side by side with Serjeant Parsing, while the company from Schoolroom-shire, armed with slates and pencils, prepared to listen to the examination that was to take place, and the Parts-of-Speech crowded together at the end of the court, waiting for their names to be called.



Chapter I

Mr. Noun



The first Part-of-Speech that was called was Mr. Noun. He is a stout big fellow, very well dressed, for he does not mind showing that he is very rich.

As Mr. Noun came forward, Serjeant Parsing rose, put his pen behind his ear, arranged his papers on the table before him, and looking at Mr. Noun through his eye-glass, asked: "What is your name?"

"Name," answered Mr. Noun.

"Yes, your name?" repeated Serjeant Parsing.

"Name," again answered Mr. Noun.

"Do not trifle, sir," said the Judge, sternly; "what is your

name? Answer at once, and truly."

"I have answered truly," replied Mr. Noun. "My name is *Name*, for *noun* means *name*. The name of everything belongs to me, so I am called Mr. Name, or Mr. Noun, which means the same thing, and all my words are called *nouns*."

"The name of *everything* belongs to you?" asked Serjeant Parsing, in surprise.

"Yes," answered Mr. Noun, "the name of everything."

"What? Do you mean to say that the name of everything I can see round me now is one of your words, and is called a noun?"

"I do indeed," said Mr. Noun. "The name of everything you can see, or touch, or taste, or smell, or hear, belongs to me."

"What," said Serjeant Parsing, "is this *desk* yours then, and the *ink* and the *pen* and the *window*?"

"The *words* that *name* them are all mine," said Mr. Noun. "Of course I have nothing to do with the *things*. No gentleman in Grammar-land has anything to do with *things*, only with words; and I assure you, you cannot *name* anything that you can see, or touch, or taste, or smell, or hear, without using one of my words. *Desk, pen, ink, window, water, wine, fire, smoke, lights, lightning, thunder,* a *taste*, a *smell*, a *noise*; all these words belong to me, and are called nouns."

"I see," said Serjeant Parsing;" you can *hear* thunder, and *smell* smoke, and *taste* wine. And I suppose *dinner* and *tea* are yours also?"

"Certainly, the *words* breakfast, dinner, and tea, are mine,"

replied Mr. Noun. "The *things* are what the people live upon in Schoolroom-shire, but they could not name what they eat without using my words. The servant would have to make signs to let people know that dinner was ready; she could not *say* so unless I allowed her to use my noun *dinner*."

"Well," said Serjeant Parsing, "if you have the name of everything we can see, touch, taste, smell, or hear, all I can say is, I hope you are satisfied, and do not clame any more words besides."

"Indeed," replied Mr. Noun, drawing himself proudly up, "I have not mentioned nearly all my words. I told you at first that I have the name of *everything*, and there are plenty of things that you know about, although you cannot see, or touch, or taste, or smell, or hear them. For instance, *love*, or *anger*, or *happiness*. You can feel them in your heart, and know they are there, although you cannot touch them with your fingers, or taste them with your tongue, or find them out by any of your five senses."

"Do you mean to say, then," asked Serjeant Parsing, "that when a child feels naughty in its heart?"

"Naughtiness is mine," said Mr. Noun; "the *word* naughtiness, for it is the *name* of the something bad that the child feels."

"And when it is kind?"

"Kindness is mine, because it is the *name* of the something kind and nice it feels *there*. I have a good many more words that end in ness, and that are the names of things you can find out about, and talk about, though you cannot tell what shape

or colour or smell or taste they have; like *cleverness, silliness, idleness, ugliness, quickness*."

"I see," said Serjeant Parsing. "You cannot tell what shape or colour cleverness is, but you can soon find out whether a boy has any of it by the way in which he does his lessons."

"Yes," said Mr. Noun; "and the names of his lessons are mine too, for the lessons are things that you can learn about; *geography, history, writing, arithmetic,* all these names belong to me."

"Really Mr. Noun," said Serjeant Parsing, "you do claim a big share of words. You will be making out that the names of *persons* belong to you next."

"So they do," replied Mr. Noun; *' no matter who the persons are, their names belong to me. I have the name of every person in the world from good Queen Victoria on her throne to the raggedest beggar-boy in the street. There is not a child in Schoolroom-shire whose name is not a noun. And I have not the names oi *people* only, but of all pet dogs, cats, birds, horses, or rabbits: *Fido, Tabby, Bright-eye, Tiny, Shag,* and any other pet names you can think of. Indeed, I am very particular about such names. I call them *proper nouns*, and expect them always to be written with a capital letter."

"Proper nouns?" repeated Serjeant Parsing. "Then what are the other nouns called?"

"They are only *common nouns*," answered Mr. Noun, carelessly.

"Then all names are common nouns, except the names of persons or animals, are they?" asked Serjeant Parsing.

"No, no, no," said Mr. Noun, quite crossly: "the name of an animal is not a proper noun unless it is the own special name of one animal, that marks it from other animals of the same kind. *Dog* is the name given to all dogs, they have the name in common between them; but *Fido* is the name of one particular dog, his own proper name by which his master calls him. So *dog* is a common noun, *Fido* is a proper noun."

"Oh, I see," said Serjeant Parsing. "Then the particular name of any person or animal is a proper noun, and all other names are common nouns."

"I never said that," exclaimed Mr. Noun. "How very stup– I mean, you do not understand me, my dear sir. I never said that the particular name of a place or thing was not a proper noun too. Every particular and special name, whether of a person, an animal, a place, or a thing, is a proper noun. Every place has its own proper name, or should have. Every country and mountain and river and town in Europe is named with a *proper* noun. Why, you would not call *England* a common noun, I should hope? There are plenty of countries in the world, but there is only one country that is called by the proper name of dear old England. *Country* is a common noun, all countries have it in common, but when you want to speak of any particular country you use the proper nouns, *England, Scotland, Ireland, France, etc., etc.*"

"Well, I think we can understand that the particular names of *places* are proper nouns," said Serjeant Parsing; "but you spoke about *things* also. Surely things have no proper names? You do not give names to chairs and tables, and call them Mr.

Leanback or Squire Mahogany?"

"Not exactly," answered Mr. Noun; "we do not name chairs and tables with proper names, but what do you say to houses? They are *things*, are they not? And you may have heard of such names as *Marlborough House, Springfield Cottage, Ivy Lodge*!'

"Well, no other things besides houses have proper names, have they?" said Serjeant Parsing.

"Books are things," said Mr. Noun, "and they all have proper names. So have ships and boats, *Warrior, Seafoam, Fairy,* or something of that sort. I have heard of a cannon which was called *Roarer*, and you ought to know that King Arthur's sword was named *Excalibur*. Indeed, you can give a proper name to anything you like that you want to distinguish from other things of the same sort."

"And all such proper names, or proper nouns, as you call them, must be written with a capital letter, must they? Whether they are the names of persons, animals, places, or things, little or big ? "

"Sir," answered Mr. Noun, "littleness or bigness makes no difference. If you had a pet fly, and called it Silver-wing, Silver-wing must be written with a capital S, because it is a proper noun."

"Well, Mr. Noun," said Serjeant Parsing, "your ideas of what is *proper* seem to me rather peculiar, but I suppose Dr. Syntax has no objection, so I will say nothing."

Dr. Syntax silently bowed his head.

The Judge then spoke. "Mr. Noun, you have claimed a

great many words, and it remains to be seen whether all the other Parts-of-Speech agree to these words being yours. In order to find out whether they do or no, I will ask our friends from Schoolroom-shire to write out, each of them, a list of twenty names, the names of anything they can *see, hear, touch, taste, smell, or think about*, or the *proper* names of any persons, animals, places, or things they know; and when next we meet I will read out what they have written, and we shall hear whether any one has any good reason to give why they should not be called nouns."

The Judge then rose from his seat, and every one left the court.



Chapter II

Little Article



When Judge Grammar next took his seat in court, a number of papers covered with words were handed up to him by Serjeant Parsing.

"They are the lists of names, my lord," he said, "which you asked the people of Schoolroom-shire to write for you."

"Very good," said the Judge. "I will read some of the words aloud, and if any one thinks that they are not *nouns*, let him come forward and say so. And he began to read: *the garden, the house, the sky, a book, a bird, a fly,* when suddenly he was interrupted by a sound of bitter sobbing and crying.

"What is the matter?" he asked. "Who dares to interrupt the court?"

"It is this tiresome little Article, your lordship," said

Serjeant Parsing, pushing forward a ragged little fellow, who was rubbing both fists into his eyes and crying bitterly. "He says he is being cheated, my lord; that he has only two words of his own in all Grammar-land, and that they are being used on these lists as if they belonged to Mr. Noun."

"Bring him up before me," said the Judge. "What is your name, sir?"

"My name is Article, or Little-joint," replied the little fellow. "I have only two words in all Grammar-land, *a* and *the*. I lend them to Mr. Noun whenever he asks for them fairly; but, your lordship, it is very hard," and here he began to cry again, "that they should be read as your lordship was reading them just now, as if they belonged to Mr. Noun, when he is so rich, and I am so very, very poor."

"Is it true, Brother Parsing," asked the Judge, *' that little Article is always ready to wait upon Mr. Noun?"

"Quite true, my lord," answered Serjeant Parsing.

"Indeed, I have often been able to discover Mr. Noun by catching sight of little Article running before him, for whenever you see an *a* or a *the*, you may be sure that Mr. Noun will have a word of his own in somewhere near. The chief use of little Article is to point out that a noun is coming, for you may be sure that if you can put an *a* or a *the* before a word, that word is a noun, as *a bird, the sky*."

"And do you use him as much before your pet proper nouns, sir?" asked Judge Grammar of Mr. Noun.

"No, your lordship," replied Mr. Noun, "that I do not. Indeed, *I* cannot see that little Article is of much use to me at

any time; but he has an old habit of coming with me wherever I go, and when I have no one else I do not mind having him."

"Well," said Judge Grammar, "if you do have him, take care that you use him well; and pray, Brother Parsing, tell the Schoolroom-shire children to give him a separate mark for himself, and not to put his words with Mr. Noun's."

"Certainly, my lord," said Serjeant Parsing, "but I have one question to ask first. This little Article said that he had only two words in all Grammar-land, *a* and *the*. I wish to ask him what he says to an, as you say *an* egg, *an* apple? Surely *an* belongs to him also."

Article was just beginning to answer when he suddenly stopped, turned pale, trembled, and looked as if he would have tumbled to pieces in terror, for he saw Dr. Syntax rise.

Dr. Syntax stood upright, looking very tall and thin and black: he spoke in very stern voice, but all he said was, "*An* is only used before a vowel or an *h* mute." Then he sat down again.

"Ah!" said Serjeant Parsing, drawing a long breath, "thank you. Now, little Article, say what you have to say."

"I have only to say," remarked Article, recovering his courage, "that *a* and *an* are really one and the same word; *a* is only *an* with his coat off. I like to use it best as *a* without its coat, but before a vowel or an *h* mute I am obliged," and here Article gave a frightened look at Dr. Syntax, "I am obliged to keep its coat on and call it *an*."

"And do you know what you mean by a vowel or an *h* mute?" asked Judge Grammar.

"O yes, my lord : there are five vowels, *a, e, i, o, u*," answered Article.

"And what is an *h* mute?" asked the Judge.

"An *h* that is not sounded, as in *an hour, an honour*," answered Article, rather impatiently, for he was getting very tired of being questioned.

"And you are to use *an* before any word that begins with a vowel, *a, e, i, o*, or *u*, or an *h* mute, are you?" asked the Judge.

"Yes, my lord," said Article, "I told you so before."

"Give us some examples of words beginning with each of these," said the Judge, "and show us how you use *an* before them."

Article held up one hand, with the thumb and four fingers stretched out, and pointing to each one in turn, beginning with the thumb, he answered: "*An* apple, *an* eagle, *an* idol, *an* ox, and *an* ugly, uncomfortable, unkind old Judge, to keep me here so long answering questions." Saying which, little ragged Article turned and scampered off as fast as his legs could carry him.

Serjeant Parsing then said that as Article had behaved so badly, he hoped the Judge would give him a severe punishment, by allowing the children of Schoolroom-shire to use his words as often as they liked in their new lists.

"Certainly," said Judge Grammar." I request that each of you will write six new nouns, and will use an article before every one of them."

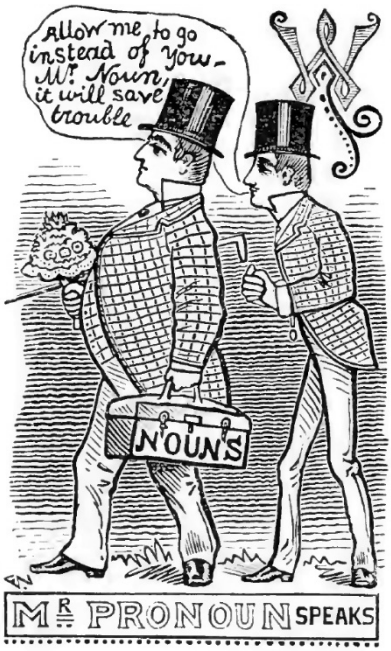
The court then rose, after Serjeant Parsing had handed the Schoolroom-shire children the following verse, begging them

to find out all the nouns and articles in it : —

Once there was a little boy,
With curly hair and pleasant eye;
A boy who always spoke the truth,
And never, never told a lie.

Chapter III

Mr. Pronoun



When the court next assembled, the Judge read aloud all the nouns and articles on the lists, casting a stern glance at little Article at each *a*, *an*, or *the* that he came to, in order to show that they were put in as a punishment for Article's impudent behaviour the day before. Poor little Article said nothing, and no one having objected to any of the words, the Judge said: "Mr. Noun and Article, since no one finds fault with the words that you claim, I declare them to be lawfully yours. Now, stand aside, and let Mr. Pronoun come forward,"

At these words Mr. Pronoun stood before the Judge. He is something like Mr. Noun, only he is thinner, and looks as if

he worked harder.

"Mr. Pronoun?" said Serjeant Parsing, standing up to begin his questioning.

Mr. Pronoun bowed.

"Why are you called Pronoun, sir, and what words do you possess?"

"I am called Pronoun, because I often do the work for my rich neighbour, Mr. Noun. *Pro* means *instead of*, so *pronoun* means *instead of noun*, and my words are called *pronouns* because they stand *instead of nouns*. Mr. Noun, though he is so rich, does not like to have his words used over and over again — he says it wears them out; so to save trouble I put in *my* little words, which do just as well."

"And you are not afraid of *your* words being worn out?" asked the Judge.

"O dear no! my lord," answered Pronoun. "I think my words are like the iron rails on the railway — the more they are used the brighter they look; it is only the idle ones that get rusty and spoilt. And it is not many of *my* words that get rusty, I can tell you, my lord. Serjeant Parsing knows how he was one day trying to make sense of Dr. Faustus without me, and what a muddle he made of it. If he will kindly repeat it now, 1 will show you."

So Serjeant Parsing said: —

> Dr. Faustus was a good man;
> Dr. Faustus whipped Dr. Faustus's scholars now and then

When Dr. Faustus whipped the scholars Dr. Faustus
made the scholars dance
Out of England into France.

"There!" said Pronoun. "Let any one try to sing that, and he will find how awkward it is. Now, if you will use my little *he* or *his*, instead of saying Dr. Faustus so often, and put *them* instead of scholars, it will sound much better. Just listen. Please, Mr. Parsing, say it again, and I will come in when I am wanted."

So Serjeant Parsing said: "Dr. Faustus was a good man."

"*He* whipped *his*," shouted Pronoun.

"He whipped his scholars now and then. When –"

"*He* whipped *them*," shouted Pronoun.

"When he whipped them," continued Serjeant Parsing.

"*He* made *them* dance," cried Pronoun.

"When he whipped them he made them dance," repeated Serjeant Parsing, "out of England into France."

"Ah," said the Judge, "yes! It is certainly better so. Mr. Noun's words are not used so often, and all parties are pleased. Then *he*, *his*, and *them* are pronouns, as they stand instead of nouns. Now tell us what other words you have, Mr. Pronoun."

"First of all, my lord, I have words which are used instead of the names of people when they are talking of themselves, such as *I* or *me*, *we* or *us*. When a person is speaking of himself he does not name his own name, but says instead, *I* or *me*. Except, indeed, very little children, who say, 'Baby wants more,' or, 'Give baby milk.' Reasonable persons say, '*I* want more,' 'Give *me* some milk.'"

"The Queen says *we* in speaking of herself," remarked the Judge.

"Yes, my lord," said Pronoun, "the Queen is of course allowed to use *we* or *us* when she means only herself; but other people do not use *we* or *us* unless they mean more than one person."

"Then *I* or *me*, *we* or *us*, are the pronouns used instead of the names of people speaking of themselves, are they, Mr. Pronoun?" inquired Serjeant Parsing.

"Certainly," replied Pronoun: "and the words used instead of the names of persons you are speaking to are *thou*, or *thee*, and *you*. When I am speaking to you, Mr. Parsing, I say, I tell *you*; I do not say, I tell Serjeant Parsing."

"Quite so," answered Serjeant Parsing; "but why do you not say, "tell *thee*?"

"Why, the fact is," replied Mr. Pronoun, "that *thou* and *thee* really stand for one person only, and *you* stands for more than one. But long ago people took it into their heads to fancy that it would be *very* polite to talk to one person as if he were at least as good as two. It is a very vulgar thing to be only one person, but to be two people rolled into one would be very grand indeed. So when a man was talking to a grand neighbour he called him *you* instead of *thou*, and the grand neighbour was so much pleased that it came to be the fashion to say *you* to every one, and my poor little *thou* and *thee* were quite set aside."

"And are they never used now?" said Serjeant Parsing.

"O yes, they are used," said Mr. Pronoun; "but as people

neglected them in former days, I won't have them used in common now. *You* is quite good enough for everyday talk."

"Well," said Serjeant Parsing, "you have shown that *I* or *me*, *we* or *us*, *thou* or *thee*, and *you*, are all your words. Have you any others?"

"Plenty more," answered Pronoun. "I have *he*, *she*, *it*, and *they*, to stand instead of persons or things you are talking about.

Tom took Maria on the ice;
It broke, and *she* fell in;
He got a rope, and in a trice
He pulled *her* out again.
If *they* had both been drowned, you know,
Folks would have said, "I told you so."

"There *it* stands for *ice*, and *she* for *Maria*, and *he* for *Tom*, and *they* for *Tom* and *Maria* together. So you see clearly that *he*, *she*, *it*, and *they* are pronouns."

"I do not think any one could deny it," said Serjeant Parsing. "Have you any other words?"

"O yes, there are plenty more words that stand instead of nouns. *My*, *thy*, *his*, *our*, *your*, *their*, which are used to show that something belongs to the person these words stand instead of. Just as instead of saying *Dr. Faustus's* scholars, we said *his* scholars; and as in speaking to you, my lord, I should not say Judge Grammar's wig, but *your* wig."

"You need not say anything about my wig," said the Judge, rather testily. "Mind your own words, sir, and tell us what

others you have."

"I have *who* and *which*," replied Pronoun. "Instead of saying, 'I met a man, the man had no eyes,' you say, 'I met a man *who* had no eyes;' so my little *who* saves Mr. Noun's *man*. Instead of saying, 'I will tell you a tale, a tale was told to me,' you can say, 'I will tell you a tale *which* was told to me;' so *which* stands instead of *tale*."

"We understand," said the Judge. "No more of your tales now, if you please. You have no more words, I suppose?"

"Indeed I have, my lord. *This* and *that*, *these* and *those*, are pronouns. For when you say, 'Look at *this*,' you mean a picture, or a sum, or anything else that *this* may happen to stand for; and when you say, 'Take *that*,' that stands for a halfpenny, or a kick, or anything else you may be giving at the time. And if you sing to a child — if your lordship ever does sing — which does not seem very likely –"

"Mind your words, sir," said the Judge, again. "If we sing what?"

"If you sing '*This* is the way the lady goes,' then *this* stands for the jogging up and down of my knee, the way the lady goes."

"Really, Mr. Pronoun," said the Judge, "you are very childish. The Schoolroom-shire people are quite ashamed of you. We shall ask for no more of your words to-day, for I suppose, after all, they are easy enough to find out."

"All words that stand instead of nouns belong to me," said Pronoun; "but they are not quite so easy to find out as you suppose. Those that stand instead of persons, like *I*, *thou*, *he*,

we, you, they, any one can find out. I have told you about a good many others, and if Serjeant Parsing wishes to discover the rest for himself –"

"He does, sir," said the Judge, who was getting very tired and hungry. "You may go. I will only ask you to assist our Schoolroom-shire friends in making the following verses right. They read very queerly at present; but if you can set them right, I think we shall agree that what you have been saying of your words is true."

The Judge then wished them all good-morning, and went to lunch off a few pages of dictionary.

Here are the verses.

There was a man, the man had no eyes,
And the man went out to view the skies;
The man saw a tree with apples on,
The man took no apples off, and left no apples on.

Little Bo-peep has lost Bo-peep's sheep,
And does not know where to find the sheep;
Leave the sheep alone till the sheep come home,
And bring the sheep's tails behind the sheep.

Matilda dashed the spectacles away
To wipe Matilda's tingling eyes;
And as in twenty bits the spectacles lay,
Matilda's grandmamma Matilda spies.

Chapter IV

Serjeant Parsing's Visit



erjeant Parsing paid a visit to Schoolroom-shire.

"My young friends," he said, in his most amiable voice, "may I trouble you with a little piece of business for Judge Grammar to-day. I have here a story, and the Judge requests that you will kindly find out how many of the words in it belong to Mr. Noun, how many to Mr. Pronoun, and how often little ragged Article comes in. The best way to do this is to get your slates, and mark off a piece for Mr. Noun, another for Mr. Pronoun, and a corner somewhere for little Article. Write their names in each. Now I will read the story, and whenever I come to a noun, give Mr. Noun a mark; whenever I read a pronoun, give a mark to Mr. Pronoun; and if I read an *a*, *an*, or *the*, put down a mark to little Article. When it is finished

we will count up and see who has the most marks."

Serjeant Parsing then read the following story: — "Some sailors belonging to a ship of war had a monkey on board. The monkey had often watched the men firing off a cannon, so one day when they were all at dinner he thought he should like to fire it too. So he took a match, as he had seen the men do, struck it, put it to the touch-hole, and looked into the mouth of the cannon, to see the ball come out. The ball did come out, and alas! alas! the poor little monkey fell down dead."



Chapter V

Mr. Adjective



he next Part-of-Speech called up before Judge Grammar was Mr. Adjective.

"My young friends in Schoolroom-shire," said Serjeant Parsing, "must know Mr. Adjective well. He is the greatest chatterbox and the veriest gossip that ever lived. You never in all your life, my lord, knew any one who could say so much about one thing as Mr. Adjective. Mr. Noun cannot mention a word, but Mr. Adjective is ready to tell all about it, whether it is *little* or *big, blue* or *green*, *good* or *bad*, and mischief enough he does in Schoolroom-shire. For instance, if Noun mentions Willy's pen — '*Nasty, spluttering, cross-nibbed* thing,' whispers Adjective, and Willy thinks that is why he wrote such a bad copy, and did not dot his i's. If Mr. Noun points out pussy, who is coming into

the room, purring and rubbing her head against the leg of each chair as she passes. Adjective whispers that she is a '*dear, sweet, soft, warm, little* pet,' so Milly leaves off her sums to pick her up and play with her. Ann, the housemaid, finds dirty boot-marks on her nice clean stairs, and as soon as she sees Tom she tells him he is a '*tiresome, untidy, disobedient*, and *naughty* boy,' not knowing that Mr. Adjective was whispering all those words in her ear. Indeed, Mr. Adjective causes more quarrels in Schoolroom-shire, and other places too, than any one can tell. Only yesterday Jane and Lucy had a quarrel, I hear, because Jane pulled the arm off Lucy's doll. If Adjective had not put into Lucy's head to call Jane *naughty* and *unkind*, Jane would not have answered that Lucy was *cross* and *disagreeable*. She would most likely have said, 'I beg your pardon, I did not mean to do it,' and they would have been friends again directly. See how much mischief is caused by talkative, gossiping Mr. Adjective."

"Really, Mr. Parsing," remarked Adjective, now putting in his word for the first time, "you have made a long speech to show how mischievous I am. Pray, have you nothing to say about the good that my kind, loving words do?"

"Oh, certainly, my dear sir," said Serjeant Parsing, suddenly changing his tone. "When you like any one you are a very good-natured fellow, and can say all sorts of sweet things. I heard you in Schoolroom-shire telling Mary that her mamma is her *own dearest, kindest, sweetest* mother — that baby is a *bright, bonny little* darling — that Fido is a *good, faithful old* doggie — and that home is the *happiest* place in the *whole wide* world. Oh,

yes," continued Serjeant Parsing, "you can call people good names as well as bad."

"I do not call people names," said Adjective, indignantly. "I *qualify* them. I could qualify you, Mr. Parsing, and say you are an *impertinent, rude* –"

"That will do, Mr. Adjective," interrupted the Judge.

"We understand what you mean by *qualifying*. But tell us, are your words always placed *before* nouns?"

"Oh, no, my lord," answered Adjective. "They *can*, almost all of them, be used before a noun, but they are often used after it, in this way: —

The sky is *blue*,
    The sun is *bright*,
My words are *true*.
    The snow is *white*.

"You could also say, *blue sky*, *bright sun*, *true words*, *white snow*, but it does not sound so well, I think. And when a pronoun stands instead of a noun, and my words qualify it –"

"Oh, you qualify pronouns as well as nouns, do you?" asked Serjeant Parsing.

"I am obliged to do so sometimes," said Mr. Adjective, rather sulkily. "I will not have my words used before a pronoun, as they are before a noun. You can say: —

    I am *right*,
And you are *wrong*;
    It is *late*.
And we are *strong*.

But you must not say: *right I*, *wrong you*, *late it*, or *strong we*."

"I should think not," said Serjeant Parsing, laughing.

"Then we are to understand that adjectives are used to qualify nouns and pronouns, and that they may be used before a noun or after it, but not before a pronoun."

"Quite right, so far," said Mr. Adjective; "but I can do other things besides qualifying nouns."

"What can you do?"

"I can tell how many there are of the thing the noun names, *one, two, three, four,* and so on. And whether the thing is the *first, second, third, or fourth*, and so on. And whether there are *some* things, *many* things, *few* things, *more* things, *no* things."

"And all these words are adjectives, are they?"

"Yes," answered Adjective. "All words that can be put before *thing* or *things* are adjectives."

"*A* thing, *the* thing," remarked little Article, looking up with a cunning smile at Adjective. "*A* and *the* are both articles."

"*A* and *the* don't count, of course," said Adjective, impatiently. "Besides, they were adjectives once, people say, only they got so worn out, that I let my ragged little cousin Article have them. But except *a* and *the,* there is no word that you can put before *thing* or *things* that is not an adjective. A *beautiful thing*, an *ugly thing*, *bad things, good things, green things, yellow things, large things, little things;* and so you can say, *one thing, two things, some things, any things;* and also, *this thing, that thing, these things, those things*."

"That seems a very easy way of finding out an adjective," remarked the Judge. "I hope it is a correct way."

"Indeed it is, my lord," said Adjective, earnestly. "See, I can give you many more examples.

A *lovely, graceful, beautiful* thing,
A *useful, homely, dutiful* thing;
Foolish, childish, useless things;
Handsome, rich, and *priceless* things.

"My lord," said Mr. Noun, coming forward and speaking in a solemn voice, "I accuse Mr. Adjective of stealing, and wish him to be sent to prison."

"Indeed!" said the Judge; "but he must be tried first, and you must prove him guilty before I have him punished. What do you say he has stolen?'

"My lord, he is constantly stealing my words, and only just now he used these without my leave, in open court: *love, grace, beauty, use, home, duty."*

"Enough," said the Judge. "I certainly heard him use some such words only just now. Critics," he called to the policemen, for that is the name they have in Grammar-land, "seize Mr. Adjective, and keep him safe until the court meets again, when he shall be tried for stealing." Then turning to the people of Schoolroom-shire, the Judge continued, "My friends, I shall be much obliged if you will look over the following story, and strike out of it all the words belonging to Mr. Adjective. I cannot allow them to remain side by side with other words, until it is proved that Mr. Adjective is not guilty of stealing them."

The Judge then rose, and poor Afr. Adjective was led out

of the court, with his hands bound.

The following is the story which the Judge sent to the people of Schoolroom-shire.

The Maiden Prince

A long, long time ago, there lived in a grey old castle, a widowed queen, who had one only child, a beautiful bright boy. "My good husband was killed in the terrible war," said the timid queen, "and if my dear son grows up to be a strong man, I fear that he will go to the cruel wars, too, and be killed. So he shall learn nothing about rough war, but shall be brought up like a simple maiden." So she taught him all maidenly duties, to spin, and to weave, and to sew, and she thought he was too simple and quiet to wish to go to war ; but one day there came to the great castle gate a noble knight riding a gallant charger. "Come," he cried to the young prince, "come, follow me. I ride to fight with the wicked and strong who are oppressing the weak and the poor." Up sprang, in a moment, the fair young boy, flung aside his girlish work, seized his father's battered sword, and leaped into the saddle behind the noble knight. "Farewell, dear mother," he cried, "no more girlish work for me. I must be a brave man, as my father was, and conquer or die in the rightful cause." Then the foolish queen saw that it was useless to try to make a daring boy into a timid maiden.

Chapter VI

Mr. Adjective Tried for Stealing



There was great excitement in the court the next day; and when every one was assembled, except Adjective, the Judge called out: "Bring the prisoner in;" and poor Adjective was led in between two Critics, with his hands tied behind him, and placed before the Judge.

Serjeant Parsing rose, and began to question him.

"Is your name Adjective?" he said.

"It is," answered Adjective.

"And you possess all the adjectives in Grammar-land?"

"I do."

"What is an adjective?"

"A word used to qualify a noun."

"What is a noun?"

"Please, my lord, need I answer that?" asked Adjective.

"Certainly," replied the Judge.

"It is not fair," said Adjective; "nouns are not my words."

"But you must know what a noun is, in order that you may use your adjectives properly."

"Of course I know what a noun is — it is a *name*, the name of anything."

"Then do you know the difference between a noun and an adjective?" asked Serjeant Parsing.

"Certainly. A *noun* is the name of a thing. An *adjective* tells you something about the thing the noun has named; whether it is large or small, or what colour it is, or how much there is of it, or whether there are few things or many, or something of that sort."

"Quite so; but can you find out at once, without much thinking, whether a word is a noun or an adjective?"

"If you can put an article before a word, then it is a noun," answered Adjective; "as, *a* man, *the* dog."

"Then when I say, 'Pity the poor,' of course *poor* is a noun, is it?"

"No," said Adjective, quickly; "*poor* is my word, I know, for you can say *poor* child, a *poor* thing. 'Pity the poor' really means, 'Pity the poor people;' but Mr. Noun is so stingy, that when he thinks the sentence will be understood without his word, he just leaves it out, and then people say the noun is *understood*."

"Exactly so; but your way of finding out a noun does not answer, you see, for the first time I try it, you tell me the word I have found is an adjective."

"It always answers unless there happens to be a word understood," replied Adjective, "and then it answers if you use your reason; for any one would know that you are not asked to pity a thing called a *poor*, but to pity poor people. But it is not fair, my lord," continued Adjective, turning to the Judge. "Here am I, a poor prisoner, unjustly accused of stealing, and Mr. Parsing is trying to puzzle me as much as he can."

"Not at all," replied Serjeant Parsing. "I only want you to be sure that you know clearly the difference between a noun and an adjective."

"I do," answered Adjective, "quite clearly."

"Well, then, answer this question. What is the word *beauty*?"

"Beauty?" repeated Adjective, getting rather red; "*beauty* is a noun."

"Yes," said Serjeant Parsing; "and *grace*, and *home*, and *duty*?"

"They are all nouns," answered Adjective, looking uncomfortable.

"Yes; now another question. What is *beautiful*?"

"Beautiful?" repeated Adjective, looking *very* red now; "*beautiful* is an adjective."

"Very well. Now, Mr. Adjective," said Serjeant Parsing, "kindly tell me how you got the adjective *beautiful*?"

"I made it," answered Adjective, with his eyes on the

ground.

"How did you make it?"

"I stuck *ful* on to *beauty*. When I want to say a thing is full of beauty I call it *beautiful*."

"And how did you get *beauty*, since it belongs to Mr. Noun?" asked Serjeant Parsing.

"I took it," replied Adjective, still looking down.

"Which means to say that you stole it. It is quite clear that you stole it, and that you did the same to *grace*, *home*, *duty*, and others, to make *graceful*, *homely*, *dutiful*, and the rest. My lord, I think I need say nothing more: the prisoner himself owns that he took these words; it only remains for you to give him his punishment."

The Judge looked very grave, and was beginning to say, "Mr. Adjective, I am very sorry –" when Serjeant Parsing interrupted him, and said: —

"Please, my lord, I am going to take the other side now. Will you order Mr. Noun to come forward to be questioned?"

"Certainly," said the Judge; and Mr. Noun approached.

"Mr. Noun?" said Serjeant Parsing.

"The same, sir," said Mr. Noun; "all nouns belong to me."

"You know a noun when you see it?"

"Of course I know my own words."

"And you know an adjective?"

"Yes; an adjective is a word that tells something about one of my nouns."

"Very good. Now can you tell me whether *happy* is a noun?"

"Certainly not. It is an adjective. You can say a happy boy,

a happy thing."

"Exactly so. Now will you tell me what *happiness* is?"

"Happiness," repeated Mr. Noun, getting suddenly very red, for he saw what was coming; "happiness is a noun, it is mine."

"Oh!" said Serjeant Parsing; "how did you get it?"

"I made it."

"How?"

"I joined *happy* and *ness* together."

"H'm!" said Serjeant Parsing. "I will not ask you where you found such a silly word as *ness*, but *happy* you said just now belongs to Mr. Adjective, so of course you took it from him."

Mr. Noun did not answer, but looked down, exceedingly red and uncomfortable.

"My lord," said Serjeant Parsing to the Judge, "need I say any more. This Mr. Noun, who would have Adjective put in prison for stealing, has been doing the very same thing himself. *Happiness, prettiness, silliness, cleverness,* and almost all the words that end in *ness* are nouns made from adjectives. If Mr. Noun would give them all up, I have no doubt Mr. Adjective would then give up his *beautiful, useful, graceful,* and other adjectives that are made from nouns."

"No, no," said the Judge; "I will have no giving up. When a word is once made it is made for good, and instead of blaming those who take their neighbour's words to make new ones for themselves, I consider that they are very much to be praised. Critics, untie Mr. Adjective's hands. Mr. Adjective, I am glad to hear you are so clever in making new words, and I

give you full permission to make as many more as you can, by borrowing either from Mr. Noun or from any other Part-of-Speech. Have you any other ending to put on besides *ful?*"

"My lord," said Adjective, whose hands were now untied, and who was standing free and upright before the Judge, "my lord, I have a whole string of tails which I keep ready to make adjectives with. Here are some of them: *ful, like, ly, y, ous, less, en,* and *ern* and this is the way I stick them on: *beautiful, ladylike, manly, dirty, poisonous, careless, golden, western,* and with your lordship's kind permission, I will make such words as often as I can."

"Do so," replied the Judge. "And you, Mr. Noun, remember, that you are to allow Adjective to take your words whenever he requires them, for you ought to know that words in Grammar-land are not like pennies in Matter-of-fact-land. *There*, if some one steals a penny from you, he has it and you have not ; but *here*, in Grammar-land, when any one takes your words to make new ones, it makes him richer, but you are none the poorer for it. You have *beauty* still, although Mr. Adjective has made *beautiful*; and you have *lady*, and *man*, and *gold*, although Mr. Adjective has made *ladylike*, and *manly*, and *golden*. You ought to have known this, Mr. Noun, and not to have accused Mr. Adjective of stealing. Therefore, as a punishment, I require you to send into Schoolroom-shire a list of nouns that may be made into adjectives by the addition of some of Mr. Adjective's tails."

The Judge then left the court, and this is the list that Mr. Noun sent into Schoolroom-shire.

Mr. Adjective Tried for Stealing

Nouns to be made into Adjectives

Truth	Lady	Child	Dirt
Faith	Man	Baby	Wood
Hope	Love	Fool	Fire
Care	Gold	North	Poison
Sleep	Wood	East	Danger
Sense	Silk	West	Virtue

Adjective endings that may he added to Nouns

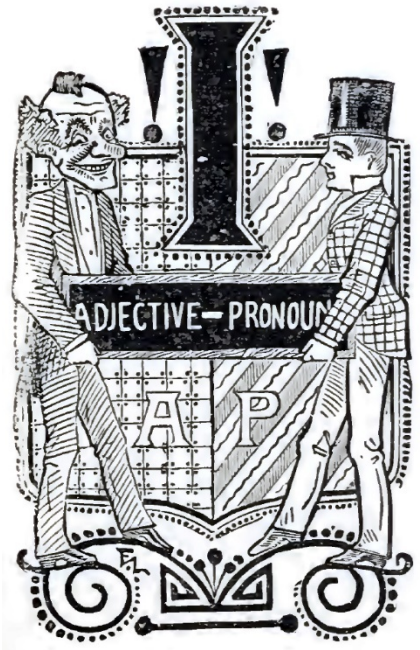
ful *like or ly* *ish* *y*

less *en* *em* *ous* (meaning full of)



Chapter VII

The Quarrel between Mr. Adjective and Mr. Pronoun and Little Interjection



t is sad to tell that nearly the first thing Mr. Adjective did when he was set free was to have a quarrel with Pronoun.

When the Judge came into court the next day he found them both much excited.

"It is mine, I know it is," said Pronoun.

"And I know it is mine," cried Adjective. "I'll ask the Judge if it is not."

"I'll ask him, too," said Pronoun. "My lord," he continued, coming forward, "*her* is mine, and Adjective wants to take it from me. But when I claimed it in court before, he said nothing about it."

"I thought the more," returned Adjective, "but I supposed

that you would give it up quietly without all this fuss in court."

"I would willingly give it up if it were yours," said Pronoun; "but it is not."

"It is," cried Adjective, angrily; "I tell you it is.

"Silence!" said the Judge, sternly. "Brother Parsing, be kind enough to question both Adjective and Pronoun, that we may know the cause of this quarrel, and hear what each has to say for himself."

"Certainly, my lord," answered Serjeant Parsing. "Adjective, what words do you claim?"

"*My, thy, his, her, its, our, your,* and *their*," replied Adjective.

"Well, Mr. Pronoun, tell us how you make them out to be yours."

"Nothing is easier," answered Pronoun. "These words stand instead of nouns, and therefore they must be pronouns. When you say *'my thumb,'* my lord, you mean Judge Grammar's thumb, so *my* stands instead of the noun Judge Grammar. And when you say, ' Little Bo-peep has lost *her* sheep,' you mean little Bo-peep's sheep, therefore *her* stands instead of little Bo-peep. So *his* and *her* are clearly pronouns; and *thy, his, its, our, your, their* are used in just the same way, and therefore must be pronouns too."

"It would seem so," said the Judge. "What has Mr. Adjective to say to that?"

"I will soon tell you, my lord," replied Adjective.

"You will, of course, allow that an adjective is a word that may be used before a noun, to tell something about the thing that the noun names. It has been said that if you can put thing

or things after a word, that word (not counting *a* or *the*, of course) is sure to be an adjective; as, a *good thing*, a *bad thing*, *large things*, *little things*, and so on. Well, I am sure you can say *my* thing, *thy* thing, *his* thing, *her* thing, *its* thing, *our* thing, *your* thing, and *their* thing. Therefore, *my, thy, his, her, its, our, your,* and *their*, must be adjectives."

"H'm! It is all very well to say *must*," remarked the Judge, "but then Pronoun says they *must* be pronouns. Are there any more of your words, Mr. Pronoun, that Adjective claims in the same way?"

"My lord," answered Pronoun, "he claims all the words of mine that may be used before a noun. *This*, *that, these,* and *those*, for instance."

"Of course I do," said Adjective; "for when you say *this* bird, *that* horse, *these* rabbits, *those* people; *this*, *that, these*, and *those* are clearly used with a noun, but do not stand instead of one."

"Ah!" said Pronoun, "but when you say 'look at *this*,' 'take *that*,' 'may I have *these*?' 'burn *those*;' *this, that, these,* and *those* are not used with a noun, but clearly stand *instead of one*, and therefore they are pronouns."

"It seems to me," said the Judge, half to himself, "that sometimes they are adjectives, and sometimes they are pronouns."

"That is just what I say, my lord," cried Adjective, "and if you will allow it, I think I know of a way that will make peace between us directly. Let us call them *Adjective-Pronouns,* and have them between us. When they are used, not with a noun,

but instead of one, then Pronoun may have them all to himself; but when they are used like adjectives, before a noun, then we will have them between us, and call them *Adjective-Pronouns.*"

"That seems very fair," replied the Judge, "and I certainly allow it. Mr. Pronoun, be kind enough to give us a list of your words, and Mr. Adjective will point out any that may be used as Adjective-Pronouns."

So Mr. Pronoun began: "*I, thou, he, she, it, we, you, they, mine, thine, his, hers, its, ours, yours, theirs ; my, thy, his, her, its, our, your, their.*"

"Those last eight are between us," said Adjective, "for they can all be used before a noun."

"*Myself, thyself, himself, herself, itself, ourselves, yourselves, or yourself, themselves,*" said Pronoun, with a little toss of his head, "those, at least, are all mine, Mr. Adjective."

"Continue repeating your words, sir," said the Judge, sternly; "do not stop to talk."

"*This, that, these, those,*" continued Pronoun.

"Adjective-pronouns, all four of them," remarked Mr. Adjective; "we have shown that already."

"*Each, either, neither, one, other,*" continued Pronoun.

"Stop," said the Judge; "we have not had these words before. You must give us some sentences to show that they are pronouns."

Pronoun replied: —

> Two sparrows had a fight to-day,
> *Each* wished to take a worm away;

One pulled at it, so did the *other*.
Neither would yield it to his brother.
Had *either* given up at least,
His brother would have had the feast;
But while they fought a thrush came by,
And with the worm away did fly.

"There, my lord," continued Pronoun, "all the words, *each, one, other, neither, either,* stand for sparrow in those lines, and as sparrow is a noun, they must be pronouns."

"They are adjective-pronouns sometimes," remarked Mr. Adjective, "for you can say, 'each boy,' 'the other day,' 'on either side.'"

"Certainly," said the Judge. "Have you any more, Mr. Pronoun?"

"*Who, which, what,*" continued Pronoun.

"You must show that they are pronouns," said the Judge.

"'Here is the man *who* shot the tiger,'" said Pronoun. "'Here are two apples; *which* do you choose?' 'I know *what* I want.' *Who* stands instead of the *man*, because you could say, 'Here is the man; the man shot the tiger.' *Which* stands instead of one of the apples, and *what* stands instead of the thing that I want, whatever it may be."

"Yes," said Serjeant Parsing. "But if *who* and *what* are used to ask questions, as, '*who* is there?' '*what* is that?' then what do *who* and *what* stand instead of?"

"If you will answer the questions, and tell me who was really there, and what that really was, then I will tell you what nouns *who* and *what* stand instead of; but if you do not know

any answer to your own questions, then of course I cannot tell you what noun my little pronouns stand for; I can only tell you they stand instead of something, and therefore are pronouns."

"*Which* and *what* are used before nouns sometimes," cried Adjective: "'*which* way are you going?' '*what* bell is that?' therefore they are adjective-pronouns too."

"At any rate," said Pronoun, haughtily, "*who* is altogether mine, for you cannot say, 'who way,' 'who book,' 'who man,' or anything of that sort."

"Hoo! hoo! hoo! ha! ha! ha! he! he! he! "cried a voice among the crowd. "Old Adjective beaten! hurrah! bravo!"

Every one in the court looked round to see where such strange sounds came from.

"It is Interjection," said Serjeant Parsing, angrily, making a dive at the crowd behind him, to try and catch hold of some one in it."

"Critics," cried the Judge, "seize that fellow, and bring him here."

But that was more easily said than done, for little Interjection was as quick and active as any street boy in London. He dodged in and out amongst the other Parts-of-Speech, and was here, there, and everywhere, till at last he tumbled up against Serjeant Parsing, who held him fast till the Critics came up. He is such an odd little creature, that you could hardly tell what he is like. One moment he is crying bitterly, and the next he is in fits of laughter; when you look at him again he is perhaps shrieking for fear, and in another minute he is standing on his head for joy. He is so fond of

standing on his head, that people say he had his portrait taken so once (!), and that is why they put a note of exclamation (!) after his words; but that is all nonsense, of course.

"Interjection!" said the Judge, sternly, "you are the last of all the Parts-of-Speech, and have no business to interrupt the court now. Let me not hear you again until your turn comes."

"Alas! alas!" cried Interjection, wringing his hands. "Mr. Parsing says I am only a poor little fellow thrown in (that is what my name interjection means, *thrown in*), to express surprise or fear, joy or sorrow. When folks do not know what to say next, one of my little words pops in, and poor Mr. Parsing is at his wit's end to know what to do with it, ah! ah! Off! off!" he cried, changing his tone, and suddenly jerking himself out of the policeman's hold. "Away! away!" he shouted, springing to the door; and before they could catch him he was indeed away, and they heard his "ha! ha! ha!" die away in the distance.

Serjeant Parsing then turned to the Schoolroom-shire folks, and asked them to mark off on their slates places for Mr. Noun, Pronoun, Adjective, and little Article, and a corner somewhere for tiresome Interjection; and while he read to them, to put down a stroke in the right place for each word that they knew. "And when you come to an adjective-pronoun used *with* a noun," continued Serjeant Parsing, "put a stroke on the line that divides Adjective's ground from Pronoun's. That will be like a little man sitting astride on the wall, with one leg for Pronoun to pull and one for Adjective. Of course if it is used *instead* of a noun, and not with one, then Mr.

Pronoun must have the stroke all to himself. Whichever Part-of-Speech gets the most strokes gains the game."

This is what Serjeant Parsing read.

"Alas! alas! that naughty boy," said Harry's mother, as she waited for him to come back from school. "He must have gone to play with the other boys at the big pond, and he will certainly fall in, for the boys are sure to try the ice, and it is too thin to bear them yet. Oh! my poor, dear boy! what shall I do? If he falls into the black, cold water, he will certainly be drowned. My darling Harry! ah! why does he not come home? If I had any one to send. . . . Why, there he is, I declare, with his hands full of oranges. Oh! the naughty boy! I will give him a great scolding. To give me a fright, and keep me waiting while he was buying oranges! Harry, you are a naughty, careless, tiresome – What! kissing me, you little rogue, to stop my mouth. There! there! do not pull down my hair, and never give your poor mother such a fright again; and now come in and see the lovely Christmas-box I have for you."

Chapter VIII

Dr. Verb



he next Part-of-Speech called up before Judge Grammar, to give an account of himself, was Dr. Verb.

He came bustling up with an air of great importance.

"My lord, my name is Verb. I am called Verb because *verb* means *word*, and the verb is the most important word, *the* word, in fact, in every sentence."

"The *most important* word!" cried Mr. Noun, interrupting him. "My lord, he says the verb is the most important word in every sentence! Why, Dr. Verb, you know that *you* cannot give the name of a single thing, for all names are nouns, and belong to me. The *verb* the most important word, indeed, when I have the name

of everything!"

"I know that," answered Dr. Verb, "I know very well that when people want to name a thing they must use a noun. But do you suppose that when they have simply named a thing they have made a sentence? Not a bit of it. To make a sentence you must tell something about the thing that you have named; you must say whether it *is* or *has* or *does* anything, as: 'Ice *is* cold,' 'Puss *has* a tail,' 'Blackbirds *sing*.' *Is, has, sing*, are verbs, and so are all words that speak of *being*, *having*, or *doing*, and without some such word you cannot make a sentence."

"You think so. Dr. Verb," said the Judge, "but I should like it to be proved. Brother Parsing, just call some of the other Parts-of-Speech forward, and let them try to make a sentence without Dr. Verb."

"I will, my lord," answered Serjeant Parsing. "Noun, Adjective, and Article, be kind enough to step forward, and each of you give me a word."

"*Sun,*" said Mr. Noun.

"*Bright,*" said Adjective.

"*The,*" said little Article.

"Very good," said Serjeant Parsing, "now I will put them together; *'sun bright the;' 'the bright sun;' 'the sun bright.'* They do not seem to make quite a proper sentence, my lord, any way."

"Of course not," said Dr. Verb, interrupting; "for when you say *'the bright sun,'* which sounds the best of the three ways, you still have not made a sentence, for you have not said whether the bright sun is shining, or is not shining, or whether you can see it, or what it does. *'The sun bright'* of course is

nonsense; but say the sun *is* bright, and then you tell a fact about the sun, and you have made a sentence fit to set before the king."

"You had better try Mr. Noun again. Brother Parsing," said Judge Grammar. "Perhaps he can give you a more convenient word."

Serjeant Parsing turned again to Mr. Noun, and asked for another word.

"*Hippopotamus,*" answered Mr. Noun. Mr. Adjective gave *fat*.

"Now, little Article, give me *a*," said Serjeant Parsing, "and I will put them together. '*Hippopotamus fat a;*' '*a fat hippopotamus;*' '*a hippopotamus fat.*' H'm! it sounds odd."

"'*A fat hippopotamus*' does not sound wrong," put in Mr. Noun.

"Not wrong, of course," answered Dr. Verb. "You may mention a fat hippopotamus, if you like, or any other animal, but unless you tell something about it you have not made a sentence. Say that it *is*, or *has*, or *did* something, if you want to make a sentence; like 'a fat hippopotamus is here;' or 'a hippopotamus has a fat body;' or, 'a hippopotamus ate me up,' or, 'swam away,' or something of that sort. Then you will have some famous sentences, but you will have had to use verbs to make them, for *is, has, ate, swam,* are all verbs, for they are all words that speak of *being, having,* or *doing*."

"How can we always find out if a word is a verb?" asked Serjeant Parsing.

"It is sure to be a verb if you can put a little to before it,"

answered Dr. Verb; *"to be, to have, to do, to eat, to drink, to swim, to fly, to speak, to think, to run, to dance, to play, to sing, to sleep, to wake, to laugh, to cry, to call, to fall;"* and Dr. Verb stopped, quite out of breath.

"That sounds very easy," said Serjeant Parsing. "Let me try it with the words that you said were verbs; *to is, to has, to ate, to swam*."

"Stop, stop," cried Dr. Verb; "not like that. You must not put to before any part of the verb you like. *Is* is part of the verb *to be*, *has* is part of the verb *to have*."

"*Is,* part of the verb *to be*?" said Serjeant Parsing. "What do you mean? why, the two words have not a single letter alike."

"True; but still they mean the same sort of thing. When a countryman says 'he *be* a brave lad,' he means the same thing as 'he *is* a brave lad; 'or when he says,' 'I *be* too tired,' he means, 'I *am* too tired.' *Is* and *am* ought to be used according to the laws of Grammar-land instead of *be*, but as they both express something about being they are said to be parts of the verb *to be*. In the same way *has* is part of the verb *to have*, *ate* is part of the verb *to eat*, and *swam* is part of the verb *to swim*.

"That is very learned, I daresay," said Serjeant Parsing, "but will you kindly tell us. Dr. Verb, how we are to guess that *am*, or any other word that has neither a *b* nor an *e* in it, is part of the verb *to be*?"

"You cannot *guess*, of course," retorted Dr. Verb, sharply. "I never said you were to guess. You must use your reason, to find out whether they have the same sort of meaning. Or if you like it better, learn the song that Mr. Pronoun and I have

made up, to bring in all the different parts of the verb."

"A song?" said Judge Grammar, in surprise. "I did not know that you could sing, Dr. Verb; but let us hear your song, by all means."

"If you will not interrupt me, my lord, I will give you three verses of it," answered Dr. Verb.

"No, we will not interrupt," said the Judge.

So Dr. Verb began: —

The Song of the Verb "To Be"

Present Tense

I am	We are
Thou art	You are
He is	They are

Past Tense

I was	We were
Thou wast	You were
He was	They were

Future Tense

I shall be	We shall be
Thou wilt be	You will be
He will be	They will be

When he had finished, every one burst out laughing.

"And you call that singing, do you. Dr. Verb?" said the Judge.

"Dr. Syntax, there, calls it *conjugating*, I believe," said Dr. Verb; "but I think *singing* is a prettier and easier name for it."

"But it is not a song at all," said the Judge, nearly laughing again; "there is no tune in it, and no rhyme."

"It is the best that Pronoun and I could make alone," said Dr. Verb, angrily. "But it can be easily made to rhyme if the other Parts-of-Speech will help. Listen.

Present Tense

I am an Englishman merry and bold,
Thou art a foreigner out in the cold,
He is a beggar-man hungry and old;
We are not happy to see you out there,
You are too snug and warm ever to care.
They are at home with us now, I declare."

"That will do," interrupted the Judge; "we do not want to hear any more to-day. Another day I shall want to know what you mean by calling the verses *Present Tense, Past Tense,* and *Future Tense* — why you have just six of your words in each tense, — and whether other verbs can be *conjugated* m the same way."

"I can answer at once that they can, my lord," said Dr. Verb. "Indeed, very few verbs change as much as the verb *to be*, so that they are all easier to *conjugate*; as, *I have, thou hast, he has; we have, you have, they have, I live, thou livest, he lives; we live, you live, they live,"'*

"Enough for to day, Dr. Verb," interrupted the Judge once more; "we will hear about them next time. Meanwhile, as we shall have further examination of this verb *to be*, I should like my friends in Schoolroom shire to make a copy of it, to bring

with them. I shall also request them to find out all the verbs in the following verses: —

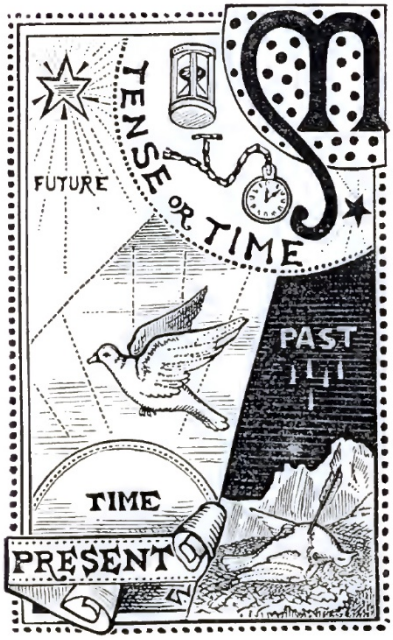
"Sit to your task," a father said,
"Nor play nor trifle, laugh nor talk,
And when your lesson well is read.
You all shall have a pleasant walk."
He left the room, the boys sat still.
Each gravely bent upon his task.
But soon the youngest, little Will,
Of fun and nonsense chose to ask.
"My ball is lost," the prattler cried,
"Have either of you seen my ball?"
"Pray mind your book," young Charles replied,
"Your noisy words disturb us all."

The court then rose.



Chapter IX

Dr. Verb's Three Tenses and Number and Person



Now, Dr. Verb," said Judge Grammar, the next day, "we have well examined this that you call your 'Song of the Verb To Be.'"

"Conjugation, my lord, if you like," said Dr. Verb, bowing.

"I *do* like, certainly," replied the Judge. "Conjugation is a much better word than *song* — longer and more respectable, and in every way."

Dr. Verb's Tenses and Number and Person, more suited to Grammar-land. Con-ju-ga-tion — this conjugation of the verb 'to be.' We require you to explain it."

"With pleasure, my lord. You see, it is divided into three

verses."

"Verses!" exclaimed Serjeant Parsing. "You know it is not to be called a song, Dr. Verb."

"Quite so, quite so," said Dr. Verb, bowing again.

"Well, Tenses, then. It is divided into three tenses, the Present Tense, the Past Tense, and the Future Tense, which mean the present time, the past time, and the future time; and your lordship knows that all time must be either present time, or past time, or future time. Just as when you are reading a book. There is the part you have read, that is the past; the part you are going to read, that is the future; and the part you are reading now, that is the present."

"We understand," said Judge Grammar; "but pray explain why you divide your *verbs* into these three parts."

"To show how my verbs change when they have to mark the present, past, or future time. You see, the verb 'to be' takes *am* for the present, *was* for the past, and adds on *will* or *shall* for the future. I *am* in the present time talking to your lordship. I *was* in the past time talking to your lordship. I *shall be* in the future time talking to your lordship."

"Indeed, I hope not," cried the Judge, putting his hands to his ears. "Pray do not go on forever talking to me. I have heard quite enough of your voice already. Step back, and allow Mr. Pronoun to take your place, and explain the rest of the conjugation to us."

"Allow me to say one thing more," said Dr. Verb. "Please, Mr. Parsing, whenever you see a *will* or *shall*, or any other little verb put in to show the time, will you remember that it is only

a little helping verb, used to make up the tense of some other verb, and therefore to be counted in with that, and not taken alone."

"Just give an example of what you mean," said Serjeant Parsing; "I do not quite understand."

"I mean to say that when you see 'he will go,' you must take *will go* as part of the verb *to go*; and when you see *am coming, was dancing, has eaten, had fought*, you must take them as parts of the verbs *to come, to dance, to eat, to fight.* The first words, *am, was, has, had*, are very good and respectable words by themselves, of course; but when they are used with another verb, they are never offended if you just take them as part of that other verb."

"Thank you. I will remember," said Serjeant Parsing, laughing. "Now please to stand back, and allow Mr. Pronoun to answer. — Mr. Pronoun, pray why do you use these particular six words, *I, thou, he, we, you,* and *they,* to make up Dr. Verb's tenses?"

"I use *I* and *we*," answered Pronoun, "to stand for the first person; *thou* and *you* to stand for the second person; and *he* and *they* to stand for the third person."

"What do you mean by the first person?" asked Serjeant Parsing.

"My lord," answered Mr. Pronoun, turning to Judge Grammar, "may I ask you who is the first person in Grammarland?"

"*I* am, of course," answered the Judge.

"That is what I find all my friends answer," said Pronoun.

"When I ask them who is the most important, the first person in the world to them, they say *I* am; so my little *I* stands for the person who is speaking about himself, and I call it the *first* person."

"Then who is the *second* person?" asked the Judge.

"*You* are, my lord," answered Pronoun, bowing politely.

"You said just now that *I* was the *first* person," said the Judge.

"Yes, my lord," replied Mr. Pronoun, putting his hand on his breast; "*I* first, and *you* second."

"But it ought to be *I* first, and *you* second," said the Judge, angrily.

"That is exactly what I said, my lord," repeated Pronoun. "*I* first, and *you* second."

The Judge was getting so angry, that Pronoun's friends began to tremble for his head, when suddenly Dr. Syntax rose and said: "The first person is always the person speaking, and the second is the person spoken to. Let every one in the court say, '*I* am the first,' and we shall all be right, and all satisfied."

"*I* first, *we* first," they all shouted; "and *you, you, you*, only the second."

The noise was tremendous, and the Judge, finding himself only one against a number, thought he had better turn the subject; and clapping his hands loudly, to call for silence, he called out:

"But if we are all firsts and seconds, pray where is the third person to go?"

"Oh, the third person," said Pronoun, contempt-uously,

"is only the one we are talking about. He may not be here, so it cannot matter if we call him only the third person."

"And what is the use of your having pronouns to stand for all these three persons in Dr. Verb's tenses?" asked Serjeant Parsing.

"Dr. Verb and I agree together to alter our words according to the person they represent," said Mr. Pronoun. "When my pronoun is in the first person. Dr. Verb has to make his verb in the first person too. He has to say *am* when I have put *I*, and *are* when I have put *we*, *I is*, or *we art*, would make Dr. Syntax there very angry."

"And he would be rightly angry," replied the Judge. "You know that very well."

"Oh, I am not complaining, my lord," answered Pronoun; "I was merely stating a fact. Of course I am rather pleased than otherwise that Dr. Verb should have to alter his words to make them agree with mine. My pronouns show the person (that is why, you know, they are called personal pronouns), and then Dr. Verb has to make his words agree with them."

"Very fine!" remarked Serjeant Parsing, "But tell us, Mr. Pronoun, why, when there are only three different persons, you should have six different pronouns in each tense?"

"Three of them are for the singular number, standing for only one — *I, thou, he*," replied Pronoun; "and the other three are for the plural number, standing for as many as you like — *we, you, and they.*"

"Singular number only one, *I, thou, he;* plural number more than one, *we, you, they*; — that is it, is it not, Mr.

Pronoun?" asked Serjeant Parsing.

"Yes, sir," replied Pronoun, "that is it exactly; I could not have explained it better myself. And whatever number the pronoun is, that the verb must be also."

"You mean that when the pronoun only stands for one thing or person, then both it and the verb that comes after it are said to be in the singular number: is it not so?" said Serjeant Parsing.

"Quite so, Mr. Parsing," said Pronoun, delighted; "the verb has to agree with the pronoun in number, just as it has to do in person. If my pronoun stands for only one, then it and the verb are called singular number; but if my pronoun stands for more than one thing, then it and the verb are said to be in the plural number. You quite understand me, I see, my dear Mr. Parsing, and I am sure you will take care to see that the verb always agrees with me in number and person."

"Whenever it is proper that it should," replied Serjeant Parsing, gravely.

"But it ought always to agree with my words when Ave are conjugating a verb together," said Pronoun, eagerly; "that is the very reason why it is useful to conjugate verbs. In every tense you have the first person, second person, and third person in the singular number ; and the first person, second person, and third person in the plural number ; and then you see how the verb alters each time to agree with the pronoun."

"It does not alter every time," put in Dr. Verb; -'in some tenses it hardly alters at all. Just listen, — 'I had, thou hadst, he had, we had, you had, they had; I lived, thou livedst, he lived,

we lived, you lived, they lived; I sang, thou sangest, he sang, we sang, you sang, they sang; I rang, thou rangest, he rang, we rang, you rang, they rang.'"

"That will do, that will do. Dr. Verb," cried the Judge. "We have had your talking in the past tense, we do not want it in the present tense, and if we should happen to require it in the future tense, we will let you know another time. Instead of talking here, you had much better go to Schoolroom-shire, and help the people there to write out the present, past, and future tenses of the verbs you have mentioned — to have, to live, to sing, to ring; and show them how the words alter, not only to mark the different times, but to agree with Afr. Pronoun's words in number and person.

"I shall be most happy, my lord," said Dr. Verb; "but Air. Pronoun must come too, to help me."

"With great pleasure, my dear Doctor," said Mr. Pronoun, gaily: "there is no one in Grammar-land I can work with so easily as you, because you agree with me so beautifully."

Then, bowing to the Judge, he and Dr. Verb walked out of the court, arm-in-arm, humming the present tense of the verb *to be*, and the Schoolroom-shire people, with their help, easily wrote out the four verbs mentioned, — *to have, to live, to sing,* and *to ring.*

Chapter X

Serjeant Parsing in Schoolroom-Shire Again



efore the court met again, Serjeant Parsing paid another visit to Schoolroom-shire.

"My dear young friends," he said, "will you kindly get your slates, and divide them into four parts, writing at the top of each part, the name of Mr. Noun, Mr. Pronoun, Mr. Adjective, and Dr. Verb. Then cut off two corners somewhere, for little ragged Article and Interjection. Then listen to the following story, and when any word that you know is read out, give a mark to the Part-of-Speech to whom it belongs. If you come to an adjective-pronoun, of course you must put a little man astride between Mr. Pronoun's ground and Mr.

Adjective's; and whenever you come to a verb, please to say whether it is in the present, past, or future tense. When you have done, we will count up, and see which Part-of-Speech has gained the most marks.

"This is the story: —

"The Two Neighbours.

"A man lived by his labour; and as he had strong arms and a brave heart, he supported, easily, his wife, his little children, and himself.

"But a famine came upon the land, and work failed.

"The man spent all the money which he had saved, until he had not a penny to buy food for his children.

"Then he went to a rich neighbour, and said: 'My little children are crying for food, and I have no bread to give them. Help me.'

"And the rich man said: —

"'I am a just man; I always pay my debts; but I owe you no money. Go! I cannot give you chanty.'

"Then the poor man went to another neighbour, almost as poor as himself.

"'Give me food for my little children,' he said.

"'Brother,' said the poorer neighbour, 'we have not much ourselves, but you shall share with us as long as a crust of bread remains.'

"Then they divided between them the little food that was left, and that food lasted until the hard times had passed."

Chapter XI

The Nominative Case



The next day, Dr. Verb came bustling into the court, looking very cross, and calling out loudly for justice.

"What is the matter?" asked the Judge; "state your case quietly."

"It is not *my* case, it is Pronoun's case, that is the matter," answered Dr. Verb; "though I do not say it is his fault. We should get on very well if people would only mind their own business."

"If you will not tell me the state of the case clearly, I cannot help you," said the Judge.

"Well, my lord, if you will listen for a minute, I will try to explain it, so that every one can understand. As you know very

well, I am constantly agreeing with Mr. Pronoun. I showed you how I alter to suit his number and person, and it is only fair that he should alter sometimes to suit me. I only agree with him when he is in the 'Nominative Case.'"

At the words "Nominative Case" there was a real cry of horror from nearly every one in court. You might have thought they had all turned into interjections, they made such a fuss.

"Nominative Case!" cried Noun; "shame, shame!"

"Shameful! awful! shocking!" cried Adjective.

"Fie! fie! fie!" cried Interjection, and turned three times over head and heels.

"Pray do not use such words. Dr. Verb," said Judge Grammar, "but tell us what you mean."

"Really, my lord," said Dr. Verb, "I did not mean any harm. Nominative is not such a *very* long word, that people should make such a fuss about it. I am sure the ladies and gentlemen of the jury will not be angry at my using it."

"That depends on how you explain it," said the Judge; "What does it mean?"

"It means the person or thing that *is* or *does* whatever my verb says about him. *The cat purrs*. It is the cat that does what the verb mentions. You have only to put 'who' before the verb in any sentence, and the answer will give you the Nominative. 'Who purrs?' The answer is the *cat*, so *cat* is the nominative to the verb *purrs*. That is the way that *I* find out whom I am to make my verb agree with."

"Is that your way, Brother Parsing?" asked the Judge.

"Yes, my lord," answered Serjeant Parsing, "that is my way,

and therefore, of course, it is the best way. My way is always the best way. Now there is a sentence all ready for you: *My way is always the best way.* I'll find the nominative before you can dot an i, '*What* is always the best way? 'Answer, *my way* is always the best way; — so *my way* is the Nominative."

"But you asked 'what?' not 'who?' there, Brother Parsing," remarked the Judge.

"Because *way* is a thing, not a person, my lord. When we are talking of a thing, then we ask 'what?' instead of 'who?' If you said 'the pudding is boiling in the pot,' I should say '*what* is boiling?' not '*who* is boiling?' for I should hope you would not be boiling a *person* in a pot, unless you were the giant in Jack and the Beanstalk."

"Fi! fo! fum!" said Interjection, standing on his head, and clapping his heels together.

"Silence, sir!" cried the Judge. "Brother Parsing, please not to talk about giants till we have done with the Nominative Case. Has any gentleman anything more to explain about it? "

"Please, my lord," said Pronoun, "Dr. Verb complains that he has to agree with me when I am in the Nominative Case. But he has to agree with Mr. Noun just as much. It is no matter what part of speech stands as the Nominative in a sentence. Dr. Verb must agree with it; so he need not grumble at me more than at any one else."

"I am not grumbling at you –" Dr. Verb began.

"Wait a minute, Dr. Verb," interrupted the Judge; "Let us first fully understand this case. You say there is a verb in every sentence?"

"Certainly, my lord," said Verb.

"And there is a Nominative in every sentence?"

"Exactly so, my lord," answered Serjeant Parsing.

"And this Nominative may be a noun or a pronoun?" continued the Judge.

"It may, my lord," chimed in both Mr. Noun and Mr. Pronoun.

"And this verb must agree with this Nominative, whether it likes or not?" asked the Judge.

At that question Dr. Syntax suddenly started up like a jack-in-the-box, and standing bolt upright, said, "A verb must agree with its Nominative case in number and person. A verb must agree with its Nominative case in number and person;" and then sank down again.

"Ah!" said the Judge. "Very good. So you see, Dr. Verb, when you have a sentence like 'ducks swim in ponds,' you are first to find your own word swim, then to put *who* or *what* before it — 'who swim?' or 'what swim?' The answer will be *ducks*, the Nominative. Then you are to be sure that the verb agrees with it. You must say 'ducks swim,' not 'ducks swims;' and as ducks is the third person and plural number, swim will be third person and plural number too."

"Please, my lord," said Pronoun, "when I am Nominative you need very seldom take the trouble to ask any question to find out the Nominative, for most of my words show at once what they are in. *I, thou, he, she, we,* and *they* will never allow themselves to be used except as Nominatives. They were born Nominatives, they say, and will not degrade themselves by

being anything else. They are rather angry with *you* for letting people use *him* in any way they like, but he is a good-natured little fellow, and does not mind any more about the case than he does about being called singular when he is really plural. But *I, thou, he, she, we,* and *they,* are exceedingly particular, and always are and will be Nominatives, so you need not ask any question when you see one of them in a sentence."

"You may just as well make it a rule to ask 'who?' or 'what?' in every sentence, to find the Nominative," said Serjeant Parsing. "It is such an easy way of finding the case that a baby in arms could understand it."

"Tut! tut! tut! tut!" laughed Interjection again.

"Oh! be quiet, do!" said Serjeant Parsing; "and, my lord, if the ladies and gentlemen of Schoolroom-shire like to find out the Nominatives in these verses –"

"Yes," said the Judge; "hand them up, brother. No, do not begin again, Dr. Verb; no more complaints to-day. And remember, friends, that in these lines every verb must have a Nominative, unless there is a little to before the verb. Then it has none — it does not agree with anything. And remember, too, that every noun or pronoun that is in the Nominative case is to get an extra mark on your slates. I wish you good-morning, gentlemen."

So saying, the Judge rose. The verses were handed to the people of Schoolroom-shire, and the court was cleared.

Serjeant Parsing's Verses

The hen guards well her little chicks,

The useful cow is meek;
The beaver builds with mud and sticks,
The lapwing loves to squeak.

In Germany they hunt the boar,
The bee brings honey home;
The ant lays up a winter store,
The bear loves honeycomb.

I lost my poor little doll, dears,
As I played on the heath one day;
And I cried for her more than a week, dears,
But I never could find where she lay.

The maidens laughed, the children played,
The boys cut many capers.
While aunt was lecturing the maid,
And uncle read the papers.

Chapter XII

Adverb



Dr. verb;" said Judge Grammar, next day, "I am ready to hear what is your great complaint against Pronoun."

"Why, my lord, when he is in the Objective Case —"

"I object, I object!" exclaimed the Judge, while a general murmur of disapproval ran through the court. "No, no, we have had enough with the Nominative Case; we will not have another case brought in. You ought to be ashamed of yourself, sir, to keep us listening to your nonsense about an Objective case, while your devoted friend Adverb is waiting to be heard. Sit down, and let Adverb speak."

"Devoted friend!" muttered Dr. Verb, as he obeyed. "I am sure I often wish he would leave me alone. He sticks on to me so tight sometimes, that we look like one instead of two, and he is a good weight to carry. Besides, he is always teasing by asking *why*, and *when*, and *how* everything is done. Friend, indeed!"

But Adverb did not hear what Dr. Verb was muttering. He came forward, bowing politely, and rubbing his hands together, as if he were washing them.

"*Very much* obliged, indeed," he said, smoothly; "very kind of my friend Dr. Verb to give way to me! *So* like him!"

"You seem to be fonder of him than he is of you," remarked the Judge. "Pray, why do you follow him so closely?"

"I like to hear what he says, and to point out to others *how exceedingly well* he speaks," answered Adverb.

"He is always exaggerating my words," grumbled Dr. Verb. "If I say I like anything, Adverb puts in *very much indeed,* or *extremely well*, or some such silly words; or, if he is in a bad temper, then he flatly contradicts me, and says, *no,* or *not,* or *never*. If I say will, he adds *not*, and makes it *will not*; if I say can, he makes it *cannot*, even sticking his word on to mine as if it were part of it. Sometimes he does worse. He actually dares to alter my word after he has stuck his tail on to it, and so he makes *will not* into *won't, cannot* into *can't*, *shall not* into *shan't*, and so on. The *wo'* and *ca'* and *sha'* is all he has left me, and the *n't* is his."

"Has he always treated you in this way?" asked the Judge.

"As long as I can remember, my lord," answered Dr. Verb.

"That is why, when we were at school together, the boys called him *Adverb*, because he was always *adding* his words on to mine. And he has kept the name ever since."

"Your lordship must remember," remarked Adverb, in a mild tone, still rubbing his hands very smoothly together, "that Dr. Verb is *rather* out of temper this morning, and is, *perhaps*, *not quite* just. For *indeed* it is a fact that I make his words *much more* useful than they *otherwise* would be. Besides, I treat Mr. Adjective in *much* the same way, and he does not complain."

"It is quite true," remarked Adjective, coming forward, delighted to get a chance of using his tongue; "it is quite true that Adverb has his word to say about me, just as much as about Dr. Verb. He is always putting *very, quite, more, most,* and words of that sort, before my adjectives, and exaggerating them: as, *very* beautiful, *quite* charming, *more* obstinate, *most* provoking, and I do not complain of him for that. But one thing I do complain of, my lord, and that is, that Adverb will take my words, right good adjectives, stick a *ly* on to them, and call them his adverbs. For instance, he takes *bright*, puts *ly* to it, and makes it *brightly*; he takes *bad*, and makes it *badly*; *nice*, and makes it *nicely*; *beautiful*, and makes it *beautifully*!'

Judge Grammar at this held up his forefinger, and solemnly shook his head, till he nearly shook his wig off.

"Mr. Adjective, Mr. Adjective!" he said, "I am surprised at you. You complain of Adverb for doing the very thing that you do yourself. We all know that you keep your pockets full of tails ready to stick on to your neighbours' words — *ful, ous, able, like, ly,* and plenty more, and you use them as often as you can

with other people's words. But when Adverb uses his one little *ly* with *your* words, then you are up in arms directly. And yet you know very well that according to the laws of Grammar-land every Part-of-Speech may make as many new words out of old ones as he likes, and is to be praised, not blamed, for it. Adverb may put his *ly* on to as many of your words as he can, and you have no right to find fault. I wonder at both you and Dr. Verb. You ought to agree with Adverb better."

"We none of us agree with him," remarked Pronoun, "nor he with us."

"He certainly has no number, or person, or case," replied the Judge; "but he is none the worse for that. He gives Serjeant Parsing less trouble than some of you. What did you say about asking questions, Adverb?"

"I teach the game of *how, when,* and *where*," replied Adverb; "*how, when,* and *where,* are all my words, and so are the answers to them.

> How do you like it? pray you tell?
> *Not too much, extremely well.*
> When do you like it, tell me when?
> *To-day, to-morrow, now,* and *then.*
> Where do you like it, answer fair?
> *Here* and *there* and *everywhere.*

All these words that answer *how*, *when*, and *where*, are mine," continued Adverb, "and so are the forfeit words *yes, no,* or *nay*."

"Ah! but *black*, *white*, and *grey* are mine," said Adjective,

interrupting; "and please, your lordship, you were mistaken in saying that Adverb has only one tail, *ly*, to put on to other people's words. What do you think of *upwards, downwards, homeward, forward?*"

"Yes, they are certainly adverbs," said the Judge, "and you might say that *wards* and *ward* are the tails he has added on to *up, down, home, for*; but these words are not yours, Mr. Adjective, so you have no right to interfere."

"Well, my lord," replied Adjective, "at any rate I have a right to speak about *once, twice, thrice*, for Adverb has stolen them from my *one, two, three*."

"*Once, twice, thrice*," repeated the Judge; "is that all?"

"He has not got a word for four times," answered Adjective; "*once, twice, thrice*, and *away*, is all that he can say."

"Then I think," said the Judge, " that you ought to be ashamed to grudge them to him, when you have *one, two, three*, and as many more as you can count; besides *first, second, third, fourth*, and all that list. I do not like such greedy ways, and as a punishment, I order you to hand up a list of adjectives to be turned into adverbs. Our friends may take them to Schoolroom-shire and put a ly to each of them; then they will be adverbs, and will answer to one of Adverb's questions, *how, when,* or *where*."

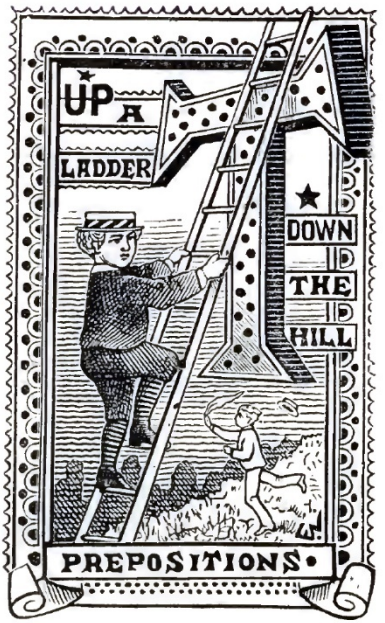
This is the list Mr. Adjective made out.

quick	sudden	pretty
bright	late	dainty
soft	punctual	funny

strong	regular	free
distinct	sly	happy
clear	cunning	awful
neat	false	
sharp	true	

Chapter XIII

Preposition



o, from, of, for, over, under, on, near, at, by, in, among, before, behind, up, down – Pray, who is the owner of all these little creatures?" said Judge Grammar, the next day. "Mr. Noun, are they yours?"

"No, indeed, my lord," answered Mr. Noun, "they are not the names of any one or anything that I ever heard of."

"Dr. Verb, are they yours?"

"I should not object to having them, my lord," answered Dr. Verb, "if I could do anything with them; but they seem to me neither *to be* nor *to do*, nor *to suffer* any –"

"That will do," interrupted the Judge, afraid that Dr. Verb was beginning one of his long speeches. "Mr. Adjective, do you claim them?"

"They do not qualify anything, my lord," answered Adjective; "indeed, they seem to me *poor, useless, silly, little –"*

"We do not want you to qualify them, thank you," said the Judge, "but to tell us if they are yours. Article, we know, has only *a* or *an* and *the*, so they cannot be his. Mr. Pronoun, do they belong to you?"

"No, my lord," answered Pronoun. "As Mr. Noun has nothing to say to them, neither have I. They do not stand instead of any name."

"Well," said the Judge, "we know they do not belong to that tiresome little Interjection. Are they yours, Adverb?"

"I should be *extremely* glad to have them, my lord," answered Adverb, smoothly washing his hands, as usual. "I have no doubt I could make them *exceedingly* useful –"

"That is not what I asked," said the Judge; "are they yours?"

"I cannot say they are *exactly* mine," said Adverb; "but –"

"That is all we want to know," interrupted the Judge. Then raising his voice, he continued:" If there is any one in this court to whom these words, 'to, from, of, for,' etc., do belong, let him come forward."

At these words, a sharp, dapper little fellow stepped forward, and looking around the court with a triumphant air, exclaimed, "They belong to me."

"And who are you?"

"Preposition, my lord. My position is just before a noun or pronoun. My words point out to them their proper position. I keep them in order."

"You keep them in order?" said Judge Grammar, looking

down at him through his spectacles; "how can a little mite like you keep Mr. Noun in order?"

"Little or big, my lord, that's what I do," said Preposition. "I settle the position of every one and every thing, and show whether they are to be *on* or *under*, *to* or *from*, *up* or *down* –"

"Kindly forgive me for interrupting you," said Adverb, coming forward. "I really must remark that *up* and *down* are my words."

"How do you make out that?" asked the Judge.

"I will show you *directly*, my lord," answered Adverb. "By the help of my questions *how*, *when*, and *where*, which, you know, I alone can answer. If you say, 'sit up,' I ask, '*how* am I to sit?' The answer is, '*up*.' 'Lie down;' '*how* am I to lie?' 'The answer is, '*down*.' *Up* and *down*, therefore, answer to my question *how*, and are mine."

"Stop a minute," said Preposition. "I also can answer to your favourite questions *how*, *when*, and *where*. Listen: —

How do you like it? tell me true.
Made *with* sugar, dressed *in* blue.
When do you like it? answer me.
At my dinner; *after* tea.
Where do you like it? say, if you're able.
On my lap or *under* the table?"

"Really," said Adverb, smiling politely, "that is *very cleverly* done. But allow me to make just one remark. You have not answered one single question without the help of some other part of speech. Mr. Noun has helped you with 'sugar,' 'dinner,'

'tea,' 'lap,' 'table;' Mr. Adjective lent you 'blue;' Mr. Pronoun, 'my;' and so on. Now I, without any help, answer the questions quite alone."

"You cannot expect a little fellow like me to stand quite alone," said Preposition; "I don't pretend to do it. I told you at first that my right position is before a noun or pronoun, or some such word. All I mean is that I help to answer the questions, and that neither Mr. Noun nor Mr. Pronoun could answer them without me."

"Is that true, Brother Parsing?" asked the Judge.

"Quite true, my lord," answered the learned Serjeant. "When I find the questions 'how?' 'when?' or 'where?' answered by one word alone, I put that word down to Adverb. But when I find them answered by Mr. Noun or Mr. Pronoun, helped by another little word, then I know that that other little word belongs to Preposition."

"Yes, my lord," continued Preposition; "so if you say '*up* a ladder' or '*down* a hill,' *up* and *down* are mine; they show your position on the ladder or the hill ; they are the little prepositions put before Mr. Noun's words *ladder* and *hill*. But, of course, if you were to ask how I am to step *up* or *down*? then Adverb could call up and down *adverbs*, because they are added on to the verb 'step,' and they have nothing to do with a noun or a pronoun."

"*Precisely,*" said Adverb; "my friend Preposition is *perfectly* correct. I *immensely* admire my young friend, although he does not move in *quite so* select a circle as myself."

"Don't I?" said Preposition, with a knowing little nod. "I

think Mr. Noun quite as good company as Dr. Verb, any day. Besides, even grand Dr. Verb is glad enough to have my little *to* to put before his verbs. When he makes up his 'songs,' as he calls them, he always puts my little *to* before the name at the top. He is glad enough to have it to point out his verbs, and does not despise me at all, though I do not stick on to him like a leech, as some people do;" and Preposition nodded his head very fast a great many times at Adverb.

"Dr. Verb does not agree with you, though," remarked Pronoun, quietly.

"No," said Preposition, "I do not alter for him, nor he for me. But he does not agree with Adverb either. Poor Adverb agrees with nobody, and nobody agrees with him; and he, poor fellow! cannot govern anybody, either. Now I govern every noun or pronoun that I come before, for I put them in the Objective Case."

"I object," cried the Judge. "I will not have that word brought into court. I said so before, and I say so again. Nominative Case is bad enough, but Objective Case is enough to turn a brown wig grey in a single night. Break up the court! Critics, clear the room!"

And Judge Grammar rose hastily from his seat, and stalked angrily out, while all the Parts-of-Speech stood looking speechlessly at each other till the policemen came, bundled them all out, and locked the doors behind them.

In spite of the hurry, however, Serjeant Parsing managed to hand up to the people of Schoolroom-shire the following verses, begging the ladies and gentlemen there to find out all

the prepositions in them, and to count how many lines there are in which Preposition has nothing to say.

The Fairy-Ring

Beside a bluebell on the heath,
    Among the purple heather,
A fairy lived, and crept beneath
    The leaves in windy weather.

She drank the dewdrops from the stalk,
    See peeped into the flower;
And then she went to take a walk,
    Or ride for half-an-hour.

She rode upon a cricket's back.
    She came before the Queen,
The fairy Queen, with all her court,
    Within the forest green.

They had a dance upon the grass.
    Till larks began to sing;
And where they danced, as all may know
    They left a fairy-ring.

Oh, pretty fairies! why not stay,
    That we at you may peep?
Why will you only dance and play
    When we are fast asleep?

Chapter XIV

Prepositions Govern the Objective Case



hen the Parts-of-Speech found themselves so suddenly turned out of the court, they collected in a group before the door, and looked at each other in astonishment."

"Here is a pretty thing!" said Mr. Noun, indignantly. A fine way to treat us, indeed!"

"And after all, I only said what is true," said Preposition. "I do put every noun or pronoun that comes after mv words in the Objective Case, do I not. Dr. Syntax?"

"Prepositions govern the Objective Case," said Dr. Syntax, in his usual monotonous voice; then lifting his spectacles, he twisted his head round to look at Preposition, and actually deigned to explain his words by saying: "Whatever noun or

pronoun a preposition is placed before and refers to, must be in the Objective Case."

"Speak to him," murmured Serjeant Parsing, as if he were talking to himself: "*him*, a pronoun, objective case, governed by the preposition *to*."

"Mr. Pronoun, you hear that!" exclaimed Mr. Noun. "This little Preposition is said to govern us, you and me, in the Objective Case. Very impertinent, on my word!"

"On my word!" again muttered Serjeant Parsing. "Word, a noun. Objective Case, governed by the preposition on."

"However, it does not matter to me," continued Mr. Noun, without taking any notice of Serjeant Parsing. "It will make no difference to me;" and he turned away, with his hands in his pockets, and began to whistle a tune.

"It does matter to me, though," said Pronoun, "for I have to alter my words according to the case they are in. *I* is only in the nominative case, me in the objective; *we* is nominative, *us* objective; *he* nominative, *him* objective, and so on. You cannot say 'look at *I*;' you must say 'look at *me*:'"

"Look at me," echoed Serjeant Parsing, in the same quiet tone: "*Me*, Objective Case, governed by the preposition *at*."

"Quite so," continued Pronoun, turning to Serjeant Parsing. "I am objective there, I cannot help it; I must be objective after a preposition."

"Yes," said Serjeant Parsing, aloud, "and it is very convenient for me that you must. It often helps me to find out whether a word is really a preposition or no. I just try whether it wants *I* or *me* after it. Take *when* or *if*, for instance. You can

say, when *I* go, if *I* were; so when and if are not prepositions. But you cannot say 'for *I*,' or 'from *I*;' you must have the Objective Case, and say for *me*, from *me*; so *for* and *from* are prepositions governing the Objective Case."

"You had better take care," said Preposition; "you keep on saying Objective Case, and if you say it before Judge Grammar, you know you will get us all into trouble again."

"Oh, never fear," said Serjeant Parsing; "the Judge will listen to us patiently enough, next time. Besides, he must hear about Objective Case, whether he likes it or no, because the prize will partly depend upon it."

"The prize! what prize?" cried every one.

"Listen. There is to be a grand trial or examination soon. All the Schoolroom-shire children are to be invited, and all you Parts-of-Speech are to make up a story between you. You will each get a mark for every word you give, and whoever gets the most marks will get –"

"Yes, what? what will he get?" they all cried out eagerly.

"Ah! that is a secret. What I want to tell you is, that any word that governs another will get an extra mark. For instance, when I say 'Listen to me,' the preposition *to* puts *me* in the Objective Case, so *to* will get an extra mark."

"That is splendid!" cried little Preposition, clapping his hands and jumping about for joy. "I always govern a noun or pronoun in the Objective Case, so I shall get two marks every time I come in."

"Not quite so sure," interrupted Dr. Verb. "Sometimes you come before a verb, *to* eat, *to* sleep, *to* fly, and then you can

only get one mark, for you do not govern me, my little dear, seeing that verbs do not have a case at all."

"Ah, but you have to agree with your Nominative Case, Dr. Verb," said Pronoun; "so I suppose, when I am nominative, I shall have an extra mark, for I might be said to govern you in a sort of way."

"No, no," said Serjeant Parsing, putting in his word, "you are not said to govern Dr. Verb; he agrees with you, that is all; but the Nominative Case, being a very honourable one, will always get two marks."

"Then," said Mr. Noun, suddenly stopping his whistling and taking an interest in the conversation, "I am of course to get two marks for every noun in the Nominative Case?"

"Certainly," answered Serjeant Parsing.

"And in the Objective Case also?" asked Mr. Noun.

"No, no," said Serjeant Parsing, laughing; "that would be too much of a good thing, since your words are nearly always either nominative or objective. No, no; on the contrary, the Objective Case, being governed by other words (even such little trifles as prepositions), is not considered at all an honourable case, and therefore will not only give a noun or pronoun no extra marks, but will take away one of those it already has. For instance, if I am parsing 'Come to me,' and I give Mr. Pronoun a mark for *me*, I must strike out that mark as soon as I find that *me* is in the Objective Case, and must give it to Preposition for his little word *to*, which governs *me*."

Mr. Noun and Mr. Pronoun both looked very dismal at these tidings, and then Mr. Noun said: —

"I hope no one else except Preposition can put me into the Objective Case."

"O yes, indeed, I can," cried Dr. Verb, bustling up, eagerly; but Serjeant Parsing stopped him.

"No, no. Dr. Verb," he said, "we are not going to begin that question. No notice will be taken of any noun or pronoun's being in the Objective Case, unless it is governed by a preposition. That is the rule for this trial; another time, perhaps, your rights will be considered."

Serjeant Parsing then took the following lines to Schoolroom-shire, that every Objective Case governed by a preposition might be found out: —

Tom called for me, I went with him,
We climbed upon a rock;
There over the sea we looked for thee,
Till seven of the clock.
And then a white sail over the main.
Brought back our sailor-boy again.

Fill up the blanks with a noun or pronoun, and say whether it will be nominative or objective.

_____ went for a walk yesterday, _____ walked through a dark _____ under tall _____; suddenly, when _____ were in a very lonely _____, _____ heard the steps of some _____ crashing through the _____. "What can it be?" _____ cried. _____ stopped to listen; the _____ came nearer, two bright eyes gleamed at us through the _____, and in another _____ out bounded, with a deep _____ that made echoes all round

us, our own dear old _____, who had broken his chain, escaped from the _____, and had come out to look for _____.

Chapter XV

Conjunction



y lord," said Serjeant Parsing, the next time that the court assembled, "I must beg for your assistance. I have here a story — a very excellent story, as it seems to me; but somehow or other it will not go right — it has what you might call a jerky sound — as if you were riding over a corduroy road in a cart without springs, and were trying to talk between the bumps. I have asked all the Parts-of-Speech that are in court to help me, but none of them can give me any assistance."

"Read the story aloud," said the Judge, "and let us hear it."

So Sergeant Parsing read —

"The Eagle . . . . the Raven.

"An eagle pounced on a little lamb . . . . carried it off in his

claws. A raven saw him fly . . . . thought he could do the same; . . . . he chose out the best . . . . biggest sheep of the flock, ... pounced down upon it; . . . . lo! . . . . behold! it was much too heavy . . . . it was much bigger . . . . himself, ... poor Mr. Raven only got his claws entangled in the wool . . . . when he tried to fly away he found it impossible to get free . . . . he was struggling . . . . the shepherd came . . . . caught him . . . . put him in a cage."

"I see, I see," said the Judge, "you want some words to join your sentences together. Noun, Pronoun, Article, Adjective, Verb, Adverb, Preposition, none of these will do. I have only two other Parts-of-Speech left on my list: that tiresome Interjection, who is, of course, no use, and Con—"

"Conjunction! Here you are, my lord," said a bright cheery voice at the door, and Conjunction walked into court.

He had on a coat with brass buttons, and a cap like a railway guard's, with C. J. marked on the front. Under his arm he had a bundle of iron hooks or tools — at least what you would have thought were iron hooks or tools, if you had seen them down in Matter-of-fact-land, and had not known any better. They were really his words.

"You are late, sir," said the Judge, very sternly; "where have you been?"

"To tell you the truth, my lord," answered Conjunction, "I have been for a little holiday trip on the Grammar-land Railway. The fact is, my turn was so long in coming, and the last time I was here your lordship broke up the court in such a temp—"

"A what, sir?" interrupted the Judge, angrily.

"A hurry, my lord, — in such a hurry, that I did not think we should meet again for some time; and so I just amused myself by a trip on the railway, where I am so often at work."

"Very improper, indeed!" replied the Judge, "as if you were made to amuse yourself. Such a thing was never heard of before in Grammar-land. Ask Dr. Syntax whether conjunctions are used for amusement."

"Conjunctions are used to connect words or sentences," said Dr. Syntax, in his solemn unchanging voice, standing up to speak, and sinking down the moment he had finished.

"There!" said the Judge, "you hear what you are used for — to connect words or sentences — that is your work, and that is just what we have been wanting you for. You have kept the whole court waiting, while you have been taking a holiday, forsooth! Your very cap ought to shame you. Pray what does C. J. stand for?"

"Well, my lord, the folks in Matter-of-fact-land say that it stands for Clapham Junction, which is a big station down there, where a great many railways are joined together; and they say that I am the pointsman, who moves the rails and makes the trains run together, or apart, as the case may be; and I don't know but what that's as good a description of my work as the folks in Matter-of-fact-land could give. Only they ought to understand that our trains in Grammar-land are sentences, and my tools with which I join them together are my words — *and, but, if, also*, and so on. And here they are, Mr. Parsing, and heartily at your service, sir, if you like to make use of them;"

and pulling the bundle from under his arm, Conjunction laid them down before Serjeant Parsing, with a bow.

"Thank you, my man," said Serjeant Parsing, "one at a time, if you please. I will read my story again, and do you hand up a word that will fit, whenever I stop for it."

So he read it again, and Conjunction put in the words as follows: —

"The Eagle *and* the Raven.

"An eagle pounced on a little lamb *and* carried it off in his claws. A raven saw him fly, *and* thought he could do the same; *so* he chose out the best *and* biggest sheep of the flock, *and* pounced down upon it; *but* lo! *and* behold! it was much too heavy, *for* it was much bigger *than* himself, *so* poor Mr. Raven only got his claws entangled in the wool, *and* when he tried to fly away, he found it impossible to get free; *and whilst* he was struggling, the shepherd came *and* caught him *and* put him in a cage."

"Ah," said Judge Grammar, "yes, that is an improvement. I see. Conjunction, you have put in *and, so, but, then, for, whilst.* What other words have you?

"I have *because*, my lord," answered Conjunction. "Mr. Adverb asks 'why?' but I answer 'because,' which is much more useful. Any one can ask 'why?' but it is only a fellow like me, that knows how things work, that can answer 'because.'"

"You need not boast," said the Judge; "you only join the trains together, you know; you do not make them. *Because* is only useful on account of what comes after it; it would not tell us much if it stood alone. But what others have you?"

"I have *if*, my lord; and though it is only a word of two letters, it makes a mighty difference many a time. How happy we should all be *if* we could get just what we want."

"Yes, yes, we know," said the Judge; "'*if*' wishes were horses, beggars would ride;' but it is a very good thing they are not. Now, Conjunction, *if* you have any more words, let us hear them.

"Except that I sometimes use my neighbours' words as conjunctions, my lord," answered Conjunction, "I think I have told you pretty well all. Here is a packet I put together: —

If, because, and, so, that, or,
But, although, as, also, nor."

"One more question," said the Judge; "do you govern or agree with any of your neighbours?"

"Not I, my lord, I leave that for my betters. I am quite satisfied to join them together, and then leave them alone," answered Conjunction.

"Then that will do for to-day. Brother Parsing, be good enough to send the following story to Schoolroom -shire, and tell them to give Conjunction a place on their slates among the other Parts-of-Speech, and mark down all his words for him. When that is done, I shall have some good news to tell you."

The court then rose.

A Narrow Escape

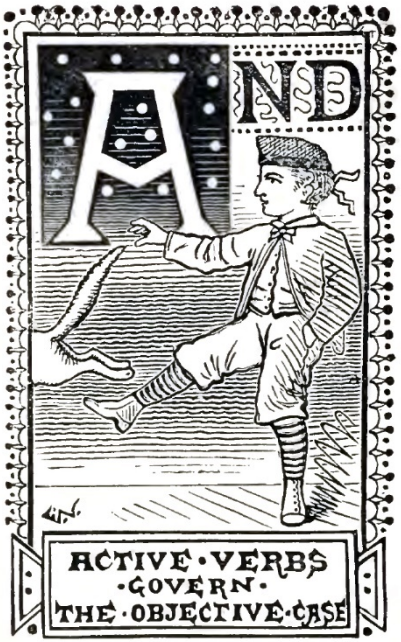
A traveller in India one day strayed away from his companions, and went to sleep under a tree. When he awoke he saw, to his horror, the two bright eyes of a tiger, ready to

spring upon him from a high bank. He leaped up to run away, but fell back again directly, for a large crocodile was coming towards him, with its great mouth open. He shut his eyes and waited in terror, for he heard the tiger spring. A tremendous noise followed; but he felt nothing. He opened his eyes, and lo! the tiger had sprung into the mouth of the crocodile; and while the two wild beasts were struggling, the traveller sprang up and ran away.



Chapter XVI

Active Verbs Govern the Objective Case



now, gentlemen," said Judge Grammar, when next they were assembled. "But what is the matter, Dr. Verb? What is this about?" he asked, interrupting himself, for Dr. Verb had gone down on one knee before the Judge, and was holding out a paper to him. "A petition, your lordship," said Dr. Verb, solemnly; "I beg for justice. No, Preposition, it is of no use to try to hold me back, and to whisper that his lordship will be very angry. You have had your rights given you, and I am going to claim mine. My lord, I beg for the right of an extra mark whenever any word of mine governs a noun or pronoun in the

Objective Case."

At the words "Objective Case," every one in the court held his breath, expecting the Judge to burst into a rage; and certainly a sudden flush did overspread his face, and rise to the very roots of his wig. For a moment he sat silent with compressed lips, then lifting his head haughtily, he said: —

"Do not apologise, Dr. Verb; I forgive you; but on one condition — that you show clearly and at once how to discover an Objective Case that is governed by a verb."

"Certainly, my lord," said Dr. Verb, joyfully; "it is the easiest thing in the world. Just as you have to ask the question, 'who?' or 'what?' *before* the verb, to find out the Nominative Case, so you must ask the question, 'whom?' or 'what?' *after* the verb, to find the Objective Case. For the nominative tells you who did the thing, and the objective tells you to whom the thing was done. Here is an example: — 'Harry kicked the cat.' You ask, 'who kicked?' to find the nominative, and the answer is *Harry*, You ask, 'Harry kicked what?' to find the objective, and the answer is, *the cat.* Is that clear?"

"The cat would certainly object," muttered the Judge; "but I suppose that is not why it is called objective, because if the verb had been *fed*, cat would have been objective all the same. Well, Brother Parsing," he continued aloud, "did Dr. Verb explain the matter clearly? Could you find out the objective in that way?"

"Certainly, my lord," answered Serjeant Parsing, readily. "I will give you an example to prove it. 'I ate my dinner.' I find the nominative by asking 'who ate?' answer: *I*. I find the

objective by asking 'I ate what?' answer: *dinner*; and dinner is clearly the objective, for it was the object for which I sat down to eat."

"Must all verbs have an Objective Case after them?" asked the Judge.

"They cannot all govern the objective," Serjeant Parsing began, when he was interrupted by a solemn voice near him, as Dr. Syntax suddenly rose and said, "Active verbs govern the Objective Case; active verbs govern the Objective Case;" and then sat down again.

"I know what he means by that," said Dr. Verb. "Active verbs are those whose action passes on to some one or something else, as in the sentence, 'Harry kicked the cat,' the action of kicking passed on to the poor cat; and in 'I ate my dinner,' the action of eating passed on and consumed the dinner; so *kick* and *eat* are both active verbs, and govern an Objective Case."

"Well, then," said the Judge, "must all *active* verbs have an Objective Case? "

"They should have one, my lord, if you want to make the sentence complete. You must give them an *object* for their activity. Every active boy can do *something,* though it may not be Latin, and the same with every active verb. If it *is* an active verb you can always put *some one* or *something* after it; as to *eat* something, *drink* something, *see* something, *love* somebody."

"And if the verb is not active?" asked the Judge.

"Then it usually has a preposition between it and the noun or pronoun after it, as, 'I think *of* you.' And the preposition

gets all the honour and glory of governing the Objective Case, and gets an extra mark besides."

"Well," said the Judge, "you have explained it pretty clearly. I suppose I must allow you an extra mark for every verb that governs an Objective Case."

"But, please, my lord," said Mr. Noun, coming forward, "I suppose that Pronoun and I are not to lose a mark for every word of ours that is governed by a verb. That would be very hard."

"No, no," said the Judge. "There is no dishonour in being governed by an active verb; it is only when you allow yourselves to be governed by a little mite like Preposition, that you are to lose a mark."

"Allow ourselves to be governed," muttered Mr. Noun. "As if we could help it, when Dr. Syntax has once made the rule."

"Brother Parsing," said the Judge, "let us have a sentence to 'parse,' as you call it, that we may see clearly how it is done."

"Certainly, my lord," said Serjeant Parsing, turning over his papers. "Here is an excellent sentence, or rather, I should say, two sentences, for there are two verbs: 'Jack suddenly gave a loud cry, for lo! a tiger appeared before him.' Now let each Part-of-Speech claim the word as I read it. *Jack*,"

"Mine," said Mr. Noun. "*Jack* is a proper noun."

"*Suddenly,*" said Serjeant Parsing.

"Certainly *suddenly* is mine," said Adverb, smoothly.

"*Gave,*" said Serjeant Parsing.

"*Gave* is mine," said Dr. Verb, "and it agrees with its nominative. *Jack*, for 'who gave?' *Jack* gave, so *Jack* is the

nominative; and please, Mr. Noun, what number and person is *Jack*, for *gave* must be the same?"

"*Jack* is singular number, of course," said Mr. Noun, "for there is only one Jack mentioned; and it is third person, for you are talking about him, not *to* him, and, of course, he is not talking of himself; my words never do that."

"Oh," said Dr. Verb, "then *Jack* is third person singular, is he? then *gave* is third person singular, too, and it is an active verb, and has an Objective Case. 'Jack gave what?' a *cry* — *cry* is the objective, governed by the active verb gave; so an extra mark for me, please Serjeant Parsing."

"All right," said the learned Serjeant. "*A* is the next word."

"Mine," said little Article.

"*Loud,*" continued Serjeant Parsing.

"*Loud* is mine," said Adjective; "it qualifies *cry* — tells what sort of a cry he gave."

"Good," said Serjeant Parsing; "now, *cry.*"

"Mine," said Mr. Noun; "a common noun this time, and Objective Case; but it does not lose a mark, as it is governed by an active verb, not by a preposition."

"*For,*" continued Serjeant Parsing.

"Mine, sir," said Conjunction; "it joins the sentences. 'Jack gave a loud cry,' *for* 'lo! a tiger appeared before him.'"

"Lo! lo! lo! that is mine," cried little Interjection, before Serjeant Parsing had time to continue.

"*A,*" called out the Serjeant, without noticing him.

"An article, again," said little Article.

"*Tiger,*" continued Serjeant Parsing.

"Mine," said Mr. Noun; "a common noun, but nominative this time to the verb *appeared*."

"You should not tell my words, Mr. Noun," said Dr. Verb. "Please, sir, *appeared* is a verb, not active, because it does not say that the tiger appeared to anybody or anything; it appeared *before* somebody, and that little preposi—"

"Now you're telling, Dr. Verb," cried Preposition.

"Please, sir, *before* is mine — a preposition, showing the position of the tiger with regard to poor Jack, and governing him in the Objective Case; so two marks for me, please, sir."

"One more word," said Serjeant Parsing; *"him."*

"*Him* is mine," said Pronoun, sadly; "it is a personal pronoun, third person and singular number, standing instead of the noun *Jack*; but," he added, with tears in his eyes, "it is of no use to give me a mark for it, as I shall lose it again on account of the case. *Him* is the objective case, governed by the preposition *before;"* and Pronoun turned away with a sob.

"Well, gentlemen," said Judge Grammar, "you see what the learned Serjeant means by 'parsing.' Only let our Schoolroom-shire friends parse a few sentences in the same way, and they will be perfectly prepared for the great trial that is coming on. Brother, pray hand them up a few." Then pulling out his watch, the Judge continued: "I find, gentlemen, that the present time will soon be past, and we shall be stepping into the future if we go on much longer; therefore I must put off, until the next time we meet, the announcement I was going to make to you to-day."

The Judge then left the bench, and Serjeant Parsing

prepared the following sentences for parsing: —

We took a walk in the garden.
I see a bee in your bonnet.
The dragon ate a dragon-fly.
You never saw a blue rose.
Ah! I have a bone in my leg.
I will ride behind you on your horse.
Tom picked a flower for me.
Willy is riding on the rocking-horse.
A spider has eight legs.



Chapter XVII

The Possessive Case; and Who's to Have the Prize?



he court was again assembled, and the Judge was just going to speak, when he stopped — for there was Mr. Noun, who had gone plop down on one knee before him, just as Dr. Verb did before, and was holding out his petition.

"Dear me," exclaimed the Judge, "you too! What can you have to complain of.?"

"I have lost a Case, my lord," said Mr. Noun, still kneeling.

"Get up, sir," said the Judge, "and say out quickly what you mean. Am I never to have done with these tiresome Cases?"

"Please, my lord, it is just this," said Mr. Noun, standing up. "You have seen how my words can be Nominative Case or

Objective Case; but there is a case in which they are neither of these two. For instance, in the sentence, 'The monkey pulled the cat's tail,' — *pulled* is the verb; *monkey* is the nominative, for the monkey did the pulling; *tail* is the objective, for 'what did the monkey pull? 'The tail — but then what case is cat's? It is not nominative nor objective."

"Don't ask me what case it is," said the Judge, indignantly; "say out at once yourself."

"But you will be angry at the long word, my lord," said Mr. Noun.

"Nonsense, sir," said the Judge, getting very red. "Speak at once, when I order you to do so."

"Then *cat's* is said to be in the Possessive Case," said Mr. Noun, "because it shows who possessed the tail that was pulled by the monkey. Any noun that shows to whom a thing belongs — who is the possessor of it — is said to be in the Possessive Case."

"Oh!" said the Judge. "Then if I say, 'This knife belongs to Harry,' *Harry* will be in the Possessive Case, will it?"

"No, my lord," said Mr. Noun, looking a little confused, "because there is a little preposition *to* before Harry, and prepositions –"

"Prepositions govern the Objective Case," said Dr. Syntax, solemnly.

"Yes, yes, we know," said Mr. Noun, impatiently; "but I mean any noun that shows possession, without the help of any preposition, as if you said, 'This is Harry's knife.' *Harry's* is in the Possessive Case, for it shows who possesses the knife, not

by the help of any preposition, but by making it Harry's instead of *Harry*. I might have said in the other sentence, 'The monkey pulled the tail belonging to the cat,' but it is much better and shorter to use a Possessive Case, and say, 'The monkey pulled the cat's tail.'"

"It certainly seems a convenient case," said the Judge.

"It is, my lord," said Mr. Noun; "- and, therefore, I think I have a right to ask for an extra mark for it."

"Oh! that is what you want, is it?" said the Judge. "Well, I will grant your request, provided you can show me an easy way of finding the Possessive Case at once."

"You may always know it by the little apostrophe (') either before or after an s at the end of the word," answered Mr. Noun; "as, 'Mary's doll,' 'Tom's dog,' 'the baby's milk,' 'the children's toys,' 'the boys' hats,' 'the girls' gardens.' Is not that easy, my lord?"

"Yes, that is simple enough," replied the Judge; "therefore, although I think it rather impertinent of you to have brought so many Cases before me, I will grant your request. You are to have then an extra mark for every Nominative Case and for every Possessive Case, but none for the Objective Case; and you will lose a mark every time you are governed by a preposition. Are you satisfied?"

Mr. Noun bowed, and took his seat.

"And now, gentlemen," continued the Judge, addressing the nine Parts-of-Speech, "as you have all appeared before me. and shown clearly who and what you are –"

"And me! oh! oh! poor little me!" cried Interjection.

"I have not called you up before me," said the Judge, sternly, "because we have all heard quite enough about you already. Once is quite enough to have heard such an unruly, odd little creature as you are; and you have thrown yourself in more than once while the people were speaking. We all know that you neither govern nor are governed by any one else, and that you agree with nobody. Therefore, stand aside and be quiet."

"Ah, well!" chuckled Interjection, as he obeyed, "if I do not govern any one, at least I can take my neighbours words, as other people can, and make them my own. Marry! forsooth! indeed! that I can!"

"*Marry* is mine," said Dr. Verb, bustling up.

"Indeed, *indeed* is mine," said Adverb, blandly.

"Pray, do not quarrel with him," said the Judge; "let him have a few words to keep him quiet."

"There is one thing," said Dr. Verb, laughing, "no one would be in a hurry to steal Interjection's words, for they are not worth it. Who could ever make a decent word out of *oh!* or *fie!* or *pshaw!* or *ugh!*"

"Laugh as you like, Dr. Verb," cried Interjection, "my words can stand alone, and make sense all by themselves, and mean as much as a whole string of other words. For instance, when I say 'Fie!' that is as good as saying, 'You ought to be ashamed of yourself;' and when I say 'Ah!' that means, 'I see through all your fine airs and graces. Dr. Verb, and know all about you.' Ha! ha! what do you say to that?" And Interjection once more took a turn over head and heels.

"Keep him quiet, will you," said the Judge. "And now, gentlemen," he continued, for the third time, "I hope we shall all be prepared for the great trial that is to take place this day week. The people of Schoolroom-shire are all invited to attend, and to bring their slates and pencils with them. You all, my nine Parts- of-Speech, will together make up a story which Serjeant Parsing will have in his hand. He will then carefully examine every word, and the children of Schoolroom-shire, who will have a place for each oi you on their slates, will put down a mark to each one who deserves it. In the end, they will count up all the marks, and the Part-of-Speech who has the most will get — will get"

Just at this moment, when every one was listening most anxiously to hear what the prize was to be, clouds of dust were observed arising from behind his lordship's throne. In fact, the critics, tired of doing nothing, had begun to turn out whole piles of mouldering old books, Murray's Grammars, old dictionaries, and I know not what ; and the venerable dust therefrom, getting into his lordship's eyes, nose, and mouth, brought on such a violent fit of coughing and choking, that it was impossible to get another word from him. He did not then, nor has he since, informed his loving subjects what the prize was to be. Therefore, it is left to the children of Schoolroom\ -shire to decide. In examining the following story they must be both judge and jury, and decide not only which Part-of-Speech deserves the most marks, but also what is a fitting reward for the happy being who shall win the great prize of Grammar-land.

Serjeant Parsing s Story for the Examination.

The Sad Fate of Our Squirrel

Once, when I was walking in the garden, I found a young squirrel on the ground at the foot of a tall tree. It had fallen from the nest. I took the little soft warm creature in my hand, and I carried it carefully into the house. There we fed it with warm milk, and it quickly revived. It soon sat up, with its pretty curly tail over its back, and then it rubbed its nose with its paws. It seemed to look to me as if it knew me for a friend. When night came, I made a soft bed for it beside me, and it slept cosily. In the morning, I took it to my cousin. "It wants breakfast," she said; "I will warm some milk for it in my doll's saucepan." So she boiled some milk in a little green saucepan, and we fed our pet. "Ah!" I cried, "is it ill? It is struggling as if it were in pain." We tried to warm it, and we gave it another spoonful of milk; but, alas! the poor little creature gave a pitiful moan, and we soon saw that it was dead. The green paint on the doll's saucepan was poisonous, and we had killed our little squirrel while it was lying in our arms.



STORIES THAT WORDS TELL US

BY

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AUTHOR OF "THE WORLD'S STORY,
"A NURSERY HISTORY OF
ENGLAND," ETC.

STORIES THAT WORDS TELL US.

CHAPTER I.

SOME STORIES OF BRITISH HISTORY TOLD FROM ENGLISH WORDS.

NEARLY all children must remember times when a word they know quite well and use often has suddenly seemed very strange to them. Perhaps they began repeating the word half to themselves again and again, and wondered why they had never noticed before what a queer word it is. Then generally they have forgotten all about it, and the next time they have used the word it has not seemed strange at all.

But as a matter of fact words *are* very strange things. Every word we use has its own story, and has changed, sometimes many times since some man or woman or child first used it. Some words are very old and some are quite new, for every living language—that is, every language used regularly by some nation—is always growing, and having new words added to it. The only languages which do not grow in this way are the "dead" languages

which were spoken long ago by nations which are dead too.

Latin is a "dead" language. When it was spoken by the old Romans it was, of course, a living language, and grew and changed; but though it is a very beautiful language, it is no longer used as the regular speech of a nation, and so does not change any more.

But it is quite different with a living language. Just as a baby when it begins to speak uses only a few words, and learns more and more as it grows older, so nations use more words as they grow older and become more and more civilized. Savages use only a few words, not many more, perhaps, than a baby, and not as many as a child belonging to a civilized nation. But the people of great civilized nations like England and France use many thousands of words, and the more educated a person is the more words he is able to choose from to express his thoughts.

We do not know how the first words which men and women spoke were made. People who study the history of languages, and who are called *Philologists*, or "Lovers of Words," say that words may have come to be used in any one of three different ways; but of course this is only guessing, for though we know a great deal about the way words and languages grow, we do not really know how they first began. Some people used to think that the earliest men had a language all ready-made for them, but

this could not be. We know at least that the millions of words in use in the world to-day have grown out of quite a few simple sounds or "root" words. Every word we use contains a story about some man or woman or child of the past or the present. In this chapter we shall see how some common English words can tell us stories of the past.

In reading British history we learn how different peoples have at different times owned the land: how the Britons were conquered by the English; how the Danes tried to conquer the English in their turn, and how great numbers of them settled down in the *Danelaw*, in the east of England; how, later on, the Norman duke and his followers overcame Harold, and became the rulers of England, and so on. But suppose we knew nothing at all about British history, and had to guess what had happened in the past, we might guess a great deal of British history from the words used by English people to-day. For the English language has itself been growing, and borrowing words from other languages all through British history. Scholars who have studied many languages can easily pick out these borrowed words and say from which language they were taken.

Of course these scholars know a great deal about British history; but let us imagine one who does not. He would notice in the English language some words (though not many) which must have come from the language which the Britons spoke. He

would know, too, that the name *Welsh*, which was given to the Britons who were driven into the western parts of England, comes from an Old English word, *wealh*, which meant "slave." He might then guess that, besides the Britons who were driven away into the west of the country, there were others whom the English conquered and made to work as slaves. From the name *wealh*, or "slave," given to these, all the Britons who remained came to be known as *Welsh*.

Yet though the English conquered the Britons, the two peoples could not have mixed much or married very often with each other; for if they had done so, many more British words would have been borrowed by the English language. To the English the Britons were strangers and "slaves."

We could, too, guess some of the things which these old English conquerors of Britain did and believed from examining some common English words. If we think of the days of the week besides *Sunday*, or the "Sun's day," and *Monday*, the "Moon's day," we find *Tuesday*, "Tew's day," *Wednesday*, "Woden's day," *Thursday*, "Thor's day," *Friday*, "Freya's day," *Saturday*, "Saturn's day," and it would not be hard to guess that most of the days are called after gods or goddesses whom the English worshipped while they were still heathen. Tew was in the old English religion the bravest of all the gods, for he gave up his own arm to save the other gods. Woden, the wisest of the gods,

had given up not an arm but an eye, which he had sold for the waters of wisdom. Thor was the fierce god of thunder, who hurled lightning at the giants. Freya was a beautiful goddess who wore a magic necklace which had the power to make men love. We might then guess from the way in which our old English forefathers named the days of the week what sort of gods they worshipped, and what kind of men they were—great fighters, admiring courage and strength above all things, but poetical, too, loving grace and beauty.

But, as everybody knows, the English people soon changed their religion and became Christians; and any student of the English language would soon guess this, even if he knew nothing of English history. He would be able to guess, too, that the English got their Christianity from a people who spoke Latin, for so many of the English words connected with religion come from the Latin language. It was, of course, the Roman monk St. Augustine who brought the Christian religion to the English. Latin was the language of the Romans. The word *religion* itself is a Latin word meaning reverence for the gods; and *Mass*, the name given to the chief service of the Catholic religion, comes from the Latin *missa*, taken from the words, *Ite missa est* ("Go; the Mass is ended"), with which the priest finishes the Mass. *Missa* is only a part of the verb *mittere*, "to finish."

The words *priest, bishop, monk, altar, vestment,*

and many others, came into the English language from the Latin with the Christian religion.

Even, again, if a student of the English language knew nothing about the invasions of England by the fierce Danes, he might guess something about them from the fact that there are many Danish words in the English language, and especially the names of places. Such common words as *husband, knife, root, skin,* came into English from the Danish.

But many more words were added to the English language through the Norman Conquest. It is quite easy to see, from the great number of French words in the English language, that France and England must at one time have had a great deal to do with each other. But it was the English who used French words, and not the French who used English. This was quite natural when a Norman, or North French, duke became king of England, and Norman nobles came in great numbers to live in England and help to rule her.

Sir Walter Scott, in his great book "Ivanhoe," makes one man say that all the names of living animals are English, like *ox, sheep, deer,* and *swine,* but their flesh when it becomes meat is given French names—*beef, mutton, venison,* and *pork.* The reason for this is easy to see: Englishmen worked hard looking after the animals while they were alive, and the rich Normans ate their flesh when they were dead.

England never, of course, became really Norman.

Although the English were not so learned or polite or at that time so civilized as the Normans, there were so many more of them that in time the Normans became English, and spoke the English language. But when we remember that for three hundred years French was spoken in the law courts and by the nobility of England, and all the English kings were really Frenchmen, it is easy to understand that a great many French words found their way into the English language.

As it was the Normans who governed England, many of our words about law and government came from the French. Englishmen are very proud of the "jury system," by which every British subject is tried by his equals. It was England who really began this system, but the name *jury* is French, as are also *judge, court, justice, prison, gaol.* The English Parliament, too, is called the "Mother of Parliaments," but *parliament* is a French word, and means really a meeting for the purpose of talking.

Nearly all titles, like *duke, baron, marquis,* are French, for it was Frenchmen who first got and gave these titles; though *earl* remains from the Danish *eorl.* It is a rather peculiar thing that nearly all our names for *relatives* outside one's own family come from the French used by the Normans—*uncle, aunt, nephew, niece, cousin;* while *father, mother, brother,* and *sister* come from the Old English words.

In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, the real "Middle Ages," the French poets, scholars, and

writers were the greatest in Europe. The greatest doctors, lawyers, and scholars of the western lands of Europe had often been educated at schools or universities in France. Those who wrote about medicine and law often used French words to describe things for which no English word was known. The French writers borrowed many words from Latin, and the English writers did the same. Sometimes they took Latin words from the French, but sometimes they only imitated the French writers, and took a Latin word and changed it to seem like a French word.

If we were to count the words used by English writers in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, we should find that quite one-tenth of these are words borrowed from other languages. After this time fewer words were borrowed, but still the English language has borrowed much more than most languages.

Some people think that it is a pity that we have borrowed so many words, and say that we should speak and write "pure English." But we must remember that Britain has had the most wonderful history of all the nations. She has had the greatest explorers, adventurers, and sailors. She has built up the greatest empire the world has ever seen. It is only natural that her language should have borrowed from the languages of nearly every nation in the world, even from the Chinese and from the native languages of Australia and Africa.

Ever since the middle of the sixteenth century England has been a great sea-going nation. Her sailors have explored and traded all over the world, and naturally they have brought back many new words from East and West. Sometimes these are the names of new things brought from strange lands. Thus *calico* was given that name from *Calicut*, because the cotton used to make calico came from there. From Arabia we got the words *harem* and *magazine*, and from Turkey the name *coffee*, though this is really an Arabian word. We had already learned the words *cotton*, *sugar*, and *orange* from the Arabs at the time of the Crusades. From the West Indies and from South America many words came, though the English learned these first from the Spaniards, who were the first to discover these lands. Among these words are the names of such common things as *chocolate*, *cocoa*, *tomato*. The words *canoe*, *tobacco*, and *potato* come to us from the island of Hayti. The words *hammock* and *hurricane* come to us from the Caribbean Islands, and so did the word *cannibal*, which came from *Caniba*, which was sometimes used instead of Carib.

Even the common word *breeze*, by which we now mean a light wind, first came to us from the Spanish word *briza*, which meant the north-east trade wind. The name *alligator*, an animal which Englishmen saw for the first time in these far-off voyages, is really only an attempt to use the Spanish words for the lizard—*al lagarto*.

When the English at length settled themselves in North America they took many words from the native Indians, such as *tomahawk*, *moccasin*, and *hickory*.

In England and in Europe generally history shows us that there were a great many changes in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. This new love for adventure, which gave us so many new words, was one sign of the times. Then there were changes in manners, in religion, and in the way people thought about things. People had quite a new idea of the world. They now knew that, instead of being the centre of the universe, the earth was but one of many worlds whirling through space.

The minds of men became more lively. They began to criticize all sorts of things which they had believed in and reverenced before. During the Middle Ages many things which the Romans and Greeks had loved had been forgotten and despised; but now there was a sudden new enthusiasm for the beautiful statues and fine writings of the ancient Greeks and Romans. It was not long before this new great change got a name. It was called the *Renaissance*, or "New Birth," because so many old and forgotten things seemed to come to life again, and it looked as though men had been born again into a new time.

One of the chief results of the Renaissance was a change in religion. The Protestants declared that they had reformed or changed religion for the

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better, and the change in religion is now always spoken of as the Reformation; just as the reform of the Catholic Church which soon followed was called the *Counter-Reformation*, or movement against the Reformation—*counter* coming from the Latin word for "against."

In England the Renaissance and Reformation led to great changes not only in religion but in government, and the way people thought of their country and their rulers. People came to have a new love for and pride in their country. It was in the sixteenth century that the old word *nation*, which before had meant a race or band of peoples, came to be used as we use it now, to mean the people of one country under one government. In the sixteenth century Englishmen became prouder than ever of belonging to the English "nation." They felt a new love for other Englishmen, and it was at this time that the expressions *fellow-countrymen* and *mother-country* were first used.

The seventeenth century was, of course, a period during which great things happened to the English state. It was the period of the great Civil War, in which the Parliament fought against the king, so that it could have the chief part in the government of the country.

All sorts of new words grew up during the Civil War. The word *Royalist* now first began to be used, meaning the people who were on the king's side. The Royalists called the men who fought for

the Parliament *Roundheads*, because of their hair being cropped short, not hanging in ringlets, as was the fashion of the day.

The people who fought against the king were all men who had broken away from the English Church, and become much more "Protestant." They were very strict in many ways, especially in keeping the "Sabbath," as they called Sunday. They dressed very plainly, and they thought the followers of the king, with their long hair and lace and ruffles, very frivolous people indeed. It was the men of the Parliament side who first gave the name *Cavalier* to the Royalists. It was meant by them to show contempt, and came from the Italian word *cavaliere*, which means literally "a horseman," coming from the Late Latin word *caballus*, "a horse."

It is a curious fact that we now use the word *cavalier* as an adjective to mean rude and off-hand, whereas the Cavaliers of the seventeenth century certainly had much better manners than the Roundheads; and at the end of that century the word was sometimes used in the general sense of gay and frank.

Both sides in the Civil War invented a good many new words with which to abuse the enemy. Milton, who wrote on the side of the Parliament, made a great many; but the Royalists invented more, and perhaps more expressive, words. At any rate they have been kept and used as quite ordinary English words. The word *cant*, for instance, which every

one understands to mean pious or sentimental words which the person who says them does not really mean, was first used in this way by the Royalists to describe the sayings of the Parliament men who were much given to preaching and the singing of psalms. Before that time the word *cant* had meant a certain kind of singing, and also the whining sound beggars sometimes made.

In the eighteenth century, when Parliament was divided into two great parties, their names were given to them in the same way. The *Tories* were so called from the name given to some very wild, almost savage, people who lived in the bog lands of Ireland; and the name *Whigs* was given by the Tories, and came from a Scotch word, *Whigamore*, the name of some very fierce Protestants in the south of Scotland. At first these names were just words of abuse, but they came to be the regular names of the two parties, and people forgot all about their first meanings.

The great growth in the power of the peoples of Europe since the French Revolution has brought about great changes in the way these countries are governed. It was the French Revolution which led to the widespread opinion that all the people in a nation should help in the government. It was in writing on these subjects that English writers borrowed the words *aristocrat* and *democrat* from the French writers. *Aristocracy* comes from an old Greek word meaning the rule of the few; but the

French Revolution writers gave it a new meaning, as something evil. Before the Revolution the name *despotism* had been used for the rule of a single tyrant, but it now came to mean unjust rule, even by several people.

The French Revolution gave us several other words. We all now know the word *terrorize*, but it only came into English from the French at the time of the Revolution, when the French people became used to "Reigns of Terror." But if the French Revolution gave us many of the words which relate to democracy or government by the people, England has always been the country of parliamentary government, and many terms now used by the other countries of Europe have been invented in England—words like *parliament* itself, *bill*, *budget*, and *speech*.

Nearly all the words connected with science, and especially the "ologies," as they are called, like *physiology* and *zoology*, are fairly new words in English. In the Middle Ages there was no real study of science, and so naturally there were not many words connected with it; but in the last two centuries the study of science has been one of the most important things in history. We shall see more of these scientific words in another chapter.

Perhaps we have said enough in this chapter to show how each big movement in history has given us a new group of words and how these words are in a way historians of these movements.

CHAPTER II.

HOW WE GOT OUR CHRISTIAN NAMES AND SURNAMES.

WE can learn some interesting stories from the history of our own names. Most people nowadays have one or more Christian names and a surname, but this was not always the case. Every Christian from the earliest days of Christianity must have had a Christian name given to him at baptism. And before the days of Christianity every man, woman, or child must have had some name. But the practice of giving surnames grew up only very gradually in the countries of Europe. At first only a few royal or noble families had sur-names, or "super" names; but gradually, as the populations of the different countries became larger, it became necessary for people to have surnames, so as to distinguish those with the same Christian names from each other.

In these days children are generally given for their Christian names family names, or names which their parents think beautiful or suitable. (Often the children afterwards do not like their own names at all.) The Christian names of the children of European

countries come to us from many different languages. Perhaps the greatest number come to us from the Hebrew, because these Jewish names are, of course, found in great numbers in the Bible.

The conversion of the countries of Europe to Christianity united them in their ways of thinking and believing, and they all honoured the saints. The names of the early saints, whether they were from the Hebrew, Greek, Latin, Celtic, Teutonic, or Slavonic, were soon spread throughout all the countries of Europe, so that now French, German, English, Italian, Spanish names, and those of the other European countries, are for the most part the same, only spelt and pronounced a little differently in the different countries.

The English *William* is *Guillaume* in French, *Wilhelm* in German, and so on. *John* is *Jean* in French, *Johann* in German, and so on, with many other names.

But in early times people got their names in a much more interesting way. Sometimes something which seemed peculiar about a little new-born baby would suggest a name. *Esau* was called by this name, which is only the Hebrew word for "hairy," because he was already covered by the thick growth of hair on his body which made him so different from Jacob. The old Roman names *Flavius* and *Fulvius* merely meant "yellow," and the French name *Blanche*, "fair," or "white." Sometimes the fond parents would give the child a name describ-

ing some quality which they hoped the child would possess when it grew up. The Hebrew name *David* means " beloved."

The name *Joseph* was given by Rachel, the beloved wife of Jacob, to the baby who came to her after long waiting. *Joseph* means " addition," and Rachel chose this name because she hoped another child would yet be added to her family. She afterwards had Benjamin, the best beloved of all Jacob's sons, and then she died.

The name Joseph did not become common in Europe till after the Reformation, when the Catholic Church appointed a feast day for St. Joseph, the spouse of the Blessed Virgin. Towards the end of the eighteenth century the Emperor Leopold christened his son Joseph, and this, and the fact that Napoleon's first wife was named Josephine, made these two names as a boy's and a girl's name very popular. We have both Joseph and Josephine in English, and the French have Fifine and Finette as well as Josephine, for which these are pet names. In Italy, too, Joseph, or Giuseppe, is a common name, and Peppo, or Beppo, are short names for it. These pet names seem very strange when we remember Rachel's solemn choosing of the name for the first Joseph of all.

Sometimes the early nations called their children by the names of animals. The beautiful old Hebrew name *Deborah*, which became also an old-fashioned English name, means " bee." In several languages

the word for *wolf* was given as a personal name. The Greek *Lycos*, the Latin *Lupus*, the Teutonic *Ulf*, from which came the Latin *Ulphilas* and the Slavonic *Vuk*, all mean "wolf." The wolf was the most common and the most treacherous of all the wild animals against which early peoples had to fight, and this, perhaps, accounts for the common use of its name. People were so impressed by its qualities that they thought its name worthy to give to their sons, who, perhaps, they hoped would possess some of its better qualities when they grew up.

Sometimes early names were taken from the names of precious stones, as *Margarite*, a Greek name meaning "pearl," and which is the origin of all the Margarets, Marguerites, etc., to be found in nearly all the languages of Europe.

Among all early peoples many names were religious, like the Hebrew *Ishmael*, or "heard by God;" *Elizabeth*, or the "oath of God;" *John*, or the "grace of the Lord." The Romans had the name *Jovianus*, which meant "belonging to Jupiter," who was the chief of the gods in whom the Romans believed.

In some languages names, especially of women, are taken from flowers, like the Greek *Rhode*, or "rose," the English *Rose*, and *Lily* or *Lilian*, and the Scotch *Lilias*.

A great many of the Hebrew names especially come from words meaning sorrow or trouble. They

were first given to children born in times of sorrow. Thus we have *Jabez*, which means "sorrow;" *Ichabod*, or "the glory is departed;" *Mary*, "bitter." The Jews, as we can see from the Bible, suffered the greatest misfortunes, and their writers knew how to tell of it in words. The Celtic nations, like the Irish, have the same gift, and we get many old Celtic names with these same sad meanings. Thus *Una* means "famine;" *Ita*, "thirsty."

The Greek and Roman names were never sad like these. Some old Greek names became Christian names when people who were called by them became Christian in the first days of the Church. There are several names from the Greek word *angelos*. This meant in Greek merely a messenger, but it began to be used by the early Christian writers both in Latin and Greek to mean a messenger from heaven, or an angel. The Greeks gave it first as a surname, and then as a Christian name. In the thirteenth century there was a St. Angelo in Italy, and from the honour paid to him the name spread, chiefly as a girl's name, to the other countries of Europe, giving the English *Angelina* and *Angelica*, the French *Angelique*, and the German *Engel*.

Besides this general name of *angel*, the name of Michael, the archangel, and Gabriel, the angel of the Annunciation, became favourite names among Eastern Christians. The reason *Michael* was such a favourite was that the great Emperor Constantine dedicated a church to St. Michael in Constantinople.

The name is so much used in Russia that it is quite common to speak of a Russian peasant as a "Michael," just as people rather vulgarly speak of an Irish peasant as a "Paddy." Michael can hardly be called an English name, but it is almost as common in Ireland as Patrick, which, of course, is used in honour of Ireland's patron saint. *Gabriel* is a common name in Italy, as is also another angel's name, *Raphael*. *Gabriel* is used as a girl's name in France—*Gabrielle*.

No Christian would think of using the name of God as a personal name; but *Theos*, the Greek word for God, was sometimes so used by the Greeks. A Greek name formed from this, *Theophilos*, or "beloved by the gods," became a Christian name, and the name of one of the early saints.

The name *Christ*, or "anointed," was the word which the Greek Christians (who translated the Gospels into the Greek of their time) used for the *Messiah*. From this word came the name *Christian*, and from it *Christina*. One of the early martyrs, a virgin of noble Roman birth, who died for her religion, was St. Christina. In Denmark the name became a man's name, *Christiern*. Another English name which is like Christina is *Christabel*. The great poet Coleridge in the nineteenth century wrote the beginning of a beautiful poem called "Christabel." The name was not very common before this, and was not heard of until the sixteenth century, but it is fairly common now.

Another favourite Christian name from the name of *Christ* is *Christopher*, which means the bearer or carrier of Christ, and we are told in a legend how St. Christopher got this name. He had chosen for his work to carry people across a stream which had no bridge over it. One day a little boy suddenly appeared, and asked him to carry him across. The kind saint did so, and found, as he got farther into the stream, that the child grew heavier and heavier. When the saint put him down on the other side he saw the figure of the man Christ before him, and fell down and adored Him. Ever afterwards he was known as *Christopher*, or the "Christ-bearer."

Another Christian name which comes from a Greek word is *Peter*. *Petros* is the Greek word for "stone," and *Petra* for "rock." The name *Peter* became a favourite in honour of St. Peter, whose name was first *Simon*, but who was called *Peter* because of the words our Lord said to him: "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church."

When the barbarian tribes, such as the English and Franks, broke into the lands of the Roman Empire and settled there, afterwards being converted to Christianity, they chose a good many Latin words as names. In France names made from the Latin word *amo* ("I love") were quite common. We hear of *Amabilis* ("lovable"), *Amadeus* ("loving God"), *Amandus*, which has now become a surname in France as *St. Amand*. In England, *Amabilis* became *Amabel*, which is not a very common name

now, but from which we have *Mabel*. *Amy* was first used in England after the Norman Conquest, and comes from the French *Amata*, or *Aimée*, which means "beloved."

Another Latin word of the same kind which gave us some Christian names was *Beo* ("I bless"). From part of this verb, *Beatus* ("blessed"), there was an old English name, *Beata*, but no girl or woman seems to have been called by it since the seventeenth century. *Beatrix* and *Beatrice* also come from this. The name *Benedict*, which sometimes became in English *Bennet*, came from another word like this, *Benignus* ("kind"). *Boniface*, from the Latin *Bonifacius* ("doer of good deeds"), was a favourite name in the early Church, and the name of a great English saint; but it is not used in England now, though there is still the Italian name, *Bonifazio*, which comes from the same word.

Both Christian names and surnames have been taken from the Latin *Dies Natalis*, or "Birthday of our Lord." The French word for Christmas, *Noël*, comes from this, and, as well as *Natalie*, is used as a Christian name. *Noël* is found, too, both as a Christian name and surname in England. At one time English babies were sometimes christened *Christmas*, but this is never used as a Christian name now, though a few families have it as a surname.

Perhaps the most peculiar Christian names that have ever been were the long names which some

of the English Puritans gave their children in the seventeenth century. Often they gave them whole texts of Scripture as names, so that at least one small boy was called "Bind their nobles in chains and their kings in fetters of iron." Let us hope his relatives soon found some other name to call him "for short."

Everybody has heard of the famous Cromwellian Parliament, which would do nothing but talk, and which was called the "Barebones Parliament," after one of its members, who not only bore this peculiar surname, but was also blessed with the "Christian" name of *Praise-God*. Cromwell grew impatient at last, and Praise-God Barebones and the other talkers suddenly found Parliament dissolved. These names were not, as a rule, handed on from father to son, and soon died out, though in America even to-day we get Christian names somewhat similar, but at least shorter—names like *Willing*.

It is often easier to see how we got our Christian names than how we got our surnames. As we have seen, there was a time when early peoples had only first names. The Romans had surnames, or *cognomina*, but the barbarians who won Europe from them had not.

In England surnames were not used until nearly a hundred years after the Norman Conquest, and then only by kings and nobles. The common people in England had, however, nearly all got them by the fourteenth century; but in Scotland many people

were still without surnames in the time of James I., and even those who had them could easily change one for another. Once a man got a surname it was handed on to all his children, as surnames are to-day.

It is interesting to see in how many different ways people got their surnames. Sometimes this is easy, but it is more difficult in other cases.

The first surnames in England were those which the Norman nobles who came over at the Conquest handed on from father to son. These people generally took the name of the place from which they had come in Normandy. In this way names like *Robert de Courcy* ("Robert of Courcy") came in; and many of these names, which are considered very aristocratic, still remain. We have *de Corbet, de Beauchamp, de Colevilles*, and so on. Sometimes the *de* has been dropped. Sometimes, again, people took their names in the same way from places in England. We find in old writings names like *Adam de Kent, Robert de Wiltshire*, etc. Here, again, the prefix has been dropped, and the place-name has been kept as a surname. *Kent* is quite a well-known surname, as also are *Derby, Buxton*, and many other names of English places.

The Normans introduced another kind of name, which became very common too. They were a lively people, like the modern French, and were very fond of giving nicknames, especially names referring to people's personal appearance. We get

the best examples of this in the nicknames applied to the Norman kings. We have William *Rufus*, or "the Red;" Richard *Cœur-de-Lion*, or "Lion-Hearted;" Henry *Beauclerc*, or "the Scholar."

These names of kings were not handed down in their families. But in ordinary families it was quite natural that a nickname applied to the father should become a surname. It is from such nicknames that we get surnames like *White*, *Black*, *Long*, *Young*, *Short*, and so on. All these are, of course, well-known surnames to-day, and though many men named *Long* may be small, and many named *Short* may be tall, we may guess that this was not the case with some far-off ancestor. Sometimes *man* was added to these adjectives, and we get names like *Longman*, *Oldman*, etc.

Sometimes these names were used in the French of the Normans, and we get two quite different surnames, though they really in the first place had the same meaning. Thus we have *Curt* for *Short*, and the quite well-known surname *Petit*, which would be *Short* or *Little* in English. The name *Goodheart* was *Bun-Couer* in Norman-French, and from this came *Bunker*, which, if we knew nothing of its history, would not seem to mean *Goodheart* at all. So the name *Tait* came from *Tête*, or *Head;* and we may guess that the first ancestor of the numerous people with this name had something remarkable about their heads. The name *Good-fellow* is really just the same as *Bonfellow*. The

surname *Thin* has the same meaning as *Meagre*, from which the common name *Meager* comes.

Names like *Russell* (from the old word *rouselle*, or "red"), *Brown*, *Morell* ("tan"), *Dun* ("dull grey"), all came from nicknames referring to people's complexions. *Reed* and *Reid* come from the old word *rede*, or "red." We still have the names *Copperbeard*, *Greybeard*, and *Blackbeard*.

Sometimes names were given from some peculiarity of clothing. *Scarlet*, an old English name, probably came from the colour of the clothing of the people who were first called by it—scarlet, like all bright colours, being very much liked in the Middle Ages. So we hear of the name *Curtmantle*, or "short cloak," and *Curthose*, which was later changed to *Shorthose*, which is still a well-known name in Derbyshire. The names *Woolward* and *Woolard* come from the old word *woolard*, which meant wearing wool without any linen clothing underneath. This was often done by pilgrims and others who wished to do penance for their sins.

Many surnames have come down from nicknames given to people because of their good or bad qualities. This is the origin of names like *Wise*, *Gay*, *Hardy*, *Friend*, *Truman*, *Makepeace*, *Sweet*, etc. The people who have these names may well believe that the first of their ancestors who bore them was of a gentle and amiable disposition. Names like *Proud*, *Proudfoot*, *Proudman*, *Paillard* (French for "lie-a-bed") show that the first people who had

them were not so well liked, and were considered proud or lazy.

Another way of giving nicknames to people because of something noticeable in their character or appearance was to give them the name of some animal having this quality. The well-known name of *Oliphant* comes from *elephant*, and was probably first given to some one very large, and perhaps a little ungraceful. *Bullock* as a surname probably had the same sort of origin. The names *Falcon*, *Hawk*, *Buzzard*, must have been first given to people whose friends and neighbours saw some resemblance to the quickness or fierceness or sureness or some other quality of these birds in them. The names *Jay*, *Peacock*, and *Parrott* point to showiness and pride and empty talkativeness.

A very great number of surnames are really only old Christian names either with or without an ending added to them. A very common form of surname is a Christian name with *son* added to it. The first man who handed on the name *Wilson* (or *Willson*, as it is still sometimes spelt) was himself the "son of Will." Any one can think of many names of this kind—*Williamson*, *Davidson*, *Adamson*, etc. Sometimes the founder of a family had taken his name from his mother. This was the origin of names like *Margerison* ("Marjorie's son") and *Alison* ("Alice's son"). This was a very common way of inventing surnames.

The Norman *Fitz* meant "son of," and the numer-

ous names beginning with *Fitz* have this origin. *Fitzpatrick* originally meant the "son of Patrick," *Fitzstephen* the "son of Stephen," and so on. The Irish prefix *O'* has the same meaning. The ancestor of all the O'Neills was himself the son of *Neill*. The Scandinavian *Nillson* is really the same name, though it sounds so different. The Scotch *Mac* has the same meaning, and so have the Welsh words *map, mab, ap,* and *ab*.

One very interesting way of making surnames was to take them from the trade or occupation of the founder of the family. Perhaps the commonest of English surnames is *Smith*. And the word for *Smith* is the commonest surname in almost every country of Europe. In France we have *Favier*.

The reason for this is easy to see. The smith, or man who made iron and other metals into ploughshares and swords, was one of the most important of all the workers in the early days when surnames were being made. There were many smiths, and John the Smith and Tom the Smith easily became John Smith and Tom Smith, and thus had a surname to pass on to their families.

As time went on there came to be many different kinds of smiths. There was the smith who worked in gold, and was called a "goldsmith," from which we get the well-known surname *Goldsmith*, the name of a great English writer. Then there was the "nail smith," from which trade came the name *Nasmith;* the "sickle smith," from which came

Sixsmith; the "shear smith," which gave us *Shearsmith*—and so on.

In mediæval England the manufacture of cloth from the wool of the great flocks of sheep which fed on the pasture lands of the monasteries and other great houses, was the chief industry of the nation. This trade of wool-weaving has given us many surnames, such as *Woolmer, Woolman, Carder, Kempster, Towser, Weaver, Webster,* etc. Some of these referred to the general work of wool-weaving and others to special branches.

Any child can think in a moment of several names which have come in this way from trades. We have *Taylor* for a beginning.

But many surnames which are taken from the names of trades come from Old English words which are now seldom or never used. *Chapman,* a common name now, was the Old English word for a general dealer. *Spicer* was the old name for grocer, and is now a fairly common surname. The well-known name of *Fletcher* comes from the almost forgotten word *flechier,* "an arrowmaker." *Coltman* came from the name of the man who had charge of the colts. *Runciman* was the man who had charge of horses too, and comes from another Old English word, *rouncy,* "a horse." The *Parkers* are descended from a park-keeper who used to be called by that name. The *Horners* come from a maker of horns; the *Crockers* and *Crokers* from a "croker," or "crocker," a maker of pottery. *Hogarth* comes

from "hoggart," a hog-herd; *Calvert* from "calf-herd;" and *Seward* from "sow-herd." *Lambert* sometimes came from "lamb-herd."

But we cannot always be sure of the origin of even the commonest surnames. For instance, every person named *Smith* is not descended from a smith, for the name also comes from the old word *smoth*, or "smooth," and this is the origin of *Smith* in *Smithfield*.

A great many English surnames were taken from places. *Street, Ford, Lane, Brooke, Styles*, are names of this kind. Sometimes they were prefixed by the Old English *atte* ("at") or the French *de la* ("of the"), but these prefixes have been dropped since. *Geoffrey atte Style* was the Geoffrey who lived near the stile—and so on.

Nearly all the names ending in *hurst* and *shaw* are taken from places. A *hurst* was a wood or grove; a *shaw* was a shelter for fowls and animals. The chief thing about a man who got the surname of *Henshaw* or *Ramshaw* was probably that he owned, or had the care of, such a shelter for hens or rams.

Names ending in *ley* generally came into existence in the same way, a *ley* being also a shelter for domestic animals. So we have *Horsley, Cowley, Hartley, Shipley* (from "sheep"). Sometimes the name was taken from the kind of trees which closed such a shelter in, names like *Ashley, Elmsley, Oakley, Lindley*, etc.

Surnames as well as Christian names were often

taken from the names of saints. From such a beautiful name as *St. Hugh* the Normans had *Hugon*, and from this we get the rather commonplace names of *Huggins*, *Hutchins*, *Hutchinson*, and several others. So *St. Clair* is still a surname, though often changed into *Sinclair*. St. Gilbert is responsible for the names *Gibbs*, *Gibbons*, *Gibson*, etc.

Sometimes in Scotland people were given, as Christian names, names meaning *servant* of Christ, or some saint. The word for servant was *giollo*, or *giolla*. It was in this way that names like *Gilchrist*, *Gilpatrick*, first came to be used. They were at first Christian names, and then came to be passed on as surnames. So *Gillespie* means "servant of the bishop."

Some surnames, though they seem quite English now, show that the first member of the family to bear the name was looked upon as a foreigner. Such names are *Newman*, *Newcome*, *Cumming* (from *cumma*, "a stranger"). Sometimes the nationality to which the stranger belonged is shown by the name. The ancestors of the people called *Fleming*, for instance, must have come from Flanders, as so many did in the Middle Ages. The *Brabazons* must have come from Brabant.

Perhaps the most peculiar origin of all belongs to some surnames which seem to have come from oaths or exclamations. The fairly common names *Pardoe*, *Pardie*, etc., come from the older name *Pardieu*, or "By God," a solemn form of oath.

We have, too, the English form in the name *Bigod.* Names like *Rummiley* come from the old cry of sailors, *Rummylow,* which they used as sailors use " Heave-ho " now.

But many chapters could be written on the history of names. This chapter shows only some of the ways in which we got our Christian names and surnames.

CHAPTER III.

STORIES IN THE NAMES OF PLACES.

THE stories which the names of places can tell us are many more in number, and even more wonderful, than the stories in the names of people. Some places have very old names, and others have quite new ones, and the names have been given for all sorts of different reasons. If we take the names of the continents, we find that some of them come from far-off times, and were given by men who knew very little of what the world was like. The names *Europe* and *Asia* were given long ago by sailors belonging to the Semitic race (the race to which the Jews belong), who sailed up and down the Ægean Sea, and did not venture to leave its waters. All the land which lay to the west they called *Ereb*, which was their word for "sunset," or "west," and the land to the east they called *Acu*, which meant "sunrise," or "east;" and later, when men knew more about these lands, these names, changed a little, remained as the names of the great continents, Europe and Asia.

Africa, too, is an old name, though not so old as

these. We think of Africa now as a "dark continent," the greater part of which has only lately become known to white men, and with a native population of negroes. But for hundreds of years the north of Africa was one of the most civilized parts of the Roman Empire. Before that time part of it had belonged to the Carthaginians, whom the Romans conquered. *Africa* was a Carthaginian name, and was first used by the Romans as the name of the district round Carthage, and in time it came to be the name of the whole continent.

America got its name in quite a different way. It was not until the fifteenth century that this great continent was discovered, and then it took its name, not from the brave Spaniard, Christopher Columbus, who first sailed across the "Sea of Darkness" to find it, but from Amerigo Vespucci, the man who first landed on the mainland.

Australia got its name, which means "land of the south," from Portuguese and Spanish sailors, who reached its western coasts early in the sixteenth century. They never went inland, or made any settlements, but in the queer, inaccurate maps which early geographers made, they put down a *Terra Australis*, or "southern land," and later, when Englishmen did at last explore and colonize the continent, they kept this name *Australia*. This Latin name reminds us of the fact that Latin was in the Middle Ages the language used by all scholars in their writings, and names on maps were written

in Latin too, and so a great modern continent like Australia came to have an old Latin name.

There is a great deal of history in the names of countries. Take the names of the countries of Europe. *England* is the land of the *Angles*, and from this we learn that the Angles were the chief people of all the tribes who came over and settled in Britain after the Romans left it. They spread farthest over the land, and gave their name to it; just as the *Franks*, another of these Northern peoples, gave their name to *France*, and the *Belgæ* gave theirs to *Belgium*. The older name of *Britain* did not die out, but it was seldom used. It has really been used much more in modern times than it ever was in the Middle Ages. It is used especially in poetry or in fine writing, just as *Briton* is instead of *Englishman*, as in the line—

"Britons never, never, never shall be slaves."

The name *Briton* is now used also to mean Irish, Scotch, and Welsh men—in fact, any British subject. We also speak of *Great Britain*, which means England and Scotland. When the Scottish Parliament was joined to the English in 1702 some name had to be found to describe the new "nation," and this was how the name *Great Britain* came into use, just as the *United Kingdom* was the name invented to describe Great Britain and Ireland together when the Irish Parliament too was joined to the English in 1804.

We see how Gaul and Britain, as France and England were called in Roman times, had their names changed after the fall of the Roman Empire; but most of the countries round the Mediterranean Sea kept their old names, just as they kept for the most part their old languages. Italy, Greece, and Spain all kept their old names, although new peoples flocked down into these lands too. But though new peoples came, in all these lands they learned the ways and languages of the older inhabitants, instead of changing everything, as the English did in Britain. And so it was quite natural that they should keep their own names too.

Most of the other countries in Europe took their names from the people who settled there. Germany (the Roman *Germania*) was the part of Europe where most of the tribes of the German race settled down. The divisions of Germany, like Saxony, Bavaria, Frisia, were the parts of Germany where the German tribes known as Saxons, Bavarians, and Frisians settled. The name *Austria* comes from *Osterreich*, the German for "eastern kingdom." Holland, on the other hand, takes its name from the character of the land. It comes from *holt*, meaning "wood," and *lant*, meaning "land." The little country of Albania is so called from *Alba*, or "white," because of its snowy mountains.

But perhaps the names of the old towns of the old world tell us the best stories of all. The greatest city the world has ever seen was Rome, and many

scholars have quarrelled about the meaning of that great name. It seems most likely that it came from an old word meaning "river." It would be quite natural for the people of early Rome to give such a name to their city, for it was a most important fact to them that they had built their city just where it was on the river Tiber.

One of the best places on which a town could be built, especially in early days, was the banks of a river, from which the people could get water, and by which the refuse and rubbish of the town could be carried away. Then, again, one of the chief things which helped Rome to greatness was her position on the river Tiber, far enough from the sea to be safe from the enemy raiders who infested the seas in those early days, and yet near enough to send her ships out to trade with other lands. Thus it was, probably, that a simple word meaning "river" came to be used as the name of the world's greatest city.

Others among the great cities of the ancient world were founded in a quite different way. The great conqueror, Alexander the Great, founded cities in every land he conquered, and their names remain even now to keep his memory alive. The city of *Alexandria*, on the north coast of Africa, was, of course, called after Alexander himself, and became after his death more civilized and important than any of the Greek cities which Alexander admired so much, and which he tried to imitate everywhere.

Now Alexandria is no longer a centre of learning, but a fairly busy port. Only its name recalls the time when it helped in the great work for which Alexander built it—to spread Greek learning and Greek civilization over Europe and Asia.

Another city which Alexander founded, but which afterwards fell into decay, was *Bucephalia*, which the great conqueror set up in the north of India when he made his wonderful march across the mountains into that continent. It was called after "Bucephalus," the favourite horse of Alexander, which had been wounded, and died after the battle. The town was built over the place where the horse was buried, and though its story is not so interesting as that of Alexandria, as the town so soon fell into decay, still it is worth remembering.

Another of the world's ancient and greatest cities, Constantinople, also took its name from a great ruler. In the days when the Roman Empire was beginning to decay, and new nations from the north began to pour into her lands, the emperor, Constantine the Great, the ruler who made Christianity the religion of the empire, chose a new capital instead of Rome. He loved Eastern magnificence and Eastern ways, and he chose for his new capital the old Greek colony of Byzantium, the beautiful city on the Golden Horn, which Constantine soon made into a new Rome, with churches and theatres and baths, like the old Rome. The new Rome was given a new name. Constantine had turned

Byzantium into a new city, and it has ever since been known as *Constantinople*, or the "city of Constantine."

We can nearly always tell from the names of places something of their history. If we think of the names of some of our English towns, we notice that many of them end in the same way. There are several whose names begin or end in *don*, like *London* itself. Many others end in *caster* or *chester*, *ham*, *by*, *borough* or *burgh*.

We may be sure that most of the places whose names begin or end in *don* were already important places in the time before the Britons were conquered by the Romans. The Britons were divided into tribes, and lived in villages scattered over the land; but each tribe had its little fortress or stronghold, the "dun," as it was called, with walls and ditches round it, in which all the people of the tribe could take shelter if attacked by a strong enemy. And so the name of London takes us back to the time when this greatest city of the modern world, spreading into four counties, and as big as a county itself, with its marvellous buildings, old and new, and its immense traffic, was but a British fort into which scantily-clothed people fled from their huts at the approach of an enemy.

But the British showed themselves wise enough in their choice of places to build their *duns*, which, as in the case of London, often became centres of new towns, which grew larger and larger through

Roman times, and on into the Middle Ages and modern times.

The great French fortress town of Verdun, which everybody has heard of because of its wonderful resistance to the German attacks in 1916, is also an old Celtic town with this Celtic ending to its name. It was already an important town when the Romans conquered Gaul, and it has played a notable part in history ever since. Its full name means "the fort on the water," just as *Dundee* (from *Dun-tatha*) probably meant "the fort on the Tay."

By merely looking at a map of England, any one who knows anything of the Latin language can pick out many names which come from that language, and which must have been given in the days when the Romans had conquered Britain. The ending *caster* of so many names in the north of England, and *chester* in the Midlands, *xeter* in the west of England, and *caer* in Wales, all come from the same Latin word, *castrum*, which means a military camp or fortified place. So that we might guess, if we did not know, that at Lancaster, Doncaster, Manchester, Winchester, Exeter, and at the old capital of the famous King Arthur, Caerleon, there were some of those Roman camps which were dotted over England in the days when the Romans ruled the land.

Here the Roman officers lived with their wives and families, and the Roman soldiers too, and here

they built churches and theatres and baths, such as they were used to in their cities at home in Italy. Here, too, it was that many of the British nobles learned Roman ways of living and thinking; and from here the Roman priests and monks went out to teach the Britons that the religion of the Druids was false, and instruct them in the Christian religion.

Another common Latin ending or beginning to the names of places was *strat*, *stret*, or *street*, and wherever we find this we may know that through these places ran some of the *viæ stratæ*, or great Roman roads which the Romans built in all the provinces of their great empire. There are many remains of these Roman roads still to be seen up and down England; but even where no trace remains, the direction of some, at least, of the great roads could be found from the names of the towns which were dotted along them. Among these towns are *Stratford* in Warwickshire, *Chester-le-Street* in Durham, *Streatham*, etc.

Then, again, some of the towns with *port* and *lynne* as part of their names show us where the Romans had their ports and trading towns.

It is interesting to see the different names which the English gave to the villages in which they dwelt when the Romans had left Britain, and these new tribes had won it for themselves. Nearly all towns ending in *ham* and *ford*, and *burgh* or *borough*, date from the first few hundred years after the English

won Britain. *Ham* and *ford* merely meant "home," or "village." Thus *Buckingham* was the home of the Bockings, a village in which several families all related to each other, and bearing this name, lived. Of course the name did not change when later the village grew into a town. Buckingham is a very different place now from the little village in which the Bockings settled, each household having its house and yard, but dividing the common meadow and pasture land out between them each year.

Wallingford was the home of the Wallings. Places whose names ended in *ford* were generally situated where a *ford*, or means of crossing a river or stream, had to be made. Oxford was in Old English *Oxenford*, or "ford of the oxen."

Towns whose names end in *borough* are often very old, but not so old as some of those ending in *ham* and *ford*. There were *burhs* in the first days of the English Conquest, but generally they were only single fortified houses and not villages. We first hear of the more important *burghs* or *boroughs* in the last hundred years or so before the Norman Conquest. *Edinburgh*, which was at first an English town, is a very early example. Its name means "Edwin's borough or town," and it was so called because it was founded by Edwin, who was king of England from 617 to 633.

The special point about boroughs was that they were really free towns. They had courts of justice

of their own, and were free from the Hundred courts, the next court above them being the Shire court, ruled over by the sheriff. So we know that most of the towns whose names end in *burgh* or *borough* had for their early citizens men who loved freedom, and worked hard to win their own courts of justice.

There are other endings to the names of towns which go back to the days before the Norman Conquest, but which are not really English. If a child were told to pick out on the map of England all the places whose names end in *by* or *thwaite*, he or she would find that most of them are in the eastern part of England. The reason for this might be guessed, perhaps, by a very thoughtful child. Both *by* and *thwaite* are Danish words, and they are found in the eastern parts of England, because it was in those parts that the Danes settled down when the great King Alfred forced them to make peace in the Treaty of Wallingford. After this, of course, the Danes lived in England for many years, settling down, and becoming part of the English people. Naturally they gave their own names to many villages and towns, and many of these remain to this day to remind us of this fierce race which helped to build up the English nation.

The Normans did not make many changes in the names of places when they won England, and most of our place-names come down to us from Roman and old English times. The places have changed, but the names have not. But though towns and

counties have had their names from those times, it is to be noticed that the names of our rivers and hills come down to us from Celtic times. To the Britons, living a more or less wild life, these things were of the greatest importance. There are several rivers in England with the name of *Avon*, and this is an old British name. The rivers *Usk*, *Esk*, and *Ouse* were all christened by the Britons, and all these names come from a British word meaning "water." Curiously enough, the name *whisky* comes from the same word. From all these different ways in which places have got their names we get glimpses of past history, and history helps us to understand the stories that these old names tell us.

CHAPTER IV.

NEW NAMES FOR NEW PLACES.

We have seen in how many different ways many of the old places of this world got their names. Some names go so far back that no one knows what is their meaning, or how they first came to be used. But we know that a great part of the world has only been discovered since the fifteenth century, and that a great part of what was already known has only been colonized in modern times.

With the discovery of the New World and the colonization of the Dark Continent and other far-off lands, a great many new names were invented. We could almost write a history of North or South America from an explanation of their place-names.

In learning the geography of South America we notice the beautiful Spanish names of most of the places. The reason for this is that it was the Spaniards who colonized South America in the sixteenth century. Very little of this continent now belongs to Spain, but in those days Spain was the greatest country in Europe. The proud and brave Spanish adventurers were in those days sailing over the seas

and founding colonies, just as the English sailors of Queen Elizabeth soon began to do in North America.

Let us look at some of these names—*Los Angelos* ("The Angels"), *Santa Cruz* ("The Holy Cross"), *Santiago* ("St. James"), all names of saints and holy things. Any one who knew no history at all might guess, from the number of places with Spanish names spread over South America, that it was the Spaniards who colonized this land. He would also guess that the Spaniards in those days must have been a very great nation indeed. And he would be right.

He would guess, too, that the Spaniards had clung passionately to the Catholic religion. Here, again, he would be right. Any great enthusiasm will make a nation great, and the Spaniards in the sixteenth century were filled with a great love for the old Church against which the new Protestantism was fighting. The Pope looked upon Spain as the great bulwark of Catholicism. The new religious feeling, which had swept over Europe, and which had made the Protestants ready to suffer and die for their new-found faith, took the form in Spain of this great love for the old religion. The nation seemed inspired. It is when these things happen that a people turns to great enterprises and adventure. The Spaniards of the sixteenth century regarded themselves, and were almost regarded by the other nations, as unconquerable. The great aim of Elizabethan Englishmen was to "break the power of Spain," and

this they did at last when they scattered the "Invincible Armada" in 1588. But before this Spain had done great things.

The Portuguese had been the first great adventurers, but they were soon left far behind by the Spanish sailors, who explored almost every part of South America, settling there, and sending home great shiploads of gold to make Spain rich. And wherever they explored and settled they spread about these beautiful names to honour the saints and holy things which their religion told them to love and honour.

It was the great discoverer Christopher Columbus who first gave one of these beautiful names to a place in South America. He had already discovered North America, and made a second voyage there, when he determined to explore the land south of the West Indies. He sailed south through the tropical seas while the heat melted the tar of the rigging. But Columbus never noticed danger and discomfort. He had made a vow to call the first land he saw after the Holy Trinity, and when at last he caught sight of three peaks jutting up from an island he gave the island the name of *La Trinidad*, and "Trinidad" it remains to this day, though it now belongs to the British. As he sailed south Columbus caught sight of what was really the mainland of South America, but he thought it was another island, and called it *Isla Santa*, or "Holy Island."

It might seem curious that as Columbus had discovered both North and South America, the continent was given the name of another man. As we have seen, its name was taken from that of another explorer, Amerigo Vespucci. The reason for this was that Columbus never really knew that he had discovered a "New World." He believed that he had come by another way to the eastern coast of Asia or Africa. The islands which he first discovered were for this reason called the *Indies*, and the *West Indies* they remain to this day.

It was Amerigo Vespucci who first announced to the world, in a book which he published in 1507 (three years after Christopher Columbus had died in loneliness and poverty), that the new lands were indeed a great new continent, and not Asia or Africa at all. People later on said that Amerigo Vespucci had discovered a new continent, and that it ought to be called by his name. This is how the name *America* came into use; but of course the work of Vespucci was not to be compared with that of the great adventurer who first sailed across the "Sea of Darkness," and was the real discoverer of the New World.

Though it was the Spaniards who discovered North America, it was the English who chiefly colonized it.

It is interesting to notice the names which the early English colonists scattered over the northern continent. We might gather from them that, just

as the love of their Church was the great passion of the sixteenth-century Spaniards, so the love of their country was the ruling passion of the great English adventurers. (Of course the Spaniards had shown their love for their old country in some of the names they gave, as when Columbus called one place *Isabella*, in honour of the noble Spanish queen who had helped and encouraged him when other rulers of European countries had refused to listen to what they thought were the ravings of a madman.)

The English in Reformation days had a very different idea of religion from the Spanish. Naturally they did not sprinkle the names of saints over the new lands. But the English of Elizabeth's day were filled with a great new love for England. The greatest of all the Elizabethan adventurers, Sir Francis Drake, when in his voyage round the world he put into a harbour which is now known as San Francisco, set up "a plate of brass fast nailed to a great and firm post, whereon is engraved Her Grace's name, and the day and the year of our arrival there." The Indian king of these parts had freely owned himself subject to the English, taking the crown from his own head and putting it on Drake's head. Sir Francis called his land *New Albion*, using the old poetic name for England.

But the colonization of North America was not successfully begun until after the death of Elizabeth, though one or two attempts at founding colonies, or "plantations," as they were then called, were

made in her time. Sir Walter Raleigh tried to set up one colony in North America, and called it *Virginia*, after the virgin queen whom all Englishmen delighted to honour. Virginia did not prosper, and Raleigh's colony broke up; but later another and successful attempt at colonizing it was made, and the same name kept. Virginia—"Earth's only Paradise," as the poet Drayton called it—was the first English colony successfully settled in North America. This was in the year 1607, when two hundred and forty-three settlers landed, and made the first settlement at a point which they called *Jamestown*, in honour of the new English king, James I.

The first settlers in Virginia were men whose chief aim was to become rich, but it was not long before a new kind of settler began to seek refuge in the lands north of Virginia, to which the great colonizer, Captain John Smith, had by this time given the name of *New England*. It was in 1620 that the "Pilgrim Fathers," because they were not free to worship God as they thought right at home, sailed from Southampton in the little *Mayflower*, and landed far to the north of Virginia, and made a settlement at a place which Smith had already called *Plymouth*.

Before long new colonies began to spring up all over New England; and though we find some new names, like the Indian name of the great colony *Massachusetts*, we may read the story of the great

love which the colonists felt for the old towns of the mother-country in the way they gave their names to the new settlements.

A curious thing is that many of these new towns, christened after little old towns at home, became later very important and prosperous places, while the places after which they were called are sometimes almost forgotten. Many people to whom the name of the great American city of Boston is familiar do not know that there still stands on the coast of Lincolnshire the sleepy little town of Boston, from which it took its name.

Boston is the chief town of Massachusetts; but the first capital was *Charlestown*, called after King Charles I., who had by this time succeeded his father, James I. The place on which Charlestown was built, on the north bank of the Charles River, was, however, found to be unhealthy. The settlers, therefore, deserted it, and Boston was built on the south bank.

It was not long before the Massachusetts settlers built a college at a place near Boston which had been called *Cambridge*. This is a case in which the old town at home remained, of course, much more important than its godchild. If a person speaks of Cambridge, one's mind immediately flies to the English university city on the banks of the river Cam. Still the college built at the American Cambridge, and called "Harvard College," after John Harvard, one of the early settlers, who

gave a great deal of money towards its building, is famous now throughout the world.

It was natural and suitable that the early settlers should use the old English names to show their love for the mother-country; but it was not such a wise thing to choose the names of the great historic towns of Europe, and give them to the new settlements. To give the almost sacred name of *Rome* to a modern American town seems almost ridiculous. Certainly one would have always to be very careful to add "Georgia, U.S.A.," in addressing letters there. The United States has several of these towns bearing old historic names. *Paris* as the name of an American town seems almost as unsuitable as Rome.

But this mistake was not made by the early colonists. If we think of the names of the colonies which stretched along the east of North America, we find nearly always that the names are chosen to do honour to the English king or queen, or to keep the memory fresh of some beloved spot in the old country.

In 1632 the Catholic Lord Baltimore founded a new colony, the only one where the Catholic religion was tolerated, and called it *Maryland*, in honour of Charles I.'s queen, Henrietta Maria. Just after the Restoration of Charles II. in 1660, when the country was full of loyalty, a new colony, *Carolina*, was founded, taking its name from *Carolus*, the Latin for "Charles." Afterwards this colony was divided into two, and became North and South Carolina.

To the north of Maryland lay the *New Netherlands*, for Holland had also colonized here. In the seventeenth century this little nation was for a time equal to the greatest nations in Europe. The Dutch had very soon followed the example of that other little nation Portugal, which, directed by the famous Prince Henry of Portugal, had been the first of all the European nations to explore far-off lands. Holland was as important on the seas as Spain or England; but this could not last long. The Dutch and the English fought several campaigns, and in the end the Dutch were beaten.

In 1667 the New Netherlands were yielded up to England. The name of the colony was changed to *New York*, and its capital, New Amsterdam, was given the same name. This was in honour of the sailor prince, James, Duke of York, afterwards the unhappy King James II. Another of the Stuarts who gave his name to a district of North America was Prince Rupert, the nephew of Charles I., who fought so hard for the king against Cromwell. In 1670 the land round Hudson Bay was given the name of *Rupertsland*.

Sometimes, but not often, the new colonies were given the names of their founders. William Penn, who founded the Quaker colony of *Pennsylvania*, gave it this name in honour of his father, Admiral Penn. *Sylvania* means "land of woods," and comes from the Latin *sylvanus*, or "woody."

But it is not only in America that the place-names

tell us the stories of heroism and romance. All over the world, from the icy lands round the Poles to the tropical districts of Africa, India, and Australia, these stories can be read. The spirit in which the early Portuguese adventurers sailed along the coast of Africa is shown in the name they gave to what we now know as the *Cape of Good Hope.* Bartholomew Diaz called it the *Cape of Storms,* for he had discovered it only after terrible battlings with the waves; but when he sailed home to tell his news the king of Portugal said that this was not a good name, but it should instead be called the *Cape of Good Hope,* for past it lay the sea passage to India which men had been seeking for years. And so the *Cape of Good Hope* it remains to this day.

After this it was not long before the Portuguese explored the south and east coasts of Africa and the west coast of India to the very south, where they took the *Spice Islands* for their own. From these the Portuguese brought home great quantities of spices, which they sold at high prices in Europe.

It was the great explorer Ferdinand Magellan who first sailed round the world, being sure, as he said, that he could reach the Spice Islands by sailing west. And so he started on this expedition, sailing through the straits which have ever since been known as the *Magellan Straits* to the south of South America, into the Pacific, or "Peaceful," Ocean, and then ever west, until he came round

by the east to Spain again, after three years of great hardship and wonderful adventure.

The adventures of the early explorers most often took the form of seeking a new and shorter passage from one ocean to another, and so many straits bear the names of the explorers. The Elizabethan explorer, Martin Frobisher, sought for a "North-west Passage" from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and for a time it was thought that he had found it in the very north of North America. But it was afterwards found that the "passage," which had already been given the name of *Frobisher's Straits*, was really only an inlet, and afterwards it became known as *Lumley's Inlet.*

Frobisher never discovered a North-west Passage, for the ships of those days were not fitted out in a way to enable the sailors to bear the icy cold of these northern regions. Many brave explorers tried later to discover it. Three times John Davis made a voyage for this purpose but never succeeded, though *Davis Strait* commemorates his heroic attempts. Hudson and Baffin explored in these waters, as the names *Hudson Bay* and *Baffin Bay* remind us.

It was nearly two hundred years later that Sir John Franklin sailed with an expedition in two boats, the *Erebus* and *Terror*, determined to find the passage. He found it, but died in the attempt; but, strangely enough, his name was not given to any strait, though later it was given to all the islands of the Arctic Archipelago.

The winning of India by the British in the eighteenth century did not give us many new English names. India was not, like the greater part of America, a wild country inhabited by savage peoples. It had an older civilization than the greater part of Europe, and the only reason that it was weak enough to be conquered was that the many races who lived there could not agree among themselves. Most of the place-names of India are native names given by natives, for centuries before France and England began to struggle for its possession in the eighteenth century India had passed through a long and varied history.

When we remember that the natives of India have no name to describe the whole continent, it helps us to understand that India is in no way a single country. The British Government have given the continent the name *India*, taking it from the great river Indus, which itself takes its name from an old word, *sindhu*, meaning "river."

In the days of the early explorers, after the islands discovered by Columbus were called the *West Indies*, some people began to call the Indian continent the *East Indies*, to distinguish it; and some of the papers about India drawn up for the information of Parliament about Indian affairs still use this name, but it is not a familiar use to most people.

The mistake which Columbus and the early explorers made in thinking America was India has

caused a good deal of confusion. The natives of North America were called Indians, and it was only long afterwards, in fact quite lately, that people began to write and speak of the natives of India as *Indians*. When it was printed in the newspapers that Indians were fighting for the British Empire with the armies in France, the use of the word *Indian* seemed wrong to a great many people; but it is now becoming so common that it will probably soon seem quite right. When it is used with the old meaning we shall have to say the "Indians of North America." Some people use the word *Hindu* to describe the natives of India; but this is not correct, as only *some* of the natives of India are Hindus, just as the name *Hindustan* (a Persian name meaning "land of the Hindus," as *Afghanistan* means "land of the Afghans"), which some old writers on geography used for *India*, is really the name of one part of the land round the river Ganges, where the language known as *Hindi* is spoken.

The place-names of India given by natives of the many different races which have lived in the land could fill a book with their stories alone. We can only mention a few. The name of the great range of mountains which runs across the north of the continent, the *Himalayas*, means in Sanskrit, the oldest language used in India, the "home of snow." *Bombay* takes its name from *Mumba*, the name of a goddess of an early tribe who occupied the dis-

trict round Bombay. *Calcutta*, which stretches over ground where there were formerly several villages, takes its name from one of these. Its old form was *Kalikuti*, which means the "ghauts," or passes, leading to the temple of the goddess Kali.

In Australia, where a beginning of colonization was made through the discoveries of Captain Cook towards the end of the eighteenth century, the place-names were sometimes given from places at home, sometimes after persons, but they have hardly the same romance as the early American names.

Botany Bay was the name chosen by Captain Cook in a moment of enthusiasm for an inlet of New South Wales. He gave it this name because of the great number of plants and flowers which grow there.

In Africa a good deal of history can be learned from the place-names. Although the north of Africa had for many hundreds of years had its part in the civilization of the countries round the Mediterranean Sea, the greater part of Africa had remained an unexplored region—the "Dark Continent," as it was called. In the fifteenth century the Portuguese sailors crept along the western coast, and afterwards along the south, as we have seen, past the Cape of Good Hope. But the interior of the continent remained for long an unexplored region.

The Dutch had, very soon after the discovery of

the Cape, made a settlement there, which was known as *Cape Colony*. This was afterwards won by the English; but many Dutchmen still stayed there, and though, since the Boer War, when the Boers, or Dutch, in South Africa tried to win their independence, the whole of South Africa belongs to the British Empire, still there are naturally many Dutch names given by the early Dutch settlers. Some of these became very well known to English people in the Boer War. *Bloemfontein* is one of these names, coming from the Dutch word for "spring" (*fontein*), and that of Jan Bloem, one of the farmers who first settled there. Another well-known place in the Transvaal, *Pietermaritzburg*, took its name from the two leaders who led the Boers out of Cape Colony when they felt that the English were becoming too strong there. These leaders were Pieter Retief and Georit Maritz. This movement of the Boers into the Transvaal was called the "Great Trek," *trek* being a Dutch word for a journey or migration of this sort. Since the days of the Boer War this word has been regularly used in English with this same meaning. Like the English settlers in America, the Dutch settlers in South Africa sometimes gave the names of places in Holland to their new settlements. *Utrecht* is an example of this.

Up to the very end of the nineteenth century no European country besides England had any great possessions in Africa. The Portuguese still

held the coast lands between Zululand (so called from the fierce black natives who lived there) and Mozambique. Egypt had come practically under British rule soon after the days of Napoleon, and in the middle of the nineteenth century the great explorers Livingstone and Stanley had explored the lands along the Zambesi River and a great part of Central Africa. Stanley went right across the centre of the continent, and discovered the lake *Albert Edward Nyanza. Nyanza* is the African word for "lake," and the name Albert Edward was given in honour of the Prince Consort. *Victoria Nyanza*, so called after Queen Victoria, had been discovered some years before. It was all these discoveries which led to the colonization of Africa by the nations of Europe.

In 1884 the great German statesman, Prince Bismarck, set up the German flag in Damaraland, the coast district to the north of the Orange River; and soon after a German colony was set up in the lands between the Portuguese settlements and the Equator. This was simply called German East Africa. At the same time the other nations of Europe suddenly realized that if they meant to have part of Africa they must join in the scramble at once. There were soon a British East Africa, a Portuguese East Africa, a Portuguese West Africa, a German South-west Africa, and so on. All these are names which might have been given in a hurry, and in them we seem to read the haste of the Euro-

pean nations to seize on the only lands in the world which were still available. They are very different from the descriptive names which the early Portuguese adventurers had strewn along the coast, like *Sierra Leone*, or "the lion mountain;" *Cape Verde*, or "the green cape," so called from its green grass.

Still, romance was not dead even yet. There is one district of South Africa which takes its name in the old way from that of a person. *Rhodesia*, the name given to Mashonaland and Matabeleland, was so called after Mr. Cecil Rhodes, a young British emigrant, who went out from England in very weak health and became perfectly strong, at the same time winning a fortune for himself in the diamond fields of Kimberley. He devoted himself heart and soul to the strengthening of British power in South Africa, and it is fitting that this province should by its name keep his memory fresh.

The story of the struggle in South Africa between Boer and Briton can be partly read in its place-names; and the story of the struggle between old and new settlers in Canada can be similarly read in the place-names of that land.

The first settlers in Canada were the French, and the descendants of these first settlers form a large proportion of the Canadian population. Many places in Canada still have, of course, the names which the first French settlers gave them.

The Italian, John Cabot, had sailed to Canada a

few years after Columbus discovered America, sent by the English king, Henry VII., but no settlements were made. Thirty-seven years later the French sailor, Jacques Cartier, was sent by the French king, Francis I., to explore there. Cartier sailed up the Gulf of St. Lawrence as far as the spot where Montreal now stands. The name was given by Cartier, and means "royal mount." It was Cartier, too, who gave Canada its name; but he thought that this was already the Indian name for the land. A story is told that some Red Indians were trying to talk to him and making signs, and they pointed to some houses, saying, "Cannata." Cartier thought they meant that this was the name of the country, but he was mistaken. They were, perhaps, pointing out their village, for *cannata* is the Indian name for "village."

Cartier, like Cabot, sailed away again, and the first real founder of a settlement in Canada was the Frenchman, Samuel de Champlain, who made friends with the Indians, and explored the upper parts of the river Lawrence, and gave his name to the beautiful *Lake Champlain*, which he discovered. It was he who founded *Quebec*, giving it this Breton name. Sailors from Brittany had ventured as far as the coast of Canada in the time of Columbus, and had given its name to *Cape Breton*. And so French names spread through Canada. Later, in one of the wars of the eighteenth century, England won Canada from France; but these French names

still remain to tell the tale of French adventure and heroism in that land.

We have seen many names in new lands, some of them given by people from the Old World who settled in these lands. In the great European War we have seen people from these new lands coming back to fight in some of the most ancient countries of the Old World. The splendid Australian troops who fought in Gallipoli sprinkled many new names over the land they won and lost. One, at least, will always remain on the maps. *Anzac*, where the Colonials made their historic landing, will never be forgotten. It was a new name, made up of the initial letters of the words "Australian and New Zealand Army Corps," and will remain for ever one of the most honoured names invented in the twentieth century.

Children who like history can read whole chapters in the place-names of the old world and the new.

CHAPTER V.

STORIES IN OLD LONDON NAMES.

It is not only in the names of continents, countries, and towns that stories of the past can be read. The names of the old streets and buildings (or even of new streets which have kept their old names) in our old towns are full of stories. Especially is this true about London, the centre of the British Empire, and almost the centre of the world's history. It will be interesting not only to little Londoners, but to other children as well, to examine some of the old London names, and see what stories they can tell.

Naturally the most interesting names of all are to be found in what we now call "the City," meaning the centre of London, which was at one time all the London there was.

We have seen that London was in the time of the Britons just a fort, and that it became important in Roman times, and a town grew up around it. But this town in the Middle Ages, and even so late as the eighteenth century, was not at all like the London we know to-day. London now is really a

county, and stretches away far into four counties; but mediæval London was like a small country town, though a very important and gay and busy town, because it was the capital.

Many of the names in the City take us back to the very earliest days of the capital. This part of London stands on slightly rising ground, and near the river Thames, just the sort of ground which early people would choose upon which to build a fortress or a village. The names of two of the chief City streets, the Strand and Fleet Street, help to show us something of what London was like in its earliest days. A few years ago, in a famous case in a court of law, one of the lawyers asked a witness what he was doing in the Strand at a certain time. The witness, a witty Irishman, answered with a solemn face, "Picking seaweed." Everybody laughed, because the idea of picking seaweed in the very centre of London was so funny. But a strand *is* a shore, and when the name was given to the London *Strand* it was not a paved street at all, but the muddy shore of the river Thames.

Then *Fleet Street* marks the path by which the little river Fleet ran into the Thames. The river had several tributaries, which were covered over in this way, and several of them are used as sewers to carry away the sewage of the city. There is a *Fleet Street,* too, in Hampstead, in the north-west of London, and this marks the beginning of the

course of the same little river Fleet which got its water from the high ground of Hampstead.

This river has given us still another famous London name. It flowed past what is now called King's Cross, and here its banks were so steep that it was called *Hollow*, or *Hole-bourne*, and from this we get the name *Holborn*.

The City being the centre of London had a certain amount of trading and bargaining from the earliest times. In those times there were no such things as shops. People bought and sold in markets, and the name of the busy City street, *Cheapside*, reminds us of this. It was called in early times the *Chepe*, and took its name from the Old English word *ceap*, "a bargain."

At the end of Cheapside runs the street called *Poultry*, and this, so an old chronicler tells us, has its name from the fact that a fowl or poultry market was regularly held there up to the sixteenth century. The name of another famous City street, *Cornhill*, tells us that a corn market used to be held there. Another name, *Gracechurch Street*, reminds us of an old grass market. It took its name from an old church, St. Benet Grasschurch, which was probably so called because the grass market was held under its walls.

Smithfield is the great London meat market now; but its name means "smooth field," and in the Middle Ages it was used as a cattle and hay market, and on days which were not market days games

and tournaments took place there. Later its name became famous in English history for the "fires of Smithfield," when men and women were burned to death there for refusing to accept the state religion.

Many London names come from churches and buildings which no longer exist. The names help us to picture a London very different from the London of to-day. One of the busiest streets in that part of the City round Fleet Street where editors and journalists, and printers and messengers are working day and night to produce the newspapers which carry the news of the day far and wide over England, is *Blackfriars*. This is a very different place from the spot where the Dominicans, or "Black Friars," built their priory in the thirteenth century.

In those days the friars chose the busiest parts of the little English towns to build their houses in, so that they could preach and help the people. They thought that the earlier monks had chosen places for their monasteries too far from the people. There were grey friars and white friars, Austin friar and crutched friars, all of whose names remain in the London of to-day.

There were many monasteries and convents in the larger London which soon grew up round the City, and in the City itself we have a street whose name keeps the memory of one convent of nuns. The street called the *Minories* marks the place where a convent of nuns of St. Clare was founded

in the thirteenth century. The Latin name for these nuns is *Sorores Minores*, or "Lesser Sisters," just as the Franciscans, or grey friars, were *Fratres Minores*, or "Lesser Brethren." And so from the Latin *minores* we get the name Minories as the name of a London street, standing where this convent once stood.

The name of the street *London Wall* reminds us of the time when London was a walled city with its gates, which were closed at night and opened every morning. Many streets keep the names of the old gates, like *Ludgate Hill, Aldersgate, Bishopsgate.*

The great *Tower of London* still stands to show us how London was defended in the old feudal days; but *Tower Bridge*, the bridge which crosses the river at that point, is a modern bridge, built in 1894. The name *Cripplegate* still remains, and the story it has to tell us is that in the Middle Ages there stood outside the city walls beyond this gate the hospital of St. Giles-in-the-Fields. It was a hospital for lepers; but St. Giles is the patron saint of cripples, and so this gate of the city got the name of Cripplegate, because it was the nearest to the church of the patron saint of cripples.

This church of St. Giles-in-the-Fields no longer remains; but we have *St. Martin's-in-the-Fields*, to remind us of the difference between Trafalgar Square to-day and its condition not quite two hundred years ago, when this church was built.

It must be remembered that even at the very

end of the eighteenth century London was just a tiny town lying along the river. At that time many of the nobles and rich merchants were building their mansions in what is now the West Central district of London. The north side of Queen Square, Bloomsbury, was left open, so that the people who lived there could enjoy the view of the Highgate and Hampstead hills, to which the open country stretched. Even now this end of Queen Square is closed only by a railing, but a great mass of streets and houses stretches far beyond Hampstead and Highgate now.

Trafalgar Square itself got its name in honour of Nelson, the hero of the great victory of Trafalgar. The great column with the statue of Nelson stands in the square.

This brings us to one of the most interesting of old London names. On one side of the square stands *Charing Cross*, the busiest spot in London. At this point there once stood the last of the nine beautiful crosses which King Edward III. set up at the places where the coffin of his wife, Eleanor, was set to rest in the long journey from Lincolnshire, where she died, to her grave in Westminster Abbey; and so it got its name. A fine modern cross has been set up in memory of Edward's cross, which has long since disappeared.

The district of Westminster takes its name, of course, from the abbey; and the name *Broad Sanctuary* remains to remind us of the sanctuary in

which, as in many churches of the Middle Ages, people could take refuge even from the Law. *Covent Garden* took its name from a convent garden belonging to the abbey.

One of the oldest parts of London is *Charterhouse Square*, where, until a year or two ago, there stood the famous boys' school of this name. The school took its name from the old monastery of the Charterhouse, which King Henry VIII. brought to an end because the monks would not own that he was head of the Church instead of the Pope. They suffered a dreadful death, being hanged, drawn, and quartered as traitors. The monastery was taken, like so many others, by the king, and afterwards became a school. But the school was removed in 1872 to an airier district at Godalming. Part of the old building is still used as a boys' day school.

The word *Charterhouse* was the English name for a house of Carthusians, a very strict order of monks, whose first house was the Grande Chartreuse in France.

Not far from the Charterhouse is *Ely Place*, with the beautiful old church of St. Ethelreda. This was, in the Middle Ages, a chapel used by the Bishop of Ely when he came to London, and that is how Ely Place, still one of the quietest and quaintest spots in London, got its name.

People who go along Ludgate Hill to St. Paul's must have noticed many curious names. Perhaps

the quaintest of all is *Paternoster Row*. This street, which takes its name from the Latin name of the "Our Father," or Lord's Prayer, got its name from the fact that in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries many sellers of prayer-books and texts collected at this spot, on account of it being near the great church of St. Paul's. Paternoster Row is still full of booksellers.

Ave Maria Lane and *Amen Corner*, just near, got their names in imitation of Paternoster Row, the *Ave Maria*, or "Hail, Mary!" being the words used by the angel Gabriel to the Blessed Virgin at the Annunciation, and *Amen* being, of course, the ending to the *paternoster*, as to most prayers.

Not far from St. Paul's is the Church of *St. Mary-le-Bow*. It used to be said that the true Londoner had to be born within the sound of Bow-bells, and the old story tells us that it was these bells which Dick Whittington heard telling him to turn back when he had lost hope of making his fortune, and was leaving London for the country again. The present Church of St. Mary-le-Bow was built by Sir Christopher Wren, the great seventeenth-century architect, who built St. Paul's and several other of the most beautiful London churches after they had been destroyed by the Great Fire of 1666. But underneath the present Church of St. Mary-le-Bow is the crypt, which was not destroyed in the fire. This crypt was built, like the former church, in Norman times, and the church took its

name of *bow* from the arches upon which it was built in the Norman way, it being the first church in London to be built in this way. The church is generally called "Bow Church."

Another famous old London church, the *Temple Church*, which is now used as the chapel of the lawyers at the Inns of Court, got its name from the fact that it belonged to and was built by the Knights Templars in the twelfth century. These knights were one of those peculiar religious orders which joined the life of a soldier to that of a monk, and played a great part in the Crusades. King Edward III. brought the order to an end, and took their property; but the Temple Church, with its tombs and figures of armoured knights in brass, remains to keep their memory fresh.

We may mention two other names of old London streets which take us back to the Middle Ages. In the City we have the street called *Old Jewry*, and this reminds us of the time when in all the more important towns of England in the early Middle Ages a part was put aside for the Jews. This was called the *Ghetto*. The Jews were much disliked in the Middle Ages because of the treatment of Our Lord by their forefathers; but the kings often protected them because, in spite of everything, the Jews grew rich, and the kings were able to borrow money of them. In 1290, however, Edward I. banished all the Jews from England, and they did not return until the days of Cromwell. But the

name of the Old Jewry reminds us of the ghetto which was an important part of old London.

Another famous City street, *Lombard Street*, the street of bankers, got its name from the Italian merchants from Lombardy who set up their business there, and who became the bankers and money-lenders when there were no longer any Jews to lend money to the English king and nobles.

As time went on London began to grow in a way which seemed alarming to the people of the seventeenth century, though even then it was but a tiny town in comparison with the London of to-day. The fashionable people and courtiers began to build houses in the western "suburbs," as they were then called, though now they are looked upon as very central districts. It was chiefly in the seventeenth century that what we now know as the *West End* became a residential quarter. Some parts of the West End are, of course, still the most fashionable parts of London; but some, like Covent Garden and Lincoln's Inn Fields, have been given over to business.

Most of the best-known names in the West End date from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The most fashionable street of all, *Piccadilly*, probably got its name from the very fashionable collar called a *pickadil* (from the Spanish word *picca*, "a spear") which the fine gentlemen wore as they swaggered through the West End in the early seventeenth century. *Pall Mall* and the *Mall* in St.

James's Park took their names from a game which was very fashionable after the Restoration, but which was already known in the time of Charles I. The game was called *pall-mall*, from the French *paille-maille*. After the Restoration Charles II. allowed the people to use St. James's Park, which was a royal park, and Londoners used to watch respectfully and admiringly as Charles and his brother James played this game.

Spring Gardens, also in St. James's Park, reminds us of the lively spirits of Restoration times. It was so called because of a fountain which stood there, and which was so arranged that when a passer-by trod by accident on a certain valve the waters spurted forth and drenched him. We should not think this so funny now as people did then.

At the same time that the West End was growing, poorer districts were spreading to the north and east of the City. *Moorfields* (which tells us by its name what it was like in the early London days) was built over. *Spitalfields* (which took its name from one of the many hospitals which religious people built in and near mediæval London) and *Whitechapel* also filled up, and became centres of trade and manufacture. The games and sports which amused the people in these poorer quarters were not so refined as the ball-throwing of the princes and courtiers. In the name *Balls Pond Road*, Islington, we are reminded of the duck-

hunting which was one of the sports of the common people.

As time went on and London became larger and more crowded, the fashionable people began to go away each summer to drink the waters at Bath and Tunbridge Wells. But in London itself there were several springs and wells whose waters were supposed to be good for people's health, and these have given us some of the best-known London names. Near *Holywell Street* there were several of these wells; and along *Well Walk,* in the north-west suburb of Hampstead, a procession of gaily-dressed people might regularly be seen in Charles II.'s time going to drink the waters. *Clerkenwell* also took its name from a well which was believed to be mediæval and even miraculous. *Bridewell,* the name of the famous prison, also came from the name of a well dedicated to St. Bride.

Many of the great streets and squares of the West End of London have taken their names from the houses of noblemen who have lived there, or from the names of the rich owners of property in these parts. *Northumberland Avenue,* opening off Trafalgar Square, takes its name from Northumberland House, built there in the time of James I. *Arundel Street,* running down to the Embankment from the Strand, is so called in memory of Arundel House, the home of the Earl of Arundel, which used to stand here. It was there that the famous collection of statues known as the "Arundel Marbles" was

first collected. They were presented to Oxford University in 1667.

Just near Charing Cross there is a part of old London called the *Adelphi*. This district takes its name from a fine group of buildings put up there in the middle of the eighteenth century by the two famous brother architects Robert and William Adam. *Adelphi* is the Greek word for "brothers," but the name seems very peculiar applied in this way.

The name of *Mayfair*, the very centre of fashion in the West End, reminds us that in this magnificent quarter of London a fair used to be held in May in the time of Charles II. This gives us an idea of how the district must have changed since then. *Farm Street*, in Mayfair, has its name from a farm which was still there in the middle of the eighteenth century. The ground is now taken up by stables and coach-houses. *Half-Moon Street*, another fashionable street running out of Piccadilly, takes its name from a public house which was built on this corner in 1730.

These old names give us some idea of what London was like at different times in the past; but another very interesting group of names are those which are being made in the greater London of to-day. One of the commonest words used by Londoners to-day is the *Underground*. If an eighteenth-century Londoner could come back and talk to us to-day he would not know what we meant by this word.

For the great system of underground railways to which it refers was only made in the later years of the nineteenth century. The *Twopenny Tube* was the name of one of the first lines of these underground railways. It was so called because the trains ran through great circular tunnels, like the underground railways which connect all parts of London to-day. It has now become quite a habit of Londoners to talk of going "by Tube" when they mean by any of the underground railways.

One of these lines has a very peculiar and rather ugly name. It is called the *Bakerloo Railway*, because it runs from Baker Street to Waterloo. It certainly makes us think that the Londoners of long ago showed much better taste in the names they invented.

CHAPTER VI.

WORDS MADE BY GREAT WRITERS.

As we have seen, languages while they are living are always growing and changing. We have seen how new names have been made as time went on. But many new words besides names are constantly being added to a language; for just as grown-up people use more words than children, and educated people use more words than uneducated or less educated people, so, too, *nations* use more words as time goes on. Every word must have been used a first time by some one; but of course it is impossible to know who were the makers of most words. Even new words cannot often be traced to their makers. Some one uses a new word, and others pick it up, and it passes into general use, while everybody has forgotten who made it.

But one very common way in which people learn to use new words is through reading the books of great writers. Sometimes these writers have made new words which their readers have seen to be very good, and have then begun to use themselves. Sometimes these great writers have made use of

words which, though not new, were very rare, and immediately these words have become popular and ordinary words.

The first great English poet was Chaucer, and the great English philologists feel sure that he must have made many new words and made many rare words common; but it is not easy to say that Chaucer made any particular word, because we do not know enough of the language which was in use at that time to say so. One famous phrase of Chaucer is often quoted now: "after the schole of Stratford-atte-Bowe," which he used in describing the French spoken by one of the Canterbury Pilgrims in his great poem. He meant that this was not pure French, but French spoken in the way and with the peculiar accent used at Stratford (a part of London near Bow Church). We now often use the phrase to describe any accent which is not perfect.

But though we do not know for certain which words Chaucer introduced, we do know that this first great English poet must have introduced many, especially French words; while Wyclif, the first great English prose writer, who translated part of the Bible from Latin into English, must also have given us many new words, especially from the Latin. The English language never changed so much after the time of Chaucer and Wyclif as it had done before.

The next really great English poet, Edmund

Spenser, who wrote his wonderful poem, "The Faerie Queene," in the days of Queen Elizabeth, invented a great many new words. Some of these were seldom or never used afterwards, but some became ordinary English words. Sometimes his new words were partly formed out of old words which were no longer used. The word *elfin*, which became quite a common word, seems to have been invented by Spenser. He called a boasting knight by the name *Braggadocio*, and we still use the word *braggadocio* for vain boasting. A common expression which we often find used in romantic tales, and especially in the novels of Sir Walter Scott, *derring-do*, meaning "adventurous action," was first used by Spenser. He, however, took it from Chaucer, who had used it as a *verb*, speaking of the *dorring-do* (or "daring to do") that belonged to a knight. Spenser made a mistake in thinking Chaucer had used it as a noun, and used it so himself, making in this way quite a new and very well-sounding word.

Another word which Spenser made, and which is still sometimes used, was *fool-happy;* but other words, like *idlesse, dreariment, drowsihead,* are hardly seen outside his poetry. One reason for this is that Spenser was telling stories of quaint and curious things, and he used quaint and curious words which would not naturally pass into ordinary language.

The next great name in English literature, and the greatest name of all, is Shakespeare. Shake-

speare influenced the English language more than any writer before or since. First of all he made a great many new words, some very simple and others more elaborate, but all of them so suitable that they have become a part of the language. Such a common word as *bump*, which it would be difficult to imagine ourselves without, is first found in Shakespeare's writings. *Hurry*, which seems to be the only word to express what it stands for, seems also to have been made by Shakespeare, and also the common word *dwindle*. Some other words which Shakespeare made are *lonely*, *orb* (meaning " globe "), *illumine*, and *home-keeping*.

Many others might be quoted, but the great influence which Shakespeare had on the English language was not through the new words he made, but in the way his expressions and phrases came to be used as ordinary expressions. Many people are constantly speaking Shakespeare without knowing it, for the phrases he used were so exactly right and expressive that they have been repeated ever since, and often, of course, by people who do not know where they first came from. We can only mention a few of these phrases, such as " a Daniel come to judgment," which Shylock says to Portia in the " Merchant of Venice," and which is often used now sarcastically. From the same play comes the expression " pound of flesh," which is now often used to mean what a person knows to be due to him and is determined to have. " Full of sound and

fury, signifying nothing," "to gild refined gold," "to wear one's heart upon one's sleeve"—these and hundreds of other phrases are known by most people to come from Shakespeare; they are used by many who do not. They describe so splendidly so many things which are constantly happening that they seem to be the only or at least the best way of expressing the meanings they signify.

But not only have hundreds of Shakespeare's own words and phrases passed into everyday English, but the way in which he turned his phrases is often imitated. It was Shakespeare who used the phrase to "out-Herod Herod," and now this is a common form of speech. A statesman could now quite suitably use the phrase to "out-Asquith Asquith."

The next great poet after Shakespeare was Milton. He also gave us a great many new words and phrases, but not nearly so many as Shakespeare. Still there are a few phrases which are now so common that many people use them without even knowing that they come from Milton's writings. Some of these are "the human face divine," "to hide one's diminished head," "a dim religious light," "the light fantastic toe." It was Milton who invented the name *pandemonium* for the home of the devils, and now people regularly speak of a state of horrible noise and disorder as "a pandemonium." Many of those who use the expression have not the slightest idea of where it came from. The few words which

we know were made by Milton are very expressive words. It was he who invented *anarch* for the spirit of anarchy or disorder, and no one has found a better word to express the idea. *Satanic, moon-struck, gloom* (to mean "darkness"), *echoing,* and *bannered* are some more well-known words invented by Milton.

It is not always the greatest writers who have given us the greatest number of new words. A great prose writer of the seventeenth century, Sir Thomas Browne, is looked upon as a classical writer, but his works are only read by a few, not like the great works of Shakespeare and Milton. Yet Sir Thomas Browne has given many new words to the English language. This is partly because he deliberately made many new words. One book of his gave us several hundreds of these words. The reason his new words remained in the language was that there was a real need of them.

Many seventeenth-century writers of plays invented hundreds of new words, but they tried to invent curious and queer-sounding words, and very few people liked them. These words never really became part of the English language. They are "one-man" words, to be found only in the writings of their inventors. Yet it was one of these fanciful writers who invented the very useful word *dramatist* for "a writer of plays."

But the words made by Sir Thomas Browne were quite different. Such ordinary words as *medical,*

literary, and *electricity* were first used by him. He made many others too, not quite so common, but words which later writers and speakers could hardly do without.

Another seventeenth-century writer, John Evelyn, the author of the famous *Diary* which has taught us so much about the times in which he lived, was a great maker of words. Most of his new words were made from foreign words, and as he was much interested in art and music, many of his words relate to these things. It was Evelyn who introduced the word *opera* into English, and also *outline, altitude, monochrome* ("a painting in one shade"), and *pastel*, besides many other less common words.

Robert Boyle, a great seventeenth-century writer on science, gave many new scientific words to the English language. The words *pendulum* and *intensity* were first used by him, and it was he who first used *fluid* as a noun.

The poets Dryden and Pope gave us many new words too.

Dr. Johnson, the maker of the first great English dictionary, added some words to the language. As everybody knows who has read that famous book, Boswell's *Life of Johnson*, Dr. Johnson was a man who always said just what he thought, and had no patience with anything like stupidity. The expression *fiddledeedee*, another way of telling a person that he is talking nonsense, was made by him. *Irascibility*, which means "tendency to be easily

made cross or angry," is also one of his words, and so are the words *literature* and *comic*.

The great statesman and political writer, Edmund Burke, was the inventor of many of our commonest words relating to politics. *Colonial*, *colonization*, *electioneering*, *diplomacy*, *financial*, and many other words which are in everyday use now, were made by him.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century there was a great revival in English literature, since known as the "Romantic Movement." After the rather stiff manners and writing of the eighteenth century, people began to have an enthusiasm for all sorts of old and adventurous things, and a new love for nature and beauty. Sir Walter Scott was the great novelist of the movement, and also wrote some fine, stirring ballads and poems. In these writings, which dealt chiefly with the adventurous deeds of the Middle Ages, Scott used again many old words which had been forgotten and fallen out of use. He made them everyday words again.

The old word *chivalrous*, which had formerly been used to describe the institutions connected with knighthood, he used in a new way, and the word has kept this meaning ever since. It has now always the meaning of courtesy and gentleness towards the weak, but before Sir Walter Scott used it it had not this meaning at all. Scott also revived words like *raid* and *foray*, his novels, of course, being full of descriptions of fighting on the borders of England

and Scotland. It was this same writer who introduced the Scottish word *gruesome* into the language.

Later in the century another Scotsman, Thomas Carlyle, made many new words which later writers and speakers have used. They are generally rather forcible and not very dignified words, for Carlyle's writings were critical of almost everything and everybody, and he seemed to love rather ugly words, which made the faults he described seem contemptible or ridiculous. It was he who made the words *croakery*, *dry-as-dust*, and *grumbly*, and he introduced also the Scottish word *feckless*, which describes a person who is a terribly bad manager, careless and disorderly in his affairs, the sort of person whom Carlyle so much despised.

The great writers of the present time seem to be unwilling to make new words. The chief word-makers of to-day are the people who talk a new slang (and of these we shall see something in another chapter), and the scientific writers, who, as they are constantly making new discoveries, have to find words to describe them.

Some of the poets of the present day have used new words and phrases, but they are generally strange words, which no one thinks of using for himself. The poet John Masefield used the word *waps* and the phrase *bee-loud*, which is very expressive, but which we cannot imagine passing into ordinary speech. Two poets of the Romantic Movement, Southey and Coleridge, used many new and

strange words just in this way, but these, again, never passed into the ordinary speech of English people.

One maker of new words in the nineteenth century must not be forgotten. This was Lewis Carroll, the author of "Alice in Wonderland" and "Through the Looking-Glass." He made many new and rather queer words; but they expressed so well the meaning he gave to them that some of them have become quite common. This writer generally made these curious words out of two others. The word *galumph* (which is now put as an ordinary word in English dictionaries) he made out of *gallop* and *triumph*. It means "to go galloping in triumph." Another of Lewis Carroll's words, *chortle*, is even more used. It also has the idea of "triumphing," and is generally used to mean "chuckling (either inwardly or outwardly) in triumph." It was probably made out of the words *chuckle* and *snort*.

But great writers have not only added new words and phrases to the language by inventing them; sometimes the name of a book itself has taken on a general meaning. Sir Thomas More in the time of Henry VIII. wrote his famous book, "Utopia," to describe a country in which everything was done as it should be. *Utopia* (which means "Nowhere," More making the word out of two Greek words, *ou*, "not," and *topos*, "place") was the name of the ideal state he described, and ever since such

imaginary states where all goes well have been described as "Utopias."

Then, again, a scene or place in a great book may be so splendidly described, and interest people so much, that it, too, comes to be used in a general way. People often use the name *Vanity Fair* to describe a frivolous way of life. But the original *Vanity Fair* was, of course, one of the places of temptation through which Christian had to pass on his way to the Heavenly City in John Bunyan's famous book, the "Pilgrim's Progress." Another of these places was the *Slough of Despond*, which is now quite generally used to describe a condition of great discouragement and depression. The adjective *Lilliputian*, meaning "very small," comes from *Lilliput*, the land of little people in which Gulliver found himself in Swift's famous book, "Gulliver's Travels."

Then many common expressions are taken from characters in well-known books. We often speak of some one's *Man Friday*, meaning a right-hand man or general helper; but the original Man Friday was, of course, the savage whom Robinson Crusoe found on his desert island, and who acted afterwards as his servant.

In describing a person as *quixotic* we do not necessarily think of the original Don Quixote in the novel of the great Spanish writer, Cervantes. Don Quixote was always doing generous but rather foolish things, and the adjective *quixotic* now describes this sort

of action. A quite different character, the Jew in Shakespeare's play, "The Merchant of Venice," has given us the expression "a Shylock." From Dickens's famous character Mrs. Gamp in "Martin Chuzzlewit," who always carried a bulgy umbrella, we get the word *gamp*, rather a vulgar name for "umbrella."

We speak of "a Sherlock Holmes" when we mean to describe some one who is very quick at finding out things. Sherlock Holmes is the hero of the famous detective stories of Conan Doyle.

It is a very great testimony to the power of a writer when the names of persons or places in his books become in this way part of the English language.

CHAPTER VII.

WORDS THE BIBLE HAS GIVEN US.

A GREAT English historian, writing of the sixteenth century, once said, "The English people became the people of a book." The book he meant was, of course, the Bible. When England became Protestant the people found a new interest in the Bible. In Catholic times educated people, like priests, had read the Bible chiefly in Latin, though the New Testament had been translated into English. But most of the people could not even read. They knew the Bible stories only from the sermons and teaching of the priests, and from the great number of statues of Biblical kings and prophets which covered the beautiful churches of the Middle Ages.

But the new Protestant teachers were much more enthusiastic about the Bible. Many of them found the whole of their religion in its pages, and were constantly quoting texts of Scripture. New translations of the New Testament were made, and at last, in 1611, the wonderful translation of the whole Bible known as the "Authorised Version," because

it was the translation ordered and approved by the Government, was published. About the same time a translation into English was made for Catholics, and this was hardly less beautiful. It is known as the "Douai Bible," because it was published at Douai by Catholics who had fled from England.

From that time the Bible has been the book which English people have read most, and it has had an immense influence on the English language.

Even in the Middle Ages the Bible had given many new words to the language. Names of Eastern animals, trees, and plants, etc., like *lion, camel, cedar, palm, myrrh, hyssop, gem,* are examples of new words learned from the Bible at this time.

But the translations of the Bible in the Reformation period had a much greater effect than this. Many words which were already dying out were used by the translators, and so kept their place in the English language. Examples of such words are *apparel* and *raiment* for "clothes." These words are not used so often as the more ordinary word *clothes* even now, but it is quite probable that they would have passed out of use altogether if the translators of the Bible had not saved them.

There are many words of this sort which were saved in this way, but they are chiefly used in poetry and "fine" writing. We do not speak of the "firmament" in an ordinary way; but this word, taken from the first chapter of the Bible, is still used as a more poetical name for *sky*.

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But the translators of the Bible must also be put among the makers of new English words. Sometimes the translator could not find what he considered a satisfactory word to express the meaning of the Greek word he wished to translate. He, therefore, made a new word, or put two old words together to express exactly what he thought the Greek word meant. The word *beautiful* may not have been actually invented by the translator, William Tyndale, but it is not found in any book earlier than his translation of the New Testament. It seems a very natural and necessary word to us now. It was Tyndale who first used the words *peacemaker* and *scapegoat* and the compound word *long-suffering;* and another famous translator, Miles Coverdale, who invented the expressions *loving-kindness* and *tender mercy*.

But the great effect which the Bible has had on the English language is not in the preserving of old words and the making of new. Its chief effect has been in the way many of its expressions and phrases have passed into everyday use, so that people often use Biblical phrases without even knowing that they are doing so, just as we saw was the case with many phrases taken from Shakespeare's works.

Every one knows the expression to *cast pearls before swine*, and its meaning, " to give good things to people who are too ignorant to appreciate them." This expression, taken from the Gospel of St. Matthew, has now become an ordinary English expres-

sion. The same is the case with the expression, *the eleventh hour*, meaning "just in time." But perhaps not every one who uses it remembers that it comes from the parable of the Labourers in the Vineyard, though, of course, most people would.

Other common Biblical expressions are, *a labour of love, to hope against hope, the shadow of death*, and so on. When a child is described as the *Benjamin* of the family, we know that this means the youngest and best loved, because the story of Jacob's love for Benjamin is familiar to every one. Again, when a person is described as a *Pharisee* no one needs to have a description of his qualities, for every one knows the story of the Pharisee and the Publican.

The Bible is, of course, full of the most poetical ideas and the most vivid language, and the fact that this language has become the everyday speech of Englishmen has been most important in the development of the English language. Without the Bible, which is full of the richness and colour of Eastern things and early peoples, the English language might have been much duller and less expressive.

But the religious writers of the Reformation period gave us another kind of word besides those found in the translations of the Bible. Many of these writers thought it was their duty to abuse the people who did not agree with them on the subject of religion. Tyndale himself, who invented such beautiful words in his translations, was the first to use the word

dunce. He called the Catholics by this name, which he made out of the name of a philosopher of the Middle Ages called Duns Scotus. The Protestants despised the Catholic or scholastic philosophy. But Duns Scotus was quite a clever man in his day, and it is curious that his name should have given us the word *dunce,* which became quite a common word as time went on.

Other new words which the Protestants used against the Catholics were *Romish, Romanist* (which Luther had used, but which Coverdale was the first to use in English), *popery, popishness, papistical, monkish,* all of which are still used to-day, and still have an anti-Catholic meaning. It was then that Rome was first described as *Babylon,* the meaning of the Protestants being that the city was as wicked as ancient Babylon, the name of which is used as a type of all wickedness in the Apocalypse, and these writers often used the words *Babylonian* and *Babylonish* instead of *Roman.* The name *Scarlet Woman,* also taken from the Apocalypse, was also often used to describe the Catholic Church.

The expression *Roman Catholic,* to which no one objects, was invented later, at the time that it was thought that Charles I. was going to marry a Spanish princess, and, of course, a Catholic. It was invented as being more polite than the terms by which the Protestants had so often abused the Catholics, and it has been used ever since.

Other new words came from the breaking up of

Protestantism into different sects. *Puritan* was the name given to those who wished to "purify" the Protestant religion from all the old ceremonies of Catholicism. The Calvinists (or followers of the French reformer, John Calvin) believed that souls were "predestined" to go to heaven or to be lost. The people who were predestined to be lost they described as *reprobate*, and this word we still use, but with a different meaning. A reprobate nowadays is a person who is looked upon as hopelessly bad, and the word is also sometimes used jokingly.

The name *Protestant* itself is interesting. It was first used to describe the Lutherans, who "protested" against, and would not agree with, the decisions made by the Emperor Charles V. on the subject of religion.

The names of the different forms of Protestantism are often very interesting, and were, of course, new words invented to describe the different forms of belief. The first great division was between the *Lutherans* and the *Calvinists*. The meaning of these names is plain. They were merely the followers of Martin Luther and John Calvin.

But later on there were many divisions, such as the *Baptists*, who were so called because they thought that people should not be baptized until they were grown up. They also administered the sacrament in a different way from most other Churches, the person baptized being dipped in the water. At one time these people were called *Anabaptists*, *ana* being

the Greek word for "again." But this was supposed to be a term of abuse similar to those showered on the Roman Catholics, and in time it died out.

Then there were the *Independents*, who were so called because they believed that each congregation should be independent of every other.

Perhaps the most peculiar name applied to one of the many sects in the England of the seventeenth century was that of the *Quakers*. This, too, was a name of abuse at first; but the "Society of Friends," to whom it was applied, came sometimes to use it themselves. They were a people who believed in great simplicity of life and manners and dress, and had no priests. At their religious meetings silence was kept until some one was moved to speak. The name was taken from the text, "quaking at the word of the Lord."

The names chosen by religious leaders, and those applied to the sects by their enemies, can teach us a great deal of history.

CHAPTER VIII.

WORDS FROM THE NAMES OF PEOPLE.

MANY words have been taken from the names of people, saints and sinners, men who have helped on human progress and men who have tried to stand in its way, from queens and kings and nobles, and from quite humble people.

One large group of words has been made from the names of great inventors. All through history men have been inventing new things. We realize this if we think of what England is like to-day, and what it was like in the days of the early Britons. But even by the time of the early Britons many things had been invented which the earlier races of men had not known. Perhaps the greatest inventor the world has ever known was the man who first discovered how to make fire; but we shall never know who he was.

The people who discovered how to make metal weapons instead of the stone weapons which early men used were great inventors too; and those who discovered how to grow crops of corn and wheat, and so gave new food to the human race. But all

this happened in times long past, before men had any idea of writing down their records, and so these inventors have not left their names for us to admire.

But in historical times, and especially in the centuries since the Renaissance, there have been many inventors, and it will be interesting to see how the things they invented got their names. The word *inventor* itself means a "finder," and comes to us from the Latin word *invenio*, "I find."

The greatest number of inventions have been made in the last hundred and fifty years. The printing-press was, of course, a great invention of the fifteenth century, but it was simply called the *printing-press*, and did not take the name of its inventor. Yet this was a new name too, for the people of the Middle Ages would not have known what a printing-press was.

Several early printers have, however, had their names preserved in the description of the beautiful books they produced. All lovers of rare books are admirers of what they call *Aldines* and *Elzevirs*—that is, books printed at the press of Aldo Manuzio and his family at Venice in the sixteenth century, and by the Elzevir family in Holland in the seventeenth century.

We speak of a *Bradshaw* and a *Baedeker* to describe the best-known of all railway guides and guide-books. The first takes its name from George Bradshaw, a map engraver, who was born in Manchester in 1801, and lived there till he died, in 1853.

In 1839 he published on his own account "Bradshaw's Railway Time Table," of which he changed the name to "Railway Companion" in the next year. He corrected it a few days after the beginning of each month by the railway time sheets, but even then the railway companies sometimes made changes later in the month. In a short time, however, the companies agreed to fix their time tables monthly, and in December 1841 Bradshaw was able to publish the first number of "Bradshaw's Monthly Railway Guide." Six years afterwards he published the first number of "Bradshaw's Continental Railway Guide."

The famous series of guides now called *Baedekers* take their name from Karl Baedeker, a German publisher, who in the first half of the nineteenth century began to publish this famous series.

Members of Parliament still speak of the volumes containing the printed record of what goes on in Parliament as *Hansard*. This name comes from that of the first publisher of such records, Luke Hansard, who was printer to the House of Commons from 1798 until he died, in 1828. His family continued to print the reports as late as 1889, and though the work is now shared by other firms, the name is still kept.

Not only books but musical instruments are frequently called after their makers. The two most famous and valuable kinds of old violins take their names from the Italian family of the Amati, who

made violins in the sixteenth century, and Antonio Stradivari, who was their pupil. An *Amati* and a *Stradivarius*, often called a "Strad" for short, are the names now given by musicians to the splendid old violins made by these people.

The names of many flowers have been taken from the names of persons, and this still goes on to-day when new varieties of roses or sweet peas are called after the person who first grew them, or some friend of this person. These modern names are not, as a rule, very romantic, but some of the older ones are interesting. The *dahlia*, for instance, was called after Dahl, a Swedish botanist, who was a pupil of the great botanist Linnæus, after whom the chief botanical society in England, the *Linnæan Society*, is called. The *lobelia* was so called after Matthias de Lobel, a Flemish botanist and physician to King James I. The *fuchsia* took its name from Leonard Fuchs, a sixteenth-century botanist, the first German who really studied botany.

There are many more new things and names to-day than in earlier times, names which our grandparents and even our parents did not know when they were children. We talk familiarly now about *aeroplanes* and the different kinds of aeroplanes, such as the *monoplane*, *biplane*, etc. But these are new names invented in the last twenty years. Some of the names of airships and aeroplanes are very interesting. The *Taube*, for instance, is so called from the German word meaning "dove," because

it looks very like a bird when it is up in the sky. The great German airships called *Zeppelins* took their name from the German Count Zeppelin, who invented them; and the splendid French airships called *Fokkers* also take their name from their inventor, and so does the *Gotha*—name of ill-fame.

The man who first discovered gunpowder is forgotten, but many of the powerful guns which are used in modern warfare are called after their inventors. The *Gatling gun* is not much talked of to-day, but it was a famous gun in its time, and took its name from the American inventor, Richard Jordan Gatling, who lived in the early nineteenth century, and devoted his life to inventions. Some were peaceable inventions, like machines for sowing cotton and rice; but he is best remembered by the great gun to which he gave his name.

Another famous gun of which we have heard a great deal in the Great War is the *Maxim gun*, which again took its name from its inventor, Sir Hiram Maxim. The *shrapnel*, of which also so much was heard in the Great War, the terrible shells which burst a certain time after leaving the gun without striking against anything, took its name from its inventor. The chief peculiarity of shrapnel is that the bullets fall from above in a shower from the shell as it bursts in the air.

But there are many other names which we should not easily guess to come from the names of inventors. People talk of a macadamized road without know-

ing that these roads are so called because they are made in the way invented by John M'Adam, who lived from 1756 to 1836. The name *macadam* is often used now to denote the material used in making roads. Sometimes this material is of a sort which John M'Adam would not have approved of at all, for he did not believe in pouring a fluid material over the stones, or in the heavy rollers which are now often used in making new roads.

Another useful article, the homely *mackintosh*, takes its name from that of another Scotsman, Charles Macintosh, who lived at the same time as M'Adam. It was he who first, in 1823, finished the invention of a waterproof cloth.

In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries many great discoveries were made in science, and many names of discoverers and inventors have been preserved in scientific words. *Galvanism*, one branch of electricity, took its name from Luigi Galvani, an Italian professor, who made great discoveries about electricity in the bodies of animals. Every one has heard of a galvanic battery, but not everybody knows how it got its name.

Mesmerism, or the science by which the human mind is influenced by suggestions from itself or another mind, took its name from Friedrich Anton Mesmer, who first made great discoveries about animal magnetism.

Another famous discoverer of the powers of electricity, and one who is still a young man, is Gugli-

elmo Marconi, a native of Bologna. It was he who invented the great system of wireless telegraphy which is now used in nearly all big ships. In 1899 he first succeeded in sending a message in this way from England to France, and in the next year he sent one right across the Atlantic. Now ships frequently send a *Marconigram* home when they are right in the middle of the ocean; and many lives have been saved through ships in distress having been able to send out wireless messages which have brought other vessels steaming up to their aid. In fact, this invention of Marconi's is, perhaps, the greatest of all modern inventions, and it is but right that it should preserve his name.

A different kind of invention has preserved the name of the fourth Earl of Sandwich, an eighteenth-century nobleman, who was so fond of card games that he could not bear to leave the card table even to eat his meals, and so invented what has ever since been called by his name—the *sandwich.*

Not unlike the origin of the name sandwich is that of *Abernethy* biscuits, so called after the doctor who invented the recipe for making them.

It was another doctor, the French physician, Joseph Ignace Guillotin, who gave his name to the *guillotine,* the terrible knife with which people were beheaded in thousands during the French Revolution. Guillotin did not really invent it, nor was he himself guillotined, as has often been said. The guillotine is supposed to have been invented long

ago in Persia, and was used in the Middle Ages both in Italy and Germany. The Frenchman whose name it bears was a kindly person, who merely advised this method of execution at the time of the French Revolution, because he thought, and rightly, that if people were to be beheaded at all, it should be done swiftly and not clumsily.

But many things are called by the names of persons who were not inventors at all. Sometimes a new kind of clothing is called after some great person just to make it seem distinguished. A *Chesterfield* overcoat is so called because the tailor who first gave this kind of coat that name wished to suggest that it had all the elegance displayed in the clothing of the famous eighteenth-century dandy, the fourth Earl of Chesterfield. So the well-known *Raglan* coats and sleeves took their name first from an English general, Baron Raglan, who fought in the Crimean War. Both Wellington and Blücher, the two generals who fought together and defeated Napoleon at Waterloo, gave their names to different kinds of boots. *Bluchers* are strong leather half boots or high shoes, and *Wellingtons* are high riding boots reaching to the bend of the knee at the back of the leg, and covering the knee in front. Wellington is supposed to have worn such boots in his campaigns.

Another article of clothing which was very popular with ladies at one time was the *Garibaldi* blouse, which was so called after the red shirts which were

worn by the followers of the famous soldier who won liberty for Italy, Garibaldi.

The rather vulgar name for ladies' divided skirts —*bloomers*—came from the name of an American woman, Mrs. Amelia Jenks Bloomer, who used to wear a skirt which reached to her knee, and then was divided into Turkish trousers tied round her ankles.

A great many different kinds of carriages and vehicles have been called by the names of people. The *brougham*, which is still a favourite form of closed carriage, got its name from Lord Brougham. The old four-wheeled carriage with a curved glass front got its name from the Duke of Clarence, who afterwards became King William IV.; and the carriage known as the *Victoria* was so called as a compliment to Queen Victoria. We do not hear much of this kind of carriage now; but the two-wheeled cab known as the *hansom* is still to be seen in the streets of London, in spite of the coming of the taxi-cab. This form of conveyance took its name from an architect who invented it in 1834. An earlier kind of two-wheeled carriage invented a few years before this, but which was displaced by the hansom, was the *stanhope*, also called after its inventor. The general name for a two-wheeled carriage of this sort used to be the *phaeton*, and this was not taken from any person, but from the sun-chariot in which, according to the old Greek story, the son of Helios rode to destruction when he had roused the anger of the great Greek god, Zeus.

STORIES THAT WORDS TELL US.

The names of old Greeks and Romans have given us many words. We speak of a very rich man as a *Crœsus*, a word which was the name of a fabulously rich tyrant in Ancient Greece. A person who is supposed to be a great judge of food, and devoted to the pleasures of the table, is called an *epicure*, from the old Greek philosopher Epicurus, who taught that the chief aim of life was to feel pleasure. The word *cynic*, too, comes from the name given to certain Greek philosophers who despised pleasure. The name was originally a nickname for these philosophers, and was taken from the Greek word *kunos*, "dog."

We describe a person who chooses to live a very hard life as a *Spartan*, because the people of the old Greek state of Sparta planned their lives so that every one should be disciplined and drilled to make good soldiers, and were never allowed to indulge in too much comfort or too many amusements, lest they should become lazy in mind and weak in body. A *Draconian* system or law is one which has no mercy, and preserves the name of Draco, a statesman who was appointed to draw up laws for the Athenians six hundred and twenty-one years before the birth of Our Lord, and who drew up a very strict code of laws.

The word *mausoleum*, which is now used to describe any large or distinguished tomb, comes from the tomb built for Mausolus, king of Caria (in Greek Asia Minor), by his widow, Artemisia, in 353 B.C. The

tomb itself, which rises to a height of over one hundred and twelve feet, is now to be seen in the British Museum.

The verb *to hector*, meaning "to bully," is taken from the name of the Trojan hero Hector, in the famous old Greek poem, the Iliad. Hector was not, as a matter of fact, a bully, but a very brave man, and it is curious that his name should have come to be used in this unpleasant sense. The other great Greek poem, the Odyssey, has given us the name of one of its characters for a fairly common English word. A *mentor* is a person who gives us wise advice, but the original Mentor was a character in this great poem, the wise counsellor of Telemachus.

From the names of great Romans, too, we have many words. If we describe a person as a *Nero*, every one knows that this means a cruel tyrant. Nero was the worst of all the Roman emperors, and the story tells that he was so heartless that he played on his violin while watching the burning of Rome. Some people even said that he himself set the city on fire. Again, the name of Julius Cæsar, who was the first imperial governor of Rome, though he was never called emperor, has given us a common name. *Cæsar* came to mean "an emperor;" and the modern German *Kaiser* and the Russian *Tsar* come from this name of the "noblest Roman of them all."

An earlier Roman was Fabius Cunctator (or "Fabius the Procrastinator"), a general who, in-

stead of fighting actual battles with the Carthaginian Hannibal, the great enemy of Rome, preferred to tire him out by keeping him waiting and never giving battle. His name has given us the word *Fabian*, to describe this kind of tactics.

The name by which people often describe an unscrupulous politician now is *Machiavellian*, an adjective made from the name of a great writer on the government of states. At the time of the Renaissance in Italy, Machiavelli, in his famous book called "The Prince," took it for granted that every ruler would do anything, good or bad, to arrive at the results he desired.

Another common word taken at first from politics, but now used in a general sense, is *boycott*. To boycott a person means to be determined to ignore or take no notice of him. A child may be "boycotted" by disagreeable companions at school. Another expression for the same disagreeable method is to "send to Coventry."

But the political boycotting from which the word passed into general use took place in Ireland, when any one with whose politics the Irish did not agree was treated in this way. The first victim of this kind of treatment was Captain Boycott of County Mayo in 1880. So useful has this word been found that both the French and Germans have borrowed it. The French have now the word *boycotter*, and the Germans *boycottieren*.

Another Irish name which has given us a common

word is Burke. Sometimes in a discussion one person will tell another that he *burkes* the question. This means that he is avoiding the real subject of debate. Or a rumour may be *burked*, or "hushed up." In this way the subject is, as it were, smothered. And it was from this meaning that the name came to be used as a general word. William Burke was an Irish labourer who was executed in 1829, when he was found guilty of having murdered several people. His habit had been to smother them, so that their bodies did not show how they had died, and sell their bodies to a doctor for dissection. From this dreadful origin we have the new use of this fine old Irish name.

People who love books are often very indignant when the editors of a new edition of an old book think it proper to leave out certain passages which they think are indecent or unsuitable for people to read. This is called "expurgating" the book; but people who disapprove often call it to *bowdlerize*. This word comes from the name of Dr. Thomas Bowdler, who in 1818 published an edition of Shakespeare's works in which, as he said, "those words and expressions are omitted which cannot with propriety be read aloud in a family."

Sometimes a badly-dressed or peculiar-looking person is described as a *guy*. This word comes from the name of Guy Fawkes, the Gunpowder Plotter, through the effigies, or "guys," which are often burned in bonfires on November 5th.

Certain Christian names have, for reasons which it is not easy to see, given us words which mean "fool" or "stupid person." The word *ninny* comes from Innocent. *Noddy* probably comes from Nicodemus or Nicholas. Both these names are used to mean "foolish person" in France, and so is *benêt*, which comes from Benedict.

Some saints' names have given us words which do not seem at first sight to have any connection with them. The word *maudlin*, by which we mean "foolishly sentimental," comes from the name of St. Mary Magdalen, a saint whose name immediately suggests to us sorrow and weeping. The word *maudlin* suggests the idea of being ready to weep unnecessarily. In this way a word describing a disagreeable quality is taken from the name of one of the most honoured saints.

The word *tawdry*, by which we mean cheap and showy things with no real beauty, comes from St. Audrey, another name for St. Etheldreda, who founded Ely Cathedral. In the Middle Ages St. Audrey's Fair used to be held at Ely, and as fairs are always full of cheap and showy things, it was from this that the word *tawdry* came.

St. Anthony's fire is a well-known name for erysipelas, and *St. Vitus's dance* for another distressing disease. These names came from the fact that these saints used to be chosen out as the special patrons of people suffering from such diseases. In the same way the disease which used to be called

the *King's Evil* was so named because people formerly believed that persons suffering from it would be cured if touched by the hands of the king or the queen. On certain occasions, even down to the time of Queen Anne, English kings and queens "touched" crowds of sufferers from this disease.

So in these words taken from the names of people we may read many a story of love and sorrow and wonder, of disgust and every human passion.

CHAPTER IX.

WORDS FROM THE NAMES OF ANIMALS.

It is easy to see how names of persons have sometimes changed into general words. But we have also a great number of general words which are taken from animals' names. Most often these words are used to describe people's characters. Sometimes people are merely compared with the animals whose qualities they are supposed to have, and sometimes they are actually called by the names of these animals. Thus we may say that a person is "as sly as a fox," or we may call him an "old fox," and every one understands the same thing by both expressions.

The cause of this continual comparison of human beings with animals is that long ago, when these expressions first began to be used, animals, and especially wild animals, played a great part in the lives of the people. In the Middle Ages great parts of England, now dotted over with big towns, were covered with forest land. Wolves roamed in the woods, and the fighting of some wild animals and the taming of others formed a most important part of

people's lives. The same thing was, of course, the case in other countries. So familiar were people in those days with animals that they thought of them almost as human beings and believed that they had their own languages. It was people who believed these things who made up many of the old fairy tales about animals—stories like "Red Riding Hood" and the "Three Bears."

We often say that we are "as hungry as a wolf;" but we who have never seen wolves except behind the bars of their cages at the Zoological Gardens do not know how hungry a wild wolf can be. Those, however, who first used this expression thought of the lean and hungry wolves who prowled round the farms and cottages in the hard winter weather, driven by starvation to men's very doors. We also have the expression, "a wolf in sheep's clothing." By this we mean a person who is really dangerous and harmful, but who puts on a harmless and gentle manner to deceive his victim.

Another use of the word *wolf* is as a verb, meaning to eat in a very quick and greedy manner, as we might imagine a hungry wolf would do, and as our forefathers knew by experience that they did do. Most of the people who use the names of the wolf and the fox in these ways do not know anything of the habits of these animals, but the expressions have become part of the common language.

The same thing is, of course, true about the lion, with which even our far-off English ancestors had

never to fight. But the lion is such a fierce and magnificent animal that it naturally appeals to our imagination, and we find numerous comparisons with it, chiefly in poetical language. We say a soldier is as "brave as a lion," or describe him as a "lion in the fight."

A less complimentary comparison is an expression we often hear, "as stubborn as a mule." Only a few of the people who use this expression can have had any experience of the stubbornness of mules. Sometimes a stubborn person is described quite simply as a "mule." Another compliment of the same sort is to call a person who seems to us to be acting stupidly a "donkey."

We may say a person is as "greedy as a pig," or describe him with disgust as a "pig," which may mean either that they are very greedy or that they are behaving in a very ungracious or unmannerly way. A more common description of a person of this sort is "a hog." Every one has heard of the "road hogs," who drive their motors regardless of other people's convenience or safety; and of the "food hogs," who tried to store up food, or refused to ration themselves, and so shortened other people's supplies of food in the Great War.

Other common expressions comparing people with animals are—"sulky as a bear," "gay as a lark," "busy as a bee." We might also call a cross person a "bear," but should not without some explanation call a person a "lark" or a "bee."

WORDS FROM NAMES OF ANIMALS.

We may say a person "chatters like a magpie," or we may call him or her a "magpie." A person who talks without thinking, merely repeating what other people have said, is often called a "parrot."

Sometimes names of common animals or birds used to describe people are complimentary, but more often they are not. It seems as though the people who made these metaphors were more eloquent in anger than in love. A very nice child will be described by its friends as a "little duck." A mischievous child may also be described good-temperedly as a "monkey;" but there are far more words of abuse taken from the names of animals than more or less amiable words like these.

A bad-tempered woman is described as a "vixen," or female fox; a lazy person as a "drone," or the bee which does no work. A stupid person may be called a "sheep" or a "goose" (which is not quite so insulting). *Dog*, *hound*, *cur*, and *puppy* are all used as words of abuse; and contempt for some one who is regarded as very mean-spirited is sometimes shown by describing such a person as a "worm," or worse, if possible, a "reptile." A "bookworm," on the other hand, the name of a little insect which lives in books and eats away at paper and bindings, is applied to people who love books in another way—great readers—and is, of course, not at all an uncomplimentary word.

A foolish person who has been easily deceived in some matter is often described as a "gull," or is

said to have been "gulled." *Gull* is now the name of a sea-bird, but in Early English it was used to describe any young bird, and from the idea that it is easy to deceive such youngsters came the use of the word to describe foolish people.

Another name of a bird used with almost the opposite meaning is *rook*. This name is given to people who are constantly cheating others, especially at card games. It was earlier used, like *gull*, to describe the person cheated. It then came to be used as a verb meaning "to cheat," and from this was used to describe the person cheating instead of the person cheated.

Other names of birds not quite so common used to describe stupid people are *dotterel* and *dodo*. The dotterel is a bird which is very easily caught, and it was from this fact that it got its name, which comes from *dote*, to be "silly" or "feeble-minded." When the name of the bird is used to describe a silly person, the word is really, as an interesting writer on the history of words says, turning "a complete somersault." The same is the case with *dodo*, which is also used, but not so often, to describe a stupid person. This bird also got its name from a word which meant "foolish." It comes from the Portuguese word *doudo*, which means "simpleton."

We have a few verbs also taken from the names of animals and birds. We say a person "apes" another when he tries to imitate him. This word comes, of course, from the fact that the ape is

always imitating any action performed by other people.

A person who follows another persistently is said to "dog" his steps. This expression comes, of course, from the fact of dogs following their masters. Another expression is to "hound" a person to do something, by which we mean persecute him. This comes from the idea of a hound tracking its victim down. Another of these words which has the idea of persecution is *badger*. When some one constantly talks about a subject which is unpleasant to another, or continually tries to persuade him to do something against his will, he is said to be "badgering" him. The badger is an animal which burrows into the ground in winter, and dogs are set to worry it out of its hiding-place. The badger is the victim and not the persecutor, as we might think from the use of the verb.

The verb *henpeck*, to describe the teasing of her husband by a disagreeable wife, comes, of course, from the idea of the continual pecking of a hen.

Many common articles are named after animals which they resemble in some way. A "ram" is an instrument, generally of wood, used to drive things into place by pressure. In olden days warships used to have a "battering-ram," or projecting beak, at their prow, with which to "ram" other vessels. The Romans called such a beak an *aries*, which is the Latin for "ram," a male sheep. This was probably from the habit of rams butting an

enemy with their horns. The Romans often had the ends of their battering-rams carved into the shape of the head of a ram. A "ramrod" gets its name from the same idea. It is an instrument for pressing in the ammunition when loading the muzzle of a gun.

The word "ram" has now several more general uses. We speak of a person "ramming" things into a drawer or bag when we mean pushing them hastily and untidily into too small a place. Or a man may "ram" his hat down on his head. Again, we may have a lesson or unpleasant fact "rammed" into us by some one who is determined to make the subject clear whether we want to hear about it or not. And all this comes from the simple idea of the ram butting people whom it considers unpleasant.

More commonplace instruments having animals' names are the "clothes'-horse" and "fire-dogs."

We have other words, which we should not guess to be from animals' names, but which really are so. We say that a person who is always changing his mind, and wanting first one thing and then another, is "capricious." Or we speak of a curious or unreasonable desire as a "caprice." These words really come from the Latin name for a goat—*caper*. The mind of the capricious person skips about just like a goat. At least that is what the word *capricious* literally says about him. The word *caper*, meaning to "jump about playing tricks," comes from the Latin word *capra*, a "she-goat."

WORDS FROM NAMES OF ANIMALS.

The word *coward* comes from the name of an animal, but *not* the cow. In a famous French story of the Middle Ages, in which all the characters are animals, the "Roman de Renard," the hare is called *couard*, and it is from this that the word *coward* ("one who runs away from danger") comes.

All these words from the names of animals take us back, then, to the days when every man was a kind of naturalist. In those early days, when town life hardly existed, everybody knew all about animals and their habits. Their conversation was full of this sort of thing. And so it is that in hundreds of our words which we use to-day, without thinking of the literal meaning at all, we have a picture of the lives of our ancestors preserved.

We have, too, words taken from the names of some animals which never existed at all. The writers of the Middle Ages told many tales or fables of animals and monsters which were purely imaginary, but in which the people of those days firmly believed. We sometimes hear people use the expression a "basilisk glare," which other people would describe as a "look that kills," meaning a look of great severity or displeasure. There is a little American lizard which zoologists call the "basilisk," but this is not the basilisk from which this expression comes. The basilisk which the people of the Middle Ages imagined, but which never existed, was a monstrous reptile hatched by a serpent from

a cock's egg. By its breath or even its look it could destroy all who approached it.

Another invention of the Middle Ages was the bird called the "phœnix." We now use the word *phœnix* to describe some one who is unique in some good quality. A commoner way of expressing the same idea would be that "there is no one like him." It was believed in the Middle Ages that only one of these wonderful birds could exist in the world at one time. The story was that the phœnix, after living through five or six hundred years in the Arabian desert, prepared a funeral pile for itself, and was burned to death, but rose again, youthful and strong as ever, from the ashes.

In these words we are reminded once again of another side of the life of our ancestors.

CHAPTER X.

WORDS FROM THE NAMES OF PLACES.

We have already seen something of the stories which the names of places, old and new, can tell us. But the names of places themselves often give us new words, and from these, too, we can learn many interesting facts.

Many manufactured things, and especially woven cloths, silks, etc., are called by the name of the place from which they come, or from which they first came. *Cashmere*, a favourite smooth woollen material, is called after Cashmir, in India. *Damask*, the material of which table linen is generally made, takes its name from Damascus; as does *holland*, the light brownish cotton stuff used so much for children's frocks and overalls, from Holland, and the rough woollen material known as *frieze* from Friesland. *Cambric*, the fine white material often used for handkerchiefs, takes its name from Cambrai in France, the place where it was first made. The word *cambric*, however, came into English from *Kamerijk*, the Dutch name for Cambrai. So the other fine material known as *lawn* got its name

from Laon, another French town. Another fine material of this kind, *muslin*, takes its name from Mussolo, a town in Mesopotamia, from which this kind of material first came.

Another commoner kind of stuff is *fustian*, made of cotton, but thick, with a short nap, and generally dyed a dark colour. The word *fustian* has also come to be used figuratively to describe a showy manner of speaking or writing, or anything which tries to appear better than it is. The word comes from Fustat, a suburb of Cairo.

A more substantial material, *tweed*, which is largely made in Scotland, really takes its name from people pronouncing *twill* badly; but the form *tweed* spread more quickly because people associated the material with the country beyond the river Tweed.

Another kind of stuff which we generally associate with Scotland is *tartan*, because this woollen stuff, with its crossed stripes of different colours, is chiefly used for Scottish plaids and kilts, especially of the Highland regiments. But the word *tartan* does not seem to be a Scottish word, and probably comes from *Tartar*, which was formerly used to describe almost any Eastern people. Perhaps the fact that Eastern peoples love bright colours caused this name to be given to these bright materials, though there is nothing at all Eastern in the designs of the Scottish tartans. Another material with an Eastern name is *sarcenet*, or *sarsenet*, a soft, silky stuff now chiefly used for linings.

WORDS FROM NAMES OF PLACES.

Often in tales of olden times we read of people hiding behind the "arras." This was a wall covering of tapestry, often hung sufficiently far from the wall to leave room for a person to pass. The word *arras* comes from Arras, a town in France, which was famous for its beautiful tapestries.

We know the word *tabby* chiefly as the name of a kind of striped cat, but this use of the word came from the Old French word *tabis*, and described a material with marks which the markings on a "tabby" cat resemble. The French word came from the Arab word *utabi*, which perhaps came from the name of a suburb of the famous city of Baghdad.

Worsted, the name of a certain kind of knitting-wool, comes from the name of the town of Worstead, in Norfolk. The close-fitting woollen garments worn by sailors and often by children are known as *jerseys*—a word which is taken from the name of one of the Channel Islands, Jersey. Sometimes, but not so commonly, they are called *guernseys*, from the name of the chief of the other Channel Islands, Guernsey. Another piece of wearing apparel, the Turkish cap known as a *fez*, gets its name, perhaps, from Fez, a town in Morocco.

Besides woven stuffs, many other things are called by the names of the places from which they come. *China*, the general name for very fine earthenware, is the same name as that of the great Eastern country which is famous for its beautiful pottery. Another

kind of ornamented earthenware is the Italian *majolica*, and this probably gets its name from the island of Majorca; while *delf* is the name of the glazed earthenware made at Delft (which in earlier times was called "Delf"), in Holland.

The beautiful leather much used for the bindings of books, *morocco*, takes its name from Morocco, where it was first made by tanning goatskins. It is now made in several countries of Europe, but it keeps its old name. Another old kind of leather, but whose name is no longer used, was *cordwain*, a Spanish leather for the making of shoes, which took its name from Cordova in Spain. *Cordwainer* was the old name for "shoemaker," and is still kept in the names of shoemakers' guilds and societies.

Many wines are simply called by the names (sometimes altered a little through people mispronouncing them) of the places from which they come. *Champagne* is the wine of Champagne, *Burgundy* of Burgundy, *Sauterne* of Sauterne, *Chablis* of Chablis—all French wines. *Port* takes its name from Oporto, in Portugal; and *sherry*, which used to be called "sherris," comes from the name of Xeres, a Spanish town.

Many less well-known wines have merely the name of the place where they are produced printed on the label, and they tend to be called by these names—such as *Capri bianco Vesuvio*, etc. *Malmsey*, the old wine in which the Duke of Clarence was sup-

posed to have been drowned when his murder was ordered by his brother, and which is also called *malvoisie*, got its name from Monemvasia, a town in the peninsula of Morea.

Not only wine but other liquids are sometimes called after the places from which they come. The oil known as *macassar* comes from Maugkasara, the name of a district in the island of Celebes. This oil was at one time very much used as a dressing for the hair, and from this we get the name *antimacassar* for the coverings which used to be (and are sometimes still) thrown over the backs of easy-chairs and couches to prevent their being soiled by such aids to beauty. *Antimacassar* means literally a "protection against macassar oil," *anti* being the Latin word for "against."

The tobacco known as *Latakia* takes its name from the town called by the Turks Latakia, the old town of Laodicea. (Laodicea also gives us another common expression. We describe an indifferent person who has no enthusiasm for anything as "a Laodicean," from the reproach to the Church of the Laodiceans, in the Book of Revelation in the Bible, that they were "neither cold nor hot" in their religion.)

Both the words *bronze* and *copper* come from the names of places. *Bronze* is from *Brundusium*, the ancient name of the South Italian town which we now call Brindisi. The Latin name for this metal was *aes Brundusinum*, or "brass of Brindisi."

Copper was in Latin *aes Cyprium*, or "brass of Cyprus."

Some coins take their names from the names of places. The *florin*, or two-shilling piece, takes its name from Florence. *Dollar* is the same word as the German *thaler*, the name of a silver coin which was formerly called a *Joachimstaler*, from the silver-mine of Joachimstal, or "Joachim's Dale," in Bohemia. The *ducat*, a gold coin which was used in nearly all the countries of Europe in the Middle Ages, and which was worth about nine shillings, got its name from the duchy (in Italian, *ducato*) of Apulia, where it was first coined in the twelfth century.

It was an Italian town, Milan, which gave us our word *milliner*. This came from the fact that many fancy materials and ornaments used in millinery were imported from Milan.

Many old dances take their names from places. We hear a great deal nowadays of the "morris dances" which used to be danced in England in olden times. But *morris* comes from *morys*, an old word for "Moorish." In the Middle Ages this word was used, like "Turk" or "Tartar," to describe almost any Eastern people, and the name came, perhaps, from the fact that in these dances people dressed up, and so looked strange and foreign. The name of a very well-known dance, the *polka*, really means "Polish woman." *Mazurka*, the name of another dance, means "woman of Masovia." The

old-fashioned slow dance known as the *polonaise* took its name from Poland, and was really a Polish dance. The well-known Italian dance called the *tarantella* took its name from the South Italian town Tarento.

The word *canter*, which describes another kind of movement, comes from Canterbury. *Canter* is only the short for "Canterbury gallop," an expression which was used to describe the slow jogging pace at which many pilgrims in the Middle Ages rode along the Canterbury road to pray at the famous shrine of St. Thomas Becket in that city.

Several fruits take their names from places. The *damson*, which used in the Middle Ages to be called the "damascene," was called in Latin *prunum damascenum*, or "plum of Damascus." The name *peach* comes to us from the Late Latin word *pessica*, which was a bad way of saying "Persica." *Currants* used to be known as "raisins of Corauntz," or Corinth raisins.

Parchment gets its name from Pergamum, a city in Asia Minor. *Pistol* came into English from the Old French word *pistole*, and this came from an Italian word, *pistolese*, which meant "made at Pistoja." We do not think of *spaniels* as foreign dogs; but the name means "Spanish," having come into English from the Old French word *espagneul*, with that meaning.

A derivation which it would be even harder to guess is that of the word *spruce*. We now use this

word to describe a kind of leather, a kind of ginger beer, and a variety of the fir tree, and also in the same sense as "spick and span." The word used to be *pruce*, and meant "Prussia."

The name of the famous London fish-market, *Billingsgate*, has long been used to mean very violent and abusive language supposed to resemble the scoldings of the fishwomen in the market.

Another word describing a certain kind of speaking, and which also comes from the name of a place, is *bunkum*. When a person tells a story which we feel sure is not true, or tells a long tale to excuse himself from doing something, we often say it is all "bunkum." This word comes from the name of the American town of Buncombe, in North Carolina, and came into use through the member for Buncombe in the House of Representatives insisting on making a speech just when every one else wanted to proceed with the voting on a bill. He knew that he had nothing of importance to say, but explained that he must make a speech "for Buncombe"—that is, so that the people of Buncombe, who had elected him, might know that he was doing his duty by them. And so the expression *bunkum* came into use.

Another word which may go with these, because it also begins with the letter *b*, is *bedlam*. We describe a scene of great noise and confusion, as when a number of children insist on talking all together, as a "perfect bedlam." The word *bedlam*

comes from Bethlehem. In the Middle Ages there was a hospital in London kept by monks of the Order of St. Mary of Bethlehem. In time this house came to be known as "Bedlam," and as after a while the hospital came to be an asylum for mad people, this name came to be used for any lunatic asylum. From that it came to have its modern use of any great noise or confusion.

The sport of shooting pheasants is very English, and few people think that the pheasant is a foreign bird, introduced into England, just as in fact the turkey, which seems to belong especially to the English Christmas, came to us from America. The *pheasant* gets its name from the river Phasis, in the Eastern country of Pontus. It may seem peculiar that a bird coming from America should be called a *turkey*; but we saw in an earlier chapter how vague the people of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries were about America. When Columbus reached the shore of that continent, people thought he had sailed round by another way to the "Indies." In nearly all European countries the turkey got names which show that most people thought it came from India, or at least from some part of the "Indies." Even in England it was called for a time "cok off Inde." In Italy it was *gallina d'India* (or "Indian hen"). The modern French words for male and female turkeys come from this mistake. In French the bird was at first known as *pouille d'Inde* (or "Indian fowl"). The name came to be shortened into the

one word *dinde*, and then, as people thought this must mean the female turkey, they made a new word for the male, *dindon*.

But though so many words come from the names of places, and some of these would not seem to do so at first sight, there are other words which seem to come from place-names which do not do so at all. *Brazil* wood is found in large quantities in Brazil, but the wood is not called after the country. On the contrary, the country is called after the wood. This kind of wood was already used in Europe in the twelfth century, and its name is found in several European languages. When the Portuguese adventurers found such large quantities in this part of South America they gave it the name of *Brazil* from the wood. The island of *Madeira* got its name in the same way, this being the word for "timber," from the Latin word *materia*.

Again, guinea-pigs do not come from Guinea, on the west coast of Africa, though guinea-fowls do so. Guinea-pigs really come from Brazil. The name *guinea-pig* was given to these little animals because, when the sailors brought them home, people thought they had come from Africa. But in the seventeenth century a common voyage for ships was to sail from English or other European ports to the west coast of Africa, where bands of poor negroes were seized or bought, and carried over the Atlantic to be sold as slaves in the American "plantations." The ships naturally did not come

home empty, but often people were not very clear as to whether the articles they brought back came from Africa or America.

Again, *India ink* comes, not from India, but from China. *Indian corn* comes from America. *Sedan chairs* had nothing to do with Sedan in France, but probably take their name from the Latin verb *sedere*, "to sit."

In these words, as in many others, we can see that it is never safe to *guess* the derivation of words. Many of the old philologists used to do this, and then write down their guesses as facts. This caused a great deal of extra work for modern scholars, who will not, of course, accept any "derivation" for a word until they have clear proof that it is true.

CHAPTER XI.

PICTURES IN WORDS.

EVERYBODY who has thought at all about our ways of speech must have noticed that we are all constantly saying things in a way which is not literally true. We say a child is a "sunbeam in the house;" but, of course, we only mean that she is gay and happy, and cheers every one up by her merriment. Or we describe some one as a "pearl among women," meaning that by her splendid qualities she is superior to most women as a pearl is to common stones.

Or, again, we may read in the newspaper that a statesman "spoke with sudden fire;" by which, of course, we understand that in the course of a calm speech he suddenly broke out passionately into words which showed how keenly he felt on the subject of which he was speaking.

Our language is full of this kind of speaking and writing, which is called "metaphorical." The word *metaphor* comes from two Greek words meaning "to carry over." In "metaphorical" speech a name or description of one thing is transferred to another

thing to which it could not apply in ordinary commonplace language.

By means of metaphors we express more vividly and strikingly our feelings on any subject. We draw our metaphors from many different sources. Many of them naturally come from Nature, for the facts of Nature are all around us. We speak of a "sea of trouble" when we feel that the spirit is overwhelmed by sadness so great that it suggests the vastness of the sea swallowing up all that it meets. Or we speak of a "storm of anger," because what takes place in a person's soul in such a state is similar in some way to the confusion and force of a storm in Nature. Again, an expression like a "torrent of words" is made possible by our familiarity with the quick pouring forth of water in a torrent. By this expression, of course, we wish to suggest a similar quick rushing of words. Other expressions of this kind are "a wave of anguish," the "sun of good fortune," and there are hundreds of which every one can think.

Another source from which many metaphors have come is war, which has given men some of the most vivid action possible to humankind. Thus we speak of "a war of words," of a person "plunging into the fray," when we mean that he or she joins in a keen argument or quarrel. Or we speak more generally of the "battle of life," picturing the troubles and difficulties of life as the obstacles against which soldiers have to fight in battle. Shake-

speare has the expression, "the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune."

We have a great many metaphorical expressions taken from painting, sculpture, and other arts. Thus we speak of "moulding" one's own life, picturing ourselves as sculptors, with our lives as the clay to be shaped as we will. Shakespeare has a similar metaphor,—

> "There's a divinity which shapes our ends,
> Rough-hew them how we will."

We may, he says, roughly arrange our way of life, but the final result belongs to a greater artist—God.

Again, we speak of "building our hopes" on a thing, of "moulding" a person's character, of the "canvas of history," imagining history as a picture of things past. We speak of a person describing something very enthusiastically as "painting it in glowing colours," and so on. We also describe the making of new words as "coining them."

But not only are the sentences we make full of metaphors, but most of our words—all, in fact, except the names of the simplest things—are really metaphors themselves. The first makers of such words were speaking "in metaphor," as we should say now; but when the words passed into general use this fact was not noticed.

A great many of the metaphors found in words are the same in many languages. Many of them are taken from agriculture, which is, of course,

after hunting, the earliest occupation of all peoples. We can easily think of many words now used in a general sense which originally applied to some simple country practice. We speak of being "goaded" to do a thing when some one persuades or threatens or irritates us into doing it. But a *goad* was originally a spiked stick used to drive cattle forward. The word *goad*, then, as we use it now, is a real metaphor.

Again, we speak of our feelings being "harrowed." The word *harrow* first meant, and still means, the drawing of a frame with iron teeth (itself called a *harrow*) over ploughed land to break up the clods. From this meaning it has come to have the figurative meaning of wounding or ruffling the feelings.

Another word connected with agriculture which has passed into a general sense is *glean*. We may now speak of "gleaning" certain facts or news, but to glean was originally (and still means in its literal sense) to gather the ears of corn remaining after the reapers have got in the harvest.

We speak of a nation groaning under the "yoke" of a foreign tyrant, or again of the "yoke" of matrimony, and in the Bible we have the text, "My yoke is easy." In these and in many other cases the word *yoke* is used figuratively to denote something weighing on the spirit; but the original use of *yoke*, and again one which remains, was to name the wooden cross-piece fastened over the

necks of two oxen, and attached to a plough or wagon which they have to draw.

The word *earn* reminds us of a time when the chief way of earning money or payment of any kind was field-labour; for this word, which means so many things now, comes from an old Teutonic word meaning field-labour. The same word became in German *ernte*, which means "harvest."

Another common word with somewhat the same meaning as *earn* is *gain;* and this, again, takes us back to a time when our early ancestors won their profits by the grazing of their flocks. The word *gain* came into English from an Old French word, but this word in its turn came from a Teutonic word meaning to graze or pasture. The first people who used the word *earn* for other ways of getting payment than field-labour, and the word *gain* in a general sense, were really making metaphors.

Some of our commonest words take us back to a time before our ancestors even settled down to cultivate the land, or perhaps even before the days when they had learned to tame and give pasturage to their flocks. Some of our simplest words contain the idea of *travelling* or *wandering*. The word *fear*, which would not seem to have anything to do with journeying, comes from the same root-word as *fare*, the Old English word for "travel." Probably it came to be used because people travelling through the wild forests and swamps of Europe in those far-off days found much to terrify them, and

so the word *fear* was made, containing this idea of moving from place to place. But again this was a metaphor. Until after the Norman Conquest the word *fear* meant a sudden or terrible happening. Only later it came to mean the feeling which such an event or the expectation of it would cause.

We may become tired in mind or body from many causes; but when we say we are "weary" we are literally saying that we have travelled far over difficult ground, for the word *weary* comes from an Old English word meaning this.

Some of our words are really metaphors showing the effect which different aspects of Nature had on the men who made them. When we say we are astonished we do not mean that we are "struck by thunder," but that is what the word literally means. It comes from the Latin word *attonare,* which means this. The words *astound* and *stun* contain the same hidden metaphor, which we use in a plainer way when we say we are "thunder-struck," meaning that we are very much surprised.

In the Middle Ages people believed that the stars had a great effect on the lives of men. If the stars were in a certain position at the time of a person's birth, he would be lucky all his life; if in another, he was doomed to unhappiness. From this belief we still use the expression "born under a lucky star" to describe a person who seems always to be fortunate. But the same metaphor is contained in single words. We speak of an unfortunate enter-

prise as "ill-starred," and the metaphor is clear. But when the newspapers speak of a railway "disaster," very few people realize that they are speaking the language of the mediæval astrologers, men who studied the fortunes of nations and individuals from the stars. *Disaster* literally means such a misfortune as would be caused by adverse stars, and comes from the Greek word for star, *astron*, and the Latin *dis*.

The words *jovial* and *mercurial*, used to describe people of merry and lively temper, are metaphors of the same kind. A person born under the planet Jupiter (the star called after the Roman god Jupiter or Jove) was supposed to be of a merry disposition, and a person born when the planet Mercury was visible in the heavens was expected to be lively and ready-witted. When we use these words now to describe people, we do not, of course, mean that they were born under any particular star, but the words are metaphors which literally do mean this.

The word *auspicious* comes from a similar source. We speak of an "inauspicious" undertaking, meaning one which seems destined to be unlucky. But really what the word *inauspicious* says is that the "auspices are against" the undertaking. And this takes us back to Roman times, when no important thing was done in the state without the magistrates "taking the auspices." This they did from observing the flight of certain birds. In war the commander-in-chief of the Roman armies alone had

the right to "take the auspices." We should think such a proceeding very foolish now, but in the words *auspicious* and *inauspicious* we are literally saying that the auspices have been favourable or unfavourable.

One of the common practices of the scholars who studied astrology and other sciences in the Middle Ages was the search for the philosopher's stone, which they believed had the power of giving eternal youth. They would melt metals in pots for this purpose. These pots were called by the Old Latin name of *test*. From this word we now have the modern word *test*, used in the sense of *trial*—another metaphor from the Middle Ages.

Many common English words are really metaphors made from old English sports, such as hunting and hawking. It is curious to think how these words are chiefly used to-day by people who know nothing of these pastimes, while the people who made the words were so familiar with them that they naturally expressed themselves in this way. We speak of a person being in another's "toils," when we mean in his "power." The word *toils* comes from the French *toiles*, meaning "cloths," and also used for the nets put round part of a wood, in which birds are being preserved for shooting, to prevent their escaping. The expression to "turn" or be "at bay," by which we mean that there is no chance of escape, but that the person in such a situation must either give in or fight, comes from

hunting. The hare or the fox is said to be "at bay" when it comes to a wall or other object which prevents its running farther, and so turns and faces its pursuers. *Bay* is the deep barking of the hounds.

The word *crestfallen*, by which we mean looking ashamed and depressed, comes from the old sport of cock-fighting. The bird whose crest (or tuft of hair on the head) drooped after the fight was naturally the one which had been beaten. The word *pounce* comes from hawking, *pounces* being the old word for a hawk's claws. The word *haggard*, which now generally means worn and sometimes a little wild-looking through grief or anxiety, was originally the name given to a hawk caught, not, like most hawks used for hawking, when it was quite young, but when it was already grown up. Such a hawk would naturally have a wild look, and would never become so tame as the birds caught young.

Several words meaning to entice a person come from fowling. We speak of persons being "decoyed" when we mean that they are deceived into going to some dangerous place. The person who entices them away is called a "decoy;" but the first use of the word was to describe a duck trained to induce other ducks to fly or walk into nets laid over ponds by trappers. Another word of this kind is *allure*, which means to persuade a person to do something by making it seem very attractive. This word really means to bring a person (originally an

animal) to the "lure" or "bait" prepared to catch him.

The word *trap*, which may now mean to show a person to be guilty by a trick, or to put him in the wrong in some way, is a metaphorical use. The word literally means to catch an animal in a trap.

Many words contain metaphors drawn from the older and simpler trades. We speak of a thing being "brand-new"—that is, as new as though just stamped with a "brand" or iron stamp. Another expression which has changed its meaning a little with time used to have exactly the same meaning. We now say a person looks "spick and span" when he or she is very neatly dressed. Formerly the expression was "spick and span new"—that is, as new as a spike (or spoon) just made or a chip newly cut. We may safely say that very few people who now use the expression "spick and span" have any idea of what it means literally. The metaphor is well hidden, but it is there.

Another metaphor, connected with metals and coins, is contained in the word *sterling*. We speak of "sterling qualities" or a "sterling character" in praising people for being straightforward and truthful, and not boastful. But the expression originally applied only to metals and coins. Sterling gold or silver is gold or silver of a certain standard of purity and not mixed with too much of any base metal.

Even the art of the baker has given us a word

with a hidden metaphor. We speak of sending out another "batch" of men to the front; but *batch* originally meant, and still means, the loaves of bread produced at one baking. It is now used generally to describe a number of things coming together or in a set.

The butcher's shop has given us the word *shambles*, by which we now mean a place of slaughter. Thus we speak of a terrible battlefield as a "shambles." This metaphor is really due to a mistake. People came to think that a shambles was a singular noun meaning slaughter-house, or place where cattle were killed; but really the shambles were the benches on which the meat was spread for sale.

We speak of a person being the "tool" of another, and this is a metaphor taken from the general idea of work. The "tool" is merely used by the other person for some purpose of his own, just as a workman uses his tools. The greatest poem, or book, or picture of a poet, writer, or painter is often described as a "masterpiece." This word now means a "splendid piece of work," but in the Middle Ages a "masterpiece" was a piece of work by which a person working at a trade showed himself sufficiently good to be allowed to be a "master." Before that he was a "journeyman," and worked for a master himself, and, earlier still, an apprentice merely learning his trade. We often now use the expression to try one's "'prentice hand" on a

thing when we mean that we are going to do a thing for the first time.

The commonest actions have naturally given us most metaphorical words, for these were the actions of which the word-makers were most easily reminded. We speak of our passions or emotions being "kindled," taking the metaphor from the common action of lighting a fire.

The two words *lord* and *lady* contain very homely metaphors. The lord was the "loaf-keeper," in Old English *hlaford*, the person on whom the household depended for their food. The lady might even make the bread, and often did so; and the word *lady* comes from *hlæfdige—dig* being the Old English word for *knead*.

The common word *maul* may mean to beat and bruise a person, but it means more often merely to handle something carelessly and roughly. Literally it means "to hit with a hammer," and comes from *maul* or *mall*, the name of a certain very heavy kind of hammer; so that when a child is told not to "maul" a book, it is literally being told not to hit it with a heavy hammer.

We have made many metaphorical words from joining together two Latin words and making a new meaning. We speak of a person having an "obsession" about something when he is always thinking of one thing. But the word *obsession* comes from the Latin word *obsidere*, "to besiege;" and so in the word *obsession* the constant thought

is pictured as continually trying to gain entrance into the mind. We use the word *besiege* in the same metaphorical sense. We speak of being "besieged" with questions, and so on.

Another word used now most often metaphorically comes also from this idea of siege warfare. In all fortified places there are holes at intervals along the walls of defence, through which the defenders may shoot at the attackers. These are called "loopholes." This word is now used much oftener in a figurative sense than to describe the actual thing. When two persons are arguing and one has plainly shown the other to be wrong, we say he has "not a loophole" of escape from the other's reasoning. Or if a person objects very much to doing something, and makes many excuses, every one of which is shown to be worthless, we again say he has "no loophole for escape."

Every child has heard of the Crusades, in which the nobles and knights and soldiers of the Middle Ages went to fight against the Turks to win back the Holy Sepulchre. These wars were called "crusades," from the cross which the Crusaders wore as badges. The word was made from the Latin word *crux*, which means "cross." But *crusade* has now become a general word. We speak of a "temperance crusade," of a "peace crusade," and so on. The word has come to have the general meaning of efforts made by people for something which they believe to be good; but literally every

person who works for such a "crusade" is a knight buckling on his armour, signed with the cross, and sallying forth to the East.

This word *sally* also comes from siege warfare. A "sally" means a rush of defenders from a besieged place, attempting to get past the besiegers by taking them by surprise. It also has the more general meaning of an excursion, such as the going forth to a crusade. It means literally a "leaping out," and comes from the Latin word *salire*, "to leap." The word *sally* is also used to mean a sudden lively remark generally rather against some person or thing. It is interesting to notice that the fish salmon also probably takes its name from this Latin word meaning "to leap."

Any child with a dictionary can find for himself many hidden metaphors in the commonest words; and he will learn a great deal and amuse himself at the same time.

CHAPTER XII.

WORDS FROM NATIONAL CHARACTER.

THERE is one group of metaphorical words which is specially interesting for the stories of the past which they tell us if we examine into their meaning. Many names of ancient tribes and nations, and some names of modern peoples, have come to be used as general words; but the new meanings they have now tell us what other peoples have thought of the nations bearing these names in history.

One of the best things that can be said about a boy or a girl is that he or she is "frank," by which we mean open and straightforward. The Franks were, of course, the Teutonic tribe which conquered Gaul (the country we now call France) in the sixth century. Unlike the English when they conquered the Britons, the Franks mixed with the Gauls and the Roman population which they conquered; but for a long time the Franks were the only people who were altogether free. From this fact the word *frank* came into use, meaning "free." A "frank" person is one who speaks out freely and without restraint.

FROM NATIONAL CHARACTER.

The name *Frank* has given us a word with a very pleasant meaning, but this was not the case with all the Teutonic tribes which broke in upon the Roman Empire. A person who is very uncivilized in his manners is sometimes called a "Goth." The word is often especially used to describe a person who does not appreciate pictures and books and works of art. Sometimes architects will pull down beautiful old buildings to make place for new, and the people who appreciate beautiful things describe them as "Goths." More often, perhaps, the word *Vandal* is used to describe such people. The Goths and Vandals were two of the fiercest and most barbaric of the German tribes which overran the Roman Empire from the third to the fifth century. They showed no respect for the beautiful buildings and the great works of art which were spread over the empire. They robbed and burned like savages, and in a few years destroyed many of the beautiful things which had been made with so much care and skill by the Greek and Roman artists. So deep an impression did their destructiveness make on the world of that time that their names have been handed down through sixteen centuries, and are used to-day in the unpleasant sense of wilful destroyers of beautiful things.

The words *barbarian* and *barbarous* are used in the same way. We describe a child who behaves in a rough way as "a little barbarian," or a grown-up person without ordinary good manners as "a

mere barbarian." And the word *barbarous* has an even worse meaning. It is used to describe very coarse, uncivilized behaviour; but most often it has also the sense of cruelty as well as coarseness. Thus we speak of the barbarous behaviour of the Germans in Belgium. But when the word *barbarous* was first used it meant merely "foreign."

To the Greeks there were only two classes of people—Greeks, and non-Greeks or "barbarians." The name *barbarian* meant a bearded man, and came from the Greek word *barbaros*. The Greeks were clean-shaven, and distinguished themselves from the "bearded" peoples who knew nothing of Greek civilization. The Romans conquered Greece, and learned much from its civilization. To them all who were not Greeks or Romans were "barbarians." Some Roman writers, like Cicero, use the word in the modern sense of unmannerly or even savage, but this was not a common use. St. Paul was a Roman citizen, for he belonged to Tarsus, a city in Asia Minor which had been given full Roman rights; but he was a Greek by birth, and he uses the word in the Greek way. He speaks of all men being equal according to the Christian religion, saying, "There is neither Greek nor . . . barbarian, bond nor free."

The word *slave*, again, contains in itself whole chapters of European history. It comes from the word *Slav*. The Slavs are the race of people to which the Russians, Poles, and many other nations in the East of Europe belong. The Great War has

been partly fought for the freedom of the small Slav nations, of which Serbia is one. The Slavs have a long history of oppression and tyranny behind them. They have been subject to stronger nations, such as the Turks, and, in Hungary, the Magyars. The first "slaves" in mediæval Europe belonged to this race, and the word "slave" is only another form of *Slav*. The word gives us an idea of the impression which the misfortunes of the Slavs made on the people of the Middle Ages.

The words *Turk* and *Tartar* have almost the opposite meaning to *slave* when they are used in a general sense. We call an unmanageable baby a "young Turk," and in this expression we have the idea of all the trouble the Turks have given the people of Europe since they swarmed in from the East in the twelfth century. The word *Turk* in this sense is now generally used amusingly to describe a troublesome child; but a grown-up person with a very quick temper or very difficult to get on with is often described also, chiefly in fun, as a "Tartar." Tartar is the name of the race of people to which the Turks, Cossacks, and several other peoples belong. The name by which they called themselves was *Tatar;* but Europeans changed it to *Tartar*, from the Latin word *Tartarus*, which means "hell." This gives us some idea of the impression these fierce people made on mediæval Europe—an impression which is kept in memory by the present humorous use of the word.

It is chiefly Eastern peoples whose names have passed into common words meaning fierce and cruel people. Our fairy tales are full of tales of "ogres." It is not quite certain, but it is probable that this word comes from *Hungarian*. The chief people of Hungary are the Magyars; but the first person who used the name *Hungarian* in the sense of "ogre" probably did not know this, but thought of them as Huns, or perhaps Tartars, and therefore as very fierce, cruel people. The first person who is known to have used it is Perrault, a French writer of fairy tales in the seventeenth century.

The Great War has given us another of these national names used in a new way. Many people referred to the Germans all through the war as the "Huns." The Huns were half-savage people, who in the early Middle Ages moved about in great hordes over Europe killing and burning. They were at last conquered in East and West, and finally disappeared from history. But their name remained as a synonym for cruelty. The Kaiser, in an unfortunate speech, exhorted his soldiers to make themselves as terrible as Huns; and when people heard of the ill-treatment of the Belgians when their country was invaded at the beginning of the war, they said that the Germans had indeed behaved like the Huns of long ago. The name clung to them, and during the war, when people spoke of the "Huns," they generally meant the Germans, and not the fierce, half-savage little men who fol-

lowed their famous chief Attila, plundering and burning through Europe about fifteen centuries ago.

Another name with a somewhat similar meaning is *assassin*, which most people would not guess to have ever been the name of a collection of people. An assassin is a person who arranges beforehand to take some one by surprise and kill him. But the original assassins were an Eastern people who believed that the murder of people of a religion other than their own was pleasing to their God. The Arabs first called this sect by the name *hashshash*, which the scholars of the Middle Ages translated into the Latin *assassinus*. The Arab name was given because these people were great eaters of "hashish" or dry herbs.

The name *Arab* itself has come to be used with a special meaning which has nothing to do with the people whose name it is. A rough little boy who spends most of his time in the streets is described as a "street Arab," and this comes from the fact that we think of the Arabs as a wandering people. The "street Arab" is a wanderer also, of another sort.

Another name of a wandering people has also come to have a special meaning in English. The French word for gipsy is *bohemien*, and from this we have the English word *Bohemian*. When we say a person is "a Bohemian," we mean that he lives in the way he really likes, and does not care whether other people think he is quite respectable

or not. It was the novelist Thackeray who first used the word *Bohemian* in this sense.

Bohemia is, of course, the name of a country in Germany, but it is also used figuratively to describe the region or community in which "Bohemian" or unconventional people live.

The word *gipsy* itself is used to describe a very dark person, or almost any kind of people travelling round the country in caravans. But *gipsy* really means "Egyptian." When the real gipsies first appeared in England, in the sixteenth century, people thought they came from Egypt, and so gave them this name.

Another name often given to very dark people is *blackamoor*, a name by which negroes are sometimes described. This really means "Black Moor," and shows us how confused the people who first used the word were about different races of people. The Moors were a quite different people from the negroes, being related to the Arabs. But to some people every one who is not white is a "nigger." *Nigger* comes, of course, from *negro*.

The Moors inhabited a part of North-west Africa. It was also a North African people, the Algerians, who gave us the word *Zouave*. Every one has seen since the Great War began pictures of the handsome and quaintly-dressed French soldiers called "Zouaves." Perhaps some children wondered why they wore such a strange Eastern dress. It is because the Zouave regiments, which are now chiefly

composed of Frenchmen, were originally formed from an Algerian mountain tribe called the Zouaves —Algeria being a French possession. The name is almost forgotten as that of a foreign tribe, but has become instead the name of these light infantry French regiments.

The name of the most famous of Eastern nations now spread all over the world, the Jews, has become a term of reproach. For hundreds of years after the spread of Christianity over Europe the Jews were looked upon as a wicked and hateful people. In many countries they were not allowed to live at all; in others a portion of the towns was set apart for them, and they were allowed to live there because they were useful as money-lenders.

Naturally the Jews, persecuted and distrusted, made as much profit as they could out of the people who treated them in this way. Perhaps with the growth of their wealth they grew to love money for its own sake. In any case, before long the Jews were looked upon as people who were decidedly ungenerous in the matter of money. Everybody knows the story of the Jew Shylock in Shakespeare's great play "The Merchant of Venice." Nowadays a person who is not really a Jew is often described contemptuously as a "Jew" if he shows himself mean in money matters; and some people even use a slang expression, "to jew," meaning to cheat or be very mean over a money affair.

Another name of a nation which stands for dis-

honesty of another sort (and much more excusable) is *Gascon*. The Gascons are the natives of Gascony, a province in the south of France. It is proverbial among other Frenchmen that the Gascons are always boasting, and even in English we sometimes use the word *Gascon* to describe a great boaster, while *gasconade* is now a common term for a boastful story.

Another word which we use to describe this sort of thing is *romance*. We often hear the expression, "Oh, he is only romancing," by which we mean that a person is saying what is not true, inventing harmless details to improve his story. The word *romance* has now many meanings, generally containing the idea of *imagination*. A person is called "romantic" when he or she is full of imaginings of great deeds and events. Or we say a person is a "romantic figure" when we mean that from his looks or speech, or from some other qualities, he seems fit for adventures.

But *romance*, from which we get *romantic*, was at first merely an adjective used to describe the languages which are descended from the Latin language, like French, Italian, and Spanish. In the Middle Ages scholars wrote in Latin, but poets and taletellers began to write in the language of the people—the *romance* languages in France and Italy. The tales of adventure and things which we should now call "romantic" were written in the "romance" languages; and from being used to describe the language, the word came to be used to describe the

kind of story contained in these poems and tales. Gradually the words *romantic* and *romance* got the meaning which they have to-day.

We have seen in another chapter that we have a number of words taken from the names of persons in ancient history. We have also a modern and special use of words formed from the names of some of the ancient nations. We saw that we use the word *Spartan* to describe any very severe discipline, or a person who willingly uses such discipline for himself.

There are several other such names used in a more or less complimentary way. We speak of "Roman" firmness, and every one who has read Roman history will agree that this is a good use of the word. On the other hand, we have the expression "Punic faith" to describe treachery. The Romans had had many reasons for mistrusting their great enemy, the Carthaginians, and they used this expression, *Fides Punica*, which we have simply borrowed from the Latin.

We use the expression "Attic (or Athenian) salt" to describe a very refined wit or humour. The Romans used the word *sal*, or "salt," in this sense of *wit*, and their expression *sal Atticum* shows the high opinion they had of the Athenians, from whom, indeed, they learned much in art and in literature. It is this same expression which we use to-day, having borrowed and translated it also from the Latin.

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STORIES THAT WORDS TELL US.

We speak of a "Parthian shot" when some one finishes a conversation or an argument with a sharp or witty remark, leaving no chance for an answer. This expression comes from the story of the Parthians, a people who lived on the shores of the Caspian Sea, and were famous as good archers among the ancient nations.

The way in which the names of nations and peoples have taken on more general meanings gives us many glimpses into history.

CHAPTER XIII.

WORDS MADE BY WAR.

SINCE the earliest ages men have made war on one another, and we have a great crowd of words, new and old, connected with war. Some of these are very simple words, especially the names of early weapons; some are more elaborate and more interesting in their derivation.

The chief of all weapons, the sword, has its simple name from the Old English language itself, and so has the spear. But it was after the Norman conquest of England that war became more elaborate, with armoured knights and fortified towers, and nearly all the names connected with war of this sort come to us from the French of that time. The word *war* itself comes from the Old French word *werre*. *Battle*, too, comes from the French of this time; and so do *armour*, *arms*, *fortress*, *siege*, *conquer*, *pursue*, *tower*, *banner*, and many other words. All of these words came into French originally from Latin. *Knight*, however, is an Old English word. The French word for knight, *chevalier*, never passed into English, but from it we got the word *chivalry*.

The great weapons of modern warfare are the gun and the bayonet. There are, of course, many kinds of guns, small and large. Formerly it was the fashion to call the big guns by the name of *cannon*, but in the great European war this word has hardly been used at all. They are all "guns," from the rifles carried by the foot soldiers to the Maxims and the great howitzers which each require a company of men to serve them. The word *cannon* comes from the French *canon*, and is sometimes spelt in this way in English too. It means "great tube."

The derivation of the word *gun* is more interesting. Gunpowder was not really discovered until the fifteenth century, but long before this a kind of machine, or gun, for hurling great stones, or sometimes arrows, had been used. These instruments were called by the Latin word *ballista* (for the Romans had also had machines of this sort), which comes from the Greek word *ballo*, meaning "throw." In the Middle Ages weapons of this sort were called by proper names, just as ships are now. A common name for them was the woman's name *Gunhilda*, which would be turned into *Gunna* for short. It is probably from this that we get the word *gun*. The most interesting of all the guns used in the Great War has only a number for its name. It is the famous French '75, and takes this name merely from a measurement.

The special weapon of the foot soldier, or infantryman, is the bayonet. This is a short blade

which the foot soldier fixes on the muzzle of his rifle before he advances to an attack. In the trenches his weapon is the rifle; before the order is given to go "over the parapet"—that is, to climb out of the trenches, to run forward and attack the enemy at close quarters—he "fixes his bayonet." The word *bayonet* probably comes from *Bayonne*, the name of a town in France.

The word *infantry* itself, now used to describe regiments of foot soldiers armed with the ordinary weapons, comes to us, like most of our words connected with war, from the French. We have already seen that the words of this sort which we borrowed in the Middle Ages were Norman-French words descended from Latin. But after the use of gunpowder in war became general there were many new terms; and as at this time the Italians were the people who fought most, and wrote most about fighting, many words relating to the methods of war after the close of the Middle Ages were Italian words. It is true that we learned them from the French, for the great writers on military matters in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were Frenchmen. But they borrowed many words from the Italian writers of the fifteenth century. One of these words is *infantry*, which means a number of junior soldiers or "infants"—the regiments of foot soldiers being made up of young men, while the older and more experienced soldiers made up the cavalry.

This, again, is a word which we borrowed from the French, and which the French had borrowed from the Italians. *Cavalry* is, of course, the name for horse soldiers, and the Italian word *cavalleria*, from which it comes, was itself derived from the Latin word *caballus*, "a horse." The general weapon for a cavalryman is the "sabre," a sword with a curved blade. This, again, comes to us from the French, but was probably originally an Eastern word. It is quite common for officers, in reckoning the number of men in an army, to speak of so many "bayonets" and so many "sabres," instead of "infantry" and "cavalry."

Many of the words which people began to use familiarly during the great European war first came into English in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, a time when it seemed to be the ordinary state of affairs for some, at least, of the European countries to be at war with one another. *Bivouac* is a word which was used a good deal in descriptions of earlier wars. It is a German word, which came into English at the time of the Thirty Years' War (1618–1648) in Germany. It means an encampment for a short time only (often for the night), without tents. It plainly has not much connection with modern trench warfare.

Another word which came from the German at the same time may serve to remind us that the German soldier of to-day is not very much unlike his ancestors of three hundred years ago. The

word *plunder* was originally a German word meaning "bed-clothes" or other household furnishing. From the fact that so much of this kind of thing was carried off in the fighting of this terrible war, the word came to have its present sense of anything taken violently from its rightful owner. It must be confessed that the word was also used a great deal in the English Civil War, which was, of course, fought at the same time as the end of the Thirty Years' War.

It was also in the English Civil War that we first find the word *capitulation*, which now generally means to surrender on certain conditions. Before this, *capitulation* had more the meaning which it still keeps in *recapitulation*. It meant an arrangement under headings, and the word probably was transferred from describing the terms of surrender to describing the surrender itself.

One of the many words connected with war which came into the English language from the French in the seventeenth century was *parade*, which means the showing off of troops, and came into French from an Italian word which itself came from the Latin word *parare*, "to prepare." Another of these words which has been much used in descriptions of the battles of the Great War, and especially in the "Battle of the Rivers" in the autumn of 1914, is *pontoon*. Pontoons are flat-bottomed boats by means of which soldiers make a temporary bridge across rivers, generally when the permanent bridges have

been destroyed by the enemy. The word is *ponton* in French, and comes from the Latin *pons*, "a bridge." Most words of this sort in French ending in *on* take the ending *oon* in English. Thus *ballon* in French becomes *balloon* in English. *Barracks* also comes from the French *baraque*, and the French had it from the Spanish or Italian *barraca* or *baraca*; but no one knows whence these languages got the word.

The word *bombard*, also much used during the Great War, came into English at the end of the seventeenth century from the French word *bombarder*, which came from the Latin word *bombarda*, an engine for throwing stones, and which in its turn came from the Latin word *bombus*, meaning "hum." Even a stone hurled with great force through the air makes a humming noise, and the "singing" of the bombs and shells hurled through the air became a very familiar sound to the soldiers who fought in the Great War. The word *bomb*, too, comes from the French *bombe*.

The words *brigade* and *brigadier* also came from the French at this time. So, too, did the word *fusilier*, a name which some British regiments still keep (for example, the Royal Fusiliers), though they are no longer armed with the old-fashioned musket known as the *fusil*, the name of which also came from the French, which had it from the Latin word *focus*, "a hearth" or "fire." It is curious how the names of modern British regiments, not even carry-

ing the weapons from which they have their names, should take us back in this way to the days of early Rome.

The word *patrol,* which was used very much especially in the early days of the Great War, has an interesting origin. It may mean a small body of soldiers or police sent out to go round a garrison, or camp, or town, to keep watch ; or, again, it may mean a small body of troops sent on before an advancing army to " reconnoitre "—that is, to spy out the land, the position of the enemy, etc. The word *patrol* literally means to " paddle in mud," for the French word, *patrouille,* from which it came into English in the seventeenth century, came from an earlier word with this meaning.

The word *campaign,* by which we mean a number of battles fought within a certain time, and generally according to a plan arranged beforehand, also came from the French word *campagne* at the beginning of the eighteenth century—a century of great wars and many campaigns. The word was more used in those earlier wars than it is now, because in those days the armies used practically never to fight in the winter, and so each summer during a war had its " campaign." The earlier meaning of the French word *campagne,* and one which it still keeps besides this later meaning, is "open country," the kind of country over which battles were generally fought.

Recruit is another word which came into English from the French at this time. It, again, is a word

which has been used a great deal in the European war. It came from the French word *recrue*, which also means a newly-enlisted soldier. The French word *croître*, from which *recrue* came, was derived from the Latin word *crescere*, " to increase."

All these words, we should notice, have now a figurative use. We speak of " recruits " not only to the army, but to any society. Thus we may say a person is a valuable " recruit " to the cause of temperance, etc. A " campaign " can be fought not only on the field of battle, but through newspapers, meetings, etc. It is in this sense that we speak of the " campaign " for women's suffrage, etc.

Many words relating to the dress and habits of our soldiers have curious origins. We say now quite naturally that a man is " in khaki " when we mean that he is a soldier, because the peculiar yellow-brown colour which is known as " khaki " is now the regular colour of the uniform of the British soldier. In earlier days the British soldier was generally a " redcoat," but in modern trench warfare it is so important that the enemy should not be able to pick out easily the position of groups of men in order to " shell " them, that the armies of all nations use gray or brown or other dull shades. *Khaki* is a word which came into English through the South African War, when the policy of clothing the soldiers in this way was first begun on a large scale. It comes from a Hindu word, *khak*, which means " dust." The object of this kind of clothing

for our soldiers is that they shall not be easily distinguished from the soil of the trenches and battlefields.

When a soldier or officer or any other person who is generally in uniform wears ordinary clothes we say he is "in mufti." This, again, is an Arab word meaning "Mohammedan priest."

The soldiers in the Great War used many new words which became a regular part of their speech. They were chiefly "slang," but it is quite possible that some of them may pass into good English. We shall see something of them in a later chapter.

CHAPTER XIV.

PROVERBS.

EVERY child knows what a proverb is, though every child may not, perhaps, be able to say in its own words just what makes a proverb. A proverb has been defined as "a wise saying in a few words." At any rate, if it is not always wise, the person who first said it and the people who repeat it think it is. Most proverbs are very old, and take us back, just as we saw that words formed from the names of animals do, to the early days before the growth of large towns.

In those days life was simple, and people thought chiefly of simple things. When they thought children or young persons were going to do something foolish they gave them good advice, and tried to teach them a little lesson from their own experience of what happened among the common things around them.

A boy or a girl who was very enthusiastic about some new thing was warned that "new brooms sweep clean." When several people were anxious to help in doing one thing, they were pushed aside

(just as they are now) with the remark that "too many cooks spoil the broth." The people who use this proverb now generally know very little about broth and still less about cooking. They say it because it expresses a certain truth in a striking way; but the first person who said it knew all about cooks and kitchens, and spoke out of the fullness of her (it must have been a woman) experience.

Again, a person who is discontented with the way in which he lives and is anxious to change it is warned lest he jump "out of the frying-pan into the fire." Again the wisdom comes from the kitchen. And we may remark that these sayings are difficult to contradict.

But there are other proverbs which contain statements about birds and animals and things connected with nature, and sometimes these seem only half true to the people who think about them. We sometimes hear it said of a person who is very quiet and does not speak much that "still waters run deep." This is true in Nature. A little shallow brook will babble along, while the surface of a deep pool will have hardly a ripple on it. But a quiet person is not necessarily a person of great character or lofty thoughts. Some people hardly speak at all, because, as a matter of fact, they find nothing to say. They are quiet, not because they are "deep," but because they are shallow. Still, the proverb is not altogether foolish, for when people

use it about some one they generally mean that they think this particular quiet person is one with so much going on in his or her mind that there is no temptation to speak much. "Empty vessels make most sound" is another of these proverbs which is literally true, but is not always true when applied to people. A person who talks a great deal with very little to say quite deserves to have this proverb quoted about him or her. But there are some people who are great talkers just because they are so full of ideas, and to them the proverb does not apply.

Another of these nature proverbs, and one which has exasperated many a late riser, is, "The early bird catches the worm." Many people have inquired in their turn, "And what about the worm?" But the proverb is quite true, all the same.

Again, "A rolling stone gathers no moss" is a proverb which has been repeated over and over again with many a headshake when young people have refused to settle down, but have changed from one thing to another and roamed from place to place. And this is quite true. But we may ask, "Is it a good thing for stones to gather moss?" After all, the adventurous people sometimes win fortunes which they could never have won if they had been afraid to move about. And the adventurous people, too, win other things—knowledge and experience—which are better than money. Of course the proverb is wise to a certain degree, for mere

foolish changing without any reason cannot benefit any one. But things can gather *rust* as well as moss by keeping still, and this is certainly not a good thing.

"Where there's a will there's a way." So the old proverb says, and this is probably nearly always true, except that no one can do what is impossible. "Look before you leap" is also good advice for impetuous people, who are apt to do a thing rashly and wonder afterwards whether they have done wisely.

The most interesting thing about proverbs to the student of words is that they are always made up of simple words such as early peoples always used. But we go on repeating them, using sometimes words which we should never choose in ordinary speech, and yet never noticing that they are old-fashioned and quaint.

It is true that there are some sayings which are so often quoted that they seem almost like proverbs. But a line of poetry or prose, however often it may be quoted, is not a proverb if it is taken from the writings of a person whom we know to have used it for the first time. These are merely quotations. No one can say who was the first person to use any particular proverb. Even so long ago as the days of the great Greek philosopher Aristotle many proverbs which are used in nearly every land to-day were ages old. Aristotle describes them as "fragments of an elder wisdom."

Clearly, then, however true some quotations from Shakespeare and Pope and Milton may be, and however often repeated, they are not proverbs.

"A little learning is a dangerous thing."

This line expresses a deep truth, and is as simply expressed as any proverb, but it is merely a quotation from Pope. Again,

"Fools rush in where angels fear to tread"

is true enough, and well enough expressed to bear frequent quotation, but it is not a "fragment of elder wisdom." It is merely Pope's excellent way of saying that foolish people will interfere in delicate matters in which wise people would never think of meddling. Here, again, the language is not particularly simple as in proverbs, and this will help us to remember that quotations are not proverbs. There is, however, a quotation from a poem by Patrick A. Chalmers, a present-day poet, which has become as common as a proverb :—

"What's lost upon the roundabouts
We pulls up on the swings."

The fact that this is expressed simply and even ungrammatically does not, of course, turn it into a proverb.

Though many of the proverbs which are repeated in nearly all the languages of the world are without date, we know the times when a few of them were first quoted. In Greek writings we already

find the half-true proverb, "Rolling stones gather no moss;" and, "There's many a slip 'twixt the cup and the lip," which warned the Greeks, as it still warns us, of the uncertainty of human things. We can never be sure of anything until it has actually happened. In Latin writings we find almost the same idea expressed in the familiar proverb, "A bird in hand is worth two in the bush"—a fact which no one will deny.

St. Jerome, who translated the Bible from Greek into Latin in the fourth century and wrote many wise books besides, quotes two proverbs which we know well: "It is not wise to look a gift horse in the mouth," and, "Liars must have good memories." The first again deals, like so many of the early proverbs, with the knowledge of animals. A person who knows about horses can tell from the state of their mouths much about their age, health, and general value. But, the proverb warns us, it is neither gracious nor wise to examine too closely what is given to us freely. It may not be quite to our liking, but after all it is a present.

The proverb, "Liars must have good memories," means, of course, that people who tell lies are liable to forget just what tale they have told on any particular occasion, and may easily contradict themselves, and so show that they have been untruthful. It is necessary, then, for such a person, unless he wishes to be found out, to remember exactly what lies he has told.

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Many proverbs have remained in the English language, not so much for the wisdom they contain as for the way in which they express it. Some are in the form of a rhyme—as, "Birds of a feather flock together," and "East and west, home is best." These are always favourites.

Others catch the ear because of their alliteration; that is to say, two or three of their words begin with the same letter. Examples of this are: "Look before you leap." The proverb "A stitch in time saves nine" has something of both these attractions, though it is not exactly a rhyme. Other examples of alliteration in proverbs are: "Delays are dangerous," "Speech is silvern, silence is golden."

A few proverbs are witty as well as wise, and these are, perhaps, the best of all, since they do not, as a rule, exasperate the people to whom they are quoted, as many proverbs are apt to do. Usually these witty proverbs are metaphors.

CHAPTER XV.

SLANG.

EVERY child has some idea of what is meant by "slang," because most schoolboys and schoolgirls have been corrected for using it. By slang we mean words and expressions which are not the ordinary words for the ideas which they express, but which are invented as new names or phrases for these ideas, and are at first known and used only by a few people who use them just among themselves. There are all kinds of slang—slang used by schoolboys and schoolgirls in general, slang used by the pupils of each special school, slang used by soldiers, a different slang used by their officers, and even slang used by members of Parliament.

The chief value of slang to the people who use it is that at first, at any rate, it is only understood by the inventors and their friends. The slang of any public school is continually changing, because as soon as the expressions become known and used by other people the inventors begin to invent once more, and get a new set of slang terms. Sometimes a slang word will be used for years by one

class of people without becoming common because it describes something of which ordinary people have no experience, and therefore do not mention.

The making of slang is really the making of language. Early men must have invented new words just as the slang-makers do to-day. The difference is that there are already words to describe the things which the slang words describe. It may seem curious, then, that people should trouble to find new words. The reason they do so is often that they want to be different from other people, and sometimes because the slang word is much more expressive than the ordinary word.

This is one reason that the slang of a small number of people spreads and becomes general. Sometimes the slang word is so much better in this way than the old word that it becomes more generally used than it, and finds its way into the ordinary dictionaries. When this happens it is no longer slang.

But, as a rule, slang is ugly or meaningless, and it is very often vulgar. However common its use may become, the best judges will not use such expressions, and they remain mere slang.

A writer on the subject of slang has given us two good examples of meaningless and expressive slang. The people who first called marmalade "swish" could have no reason for inventing the new name except to seem odd and different from other people. *Swish* is certainly not a more expressive or descriptive word than *marmalade*. The one means noth-

ing, while the other has an interesting history coming to us through the French from two old Greek words meaning "apple" and "honey."

The expressive word which this writer quotes is *swag*, a slang word for "stolen goods." There is no doubt that *swag* is a much more expressive word than any of the ordinary words used to describe the same thing. One gets a much more vivid picture from the sentence, "The thieves got off with the *swag*," than he would had the word *prize* or even *plunder* or *booty* been used. Yet there is no sign that the word *swag* will become good English. Expressive as it is, there is a vulgar flavour about it which would make people who are at all fastidious in their language very unwilling to use it.

Yet many words and phrases which must have seemed equally vulgar when first used have come to be accepted as good English. And in fact much of our language, and especially metaphorical words and phrases, were once slang. It will be interesting to examine some examples of old slang which have now become good English.

One common form of slang is the use of expressions connected with sport as metaphors in speaking of other things. Thus it is slang to say that we were "in at the death" when we mean that we stayed to the end of a meeting or performance. This is, of course, a metaphor from hunting. People who follow the hounds until the fox is caught and killed are "in at the death." Another such expression is

to "toe the mark." We say a person is made to "toe the line" or "toe the mark" when he or she is subjected to discipline; but it is a slang phrase, and only good English in its literal meaning of standing with the toes touching a line in starting a race, etc., so that all may have an equal chance.

We say a person has "hit below the belt" if we think he has done or said something unfair in an argument or quarrel. This is a real slang phrase, and is only good English in the literal sense in which it is used in boxing, where it is against the rules to "hit below the belt." The term "up to you," by which is expressed in a slang way that the person so addressed is expected to do something, is a slang expression borrowed from cards.

Even from these few examples we can see that there are various degrees in slang. A person who would be content to use the expression "toe the line" might easily think it rather coarse to accuse an opponent of "hitting below the belt." There comes a time when some slang almost ceases to be slang, and though good writers will not use it in writing, quite serious people will use it in merely speaking. It has passed out of the stage of mere slang to become a "colloquialism."

The phrases we have quoted from present-day sport when used in a general sense are still for the most part slang; but many phrases taken from old sports and games, and which must have been slang

in their time, are now quite good English and even dignified style. We speak of "wrestling with a difficulty" or "parrying a thrust" (a metaphor taken, of course, from fencing), of "winning the palm," and so on, all of which are not only picturesque but quite dignified English.

A very common form of slang is what are called "clipped" words. Such words are *gov* for "governor," *bike* for "bicycle," *flu* for "influenza," *indi* for "indigestion," *rec* for "recreation," *loony* for "lunatic," *pub* for "public house," *exam* for "examination," *maths* for "mathematics." All of these words are real slang, and most of them are quite vulgar. There is no sign that any of them will become good English. The most likely to survive in ordinary speech is perhaps *exam.*

Yet we have numbers of short words which have now become the ordinary names for certain articles, and yet which are only short forms of the original names of those articles. The first man who said *bus* for "omnibus" must have seemed quite an adventurer. He probably struck those who heard him as a little vulgar; but hardly any one now uses the word *omnibus* (which is in itself an interesting word, being the Latin word meaning "for all"), except, perhaps, the omnibus companies in their posters. Again, very few people use the full phrase "Zoological Gardens" now. Children are taken to the *Zoo*. *Cycle* for "bicycle" is quite dignified and proper, though *bike* is certainly vulgar. In the

hurry of life to-day people more frequently *'phone* than "telephone" to each other, and we can send a *wire* instead of a "telegram" without any risk of vulgarity. The word *cab* replaced the more magnificent "cabriolet," and then with the progress of invention we got the "taxicab." It is now the turn of *cab* to be dropped," and when we are in haste we hail a *taxi*. No one nowadays, except the people who sell them, speaks of "pianofortes." They have all become *pianos* in ordinary speech.

The way in which good English becomes slang is well illustrated by an essay of the great English writer Dean Swift, in the famous paper called "The Tatler," in 1710. He, as a fastidious user of English, was much vexed by what he called the "continual corruption of the English tongue." He objected especially to the clipping of words—the use of the first syllable of a word instead of the whole word. "We cram one syllable and cut off the rest," he said, "as the owl fattened her mice after she had cut off their legs to prevent their running away." One word the Dean seemed especially to hate—*mob*, which, indeed, was richer by one letter in his day, for he sometimes wrote it *mobb*. *Mob* is, of course, quite good English now to describe a disorderly crowd of people, and we should think it very curious if any one used the full expression for which it stands. *Mob* is short for the Latin phrase *mobile vulgus*, which means "excitable crowd."

Other words to which Swift objected, though

most of them are not the words of one syllable with which he declared we were "overloaded," and which he considered the "disgrace of our language," were *banter, sham, bamboozle, bubble, bully, cutting, shuffling,* and *palming.* We may notice that some of these words, such as *banter* and *sham,* are now quite good English, and most of the others have at least passed from the stage of slang into that of colloquialism.

The word *bamboozle* is still almost slang, though perhaps more common than it was two hundred years ago, when Swift attacked it. Even now we do not know where it came from. There was a slang word used at the time but now forgotten—*bam,* which meant a trick or practical joke; and some scholars have thought that *bamboozle* (which, of course, means "to deceive") came from this. On the other hand, it may have been the other way about, and that the shorter word came from the longer. The word *bamboozle* shows us how hard it is for meaningless slang to become good English even after a struggle of two hundred years.

We have seen how many slang words in English have become good English, so that people use with propriety expressions that would have seemed improper or vulgar fifty or ten or even five years ago. Other interesting words are some which are perfectly good English as now used, but which have been borrowed from other languages, and in those languages are or were mere slang. The word

bizarre, which we borrowed from the French, and which means "curious," in a fantastic or half-savage way, is a perfectly dignified word in English; but it must have been a slang word at one time in French. It meant long ago in French "soldierly," and literally "bearded"—that is, if it came from the Spanish word *bizarra*, "beard."

Another word which we use in English has a much less dignified use in French. We can speak of the *calibre* of a person, meaning the quality of his character or intellect; but in French the word *calibre* is only in ordinary speech applied to things. To speak of a "person of a certain calibre" in French is very bad slang indeed.

Again, the word *fiasco*, which we borrowed from the Italian, and which means the complete failure of something from which we had hoped much, was at first slang in Italian. It was applied especially to the failure of a play in a theatre. To break down was *far fiasco*, which literally means "make a bottle." The phrase does not seem to have any very clear meaning, but at any rate it is far removed from the dignified word *fiasco* as used in English.

The word *sack* as used in describing the sack of a town in war is a picturesque and even poetic word; but as it comes from the French *sac*, meaning "pack" or "plunder," it is really a kind of slang.

On the other hand, words which belong to quite good and ordinary speech in their own languages often become slang when adopted into another. A

slang word much used in America and sometimes in England (for American expressions are constantly finding their way into the English language) is *vamoose,* which means "depart." *Vamoose* comes from a quite ordinary Mexican word, *vamos,* which is Spanish for "let us go."

It is very interesting to find that many of our most respectable words borrowed from Latin have a slang origin. Sometimes these words were slang in Latin itself; sometimes they were used as slang only after they passed into English. The French word *tête,* which means "head," comes from the Latin *testa,* "a pot." (We have seen that this is the word from which we get our word *test.*) Some Romans, instead of using *caput,* the real Latin word for "head," would sometimes in slang fashion speak of some one's *testa,* or "pot," and from this slang word the French got their regular word for head.

The word *insult* comes from the Latin *insultare,* which meant at first "to spring or leap at," and afterwards came to have the same meaning as it has with us. The persons who first used this expression in the second sense were really using slang, picturing a person who said something unpleasant to them as "jumping at them."

We have the same kind of slang in the expression "to jump down one's throat," when we mean "to complain violently of some one's behaviour." The word *effrontery,* which comes to us from the French *effronterie,* is really the same expression as the

vulgar terms *face* and *cheek*, meaning "impudence." For the word comes from the Latin *frons*, "the forehead."

An example of a word which was quite good English, and then came to be used as slang in a special sense, and then in this same special sense became good English again, is *grit*. The word used to mean in English merely "sand" or "gravel," and it came to mean especially the texture or grain of stones used for grinding. Then in American slang it came to be used to mean all that we mean now when we say a person has "grit"—namely, courage, and strength, and firmness. This use of the word seemed so good that it rapidly became good English; but the American slang-makers soon found another word to replace it, and now talk of people having "sand," which is not by any means so expressive, and will probably never pass out of the realm of slang.

An example of a word which was at first used as slang not many years ago, and is now, if not the most elegant English, at least a quite respectable word for newspaper use, is *maffick*. This word means to make a noisy show of joy over news of a victory. It dates from the relief of Mafeking by the British in 1900. When news of its relief came people at home seemed to go mad with joy. They rushed into the streets shouting and cheering, and there was a great deal of noise and confusion. It was noticed over and over again that there was no

"mafficking" over successes in the Great War. People felt it too seriously to make a great noise about it.

A slang word which has become common in England during the Great War is *sträfe*. This is the German word for "punish," and became quite familiar to English people through the hope and prayer to which the Germans were always giving expression that God would "sträfe" England. The soldiers caught hold of the word, and it was very much used in a humorous way both at home and abroad. But it is not at all likely to become a regular English word, and perhaps will not even remain as slang after the war.

Besides the fact that slang often becomes good English, we have to notice that good English often becomes slang. One of the most common forms of slang is to use words, and especially adjectives, which mean a great deal in themselves to describe quite small and ordinary things. To speak of a "splendid" or "magnificent" breakfast, for instance, is to use words out of proportion to the subject, though of course they are excellent words in themselves; but this is a mild form of slang.

There are many people now who fill their conversation with superlatives, although they speak of the most commonplace things. A theatrical performance will be "perfectly heavenly," an actress "perfectly divine." Apart from the fact that nothing and no one merely human can be "divine,"

divinity itself is perfection, and it is therefore not only unnecessary but actually incorrect to add "perfectly." A scene or landscape may very properly be described as "enchanting," but when the adjective is applied too easily it is a case of good English becoming slang.

Then, besides the use of superlative adjectives to describe things which do not deserve such descriptions, there is a crowd of rarer words used in a special sense to praise things.

Every one knows what a "stunning blow" is, but few people can ever have been stunned by the beauty of another's clothes. Yet the expression "stunning hat" or "stunning tie" is quite common. Expressions like a "ripping time" are even more objectionable, because they are even more meaningless.

Then, besides the slang use of terms of praise, there are also many superlatives expressing disgust which the slangmongers use instead of ordinary mild expressions of displeasure. To such people it is not simply "annoying" to have to wait for a lift on the underground railways; for them it is "perfectly sickening."

Horrid, a word which means so much if used properly, is applied to all sorts of slightly unpleasant things and people. When one thinks of the literal Latin meaning of this word ("so dreadful as to cause us to shudder"), the foolishness of using it so lightly is plain. People frequently now declare

that they have a "shocking cold"—a description which, again, is too violent for the subject.

Another form of slang is to combine a word which generally expresses unpleasant with one which expresses pleasant ideas. So we get such expressions as "awfully nice" and "frightfully pleased," which are actually contradictions in terms.

This kind of slang is the worst kind of all. It soon loses any spice of novelty. It is not really expressive, like some of the quaint terms of school or university slang, and it does a great deal of harm by tending to spoil the full force of some of our best and finest words. It is very difficult to avoid the use of slang if one is constantly hearing it, but, at any rate, any one who feels the beauty of language must soon be disgusted by this particular kind of slang.

CHAPTER XVI.

WORDS WHICH HAVE CHANGED THEIR MEANING.

We have seen in the chapter on "slang" how people are continually using old words in new ways, and how, through this, slang often becomes good English and good English becomes slang. The same thing has been going on all through the history of language. Other words besides those used as slang have been constantly getting new uses. Many English words to-day have quite different meanings from those which they had in the Middle Ages; some even have exactly opposite meanings to their original sense. Sometimes words keep both the old meaning and the new.

In this matter the English language is very different from the German. The English language has many words which the Germans have too, but their meanings are different. The Germans have kept the original meanings which these words had hundreds of years ago; but the thousands of words which have come down to us from the English language of a thousand years ago have nearly all changed their meanings.

We have two of these old words which have now each two exactly opposite meanings. The word *fast* means sometimes "immovable," and sometimes it means the exact opposite—"moving rapidly." We say a key is "fast" in a lock when we cannot get it out, and we say a person runs "fast" when we mean that he runs quickly. The first meaning of steadiness is the original meaning; then the word came to be used to mean "moving steadily." A person who ran on, keeping up a steady movement, was said to run fast, and then it was easy to use the word for rapidity as well as steadiness in motion or position. This is how the word *fast* came to have two opposite meanings.

Another word, *fine*, has the same sort of history. We speak of a "fine needle" when we mean that it is thin, and a "fine baby" when we mean that it is fat. The first meaning is nearer to the original, which was "well finished off." Often a thing which had a great deal of "fine" workmanship spent on it would be delicate and "fine" in the first sense, and so the word came to have this meaning. On the other hand, the thing finished off in this way would generally be beautiful. People came to think of "fine" things as things to be admired, and as they like their babies to be fat, a fat baby will generally be considered a fine baby. It was in this kind of way that "fine" came to have its second meaning of "large."

The common adjectives *glad* and *sad* had quite

different meanings in Old English from those they have now. In Old English glad meant "shining," or "bright," but in a very short time it came to mean "cheerful." Now it means something rather different from this, for though we may speak of a "glad heart" or "glad spirit," such expressions are chiefly used in poetry. Generally in ordinary speech when we say that we are "glad" we mean that we are pleased about some special thing, as "glad that you have come."

Sad in Old English meant to have as much as one wanted of anything. Then it came to mean "calm" and "serious," perhaps from the idea that people who have all they want are in a mood to settle down and attend to things seriously. Already in Shakespeare's writings we find the word with its present meaning of "sorrowful." It has quite lost its earlier meaning, but has several special new meanings besides the general one of "sorrowful." A "sad tint," or colour, is one which is dull. "Sad bread" in the north of England is "heavy" bread which has not risen properly. Again, we describe as "sad" some people who are not at all sorrowful. We say a person is a "sad" liar when we mean that he is a hopeless liar.

The word *tide*, which we now apply to the regular rise and fall of the sea, used to mean in Old English "time;" and it still keeps this meaning in the words *Christmastide, Whitsuntide*, etc.

One common way in which words change is in

going from a general to a more special meaning. Thus in Old English the word *chest* meant "box" in general, but has come now to be used as the name of a special kind of box only, and also as the name of a part of the body. The first person who used the word in this sense must have thought of the "chest" as a box containing the lungs and the heart.

Glass is, of course, the name of the substance out of which we make our windows and some of our drinking vessels, etc., and this was at one time its only use; but we now use the name *glass* for several special articles—for example, a drinking-vessel, a telescope, a barometer, a mirror (or "looking-glass"), and so on. *Copper* is another word the meaning of which has become specialized in this way as time has gone on. From being merely the name of a metal it has come to be used for a copper coin and for a large cauldron especially used in laundry work. Another example of a rather different kind of this "specialization" which changes the meaning of words is the word *congregation*. *Congregation* used to mean "any gathering together of people in one place," and we still use the word *congregate* in this sense. Thus we might say "the people congregated in Trafalgar Square," but we should never think of speaking of a crowd listening to a lecturer there as a "congregation." The word has now come to mean an assembly for religious worship in a chapel or church.

Some words have changed their meaning in just the opposite way. From having one special meaning they have come by degrees to have a much more general sense. The word *bureau*, which came into English from the French, meant at first merely a "desk" in both languages. It still has this meaning in both languages, but a wider meaning as well. It can now be used to describe an office (a place associated with the idea of desks). Thus we have "employment bureau," and can get English money for foreign at a "bureau de change." From this use of the word we have the word *bureaucracy*, by which we describe a government which is carried on by a great number of officials.

A better example of how a word containing one special idea can extend its meaning is the word *bend*. This word originally meant to pull the string of a bow in order to let fly an arrow. The expression "bend a bow" was used, and as the result of pulling the string was to curve the wooden part of the arrow, people came in time to think that "bending the bow" was this making the wood to curve. From this came our general use of "bend" to mean forcing a thing which is straight into a curve or angle. We have, of course, also the metaphorical use of the word, as when we speak of bending our will to another's.

Another word which has had a similar history is *carry*. When this word was first borrowed from Old French it meant to move something from place

to place in a cart or other wheeled vehicle. The general word for our modern *carry* was *bear*, which we still use, but chiefly in poetry. In time *carry* came to have its modern general sense of lifting a thing from one place and removing it to another. A well-known writer on the history of the English language has suggested that this came about first through people using the word in this sense half in fun, just as the word *cart* is now sometimes used. A person may say (a little vulgarly), " Do you expect me to cart all these things to another room ? " instead of using the ordinary word *carry*. If history were to repeat itself in this case, *cart* might in time become the generally used word, and *carry* in its turn be relegated to the realm of poetry.

Words often come to have several meanings through being used to describe things which are connected in some way with the things for which they were originally used. The word *house* originally had one meaning, which it still keeps, but to which several others have been added. It was a building merely, but came in time to be used to mean the building and the people living in it. Thus we say one person " disturbs the whole house." From this sense it got the meaning of a royal family, and we speak of the House of York, Lancaster, Tudor, or Stuart. We also use the word in a large sense when we speak of the " House of Lords " and the " House of Commons," by which we hardly ever mean the actual buildings known generally as

the "Houses of Parliament," but the members of the two Houses. The word *world* has had almost the opposite history to the word *house*. *World* originally applied only to persons and not to any place. It meant a "generation of men," and then came to mean men and the earth they live on, and then the earth itself; until it has a quite general sense, as when we speak of "other worlds than ours."

Many words which are used at present to describe bad or disagreeable things were used quite differently originally. The word *villain* is, perhaps, the most expressive we can use to show our opinion of the depths of a person's wickedness. Yet in the Middle Ages a villain, or "villein," was merely a serf or labourer bound to work on the land of a particular lord. The word in Saxon times would have been *churl*. As time went on both these words became terms of contempt. The lords in the Middle Ages were certainly often more wicked than the serfs, as we see in the stories of the days of Robin Hood; but by degrees the people of the higher classes began to use the word *villain* more and more contemptuously. Many of them imagined that only people of their own class were capable of high thoughts and noble conduct. Gradually "villainy" came to mean all that was low and vulgar, and by degrees it came to have the meaning it has now of "sheer wickedness." At the end of the Middle Ages there were practically no longer any

serfs in England; but the word *villain* has remained in this new sense, and gives us a complete story of the misunderstanding and dislike which must have existed between "noble" and "simple" to cause such a change in the meaning of the word.

The word *churl* has a somewhat similar history. We say now that a sulky, ungracious person is a "mere churl," or behaves in a "churlish" manner, never thinking of the original meaning of the word. Here, again, is a little story of injustice. The present use of the word comes from the supposition that only the mere labourer could behave in a sulky or bad-tempered way.

Knave is another of those words which originally described persons of poor condition and have now come to mean a wicked or deceitful person. A knave, as we now understand the word, means a person who cheats in a particularly mean way, but formerly the word meant merely "boy." It then came to mean "servant," just as the word *garçon* ("boy") is used for all waiters in French restaurants. Another word which now means, as a rule, some one unutterably wicked, is *wretch*, though it is also used rather contemptuously to describe some one who is not wicked but unutterably miserable. Yet in Old English this word merely meant an "exile." An exile was a person to be pitied, and also sometimes a person who had done something wrong, and we get both these ideas in the modern uses of the word. The word *blackguard*, which now means a

"scoundrel," was also once a word for "scullion;" but it does not go back as far as "knave" and "villain," being found chiefly in writings of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

Another word in which the "villeins" and "knaves" and "churls" seem to have their revenge on the "upper classes" is *surly*. This word used to be spelt *sirly*, and meant behaving as a "sire," or gentleman, behaves. Originally this meant "haughty" or "arrogant," but by degrees came to have the idea of sulkiness and ungraciousness, much like *churlish*.

Several adjectives which are now used as terms of blame were not only harmless descriptions originally, but were actually terms of praise. No one likes to be called "cunning," "sly," or "crafty" to-day; but these were all complimentary adjectives once. A *cunning* man was one who knew his work well, a *sly* person was wise and skilful, and a *crafty* person was one who could work well at his trade or "craft." Two words which we use to-day with a better sense than any of these, and yet which have a slightly uncomplimentary sense, are *knowing* and *artful*. It is surely good to "know" things, and to be full of art; but both words have already an idea of slyness, and may in time come to have quite as unpleasant a meaning as these three which have the same literal meaning.

Fellow, a word which has now nearly always a slightly contemptuous sense, had originally the quite

good sense of *partner*. It came from an Old English word which meant the man who marked out his land next to yours. The word still has this good sense in *fellowship*, *fellow-feeling*, etc., and as used to describe a "fellow" of a college or society. But the more general use is as a less respectful word for man. One man may say of another that he is a "nice fellow" without any disrespect; but the word has no dignity, and people, even though they use it of an equal, would not think of using it to describe a superior, and the more general use is that of blame or contempt, as in the expressions, "a disagreeable fellow" or "a stupid fellow." The word *bully* was at one time a word which showed affection, and meant even "lover." In English now, of course, a bully is a person, especially a boy, who tyrannizes over people weaker than himself; but the Americans still use the word in a good sense when they say "bully for you," meaning "bravo."

We have seen many words whose meanings have become less dignified than their original meaning; but sometimes the opposite happens. Every one now speaks with respect of a "pioneer," whether we mean by that people who are the first to venture into strange lands, or, in a more figurative sense, people who make some new discovery in science or introduce some new way of thinking or acting. Yet "pioneers" were originally merely the soldiers who did the hard work of clearing the way for an

advancing army. They were looked upon as belonging to a lower class than the ordinary soldiers. But this new and at first figurative use of the word, applied first to geographical and then to scientific and moral explorers, has given the word a new dignity.

A group of words which had originally very humble meanings, and have been elevated in an even more accidental way, are the names of the officials of royal courts. The word *steward* originally meant, as it still means, a person who manages property for some one else. The steward on a ship is a servant; but the steward of the king's household was no mean person, and was dignified with the title of the "Lord High Steward of England." The royal house of Stuart took its name from the fact that the heads of the family were in earlier times hereditary stewards of the Scottish kings. So *marshal,* the name of another high official at court, means "horse boy;" *seneschal,* "old servant;" *constable,* "an attendant to horses' stalls," and so on. Some of these words have kept both a dignified and a commoner meaning. *Constable,* besides being the name of a court official, is also another term for "policeman."

The word *silly* meant in Old English "blessed" or "happy," but of course has wandered far from this meaning. On the other hand, several words which once meant "foolish" have now quite different meanings. *Giddy* and *dizzy* both had this sense

in Old English, and so had the word *nice*. But later the French word *fol*, from which we get *foolish*, was introduced into English, and these words soon ceased to be used in this sense. Before this the two words *dizzy* and *giddy* had occasionally been used in the sense in which they are used now, to describe the condition of a person whose head "swims;" this now became their general meaning, though *giddy* has gone back again to something of its old meaning in its later use to describe a person's conduct. A *giddy* person is another description for one of frivolous character.

The word *nice* has had a rather more varied history. It had its original meaning of "foolish" from the literal meaning of the Latin word *nescius*, "ignorant," from which it was derived. Gradually it came to mean "foolishly particular about small things;" and we still have a similar use of the word, as when we say a person has a "nice taste in wines," or is a "nice observer," or speak of a "nice distinction," by which we mean a subtle distinction not very easily observed. But this is, of course, not the commonest sense in which we use the word. By *nice* we generally mean the opposite of *nasty*. A "nice" observer was a good observer, and from this kind of idea the word *nice* came to have the general sense of "good" in some way. *Nice* is not a particularly dignified word, and is little used by good writers, except in its more special and earlier sense. It is, perhaps, less used in America than in

England, and it is interesting to notice that *nasty*, the word which in English always seems to be the opposite of *nice*, is not considered a respectable word in America, where it has kept its earlier meaning of "filthy," or absolutely disgusting in some way.

Again, the word *disgust*, by which we express complete loathing for anything, used merely to mean "dislike" or "distaste." In the same way, the word *loathe*, by which we mean "to hate" or feel the greatest disgust for, originally meant merely "to dislike." The stronger meaning came from the fact that the word was often used to describe the dislike a sick person feels for food. Every one knows how strong this feeling can be, and it is from this that *loathe* and *loathsome* took the strong meaning they now have. Curiously enough, the adjective *loath* or *loth*, from the same word, has kept the old mild meaning. When we say we are "loth" to do a thing, we do not mean that we hate doing it, but merely that we feel rather unwilling to do it. In Old English, too, the word *filth* and its derivative *foul* were not quite such strong words as *dirt* and *dirty*.

Again, the words *stench* and *stink* in Old English meant merely "smell" or "odour." One could then speak of the "sweet stench" of a flower; but in the later Middle Ages these words came to have their present meaning of "smelling most disagreeably."

We saw how the taking of the word *fol* from the

French, meaning " foolish," caused the meaning of several English words which before had this meaning to be changed. The coming in of foreign words has been a very common cause for such changes of meaning. The word *fiend* in English has now a quite different meaning from its original meaning in English, when it simply meant " enemy," the opposite to " friend." When the word " enemy " itself was borrowed from the French, the word *fiend* came to be less and less often used in this sense. In time *fiend* came to be another word for *devil*, the chief enemy of mankind. But in modern times we do not use the word much in this sense. It is most often now applied to persons. It sounds rather milder than calling a person a " devil," but it means exactly the same thing.

The word *stool* came to have its present special meaning through the coming into English from the French of the word *chair*. Before the Norman Conquest any kind of seat for one person was a " stool," even sometimes a royal throne. The word *deer* also had in Old English the meaning of " beast " in general, but the coming in of the word *beast* from the French led to its falling into disuse, and by degrees it became the special name of the chief beast of chase.

Again, the Latin word *spirit* led to the less frequent use of the word *ghost*, which was previously the general word for *spirit*. When *spirit* came to be generally used, *ghost* came to have the special

meaning which it has for us now—that of the apparition of a dead person.

A great many words have changed their meaning even since the time of Shakespeare through being transferred from the subject of the feeling they describe to the object, or from the object to the subject. Thus one example of this is the word *grievous*. We speak now of a "grievous wrong," or a "grievous sin," or a "grievous mistake," and all these phrases suggest a certain sorrow in ourselves for the fact described. But this was not the case in the time of Queen Elizabeth, when it was decreed that a "sturdy beggar," a man who could work but begged instead, should be "grievously whipped." In this case *grievously* merely meant "severely." On the other hand, the word *pitiful*, which used to mean "compassionate," is no longer applied to what we feel at seeing a sad thing, but to the sadness of the thing itself. We do not now say a person is pitiful when he feels sorry for some one, but we speak of a "pitiful sight" or a "pitiful plight."

The word *pity* itself is used still in both ways, subjectively and objectively. A person can feel "pity," and there is "pity" in the thing for which we feel sorry. This is the sense in which it is used in such expressions as "Oh, the pity of it!"

The word *hateful* once meant "full of hate," but came to be used for the thing inspiring hate instead of for the people feeling it. So, *painful* used to

mean "painstaking," but of course has no longer this meaning.

One very common way in which words have changed their meanings is through the name of one thing being given to another which resembles it. The word *pen* comes from the Latin *penna*, "a feather;" and as in olden days the ordinary pens were "quills" of birds, the name was very good. We still keep it, of course, for the steel pens and gold pens of to-day, which we thus literally speak of as feathers. *Pencil* is a word with a somewhat similar history. It comes from the Latin *penicillus*, which itself came from *peniculus*, or "little tail," a kind of cleaning instrument which the Romans used as we use brushes. *Pencil* was originally the name of a very fine painter's brush, and from this it became the name of an instrument made of lead which was used for making marks. Then it was passed on to various kinds of pencils, including what we know as a lead-pencil, in which, as a writer on words has pointed out, there is really neither lead nor pencil.

The word *handkerchief* is also an interesting word. The word *kerchief* came from the French *couvre-chef*, "a covering for the head." Another similar word is one which the Normans brought into England, *curfew*, which means "cover fire." When the curfew bell rang the people were obliged to extinguish all lights and fires. The "kerchief" was originally a covering for the head. Then the fashion arose of carrying a square of similar material in the

hand, and so we get *handkerchief*, and later *pocket-handkerchief*, which, if we analyse it, is rather a clumsy word, " pocket-hand-cover head." The reason it is so is that the people who added *pocket* and *hand* knew nothing of the real meaning of *kerchief*.

There are several words which used to mean " at the present time " which have now come to mean " at a future time." This can only have come about through the people who used them not keeping their promises, but putting off doing things until later. The word *soon* in Old English meant " immediately," so that when a person said that he would do a thing soon he meant that he would do it " instantly." The trouble was that often he did *not*, and so often did this happen that the meaning of the word changed, and *soon* came to have its present meaning of " in a short time." The same thing happened with the words *presently* and *directly*, and the phrase *by-and-by*, all of which used to mean " instantly." *Presently* and *directly* seem to promise things in a shorter time than *soon*, but *by-and-by* is a very uncertain phrase indeed. It is perhaps because Scotch people are superior to the English in the matter of doing things to time that with them *presently* still really means " instantly."

In all the examples we have seen of changes in the meaning of words it is fairly easy to see how the changes have come about. But there are some words which have changed so much in meaning that their present sense seems to have no connec-

tion with their earlier meaning. The word *treacle* is a splendid example of this. It comes from a Greek word meaning "having to do with a wild beast," and this seems to have no connection whatever with our present use of the word *treacle* as another word for *syrup of sugar*. The steps by which this word came to change its meaning so enormously were these. From the general meaning of "having to do with a wild beast," it came to mean "remedy for the bite of a wild beast." As remedies for wounds and bites were, in the old days, generally thick syrups, the word came in time to mean merely "syrup," and lastly the sweet syrup which we now know as "treacle."

Another word which has changed immensely in its meaning is *premises*. By the word *premises* we generally mean a house or shop and the land just round it. But the real meaning of the word *premises* is the "things already mentioned." It came to have its present sense from the frequent use of the word in documents drawn up by lawyers. In these, which very frequently dealt with business relating to houses, the "things before mentioned" meant the "house, etc.," and in time people came to think that this was the actual meaning of *premises*, and so we get the present use of the word.

The word *humour* is one which has changed its meaning very much in the course of its history. It comes to us from the Latin word *humor*, which means a "fluid" or "liquid." By "humour" we

now mean either "temper," as when we speak of being in a "good" or "bad" humour, or that quality in a person which makes him very quick to find "fun" in things. And from the first meaning of "temper" we have the verb "to humour," by which we mean to give in to or indulge a person's whims. But in the Middle Ages "humour" was a word used by writers on philosophy to describe the four liquids which they believed (like the Greek philosophers) that the human body contained. These four "humours" were blood, phlegm, yellow bile (or choler), and black bile (or melancholy). According to the balance of these humours a man's character showed itself. From this belief we get the adjectives—which we still use without any thought of their origin—*sanguine* ("hopeful"), *phlegmatic* ("indifferent and not easily excited"), *choleric* ("easily roused to anger"), and *melancholy* ("inclined to sadness"). A person had these various temperaments according as the amount of blood, phlegm, yellow or black bile was uppermost in his composition. From the idea that having too much of any of the "humours" would make a person diseased or odd in character, we got the use of the word *humours* to describe odd and queer things; and from this it came to have its modern meaning, which takes us very far from the original Latin.

It was from this same curious idea of the formation of the human body that we get two different

uses of the word *temper*. *Temper* was originally the word used to describe the right mixture of the four "humours." From this we got the words *good-tempered* and *bad-tempered*. Perhaps because it is natural to notice more when people are bad-tempered rather than good, not more than a hundred years ago the word *temper* came to mean in one use "bad temper." For this is what we mean when we say we "give way to temper." But we have the original sense of "good temper" in the expression to "keep one's temper." So here we have the same word meaning two opposite things.

Several words which used to have a meaning connected with religion have now come to have a more general meaning which seems very different from the original. A word of this sort in English is *order*, which came through the French word *ordre*, from the Latin *ordo*. Though the Latin word had the meaning which we now give to the word *order*, in the English of the thirteenth century it had only the special meaning (which it still keeps as one of its meanings) of an "order" or "society" of monks. In the fourteenth century it began to have the meaning of "fixed arrangement," but the adjective *orderly* and the noun *orderliness* did not come into use until the sixteenth century. The word *regular* has a similar history. Coming from the Latin *regula*, "a rule," its modern general meaning in English of "according to rule" seems very natural; but the word which began to be used in

English in the fourteenth century did not take the modern meaning until the end of the sixteenth century. Before this, it too was used as a word to describe monastic orders. The "regular" clergy were priests who were also monks, while the "secular" clergy were priests but not monks. The words *regularity*, *regulation*, and *regulate* did not come into use until the seventeenth century.

Another word which has now a quite different meaning from its original meaning is *clerk*. A "clerk" nowadays is a person who is employed in an office to keep accounts, write letters, etc. But a "clerk" in the Middle Ages was what we should now more generally call a "cleric," a man in Holy Orders. As the "clerks" in the Middle Ages were practically the only people who could read and write, it is, perhaps, not unnatural that the name should be now used to describe a class of people whose chief occupation is writing (whether with the hand or a typewriter). People in the Middle Ages would have wondered what could possibly be meant by a word which is common in Scotland for a "woman clerk"—*clerkess*.

The words which change their meanings in this way tell us the longest, and perhaps the best, stories of all.

CHAPTER XVII.

DIFFERENT WORDS WITH THE SAME MEANING, AND THE SAME WORDS WITH DIFFERENT MEANINGS.

We have seen that there are great numbers of words in English which come from the Latin language. Sometimes they have come to us through Old French words borrowed from the Latin, and sometimes from the Latin words directly, or modern French words taken from the Latin. The fact that we have borrowed from the Latin in these two ways has led sometimes to our borrowing twice over from the same word. Different forms going back in this way to the same origin are known as "doublets." The English language is full of them, and they, too, can tell us some interesting stories.

Many of these pairs of words seem to have no relation at all with each other, so much has one or the other, or both, changed in meaning from that of the original word from which they come. A familiar pair of doublets is *dainty* and *dignity*, both of which come from the Latin word *dignitas*. *Dignity*, which came into the English language either directly from the Latin or through the modern

French word *dignité*, has not wandered at all from the meaning of the Latin word, which had first the idea of "merit" or "value," and then that of honourable position or character which the word *dignity* has in English. *Dainty* has a quite different meaning; though it, too, came from *dignitas*, but through the less dignified way of the Old French word *daintie*.

The English words *dish*, *dais*, *desk*, and *disc* all come from the Latin word *discus*, by which the Romans meant first a round flat plate thrown in certain games (a "quoit"), and secondly a plate or dish. In Old English this word became *dish*. In Old French it became *deis*, and from this we have the English *dais*—the raised platform of a throne. In Italian it became *desco*, from which we got *desk;* and the scientific men of modern times, in their need of a word to describe exactly a round, flat object, have gone back as near as possible to the Latin and given us *disc*. It is to be noticed that the original idea of the Latin word—"having a flat surface"—is kept in these four descendants of a remote ancestor.

The words *chieftain* and *captain* are doublets coming from the Late Latin word *capitaneus*, "chief;" the former through the Old French word *chevetaine*, and the latter more directly from the Latin. *Frail* and *fragile* are another pair, coming from the Latin word *fragilis*, "easily broken;" the one through Old French, and the other through Modern French.

Both these pairs of words have kept fairly close

to the original meaning; but *caitiff* and *captive*, another pair of doublets, have quite different meanings from each other. Both come from the Latin word *captivus*, "captive," the one indirectly and the other directly. *Caitiff*, which is not a word used now except occasionally in poetry, means a "base, cowardly person;" but *captive* has, of course, the original meaning of the Latin word.

Another pair of doublets, which are quite different in form and almost opposite to each other in meaning, are *guest* and *hostile*. These two words come from the same root word; but this goes further back than Latin, to the language known as the Aryan, from which nearly all the languages of Europe and the chief language of India come. *Hostile* comes from the Latin *hostis*, "an enemy;" but *hostis* itself comes from the same Aryan word as that from which *guest* comes, and so these two words are doublets in English. They express very different ideas: we are not generally "hostile" or "full of enmity" against a "guest," one who partakes of our hospitality.

Another pair of doublets not from the Latin are *shirt* and *skirt*, which are both old Germanic words. *Skirt* came later into the language, being from the Scandinavian, while *shirt* is an Old English word.

The word *cross* and the many words in English beginning with *cruci*—such as *crucial*, *crucifix*, and *cruciform*—the adverb *across*, as well as the less common word *crux*, all come from the Latin word

crux, " a cross." The word *cross* first came into the English language with Christianity itself, for the death of our Lord on the cross was, of course, the first story which converts to Christianity were told. It came through the Irish from the Norwegian word *cros*, which came direct from the Latin. All the words beginning with *cruci* come straight from the Latin. *Cruciform* and *crucifix* refer to the form of a cross, and so sometimes does the word *crucial*. But, as a rule, *crucial* is used as the adjective of the word *crux*, which means the " test," or " difficult point," in deciding or doing something. The Romans did not use *crux* in this sense; but it is interesting to notice that they did use it in the figurative sense of " trouble " just as we do. This came from the fact that the common form of execution for all subjects of the Roman Empire except Roman citizens was crucifixion.

Two such different words as *tavern* and *tabernacle*, the one meaning an inn and the other the most sacred part of the sanctuary in a church, are doublets from the Latin word *tabernaculum*, " tent." The first comes from the French *taverne*, and the second directly from the Latin.

The words *mint* and *money* both come from the Latin word *moneta*, which was an adjective attached by the Romans to the name of the goddess Juno. The place where the Romans coined their money was attached to the temple of Juno Moneta, or Juno the Adviser. From this fact the Romans

themselves came to use *moneta* as the name for coins, or what we call money. The word passed into French as *monnaie*, which is still the French word both for *money* and *mint*, the place where we coin our money. In German it became *munze*, which has the same meanings. In English it became *mint*. But the English language, as we have seen, has a fine gift for borrowing. In time it acquired the French word *monnaie*, which became *money* as the name for coins, while it kept the word *mint* to describe the place where coins are made.

The words *bower*, formerly the name of a sleeping-place for ladies and now generally meaning a summer-house, and *byre*, the place where cows sleep, both come from the Old English word *bur*, "a bower." The word *flour* (which so late as the eighteenth century Dr. Johnson did not include in his great dictionary) is the same word as *flower*. Flour is merely the flower of wheat. Again, *poesy* and *posy* are really the same word, *posy* being derived from *poesy*. *Posy* used to mean a copy of verses presented to some one with a bouquet. Now it stands either for verses, as when we speak of the "posy of a ring," or more commonly a bunch of flowers without any verses.

The words *bench* and *bank* both come from the same Teutonic word which became *benc* in Old English and *banc* in French. *Bench* comes from *benc*, but *bank* has a more complicated history. From the French *banc* we borrowed the word to

use in the old expression a "bank of oars." From the Scandinavians, who also had the word, we got *bank*, used for the "bank of a river." Meanwhile the Italians had also borrowed the old Germanic word which became with them *banca* or *banco*, the bench or table of a money-changer. From this the French got *banque*, and this became in English *bank* as we use it in connection with money.

The Latin word *ratio*, "reckoning," has given three words to the English language. It passed into Old French as *resoun*, and from this we got the word *reason*. Later on the French made a new word direct from the Latin—*ration;* which, again, passed into English as a convenient name for the allowance of food to a soldier. It has now a more general sense, as when in the Great War people talk of the whole nation being put "on rations." Then again, as every child who is old enough to study mathematics knows, we use the Latin word itself, *ratio*, as a mathematical term.

Another Latin word which has given three different words to the English language is *gentilis*. From it we have *gentile*, *gentle*, and *genteel*. Yet the Latin word had not the same meaning as any of these words. *Gentilis* meant "belonging to the same *gens* or 'clan.'" It became later a distinguishing term from *Jew*. All who were not Jews were *Gentiles*, and this is still the meaning of the word *gentile* in English. It came directly from the Latin. But *gentilis* became *gentil* in French; and

we have borrowed twice from this word, getting *gentle*, which expresses one idea contained in the French word, though the French word means more than our word *gentle*. It has the sense of "very amiable and attractive." The last word of the three, *genteel*, is rather a vulgar word. It means "like gentlemen and ladies have to do," and only rather ignorant people use the word seriously.

Doublets from Latin words for the most part resemble each other in meaning and form, though, as we have seen, this is not always the case. We could give a long list of examples where both sense and form are similar, but there is only space to mention a few. *Poor* and *pauper* (a miserably poor person) both come from the Latin *pauper*, "poor." *Story* and *history* both come from *historia*, a word which had both meanings in Latin. *Human* and *humane* are both from the Latin *humanus*, "belonging to mankind." *Sure* and *secure* are both from the Latin *securus*, "safe." *Nourishment* and *nutriment* are both from the Latin *nutrimentum*. *Amiable* and *amicable* are both from the Latin *amicabilis*, "friendly."

Examples of doublets which are similar in form but not in sense are *chant* and *cant*, which both come from the Latin *cantare*, "to sing." *Chant* has the original idea, being a form of singing, especially in church; but *cant* has wandered far from the original sense, meaning insincere words, especially such as are used by people pretending to be religious

or pious. The word *cant* was first used in describing the chanting or whining of beggars, who were supposed often to be telling lies; and from this it got its present use, which has nothing to do with singing.

Blame and *blaspheme*, both coming from the Latin *blasphemare*, itself taken from a Hebrew word, are not, perhaps, quite so different in sense; but *blame* means merely to find fault with a person, while *blaspheme* means to speak against God.

Chance and *cadence* both come from the Latin *cadere*, "to fall," but have very little resemblance in meaning. *Chance* is what happens or befalls, and *cadence* is movement measured by the fall of the voice in speaking or singing.

But the most interesting doublets of all are those which have neither form nor sense in common. No one would guess that the words *hyena* and *sow*, the names of two such different animals, are doublets. Both come from the Greek word *sus* or *hus*, "sow." The Saxons, when they first settled in England, had the words *su*, "pig," and *sugu*, "sow;" and later the word *hyena* was taken from the Latin word *hyaena*, itself derived from the Greek *huaina*, "sow."

The words *furnish* and *veneer*, again, are doublets which do not resemble each other very closely either in sound or in sense. Both come from the Old French word *furnir*, which has become *fournir* in Modern French, and means "to furnish." The English word *furnish* was taken direct from the French, while the word *veneer*, which used to be

spelt *fineer*, came into English from a German word also borrowed from the French *furnir*.

No one would easily guess that the name *nutmeg* had anything to do with *musk;* but the word comes from the name which Latin writers in the Middle Ages gave to this useful seed—*nux muscata*, "musky nut."

It seems strange, when we come to think of it, that great English sailors like Admiral Jellicoe and Admiral Beatty are called by a title which is really the same as the name of an Arabian chieftain—*Emir*. *Admiral* comes from the Arab phrase *amir al bahr*, "emir on the sea."

Just the opposite to doublets which do not resemble each other are many pairs of words which are pronounced alike and sometimes spelled alike. Very often these words come from two different languages, and there are many of them in English through the habit the language has always had of borrowing freely whenever the need of a new word has been felt.

The word *weed*, "a wild plant," comes from an Old English word, *weod;* while "widows' weeds" take their name from the Old English word *wœde*, "garment." The word *vice*, meaning the opposite of *virtue*, comes through the French from the Latin *vitium*, "a fault;" while a "vice," the instrument for taking a perfectly tight hold on anything, comes from the Latin *vitis*, "a vine," through the French *vis*, "a screw." Yet another *vice*, as in *viceroy*,

vice-president, etc., comes from the Latin *vice*, "in the place of." *Angle*, meaning the sport of fishermen, comes from an Old English word, *angel*, "fish-hook;" while *angle*, "a corner," comes from the Latin word *angulus*, which had the same meaning.

We might imagine that the word *temple*, as the name of a part of the head, was a metaphor describing the head as the temple of the mind, but it has no such romantic meaning. *Temple*, the name of a place of worship, comes from the Latin *templum*, "a temple;" but *temple*, the name of a part of the head, is from the Latin word *tempus*, which had the same meaning in Latin, and also the earlier meaning of "the fitting time." It has been suggested that in Latin *tempus* came to mean "the temple," because it is "the fitting place" for a fatal blow, the temple being the most delicate part of the head.

Tattoo, meaning a "drum beat," comes from the Dutch *tap-toe*, "tap-to," an order for drinking-houses to shut. But *tattoo*, describing the cutting away of the skin and dyeing of the flesh so common among sailors, is a word borrowed from the South Sea Islanders.

Sound meaning "a noise," and *sound* meaning "to find out the depth of," as in *sounding-rod*, are two quite different words. The one comes from the word *son*, found both in Old English and French, and the other from the Old English words *sundgyrd*, *sund line*, "a sounding line;" while *sound* meaning

"healthy" or "uninjured," as in the expression "safe and sound," comes from the Old English word *sund*, and perhaps from the Latin *sanus*, "healthy."

The existence of so many pairs of words of this sort, which have the same sound and which yet come from such different origins—origins as far apart as the speech of the people of Holland and that of the South Sea Islanders, as we saw in the word *tattoo*—illustrates in a very interesting way the wonderful history of the English language.

CHAPTER XVIII.

NICE WORDS FOR NASTY THINGS.

In the days of Queen Elizabeth there were in England certain writers who were called "Euphuists." They got this name from the title of a book, "Euphues," written by one of them, John Lyly. The chief characteristic of the writings of these Euphuists was the grandiose way in which they wrote of the simplest things. Their writings were full of metaphors and figures of speech. The first Euphuists were looked upon as "refiners of speech," and Queen Elizabeth and the ladies at her court did their best to speak as much in the manner of Euphues as they could.

But all men at all times are unconscious Euphuists, in so far as they try to say ugly and unpleasant things in a way which will make them sound pleasant. This tendency in speech is called "euphemism," a word which is made from two Greek words meaning "to speak well." It is a true description of what the word means if by "well" we understand "as pleasantly as possible." The word *euphēmeîte*, "speak fair," was used as a warning

to worshippers in Greek temples, in the belief that the speaking of an unfortunate word might bring disaster instead of blessing from the sacrifice.

Every day, and often in a day, we use euphemisms. How often do we hear people say, "if anything should happen to him," meaning "if he died;" and on tombstones the plain fact of a person's death is nearly always stated in phrases such as "he passed away," "fell asleep," or "departed this life." People often refer to a dead person as the "deceased" or the "departed," or as the "*late* so-and-so." The fact is that, death being to most people the unpleasantest thing in the world, there is a general tendency to mention it as little as possible, and, when the subject cannot be avoided, to use vague and less realistic phrases than the words *death*, *dead*, or *die*.

One reason for this avoidance of an unpleasant subject is the superstitious feeling that mentioning a thing will bring it to pass. Or, again, if a misfortune has happened, many people feel that it only makes it worse to talk about it. While everybody avoids speaking on the subject, we can half pretend to ourselves that it is not true.

We might imagine that this kind of "refinement of speech" (which when carried to excess really becomes vulgar) was the result of modern people being so "nervous." But this is not the case. Complete savages have the same custom. If civilized people have a superstitious feeling that to

mention a misfortune may bring it to pass, savages firmly believe that this is the case. Not only will they not mention the subject of death in plain words, but some will not even mention the name of a dead person or give that name to a new-born child, so that in some tribes names die out in this way. Many civilized people have this same idea that it is unlucky for a new-born child to be called by the name of a brother or sister who has already died.

The subject of death has gathered more euphemisms around it than almost any other. Some of them are ugly and almost vulgar, while others, from the way in which they have been used, are almost poetical. To speak of the "casualties" in a battle, meaning the number of killed and wounded men, seems almost heartless; but to say a man "fell in battle," though it means the same thing, is almost poetical, because it suggests an idea of courage and sacrifice. The expression, "Roll of Honour," is a euphemism, but poetical. It suggests the one consoling thought which relieves the horror of the bald expression, "list of casualties."

Another cause of the use of euphemisms, besides the superstitious fear of bringing misfortune by mentioning it too plainly, is the fear of being vulgar or indecent. Through this feeling words which are quite proper at one time pass out of use among refined people. English people do not freely use the word "stomach" in conversation, and are often

a little shocked when they hear French people describing their ailments in this region of the body. In the same way, names of articles of underclothing pass out of use. The old word for the garment which is now generally called a "chemise" was *smock;* but this in time became tinged with vulgarity, and the word *shift* was used. This in its turn fell out of use among refined people, who began to use the French word *chemise.* Even this, and the word *drawers,* which was also once a most refined expression, are falling into disuse, and people talk vaguely of "underlinen" in speaking of these garments. The shops which are always refined to the verge of vulgarity only allow themselves to use the French word *lingerie.*

Again, the faults of our friends and acquaintances, and even the graver offences of criminals, are matters with which we tend to deal lightly. Such offences have gathered a whole throng of euphemisms about them. When we do not like to say boldly that a person is a liar, we say the same thing by means of the euphemism a "stranger to the truth." Other lighter ways of saying that a person is lying is to say that he is "romancing," or "drawing the long bow," or "drawing on the imagination," or "telling a fairy tale." A thief will be described as a "defaulter," and we may say of a man who has stolen his employer's money as it passed through his hands that he is "short in his accounts."

Especially among the poorer or less respectable people, to whom the idea of crime becomes familiar, the use of slang euphemisms on this subject grows up. A person for whom the police are searching is "wanted." A man who is hanged "swings." These expressions may seem very dreadful to more refined people, but their use really comes from the same desire to be indulgent which leads more educated people to use euphemisms to cover up as far as possible the faults of their friends.

Again, misfortunes which come not from outside happenings but from some defect in a person's mind and body are often the subject of euphemisms. In Scotland a person who is quite an imbecile will be described as an "innocent"—a milder way of saying the same thing. *Insane* and *crazy* were originally euphemisms for *mad,* but now have come to be equally unpleasant descriptions. So for *drunken* the euphemism *intemperate* came to be used, but is now hardly a more polite description. We would not willingly speak of a person being "fat" in his presence. If it is necessary to touch on the subject, the word "stout" is more favoured. In the absence of the fat person the humorous euphemism may be used by which he or she is said to "have a good deal of *embonpoint.*"

Many words are euphemisms in themselves, just as many words are complete metaphors in themselves. The word *ill* means literally "uncomfortable," but has come to have a much more serious

meaning. *Disease* means literally "not being at ease," but the sense in which we use it describes something much more serious than the literal meaning. The word *ruin* is literally merely a "falling."

One result of words being used euphemistically is that they often cease to have their milder original meaning, and cease therefore to seem euphemistic at all. *Vile*, which now means everything that is bad, is in its literal and earlier use merely "cheap." *Base*, which has the meaning of unutterable meanness, is literally merely "low." *Mercenary* is not exactly a complimentary description now. It means that a person thinks far too much of money, but originally it merely meant "serving for pay," a thing which most men are obliged to do. *Transgression* is generally used now to describe some rather serious offence, but it literally means only a "stepping across." The "step" which it describes being, however, in the wrong direction, the word has come to have a more and more serious meaning. The study of euphemisms can teach us much about men's thoughts and manners in the past and the present.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE MORAL OF THESE STORIES.

MOST stories have a moral. At least grown-up people have a habit of tacking a little lesson on to the end of the stories they tell to children. And as a rule the children will listen to the moral for the sake of the story. And so even the stories which words tell us have their lessons for us too, and, let us hope, the stories are sufficiently interesting to pay for the moral.

One thing that these stories must have shown us is that the English language is a very ancient and wonderful thing. We have only been able to get mere glimpses of its wonderful development since the days when the ancestors of the peoples of Europe and many of the peoples of India spoke the one Aryan tongue. All the history of Europe and of India—we might almost say of the world—is contained in the languages which have descended from that Aryan tongue.

Another point which these stories have impressed upon us is that language is a kind of mirror to thought. For every new idea people must find a

word, and as ideas change words change with them. These stories have given us some idea of the wonderful growth of ideas in the minds of men in the past; they have shown us men daring all dangers for the sake of adventure and discovery and for pride of country; they have shown us the growth of new ideas of religion and kindness, new notions about science and learning: in fact, they have given us glimpses of the whole story of human progress.

The great lesson which these stories ought to teach us is respect for words. Seeing as we do what a beautiful and wonderful thing the English language has become, it ought to be the resolution of each one of us never to do anything to spoil that beauty. Every writer ought to choose his words carefully, neither inventing nor copying ugly forms of speech. We have seen also from these stories, especially in the chapter on "Slang," how people have misused certain words, until speakers and writers of good taste can no longer use them in their original sense, and therefore do not use them at all.

There are many other faults in speaking and in writing which take away from the beauty and dignity of the language. We shall see what some of these faults are; but one golden rule can be laid down which, if people keep it, will help them to avoid all these faults. No one should ever try to write in a fine style. The chief aim which all young writers should keep before them is to say exactly

what they mean, and in as few and simple words as possible. If on reading what they have written they find that it is not perfectly clear, they should not immediately begin to rewrite, but instead set themselves to find out whether their *thoughts* are perfectly clear.

There is no idea which has no word to fit it. Of course some writers must use difficult language. The ordinary reader can sometimes not understand a sentence of a book of philosophy. This is not because the philosophers do not write clearly, but because the ideas with which they have to deal are very subtle, and hard for the ordinary person to understand.

But for ordinary people writing on ordinary things there is no excuse for writing so as not to be clearly understood, or for writing in such a long and round-about way that people are tired instead of refreshed by reading. Nor is there any excuse for the use of words and phrases which are vulgar or too colloquial for the subject; yet how often is this done in the modern newspaper. It may seem unnecessary to speak to boys and girls of the faults of newspaper writers. But the boys and girls of to-day are the newspaper writers and readers of the future, and the habits which young writers form cling to them afterwards. Of course many of the faults which the worse kind of journalists commit in writing would not occur to boys and girls; but one fault leads to another. The motive at the root

of most poor and showy writing is the desire to "shine." The faults which seem so detestable to the critical reader seem very ingenious and brilliant to the writer of poor taste. To the journalist, as to the schoolboy and the schoolgirl, the golden rule is, "Be simple."

Let us see what some of the commonest faults of showy and poor writers of English are—always with the moral before us that they are to be avoided.

One great fault of newspaper writers and of young writers in general is to sprinkle their compositions thickly with quotations, until some beautiful and expressive lines from the greatest poetry and prose have almost lost their force through the ear having become tired by hearing them too often. Some such phrases are—

"Tell it not in Gath;"

"Heap coals of fire upon his head;"

"Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof:"

all fine and picturesque lines, the apt quotation of which must have been very impressive, until, through frequent repetition, they have become almost commonplace.

A similar hackneyed fault is the too frequent application of the name of some historical or Biblical personage to describe the character of some person of whom we are writing. It is much more expressive now to describe a person as a "doubter" than as a "doubting Thomas," though the latter

phrase may serve to show that the writer knows something of his New Testament. The first man who called a sceptic a "doubting Thomas" was certainly a witty and cultivated person; but this cannot now be said of the use of this hackneyed phrase. Again, it is better to say a "traitor" than a "Judas," a "wise man" than a "Solomon," a "tyrant" than a "Nero," a "great general" than a "Napoleon;" for all these names used in this way have lost their force.

A similar fault is the describing of a person by some abstract noun such as a "joy," a "delight," an "inspiration"—a way of speaking which savours both of slang and affectation, and which is not likely to appeal to people of good taste. Of course it is quite different when the poet writes—

"She was a vision of delight;"

for poetry has its own rules, just as it has its own range of ideas and inspiration, and we are speaking now of the writing of mere prose.

Another bad fault of the same kind, but more colloquial, and more often met with in speaking than in writing, is the too frequent use of a word or phrase. Some people say "I mean," or "personally," or "I see," or "you see," or similar expressions, at nearly every second sentence, until people listening to them begin to count the number of times these expressions occur, instead of attending to the subject of conversation.

THE MORAL OF THESE STORIES.

Another very common fault in writing made by newspaper writers, and even more so by young beginners in composition, is the use of long words derived from Latin instead of the simpler words which have come down from the Old English. This does not mean that these words are not so good or so beautiful as the Old English words. As we have seen, these words were borrowed by our language to express ideas for which no native word could be found. But a person who deliberately chooses long Latin words because they are longer, and, as he thinks, sound grander, is sure to write a poor style. A saying which is perhaps becoming almost as "hackneyed" as some of the quotations already mentioned in this chapter is, "The style is the man." This means that if a person thinks clearly and sincerely he will write clearly and sincerely. If a person's thoughts are lofty, he will naturally find dignified words to express them. No good writer will deliberately choose "high-sounding" words to express his ideas. All young writers should avoid what have been called "flowery flourishes."

Again, young writers should be very careful not to use really foreign words to express an idea for which we have already a good word in English. Sometimes the foreign word comes first to our pen, but this may be because of the bad habit which has grown up of using these words in place of the English words which are quite as correct and expressive.

Sometimes, on the other hand, the foreign word expresses a shade of meaning which the English word misses, and then, of course, it is quite right to use it. For instance, *amour propre* is not in any way better than "self-love," *bêtise* than "stupid action," *camaraderie* than "comradeship," *savoir faire* than "knowledge of the world," *chef d'œuvre* than "masterpiece," and so on.

One disadvantage of borrowing such words is that they often come to be used in a different sense from their use in their native language; and people with an imperfect knowledge of these languages will say rather vulgar or shocking things when using them in the English manner in those languages. Thus, to speak of a person of a certain "calibre" in French is exceedingly vulgar; and refined people do not use the word *chic* as freely as the English use of it would suggest. Examples of foreign words which we could hardly replace by English expressions are *blasé, tête-à-tête, brusque, bourgeois, deshabille.* These have been borrowed, just as words have been borrowed all through its history, by the English language to fill gaps. They have really become English words. But there are many foreign expressions now scattered freely through newspapers the sense of which can only be plain to those who have had a classical education. Unfortunately it is only the minority of readers who have had this. The effect is to make whole passages unintelligible or only half intelligible to the majority of

readers. This is not writing good English. Thus people will write *le tout Paris* instead of "all Paris," *mémoires pour servir* instead of "documents," *ipsis Hibernis Hiberniores* for "more Irish than the Irish." Such phrases are quite unsuitable to the general reader, and as perfect equivalents can be found in English, there would be no point in using them, even if writing for a learned society.

Modern English, and especially colloquial English, has borrowed a great deal from the American way of speaking English. The people of the United States, though their language is that of the mother-country, have modified it so that it is, as it were, a mirror of the difference between American and English life. In America there is more hurry and bustle and less dignity. It is this difference which makes Americans and the American way of speaking appear interesting and piquant to English people. But this is no good reason for the adoption of American mannerisms into the English language. A typically American word is *boom*, meaning a sudden coming into popularity of something. Thus one may speak of a "boom" in motors, and the word has become quite common in English; but it is not beautiful, and we could easily have done without it. Words which sound quite natural when used by Americans often seem unnecessarily "slangy" when used by English people.