

UNIVERSAL
LIBRARY

OU_210982

UNIVERSAL
LIBRARY

OSMANIA UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

Call No. *823/H526* Accession No. *17976*

Author *Herbert. A. P.*

Title *What-A-Word! . . .*

This book should be returned on or before the date
last marked below

WHAT A WORD !

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

HOLY DEADLOCK
THE WATER GIPSIES
INCOMMON LAW
MISLEADING CASES IN THE COMMON LAW
MORE MISLEADING CAST S
STILL MORL MISLEADING CASES
MR PEWTER
'NO BOATS ON THE RIVER.'
HONEYBUBBLE & CO
THE SECRET BATTLE
THE HOUSE BY THE, RIVER
THE OLD FLAME
TANTIVY TOWERS
DERBY DAY
HELEN
THE BOMBER GIPSY, AND OTHER POEMS
THE WHEREFORE AND THE WHY
'TINKER, TAILOR '
WISDOM FOR THE WISE

WHAT A WORD!

*Being an Account of the Principles and Progress
of 'The Word War' conducted in 'Punch', to
the great Improvement and Delight of
the People, and the lasting Benefit
of the Kings English, with
many Ingenious Exercises
and Horrible
Examples*

by

A. P. HERBERT, M.P.

THIRD EDITION



METHUEN & CO. LTD. LONDON
36 Essex Street W. C.

<i>First</i>	<i>Published.....</i>	<i>October 17th 1935</i>
<i>second Edition</i>	<i>.</i>	<i>November 1935</i>
<i>Third Edition</i>	<i>.</i>	<i>1975</i>

DEDICATION

*TO you, my gallant and innumerable
Warriors, who have generously supported
me with encouragement and ammunition, my
warm thanks, and, for reward, this Work
Fight on!*

EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS

'DEAR A.P.H.

'I do not agree with anything you say
about words. . . .'

'DEAR A.P.H.

'Everything you say about words is *too*
obvious. . . .'

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

WHAT some persons would call 'a certain percentage' of this Work has already appeared in *Punch*: and I thank the proprietors for their permission to reprint.

The dictionary mentioned in it is, except on pages 214 and 221, the excellent *Shorter Oxford English Dictionary* (Clarendon Press; 3,781 pages—too many): and, though once or twice I have had to quarrel with the compilers, I acknowledge their many services in the fight, and commend their meritorious tomes to my countrymen.

A. P. H.

CONTENTS

	PAGE
INVITATION TO THE WAR	2
I. JUNGLE ENGLISH	8
<i>Interval for Good Stuff'</i>	
<i>The Speaker's Address to the King</i>	
II. 'VALUABLE NEOLOGISMS'	38
<i>Interval for Good Stuff:</i>	
<i>Mr. Justice Best</i>	
III. TLAIN ENGLISH'	64
<i>Interval for Good Stuff'</i>	
<i>Lord Justice Moulton</i>	
IV. ODD LOTS	90
<i>Interval for Good Stuff:</i>	
<i>Mr. Justice Blackburn</i>	
V. BIDS AND BOMBSHELLS	134
<i>Interval for Good Stuff:</i>	
<i>Captain Slocum</i>	
VI. 'GRAVE ISSUES'	150
<i>Interval for Good Stuff:</i>	
<i>Sir Austen Chamberlain</i>	
VII. IFS AND ANGLES, ETC.	204
<i>Interval for Good Stuff:</i>	
<i>Lord Hewart, L.C.J.</i>	
VIII. WITCH-WORDS	229
APPENDIX I: ENTRANCE EXAMINATION FOR WORDS, PHRASES, AND USAGES SEEKING ADMISSION TO THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE	237
APPENDIX II: WICKED WORDS—A FAMILY GAME	243
INDEX	247

INVITATION TO THE WAR

WORRY about words, Bobby. Your grandmother is right. 'For, whatever else you may do, you will be using words always. All day, and every day, words matter. Though you live in a barrel and speak to nobody but yourself, words matter. For words are the tools of thought, and you will find often that you are thinking badly because you are using the wrong tools, trying to bore a hole with a screw-driver, or draw a cork with a coal-hammer.¹

Excited persons will tell you—are telling you now—that you must be 'air-minded'. No doubt, at the moment, they are right. But flying is only the last, and, I suspect, the least interesting, of numerous methods of locomotion. The birds have had it for a long time; and it is not important. We catch and keep the birds in cages, not because they fly but because they sing. Before you die the aeroplane may be as out of date as the rickshaw is to-day. But words will still matter; and your capacity for thought and speech will still be the only quality that keeps *you* out of the Zoo.

The power and pleasure of words are enduring, and can be enjoyed by all men. They are not the privilege of wealth or intellect or costly education; and they do not suddenly perish, like last year's motor-car or fox-trot. They are not the monopoly of writers, lovers of literature, or lawyers. Every trade and every profession is conducted with words.

¹ 'A great man said long ago that most of the controversies in the world would end as soon as they began if men would only start by defining their terms.' (LORD HEWART, in the *Sunday Times*)

The English language, like the right of criticism, belongs to every subject. And so we might expect that the same authorities which urge you to get 'air-mindedness' and 'road-sense' and 'hygiene-awareness' and 'civic spirit' would beg you sometimes to think about your words, to respect and treasure the language of the race, which you are using, changing, enriching, or damaging every hour of every day. Such exhortations are seldom heard; and it is not surprising that most of us choose and use our words with no more thought than we give to respiration, fondly supposing that it is as easy and natural to speak the English language as it is to breathe the English air. But I, though I have no particular title nor aptitude for the affair and am in error as frequently as you, exhort you boldly in the nation's name to worry about words, to have an affection and a respect and a curiosity for words, to keep a dictionary in the home and ask yourself often: 'Now, why do I say that?' I am not urging you to be always right: for few can hope for that. But we all can worry; and that is the beginning of virtue.

It is not, I warn you, Bobby, a comfortable estate to be of those who worry about words. When I have read a few columns in Mr. H. W. Fowler's *Modern English Usage* I feel that I shall never dare to put pen to paper again. They are much happier who can read without a twinge Mr. Brown's complaint that Mr. Smith has 'sabotaged the Peace issue' and pass on contentedly to the next column, in which Mr. Robinson tells us that the M.C.C. 'have finalized the body-line issue'. We know, we must admit, or very nearly know, what Mr. Brown and Mr. Robinson mean, and therefore, we admit, we might be content. For if we understand clearly the signals of a policeman

we do not think of complaining that his movements are not graceful (though, by the way, they generally are). And it may be said that, the chief purpose of words being to convey meaning, to transfer thought, if that is done efficiently there is no cause of complaint. But though the chief purpose of a motor-car is to convey or transfer bodies those who manufacture, market, and purchase it use increasing care to secure that it shall be elegant and graceful as well; and in like fashion we think it right to go on worrying about words, however much it wearies ourselves or others.

I declare a new and ruthless Word War; and I invite all lovers of good words to buckle on their dictionaries and enter the fight, whether on our side or against us. We shall often, we know, become casualties (what a phrase!) ourselves; but this will make us fight more carefully and not less keenly. So, brothers, lay on!

Piratical, ruffianly, masked, braggart, and ill-bred words invade our language and lay waste our thought every day. I am not, brothers, in a superior manner, distributing blame to those who use these unseemly expressions. Nay, I have a Christian understanding of the real cause of offence, which is that those who use the most numerous words in public—that is, politicians and journalists—have the least time in which to choose their words. The Cabinet Minister who speaks for an hour or more in the House of Commons (interrupted from time to time) cannot be expected to make every sentence perfectly obedient to the laws of elegance or even grammar; and when, after a long day in his Department and the House, he comes to a public dinner the wonder

is that so often he speaks so entertainingly and well.

The special reporter or dramatic critic, writing with one foot in the telephone-box—and two minutes to go—and even, in a erris, the leader-writer, have the same defence. The orator on the soap-box, back to the wall, has no time to polish his retorts to the shower of abuse or cabbage-stalks which he has drawn upon himself, and from his excited mind emerges easily some parrot-phrase about 'sabotaging the Peace issue', 'not deviating from an attitude', 'implementing a pre-obligation', or liquidating a situation'.

But though we are Christians we must be just and firm, we lonely fighters in the Word War. Without condemning any individual we can throw such odium upon the offensive *words* that they will cease to come naturally to any pen or tongue. The mind of the orator, however many cabbages fly round his head, will unconsciously reject these inelegant weapons, as, in most cases, it would refuse to discharge an indecent or blasphemous reply.

But how is this to be brought about? Very simply. Indeed, the machinery exists already. We poor professional writers receive by every other post advice and criticism from strangers, not only about what we say but about our manner of saying it—hyphens, split infinitives, relative clauses, 'if and when', etc. Sometimes the strangers are very wrong; but often they are right and helpful. In either case they show a healthy interest in the use of language and encourage care in the writer. I suggest that the same attention be paid to the language of politics and 'public life' and journalism and business, in which

more words are flung about in a single day than all the modern novelists by massed contemporaneous effort could distribute in a whole year. The late Prime Minister himself was criticized for the form as much as for the substance of certain speeches. Whether that was just or not we do not know (and it might be argued that some of the critics were heaving boulders in a glass-house), but the principle was sound. If interruptions concerning petty points of policy are permissible at public meetings, let us from time to time have interventions in the great cause of words, thus:

SPEAKER. I say that by his speech at the Corn Exchange my opponent is deliberately sabotaging the Peace issue!

A VOICE. Why?

SPEAKER. Because the League of Nations——

INTERRUPTER. I meant, 'Why do you use such extraordinary language?'

SPEAKER. I use the language of Idealism, the language of Hope, the language of the toiling masses——

INTERRUPTER. No, you don't. The toiling masses have more sense. You use the language of a lunatic——

VOICES. Chuck him out!

SPEAKER. My policy, Sir, is to consolidate the Peace front by mobilizing the forces of the Left on a collective-security-system basis——

INTERRUPTER. Your policy is admirable. I shall probably vote for you. But you are making a speech; and a speech is made of words; and your words are pestilent.

VOICES. Chuck him out!

INTERRUPTER. What exactly do you mean by 'sabotage'? And can you sabotage an issue?

VOICES. Chuck him out!

INTERRUPTER. And what's all this nonsense about 'Fronts'? I've noticed that the more peace-loving you are, some of you, the more you talk about Fronts and forces and militants and all that.

VOICES. Chuck him out!

INTERRUPTER. You mean, don't you, that you don't agree with your opponent about the best way to secure Peace?

SPEAKER. I do, Sir.

INTERRUPTER. Then why the——don't you say so?

I sympathize, I repeat, with the speaker. But it is expedient that he should suffer for the general good; and he may live to thank you.

Then there is the advertiser, who has much less excuse; for he has quiet and time, and his mischief is done deliberately. Write to him and tell him that his language offends you so much that you will not buy his goods. Tell the 'stockist' who offers to 'service* you that you prefer to deal with a simple fellow who is content to serve you. And be a nuisance in the home. Stop your mother (politely) when she says 'literally', and ask her what she *means*. Interrupt them! Badger them! Write to them! Ask them what they *mean!* Let none of the wicked words escape without a challenge. When in doubt put them through the Entrance Examination in Appendix I. Make your dear family play the game of 'Wicked Words' (Appendix II). Attack me too if you will; but send me your own Black Lists and let us fight the Word War together. For together, brothers, we can do a great work for the English—or must we now say the British—language. And do not be afraid of

being called a snob or a pedant. We are not attacking ignorance but inefficiency. Words are the tools of every trade, and there is nothing snobbish or pedantic in expecting every one to know (or try to know) his job. It is not pedantic to bowl straight, nor is the Umpire snobbish when he says 'Out!'

I

JUNGLE ENGLISH

'Jungle. *Fig., A wild, tangled mass.*'—S.O.E.D.

THERE is here, I repeat, brothers, no Belgravian attack upon the lowly born and poorly educated. Most of my horrible examples are taken from *The Times*, from the speeches of statesmen, the letters of philanthropists or business men. We denounce, not honest slang, but fraudulent pomposity. For this jungle grows most richly in high places, though the fringes of it are beginning to creep into the valleys, which is a sad thing. It does not shock me to hear Bill say, 'You've got a nerve, you 'ave'; it would shock me grievously to hear him say, 'You've got a redundant inferiority complex'. But that kind of vegetation is already taking root in the valleys where the simple people dwell. Modern communications, as we are fond of remarking, are rapid: and the corrupt phrase passes easily from the pompous letter in *The Times* to the Front Opposition Bench, and so to the street-corner orator, the public-house, and the home.

To-day, instead of 'fun', we learn to speak of 'entertainment-value'; instead of Tories we have 'the forces of reaction'; instead of games, 'recreational facilities'. Instead of swords and guns there are 'casualty-producing weapons'.¹ We no longer work together: we co-operate according to a co-ordinated plan. We do not work whole-time, but 'on a whole-time basis'.

¹ 'They endorsed the proposition that the State should assume direct responsibility for completing the manufacture of all casualty-producing weapons' (NATIONAL PEACE COUNCIL)

We do not hunger or starve; we exhibit evidences of malnutrition, or our diet is characterized by protein deficiency. A book is not instructive; it has a high education content. We say not 'What is wanted is . . . !' but 'The requisites desiderated consist in . . . !' (And requisite, I see, in *The Times Literary Supplement*, has grown to 'prerequisite', though in the particular sentence the 'pre' adds nothing.) A frontier is not 'defined', nor 'fixed', nor even 'determined', but 'delimited'¹ or 'demarcated'; and it will not be long, I suppose, before it is 'delimitated'.

Now, not all these expressions are base of origin or bad by themselves. Human life to-day is so complex that it is often difficult to discuss it in simple language. We cannot, obviously, explain the wireless, or the cinema, or an Unemployment Insurance Bill, in honest Anglo-Saxon. We invent new words or give a twist to old ones; we run for help, and rightly, to ancient Latin and Greek. (It is amusing to note that all the 'live' modern devices get their names from the 'dead' languages. Even in politics the latest thing is always Latin—a 'quota', or a 'moratorium', a 'referendum', or 'propaganda'.)

Not everything in the jungle is unpleasant. There are noble trees and beautiful flowers. The Greek and Latin roots, though exotic, may flourish and do good service in our soil. But the forces which control them are too generous and powerful for orderly growth—free, but brief, education, the 'popular' Press, the cinema, the wireless, 'democratic' politics; the rain is too kind, the sun is too fierce, and the wind of communication that carries the seed too wild. There is neither the discipline of the English garden nor the decent profusion of the English wood.

¹ 'Chahar is the back door into a huge, if still undelimited, coal-cellar' (*The Twines*).

There is a jungle—a wild, tangled mass. The fine trees crowd together and their branches mingle without beauty or profit. And over all climb the horrid creepers, making the confusion worse—the clinging, choking, 'in view of's' and 'with respect to's'—the 'from the standpoint (or viewpoint) of's'—and 'in connexion with's'.

Is that clear?

No? Then we will give you an illustrative

EXERCISE

Translate into modern Jungle English the following passage from the Shorter Catechism:

'My duty towards my Neighbour, is to love him as myself, and to do to all men, as I would they should do unto me: To love, honour, and succour my father and mother: To honour and obey the King, and all that are put in authority under him: To submit myself to all my governours, teachers, and spiritual pastors and masters: To order myself lowly and reverently to all my betters: To hurt no body by word nor deed: To be true and just in all my dealing: To bear no malice nor hatred in my heart: To keep my hands from picking and stealing, and my tongue from evil-speaking, lying and slandering: To keep my body in temperance, soberness, and chastity: Not to covet nor desire other men's goods; but to learn and labour truly to get mine own living, and to do my duty in that state of life, unto which it shall please God to call me.'

ANSWER

My duty towards my Neighbour, is to love him as myself— In connexion with my co-citizens a general standard

self, and to do to all men, as I would they should do unto me:

of mutual goodwill and reciprocal non-aggression is obviously incumbent upon me; but a comprehensive delimitation of my obligations might be grouped under four categories:

(A) *Relations involving the subordination of the individual.*

To love, honour and succour my father and mother:

Among these must be listed the observance of Statutory and Common Law demands with regard to (a) parents and (b) the Monarchy (including here a co-operative attitude towards commissioned members of the armed forces and/or responsible civil servants, administrators, local government bodies, judges and police officers) together with a measure of deference towards non-official authority (e.g. teachers, clergy., etc.) in so far as the same is compatible with an unfettered development of the personality.

To honour and obey the King, and all that are put in authority under him:

(B) *Sociological relations not involving subordination.*

To submit myself to all my governours, teachers, spiritual pastors and masters: To order myself lowly and reverently to all my betters:

Abstention from personal injury in any shape or form, whether verbal or otherwise, is the first *desideratum* under this head,

To hurt no body by word nor deed:

To be true and just in all my dealing:

To bear no malice nor hatred in my heart:

To keep my hands from picking and stealing:

and my tongue from evil-speaking, lying, and slandering:

To keep my body in temperance, soberness and chastity:

Not to covet nor desire other men's goods;

but to learn and labour truly to get mine own living, and to do my duty in that

while hardly less important is the need for high integrity and veracity-values in all commercial and business contacts, coupled with, from the social standpoint, a non-provocative and community-conscious mentality.

(C) *Limits of criminal responsibility.*

Pending the eventual abolition of private property it is necessary to deprecate any active violation of the legal code by which that institution is buttressed* and some attention to the capitalist laws relating to defamation, sedition, blasphemy, etc., will be found advisable.

(D) *Personal hygiene, purity, etc.*

Of paramount importance, but at this date need hardly be stressed.

(E) *Miscellaneous.*

Subject to the reference to private property under (C) (above) the natural craving of the wealth-starved sections of the population for augmented material possessions should be kept in check; and in the interim the main issue for the individual seems to lie in some

state of life unto which it shall please God to call me.

degree of concentration upon the securing of economic independence and an adequate standard of life by means of intensive education and 100 per cent efficiency in the trade or industry adopted, as the case may be, respectively.

You follow, Bobby? Any one who says, as a few have said, that I am obstructing the living growth' of the language by frowning on 'useful neologisms' is erroneous, Bobby. If there are any 'neologisms' in the passage above they are not useful, as you can see. Yet my 'Answer', believe me (for I read all the papers), is not fantastic nor unjust. The sad thing is, Bobby, that the worst Jungle stuff is the fruit only of habit or senseless imitation. We have generously admitted that here and there the long manufactured Anglo-Greek or Latin-French word is useful—and even essential—to the inventor, the doctor, the lawyer, mechanic, psychologist, economist, and even politician. But once a politician or 'social worker' has acquired the phrase 'protein ratio' or 'Vitamin content' he will never, in public, speak of ordinary food again. And Tom, Dick and Harry, picking up the slabs that fall from the scientific and political tables, think that they must use nothing but these new words too, in season and out of it, and whether they understand what they are saying or not. Now do this:

EXERCISE

Translate the following passage into Jungle English:

'In these days, when fear and preparation for

war are again astir in the world, let us be thankful that quiet government and peace prevail over so large a part of the earth's surface, and that under our flag off freedom so many millions eat their daily bread, in far distant lands and climates, with none to make them afraid.'

(From the King's speech, delivered in Westminster Hall, May 9th 1935)

ANSWER

'As regards the Empire, it is a factor for congratulation that, concurrently with a process of wholesale rearmament, due to fear on the part of Continental nations, a substantial percentage of the world-population subsists under peace conditions combined with stability of government, added to which we can quote satisfactory figures as respects the total numbers receiving a measure of regular nutrition overseas, in many cases located remote from the Mother Country, and who enjoy a minimum of apprehension due to our democratic institutions.'

The King said that he would dedicate himself anew. Fine!

The *Sunday Times*, at the head of a paragraph commending the King's speeches, printed this:

'REDEDICATION'

Not so good!

Ribbon-Writing

The Times, in a leading article on 'Basic English', exhibited a superb specimen, discovered I know not where:

"The recently published English version of an official diplomatic text contained this sentence:

"The unity of view of the participants in the conversations has been established regarding the exceptional importance at the present time of an all-embracing collective organization of security on the basis of the indivisibility of peace."

The politicians, at least, will understand what I mean when I call this 'Ribbon-Writing'.

There is some sad ribbon-writing in the official statement of the Church Assembly concerning the new Cinema Christian Council, whose objects include 'the raising of *the moral and aesthetic standards* of the cinema *with a view to united action to secure*', . . . etc. It begins:

Tor some years past it has been increasingly felt by many of the leaders of Christian opinion in this country that the time has come when steps should be taken to form a council, *on an inter-denominational basis* (gosh!), with the object of focusing Christian thought and action on the subject of the cinematograph. . . .'

The Council, it is clear, will have a busy life during the first few years raising its own 'literary standards'.

EXERCISE

Translate into Christian English the following:

'Under present conditions it is not feasible arbitrarily to locate industry; we believe, however, the attractions and facilities which can be offered to industry . . . would probably suffice to secure that industry would adopt the location desired.'

(From the recommendations of a Departmental Committee of the Ministry of Health)

ANSWER

'We do not believe that industry can be compelled, at present, to go where it is wanted, but it may be persuaded to do so by the promise of special advantages.'

JUNGLE STUFF

A special medal for this:

'A *Daily Mail* reporter who made inquiries in London learned that among Church leaders there is no *crystallized viewpoint* towards spiritual healing.'

NOTE.—The Crystallized Viewpoint is not to be confused with the Standpoint *Glace* or Frosted Angle.

'Are we quite sure that newly emancipated woman has yet acquired a sound biological status, or secured for herself a harmonious psycho-physiological equilibrium?'

(From a letter to the *New Statesman*)

The monument has the *endorsement* of church authorities and social service organizations. . . .'

(Ottawa correspondent of *The Statesman*)

'Telephone Amenities

Residents not wishing, at the time, to take a call, can have *their presence negatived by the operator.*'

(From a description of the joys of residence in a new block of flats)

The Liquidated Centre

'Herbert Morrison.' said a simple Putney Socialist, 'has nothing to learn from Stalin when it comes to liquidating an oppositionist centre.'

'Accordingly the personal factor of the driver plays a preponderating part.'

(A *Times* Special Correspondent, on a Motor Race)

Or, in other words, 'the driver matters most'.

Logorrhoea

' . . . a definite improvement in health can be observed. It should be noticed in connexion with the latter point that regular outdoor exercise is an important contributing factor.'

(*The Times*)

I thought that I had invented logorrhoea—or, if you prefer it, logorrhage. But I am told that some other great man was before me. It matters not. The disease continues; and like pyorrhoea (see the tooth-paste advertisements) it afflicts three out of four.

This sentence is taken from a philanthropic letter on the leader-page of *The Times*. The writer wishes to say that regular outdoor exercise helps to give a man good health. Not a new, startling, or complicated thought; but the worthy fellow has had to use nineteen words to express it. Notice, warriors, with fierce delight: 'in connexion with the latter point', and: 'is an important contributing factor'.

'A land unacquainted with the blessings of *opinionative co-ordination*, as applied in some other countries.'

(London Correspondent of the *Montreal Gazette*—writing ironically, I know, but—!)

'Sterilize'

The satellite town, with its wide belt of sterilized land, is a concrete proposition; but works are essential to anchor the population, and no practical or certain means of planting these has yet been suggested. . . .'

(*The Times*)

Enormous areas of paper are overrun by this sort of sentence every day, and the real point of interest is the use of the word 'sterilized'. This simple verb, Bobby, means 'to make sterile'; and 'sterile' means: 'Barren: not producing fruit or offspring, (i) Of soil, a country, etc.; Unproductive of vegetation. 1572.'

But in the sentence quoted, and in all official talks about Town-planning and Green Belts, the word is used in a precisely contrary sense. For the Town-planners and Green-Belters, when they propose to 'sterilize' a given area, mean that it shall *not* be sterile, that it shall produce *nothing* but vegetation and natural life, as opposed to buildings. It is like saying that you will cultivate land when what you mean is build on it. Very odd. The politicians, no doubt, will defend their baseness as a simple extension of the medical 'sterilize'. But that will not do. For when the doctor 'sterilizes' an instrument he really does make it barren of animal and vegetable life. Besides, it is a little unfair, even for a Town-planner, to treat every human habitation as the equivalent of bacteria or bugs.

'Well,' the Town-planner replies, 'you know what we mean by "sterilize", at least, and if you don't like it, what do you suggest?'

It is not, Town-planner, our job to provide you with a Christian vocabulary; but, constructive as always, we do suggest that it is quite unnecessary for

you to use your 'sterilize' in this imbecile manner while there are such simple words as 'preserve' and 'protect' available. Your intention is noble and beautiful—to preserve the country, to keep the land green. Why use an ugly word which smells of iodoform? Let your statute speak of 'protected spaces' or 'preserved areas', or, better still, "'green lands" (as defined in Section 389 (2) (6))'. It is not truly quicker to say 'South Surrey shall be sterilized' than to say 'South Surrey shall be kept green'.

I would rather you manufactured a new adjective, 'green-kept', or a new verb, 'to evergreen', than spoke of 'sterilizing' our beloved fields. And, since you ask me, I think the best course is for the town-planning and housing world to adopt as a technical term 'greenland' (one word) to signify what you would now call 'a statutory sterilized area'. Your sentence would then begin: 'The satellite town, with its wide belt of greenland . . .'

It would be as easy, surely, to impose that term upon the nation as it has been to make it swallow 'sterilized'. Now leave me.

P.S. Since these words first appeared in print I have not seen 'sterilize' anywhere. I think, brothers, that we do not fight in vain.

Dolichologia

'The effort to rehabilitate Parliamentarianism promises well. . . .'

(From an article by MR. E. H. PICKERING, M.P.)

'Say "Rehabilitate Parliamentarianism" ', I hear, is the new order at Vine Street on Boat Race Night.

EXERCISE

Write a poem containing these beautiful words:

ANSWER

The land will not be liberated
 From sorry strife and schism
 Till we have rehabilitated
 Parliamentarianism.

Diploma Piece

'It does not mean that we are in any danger of
 valetudinarianizing our conception of "Fitness".'
 (*The Boy*)

'Count A. was made the recipient of a national
 presentation.'

(*The Times Literary Supplement*)

It is more blessed to be made the recipient than
 to receive.

'At this Juncture'

Why not use 'now', 'then', or 'yet'?

'The Italian standpoint is that *at the present
 juncture* the League has no *locus standi* in the
 dispute. . . .'

'Unilateral' Pact or Treaty

The essence of a 'pact' being an agreement be-
 tween two or more parties, a 'unilateral', or 'one-
 sided' pact, is raving nonsense.

THE 'RE-DE' PERIL

Redecontamination

'Re' and 'De' verbs are a menace. Was it neces-
 sary, for example, to add the word 'Derestriction' to
 our language in order to say that the speed-limit

would no longer be enforced on certain roads? Would not 'exemption' or 'liberation' have served as well and sounded better?

But the Golden Star (with Epithets) of our Order goes to a General who has joined our ranks. He sends me a museum-piece of re-de work—the word, believe it or not, 'redecontamination'.

'Decontamination', he tells me, is part of the special vocabulary of the gallant fellows who are learning how to save us from the next air-raids. It is defined as 'the process of *cleansing* contaminated personnel, material or ground by the removal, neutralization or destruction of blister gas'. (But since it is the process of cleansing why not *say* cleansing—or cleaning—and leave it at that?) Soon the question arose, says the warrior: 'Supposing the Blister Gas showed signs of beating the Bleaching Paste?' And the answer from high places was: 'A *process of redecontamination would be advisable.*'

Let us, dear printer, have it in large black capitals for a perpetual shame and warning to the enemy, so:

RE-DE-CON-TAMINATION!

Gosh!

Multilongihmaticolabehsm

'It remains to find some word to take the place of "isolationism" as descriptive of the American position. At the risk of adding to the already staggering list of neologisms which bedevil the purist I suggest "unilateralism".'

(*The Times* Washington Correspondent)

I hate to shoot the poor man, for, clearly, he is doing his best; but we can *not* have 'unilateralism' to describe America's 'position'. It is too long, and

means nothing at all—unless it means 'the theory or policy of being one-sided', which, as applied to the United States, is the language of a madman. Why must every one's 'position' have one of these centipedal lunatic labels, which say too little or too much—or nothing at all? 'A few illustrations,' the writer says, 'may take the place of definition.' I read most carefully the 'illustrations' and I still have not the tiniest notion of what is meant by 'unilateralism'. But I conclude that 'isolationism' is too strong. Then why not 'aloofness'? And, if that will not serve (I do not like it much myself), why not, Sir, describe the 'position' in your own words, and leave the label out?

'Re-condition'

A comrade breaks a noble lance with the verb 'to recondition', and will receive a medal. I see with shame that His Majesty's Government propose in a White Paper to 'recondition' the Navy.¹ But I see with delight and surprise that for once the *S.O.E.D.* does not acknowledge the existence of the filthy verb. How could it? There is no verb 'to condition' (in the sense intended²); they do not 'condition' a new naval vessel (or, if they do, I warn them not to do it again), so how can they 'recondition' one? Yes, I know that you know what they mean; but that is not enough. You would know what a man meant who said that he was going to 'reposition' his car in the garage or 'resituation' a cook whom he had dismissed; but that would not, I hope, prevent you from running a sharp sword through his gizzard.

These bastard 're' verbs need watching, comrades.

¹ Why not 'refit' (1666) ? But look at these.—
RE-CONDITIONING THE WORKLESS—(*Glasgow Herald*)
RECONDITIONING OF BOYS FOR HOTEL AND CATERING TRADES
(Ministry of Labour)

² And it should not exist in any sense. See page 176.

I remember in the days of the silent films seeing this legend on the screen:

DAWN AT THE MONASTERY
JASPER RE-SPEAKS HIS LOVE

But some of our enemies, wriggling under the knife, whine feebly thus: 'If we are not to use these insanitary words, how *are* we to say what we mean? Besides, our words are shorter.'

They are not shorter. That is one answer. It is a frequent error to suppose that one horrible long word is shorter than two or three good short ones; that if you call a spade an excavator you are being modern, progressive, and vastly efficient. 'Redecontamination', for example, contains seventeen letters, but 'second clean' has only eleven, and no typist would require to have it spelt.

Not that brevity or the itch for hurry would be a good defence for 'redecontamination' if it were only eight letters long.

It is no defence to a charge of walking about indecently clothed that one was late and could not think what to wear. Any staff officer who is tempted to write about redecontamination must think again and go on thinking until he has thought of something better; and if he cannot think of anything better he must simply give up the notion of discussing the subject.

But where the enemy is chastened and reasonable we are willing to help him if we can. I have received a very reasonable, almost pathetic appeal from a Birmingham gentleman concerning the 'to you odious but to me convenient word, to "recondition". What.' he says, 'can I use instead? Take the Housing Act, 1930,' he says. He wants to talk about 'schemes for reconditioning houses'. Must he, at my

command, talk about 'schemes for the treatment of houses in accordance with the bye-laws in the area for securing the improvement of housing conditions therein? The answer is in the negative.

'"Repair"' he says, 'is not exact, for "reconditioning" means more than that. It means improving the object until it conforms to a standard now, not formerly, imposed.'

Well, my dear old Birmingham boy, the answer is simple. You are evidently the slave of official verbiage. Far from being a seeker after brevity and swiftness you would rather have a long word than a short, because without a long word you do not feel that anything important is being done. You have yourself used twice what seems to me a perfect word for your purpose—'Improve'. It says, to me—and, it seems, to you—all that 'recondition' says, and it is not offensive. So why not 'House-Improvement Scheme'? Or 'Schemes for Improving Houses'? Or you may, if you like, be a little precious and talk about House-betterment. (I am not keen on 'betterment.' but I like 'betterment' better than 'reconditioning'.) Or, if you will not be happy without a 're', you may use 'reconstruct'; for 'construct' is a good verb, and 'condition', as I think I have hinted, stinks.

No, Birmingham, thank you for your pleasant letter, but *we will not have 'reconditioning'*. Don't you *see*, dear old fellow, that the next horror will be 'deconditioned'—for a house that is demolished or has fallen down? And at last, maybe, we shall have 'derecondition' or 'redecondition'—though what they will mean I cannot imagine.

'Deratizatori

I have many zealous and faithful warriors in the armed forces of the Crown, and all good sailors and

soldiers are with us. The odd—and sad—thing is that dolichological longiverbosity and 're'-fever rage increasingly in the higher ranks of the strong silent Services, where the orders and operations are devised. The man of action, in his official utterances, is far more wordy than the despised attorney. Indeed, the best lawyers are masters of concise and clear expression. But a staff officer, preparing for battle, assumes that Providence is on the side of the big words.

I hope that in the next war, when they send us home from the firing-line, they will not think it necessary to say that they are 'evacuating' us.¹ That can be left to the hospitals

A naval officer tells me that, once a year, there is (or used to be) a 'Rat-Week' in every dockyard, during which intensive war is waged on the rat, in ships, shops and warehouses. And a few years ago, at a certain port, the Rat-Orders were full of the new and pretty word: 'Deratization'. Methods of 'deratization', for example, were to be reported in order of merit.

I did not think that I should meet 'deratization' again. But here is a letter sent to me by a gallant warrior in India:

'GOVERNMENT OF BENGAL

'Office of the Port Health Officer

'Dear Sirs,

'With reference to your letter dated the 3rd April 1933 and in confirmation of the telephonic

¹ But see *The Times* (June 4th 1935) 'The mass evacuation of Quetta is proceeding . . . 10,000 survivors have been evacuated to a camp' The two senses—'to empty' and 'to transport'—in a single paragraph!

conversation of this morning, I have to inform you that the S.S.—will be inspected by the Fumigation Inspector for this Department at 8 a.m. on Sunday, the 7th instant, for the purpose of granting a *deratization exemption certificate* as applied for by you.

'Yours faithfully,

Tort Health Officer——(Offg.)

I should still, after reading that letter, have sought some charitable explanation; but my warrior assures me that 'deratize' (or is it 'deratizate?') really does mean 'kill rats'.

Is there, I wonder, Bobby, a 'demousization exemption certificate'?

Outrage at the Film Institute

Then I was shocked to see a 'Monthly Film Bulletin' of the British Film Institute (which was set up to put more 'culture' on the screen). It is headed 'Educational Films Section', and contains some searching criticism of numerous films. In an account of a film distributed by the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries I found these fragments of culture:

- (1) The de-ratization of ships and the rat-proofing of structures could with advantage be treated more fully.'
- (2) 'As a health film, more attention to this aspect would be valuable.'

(MEDICAL PANEL)

EXERCISE

'As a health film.' What exactly is the grammatical status of these four words in the sentence quoted?

ANSWER

Boneless Wonder.

They must be valuable critics who have so delicate a sense of words. The Film Institute, like other 'educational' bodies, is, I suppose, so deeply obsessed with the protection of our morals that it has no time for the protection of our language. But that is much more easily corrupted. A child forgets a bad film to-morrow; but it remembers a wicked word. Few children have suffered, morally, from the films; but all can sneer 'Sez you!' And soon, no doubt, they will be singing songs about 'The Deratization's Daughter'.

'Reaction , 'Reactionary'

These brutes, no doubt, have come to stay; but by throwing a stone or two we may take a little of the swagger out of them.

'Reaction' meant, first, 'the repulsion or resistance exerted by a body in opposition to the impact or pressure of another body'. So, when the first North American citizen said that the 'popular reaction to what-not would be favourable' there was no real cause for complaint. And even I'd be glad to know your reactions to our American institutions' was logical, though loathly (since he meant no more than 'What do you think about . . .').

But then (in 1801, I see) some lazy fellow, misled by the 're', concluded that 'reaction' meant not a 'response to a particular stimulus' but a 'working backwards'; and so it came to be used for 'a movement towards the reversal of an existing tendency or state of things'—'a return, or desire to return to a previous condition of affairs'. Thus, at the end of

the Napoleonic Wars there was, no doubt, in this bastard sense, a 'reaction' towards peace

Well and good, or bad, as you prefer. But there is yet one more stage in the development of this ill-bred brute. 'Reaction' now means not *any* 'return, desire to return, etc.', but a return which is contemplated or defended by *yur enemy*] and, most often, a return which is prompted by a desire to grind the faces of the poor and 'sabotage the forces of progress'.

This is not merely odd, but erroneous and misleading. For five or six years I suggested that the speed of motor-cars had increased and ought to be checked. I was bitterly described as a 'reactionary'. Those who maintain that the income-tax has increased and ought to return to a former level are described as 'reactionaries'¹. But what of those who think that national armaments are increasing and should be restored to a former level? Evidently they should be described as 'reactionaries', too. But no—they are 'progressives'; and they are fonder than any of calling others 'reactionaries'. Why is this?

The word is not needed. Speak, if you like, of the forces of obstruction, the foes of change, the apostles of Privilege, the enemies of Reform and Progress (though Progress is another 'Question-Beggar');¹ but kill this mean and imbecile sneer-word, whose history is a long procession of errors. Those who have been using it hitherto may plead ignorance, but after the publication of this Work no Christian will have any excuse for speaking bitterly of 'the forces of reaction' again. The only true meaning of that is 'the forces which control the response of a body to the contact of another body'.

¹ See 'Witch-words', page 229.

LABOUR-SAVERS

Dis-, De-, Re-, In-, Un-, and Non-

Most of us seem to suppose that if we take a good word and put *dis-*, *de-*, *re-*, *in-*, *un-*, or *non-* in front of it we make an equally good word. This is not always true. No one would think of saying *non-sober* when he meant *drunk*; but when we are talking pompously about 'financial equilibrium' it is not so easy to indicate the absence of equilibrium. Hastily we pull out a 'disequilibrium' and say, 'What a good boy am I!' Here is a, to me, new word in the financial news, which speaks of people 'dishoarding gold'. Shorter, no doubt, than 'selling—or releasing—their hoarded gold', but I do not admit the commanding importance of speed, whether in motoring or writing

Now, 'equilibrium' is an exact word—an 'absolute' word, like 'absolute' or 'unique'; to add 'dis-' to it does not make another exact word but a vague and feeble word. I like 'disequilibrium' as little as I should like 'disabsolutely' for 'not quite', or 'disunique' for 'common'. Here and there, Bobby, we shall be compelled to take the easy course, because there is no other (I confess, for example, that I do not know how 'a pact of non-aggression' could be otherwise described); but we can at least realize that we are falling below perfection, and only do it when we must. Take 'to disassemble' (an engine), beloved by certain low fellows in the motor-trade. What a wicked word! Dis-assemble! The engineers of our glorious Navy say 'strip an engine'—swift and metaphorical and true. That should be good enough for any motor-monger ashore. But his eye has been caught, perhaps, by 'disequilibrium' in *The Times*, and he thinks that he may do likewise.

So, Bobby, whenever you are tempted to say 'dis-equilibrium', remember that, whether that can be defended or not, you will be putting dangerous ideas into the innocent heads of the motor-trade.

De-fever

'Dezincification' (Engineers' Report)

'Methods of dehumidifying the air', in submarines (a Naval officer).

A warrior tells me that, during a tour of the London Docks, a guide said 'It takes two and a half hours to de-water the dock'.

Do you, I wonder, Bobby, 'de-water' your bath—or 'dehumidify' your ears?

To-day's Double

' . . . the disinfection, de-insectization and de-ratization of air-craft.'

(*Sudan Government Gazette*)

'Basis'

'Basis' is a very useful labour-saver; and when we do not see clearly how to end our sentences, or perhaps do not know exactly what we want to say, the best thing we can do is to bring in 'basis'. See 'Jungle English'.

' . . . steps should be taken to form a council, on an interdenominational basis. . . .'

(*Official statement of the Church Assembly concerning the Cinema Christian Council*)

' . . . and make a full enquiry on the basis of Article 15 of the Covenant.'

(*Daily Herald*)

' . . . an employer's decision to cut salaries on the basis of cost-of-living statistics. . . .'

(*Daffy*———)

' . . . will issue bills of exchange on a three-months' basis. . . .'

(*News Chronicle*)

(*First Prize—Diploma*)

The Labour Party must be built up on a rock-bottom basis.'

(*Daily Herald*: in a letter)

Slug-words

'If more people do not eventuate, the meeting will not be held.'

(Caught in Bromley-by-Bow by a curate-warrior)

Then Mr. Baldwin must show us that it was necessary in any grouping that might eventuate.'

(SIR STAFFORD CRIPPS)

The argument is that as the Franco-Soviet Pact will also oblige the Soviets to come to the assistance of France in the same eventuality. . . .'

(*Observer*)

I may be alone in this, but I detest 'eventuate' and 'eventuality'. I see that 'eventuate' was first used in the United States in 1789, and 'eventuality' in 1828, I know not where. But 'event' is dated 1573 and 'result' is very old; and both are good words. So we make an adjective out of 'event'—eventual: and some hog adds an 'ity' to the adjective and the solemn lexicographer welcomes the reptile into his book. These words increase like duckweed or the lower forms of animal life: and I wonder that 'eventualitarian' has not yet emerged from the warm swamps in which the slug-words are born. What would it mean? Well, you see, Bobby, some poor dupes persuade themselves now that 'eventuality' has the subtle and valuable meaning of a 'possible' (as

opposed to an 'actual') event. And 'eventualitarian' would mean 'of or pertaining to a possible event' and then you would have such sentences as I have quoted finishing in this way:

' . . . the assistance of France in the eventualitarian struggle.'

Do I rave? No. Consider 'reorientate', 'differentiate', 'disassociate', 'authoritarian', and—O Gosh!—'effectuate'. WHAT a word! You will read about one 'diet' now for ten 'dietaries'. I suppose that already there are 'dietarians' and from there we shall pass easily to the verb 'to dictate'. From there to 'dedietate' (to cease dieting). We may even have 'eventualize' (to make an event possible), as in:

'It was the War that eventualized this marriage.'
And 'eventualizer':

'Mr. Anthony Eden, the real eventualizer of foreign policy. . . .'

From which it is but a short stage to 'eventualization'.

Tread on them all.

EXERCISE

Translate into Jungle English:

'We may see big changes in 1936.'

ANSWER

'1936 may be differentiated by substantial eventualities.'

'Effectuate'

" . . . or otherwise howsoever to effectuate the withdrawal of the people of Western Australia

. . . and to effectuate the restoration of Western Australia to its former status. . . .'

(Western Australia's Petition to the British Parliament)

'*Effectuation* of this purpose required that each should practise properly the art of navigation.'

(From an article in a 'Service' quarterly review)

So let us hope that each proved himself effectual. Why not 'accomplish?'

'*Delimitation of function*'

Why not 'definition? 'Ware 'redelimitation!'

'*Foot-consciousness*'

'If you are a man the fair sex will suddenly become you-conscious'

(*Daily Paper, 'Birthday Predictions'*)

'Then for the feet—and foot-consciousness increases with the coming of warmer days—there is a lotion which . . .'

(*Windsor Magazine*)

Foot-consciousness! Golly! And yet, brothers, I welcome this odious thing. For it may be the last touch of absurdity which will put an end to the whole cult and tribe of 'air-mindedness', 'class-consciousness', 'community-awareness', 'peace-mentality', 'God-hunger' (see page 91), *et horrid cetera*. When any one, Bobby, bids you acquire 'air-mindedness', reply 'Foot-consciousness to you, Sir, with corns!'

The Two Defences

A Harley Street doctor, speaking for a Dutchman charged with driving a car under the influence of drink, wrote to the Court thus:

'The past week has been a period of unparalleled jubilation, with which defendant and his fellow-countrymen have unreservedly *identified themselves*.¹ It was solely *in connexion with the general feeling of enthusiasm throughout the community* that he undoubtedly took more than was good for him. The circumstances, I think, justify mitigation of the consequences.'

(*Daily Mirror*]

(56 words—306 letters)

Much sound and little said. This, Bobby, is the careful utterance of an educated man of 1935, a distinguished member of a learned profession. Now read how, in 1728, a simple ship's cook urged the same plea: that great loyalty to the Crown ought to excuse misbehaviour.

Here is William Sidwell, defending himself at the London Sessions, on a charge of putting *Elizabeth Woodnot* in fear and taking from her a Cloth Cloak, value one shilling.

PRISONER. 'As for the Pistol and Powder, I can give a good account how I came by them. I was Cook of a Ship, that was just come from New England, in company with another Ship, and our Captain invited the other Captain on board our Ship, and that Captain brought his Cook with him: and this Cook was more expert than I, in talking, and telling Stories and singing a Song, and besides he could dance, and tumble and play twenty tricks to make Diversion: and your Captains, you know, love to have their Frolicks when they are at sea. So that this Captain set great Store by this Cook, and this Cook took a great liking to me, and says he, "*Let's*

¹ See 'Identified with'—L'affaire Potts, page 143.

take some Cartridges of Powder and make Wildfire to run about the Streets, for the Glory of God, that we are come safe to old England!" And so I came by this Powder, sweet Jesus Almighty knows it to be true. And as for the Pistol, this Cook was a Hanoverian, and a loyal Soul he was to his Majesty, and so he gave me this Pistol, and we drank our Sovereign Lord King George's Health, and at every Glass we fired off a Pistol in honour of the Royal Family: and the Lord above knows that this is the whole truth of the matter, and that I had this Pistol on no other Account than to show my Loyalty.'

COURT. 'And how came you to Angel Court?'

PRISONER. 'God knows that, for I was elevated, and can't give a particular Account; only I remember we came from on board about 4 in the Afternoon, and this Cook row'd us ashore with the wrong Ends of the Oars; and I believe he had some relations that liv'd about Angel Court, and so I might bear him Company; and tho' I had a Pistol and Powder, I had no Ball.'

COURT. 'But it seems you had small Pebbles How came you by them?'

PRISONER. 'Pebbles? Why, I remember we were heaving Ballast the Day before, and the Cook and I threw many a Shovelful of Ballast at one another for Sport, and so I suppose some of it got into my Pocket. I have a great many Captains to speak to my Character, tho it happens that none of them are here; but I am an innocent lame Man, and if I suffer, it is wilful Murder.' The jury found him guilty.

EXERCISE

We cannot expect a busy physician to achieve the eloquence and ingenuity of William Sidwell; nor

would it have done the Dutchman much good if he had tried. But, having read them both, Bobby, let us consider whether the Doctor could have done his job with shorter words and better effect. These 'circumstances' and 'consequences' and 'in connection with's' are habitual to most of us, but are they necessary?

ANSWER

This has been, for England, a week of jubilation, in which our friends the Dutch have generously joined. Without doubt the defendant took more than was good for him, through his innocent desire to share our joy. But this was the only cause of his offence, and so I hope that he may be excused.'

(55 words—226 letters)

I do not say that our version would have saved the Dutchman from his heavy fine (£25) or is beautiful English; but it is, I think, a little more moving, and fewer words are wasted. The point to be noted, Bobby, is that we have no more tried to 'write like a book' than poor William Sidwell, who, by the way, was hanged.

INTERVAL FOR GOOD STUFF

Here and there, Bobby, to break the monotony of crime and punishment and instruction, I shall give you some Good Stuff. But my parcels of good stuff will not be provided by professional writers; for I want to expel from your mind the notion that only the professor and the poet have the duty or capacity to use the King's English well.

You have heard already a little of the King's own English (page 14). Here is the Speaker of the House of Commons addressing His Majesty in Westminster Hall (May 9th 1935):

'Your Majesty's high office has been enriched by the personality of Him who holds it. You have shared in the nation's trials and triumphs; You have sorrowed and rejoiced with Your people; Your wisdom and fortitude have steadied the national temper; with the gracious aid of the Queen, You have won by Your sympathy and kindness something warmer than allegiance and profounder than loyalty. To-day You are more than Sovereign: You are Head of the Family, and of a Nation and an Empire You have made a Household

'Twenty-five years ago You defined the tasks of a Sovereign as "the safeguarding of the treasures of the past" and "the preparing of the path of the future". Your Majesty has nobly fulfilled both duties. We look back with grateful hearts upon the past, and with confidence we await the future. We offer you, with deep respect and affection, the homage of a free Parliament, and we pray that, by the blessing of Almighty God, You will long continue to be the Sovereign of a proud and devoted People.'

II

'VALUABLE NEOLOGISMS'

ACCORDING to one of the Jubilee films, in 1910 King George was 'coronated'. In a magazine called *Drama* a play is said to have been 'premiated'—that is, performed for the first time.

We do not, warriors, as some have supposed, object to the invention of any new word, nor to every new use of an old one; we would not trample ruthlessly on the 'Valuable neologisms' (what a word!) which maintain the 'natural growth' of the language. We know that the slang of to-day may be a heading in *The Times* to-morrow. (Consider, for example, the odd word 'bonus'.)¹

Emerson (I am told) said:

'Language is never stationary. New words are constantly being formed; living words are constantly changing their meaning, expanding, contracting, gaining or losing caste, taking on moral or spiritual significance, and old words, though long sanctioned by custom, sometimes wither and die.'

Quite.

But would Emerson have approved the use of the verbs 'to service' and 'to coronate'² by people already possessing the verbs 'to crown' and 'to serve'? He had in mind a cultivated and disciplined growth. He lived in an age when the English-speakers

¹ Which means (if anything) a good man. It should be 'bonum'—describing a good thing. Originally Stock Exchange slang?

² As in 'Coronate Him the King of Kings!' (Hymns A. & M.)

respected the language more than we do now, or, at least, had fewer opportunities to injure it. Not much damage was done then if the barbarian flung a vile new verb into the air; for it might go no farther than his own domain. But the barbarian's vile new verb may be seen or heard by the million to-day, and is half-way round the English-speaking world to-morrow.¹ 'Due to' many things we have more barbarians, and 'due to' our many inventions they can do more harm.

The influence of 'modern communications'¹ has been much over-estimated. They have not secured the peace of Europe, nor improved the understanding of Man, nor damaged the morals of England, so strongly as some wise men expected. But their work upon the English language is rapid and powerful, is visible and audible in every street. Here, at least, the world is truly new. 'Growth' is no longer 'natural'. The old, slow selective process has gone, and 'popular usage' in England means often an illiterate but seductive mannerism in New York or California. Yet, while Mr. Hay on one side of the Atlantic, and Mr. Shortt on the other, are sedulously preventing the corruption of their countrymen's morals through the cinema, no authority (except the B.B.C.) seems to care what anybody does to their language. Indeed, so timid are we all becoming that reputed highbrows invent elaborate defences for the imbecile 'O.K.', and if men and women are not called 'guys' and 'janes' a book is thought to be old-fashioned. It may be said that these are trivial and passing follies, but they take a very long time passing. And so they will always, Bobby—wake *up!*—if you do not worry about words, suspect 'popular usage',

¹ Consider 'Deratization', invented, I am told, by some Frenchmen at Geneva, and now accepted in every British port

and decline to be the slave of habit, Hollywood, or **οἱ πολλοί**.

No doubt, we must have new names for our new things and notions. But that is not to say that every lively barbarian who wants to sell a soap, a scenario, or a 'sensation' is entitled to invent his own new words, and that we are to sit silent or applauding, from fear of obstructing the 'natural growth' of the language. That, brothers, would be fudge! We have seen already what shame and ugliness may come to the English language if its 'natural growth' is left to the gangster, the film-manufacturer, and the feverish sub-editor. Our North American friends may persuade themselves that a beautiful new 'live' language is emerging from the mess; but we are not to be deemed obsolete or obstructive if we reserve our judgment.

So, brothers, we who care and think about words have a right and duty to examine the 'new entry', without fear or favour, by whatever test we think is fitting

The new word should, if possible, be elegant rather than ugly and not only mean well but sound well;¹ and it should not wantonly violate the accepted rules which govern our words, their breeding and employment. Popular slang is one thing, but the introduction into public life of a long word with a Greek or Latin root is another: and here there is no good reason why we should not breed our words as carefully as our horses. A man may improve the thoroughbred; he may usefully breed an intelligent mongrel;² but he must not recklessly produce a monster.² At least, if he does produce a monster,

¹ See 'Stockist', page 45

² See Appendix I, 'Entrance Examination for Words and Phrases seeking Admission to the English Language'.

he must be able to plead necessity; there must be a gap for the filling of which he cannot find an elegant or well-bred word.

With this impossibility the new mechanical and political contrivances confront us often to-day. 'Television' is a monster—half Greek, half Latin; but we might have had worse; certainly it seemed impossible to find a better word.¹ From Hippodrome (a horse-run) we passed easily to aerodrome (an air-run) and no great harm was done (though why not 'flying-field' or 'sky-port'?). 'Air-port' is good, but 'air-drome' ghastly; and when some innocent tradesman elects to call his skating-rink a SPORTS DROME (or FUN DROME), then, brothers, we must challenge the new-comer. For Sports Drome is not only offensive—because it is pretentious, and its creator does not know what he is doing—but unnecessary. We can very easily describe a skating-rink, or Hall of Sport, without taking half a Greek word and applying it to something which it does not fit.²

And, by the same tests, 'to service', 'to premiate', 'to condition', and hundreds more of your 'neologisms' are to be condemned. Here is no new gap which urgently demands to be filled. Here is not 'life' but laziness, not growth but ignorance, and if a man cannot convey a simple thought to the vast audience of English-speakers without such slovenly inventions he had better go out of business. He may think that we are snobs or pedants, but that is hardly relevant; the point, once more, is that he does not know his job.

¹ One of my warriors strongly urges the claims of 'teleopsis', 'teleoptical', etc. These, no doubt, will cause derision now, but they are not funnier than 'telephone' or 'optical', and, if recommended earlier, might have prevailed. The 'televivers', I suppose, would then have become 'teleops'.

² But not at Portsmouth, where a Fun Fair is described as an 'Automachima and Sportanum'.

Brief (but adequate) Discursion on Slang

Toward *slang*, Bobby, we must show neither automatic disdain nor cowardly adulation. Much of the North American slang is vivid, amusing, clever, and valuable; but most of it seems to me to be no better than baby talk, unintelligible to any one except the baby, and discarded by him before six months have passed. It is one part 'natural growth' and nine parts a nervous disorder. It is St. Vitus's Talk. 'American slang,' said an apologist recently, 'is language which has taken its coat off!' I think of it, reluctantly, as language which is always taking its trousers off (and vaguely prancing in the street).

In the rugged books about 'guys' who 'bump off' 'dames' the favourite *mot* used to be 'Get to hell out of here!' It is now, I see, 'Get the hell out of it!' Next year—another grand advance—it may be 'Get in hell from this!' North American citizens have complained indignantly to English humorists that their American slang is out-of-date or inaccurate. It may well be so; but I cannot see that it matters. At whatever moment a nervous twitch is photographed the effect will be the same. And you, Bobby, are never to consider yourself stagnant because you do not imitate each new squirt and splutter of the North American language.

One great joke is that in the continual effort to be swift and snappy the slangsters become at last verbose and dilatory. In the very latest work of the Tough School the author and the characters say 'in back of'¹ whenever they mean 'behind' and 'where' when they mean 'that' or 'how', and 'right away'

¹ I am told that 'in back of' (for 'behind') is heard all day in British film studios, where slick Americans are working. This saves time, Bobby—as do 'check up on', and 'face up to' and 'meet up with', and 'it is up to us to' (for 'we must').

when they mean 'now'. 'Maybe they figger how' by dropping an 'of, 'the', or 'have' here and there they are being very virile and economical (I got to walk a couple blocks', 'She wouldn't left me'); but for every word saved thus on the swings about six are lost on the roundabouts.

Some of their most successful inventions are found, upon examination, to be old English words dug (very wisely) out of our dictionaries. 'Racket', for example, best-known word in the New World, is in my *Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*, and is dated 1812—'(slang) A trick, dodge, scheme, game, line of business, or action'.

EXERCISE

Translate the passages below into swift, economical American Tough Talk (1935 model):

ANSWER

'I thought she'd faint.'

'Ifigged her to faint.'

'That scent costs money.'

'That perfume costs dough.'

'I must give her that' (credit).

'I got to hand it to her for that.'

'He never guessed?'

'He never got next to it?'

'I thought they'd laugh at me.'

'Ifigged how maybe they'd give me the laugh.'

To belaud or imitate this language, Bobby, may indicate a broad mind, but is more likely to be an example of inverted snobbery. However, this Work is not concerned with North American slang, but

with the efforts of the true English-speakers to speak English.

Note on Elegance

I maintain—don't fidget, Bobby!—that words are made to be spoken; and therefore the perfect word must have music as well as meaning. It is not always possible, I know, to secure both qualities; but that should be our aim and criterion. A word which cannot be spoken does not deserve to exist; indeed, it does not truly exist. So, of two words which convey the same thought the one which is easier to say must be preferred; and a word (however clearly understood) which it is difficult or impossible to read aloud without stuttering, coughing, and spitting should be rejected, if there is any speakable alternative.¹ Sometimes, I know, as in the 'scientific' and industrial worlds, there is no speakable alternative; but, as a rule, with a little thought we can find one. At all events, we should make the attempt. Therefore, Bobby, cultivate an ear for words; listen to your words and sentences as you write them, and test them 'for sound'¹ as well as for sense. Many Englishmen—and very many North Americans—seem to have no ear for words at all:² for they cover vast areas with unpronounceable words and unreadable sentences. We may understand them—as we may understand an algebraical equation; but words should be something better than an algebraical equation, a gardener's label, a doctor's prescription or a drawing on the wall.

¹ Consider, for example, 'nonchalantly', 'interdenominational', 'vernaculanization', 'poignant', 'valetudinarianizm', 'debureaucratization', 'quotamg', and the odd new verb 'to ensemble'

² 'The Garden Party *climaxes* the London Season' (*News Reel*) You may or may not like the new verb 'to climax'—I don't But there can be no two opinions about the sound of 'climaxes'

With these thoughts, Bobby, pass on to

'*Stockist*'

'Stockists' (of tyres, cameras, cars, etc.) now abound in our land. In happy Cambridge you may see the

'STOCKISTS OF THE WORLD'S FINEST PIANOS'

Now, a warrior has written to me stoutly defending 'same'¹. There is no single word,' he says, 'for a holder of stocks of tyres. What's wrong with "stockist" except raw youth? You and I are "purists" and unashamed. . . .'

Well, warrior, I will tell you. First, it is a bad mixed marriage between the Greek suffix '-ist' and the Middle English 'stock'. So, you may say, is 'purist', and so are many other words; but there is no good reason for breeding more such words, unless they are necessary or powerfully attractive.

It is possible, Bobby, that Business Man may not be much impressed by the Greek suffix '-ist'. But then, secondly, 'stockist' is ugly to see and hear (because of the two 'st's', not to mention the 'ck'). It repels the mind of the sensitive, and fails to attract the rest; in short, *it is inefficient*. 'Purist', by comparison, is pretty.

And, thirdly, you do not require it (we do, perhaps, require 'purist'). Do not think that I am blind to your difficulties. If you must have a new word you may have 'stocker', which sounds honest, and is well-bred (for the suffix '-er' is 'Middle English', like 'stock'). I hereby pass the word 'stocker' of tyres—or pianos—into the language.¹

¹ See 'Entrance Examination for New Words, etc', Appendix

But I still do not understand why you do not say

'**WE** STOCK THE WORLD'S BEST PIANOS'

It sounds nobler; it is shorter; and it will *sell* better.

And, O all ye Sellers and Advertisers, before you fling a new word into the world, why not consult some expert word-monger who can tell you about the Greek '-ist' and euphony and what-not? Yes, I know about your 'attention-value'; but what about 'euphony-value'? You have to startle the public. But it is no use attracting my attention only to repel me with a wicked word.

'Motivate'

'This kind of political motivation does not sound very convincing.'

(MR. JAMES HILTON in the *Daily Telegraph*)

'This unseemly demonstration was not motivated by literary considerations.'

(MR. ALDOUS HUXLEY in *Time and Tide*)

Is 'motivate' a valuable neologism or a septic verb? It was born, I believe, in the film-studios, and is now breeding among the book-reviewers. I can see why they may feel the need for such a word, but I do not like it myself. And look what happens if we let the film-folk and literary fellows keep such dubious pets! They escape and turn up next among the social workers. One of these is said to have told a public meeting how she had spent a long time persuading one of the 'under-privileged' to go to hospital to have an operation. It was a difficult task, but finally *'the case became motivated to hospitalizatori.*'¹

¹ See 'Ize-mama' page 52.

Which only shows, Bobby, as Nanny used to say, how careful we should be.

'Donate'

'To donate', I hear, and 'to gift' also, are epidemic in parts of Scotland. A justly indignant Scot receives a medal for this specimen:

'Mrs. B——has donated a trousseau of slumber-wear.' Or, as my warrior irreverently interprets: 'has given a bunch of night-shirts'.

The plain truth about the verb 'donate'¹ is that it is a snob-word; for Lady Lavender 'donates' her £5 to the Fund, but Mrs. Pewter's half a crown is only 'given' (or 'gifted')¹.

EXERCISE

Who wrote the following?

- (1) 'Donate us this day our daily bread.'
- (2) 'It is more blessed to donate than to receive.'
- (3) ' 'Twas all he donated, 'twas all he had to donate.'

Note on Lexicographers

In this affair, warriors, you must not count too much on the dictionaries. Whenever I see a truly horrible word I look in the dictionary and find that it was used by Dr. Johnson, or was common in 1541.² If some one said that your young lady was 'unidea'd'³ you would think him gross in language as well as

¹ Frequent, I am told, in the *Oban Times*.

² See 'obligate', 'circularize', 'to climax', 'to coronate', 'as respects', 'diarize', 'calmative' (an obviously wicked word used by a drug-manufacturer, who describes a new drug as a 'calmative par excellence')

³ 'Not furnished with ideas'

manners. But there it is in the *Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*; and it was Dr. Johnson who used the horrid word. Modern dictionaries are pusillanimous works, preferring feebly to record what has been done than to say what ought to be done.

A distinguished lexicographer tells me that this is right. We must not bite them nor call them feeble, for they are 'historians merely, and are no longer in a position to play the Johnson and purge the language'. 'I only wish we could!' says he. But 'if a word has reached the degree of usage within the scope of our particular dictionary, in it must go, however much we may loathe it. . . .'

Maybe, lexicographer dear; but it can go in with a black mark against it, surely? The vile 'transpire,'¹ for example (in the sense of 'to happen, occur'), is officially marked 'misused'. 'To enthuse', I am told, gets its deserts in the *O.E.D.* (though not in my *S.O.E.D.*)—'an ignorant back-formation from enthusiasm.' Such markings, such opinions should be more frequent and severe. Of that felonious brute 'to sabotage' the same dictionary says feebly—I repeat, *feebly*—

'Hence Sabotage *v. trans.*, to wreck or damage by s., also fig.'

Let the next edition say firmly:

'Hence—a misuse, fig., journalistic, political pompous, erroneous, foul—Sabotage *v. trans.*, etc.'

For, as dictionaries are, they encourage and assist the enemy. One of my warriors, four years ago, rightly quarrelled with the *Spectator* for saying 'centre round'.² The Editor, with astonishing levity,

¹ See page 93.

²

See page 92.

replied 'The Oxford Dictionary is with us. We carry on.' But the Dictionary was not 'with' him in the sense of alliance or approval. It had merely, as usual, quoted a few instances in which others had made the same error, without expressing an opinion.

I hope, Bobby, that some virile new lexicographer will arise and make a *Good English Dictionary*, showing us not only what is said but what is sound (on the lines of Mr. Fowler's *Modern English Usage*). Till then, we poor strugglers should have good dictionaries and consult them often, for they are a help in spelling and contain much comfort and instruction. But never conclude that because you find a word in a dictionary it must be a good word. That may be a valuable piece of evidence; but your own taste and opinion must be the judges.

NOT VERY VALUABLE NEOLOGISMS

' . . . playwrights who authored, among other things, *The Front Page* . . . '

(C. A. LEJEUNE in the *Observer*)

I know the special difficulties of the film-world, but I can see no pressing need for the verb 'to author'—nor, by the way, the verb 'to celluloid', as in:

'*David Copperfield* (Dickens) is to be celluloided.'

' . . . A great feature of to-day's play has been the *rejuvemlity* of thirty-seven-year-old Jean Borotra.'

(ULYSS ROGERS in the *Daily Express*)

'We cater for every figural need.'

(Garment Advertisement)

'It seems that the "staggering" proclivities of certain elements have been effectually *disencouraged*.'

(*The Times*)

'Disencourage' is in the dictionary—1626.

From various shops:—

'Gardenalities', 'Homealities', 'Exclusities and Niceties', 'Fenestrational Patterning.' 'Ladies' Beautourium', 'Teaists'.

These are *not* in the *Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*.

Motor-trade Monsters

To BUILD SOUNDLY

To SELL CHEAPLY

To SERVICE SINCERELY'

(Advertised aims of a speculative builder)

I denounce, comrades, the vile new verb 'to service', an invention, I believe, of some one in the motor-trade. Let that invader through and, the next thing, we shall have solicitors and doctors charging for 'advicing' and 'attendancing' their clients. To arms!

But horrors seem to breed fast and freely in this trade. The land is full of 'stockists' (for which see page 45), and every motor advertisement contains at least one Valuable Neologism, such as 'startability' or 'manoeuvrability'.¹

I could think of plausible defences for 'startable', if it were applied to a car and meant 'capable of being started' (though it would be a queer boast in these days to say that a motor could easily be set in motion). But it is used of a motor-spirit, to mean 'capable of setting in motion', which is like saying 'singable' for 'able to sing'.

At least I know what is meant by the hateful

¹ 'Manoeuvrability is an outstanding feature of this new vehicle.'

mongrel manoeuvrability; but I can think of nothing to be said for 'improved readability', which was found in a *Punch* advertisement. It is basely bred (see 'knowledgeable'¹) and I cannot even guess what it means—so that the word fails in the first purpose of an advertisement, which is to make me buy. And the same may be said to the agent who claims that 'this is the only car tuned to human periodicity'. Once more, the main charge is *inefficiency*. Cannot the advertiser see that an advertisement based upon a ridiculously wrong or meaningless word is like a great car with a flat tyre?

' . . . exceptional acceleration and hill-climbing, improved readability, smoother running and lower fuel-consumption.'

What sort of a car, I wonder, is a car which is not 'roadable'? Is it a 'hedgeable' or 'ditchable' or perhaps a 'turfable' car? Does it leap fences but refuse to travel on roads? Does it achieve high velocity in bogs or ploughed fields but show unstartability in Oxford Street? I cannot say. Is there a word 'airable' to denote a good aeroplane, or 'oceanable' for a seaworthy vessel? Some one tells me that he thinks a roadable car is one that adheres to the road and does not fly into the air at corners. If that is so I suggest that some fine new word like 'anti-levitationalism' might satisfy the rich fancy of the modern advertiser without mystifying the modern customer. Or 'road-adhesion'? Or 'enhanced roadophily'? Or—seriously—'road-worthiness'?

But 'readability', brothers, and 'manoeuvrability' must not occur again. And if they do, you must not buy from the offenders.

Ize-mania

' . . . new suburbs, almost all in ribbon development, have been allowed to parasitize the road.'

(*Scientific Research and Social Needs*. Professor JULIAN HUXLEY)

' . . . Just because Mr. Jordan has lived so long in the country he has been able to essentialize its spirit '

(Mr. WILFRID GIBSON, reviewing a book in the *Observer*]

'Sir, We are now prepared to completely finalize . . .'

(From a Business Letter)

'He it was who persuaded him to archceologise in Sinai.'

(WILLIAM HICKEY, *Daily Express*)

'Obituarism of Lord Byng would be incomplete without a reference to his love of gardens.'

(The Same)

*'What is Furmodizing?'*¹

'Combined Vacuumising Outfit.'

'Tenderized Prunes.'

'Personalize your gift with an Initial.'

'We specialise in outsizes which really slenderize.'

(Advertisements)

' . . . hard facts which it is impossible to explain away or oratorise away.'

(From a letter to the *Yorkshire Post*)

' . . . a vernaculansed liturgy . . .'

(*The Catholic Gazette*)

'Will you be so good as to personalize these petitions?'

(From a letter to a Bishop)

¹ Answer: The Process of making your old Furs look like new

'The patient was hospitalized.'

(In a doctor's report—twice)

'Great Expectations . . . Picturized by . . .'

'The troops first paraded at the Drill Hall and were mechanised' to the aerodrome?'

(Rhodesian paper)

' . . . the debureaucratization of administrative processes.'

(*South American Journal*)

'Perry will have to maximise his powers.'

(*Daily Telegraph*)

' . . . cunning filmization of the tale. . . .'

(*Daily Gazette—India*)

'Marshall and Snelgroves designed this exclusive ensemble especially for cruising. It is materialised in an uncrushable linen.'

(Advertisement)

'Vocalize.' (Everywhere. O Gosh!)

And a North American warrior tells me that she has seen 'to renovise'!

Looking at these things, brothers—and remembering 'deratization' and 'deinsectization'—do you still think that I am stupidly obstructing the 'natural growth' of the language when I deprecate the uncontrolled breeding of verbs in '-ize'?

There seems to be a notion that any British or American subject is entitled to take any noun or adjective, add '-ize'¹ to it, and say 'I have made a new verb! What a good boy am I!' This notion must be 'finalized'.

The suffix '-ize'¹ (the Greek—, as you know so well, Bobby) is very useful. It has given us many valuable and respected verbs: some verbs (such as

¹ ? Conveyed by motor. Heaven knows!

Bowdlerize—organize—pulverize—monopolize) for which, without '-ize', it would be difficult or impossible to find an equivalent; and, without doubt, it will provide us with many more. But it is not a pretty sound—or sight. A sentence spotted with ize-words (or, worse, ization-words) is horrible.¹ We could very well do without many of the established '-izes'. I may be alone in this, but I detest 'characterize', for example. It is needed in the literary and dramatic worlds: but elsewhere, as a rule, it is lazy or pompous.

At all events, the breed is not so beautiful or strong that we want to see it increase and multiply beyond what is required for practical purposes. I regard '-ize' as I do a lavatory fitting.

But -ize-words, in fact, are being multiplied recklessly, through idleness, affectation, the desire to startle, the itch for speed or spurious novelty. It seems more grand to say 'finalize' than 'conclude' or 'settle'—but it isn't. It seems smart and efficient to say 'tenderized', but it isn't: 'made soft' (concerning prunes) is more appealing. It seems impressive and scholarly to say 'parasitize', but it isn't: 'infest with parasites' is far more effective. It is certainly a little shorter to say 'oratorize away' than 'obscure with oratory', or 'sweep aside with rhetoric', and 'hospitalize' than 'send to hospital'; but that is no excuse. Why any one says 'vocalize' instead of 'sing' I cannot imagine.

Not one of the '-izes' impaled above can pass our entrance examination.² They are neither elegant enough to be desired, nor so practically useful as to be excused their ugliness. 'Slenderize' is perhaps the least hateful, for that is a straightforward lie.

¹ See the utterance of the Mayor of Vancouver, page 97.

² See Appendix I.

I cannot even guess how 'parasitize' is pronounced; and I regretfully suspect that the distinguished professor writes without hearing the sound of his own words.

But 'parasitize'¹, *of course*, Bobby, is in the dictionary. So is 'oratorize' (but intransitive—not as above). 'Finalize' is not there yet; nor 'tenderize'; nor 'debureaucratize'. But let a few more salesmen or swankers use them and they will be in the next edition, officially enrolled in the word-strength of England.

Here is

'PERSONALIZE v. 1727. To render personal; to personify; to impersonate. Hence, Personalization.'

Hence my foot!

I do not care what some illiterate lout did in 1727; there can never be a good reason for using this obscene verb now. Obviously, it is not the same as 'personify' or 'impersonate' (which have two quite different meanings); and it ought not to be in any Christian dictionary.

You are entitled to say, Bobby, that all this is purely a question of individual taste; but then, I hope to improve the nation's taste. And if you think that I exaggerate the -ize-peril, consider this:

'John Appiah ... a Catholic and a member of the committee at that Church, who was found guilty of misconduct in a case in which a *newly-matrimonized* wife figured prominently, has received the holy communion upon the payment of a sin-money of one guinea.'

(The Gold Coast Spectator)

You see, brothers? If we give an inch, the world will take an ell. Therefore, fight or

Consider too this dolichological (Ha!) extract from a letter to *The Catholic Gazette*, urging that mass should be conducted in English:

'I maintain, then, that the use of ecclesiastical Latin has no substantial justification, and that what thin shreds of justification do exist do not compensate the advantages which *vernacularization* affords.'

This seventeen-letter paper-sore occurs three times in the same composition (twice with V and once with v). There are also 'vernacularised' and, a few lines later, 'vernaculated.' which appears to mean the same thing.

'Our English version of the Bible has not suffered. Why should a vernacularised liturgy?'

The trouble is, I suppose that the anti-vernacularisation forces are too strong.

'To diarize'

A City warrior sends me a nauseating verb in -ize. One of the 'Big Five'¹ banks, he says, provides its staff with a rubber stamp bearing the legend:

'DIARIZE FOR . . . !'

This wicked word, he says, means,

'Enter in your diary for . . . !'

And this is not the casual aberration of a lowly clerk but the official invention of a great London bank, which is forced upon the defenceless staff and perpetrated with a rubber stamp!

'Diarize'¹ must die. And if it does not die within four weeks I shall make public the name of the bank.

The beast, it seems, is breeding fast:

'but in view of your remarks we are *diarising* and we hope to have a favourable report from you later.'

And—my hat!—here is a leaflet distributed by the *Civil Service Horticultural Federation*, inviting the world to a Flower Show, and concluding:

'Memorise the Moment. Diarise the Date.'

I have now, as usual, looked in the dictionary, the *Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*, and without much surprise, I find the reptile there:

'To DIARIZE *v. intr.* to write a record of events in a diary.'

P.S. A warrior sends me this. 'Will you please diary the date?' I do not object to the verb 'diary' so strongly, for it is not, like 'diarize', a Latin dog with a Greek tail. In fact, if it is needed, I will pass it. It will be quite impossible, I know, for any one to say 'We are diarying', but the answer to that is 'Don't use the word'.

'The Finchley Education Committee have decided not to *circularise* head teachers that parties of children will be admitted to the final rehearsals of the R.A.F.'

(*Evening Standard*)

In the dictionary, of course! 'To send circulars to ... 1848.' But what care we? Why not 'inform?'

'Normalize'

No, my Sheffield warrior, I am not quarrelling with the technical terms of any trade, though many are needlessly repellent. You tell me that 'to

normalize' is an important term and process in the manufacture of steel. Well, the Steel Trade has my permission to carry on normalizing.

Provided always that the directors' wives do not take their nervous children to Harley Street to be 'normalized'; provided also that no one is permitted to express the hope that the weather will 'normalize' next week.

There is the danger, comrade, of your private 'technical terms'. They escape into the open, and breed, horribly.

But this exemption does *not* cover *inst*, *ult.*, and *prox.* (see page 64), and I will not have 'your favour to hand' trying to sneak in as a technical term: for this is neither necessary, nor brief, nor technical. It is merely muck. Is that clear?

STOP PRESS.—And now I am assured by an experienced Ordnance officer that 'the foul thing ("normalize") would not be allowed in an Admiralty specification; and should this particular officer find it in a minute, he would at once cross it out—(as he does all "ults", "proxes", and "insts")—and put in its place the proper word, which is one syllable and three letters shorter, namely, "*anneal*". Well done, warrior! The Blue Star for you. And the licence for 'normalize' is cancelled, 'pending' a public inquiry.

Spert in Yorkshire

'In recent years there have been "Rags" *personelled* almost exclusively by students.'

(Hull . . . *Daily Mail*)

Collect, brothers, the verb 'to personnel'.

To script'

The original story has been *scripted* by L. du

Garde Peach, so that the broadcast atmosphere is being preserved.'

(*The Era*)

Horrid, at first sight, but I perceive the need; and, if confined to its own technical work, 'script' may do no damage. But then we shall have Business Man writing thus: 'your favour to hand, and we will script you at the first opportunity.'

To process'

Procession of Witness

' . . . Accompanied by the Archdeacons, Clergy, and Ladies of the Party, they will *process* through the town to the Parish Church, and it is hoped to make this as imposing as possible.'

(Marching Orders for a Summer Gathering, composed by a Member of the Church Assembly)

The reverend author should consult the *S.O.E.D.*, which describes the verb 'to process' as 'colloquial or jocular—a back-formation. . . .'

'Notion your minds with the idea of God.'

(A.Y.M.C.A. writer)

A Present from New York

This paper ensembles perfectly with the others.'

High 'Attention-value'

The laudable desire to create beauty drives our tradesmen into the vilest behaviour. I have seen a scouring soap advertised as 'The Bath's Beautician'. I have heard of a 'Hairdresser and Beautician' who offers to 'lovelify' the ladies of Manchester, and, from New York, of a 'Youthifying Beauty Cream'

And here is a pretty piece from the *Windsor Magazine*:

'A hand-cream . . . has a lovelifying effect on hands roughened from gardening'

'Beautician' and 'lovelify', Bobby, are badly bred. Why not 'beauty-monger'?

Why not (if it is necessary to lie) 'makes lovely'?

Watch Australia

'Smith scored a try and Jones majorized it.'

i.e. 'scored the major points'

i.e. 'converted the try'

i.e. 'kicked a goal'

Frequent, I hear, in Australian newspapers.

Also, 'Several well-known "identities" (i.e. persons) were present.'

Yes, watch my dear Australia—where I first met the grim 'finalize'. And now I hear of 'escapee', and the verb 'to ovation'. On the other hand, the grand word 'wowsers'¹ should be given the freedom of Great Britain.

'Three-putted'

'When Padgham *three-putted* on the first green . . .'

This valuable neologism, a warrior tells me, appeared three times in a single *Evening Chronicle*. Too many.

EXERCISE

Who wrote the following?

The huntsman three-blew his horn.'

'Passionately he three-kissed his love.'

'What I three-tell you is true.'

¹ A 'wowsers'? Well, some brutes might say that Mr. Isaac Foot and the Reverend Henry Carter were 'wowsers'.

'To climax'

'1934 was climaxed by the Royal Wedding.'
(News Reel)

'The Garden Party climaxes the London Season.'
(News Reel)

Purely a matter of taste, maybe; but I do not like 'to climax'. Many words were nouns first and became verbs later, and I suppose that 'climax' may claim the same liberty; but I do not like it. It is in the dictionary (marked '*pop.*')] but I do not like it. And 'climaxes' is hideous.

'Climax', Bobby, is one of the words which beautifully display the deadness of the 'dead languages'. It is a Greek word, meaning 'ladder'—not the top of the ladder, but the whole ladder. Burke used the word precisely when he spoke of 'The top of the climax of their wickedness'. But we have changed all that.

'Ticketeers'

'GAMBLING SQUAD on Track of Dublin Ticketeers'
(*Sunday Pictorial*)

A warrior has sent me 'ticketeers' for punishment. I am sorry, warrior, but, in that context, I like it. The suffix '-eer' indicates "'one who deals in'"—often with a contemptuous implication. 'Ticketeers' is quick and easy to say; and has a racy sound, like 'buccaneers' or 'mutineers'. I like it.

INTERVAL FOR GOOD STUFF

From the judgment of Mr. Justice Best, in the case of *Blundell v. Calterall* (1821):

'It will not be disputed that the sea is common to all. Bathing in the sea, if done with decency, is not only lawful, but proper, and often necessary for many of the inhabitants of this country. There must be the right to cross the shore in order to bathe as for any lawful purpose. The universal practice of England shows the right of way over the sea-shore to be a Common Law right. All sorts of persons who resort to the sea, either for business or pleasure, have always been accustomed to pass over the unoccupied parts of the shore with such carriages as were suitable to their respective purposes, and no lord of a manor has ever attempted to interrupt such persons. . . . Men have from the earliest times bathed in the sea; and unless in places or at seasons when they could not, consistently with decency, be permitted to be naked, no one ever attempted to prevent them. . . . I believe the use of machines is essential to the practice of bathing. Decency must prevent most females and infirmity many men from bathing except from a machine. . . . By bathing, those who live near the sea are taught their first duty, namely, to assist mariners in distress. They acquire, by bathing, confidence amidst the waves, and learn how to seize the proper moment for giving their assistance. . . . Is it to be supposed that in a country the prosperity and independence of which depends on navigation that which is so necessary to navigation as a road for all lawful purposes

to the sea should not have been secured to the public, particularly when it might be done without injury to the interests of any individuals?'

Lawyers, Bobby, are supposed to be wordy, dull, and unintelligible. This is untrue, at least, of His Majesty's Judges. A good judgment on a dreary theme may be a delight to read. You will notice, both here and on page 88, that there are no ugly words, and the sentences, though necessarily long, are readable. This, Bobby, is because a judgment has to be *spoken aloud*. (See 'Note on Elegance', page 44). I must add that this was a dissenting judgment, and so, though good sense, it is not, alas, good law.

III

'PLAIN ENGLISH'

(Including 'Officese and other utterances of the Plain Business Man, Honest Advertiser, or Simple Tradesman)

Inst., Ult., and Prox.

I agree with numerous warriors that these unattractive months should be expelled from the English calendar. Our own months have charming names. Some of them are short as well as sweet—April, May, and June; and the longer ones can, in writing, be intelligibly abbreviated. So that the offices where Frantic Hurry seems to dictate the letters have no good excuse for writing: 'on the ist inst.' when what they mean is 'on May ist'.

Indeed, the hasty style is not only uglier but longer. And even 'on May the first' is only one character longer than 'on the ist inst.', which should not fatally delay the typist boasting her sixty words a minute.

The odd thing is that the very persons who insist on larding their letters with unnecessary Latin are loudest with the cry that the 'dead languages' are studied in vain. Those, they say, who would flourish in the 'real life' of trade need only the plain straightforward language of an English business man. To be intelligible is all; to be ornamental is nothing. Yet there must be millions of our citizens who have not the least notion what is meant by your *inst.*, *prox.*, and *ult.* I studied the Latin language for nearly fifteen years; but to this day I do not know why '*inst.*' denotes the month now

passing. For '*instans*', if I remember rightly, means 'pressing on', or 'attacking', and, if so, '*instante mense*' (Ablative case of *mensis*, month, Bobby) would be more apt for the month which is approaching. (It must be '*instante*', not 'instant', for all authorities agree that '*prox.*' and '*ult.*' are short for '*proximo*' and '*ultimo*'—*mense*.)

I met a man lately who had served for twelve years in an estate-agent's office; he told me that years passed before he really knew whether '*ult.*' meant last month or the month to come. He never dared to confess his ignorance, and, in dictation, would cunningly twist his letters so as to avoid having to use the sacred '*ult.*' And when he did learn surely which month '*ult.*' meant he didn't know why.

These pretentious fragments must not be used again.

EXERCISE ONE

Who wrote the following?

- (1) 'Oh, to be in England now that *inst.* is there!'
- (2) 'For I'm to be Queen of the *prox.*, Mother, I'm to be Queen of the *prox.*!'
- (3) 'In the merry month of '*ult.*'
- (4) 'And what is so rare as a day in *idem.*?'

Yes, I have discovered a fourth supernumerary month:

'Further to my letter of the 4th instant and with reference to yours of the 3rd *idem.*'

This, Bobby, should be *eodem* (Ablative), that is, if *proximo* and *ultimo* are right. But some Britons hold that these horrid little months should, if used at all, be in the Genitive case—that is *ejusdem*, *proximi*, *ultimi*, and *instantis*.

I think they are wrong—but I heartily wish they

were right. For then the *Ulters* and *Proxers* would be proved to have been guilty of a gross blunder in every letter on the files.

I have consulted certain scholars. All were doubtful and burrowed obligingly in dusty school-books; but the highest scholar thinks that either the genitive or the ablative might be used, though probably *mense proximo* (ablative absolute, like '*consule Planco*', Bobby) is the better. I take that view myself, but am still uncertain, and, not being a *Proxer*, I do not care half a hoot which is right.

'But.' says Business Man, indignant, if he has read so far, 'what do I care about ablatives and genitives and all that bunk? Plain English is good enough for me!' The answer to which is, 'Then don't talk unnecessary Latin, old boy, if you don't know the language; for this is blazing *inefficiency*. And, if you insist on using Latin (as almost every Englishman does), don't proclaim so often that young men with a "classical education" are of no use in Business. Now read carefully "The Dead Languages" (page 162). That will do.'

Only two citizens have dared to defend the *Proxers*. They say that 'on the *ist ult.*' means not merely 'on May *ist*—or *ist May*', but 'on May *ist 1935*', and that 'on May *ist*' leaves the reader in doubt about the *year*.

This is only to pile insincerity upon indefensibility. The number of the year is always (in business correspondence, though not in mine) announced at the head of a letter, and in the rare cases where a different year is intended in the text it is a short and simple task to say so.

P.S.—I am 'advised' that there is a fifth redundant month, '*curt.*'—for '*current*'—or ? '*currente*' or '*currents*'?

I still think that the old-fashioned 'May' (or even 'Dec.') is better—and briefer.

I hope, dear old Business Man, that I shall not have to speak about this painful matter again.

EXERCISE TWO

Write a love-lyric about the months of Inst., Ult., and Prox.:

ANSWER

I heard the happy lark exult,
 Too soon, for it was early ult.;
 And now the land with rain is rinsed—
 Ah, mournful is the month of inst.;
 Love, like a lizard in the rocks,
 Is hungry for the suns of prox.

Boy Cupid with his catapult
 Could find but sorry sport in ult.;
 But through the woods, with bluebells
 chintzed,
 My lady comes to me in inst.:
 And O may Cupid speed the clocks,
 For she will marry me in prox.!

Dictators

I have known rare instances of a Business—and even a Literary—Man ascribing the crimes of his correspondence to a typist or secretary. So I was amused to receive from a warrior modestly signing herself Typist¹ a well-written assault upon the barbarities of 'people in offices who dictate letters'.

Nearly all, she tells me, say that they are '*pre-
 pared*', when they mean '*willing*', to do things, although the proposal has only just been put to them and they could not have been '*prepared*' for

it. She gives no examples; but we can all see how irritating it must be to an intelligent young lady to hear her employer say that he is 'prepared' to visit the United States when she knows very well that he has not even begun to pack. And it is worse if he says that he is 'not prepared' to go to the States, for that may merely mean that he is not yet ready, and nobody knows whether he is willing or not. (However, I gather that the comrade puts this sort of thing right herself.)

Then she says: 'Why do they always say, "*Enclosed please find*"?' This question has agitated me also. 'Enclosed please look for' would be sensible, though ugly; for then there would be some point in the 'please', and the words would cover the possibility that the thing has not been enclosed (which nearly always happens in my correspondence). But no amount of 'pleases' can make any one 'find' anything, for finding is a hard fact, which happens or does not. To say, 'Enclosed please find a bun' is like saying 'Please arrive in Spain' when you mean, 'Please go to Spain'. Is that quite clear? If not, don't worry. For, in any case, I enclose a bun' or 'A bun is enclosed'¹ is surely best.

Then, she says, 'They sprinkle "*in respect of*" and "*in connexion with*" all over everything, when neither phrase means anything whatever.' One man she has worked with '*will talk about "our client's claim in connexion with the rent in respect of the premises", instead of "our client's claim for the rent of the premises"*'. The same outlaw will never use one verb if he can drag in three. 'He says, "Are you prepared to agree to accept?" or "We will endeavour to arrange to obtain".' Once he went further and dictated, 'Efforts are being made to endeavour to arrange to obtain.'¹ Grand! Tremble, then, all odious

dictators and bow to Typist', who will receive the Blue Star of our Order.

Officese

A warrior sends me from Temple Fortune (charming address!) a new and delicate 'issue'.¹ It was found, I am sorry to say, in a letter from my favourite 'multiple store'¹, to which I owe money:

'MADAM,

'We are in receipt of your favour of the gth inst. with regard to the estimate required for the removal of your furniture and effects from the above address to Burbleton, and will arrange for a Representative to call to make an inspection on Tuesday next, the 14th inst., before 12 noon, which we trust will be convenient, *after which our quotation will at once issue*

But the rare 'issue' is not the only point of interest in that letter, Bobby. The gentleman who wrote, or rather dictated, it would say, no doubt, what was lately said to me. 'Ah, but in business we have no time to write like a book. You can keep your long words for literature.' He thinks, you see, that 'officese' is short and sharp and swift and economical, and that those who dare to dislike 'officese' would put in its place a style that was long and wordy and wasteful of time.²

This does our noble war a grave injustice, Bobby. It is just the misplaced effort to 'write like a book', to be elegant and flowery, that yields the sickliest growths of Officese and Jungle English—all these 'inst.'s' and 'ult.'s' and 'in regard to's', and 'favours', and 'representatives'. The topmost legend on our

¹ See 'Issues', learnedly discussed, page 219

² Compare 'in back of' for 'behind' (page 42), 'under date ist instant' for 'of May ist', and 'check up on' for 'check' (page 157).

banner, Bobby, is 'Simplicity'. We say that if the business man dictated simply what was in his mind he would save time and typing, and perhaps achieve elegance, unconsciously, as well.¹ Let us, with that thought, write his letter again—not stylishly, nor like a book, but as simply and swiftly as we can:

EXERCISE

BUSINESS MAN—	<i>Words</i>	BOBBY—	<i>Words</i>
We are in receipt of	5	We have	2
your favour of the 9th		your letter of May 9th	5
inst.	6	requesting an estimate	3
with regard to the esti-		for the removal of your	
mate required	6	furniture and effects	8
for the removal of your		to Burbleton	2
furniture and effects	8	and a man will call	5
from the above address		to see them	3
to Burbleton	6	next Tuesday ²	2
and will arrange for a		forenoon	1
Representative to call	8	if convenient	2
to make an inspection	4	after which	2
on Tuesday next the		we will send the esti-	
14th inst.	6	mate	5
before 12 noon	3	without delay.	2
which we trust will be			
convenient	6		
after which our quota-			
tion	4		
will at once	3		
ISSUE!	1		
	<hr/>		<hr/>
TOTAL	66 words	TOTAL	42 words
	<hr/>		<hr/>
	294 letters		191 letters

¹ See William Sidwell (page 34) and Captain Slocum (page 148).
² She knows the date already.

No cheating, I think, Bobby; it is all there. Certainly there is not enough cheating to account for a reduction, in words, of (as Business Man would say) 33 per cent.

And observe, Bobby, you were handicapped by following the 'lay-out' of the original letter. Forgetting that, we should save much more, thus:

EXERCISE

Thank you for your letter of May *gih*. A man will call next Tuesday, forenoon, to see your furniture and effects, after which, without delay, we will send our estimate for their removal to Burpleton.

35 words—157 letters

against

66 words—294 letters

A difference, in words, of nearly '50 per cent'¹.

Now these, if they are right, are shocking figures, Bobby. For if a typist can save thirty words in one short letter, she can save three thousand on a hundred letters—and that, at 60 words a minute, means 50 minutes. And a big 'store' with a hundred typists, each doing a hundred letters, could save three hundred thousand words, which means five thousand minutes, or eighty-three hours and twenty minutes—or about a week's work for two typists. (And I have not yet included, Bobby, the saving of the dictator's time, nor the economy in paper, carbons, envelopes, typewriter-ribbon, and ink.)

This is the kind of calculation, Bobby, which is being feverishly made in every office and place of business to-day—though not about words. All is 'rationalization' (what a word!), 'efficiency', and 'scientific costing'. Expert efficiency-mongers prowl

round the factories and shops with slide-rules, poking their noses into 'overheads', sniffing at the output per man-minute per machine, working out how much it costs the firm every time a workman sneezes, and what could be saved if no woman scratched her nose, multiplying by x , dividing by y plus average load-charge, and expressing the whole thing as a roaring dividend.

Suppose that one of these wizards said to the average big firm: 'There is a sad "wastage" through sneezing; and I can save you x man-hours per week if you eliminate industrial sneezing, and that means fourpence per load-unit on the gross, or 37 per cent at high water?' The directors would madly insure the whole staff against hay-fever, have every one in range inoculated, and think the money well spent.

But if the wizard said (as he should): 'I can save you x hours on your overheads if you will scrap the foul and fatty rigmarole, the verbose and indolent, obscure, inelegant, and time-devouring monkey-talk which is called Commercial English and (believe it or not!) is deliberately taught to our defenceless boys in books. You are losing time and money because the men who conduct your correspondence will not speak the King's English simply as they are taught it at an intolerable expense in the national schools!'—why, then, I suppose that the directors would suffer an apoplexy.

Under the Finance Bill, 1935, 'the Board of Trade shall certify a scheme of rationalization . . . if they are satisfied (*a*) that the primary purpose of the scheme is the *elimination of redundant works*'. In any rational scheme of rationalization the elimination of redundant *words* would rank at least second.

But the enemy think that everything in the world is important save words. Well, Bobby, it is our task to show them that they err.

EXERCISE

Which is the shorter, this bit of bustling 'efficiency':

(1) 'Your favour to hand and contents noted',
or this old-fashioned and 'literary' statement:

(2) 'We have received and read your letter'?

ANSWER

(2) Seven words—thirty letters

against

(1) Seven words—thirty-too letters

(2) Wins

And, if speed is 'the goods', we could break all records with this:

'We have read your letter' (five words—twenty letters).

For no man can read a letter till he has received it.

Further Favours

'Business Man' blames Typist', and Typist' accuses 'Business Man'; and meanwhile the nation's wealth, like water dripping from a faulty tap, is wasted in a flow of ineffective words.

'We have to acknowledge with thanks your letter of the 1st inst., the contents of which have been duly noted.'

Why 'we have to'? Why 'duly'?

'We are in receipt of your letter of the 1st instant. . . .'

Why 'in receipt of'?¹

¹ But this is spreading—'. . . we have seriously to consider how far it is possible for us to continue *in receipt of* the whip of the National Government' (THE DUCHESS OF ATHOLL and four other M.P.s, to Mr Baldwin)

HOT-WATER BOTTLES

'I thank you for your letter of the 1st instant in connection with the above, which is receiving my careful attention.'

Why 'in connection with the above'? The heading indicates the subject of both letters.

'We are in receipt of your letter of the 1st instant, contents of which will receive our attention.'

One point of curiosity in this kind of correspondence is the trouble and time devoted by every writer to informing the other fellow that his letter has been read. Sometimes the whole story is repeated:

'We are obliged by yours of the 1st inst. notifying us that you are prepared to arrange to send a representative as requested in our letter of, etc., etc.'

And in a file of correspondence covering many months the words employed in assuring A that B has not only duly received A's favour but duly noted its contents as well, must be counted in hundreds.

Now, if they were corresponding with Bohemians and literary men, who, notoriously, do not duly open their letters for many days, and, having opened, do not always duly read them, I could understand this practice. But A and B have been dealing with each other for many years; they are eagerly engaged upon a particular transaction from which both hope to extract profit; and I should have thought that each might safely assume that the other, having duly received his letter, would not unduly throw it unread into the wastepaper-basket.

But I am informed that the business-correspondence formulae are devised not only to save time

(which evidently they do not achieve), but to show courtesy.¹ For business men have sensitive natures, and if the other fellow does not continually assure them of his best attention, they may break off negotiations without a word of warning. Many a fine merger, they tell me, has come to nothing because a careless typist omitted a 'duly', a 'favour', or an 'immediate consideration'.

I applaud the intention. But is it truly so very courteous or conciliatory to bombard a man with rubber-stamp phrases which stink of insincerity? The first time one receives a letter which ends:

'Assuring you, dear sir, of our best attention at all times',

a comfortable glow pervades the body. But when one finds the same assurance at the end of the letter which begins:

'We are *wholly at a loss* to understand the failure of your firm to implement the undertaking, etc.' or

'We are *surprised* by the tone of your favour of the 5th inst. and are quite unable to accept the statement of the position as therein set out . . .'

the endearing powers of that particular formula are at once diminished.

I have a letter before me which informs me that my favour of the 5th inst. has been opened

'. . . in Mr. K.'s absence. The matter will have

¹ Statesmen offer the same excuse for their circumlocutions 'The answer is in the negative', for example, is thought to be less wounding than 'No, sir'. A bumptious or unpopular back-bencher may be suppressed with 'No', but for Mr Lloyd George the answer must be in the negative

his immediate attention in the course of a few days '

You follow, Bobby? 'Immediate attention', for me, has now no meaning.

Surely the most courteous letter is composed in as careful English as the writer can command; and it suggests to the recipient not that the same letter has been addressed to fifty different persons during that same morning, but that it has been specially and lovingly devised for him, and him alone?

EXERCISE

With these considerations in your mind, examine and comment upon the following:

'We note that you will let us have the necessary estimate in due course, and shall be obliged if you are able to arrange for same to be delivered as soon as possible.'

Why not:

'Thank you. We hope that you will let us have the estimate as soon as you can'?

'Referring to your letter of the 2nd August I am giving the matter immediate attention and will write you further as soon as possible.'

Why not:

'Thank you for your letter of August 2nd

*I am doing what you wish
I am acting as you suggest
I am looking into the matter
I am making inquiries
I am sacking the driver
I am engaging the girl
I am raising Hell*

}

and I will write to you again as soon as I cant

HOT-WATER BOTTLES

'With reference to the above¹ matter I should like an opportunity of discussing *same* with you.'

Why not:

'Could we, please, have a talk about Hot-Water Bottles?' or

'Hot-Water Bottles. I should like to have a talk with you!'

'We are ascertaining for you the information regarding . . .'

Why not:

'We are getting the information you want about . . .?'

'Will you please let us hear if you have sent any previous advice on this point, as we do not seem to be able to trace *same*'?

Whynot.

'Did you write to us on this matter before? We can find no trace of an earlier letter?'

. 'We shall be glad if you will consider this

¹ *The Above, Nearby, etc*

The adverb 'above', it seems, has become an adjective (or, according to my dictionary, a 'was'-adjective) like 'nearby', to which many warriors object I shall never use it in a leading article or epic poem myself but, since I frequently speak of 'those far-off days', I find it difficult to state a, logical case against 'a near-by hospital' But we may hope that the practice does not spread—e.g to 'the below remarks', 'the before paragraph', 'the behind horses', 'the herewith enclosure', 'the within savage dogs', 'the soon holiday season', or 'the between ham' (of sandwiches) Still, we speak without shame of 'the through tram', 'the off side', 'an off day', the 'up-grade', or 'an out-patient', so I leave the whole thing to your own judgment, Bobby, with my blessing (I know that learned distinctions can be made between many of these words and phrases, but they do not seem to have much substance) I will tell you this only, that I dislike 'a worthwhile policy' and I am not going to give any reasons.

proposition and let us know if you are prepared to take advantage of same.'

Why not:

'We hope that you will consider this suggestion (scheme, proposal, offer), and let us know if you like it!'

'We beg to acknowledge your favour under date 5th inst. advising us of the alteration in the style of your firm.'

Why not:

'We thank you for your letter of May 5th informing us that your firm has changed its name to . . .?'

The contents of your No. 123 under date loth ultimo have been communicated through the medium of our Liverpool office to Messrs. John Brown who now write to us as per copy of letter enclosed.'

Why not:

'Our Liverpool office has sent (? passed, shown] your letter of May loth to Messrs. John Brown, and we enclose a copy of their reply?'

'We thank you for your favour enclosing remittance which has been duly placed to the credit of your account, and for which we BEG to hand you our receipt herewith.'

Why not:

'We thank you for your letter and ? cheque. We have credited your account accordingly and enclose our receipt?'

'Prepared to take advantage of same . . .', 'in connexion with the above . . .', 'will write you further . . .', 'immediate attention', 'kindly advise

in due course . . .'—these wheezy locutions have neither speed nor grace; they are neither friendly nor efficient. They are the language of out-of-date automatic machines. Nobody expects an automatic machine to be elegant; but at least it ought to work.

Yet this unnatural language is *taught in books*. The wretched learner of shorthand, as he approaches the highest degree of skill, is set to practise on this kind of prose:

'We-thank-you for-your esteemed orders in-the past, and-we-trnst that-we-may still be favoured with your patronage in-the future. It-will-be our endeavour to-carry out to-the best-o.'ow-ability and-with-the utmost care any order with-which-you may entrust us.'

'We-enclose full range of linens and-will-thank-you to select- quality desired . . .'

'We-have-your-favour of-yesterday, and regret to-find that your complaints are well founded. Through some misunderstanding with-the clickers, your uppers were got up extra light, whereas they should-have-been-the reverse. Under-the-circumstances, we-shall-be only too-pleased¹ to-accept your proposal for a reduction. . . . Awaiting your further favours and assuring you of-our best attention . . .'

'We-are-at-present desirous o.'-transferring . . .'

'I-regret to see-the contents of-your communication of the 8th instant relative to-'the-manner-in-which our new gas stove has-been received up to-the-present in Leicester and district. . . . We-are still unadvised of-their having been sent off.'

¹ See 'Only Too Gladders', page 125.

'We-beg' .to-draw your-attention to-the fact that-we-have-now on hand a large variety of novelties for-the coming season . . . and-we-feel sure they-would-be worth your while to stock, as we expect a large demand in-these-lines during-the-next month or- two.'

Shades of the jargon-house begin to close about the growing boy—'esteemed orders' . . . Valued cheques' . . . 'every satisfaction'. Perhaps we are here on the track of the real culprit. The harassed 'business man' tells his trained secretary to 'answer that', and she (unless, like my gallant warrior 'Typist', she has a wit and a will of her own) automatically produces the language of the shorthand school. I cannot tell. But I 'beg' to suggest that there may be matter here for the esteemed and immediate attention of the Board of Education.

'Re'—Diploma piece

'We herewith enclose receipt for your cheque £4 on a/c *re* return of commission *re* Mr. Brown's cancelled agreement *re* No 50 Box Street top flat . . .'

Esteemed Orders in Soviet Russia

I do not know whether to laugh or cry. I 'am in receipt of a letter from the International Book Co., Moscow, inviting me to buy four or five 'cultural' papers, describing (in English) 'the opportunities of unhampered cultural expression(s) under a new economic rule'. This letter is extremely cultural and lofty in tone, and, as I read it, I felt that I saw the Dawn of a New Era at last. But it ends thus:

'We trust you will afford us the opportunity of

¹ Why is there so much 'begging'? Is it for courtesy or speed?

erving you, and in anticipation of your esteemed order, we remain,

'Yours very truly,
MEZHDUMARODNAYA KNIGA,
Export Department.'

So much for the Dawn'

P.S.—But in England, at least, we will not say yet that the struggle naught availeth. Too late for adequate comment here, I have received an admirable homily on 'Business Correspondence' which was distributed to the staff at Bournville by Mr. P. S. Cadbury in 1931. Among other things he says:

'Nothing is gained, and a great deal is lost, by translating everyday speech into the jargon known as "Business English".

The excuse made for "Business English" is that it saves time or makes for clarity. But, in practice, nine times out of ten it is both more cumbersome and more obscure than ordinary language. Compare, for instance, "We are favoured with yours of the 15th ultimo" and "We thank you for your letter of March 15th." . . .

"The use of periphrases such as "We are in receipt of" instead of "We have received", or "to be of service" instead of "to serve" is a waste of time, apart from its lack of style.

It should be observed that the word "beg" can almost invariably be removed from a sentence with beneficial results to the sense. . . .

. . . It is worth while to reiterate that certain business substitutes for common words should be rigorously barred. Typical examples are:

' "Your good selves" for "You".

' "re" for "about".

' "Same" for "this" or "it".

' "inst" and "ult." for the name of the month.'

So, brothers, it seems, we are not insane—nor even 'unpractical'.

Also, after the first delivery of the lecture on Officese (page 69), Mr. C. E. Wiles, the Sales Manager of Harrods, wrote to me in truly Christian fashion:

'Last night I squealed with delight over your letter from the "multiple store"—a thank-God-we-are-not-as-other-Stores sort of squeal.

This morning . . . I find it's *usl*

'You have done good. . . .'

Both these gentlemen will receive the Emerald Star.

GLOSSARY OF BRIEF COMMERCIAL TERMS AND PHRASES

<i>To say:</i>	<i>Write:</i>
We thank you . . .	We beg to acknowledge
Write . . .	Communicate
Make inquiries . . .	Institute the necessary inquiries
Understand, realize . . .	Appreciate
Tell, inform . . .	Advise
Your second letter . . .	Your further favour
A man . . .	Our representative
We received . . .	We are in receipt of
We believe, think . . .	We are of opinion
We agree . . .	We are in agreement
We shall try . . .	It will be our endeavour
We wish . . .	We are at present desirous
It . . .	The same
Some, much . . .	A substantial percentage (or proportion)
Give details . . .	Furnish particulars
Of to-day . . .	Of even date
You——swine!	Your good selves

VALUABLE NEOJOLLYOLOGISMS

From a well-known London shop:

'Should your order not exceed the sum of 17/6 an *additional plusage* of 25% will be charged.'

From a firm of 'Publishers and Educational Contractors for Handicraft Materials :

'As official contractors to your Authority, we shall welcome the opportunity of *sampling* you with anything you would like to see.'

'We are *sampling* Norway with the new articles.'

'To sample' (thus) is wrong, but I pass it, reluctantly. It is not ugly nor pretentious, and I perceive the need. I cannot say as much for 'plusage'.

'Soon'

'In the course of soon I will prepare a rough draft.'

(An official of the Navy, Army, and Air Force Institute)

'Same'

In court a document signed by the defendant was produced:

'This is my property and I have a perfect right to deal with *same*.

(Signed)

MANCHESTER'

Dear old 'same'! There are times and places at which 'same' tempts the noblest of us. I found a 'same' in R. L. Stevenson yesterday:

'I do not know the name of that flower, but it was of the pink colour, and I thought she would admire the same, and carried it home. . . .'

(*Catriona*)

But, in the Duke's document, it is hard to see what service is rendered by 'same', which would not be done as well by little 'it'. The Duke had not Stevenson's excuse that he had written one 'it' just before and had another coming soon.

Dear old 'samel The odd thing is that the commercial folk, who love 'the same' so well,¹ suppose that they are being brief and business-like when they say 'the same' instead of 'it'; and we, who prefer 'it', are wordy high-brows, incapable of understanding the need for simplicity and speed in the conduct of trade.

A warrior in a Norfolk rectory sends me a charming piece of same-work, in which 'same', I think for the first time, is seen as a limited-liability company:

'Having just published a New Illustrated Catalogue same will willingly be sent on application.'

Here, Bobby, is what your schoolmasters call a delicious Nominativus Pendens or Hanging Nominative, or a kind of Boneless Wonder.² We all commit such crimes; but seldom are they so shameless as this. There is no possible subject to the sentence, you see, except dear old 'same', and he has been doing a little publishing.

¹ eg 'We would be much obliged if you would return the tree complained of . . . It does not matter same having been cut down.'

² Consider also-

'Commencing forthwith, L M S caravans can be booked '
(*Advertisement*).

'Hastily summoning an ambulance, the corpse was carried to the mortuary.'

Now, this is not a hasty letter, so the offence cannot be fastened upon some defenceless typist. It is in a printed leaflet, and there is no excuse. Excellent persons complain in the House of Lords about the 'palpable scientific untruths' which they find in advertisements of 'liquor', and wish such advertising to be prohibited. Far more serious, in my view, are the advertiser's indefensible linguistic outrages. For the damage done to one man's liver is confined to his liver and his life; but damage to the King's English may endure for ever and affronts half the world.

SENSITIVE SHOPS

I know how sensitive the man of business is; but his reluctance to use such vulgar words as 'sell' and 'seller' is surely nearing the neurotic.

A warrior has caught, outside a new post office in Dorset, this: 'STAMP-VENDING MACHINE'

Another gentleman, whose daily task is what the vulgar call 'window-dressing,' tells me that he is now described by his fastidious employers as a 'display-artist'. And when he arranges his window with taste and skill he is known as a 'good merchandized.

'The Orientable Visor'

One of our great motor-manufacturers advertises 'A very neat orientable anti-glare visor'. What is meant, I believe, is a device to keep the sun out of a motorist's eyes.

'Speclating'

'A sun frock in natural linen ... for *sports spectating*.'

(Committed by a Bond Street shop)

I know what could, logically, be said for this. But

how can a shop with such a taste in words expect to persuade us that it has good taste in sun-frocks?

Plain English in Guernsey

Trovisioner and Groceteria'

Fun on the Exchanges

'Industrials displayed several good features . . .'

'Although activity quietened down offerings were well absorbed . . .'

'Scattered hedge selling was absorbed by local buying and trade calling offset week-end realizing.'

'The bond market drifted narrowly . . .'

'In the afternoon a good distribution of small gains was shown, with communication and alcohol shares very active . . .'

'After some early indecision the conditions tended to improve, and while certain irregularity persisted, fractional gains predominated . . .'

(EXERCISE—Give, in your own words, a description of the market that day.)

The *protagonists*¹ of silver stocks were heartened by the firmer world prices for the commodity . . .'

(*The Times*]

The Aircraft group remained heavy, and it was said that its non-resiliency was due to the existence of a fair-sized "bull" account . . .'

The market early declined on liquidation and on selling by foreign houses due to an anti-inflation interpretation of the Senate's veto. *The fall was accentuated by reports of favourable weather.*'

¹ See page 99.

'Business rather marked time yesterday . . .'

'Falls in aircraft were partly a result of profit-taking which also reflected Hitler's speech.'

'The *upshot* of these various *factors*, at any rate, was that Rentes dropped sharply.'

'Kaffirs firmed up.'¹

'Canadian National Railway Bonds . . . are widely held by investors in this country and *enjoy excellent marketability*.'

(From a Stockbroker's letter)

'Only a fortnight ago our Metal Market reporter pointed out that the *backwardation* on the three months' quotation for tin had fallen. . . . Actually, however, *the recent rise in the backwardation of tin* is evidence that wiser counsels are prevailing.'

¹ Very septic.

INTERVAL FOR GOOD STUFF

Now here, Bobby, is one of His Majesty's Judges discussing a very dull, difficult, and complicated matter, the valuation of land; but you will see that it is possible to discuss the dull, difficult, and complicated affairs of to-day without plunging into the swamps of Dolichologia, or Jungle English, or Officese.

From the judgment of Lord Justice MOULTON, in the case of *Re Lucas and Chesterfield Gas and Water Board*, 1909'

The principles upon which compensation is assessed when land is taken under compulsory powers are well settled. The owner receives for the lands he gives up their equivalent—that is, that which they are worth to him in money. His property is, therefore, not diminished in amount, but to that extent it is compulsorily changed in form. But the equivalent is estimated on the value to him, and not on the value to the purchaser, and hence it has from the first been recognized as an absolute rule that this value is to be estimated as it stood before the scheme was authorized by which they are put to public uses. Subject to that, he is entitled to be paid the full price for his lands, and any and every element of value which they possess must be taken into consideration in so far as they increase the value to him. At a very early date in the history of this branch of the law there arose what is known as the question of "special adaptability". The phrase is not a happy one, for special adaptability for some purpose or other is the very basis of the market value of all land, except, perhaps, land that in all respects falls below the average. In agricultural land extra fertility, in town lands advantages of

site, are true cases of special adaptability for farming or building purposes. These tend so directly to increase both the value and the market price of lands in the hands of a private owner that it has never been doubted that he could urge them in augmentation of the compensation which he was entitled to receive. . . . No element of that which economists term "Value in use" can, in my opinion, increase compensation unless it is either a "value in use" to the seller, or a "value in use" to persons other than the proposed purchaser so as to introduce the element of competition as a factor in fixing price.'

IV
ODD LOTS

NOTE. *For those who will return to this Work for refreshment and instruction an Index is provided at the end.*

'Commence'

EXERCISE

(1) Are the following passages correctly quoted?

'In the commencement God created the heaven and the earth.'¹

(GENESIS i. i)

'Blossom by blossom the spring commences.'
(SWINBURNE)

'The lights commence to twinkle from the rocks.'

(TENNYSON)

'A work commenced is half done.'

(Proverb)

'Commence, be bold . . .'

(ABRAHAM COWLEY)

'When the pie was opened the birds commenced to sing.'

(Nursery Rhyme)

(2) Commit the passages above to memory, and when you meet an incorrigible 'commenced' open rapid fire with them until he cries for mercy.

PS.—I was grieved and surprised to hear that two Canons had complained about my first quotation (above), for I do not go out of my way to offend

churchmen, and there is surely no irreverence in appealing to the original text as to a model. Two days later I read that Mr. Justice Bennett (who will receive the Blue Star) had jumped upon 'commence' from the King's Bench. He said: 'I don't believe it appears in the Book of Common Prayer.' And counsel (who will receive a medal) reminded the Court that the Bible does not begin, 'In the commencement . . .'

So the Canons, to whom my respectful salutes, must now carry their complaints to the Courts. And I am sure that they will join me in objecting to such expressions as 'God-hungry'. We cannot all agree upon questions of taste: but I must say that this offends me:

'We are living in a God-hungry world.'
(GENERAL EVANGELINE BOOTH, in the *Daily*——)

No protests to the paper about this, I dare say. But if I express the hope that from 'God-hunger' we shall not pass to 'God-appetite', I shall, I suppose, be in trouble again.

Stop Press

I have been asked, Bobby, to say exactly *why* I object to 'commence', and I am told that the answer of other objectors has been 'I really don't know. It just obviously provokes objection.'

And a good reply too. But there is more. It is not so much the word as the habit that is bad.¹ 'More formal than begin.' says the dictionary; but a chronic commencer commences everything, from an Eisteddfod to a sandwich. Also, the word is longer than 'begin', but the length adds no strength.

¹ And *see* 'practically', and 'literally'.

Also, to my ear, 'beginning' is musical and 'commencement' is not. Also, it is a Snob-word. You may go now.

'Centre round'

Here, in my judgment, is another offence which is increasing and ought to be abolished. 'The little *coterie* which centred round So-and-So . . .' 'Comment in the Lobbies centred round the re-alignment of, etc., etc.'

Surely, surely, brothers, it should be 'centred *in*'! For how the Thackeray can anything find its centre *round* something else which is already the centre? If I am wrong it would be correct to say that the stars centred round the sun. But do they?

At the end of a great speech in the House of Commons, our dear Sir Austen Chamberlain said that if Germany took a certain course

'she would find this country in her path again—and with this country those great free Commonwealths which centre round it.'

No man can be cross with Sir Austen, and I welcome this excuse to compliment him upon his speech. Moreover, he is one of the few men who can make a great speech without preparation,¹ and I believe that he could plead that defence in this case. But he must not lead the legislators astray again. Surely, if the great free Commonwealths do any 'centring' at all, which I doubt, they centre *in* or *at*, or *on* the Mother Country? The one thing certain is that they cannot centre *round* her any more than she can stand at the heart of the circumference.

¹ See 'Interval for Good Stuff', page 202.

'While'

A comrade sends me some nice pieces of while-work—'while' used, not very happily, for 'and' or 'but':

The Curate read the First Lesson while the Rector read the Second'

—a horrid scene. Or, worse still:

'The Dean read the Lessons while the Bishop preached the Sermon.'

And recently on the wireless, says the comrade, it was announced that

'Sir John Simon left by aeroplane at 10 p.m. *while* Mr. Eden leaves Berlin to-morrow for Moscow'.

To *loan'*

'Loaned on hire'

(*Monthly Bulletin*, BRITISH FILM INSTITUTE)

At least twenty warriors have thrust their spears into the verb 'to loan'. He is old, I believe, and emigrated to America. Now he has returned; but, having grown up with 'lend', I agree, I do not like him. For if 'to loan', why not 'to gift' (as in 'I will gift¹ you a thick ear')?

'Transpire'

A Chester comrade makes a reluctant stab at Sir George Rankin for the following outrage in an official report:

'Head Warder P. says that he did not see what transpired in D Hall.'

¹ But 'to gift', I hear, is already raging in some parts of Scotland

Transpired! O Gosh! O Golly! The subject of the report was some disorder at a convict prison. The meanings of 'transpire', according to the *S.O.E.D.*, are '(i) To emit or cause to pass in the state of vapour through the walls or surface of the body. (2) To emit vapour or perfume. . . . To give off moisture through the skin . . . (3) To pass out as vapour through pores, to exhale . . . to escape by evaporation. (4) (*fig.*) To escape from secrecy to notice . . .'

I cannot believe that the mutinous convicts in D Hall did any of these things, unless it was to 'escape by evaporation'.

I am happy to be able, for once, to applaud the bravery of the dictionary named, which concludes its remarks upon 'transpire' thus:

¶ *b* Misused for: To occur, happen, *orig.* U.S. 1804.'

Whatever may have been said by some thoughtless, facetious, or intoxicated person on the American Continent in 1804, we will not brothers, have 'transpire' in the sense of 'occur, happen'. Shoot it.

'*Unthinkable*'

'I hope I should do my best to be of assistance in the unthinkable event of another European war. . . .'

(The Rev. H. R. L. SHEPPARD in the *Daily Herald*)

The social life of the moon is to (or by?) me unthinkable; and a shy and reticent barber is unthinkable; and the *horrors* of another war might be said to be unthinkable. But when a politician or public man says that something is 'unthinkable' you may make a safe bet that, as in this instance, not

only the speaker but the general population are thinking hard about the unthinkable thing. Some of us remember sadly that in the year 1914 the thinkers about war with Germany were frequently declaring such a war to be unthinkable.

Insanitary Verbs

Do we battle in vain, brothers? I thought that we had killed the baneful verb 'to sabotage'. But here it is, in the *New Statesman* again, and—worse—poisoning the pages of one of my most favoured dailies, in a leading article too.

'It is almost as if the Cabinet had decided to *sabotage in advance* the Foreign Secretary's mission to Berlin and Moscow.'

Sabotage meant the malicious throwing of shoes, or *sabots*, by French workmen into the machinery of their masters. The noun, meaning 'spiteful damage', has come to stay, and, so long as it behaves itself, may do some service. But let us by all means sabotage the verb, for the robust verb '*to wreck*' will always do the same work better. Certain politicians like it, because it can be used to suggest malicious injury where there is no malice and no injury is done. But that is only to say that the use of it is unfair as well as unlovely. (See 'Witch-words', page 229.) Some will admonish me that we have made a verb of 'to garage'; but that is a very poor precedent. 'Garage' has become 'garridge' already; and though the statesman may still say 'sabotahj' it will soon be 'sabotidge' or 'sabotaij'. Now, 'damidge' has a passable sound and even 'garridging' is easily said; but 'sabotaged' and 'sabotidging' will be impossible and nauseous. So that the verb fails, as the film-folk say,

'for sound' as well as for sense. (See 'Entrance Examination', Appendix I.)

Its use in this case is singularly inept. The picture of the Cabinet doing malicious damage to the mission of its own Foreign Secretary, arranged by its own authority, is ridiculous enough. But in addition, mark you, we have here the picture of a superior body throwing shoes into the machinery, or mission, of a subordinate individual; so that the original sense has been completely forgotten. And how can a mission be sabotaged 'in advance'? A thing is sabotaged, surely, if it is sabotaged at all (which Heaven forbid!), when it is sabotaged, and not before.

'Spin'

A warrior sends me a sporting curiosity which cheers but not infuriates me. 'Why,' he says, 'does the Oxford crew go out for a practice spin?' Why 'spin'? I can't imagine. I know that oarsmen are not the only sportsmen who go for 'spins'. Pugilists go for 'spins' (that is, trots) before breakfast. My dictionary says:

'SPIN (4). A spell of continuous movement by way of exercise or pastime; a fairly rapid ride or run of some duration. 1856. (5) A spell of quick rowing or sailing. 1875. "A ten-mile spin with a great-coat on" 1890.'

But it does not say who said 'spin' in these senses, or why. My own theory is that 'spin' was first used of a drive in a horse-carriage by some poetical ploughman who saw the squire's *wheels* 'spinning' round and looking like tops in the evening sun. Then a fast ride on a horse became a spin, though the wheels were no longer present; then it was extended from a horse running to a man running; and so to walking, sailing,

and rowing. It is an odd word, I agree, with which to describe the dignified movements of the Oxford University boat, though I do not feel very hot about it.

But if any one says that at Hammersmith Bridge Cambridge spurted and *sabotaged* Oxford's lead—as one day, if we are not careful, somebody will—then, brothers, he shall see our swords flash.

More 'izcs'

In the great *Times* the Mayor of Vancouver is reported to have said that

'Vancouver is being victimized by an organized attempt to capitalize for revolutionary purposes the conditions of depression'.

This musical sentence shows how right we were to deprecate the uncontrolled manufacture and use of uncomely verbs in '-ize'. 'Victimize'¹ and 'capitalize', poor half-breeds though they are, have done good service in political controversy and will do more, if they are not overworked in the wrong places. But now every one who considers himself injured is 'victimized' and every one who seeks to profit 'capitalizes'. I shall be told that the words are clear and useful. Well, then, let us have more:

'Vancouver is being victimized by an organized attempt to capitalize for revolutionizing purposes the depressionized conditions.'

That, I think, is equally clear. But so, I humbly suggest, is this:

'Vancouver is the victim of revolutionaries who are trying to make political profit from the depression.'

I throw that off lightly. No doubt there are many brief and better ways of expressing the mayor's thought.

His use of 'victimize', I confess, amuses me; for the word was invented by those against whom he now employs it. But 'capitalize'? No. If we must 'bitterize' our arguments with the mulish word, let us at least see that it observes its own rules. In my view I can only 'capitalize' (that is to say, convert into capital) something which already belongs to me. You may say rudely that I 'capitalize' my rheumatism (which, by the way, continues still) by writing articles about it. But I cannot capitalize *your* rheumatism by writing articles about it. And therefore I condemn the advertisement sent to me by a warrior which asserts that the makers of certain cellular blankets have 'capitalised this mother-instinct in their Sales campaign for 1935'.

I suppose you will now say that the 'depression' belongs to every one, and therefore the revolutionaries can correctly be said to convert it into (political) capital. I don't care what you say. *' will not have the mongrel verb.*

PS.—And (this will show you that I do not exaggerate the perils of 'izery') a warrior tells me that he has trodden on the hybrid verb 'to virilize';

' . . . and the determination to *virilize* his crooning, so to speak . . . '

(News Chronicle Week-end Supplement)

That 'so to speak' is a moving plea for mercy; but, no, brothers, we must be firm. For 'ize-mania' is contagious and quick. The next thing, we shall read of Herr Hitler feminizing his foreign policy—O Gosh! I have just looked in the dictionary and IT is THERE!

'FEMINIZE—1652. To make or become feminine.'

I surrender. I give up the struggle. No, I don't. For 'virilize' is not there yet. Let us fight on.

'Pro-tagonist'

I heard with horror and genuine surprise from a warrior that the word 'protagonist' is being used as if it were pro-tagonist—one who is *for* something, and opposed to ant-agonist, one who is against it. Heavens! And here is Sir Samuel Hoare making a fine (and prepared) speech for the third reading of the Government of India Bill:

'My right honourable friends and others have come out in this House as the protagonists of self-determination.'

O dear!

'Protagonist', Bobby, is compounded of the Greek *TPPCOTOS* (meaning 'first') and *aroma-rc* (meaning 'combatant' or 'actor'), and the whole means the chief personage in a drama or conflict. You may say that Sir John Simon was the protagonist in the Stresa drama, but *not* that he was a protagonist for Peace. And then they say that it is a waste of time for Englishmen to learn the 'dead languages'. They should be taught in every elementary school—and in all the schools of journalism.¹ Why not advocate or champion?

'To sabotage'

This ugly beast still prowls abroad. See the 'May-Day Manifesto of the Labour Party and Trades Union Congress:

'Changes in the economic system which will shorten hours of toil, etc. . . . are deliberately obstructed and sabotaged.'

¹ See 'The Dead Languages', page 162.

'And.' let us add, 'barraged, persiflaged, entouraged, orphanaged, misusaged, wreckaged, bonded, and stoppaged.' Now, I think, the meaning is clear.

'Contact'

The useful noun 'contact' has been ill-treated for a long time by some of the young and precious, who no longer meet pleasant people but make intriguing contacts.

Ten thousand times more loathsome is the verb 'to contact'—have you met it? A charming lady in the publicity business shocked me when we parted by saying that 'It has been such fun contacting you'. My brothers, let this verb be sabotaged by every possible avenue.¹

'Frankenstein'

Mr. Attlee, in a debate on foreign affairs, exhibited a delightful piece of Frankenstein-work:

'For the creation of this Frankenstein the British Government must bear its share of responsibility.'

It is hard to say why so many distinguished politicians (and lawyers) insist on dragging the dreary fellow *Frankenstein* into their speeches, especially as, nearly always, they drag him upside-down. The illustrious Fowler has patiently reminded the world of the correct method of doing a Frankenstein, if it must be done; but it may be worth while to remind the world again.

Frankenstein is a character in a book by the wife of the poet Shelley, a mortal who creates a being in the form of man; and he is himself tormented by his creature,

¹ 'Should you be able to contact some Wedgwood pottery . . . we shall appreciate it.' (Letter from North America)

Frankenstein, then, is the creator and *victim*; but nine politicians out of ten make *Frankenstein* the *monster*, as Mr. Attlee does. But he goes farther into the swamps of error than most orators. For he speaks of a 'share of responsibility'. So that *Frankenstein* has now become a sort of committee or corporation. It would have been strong, at least (though ridiculous), to say that the British Government was a *Frankenstein* which would be tormented and destroyed by the monster of its own creation. But since the monster in his mind was 'Hitler Germany', not even Mr. Attlee could go so far as that. So he waters it down to a '*share* of responsibility', and whatever dramatic force there might have been in the allusion disappears.

The orders are, then, statesmen all—no more *Frankenstein* stuff, whether you understand what you are saying or not. And for you, my warriors, the only course is to cackle loud and long whenever you hear such a sentence rolling pompously from the platform. Go on cackling, too, until the orator has to stop and ask you why you cackle. Then tell him. He won't get *Frankenstein* skew-whiff again. Leave no stone unturned to victimize *Frankenstein* and his confounded monster.

P.S.—I should add, in case I may seem to be claiming superior knowledge, that I got the information about *F.* out of reference works. Mr. Attlee evidently has not read the story of *F.* Nor have I. And I don't suppose I ever shall. But then I don't drag him into political speeches.

FRANKENSTEIN GIVES A PARTY FOR NEMESIS.

Mr. T. J. O'Connor, K.C., in the Rattenbury murder trial: "... a woman who had erected in this poor young man a Frankenstein of jealousy

which she could not control. Frankenstein was too great for her, Frankenstein pursued her, and Nemesis, I suggest, came on the night of March 24th."

'In any shape or form.' *'Of any sort or kind'*

This must stop. Lawyers and politicians, please note.

*'Anticipate'*¹

Many warriors attack those who say 'anticipate' when they mean no more than 'expect'. They are right, and will receive medals. If there are any rebels who do not admit that the act is wrongful, let them consider these two sentences and say whether they mean the same thing: 'John and Jane expected to be married' and 'John and Jane anticipated marriage.'

' "I *anticipate* to prove conclusively." said Mr. Edmunds, "that the defendant knew perfectly well that the jewelry was not his property." '

(The Times)

And Mr. Edmunds was Counsel for the Crown in the prosecution of a Duke. O fie! Perhaps the importance of the case bewildered him. The odd thing is that earlier in the hearing Mr. Edmunds said that he *expected* to prove that the Duke had done this or that; so that he is estopped, as the lawyers say, from pleading that he did not know the word 'expect'. I cannot believe that my learned brother in the law believes that 'anticipating' is the same as 'expecting', or that 'anticipate' is the more elegant word. In fact, the thing is a mystery.

Note for Bobby.—'Anticipate', Bobby, has always (or should have) the notion of doing or taking something in advance of something—before the proper, natural, or appointed time (strictly, it means to seize *ante* or beforehand). If you ask your poor father to give you a bicycle, you may or may not *expect* to get it, but you do not *anticipate* to get it (unless you are appearing for the Crown). Now, if your father pops in with a strong 'No, Bobby, I won't give you a bicycle' when you have only said, 'Please, Daddy——' he may be said to *anticipate* your request, or the end of your sentence.

Here is a good example:

The General Council of the Trade Union Congress decided to suggest . . . that the *anticipated* surplus in the insurance fund . . . should be *used* to, etc. . . .'

But if it had been 'anticipated' it would have been used already.

The crime is common. Here is the illustrious Mr. J. L. Garvin striding the sacred quarterdeck of the *Observer*:

'Nothing like the magnitude of what happened could be *anticipated*.'

He means here, Bobby, I suppose, 'foreseen'.

Why any one should want to use the word except on the rare occasions when he must, I cannot tell.

EXERCISE

Have you the faintest notion what this means?

'Mr. Lang, as was *expected*, presented victory to

Mr. Stevens even more handsomely than was *anticipated*.'

(The *Observer's* Correspondent in Sydney)

'As to'

To consider as *to* the provision of landing-stages on the Embankment . . .'

(L.C.C. agenda)

'As to', I suppose, makes the Councillors feel that they are not committed to actual consideration.

But here is the Board of Education:

The question referred to the Committee by the Board of Education was worded thus:

To inquire *as to* the selection and provision of books for public Elementary schools. . . .'

(See Fowler's *Modern English Usage*: 'As'¹—seven columns)

Aftermathematics

'Aftermath' is much overworked. It means 'second or later mowing: the crop of grass which springs up after the mowing in the early summer'.

But what does this mean?

' . . . ideas of individuality, freedom, tolerance, and eternal youth with which the aftermath of war was impregnated.' I cannot tell. But one of the special prizes for Happy Metaphors will go to the Impregnated Aftermath.

Why, by the way, is the metaphorical 'aftermath', as a rule, unpleasant?

Very often it is a 'hideous aftermath'; and I have seen one 'sinister aftermath'. There is nothing very sinister (is there?) in a second crop of grass.

'Literally'

'The horse was literally melting like butter.' It may have been toffee—or chocolate: I cannot swear to the butter. But I know that the horse was literally melting. And the speaker was Mr. R. C. Lyle, fine writer and racing correspondent to *The Times*. He was, it is fair to add, speaking on the wireless, just before the Derby; and in such agitating circumstances a man may be forgiven much. Mr. H. B. T. Wakelam had the same defence when he said that some one ' . . . *literally* cracked Vincent to the boundary.'¹

The only safe way with 'literally'¹, Bobby, is never to say 'literally'. If you say 'literally' a thousand times there is a faint chance that it may be correct and valuable once or twice—but not more. In most of the other instances you will perceive, if you give the brain a little work, that what you really mean is '*not* literally'. For 'literally' means 'in the very words, word for word. . . . (b) Used to indicate that the following word must be taken in its literal sense'. By 'literally' you should mean that you mean every word you say; but, as a rule, you mean that you don't mean a word of it. So Mr. Lyle meant that the horse was melting 'as it were' like butter, *not* literally, but, as Nanny would say, 'in a manner of speaking'. You may sit for a long time trying (in vain) to think of a genuine, legitimate 'literally'; and the odds against one turning up suddenly in conversation are so high that it is safest, I repeat, to avoid the word. Shun it especially when you are using a metaphorical figure of speech, such as 'coining money', 'cutting the painter', 'burning your boats', or 'heaping coals of fire': for then you are sure to be unsound and are probably silly. You might say that Mr. Baldwin was at the top of the tree, and we should all

understand you. But if you say that he is 'literally at the top of the tree' we shall think of a bird or a monkey. You may be 'fed-up with newspapers': but if you are 'literally fed-up with newspapers' we can only conclude that you have been eating them.

Most of us also say 'literally' when what we mean is 'Veritably' or 'absolutely' or 'really'—or 'Virtually', 'practically' or 'Very nearly'—flinging into the battle what we think is a convincing word to support a false or unconvincing cause. 'I was *literally* exhausted'—'She *literally* ignored me'—The place was *literally* empty'. 'Literally' here is a sort of verbal italics; it is like the fierce faces of a feeble fellow; and anything that it does you can do better by using a truly forcible word instead or by giving an emphatic accent to the word which it qualifies—for example, to 'exhausted', 'ignored', and 'empty'.

I do not say, Bobby, that 'literally' is never valid or useful. But, at its best, it is only a confession that, as a rule, we do not mean what we say and an appeal to the world to believe us this time. 'The Blackheath boy . . . called on yet another effort, literally leaving Lovelock with his finishing effort' (*Sunday Times*). 'Not France, for with literally half the members of the Assembly in her pocket . . .' (Lord Edward Gleichen). If 'half is true, 'literally' is unnecessary: if 'half is not, 'literally' will not improve the lie; and, either way, it goes ill with 'in her pocket'. If, at a picnic, Bobby, you quarrelled with George about the lighting of the fire and George emptied the brazier over you, you might say that he *literally* 'heaped coals of fire' upon your head. But I should not bother to arrange a picnic for that purpose. For you will find, I *think*, a valid 'literally' on page 181.

'Infer' and 'Imply'

'Infer', Bobby, is *not* the same as 'imply'. 'Infer' is a sort of thinking and 'imply' is a sort of saying. If you see a man staggering along the road you may *infer* that he is drunk, without saying a word; but if you say 'Had one too many?' you do not *infer* but *imply* that he is drunk.

'Feasible'

'He found that they had taken his imaginary letter seriously and published it, as though it was *feasible* that the Chancellor would send him a letter divulging Budget secrets.'

(THE RT. HON. L. S. AMERY, M.P.)

'Feasible.' Bobby, means 'doable', not 'possible', 'probable', or 'likely'. A revolution might be feasible to-morrow, but not rain. I am possibly, probably, and very likely, but not feasibly, an ass.

EXERCISE

What did the charwoman say when invited to forgo her mid-morning cup of tea?

ANSWER

'Not blooming feasibly.'

'Voice'

The letter which you published on April 5th . . . *voices*, I believe, the opinion of a very large proportion of the thinking people in this country.'

I do not greatly like 'to voice', even when the Mayor 'voices' the feeling of the whole Borough.

This may be unreasonable: for we 'eye' people, or fail to 'stomach' them; we 'head' the fox (or the list), and 'foot' the bill; we 'shoulder' a burden, and 'back' a friend. So, I suppose, we must let the Mayor continue—in his speeches—to voice the opinion of the Borough. But I still feel—a pedant, maybe—that a *letter* cannot legitimately be said to do any voicing.

7 *understand'*

'The sluices, I understand, are operated by a system of cam-gauges. . . .'

When a writer or speaker says 'I understand', he may mean any of the following:

- (1) 'I do not understand, and probably never shall.' (As above)
- (2) 'I believe.'
- (3) 'I suspect.'
- (4) 'I know.'
- (5) 'I have been informed.'
- (6) 'There is a strong rumour at the club', or
- (7) 'I have considerable sympathy with you, though I shall never understand why people like you behave in this extraordinary manner.'

But it is very rarely that he means 'I understand'.

No grave danger to the country here, Bobby: but a curiosity worth watching.

SNOB-WORDS

'Ideology'

'Ideology' means '(1) The science of ideas; the study of the origins and nature of ideas. . . .

(2) Ideal or abstract speculation; esp. visionary theorizing.'

According to J. Adams, Napoleon invented the word, and meant by it 'Visionary theorizing'.

It does *not* mean a given person's principles and beliefs or attitude to life and politics. But that is how the intense people who love a wriggling snob-word use it. It is most employed in what are called 'progressive circles'. If you meet a young woman who has just returned from an eight-day visit to Russia she will probably inform you that you have a 'bourgeois ideology', and unless you know that she is using the word wrongly this may make you feel very uncomfortable. Or you may hear a young man murmur dreamily to another from the depths of a shaded sofa 'Your ideology is so antagonistic to mine'—by which he means that they do not agree upon certain unimportant subjects.

This is both erroneous and nasty; so now, brothers, you will know what to do.

You will find it quite easy, Bobby, to pass through life and attain high honour in almost any walk of life without ever using the word 'ideology'.

'Mentality' too. O Gosh!

'Phenomenal'

'That was why the Opposition refused to support the Government in their phenomenal expansion. . . .'

(SIR STAFFORD CRIPPS, M.P.)

Sir Stafford Cripps was educated at Winchester College and I shall always be grateful to him for giving me my football colours. But, after this promising start, he should have known better than to use the swaggering but gutless 'phenomenal'.

'Phenomenon', Bobby, is a Greek participle (neuter) meaning 'appearing' and nothing more. It

is, no doubt, a useful word in science and philosophy, meaning a 'thing that appears or is perceived or observed—a fact or occurrence'. Just any thing, fact, occurrence, or what-not. It need not be an enormous or astonishing thing: it can be a beetle or a wet day. There is nothing in its origin, history, or scientific usage to justify us in using it as a substitute for 'prodigy', though this was done, I believe, by some loose fellow in 1771. Nor does 'phenomenal' properly carry the meaning of 'prodigious', 'extraordinary', or 'exceptional'. It means 'apparent, perceptible', as opposed to 'real, absolute'. So that, strictly, Sir Stafford, you would speak of a 'phenomenal expansion' of the Air Force if you meant or knew that it was not really, substantially, or in the long run, being expanded at all. Your use of the word is merely parrot-patter, and it must not occur again.

Note for Statesmen.—Don't believe everything you see in the dictionary.

'Intriguing'

Here is a startling offence, attributed, in *The Times*, to Mr. J. Ewart Smart, Director of Education at Acton:

'Two intriguing questions arose—namely, how did we expect to inculcate road sense in the case of children from three to five years of age. . . .'

'Intriguing' does not—at least, it shall not—mean 'very interesting'.

An intriguing question, I admit, is less hateful than an intriguing hat or pair of pyjamas; but I can see nothing in this question that is intriguing, in any sense. It is a simple and a rather silly question. My dictionary says that 'to intrigue' is to

trick, deceive, perplex (now rare); to carry on underhand plotting, etc.; and, 'as a recent Gallicism, to excite the curiosity or interest of. Feeble, as usual. This 'recent Gallicism', brothers, I declare to be not rare but redundant. It must die.

EXERCISE

Are the following passages correct?

'He wore an intriguing bowler hat.'

The Bishop preached an intriguing sermon.'

'The Majority Report of the Royal Commission on the Disposal of Sewage provides intriguing reading.'

'*Envisage*'

'He envisaged the building of a double-deck station and the construction of a tube. . . .'

(Sir PHILIP DAWSON in *The Times*)

The poet Keats may write 'to envisage circumstance, all calm'; one might envisage the Parliament of Man or the Reign of Peace. But to envisage the building of a railway station has high 'pomposity-value'. Why not 'consider', 'propose', 'contemplate', 'plan', or 'suggest'?

The word sounds well in French, but pronounced in English is ugly; and it should be another warning to us not to take such words as 'sabotage' to our incautious bosoms: for 'sabotahj' in the end will become 'sabotidge' or 'sabotaij'.

'*Vicinage*'

' . . . welcomes you for a stay at modest Tariff while you explore the vicinage.'

(Advertisement)

Yes, 'vicinage' is in the dictionary and was used by Burke and Horace Walpole. But I should like to hear the gentleman who wrote it pronounce it. Then I should like to hear whether he knows the origin of the word (the Latin *vicinus*, Bobby). For I suspect that he is one of those who condemn the teaching of Latin and Greek.

'Nonchalantly'

In the dictionary. But how is it pronounced?

In my view, Bobby, we should never write a word which we cannot comfortably read aloud.

'Brochure'

In the United States Senate, I believe, the affected 'cloture' brings debates to an end. And innumerable hotels in England offer to send me an 'Illustrated Brochure on request'.

Why?

And how do the managers pronounce it?

'Proceed'

'Proceed' was a fine word once—a dignified word to be kept for dignified occasions. 'Then shall the Bishop proceed to the Communion.'¹ It was well enough for our dignified policemen 'to proceed to the scene of the crime', for our dignified troops 'to proceed to France'. But now the whole world 'proceeds'—and even 'proceeds to go'; and those who merely 'go' or 'pass' have become the dignified exceptions. So it did not surprise me much to see that oil had caught the habit:

'Diagram of oil proceeding from feeder pipe into main pipe.'

(*Monthly Bulletin*, BRITISH FILM INSTITUTE)

'Discussant'

'Judge R. S. Hoskings . . . has been substituted as *discussant* in the place of Frank T. Sharpe at the Group Meeting on The Contribution of Child Guidance Theory to the Treatment of Behaviour Problems. . . .'

(*The Daily Bulletin of the National Conference of Social Work* . . . Montreal)

Evidently the Group is composed of sociological fussants, but if 'speaker' is too crude would not 'discusser' do?

Jungle Stuff in Norther,i Ireland

'Pavilions No. 1 and No. 2 will be devoted to ambulant female patients, who will now be *more proximal* to the administrative theatre. . . .'

(Belfast Paper)

This might be a joke, and ought to be, but, I fear, is not.

'Proximal', I know, is a word used in anatomy; and I know what 'ambulant'¹ means; but, really, really!

EXERCISE

Who wrote:

'So proximal and yet so distal'¹?

'Haver' (*unfortunate use of*)

The League Council, after considerable haver-ing, came to no definite decision.'

(Somebody's Geneva Correspondent)

But 'to haver', Bobby, means 'to talk foolishly, to talk nonsense', not, as so many of us seem to think, 'to hesitate or hover'.

Happy Metaphor

The Irish Free State had held out the olive branch but nothing of a concrete nature had come out of it. . . .'

(Mr. MAXTON, M.P.—*Daily Telegraph*)

'Factor'

'I am assured that the greatest income from any single *factor* in Switzerland is *in connection with* the League of Nations.'

(Mr. R. DAVIES, M.P.—*Hansard*)

' . . . there would certainly seem to be some *factor* at work undermining their resistance to this disease. . . . Referring to a number of *factors* that were inimical to health. . . . To-day we have a new *factor* in intermingling in cinemas, trains, omnibuses. . . . Another grave *factor* is unemployment. . . . The third *factor* making for ill-health is the slums. . . .'

(Lord HAREWOOD, as reported in a Birmingham paper)

'Factor' is a useful labour-saver, grossly over-worked; and five factors in twenty-three lines seem excessive.

¹ *Knowledgeable'*

The Welsh Department of the Board of Education, in its report for 1934, remarks that the term 'a knowledgeable man or woman' appears to be falling into disuse; and seems to regret it. I do not. It may be a peculiar fad, but I detest 'knowledgeable' (especially when used instead of 'intelligent', 'well-informed', 'learned', 'educated', 'well-read', 'wise', 'thoughtful', and other worthy words).

Our noun-able words (compared with our verb-able words—like 'movable', Bobby) are very few; and most of them are manifestly ill-bred, though useful and popular—as 'peaceable', 'serviceable', 'fashionable', 'seasonable', 'saleable', 'marriageable'. (Our precious 'reasonable' is really a verb-able, I think—'able to be questioned', called to account, reasoned, or reasoned with, though I may be wrong.)

If 'knowledgeable' was used only to describe one who was *capable* of something or other, it would at least be defensible in logic, though it would still be a blot on the stud-book, and 'teachable' would still be better.

But it is not, as a rule, used thus. You call a man 'knowledgeable' when you mean that he has already *acquired* knowledge and is full of information. And that is like saying 'marriageable' when you mean 'married', or 'saleable' when you mean 'sold'.

This is a difficult affair, brothers. I use 'peaceable' and 'fashionable' so often that I do not like to 'put the Whips on' against 'knowledgeable'. But any warrior who wishes to please the Master will shun the word, or only use it, if he must, in the sense of 'teachable' or 'capable of learning'.

P.S.—And let no citizen suppose that he is entitled to *invent* a new word of this kind by taking any noun and adding 'able' to it—such as 'colleageable' or 'foodable'. This is no nervous fancy, brothers—*see* 'Readable', denounced elsewhere.

'Wear'

'Motley's the only weare.' (SHAKESPEARE)

I have been implored by many to attack 'neck-wear', 'foot-wear', 'sleep-wear',¹ and 'swim-wear'.

¹ Not 'slumber', I beg.

Perhaps because I am weak, perhaps because they are brief and simple, they do not anger me so much as others. But I agree with an Oxford warrior that when an optician in that venerable city advertises not glasses, nor even spectacles, but

EYEWEAR

the time has come for 'a measure of severity'.¹

And would not NOSEWEAR be nearer to truth?

'Rendition'

A warrior-Colonel writes plaintively from Aldershot that for thirty years he has been fighting, in vain, against this kind of crime:

'You are requested to expedite the rendition of your Return of Musical Horses, etc.'

And why, at concerts, another comrade aptly inquires, do Vocalists' never sing, but 'give a pleasing rendition' of Tosti's 'Good-bye'?

'Rendition', I see, is dated 1601; but I do not care. And I greatly fear that before long the vocalists and staff officers may be caught 'renditioning', or even 're-renditioning'. Put this word outside in good time.

!!! *not'*

'England's Captain, R. E. S. Wyatt, played one of the greatest, *if not* the most attractive innings of his career. . . .'

(Observer)

'If not' is useful, properly handled: but this may mean (i) '*though it was not* the most attractive' or (2) '*and perhaps* the most attractive'.

Was the innings 'the most attractive' or not? Honestly, I do not know.

¹ See 'Measures', page 218.

Beware, too, Bobby, of the 'If Contradictory'¹: 'His handsome, if spotty countenance', 'The beneficial, if tuberculous milk'. See page 204.

'Case'

A few warriors have asked me to belabour 'case', in the sense of 'instance', 'example', or 'event'; and they tell me that Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch has already bullied the word. Not having read his book, I am ashamed to say, I must not quarrel with the great 'Q'. It is true that we overwork 'case', especially in the case of 'in the case of',¹ and this all good men rightly reprove. But when a sarcastic warrior tells me that 'case' means only a receptacle, such as a 'tie-case', and that in the case of Jones, who had a large coffin, 'Jones is to be congratulated on having a case as well as a coffin', I am unable to follow him.

Indeed, with great respect, I here accuse him of error. For we have two distinct words 'case'. 'Case' the receptacle, box, or shell, is the son of the French *casse*—Italian *cassa*—Latin *capsa*—from *capere* (to take or hold). But the other case is by the Latin *casus* out of the verb *cadere* (to fall). And *casus* means a thing that 'falls' or happens, an event, chance, and numerous things besides. 'In any case', then, means, quite properly, 'in any event'. A legal 'action on the case' became simply a 'case', and so we passed to a hospital case, and cases, events, chances, specimens, and examples *oi* every kind. A short, elastic, and very useful word; but we have not stretched it half so cruelly as hundreds of other words that I could name; and (subject

¹ 'There was a greater scarcity of crabs than in the case of herrings.' (Newspaper)

to the proviso against thoughtless overworking) I, for once, see little to complain about.¹

The Government—singular or plural?

Do you say 'the Government have' or 'the Government has'? I confess that I say both; and I suppose that each is permissible, provided that we follow one course or the other in the same document. But try telling His Majesty's Government how it (they) ought to behave as often as I do and you will find that it *is* difficult to make up your mind. And I see that the highest in the land suffer the same uncertainty. In the important State document, 'Statement Relating to Defence', signed 'J. R. M.', the Government is (are) singular and plural alternately:

(5) The National Government intends. But it . . . (26) . . . His Majesty's Government intend . . . (27) The Government desires . . . (28) . . . The National Government intend . . .

I feel that this is not quite right, though I sympathize with 'J. R. M.' What do you think? Homework.

I must thank a member of His Majesty's Government for an interesting and helpful comment on the problem.

'I could not say' [he writes] 'whether there is any official ruling on the subject, but when I went to the Foreign Office in—it was drummed into me that "His Majesty's Government" was plural, but the Government of every other country was singular. I do not know if this was office custom

¹ Now write to me. But first read Fowler, 'Preposition at End'. See also 'Case', which I have only just read.

or one of Lord Curzon's edicts, but it was a very intelligible arrangement as in any given sentence one could at once spot the nationality of the Government referred to.'

'As though'

A warrior at Cambridge reminds me of this old enemy of mine: 'He looked as *though* he was going to be sick.'

Why '*though*'? Why not '*if*'? You mean, 'He looked as a man would look *if* he was going to be sick'. Or don't you? 'He looked as a man would look *although* he was going to be sick' does not mean anything. Or does it?

I may not be supported in this, for the dictionaries and scholars are very feeble in the matter. My comrade tells me that Shakespeare uses the silly phrase, and perhaps that has frightened them; but I do not care. Even the fierce H. W. Fowler, in *Modern English Usage*, says meekly that '*as though* is precisely equivalent to as *if*'. With great respect, I submit that it is nothing of the sort. It would take too long to explain what '*though*' means. You know as well as I do what it means. It does not mean 'but'. It does not mean 'since'. It does not mean 'if'. 'I love you, *though* you were sick' is not the precise equivalent of 'I love you *but* you were sick', or 'I love you *if* you were sick'. And I do not see how the addition of 'as' can make them equivalent. No, no; come Shakespeare, Fowler, and all the timid lexicographers in a band against us, we will not have 'as though', my brothers. I don't care. Indeed, the more I think about 'as though' the more I dislike it. And if the world insists on saying 'as though' I shall confound the world by saying 'as but'. 'He looked as but he was going to be sick.' To arms, brothers!

EXERCISE

Do you know which came first—'although' or 'though'? I mean, is 'though' an abbreviation of 'although', or is 'although' a stronger form of 'though'? And would any one say, 'He looked as although he was going to be sick'?

ANSWER

'Though' came first; and 'all though', supposed to be stronger, followed. You didn't know that, Bobby.

'As near as made no matter'

A lady at Birmingham University sends this teasing little problem:

'Her eldest sister . . . when hunting with the Whaddon, as *near as made no matter* got drowned in the Creslow Brook.'

(Illustrated Paper)

What, asks the comrade, do these words mean? I cannot tell. They may mean that, though the unfortunate lady did in fact survive the adventure, she was so nearly drowned that she might just as well have been quite drowned. In other words, she went about in a waterlogged and oozy condition and was a nuisance to herself and friends.

Or, as the comrade shrewdly suggests, it may be that the lady perished but from another cause. A horse, for example, may have kicked her in the brook, so that the extent or degree to which she was drowned (nearly) was not a matter of importance. I cannot tell.

'The Acid Test'

I agree with a warrior in Newcastle-on-Tyne that the acid test is becoming a little tiresome. He sends me an advertisement of some new flats, headed in large capitals THE ACID TEST . . .' I have often wondered what exactly the acid test was, and, being ignorant, have shunned the seductive phrase. I have now consulted my dictionary and I find there that by the acid test is (or was) meant the testing of gold, or alleged gold, with aquafortis, or nitric acid. I still do not know exactly what is the effect of aquafortis upon bogus gold—whether, for example, it dissolves or bursts into flames. But perhaps this scrappy information may be of use to the innumerable acid-testers who are as ignorant as I am—but not as cautious.

At least, I conclude, the test shows clearly that the alleged gold is not gold—an exciting, doubt-removing process. And with this thought I returned to the advertisement of the flats, eager to see what new and thrilling thing had been devised to prove to the distrustful world that the new flats were really flats, genuine flats, not bathing-machines or hen-roosts cunningly disguised. And I read that 'Personal Inspection puts every detail of the building and equipment to the most searching test. . . .' In other words, you may go and have a look at the flats before you take one.

Well, well, one must not be pedantic, one is told. But is not this a little disappointing? Is there not the faintest lack of proportion between the thought and the words? Would not, for example, 'COME AND SEE THEM' be equally effective and less pretentious? Anyhow, I beg my countrymen to give the test a rest, and I offer a prize to the first statesman who introduces into a speech 'The Alkali Test'.

'Anyhow'

And now, not for the first time, I am in the dock. 'Bobby' sends me a charming message from his evidently charming grandmother to say that I ought not to write, what I have just written, 'anyhow'. She says that I shall not find 'anyhow' in the works of Stevenson, Scott, Austen, or C. Lamb. 'A low word, lately hatched', she says, as Dr. Johnson said of another word. I am sure that she is right, plead guilty, and submit to punishment. My dictionary says that it was used in 1740; but that is no real defence. If it is wrong it is wrong; and *nullum tempus occurrit regi* should apply to the King's English. But the offence is tempting. The thought is difficult to express correctly without using more words than it seems to deserve, and, avoiding 'anyhow', you may fall into other traps. 'Bobby' writes: 'And she says please excuse this letter from me, but anyhow at any rate it is neat and tidy.'

Now, with great respect, has not Granny led 'Bobby' into error? 'I might, and I suppose ought, to have written above, 'At any rate, we will not have it', meaning, 'Whatever they pay us, we will not have it'—though what I meant was: 'In any case, that is, whatever it may be, we will not have it.' But 'Bobby' surely did not mean, 'At any rate, that is, whatever it costs, this letter is neat and tidy.' He meant, 'In any case—that is, whether the letter is welcome or not—it is neat and tidy.'

Well, then, there is 'anyway'—I am getting a headache, but we must go on and on and on. 'Anyway', I see, was used (for 'in any case') in 1859; but strictly, I suppose, it is pretty lousy. At all events (which was R. L. Stevenson's favourite), I am worried about 'anyhow'; and I promise Bobby's grandmother to be more careful. But then there is 'somehow'.

'Somehow', I see, was used in 1664; it was used by the poet Byron; and many would resent its expulsion from our midst, though nobody would say 'manyhow' or 'everyhow' or 'allhow', even to annoy Bobby's grandmother. I believe that, for colloquial purposes, we shall have to admit 'anyhow'; but it must not be employed in leading articles or sermons.

'Prepared to admit'

I am prepared to admit that years ago our nation was one of the most drunken nations in the world. . . .'

(A Member of Parliament)

Then why not admit it? This is a good specimen: for the speaker cannot plead that he is waiting for additional evidence or final argument before he makes the great admission.

'Practically'

As a rule, practically means '*Not* practically' or 'Nearly'. For example, we say of a reluctant engine that it '*practically* started' when it did not start but made a bronchial sound and is now silent.

Do not misunderstand me, Bobby. Life would be impossible if we never said 'practically'. You may say that a family is 'practically extinct' when the only survivor is a dying old man. But it would be silly to say that the horse placed second '*practically*' won the Derby. A boxer may be '*practically*' knocked out, though still on his feet: but you cannot '*practically*' hit the bull's-eye, unless you do hit it. It is not the word but the habit that is bad. You may go now.

'Oblivious'

'Of course, he was mauled by the critics, but he was oblivious to such influences. . . .'

(*Punch*)

'Oblivious', Bobby, is 'forgetful'¹, not 'indifferent'¹ nor 'unaware'. Too often, when we say 'oblivious', we mean 'not knowing anything about'; but if we do not know anything about it we cannot *forget* it. And it should be 'oblivious *of*', not '*to*'. The crime is common, dear master, but I am surprised to *you*.

'Authoritarian'

'If an authoritarian State—there are three of them in Europe—sets itself swiftly and in large measure to increase its national defence it can do it in absolute secrecy.'

(Mr. STANLEY BALDWIN)

This wicked word, according to my dictionary, means 'favourable to the principles of authority'. But are there only three such States in Europe? And what—and where—is an unauthoritarian State? It is surely, brothers, of the essence of any 'State' to have and exercise authority. Why not despotic or oligarchic government, or absolute or autocratic ruler?

INCREDIBIDIBIBLE

'Debabelization'

Captured, a warrior tells me, in the Orthological Institute, Cambridge. It is the title of a book on 'Basic English'.

'Basic English' might assist me; but at present I can think of no fit words.

'Elasticate'

From two advertisements:

'Elasticate your incomes.'

'Elasticate your dress allowance.'

And soon, I suppose, we shall have professional Income Elasticators. I do not know whether there is a national hunger for such a word; but, if so, funnily enough, it should be 'elasticize'¹ (which I should hate): for 'elastic' is Greek, 'ate' is Latin, and the new word, therefore, is not as well-bred as it might be. (*See* page 40.)

'Only too glad'

Mr. Justice Mackinnon, concluding a judgment in the Railway and Canal Commission Court:

'I have heard of and have long realised the difficulties of this industry and should have been *only too glad* to further any plan to mitigate them. . . .'

I am surprised that the Guild of Only Too Gladders have caught one of His Majesty's Judges.

A queer sect. Only to be too, or excessively, glad is remarkable (in a Judge), though I have heard Australian ladies cry '*Too* right!', and young English ladies murmur '*Too* divine!' But if we say that we are 'only too glad', we must mean that even our present state of superfluous gladness is merely comparative, and that the real heights of excessive gladness are still above us.¹

EXERCISE

How, if he reaches the superlative degree of excessive gladness, does an 'Only Too Gladder' describe his condition?

¹ Of the same delightful breed is 'I shall be more than charmed . . .'

ANSWER

I cannot guess.

'Quite'

Perhaps 'quite glad'. For 'quite' means 'completely, wholly, altogether, entirely; to the fullest extent or degree'.

But there are difficulties here, Bobby. For the sad truth is that, through the general ill-treatment of good words, 'quite' no longer means 'completely, wholly, altogether, etc.' When we are not converting mild words into forcible words ('sensation', 'phenomenal') we are depriving our truly emphatic words of their force by using them for feeble purposes. We say veraciously that a glass is quite full, meaning that it really is full; but when we say that the theatre was 'quite full' and the play 'quite good' we mean that the theatre was half empty and the play not very bad. Very odd. But this one, Bobby, does not keep me awake.

Ancient Order of Nerve-Strainers

'But there is the practical way of straining every nerve to see that the Speaker is re-elected in the ordinary manner.'

(*The Times*)

A distinguished warrior tells me that she once wrote to Mr. W. Graham Robertson, 'Do everything, short of straining every nerve, to come'; and he replied by telegram, 'Coming with nerve in sling.'

INTER-PIECES

'Inter-Imperial'

'Inter-Imperial trade'

(*The Times*)

This was born, I believe, at the Ottawa Conference. But what is it for? 'Imperial Trade' is surely enough to indicate trade within the British Empire. 'Inter-Imperial trade can only mean trade between two or more Empires—as, for example, between the British and the Ethiopian, which is just, O all ye Ministers and Civil Servants, what you do not mean. 'Intra-Imperial would serve your purpose better, but for England's sake don't think it necessary to say that.

'Internationalists'

Certain papers, I see, are describing as 'internationalists' those who have represented their country at golf, football, etc. But, surely, surely, 'international' was long enough? And how are we now to distinguish between Hobbs and Mr. Arthur Henderson?

'Interavailibility'

'Interavailability of Tickets between the G.W.,
L.M.S., and L. & N.E. Companies.'
(G.W.R.pamphlet)

I thought I heard a simple ticket-collector say, 'No, sir, interavailability does not exist between . . .' and hoped that I was wrong. But here it is in print. Ghastly, Bobby; ill-bred, Bobby; and meaningless, Bobby; for it can only mean that the tickets are able to use each other. But the 'inter', as we know, refers to the companies. Now this, Bobby, is a good example of bad invention. It is very hard to think of one word to express what the writer wants to say; it may be impossible; but then it is not necessary. I see your difficulty, Railways, but why not borrow and adapt a word familiar at certain theatres and

cricket-grounds, thus: ' "Rover" Ticket Arrangements between, etc., etc.'? The small official, Bobby, is so fond of a huge word that he would rather create a monster than look for a decent alternative.

'Disinterested'

The following July he and Miss Joyce were becoming disinterested in each other.'

(Report of an action for breach of promise)

This is spreading. Disinterested, my dear boy, means 'not biased by self-seeking—impartial'. So that you imply that until July you were after each other's money, or had some other base 'interest'. What you mean is 'uninterested'. Neither word is a prize-winner; but they do usefully express two different states of mind, and they may as well be kept distinct.

NOVEL INN SIGNS

Sir Herbert Morgan, excellent Protector of the Pub, has suggested that the modern inn should have a modern name. The *Four Jolly Post-Boys* are out of place on a large building decorated with chromium and surrounded by petrol-pumps. Why not, said Sir Herbert, *The Careful Chauffeur!* And, why not, say I, take a few pleasant inn-titles from the familiar activities of our public life? All those, I think, who have attended these lectures would hurry into a house which bore upon its swinging sign (suitably depicted) such a name as *The Sabotaged Issue*, or *The Implemented Obligation*, *The Crystallized Viewpoint*, *The Biological Status*, *The Psycho-physiological Equilibrium*, *The Liquidated Centre* (full marks), *The Evacuated Infantryman*, *The Frankenstein and Nemesis*, *The Deinsectisized Airdrome*, *The Bid and*

Bombshell, The Phenomenal Sensation, The Decontaminated Area, The Impregnated Aftermath, The Measure of Agreement, The Bourgeois Ideology, The Further Favour, The Sterilized Field, The Acid Test, The Unexplored Avenue, The Amazing Revelation, or The Four Jolly Nerve-Strainers. And here are some more:

The Comb and Aeroplane

The aeroplane, which has been combing the sea and islands for two days . . . !
(*Daily Telegraph*)

The Summed-up Keynote

' "The keynote of British outlook in the New Year may be summed up in the word 'confidence'." This statement made by the secretary of the Department of Overseas Trade finds an echo in . . . !

(*Overseas Daily Mail*)

The Middling Batsman

'Smart who middled every ball and was undefeated when the innings closed.'

(*The Western Mail*)

The Endorsed Pacifist

'I should like others who agree to *endorse me* when I suggest an organisation of active peace advertisers. . . . !

(From a letter in the *News Chronicle*)

All right, old boy. Turn round.

The Moat in the Sky

'Mr Baldwin said that for the security of mind and for all that we held dear it was the moat on its surface and in the sky to which people and Governments must look to keep their own security.'

(*Daily Telegraph*)

The Adopted Location

' . . . to secure that industry would adopt the location desired.'

(Ministry of Health)

*The Clean Slate**The White Sheet**The Minister Without Portfolio**The Unwring Withers*

'My withers are unwrung.'

(THE RT. HON. SIR P.Q., M.P., at Llandudno)

The Dangerous Veil

'The veil has been partly lifted in Germany. I hope it will be completely raised. Until that is done we can have no security, for a partly raised veil is often quite as dangerous as a veil that is not raised at all.'

(Mr. STANLEY BALDWIN)

The Somewhat Severe Crisis

'A crisis of a somewhat severe character.'

(Truth)

The Honeycombed Wilderness

'Kalat City is another wilderness honeycombed with corpses.'

(News Chronicle)

'Stresa is honeycombed with detectives.'

(Dublin paper)

(HONEYCOMBED. 'Formed or perforated like a honeycomb.')

The Intensive Turn

'The conversations on this thorny subject have taken an intensive turn.'

(The Times Geneva Correspondent)

The Heartfelt Echo

'Mr. Baldwin's . . . remarks found a heartfelt echo here.'

(*The Times* Berlin Correspondent)

The Serious Door

'The conversations have opened a serious door to a new alignment of political forces. . . .'

The Tryst Express

'Mrs. Rattenbury . . . took train to Bournemouth to keep her tryst with death.'

(*Daily Express*]

The Attitude of Drift

The Free Churches . . . arrayed quite definitely against the attitude of drift in foreign policy.'

(*News Chronicle*)

Or perhaps it should be: '*The Quite Definite Array*'.

The Concrete Point

'The real merit of the reports is that they bring discussion to a concrete point.'

(From a leading article in *The Times*]

The Retrograde Strangulation

'The Committee states further that it would view the strangulation of this young and efficient industry as a retrograde step.'

The Undelimited Coal-cellar

'Chahar is the back-door into a huge, if still undelimited, coal-cellar.'

(*The Times*)

The Bridge in the Tree

'Miss Rathbone (English Universities, Ind.) said that she hoped the Secretary of State would see his way, without in any way seeming to climb down to Congress, to build a bridge so that the new Constitution might have a chance of being launched in an atmosphere of greater goodwill.'

We have here a charming picture of the Secretary of State remaining firmly (I presume) up a tree, in which position he is building a bridge suitable for the launching of ships in a good atmosphere.

(Diploma)

INTERVAL FOR GOOD STUFF

From the judgment of the Exchequer Chamber, delivered by Mr. Justice Blackburn, in the case of *Rylands v. Fletcher* (1868):

'The person whose grass or corn is eaten down by the escaping cattle of his neighbour, or whose mine is flooded by the water from his neighbour's reservoir, or whose cellar is invaded by the filth of his neighbour's privy, or whose habitation is made unhealthy by the fumes and noisome vapours of his neighbour's alkali works, is damnified without any fault of his own; and it seems but reasonable and just that the neighbour, who has brought something on his own property which was not naturally there, harmless to others so long as it is confined to his own property, but which he knows to be mischievous if it gets¹ on his neighbour's, should be obliged to make good the damage which ensues if he does not succeed in confining it to his own property. But for his act in bringing it there no mischief could have accrued, and it seems but just that he should at his peril keep it there so that no mischief may accrue, or answer for the natural and anticipated² consequences. And upon authority, this we think is established to be the law, whether the things so brought be beasts, or water, or filth, or stench.'

¹ Naughty!

² Naughty 1

V

BIDS AND BOMBSHELLS

NOTE. Some will think, Bobby, that this section should be longer and louder. They will be wrong. The Tribes of Journalism, every day, put out many thousand more words than the Tribes of Politics and Business, the Film, the Wireless, and the Book.¹ So we have much greater opportunities for mischief. I believe that we do much less. Nevertheless, we too have weaknesses.

•*Amazing'*

EXERCISE

On the seventh day of the Jubilee celebrations the King and Queen drive into the East End of London. Everywhere the loyal subjects run to greet their Majesties. You are on the staff of a daily newspaper, and have to compose the headings to the columns which describe the scene. What adjective do you employ?

'Amazing.'

ANSWER

Note for Bobby.—The journalist's capacity for amazement is amazing. If you meet him, as, happily, I often do, off duty, you will find that it is difficult to produce in him even a mild surprise. Offer him the strangest story you know, the spiciest piece of scandal, the most exciting political gossip—and he will shrug his shoulders, say that he knew all that long ago, and give you, very calmly, some

¹ The baser kind of novelist, whose hero 'senses (or glimpses) an atmosphere of strain' is perhaps the basest rogue of all, for he makes money from his offences. But there is no space for him in this Work

secret information far more shocking than anything that you can mention.

Such is my friend's demeanour in bar and restaurant, and at private gatherings, where we should expect to see the humane and emotional part of him expand and blossom in the warmth of friendly company. We don't. He is reserved, hard, cynical—a rock of a man. But then he goes back to Fleet Street, to his place of duty. And here you would expect him to grow callous—would you not?—since all day long the news of misfortunes, calamities, disasters, fires, floods and famine, divorce, disease, and death, is buzzing about his head. But no—here the natural tenderness of the man emerges. Here, to an extent unusual among members of the English race, all human emotions are deeply felt, freely indulged, and loudly recorded. Every typist's marriage is a romance, every nobleman's divorce is a drama; tragedies and bombshells, calamities and scandals, crowd and colour every day.

Yet through it all, through years of this cyclonic existence, the Editor, at least, preserves his open-eyed astonishment at the events of human life, even—and this is strange—where he has himself provoked them.¹ Although for many weeks he may have urged his readers to flock by thousands to a political gathering he is 'amazed' by the number who obey. And when the people on the seventh day behave exactly as they have behaved on the preceding six the scene, to him, is still 'amazing'.

This is not true of every newspaper. *The Times* is never amazed. The serious weeklies, though perpetually indignant, are rarely surprised by the

¹ 'An amazing gathering . . . How was it done? We gave the printing to the local newspaper, which "wrote up" the visit the week beforehand' (LILIAN A REED in the *White Ribbon*)

misbehaviour of the Government. 'Scenes'¹ which to the child-like picture-paper are 'most amazing' are to *The Times* no more than 'remarkable'.¹ Dramas, revelations, bids, bombshells, and betrayals which make a hell of breakfast in the humble home may never reach the sheltered tables where *The Times* is read.

It is not for us, Bobby, to say that either paper is wrong: for both are seeking only to serve us. We must presume that the Editor knows his business best; and will give us only what we want. From which it follows that, if we are poor and lead dull lives, we prefer to be continually amazed, astounded, shocked, staggered, panic-stricken, and generally upset by the news; while, if we are rich and can afford to buy our own excitements, we like to take the morning meal without emotional disturbances of any kind

Bearing these thoughts in mind, Bobby, let us pass to another interesting word.

'Sensation'

CITY SENSATION (*Star*)

NEW LARWOOD SENSATION (*Daily Herald*)

—
 'The sensation of the theatrical year . . .'

—
 'The council adopted a series of sensational financial measures (adds the Exchange)' (*Daily Mirror*)

—
 'A mild sensation was caused at Geneva. . . .'

—
 'A somewhat sensational committee report. . . .'
 (*Observer*)

¹ 'Remarkable demonstrations of loyalty' (*The Times*, Ma'. 13th) 'JUBILEE'S MOST AMAZING SCENES' (*Daily Mirror* Same day Same scenes)

I have never, Bobby—and I regret it—served on the staff of a daily newspaper. But I know enough about that work to understand the difficulties of the headline writer and the man who drafts (if that is the right expression) the newsboy's bills. They are working always in a hurry, and have little time for the careful choice of words. They must—especially if they serve an evening paper—convey to you and me that something exceptionally important has happened, as usual, in the last ten minutes. And this event, as a rule, should be calamitous or menacing, for the reasons hinted at in the lecture on 'amazing'. No one will buy an evening paper because he sees in large letters 'BIRTH-RATE SATISFACTORY' or 'EUROPE CALM'. But if we see on one bill 'WAR-CLOUDS GATHER' and on its neighbour 'BIRTH-RATE CRASHES', the kindred thoughts that war is imminent, and that Britain may be found deficient in man-power, drive us eagerly to buy both papers. Especially if they are evening papers. For it is in the evening, after the day's work, that we enjoy misfortune and disaster most. You may have noticed, as you walk about London, glancing at the bills, that the world is in a much worse state after lunch than it seemed to be at breakfast-time. The 'sensations' nearly always adorn the evening papers; and my morning specimen above is rare.

For the evening paper, Bobby, has three or four distinct editions every day, and is therefore in a double difficulty—it must provide us with disasters greater not only in gravity but in *quantity*. And, 'uncoordinated' and crazy though the world may be as a rule, there are soft periods in which the supply of genuine calamities and shocks falls short of our hungry demands; no treaty is torn, no troops

are 'rushed' to any frontier, no part of Eastern Europe or Asia 'faces up to' famine or flood, no lone young woman arrives by aeroplane from Australia or Lapland, not even a peer is prosecuted for fraud or sued for breach of promise of marriage.

It is in these anaemic and barren times that the word 'sensation' finds its opportunity and justification. For it is a word that can suggest much without saying anything. It was not designed to say much, or to say that forcibly. If we were pedantic, Bobby (which God forbid!) we should refer to our dictionary and note that sensation meant:

'An operation of any of the senses; a psychical affection or state of consciousness consequent on and related to a particular condition of some portion of the bodily organism, or a particular impression received by one of the organs of sense.'

'. . . In generalized use: The operation or function of the senses; perception by means of the senses.'

A shy, mild, passive, unassuming word. Who would have guessed, in 1615, when first the English heard it, that sensation would grow to be the boldest buccaneer in all their glad vocabulary? Aye, 'and the most cunning—capable of taking a thousand shapes: a speech, a play, a cure for cancer, an embezzlement, a war, a quarrel on the cricket-field, an exhumation, a marriage, or a new rule at the Carlton Club! What a word!

It was in 1864, I see, that sensation first slipped off the rails—'due to', as certain writers would say, some man of the theatre. (The greatest sensation of the day: grand Incantation Scene from *Der Freischutz*.) Even then the fellow had the

grace to give the modest word an adjective for company. But now, Bobby, 'sensation' ('a perception by means of the senses') stands on its own feet, an active, insolent, independent fellow. 'SENSATION' (We have put the same twist, it is true, on 'passion', which first meant 'suffering' and now means knocking people about. But two blacks do not——. Let us go on.)

'NEW LARWOOD SENSATION' What does this mean? Who is Larwood? A bowler. What event in his life can it be that the *Daily Herald*, concerned only with the profound essentials of human existence, describes as a 'sensation'? Has this Larwood committed murder, declared war, entered Parliament, betrayed his country, loved, married, or perhaps himself produced a new Larwood? No. The answer is, Bobby, that (a) in a match with Gloucestershire this valuable citizen bowled more slowly than he usually bowls, and (b) certain mean-spirited citizens said that he was acting under orders from the authorities of his club, and (c) the authorities of the club indignantly denied that they had given any instructions to the bowlers they employed.

That was all. But the paper was sold by the million that day, and, no doubt, 'Sensation' helped to sell it. I wonder greatly that no one has yet produced a newspaper with the simple title *The Daily Sensation*: for that would wallop the lot of them.

The other odd thing, Bobby, is this, that the same people who have worked so hard and well to raise 'sensation' to its present stature, at which, whatever the substance, the aspect is terrific, are now helping to whittle it away and bring it back to its former mean dimensions. How, at this date, can

there be a '*mild* sensation'¹, or a '*somewhat* sensational report'? All sensations, we have learned, are strong and terrible. And, if this mildness is allowed to continue, we shall very soon cease to be excited even by the unfortunate Larwood, sensate us how he may.

'Bid'

- (1) 'LEAGUE'S BID FOR PEACE IN EAST AFRICA'
(*Sunday Times*)
- (2) 'BRITAIN'S BID FOR WAR-PLANE SUPREMACY'
(*Daily Mirror*)
- (3) 'STABILISATION BID' (*Observer*)
- (4) 'CAMPBELL'S BID FOR RECORD'
(Many papers)
- (5) 'EXPLORER'S BID TO COVQUER THREE
DESFRTS' (*Daily Express*)
- (6) 'BiD TO PROBE SECRETS OF THE SEAS'
(*Sunday Pictorial*)
- (7) 'Mr. Lang is making a fresh bid for power.'
(*The Times*, leading article)
- (8) 'Friends did not cheer when after making a
record flight . . . Flying Officer B K. landed . . .
for many of them had thought his bid too daring'
(*Daily Mirror*)

The newspapers are full of 'bids'; and my letter-box is full of letters imploring me to crush 'bid'. I have held my hand—or foot—for a long time: for I have a Christian compassion for my colleagues of the popular Press, bound to produce swift, pregnant headlines in a very short time, and attracted by any word in three letters that may mean, or seem to mean, a very forcible action. But when one of the great men of *The Times*, in the very first sentence of a leading article, with a spacious column ahead

of him, inflicts yet one more 'bid' upon us, it is time, I agree, to consider this 'biddery'.

Biddery is a disease of recent origin. At least, it is not old enough to have provoked the attentions of Mr. Fowler. And, beyond the fact already mentioned, that 'bid' is a word of three letters, I cannot understand the affection it undoubtedly commands in Fleet Street. This is not a case of the papers adopting the common speech of the people. The ordinary citizen still remains completely unresponsive to biddery. At least, I never heard a man remark strongly at the 15th tee, 'Old boy, I'm going to make a bid for the match.' Nor, the score being *love* 40, have I heard my lawn-tennis partner whisper, 'Do let us make a bid for this game.' We do not even make bids for a new job, or for success in the old one.

And it is easy, Bobby, to see why we do not make bids all day, though every day is full of effort and struggle. A 'bid' should mean 'the offer of a price, the amount offered' *spec*, at an auction.'

Specifically—observe, Bobby—at an auction. To the ordinary man the essence of a bid is that (1) it is an offer of money; and (2) it is an offer made in competition with others who are also offering money.

Now, in all the passages quoted at the beginning of this lecture (excepting, perhaps, that which refers to Mr. Lang) the idea of offering money is inept or insulting; and in at least two of them (those which refer to CAMPBELL and LEAGUE) the idea of competition is ridiculous.

In all, Bobby (excepting STABILISATION BID, which completely baffles me), 'bid' stands for 'attempt' and not much more—or, if you will, for a strong, resolute, or, as some of my colleagues would say, a 'dramatic' attempt. I repeat, I understand the excuse for 'bid', in a headline, though I do not

admit the necessity; but in ordinary prose it is silly and indefensible. If we were commanded under pain of death to find a better word in three letters to do the work that 'bid' is doing, we should probably die. 'CAMPBELL'S TRY FOR RECORD' is not delightful, but might do, and 'BRITAIN'S TRY FOR WAR-PLANE SUPREMACY', would not, I recognize, be forcible enough for a picture-paper. And in this case, I fancy, 'bid' means 'determination to try to secure'. But difficulty is no defence, and, though we are charitable, we must be firm. The orders are that biddery is to cease; and, if there is no brief and respectable understudy to 'bid', what has to be said must be said in some other way. I, for one, should be quite content if less was said in the headlines. This is not my business, but, as a reader, I have never understood why the whole story should be given away in what, after all, is not a label but a lure. The headline, surely, should be like a lady's dress, revealing enough to provoke interest, but not so much as to make us feel that what is below is not worth looking at.

EXERCISE

Amend the headlines above, eliminating the loathly 'bid'.

ANSWER

Their job, not ours.

Technique of Modern Medicine

'Eddie Cantor, the film comedian, who was rushed to hospital on Monday with stomach trouble, has undergone a major operation. His condition is described as "satisfactory".'

(Renter)

'She was rushed to Alton Hospital, where her condition is critical.'

(*Daily Mirror*)

'RUSH'. To drag, force or carry violently; to send or impel violently.'

'Bombshell'

Yes, comrade, 'bombshell' is overworked by our dear dailies. I know their difficulties—they must be short and sharp; and when the Right Honourable Fortescue Whiff says that there are one or two passages in the White Paper with which, at first sight, he is not wholly in agreement, it makes the announcement more exciting to the plebs to describe it as 'BOMBSHELL FOR BALDWIN'. But why *'bombshell'*? Why not, for example, 'bomb'? 'BOMB FOR BALDWIN' is shorter—and very much sharper. For who in real life, who in the late war, ever talked about *'bombshells'*?—except perhaps in the munitions industry to distinguish between the empty bomb 'shell' or case and the completed bomb. But the empty bombshell is not at all alarming, and the dropping of one would do much less damage than the dropping of a coal-scuttle. So whenever I read that somebody has dropped a bombshell in political circles I draw the conclusion that there is nothing in it; and as a rule that is all there is.

'Identified with . . .'

This is an enemy very odious to my army. 'The late mayor always identified himself with the Boy Scouts . . .' so that, we presume, it was never possible to say which was the mayor and which the Boy Scouts. One good lady, I remember, 'identified herself not only with the Temperance Movement but

with Winchester Cathedral; and when that building had to be repaired a few years ago the contractor's men began by erecting scaffold-poles round Mrs. Potts, a pardonable mistake.

'Following'

'Following severe fighting the Japanese withdrew.'

The gelding had a quiet *time following* Goodwood.'

'He died *following* revolver wounds.'

'A man . . . snatched a bag of rings . . . and escaped, *following* (J) a stop-thief chase.'

(London Papers)

What's wrong with 'after'? This abomination has even crept into our beloved *Times*:

'Following a police-raid on the Jubilee Social Club . . . H C., 43, the proprietor, was fined £30 and ordered to pay 20 guineas costs.'

O Tempora, O Mores!

This is a very rare following-piece, because the one man upon this planet of whom it could be said with absolute certainty that he was *not* 'following' the police-raid would be the proprietor of the raided club; and the picture of the miscreant stealthily pursuing the officers of the law is very charming.

But we must be thankful. It might have been:

'Night-club proprietor, H. C., was fined £30, *due to* a police-raid.'

And in many of our great organs of opinion and enlightenment it would have been so. Shoot these boneless 'due to's', and poison 'following'. Also 'prior to' (as an adverb) for 'before'.

'Due to'

But is it fair to blame the Press? See—angrily—below:

The pull required is slightly greater than the weight lifted, due to friction.'

'Operators found, due to the necessity caused by the failure of one of the live wires, that advantage could be taken, etc.'

(These were caught, I am told, in the Science Museum, maintained, at the public expense, for the instruction of the Young)

'Force landed'

'Mr.——, having experienced most difficult weather coupled with engine trouble, force landed.'

(Daily Paper)

Or, in other words, 'made a forced landing'.

Or, 'was forced to land'.

Or, 'had to land'.

Or, 'came dowoi'.

'Force landed'! Here again, Bobby, the desire for brevity is no defence. Or should we say that the writer is not defence provided?

Cannibal English

WONDER MACHINE

MYSTERY GERM

MILK PUBLICITY CAMPAIGN

ONTARIO POWER CONTRACTS CONTROVERSY

WONDER HORSE

BEAUTY QUEEN

PRODIGY CROONETTE¹

¹ Description in a programme of a child performer in a jazz band.

MOTION PICTURE PURITY CAMPAIGN
UNDERGRADUATE DEATH DIVE ALLEGATIONS

The bogus adjective 'wonder' worries many warriors. But the noun-adjective grows everywhere to-day (as in 'Word War' and 'Cannibal English¹'). Glance at any page of a newspaper, Bobby, and you will see fifty, some good, some legitimate, some vile but unavoidable, and others simply vile. Once more we must remember charitably the difficulties of the journalist and the complexities of the age before we hurry into censure. On the other hand, we need not be merciful to mere habit or indolence, where necessity cannot be pleaded. And, without doubt, the practice is being barbarously extended. It would be quite easy to dispense not only with adjectives but with all other parts of speech except nouns, and still succeed in expressing our simpler thoughts; and in this manner, I am told, the cannibal tribes satisfactorily communicate with the missionaries. But it is a temptation which at this point in our history we might resist.

We cannot here give any orders, brothers, except to use good taste, discretion, and continual vigilance. 'Each case,' as the Judges say when they are in a hole, 'must be decided on its merits.'

'Ontario Power Contracts Controversy', for example, may be considered harmless and even necessary in its place in the financial columns. But this may easily be expanded into 'Ontario Power Contracts Controversy Parliament Sensation Courts Sequel', and such excesses are not to be permitted.

I see no need, and little excuse, for 'Wonder Machine' (which ought to mean a machine for wondering), or for 'Wonder Horse' (which must mean a horse that draws or carries wonders—cf.

cart-horse) or 'Beauty Queen', which is not so pleasing as 'Queen of Beauty' and only by a small space shorter.

EXERCISE

Fit with cannibal head-lines the following:

(1) 'Britannia rules the waves.'

ANSWER

'BRITAIN OCEAN MONOPOLY BID'

(2) 'England has saved herself by her exertions, and will, I trust, save Europe by her example.'

ANSWER

'BRITAIN ACTIVITY SEQUEL FORECAST'

 BLESSED WORDS

'*Rationalize*'

'Henry's appreciative eye was to fall on Anne Boleyn, and rationalising his desire, he was to seek divorce from the Queen. . . .'

(*News Chronicle*)

'*Feature*'

' . . . The match was featured by James Parks' completion of the double'

'*Unique*' (*pretty nearly absolutely*)

'Harold Gimblett . . . had the *unique* distinction of scoring a century on his first appearance in a county match, *which has been done only once before for Somerset*. . . .'

INTERVAL FOR GOOD STUFF

Captain Slocum, Bobby, an American citizen, began life as a ship's cook, and became a ship's captain. There seems to be something in the life of a ship's cook which nourishes the sense of language. (See William Sidwell, page 34.) Slocum was the first man to sail round the world by himself, and you must read his fine story, which is full of amazing bombshells and sensations, but does not, I think, contain these words

From *Sailing Alone around the World*, by Captain Joshua Slocum'

'About midnight the fog shut down again denser than ever before. One could almost "stand on it". It continued so for a number of days, the wind increasing to a gale. The waves rose high, but I had a good ship. Still, in the dismal fog I felt myself drifting into loneliness, an insect on a straw in the midst of the elements. I lashed the helm, and my vessel held her course, and while she sailed I slept. . . . The loneliness of my state wore off when the gale was high and I found much work to do. When fine weather returned, then came the sense of solitude, which I could not shake off. I used my voice often, at first giving some order about the affairs of a ship, for I had been told that from disuse I should lose my speech. At the meridian altitude of the sun I called aloud, "Eight bells", after the custom on a ship at sea. Again from my cabin I cried to an imaginary man at the helm, "How does she head, there?" and again, "Is she on her course?" But getting no reply, I was reminded the more palpably of my condition. My

voice sounded hollow on the empty air, and I dropped the practice.

... 'I had also a Pico white cheese that General Manning, the American consul-general, had given me, which I supposed was to be eaten, and of this I partook with the plums. Alas! by night-time I was doubled up with cramps. The wind, which was already a smart breeze, was increasing somewhat, with a heavy sky to the south-west. Reefs had been turned out, and I must turn them in again somehow. Between cramps I got the mainsail down, hauled out the earnings as best I could, and tied away point by point, in the double reef. There being sea-room, I should, in strict prudence, have made all snug and gone down at once to my cabin. I am a careful man at sea, but this night, in the coming storm, I swayed up my sails, which, reefed through they were, were still too much in such heavy weather: and I saw to it that the sheets were securely belayed. In a word, I should have laid to, but did not. I gave her the double-reefed mainsail and whole jib instead, and set her on her course. Then I went below, and threw myself upon the cabin floor in great pain.'

VI
'GRAVE ISSUES'

(*This section, Bobby, will be harder work for you. But it is good: so struggle onward.*)

UPS AND OUTS

'Try this new truck out.' (Mr. FORD)

'HELEN'S FIRST TRY-OUT AT WIMBLEDON'
(*Daily Herald*)

'He was not going into Mr. Elliott's various projects that were in the course of being tried out. . . . He was glad to see a man trying something.'
(Mr. D. LLOYD GEORGE)

I am implored by many to impale 'try out'. 'Let us try out Miss Dainty', or 'the Potato Board', or 'the new steel chairs'.

Well, I too detest 'try out'. And you will not impress nor soften me by referring to *Psalm xxvi. 2*:

'Try out my reins and my heart.'
(*Book of Common Prayer*),

for I shall refer you to *Psalm xxvi. 2*:

'Try my reins and my heart.'

which is the same passage in the Bible version.

But steady, brothers! The air to-day is full of roving particles, and we must consider before we cast our stones.

Now this 'out', they tell me, Bobby, is an adverb. I prefer to call the little fellow an adverbial particle.

There are others like him—ups, and ins, and downs, and throughs, and tos adhering loosely to the tails of verbs. These are sometimes adverbs, or prepositions masquerading as adverbs, and sometimes, I think, prepositional phrases with a word or two left out.

But, whatever their name or nature, the question is the same, 'Are they superfluous, and therefore bad, as unnecessary noise in a motor-car is bad, or unprofitable splashing by a swimmer is bad?' So I shall call them adverbial particles, verb-followers, tail-twisters, or what-not, Bobby, and chance it.

I suppose, brothers, that you 'ring up' your friends (where the American, more correctly, 'calls' them). On the football-field you hear without a tremor the boys exhorting the School Eleven to 'Play up!' You are not ashamed to speak of a 'knock-out' (even in the august Albert Hall), of a fire breaking out or a burglar breaking in. You do not wash your dirty plates: you wash them *up*, and then you clean *up* the sink. I suspect that you wind *up* your watch. I am sure that you tuck *up* your little ones. Then perhaps you hurry up (you may even dress up) because you want to dash off with your wife to the pictures—or the pub. At the pub she will tell you to drink up because she is fed up. You may then fall out and come home done up. I am sure that in the Great War you constantly fell in. You are tired out, you wake up, you get up and sit down. But when you hear that North Americans are beating up or shooting up or trying out you shiver.

Well, I do not say that you should not shiver, but where, brothers, do we draw the line?

You will not, I think, condemn *all* these combinations—at least, you will not damn them all with equal ferocity. Some of them, you will say, are

horrible slang, some are meritoriously idiomatic, and some are good plain English. The step from foul American slang to valuable English idiom is sometimes very short.

The question is: Which is which¹

Let us, Bobby, go back to the Ancient Greeks, whom you love so well; for I cannot find a word in Fowler about this difficult matter. The 'up and out' habit has only lately become a disease.

The Ancient Greeks had many prepositions or prefixes, which they used with much ingenuity to give subtle variations of meanings to simple verbs. They did not leave these particles lying loose, as we do; they made them fast at the fore-end of the verbs. My memories of Greek verbs are hazy, but I remember there was a very dreary verb *τίθημι*, which simply meant 'I place' (correct me, Bobby, if I err); and by putting the little *ἀνά* (up) or *κατά* (down), or *διά* (through) in front of this tedious *τίθημι* the Greeks were able to express varied and exciting thoughts. The sad thing is that I can think of no example but *ἀνάθημα*¹ (anathema)—meaning a terrific curse—which is simply compounded from *ἀνά* (up) and *τίθημι* (I place). We do the same trick, rarely. For example, by adding the simple preposition 'with' to the ordinary verb 'stand'¹ we get the meaning of stubborn resistance. But most of our verbs are not (three cheers!) like the Greek, and cannot be transformed in this way. So if we want to make a verb mean something which it does not mean we set a little fellow to trot astern, rather vaguely, like a cheeky dog behind a solid citizen. It may look disorderly and even absurd—but how English! And the point to which I am lumbering is this—that perhaps, instead of sniffing at these impudent verb-followers, we ought

¹ No, don't write to me: *ἀναθημα*, it seems, is a different word.

to boast about them and say how rich in significant short-worded idioms the English language is!

'Carry on!' 'Tall in!' Where is the Briton who would abolish these? Yet why should 'fair combined with 'in' mean the assembly of a regiment in its ordered ranks?¹ 'Knock out', you must admit, brothers, is worlds apart from 'knock'—indeed, this one is plain English—to knock out of the battle or, maybe, consciousness. 'Wash up' is indispensable in practice, though not perhaps irreproachable in origin; for these two little letters give us an exact and vivid picture of what is being washed, and if people begin to wash *up* their babies or their teeth indescribable confusion will fall on every home. 'Touching up' a picture says briefly not more than touching but something quite different, as 'dressing up' is different from dressing, and 'playing up'¹ from playing, and 'adding up' from adding. I am not sure about 'wash and brush up', and I do not like 'write up', but I think that I must pass it, for those at least who professionally need it.

In short, some of these particles, 'up' and 'out' especially, do seem to have a magical and valuable power to enrich or distinguish a plebeian verb; and wherever they are properly employed to these ends we should be proud of them.

Some impatient fellow will say that all this is obvious. But it is not obvious where to cry 'Halt!'

The trouble is that the baser sort of English-speaker, perceiving these things dimly, thinks that it is right and clever to add 'up' or 'out' to any short verb, though the sense is neither enriched nor altered; and unless we are firm our young people will soon be having a 'sleep up' or a 'drink out', 'kissing up', 'loving out', or even 'marrying up'. Already

¹ Consider, too, 'fall in with, out, through, off, back, behind'.

from Australia I hear of 'meet up', 'rest up', and 'get it over with'. I cannot see that 'up' adds anything valuable to 'shoot' or 'beat', to 'hasten', 'hurry', 'check', 'ring', or 'pack'. For these verbs are equally strong and clear without it. And that, brothers, must be our test, yard-stick, criterion, and thingummy. We must not pedantically condemn the loose but effective tail-twister; but we must not admit the merely lazy, restless, or vulgar imitation.

And so to 'try out'¹. It may be said that the 'out' in 'try out' denotes a thoroughness, as in 'clean out' or a finality, as in 'knocked out'—a trying 'out' to the farthest limits of possibility, or patience, or the time available. But I do not care what is said. I here prefer the Bible to the Prayer Book; and *I will not have the foul expression!* For if these defences are to prevail it would be right for His Majesty's Judges to tell the prisoner that he had been tried *out* and found guilty. And that, most evidently, would be lousy.

EXERCISE

Mr. Justice Rigby Swift (to a witness): 'Although you may sit down you must still speak up.'

(1) If the learned Judge had said, 'Although you may sit you must still speak', would his utterance, Bobby, have been equally (a) effective, (b) intelligible?

ANSWER

(a) No. (b) No.

(2) Do these two particles pass the test prescribed above, Bobby?

ANSWER

(a) 'Down'. No; for she was sitting already. But if it had been 'have sat down'—Yes.

(b) 'Up'. Yes.

(3) But if the 'down' is omitted does not the sentence lose its balance and the pleasing opposition of 'down' and 'up'?

ANSWER

Yes.

(4) Then do we pass both the particles, Bobby?

ANSWER

Yes. What a life!

But this is bad:

'It is proposed to hasten *up* the immunization against this disease.'

(Battalion Orders)

And ought that fine critic, Mr. E. A. Baughan, to write 'better-written music than would furnish *out* half a dozen ordinary revues'?

(*News Chronicle*)

In the dictionary, I *know*. But is it *right*—that is, fruitful?

A COUPLE OF UPS

(i) '*Sold up*'

'My grandfather, Lord Gort . . . was quite ruined and sold up. . . .'

(General Sir IAN HAMILTON in a letter to *The Times*)

We cannot acquit our favourite general of excessive emphasis in describing the financial state of his grandfather. But if he had omitted 'ruined' and said 'My grandfather was sold' we should not have understood him, should we? This, Bobby, we may pass as an UP Idiomatic. But I should not here have passed 'beaten up'. For 'beat up', meaning 'beat', is mere verbosity, and is not even necessary for eggs.

(2) '*Hotted up*'

A warrior in Venezuela sends me a moving appeal for permission to continue 'hotting up' his engine (or car). 'Heating' will not do, he says, because he does not want his engine to be 'hot'. He wants it *cool* but he wants to 'hot it up', that is, 'put a little more pep or snap into it'.

Well, I see the difficulty; and though I distrust, with reason, the language of the motor-world, I am eager to help. Certainly, brother, continue to 'hot' your engine (not a 'neologism' but a word used many hundreds of years ago) But what is the point of 'up'? I cannot see that, in this case, it adds or means anything. I am not, truly, very hot about 'hotting up'; and I should like to pass it, as a special favour, for a special purpose. But then, I fear, my friend will expect me to support him when he says that his car is, or has, 'started up'. Why? And, if I pass that, he will say that his car has 'stopped up', or has been 'painted up'. There is no end to this vice. Yet I hate to be a Thin End of the Wedger: I believe that here, at least, patient education is better than prohibition; and I am sure that, after reading this, my Venezuelan warrior will know how to conduct himself.

Uponery

'If you slip *up on* it one night go to bed after dinner the next. Check *up on* your weight every day; don't let the pounds creep *up on* you un-awares.'

(*Vogue*)

'Slip up on', Bobby, is at least significant slang, though surprising in the refined pages of *Vogue*. But the writer, having caught the 'up on' habit, has

been unable to stop. 'Check up on' is common now, but wordy and indefensible, for 'up on' adds nothing to the strong verb 'check'. It is an awful example of the Verbosity of the Slick, the Garrulity of the Young. They think that splashing is the same as sprinting. Compare 'Your further favour to hand and contents noted', 'in back of for 'behind' (page 42) and—

'Face up to'

'Face up to' is on three or four Black Lists, and rightly. What an expression! Here is Verbosity unashamed. It is twice as long as 'face', but says no more. 'Give me them that will face me', said one of Shakespeare's characters; but he would not say it now. And if Macaulay had been writing in this restless age he would have written:

'And how can man die better
Than facing *up to* fearful odds
For the ashes of his fathers
And the temples of his gods?'

They all do it:

'That had not been faced up to as a matter of defencepolicy.'

(Mr. C. R. ATTLEE, M.P.)

'It was our duty as guardians of our children to face up to the situation. . . .'

(Mr. J. EWART SMART, President of the Association of Directors and Secretaries for *Education*, and Director of Education at Acton)

'Unless you face up to the necessity of doing certain fundamental Socialist things you cannot really accomplish anything.'

(*New Statesman*, *Nation*, *Athenaeum*, *Week-End Review*, etc.)

But, surely, this is a case for facing *down* to 'the fundamental things'?

I have tried (by request), but I cannot pass 'face up to'.

'*Up to*'

'I feel *it is up to us* in the Government, it is up to all of us, to start again with renewed efforts. . . .'

(Mr. BALDWIN)

Or, in other words, '*We must* all start again.'

Intrusive 'of

'Poised all of civilization upon the brink of hostilities.'

(SENATOR TYDINGS)

Many warriors have denounced what they call the pleonastic 'of in 'all of. One has sent me this specimen, trapped in the *Observer*:

'The Boat Race will lose all of its prestige if Oxford cannot stem the Cambridge victories.'

Mr. James Agate has recently (I think) become an Ofer:

'All of the play's ingredients are popular.'

(*Sunday Times*)

This disturbs me, for he is generally right. I wish, by the way, that some one would finish for me the poem I began concerning that brilliant column:

So great the man, so small the print—

One makes you squirm, the other squint, . . .

The other two lines should picture the increased effect that might be expected if Mr. Agate were printed as large as Mr. Charles Morgan in the *Times*.

But let us go back to this 'of. You dislike it? So do I. The Rowing Correspondent of *The O.*, I am sure, never told a lady that all of his heart, was hers; nor, before the altar, did he say, 'With all of my worldly goods I thee endow.' We shudder at the thought; though if any one said that he was a jolly good fellow, we should all, I am sure, reply happily, 'And so say all of us.'

Steady, then, brothers! Shuddering is not a rational process, and at first it is difficult to say *why* we shudder. And there are base defenders of this 'of who remark slyly that we should not shudder at 'some of its prestige' or 'much of its prestige'. Why not?

I do not know what answer the pundits would give. I can find no reference to the problem in Fowler; he uses 'all of himself' (p. 399). The Master, therefore, must tackle the enemy unaided, and the Master is determined that this 'of shall be cast out. The Master's view is that you may say 'some of and 'much of, because 'of means 'out of or 'away from', and signifies the deduction of a part or portion. So, if the doctor takes out some of your inside you will lose some *part* of your inside, but you still have some inside left. But if he takes out *all* your inside, that is the end of the matter. Either he takes out all your inside or he does not; there is no question of deduction, and it is as unnecessary and wrong to add an 'of as it would be to say 'all *parts*' of your inside. By the same reasoning, I suppose, you should not say 'the whole *of* your inside', though you might say that he took out 'whole sections of your inside'. And if you say, 'Well, what about "So say all of us"?'¹ the answer is that that is a low ungrammatical ditty, and you ought to sing, 'And so we all say.' But life, I agree, will be very difficult.

'ize' and 'ise'

This is dangerous work, brothers, but every danger brings a lesson, and we must 'face up to' them bravely. Some kind warriors tell me that I have been careless and erroneous about 'ise' and 'ize'. I plead guilty. This is one of those 'issues' on which a writer may be right but seem to be wrong, or have no opinion at all and seem to be right. For newspapers and printers' 'readers' have their own fixed policy, and, though you may write 'realize' all through your novel, you may find in the first proof that it has become 'realise' in the press. But that is no defence. We should make up our minds and, if we are flouted, have rows with our publishers. The papers are another matter. In your letter to *The Times* you will be printed 'realize'. But in the *Daily Telegraph* you will find that you have written 'realise'. And if you have strong views and tell these papers that you will not write to them again it is just possible that neither of them will mind very much.

But there is the problem: Do you write 'realize' or 'realise', 'organize', or 'organise'? I confess that I have loitered through life not worrying about it, but generally writing 's' because I vaguely disliked V and was vaguely attached to 's'. Well, that was wrong, and I ask pardon of the brotherhood; for these things matter. I have studied the authorities and I am now (I *think*) a converted 'zedder' (in the right places), falling in behind *The Times*, the *O.E.D.*, and the *Encyclopedia Britannica*.¹ But, for all I know, my publisher's reader may be a passionate 'esser'; and, though I now realize that 'realise' was

¹ The King's Regulations for the Navy have 'authorise,' and those for the Army 'authorize'. A warrior tells me that the R.A.F. write 'ize' and that his part of the Army are 'essers'. Surely His Majesty should make up his mind

wrong, you may find that they have printed 'realise' after all. What a life!

But, my own troubles set aside, the orders are, brothers, that our troops be 'zedders' forthwith—in the right places. Mark that. For there are fearful pitfalls here. Do not, for example, Bobby, begin to write 'compromize', 'advertize', 'chastize', 'despize', or 'disguize' and say I told you to. No, you must write 'advertise' but 'organize', 'improvise' but 'moralize', 'chastise' but 'cauterize'. Why? Well, it would take a long time to explain, and I am not at all sure that I shall. I have a headache as it is, and I hope that by this time you have a headache too. Besides, much better men than I have explained it already in printed books, and it is not for me to cheat them of their royalties, especially as I have only just got the hang of the thing myself. Therefore, for example, look at Fowler's *Modern English Usage* under *-ise* and *-ize*. I learn from one of my gallant warriors that this is not merely a matter of domestic philology (if that is the right word). There are international complications, and the honour, perhaps the life, of the British 'zed' is in danger. For the French, you see, in their odd volatile fashion, do not use a 'z' in the kind of verbs we are talking about—a nation of 'essers', through no fault of their own. But the North Americans have a letter which is very like the British 'zed', though in their outlandish fashion they call it 'zee' ('zed', I believe, was discarded, as a 'gesture', in the War of Independence). Well, now, my warrior tells me that the Americans use their 'zee' in the most barbarous and unChristian fashion, in places where *no* civilized nation could *possibly* use 'zed'—or even 'zee'; for example, he says, they will even write 'analyze', which is wrong by every rule and in every hemisphere. And in our anxiety to avoid such

bad behaviour many of the English have swung over to the other extreme and use 's' for safety where V is not only permissible but right. That means that life is easier, since the man who always 'esses' commits no serious crime, unlike the man who 'zeds' in the wrong place; and he does not have to pause before 'advertise' and think, 'Is this a "zed" or an "ess"?' But it reduces us to the pitiable monotony of the French language, and may end at last in the extinction of the British 'zed' (except in such words as 'zebra', 'lazy', and 'Hezekiah'), which many of my warriors would regard as a calamity.

So, you see, it is the old story of Foreign Affairs, Great Britain vacillating between two alien powers, and heading feebly for a false position. I dare say that some of you think that Disarmament and Trade are more important than the British 'Z', but that is a very shallow and indolent thought, and I will not have it in the army. Your homework, then, to-night will be to think of all the verbs in 'ise' or 'ize', write them down and write them down *right!* Ask your family and friends to help you and you will find that the week-end is full of fun and dissension. I will give you only this one clue: that you ought to write 'ize' whenever you are really using the Greek termination or *-izo*, as in 'evangelize', but not in 'advertise', where you are not. Is that clear?

THE 'DEAD' LANGUAGES OR WEEWAH WOAKAY

Dismiss from your mind, Bobby, the notion that the pronunciation of Latin in England is not a matter of 'practical importance' to anybody but your detested schoolmasters. And attend to the following lectures carefully.

(i) *The Liveliness of the 'Dead' Languages*

A little knowledge of Latin and Greek, Bobby, would be useful to every citizen, for every citizen uses a little Latin and Greek every day.

I affirm boldly that the elements of these ancient tongues should be taught more widely, not less, than they are to-day; and not only in the private but in the State elementary and secondary schools. They are valued, where they are valued at all, as instruments of 'culture'¹ and mental discipline for the rich. I hold that they should be part of the 'practical' education of the people, equipping the citizen for ordinary life, whether the citizen is to be a poet or a plumber.

If I said that a little Latin and Greek made a wondrous addition to any man's understanding and enjoyment of literature Business Man would call me unpractical and highbrow. So let us leave literature out, for the moment. But then, without a little Latin and Greek it becomes every year increasingly difficult to understand even the news-columns in the popular Press. Some of the sub-editors and snappy leader-writers would be surprised to hear it, but their writings reek of the 'dead' languages. Look at this heading to a leading article:

VETERANS' BONUS VETO

—Latin, every word of it. Not long ago I came across the word 'onomatopoeic' in a leader in the *Daily*—(*several* million circulation). Heaven knows how it came to be there, and I expect that somebody was sacked; but there it was, and it was the right word.

That, no doubt, was an extreme example.' But every week some new thing is flung into the news by the engineers, the scientists, or the doctors; and

nearly always it has a Greek or Latin name, whether it is a new entertainment, a drug, or a disease. Cinema, vitamin, calory, gramophone, polytechnic, auditorium, totalizator, aeroplane, psycho-analysis—and, I regret to say, television and aquadrome—here are only a few; and be very sure there are many more to come (for the engineers, the scientists, and the doctors are steadily extending their sway). Our law is saturated with Rome, and if you attend the High Court you will hear almost as much Latin as English. As for our modern politicians, whenever they are in a mess they rush for succour to the 'dead' languages. The situation is saved by a *moratorium*, a *referendum* or a *quota*, a *veto*, or a *bonus* or an *ad valorem* duty; they take this or that as a *casus belli* and issue an *ultimatum*] or, in a milder mood, they claim that the enemy has no *locus standi*, send him a *memorandum* or make his proposition an *item* on the *agenda*, and issue an *interim* report, They declare a *maximum* tariff or a *minimum* wage; they make their calculations *per diem*, *per annum* or *per centuwl*, and base them on an *optimum* market; they postulate a *quantum* or a *tertium quid*¹, they demand a *quid pro quo* or a *sine qua non*¹, and are ready to stand or fall by the *status quo*—*mutatis mutandis*, of course, also *cetens paribus*. They assume that the other fellow is acting *bona fide* (*prima facie*], but put the *onus* on him; they share out the profits *pro rata* or *pan passu*, plus a *bonus*, and when all is over they make *propaganda* speeches (reported *verbatim*) about, *inter alia*, the *millennium*, *et cetera*.

One mining crisis, I remember, raged for months round something that was called the *datum-line*. But most of our artisans are quite in the dark about

¹ I have seen somewhere the quaint adjective '*Sine qua nona*V

the origins of these important terms; they could not guess at first what *quota* meant and why; whether it had something to do with the totalizer and whether it rhymed with 'bloater*' or 'blotter'. At the time of murder trials we all talk glibly about *alibis*.

'*Alibi**, Bobby, is a Latin word meaning 'elsewhere' and nothing more. As a noun it has long had a clear and useful significance in our Courts of Law, where, if you plead or plove an *alibi*, you say that you were *elsewhere* at the time of the crime. It is not, for example, an *alibi* to say that, though you did hit the other fellow, it was in self-defence. Mr. Weller in *The Pickwick Papers* used the word correctly, and I see no reason why we should not continue to do so. But suddenly—in the past few months, I think—we have begun to use *alibi* for any excuse, plea, defence, means of escape, or justification.

A boxer called Max Baer, after losing a boxing-match, whispered to the microphone, 'I have no *alibi*' (which could only mean that he did not intend to show that he was not present at the fight). A journalist tells us that when our cricketers returned from Australia 'they offered no *alibis*'. And if the journalist may do it, I suppose that the boxer may do it.

But nobody in my army may do it. There is no need for the change; it springs from ignorance or laziness; and to yield to 'popular usage' would here be cowardly. But does it matter? you ask me, Bobby. Yes Here is a word having a precise, important meaning in criminal causes, especially in the most popular class of crime, which is murder. The Courts will never accept the new meaning of the word, and therefore those who use it wrongly may cause or suffer confusion if they appear in

Court, and will not get the full enjoyment from the reports of murder cases.

And, apart from these practical disadvantages, it is silly, Bobby; it is inefficient; it is like saying, 'His *alias* is Jim.' when you mean that that is his name. It is like saying, 'four per centum'¹ if you mean 'four in every thousand'. It is like missing an open goal, or playing across a straight half-volley, or motoring over a policeman on point duty.

No one would defend these acts as 'popular usage'. They are unskilful and wrong, and we condemn them. And where we can say with equal confidence (as we can about *alibi*) that a word is wrongly used we must say so, Bobby, without fear or favour.

I shall say it with especial delight whenever a Latin word is ridiculously used by those who impertinently attack the 'unpractical' teaching of Latin. These stupid persons cannot have it both ways. If they condemn the learning of Latin they had better avoid the use of Latin; and if they find, as they will, that they cannot do without it, let them try to use it correctly or we will knock the stuffing out of them—not for their ignorance but for their arrogance.

Let 'Free-Lance Journalist' and 'Business Man', who write those fierce indictments of the poor public schools where the boys 'waste their time on Latin and Greek which will never be any use to them'—let this complacent pair of poops determine, shall we say next Lent, to 'give up' the use of naked Latin words (to say nothing of derivatives); and let them pay me a pound for every Latin word they use in that time. At Easter, Bobby, I shall buy a yacht.

I love to think of these plain practical fellows, Bobby, trying to struggle through the long, long weeks without *alibi* and *nem. con., inst., ult.* and *prox., per diem, per annum, quota, moratorium,*

*memorandum, agenda, quid pro quo, status quo, sine qua non, cum dividend, anno domini, maximum, minimum, medium, bonafide, data, strata, onus, bonus, proforma, pro rata, ad lib., ad hoc, ad nauseam, per se, per capita, dies non, sine die, verbum sap., via, omnibus, re, erratum, non compos mentis, ab ovo, ab initio, interim(dividend), plus, minus, ad valorem (duty), a priori, a fortiori, semi-, annus mirabilis, crux, caveat emptor, cui bono? de jure, de facto, 'de mortuis', D.V. (deo volente), deus ex machina, ex cathedra, drama, dramatis personae, climax, Ecce Homo', in vino ventas, modus operandi, et seq., vide, ex officio, felo de se, fiat, de profundis, flagrante ddicto, genius, gratis, ibidem, i.e. (id est), in camera, impedi-
 menta, in esse, in extremis, in extenso, in forma paupens, infra dig., in memonam, ipse dixit, ipso facto, in toto, lapsus linguae, homo sapiens, laudator temporis acti, sub iudice, locum tenens, Magna Carta, Mars, Venus, Juppiter, magnum opus, multum in parvo, habeas corpus, decree nisi, nil, non sequitur, N.B. (nota bene), PS. (post scriptum), post mortem, e.g. (exempligratia), nulli secundus, obiter dictum, exit,
 , pan passu, paterfamilias, Pax Britannica, Eros, per cent, per contra, vox populi, pro bono publico, pro tanto, pro tern, (tempore), Q.E.D., q.v., resjudicata, seriatim, verbatim, item, 'sic', 'si monumentum requiris circumspice , stet, sub poena, sui generis, sursum corda, Adeste Fideles, Venite, Magnificat, Jubilate, Nunc Dimittis, 'tempora mutantur', terminus, tertium quid, terra incognita, arena, major, minor, index, tu quoque, ultra vires, vice, par, premium, vice versa, a.m. (ante meridiem], p.m., v. (versus), MS., viz. (videlicet), propaganda, censor, Britannia, post hoc propter hoc, Rex versus Smith, animus, honoris causa, ratio, consensus, contra, de minimis, ego, extra, 'super', inter-, sub-, dis-, de-, pre-, addendum, hypothesis, ignoramus,*

nucleus, pseudo-, in loco parentis, innuendo, interest, hiatus, lacuna, viva voce, quorum, status, stadium, emporium, inperpetuo, et cetera! Golly, what a 'dead' language!

It is vain, Practical Man, to tell me that these words have become part of the English language and that you know what they mean. You don't! I have told you already of the estate-agent who suffered for years the guilty secret that he did not know what '*ult.*' meant or why.¹ You do not even realize that your favourites '*de-*', '*dis-*', and '*re-*', which you will cheerily attach to any word you know, are Latin prefixes, and ought, as such, to be used with discretion: so that you are constantly creating mongrels, and perpetuating, in bastard form, the language you despise.²

In short, Practical Man, without a little Latin and Greek you have not had a 'practical' education. Compared with this, the proceedings of King John and even Mr. Gladstone are of minor importance. I do not say that Latin and Greek will be equally valuable to poet and to plumber, or that either should spend as much time upon these tongues as I was made to do. Though I shall always be grateful to those who gave me a 'classical education', without doubt they gave me too much of it. But I should like to see the children of the proletariat (*what* a word!) introduced, at least, to *mensa* and *Balbus*, to the genitive and the preposition, the gerundive and the hanging nominative; and I do not see why they should not be taught what *alibi* means and *status quo* and ratio and quota and telephone and prejudice, and all the other 'dead' words which they will be using all their lives.

¹ And what can you mean by an *ultra* light aeroplane?

² 'Dewater the dock'—'A de-dirtmg process' (Commercial circular)—'Re-speak'—'Disheard', 'Undemarcated', etc.

INTERVAL

Showing what a grievous waste of time it would be for our Practical Men to study the Dead Languages:

There may be something to be said for *qnotaing* (Gosh!) the Jews who are allowed to escape to Palestine, but to *quota* the doctors seems doubly inhuman.'

(JOSIAH C. WEDGWOOD, M.P., in *The Times*)

'Irreparable damage, if only *pro tern*, may be done to Duke Ellington's orchestra.'

(*Melody Maker*)

'The police discovered that the accused had been at the locus. . . .'

(*Glasgow Herald*)

LEARNED, BUT RATHER JOLLY, NOTE ON AGENDA
AND PROPAGANDA

'*Agenda*. Bobby, as, of course, you know, is a Latin word (neuter plural) meaning Things to be done' (singular '*agendum*'). There is no necessity for Business Man to use the word '*agenda*', if he does not like Latin; for the list of tasks and topics before his Board or Committee Meeting can be headed 'Business' or 'Things to be done'. But, if he does use it, there is no good reason for his using it wrongly. He must not, for example, brightly add an V and speak of 'these *agendas*', since the word is plural already. But does it matter? he will cry. Well, he would laugh if a foreigner spoke about 'these *mices*'; and he would be shocked if his secretary wrote about 'these *womens*'; and he would sack a cashier or chauffeur who thought that the distinction between singular and plural was unimportant. I leave the case, with confidence, to his own judgment. The

charges, once more, are inaccuracy and inefficiency, both, I thought, grave crimes in the kingdom of Business.

But he may do what he likes with *propaganda*, for here confusion has prevailed so long that rectitude is impossible. Also, it is a bad word and ought to die. It is a political Witch-word,¹ used to describe the efforts of your enemy to make his creed or policy known and accepted; your own attempts are a 'campaign' or 'crusade'.

Also, unlike *agenda*, it is a nebulous word. The speaker means sometimes the doctrine or policy disseminated and sometimes the machinery or methods of dissemination; and it is seldom quite clear which he does mean.

It is a mess in every way. I humbly confess, Bobby and Business Man, that until this morning (August Bank Holiday 1935) I thought that *propaganda* was neuter plural, nominative, like *agenda*—'things to be propagated'. And so, I still think, logically, it should be. But then we should have to say 'The brewers' *propaganda* are pestilent' or 'There is just one tiny *propagandum* that I should like to', etc., and that, I agree, is not practical politics.

But my dictionary—awake, Bobby!—says severely '*sometimes erroneously treated as a plural*'; and, according to history, the absurd word is an ablative, feminine, singular. For it came from the 'modern Latin title *Congregatio de propaganda fide*' (the propagation of the faith) ... 'a Committee of Cardinals of the Roman Catholic Church having the care and oversight of foreign missions'. And now it is chiefly applied to the verbal activities of such poor outlaws as the brewers! Did I not say that the word was a mess?

¹ See page 229.

To sum up, Britons, while we have such words as campaign and policy, doctrine, preach, gospel, belief, publish, teach, educate, and advertise, we can generally do without *propaganda*. So you, Business Man, maysay *propagandas*, *propagandas*[^]*propagandi* or *propagandibus*, for all I care; and if, by making it ridiculous, you kill the word, so much the better.

(2) *Pronunciation of Latin*

But the more the English use Latin, Bobby, the more important will be the question of pronunciation.

I talk about an '*alibi*', and so does Bill at the pub; but at your queer school you are taught to talk about an '*ahleebee*' (or something like it).

I am aware that Latin prose was written originally by foreigners; but it should now be pronounced in good old English as it was in my young days, and had been for a very long time before that. In my day, when the lads of Eton and Winchester conversed in Latin prose it sounded like two young men exchanging their thoughts in an elegant but virile manner. Now it sounds like two dagoes making love; it sounds like a fraternal address from a South American republic; it sounds like a recitation from a Soho wine-list.

I was at school at the time of the great change. We boys did what we could by way of rebellion, and so, to do them justice, did some of the better-balanced masters. Little could be done in class, but we struck a blow whenever there was a Latin hymn in chapel. There was a beautiful old favourite beginning:

'Jam lucis orto sidere
Deum precemur supplices',

¹ In India, I hear, in official and business circles *pro formae* has appeared—plural of *pro forma* (another unwanted expression)

and I shall never forget the mutinous babel which resulted from the first few renderings of that hymn under the revolting New (or, as some will call it, the Restored) Pronunciation. You could hear the clever boys, the toadies, long-stops, and new masters singing obsequiously a series of alien sounds like:

'Yahm lukis orto seedairay
Dayoom prekaymoor soophkayze',

while the First Eleven, the small boys, the rackets pair, the cricket coach, and the older masters would bellow defiantly the simple natural sounds which were good enough for our fathers.

Well, the tenacious innovators wore us down, as they always will in matters of education. A determined gang of cranks can foist a new pronunciation on us as easily as the dance-instructors or fashion-mongers can impose a new frock or foxtrot. But is it not time for another change? They have had a fair trial of their folly, and what is the result?

One result is that when my daughter and I have a little chat in Latin at the lunch-table we don't understand each other; we speak different languages. I like, now and then (hoping that I may secure respect in one way, if not in another) to throw off a Latin tag or two in the family circle; but they fall flat. Worse, they expose me to mockery and suspicion—the suspicion of being antique and out of date. One evening at supper I remarked rather aptly, '*In vino veritas.*'

One daughter looked at me blankly (but she has no Latin); the other said, 'What?' (though she has a lot). I said again, '*In vino veritas, my dear.*'

'Oh.' she said, 'you mean "*In weeno wamtahss*".'

'No.' I said, 'I mean "*In vino veritas*"'

'Well.' she said, 'Miss Lotty pronounces it "*In weeno waintahss*".'

And it was clear that that settled it.

In my youth I was a classical scholar—well, exhibitioner. And to think that I should be crushed by charming Miss Lotty! To think that there is a generation of children growing up which has never heard Latin spoken in the good old English way, a generation which solemnly believes that J. Caesar (or whoever it was) came home from a campaign and said to the intelligent Romans, '*Wainee—weedee—weekee.*'

I do not know how J. Caesar (if it was he) pronounced '*Veni—vidi—vici.*' Nor, I maintain, does Miss Lotty. But Miss Lotty, it appears, and all the obedient school-masters, do tell our innocent children that it was pronounced more like '*Wainee—weedee—weekee* (my hat! it sounds like a patent medicine) than my way. How do they know? And what does it matter if they do? They know that the Romans wore curious clothes, but they don't think it necessary to put on *togae* for the Latin lesson. Nor, so far as I know, have the reformers invented a New Pronunciation for Greek. No doubt that will come. Probably some Cambridge gang is working it out now.

One of the grand arguments for learning a little Latin was that it assisted us to understand and appreciate the so-called English language, which, with a delightful freedom from insularity, has borrowed and incorporated enormous chunks of Latin. The New Pronunciation makes almost nonsense of this argument. We do not really know (I'll bet a fiver) how the Romans pronounced Augustus; nor does it matter. We do not really know how Shakespeare pronounced the month of August; nor does it matter. But we *do* know that *we* pronounce it August; and if you tell a child that the month of

August is named after the famous Roman *Owgoostoo* he receives the statement with incredulity and forms a prejudice against education which may last throughout his life.

I do not know whether the hope of the reformers was that by degrees the New Pronunciation would govern not only our use of Latin but the 'English' words we derive from Latin, i.e. that we should come to speak of the Owgoost Bank Holiday; but, if so, singularly little progress has been made in this direction. Indeed the N.P. has not had the smallest effect in any of the departments of national life which make use of Latin. Not one of His Majesty's Judges, I believe, has been persuaded to say that so-and-so is *soob yoohdicay* or *ooltrah weerayze*¹.

Let me warn you, Bobby, they pronounce *alibi* as I do—and always will; and you will make a very poor impression on the Judge if, being charged with murder and pleading self-defence, you say 'My Lord, I have an *ahhbee*. You may tell your enslaved pastors and masters that I said so; and when the next big murder comes to brighten the lives of the people, ask your masters whether they think that the accused person has an *ahhbee*. But do not be hard on them; this is not their fault.

The doctors keep on inventing things with Latin or semi-Latin names, but they rudely ignore the N.P. The vitamin, I fancy, is of much later origin than the N.P., but they call it a vitamin and not a weetahmeen. Politicians obstinately refuse to speak of *werbahtem*, *morahtoroom*, of *nay plooss ooltrah* or *wox populee*. In short, the New Pronunciation is no better than a secret cult, imposed by fanatics on the schools and colleges at the expense of our defenceless young. And the moment the young

¹ *Sub judice—ultra vires.*

escape from the schools, whether they enter a learned profession or not, they cast off the whole thing and return to the pronunciation of their fathers.

And so they always will do. For not even the cranks themselves have the courage to practise their crankery in real life. You will hear a don in his college assuring an innocent youth that *lumbus* should be pronounced *loombooss* because it is thought (by whom?) that Yooliooss Kyzer pronounced it in that way. But I have challenged them in vain to say that they want to take a motor-omnibooss to the tairminooss at Wictoria Station; to tell their doctor that they suffer from *loombahgo*; to tell the gardener to put *gerahnirooms* in their window-boxes or their housekeepers to clean their carpets with *wahkoo-oom* cleaners; and the final ordeal of 'Schools'¹ is still, I believe, a *viva-voce* and not a *weewah-wookay* examination. Smith *major*, I believe, should be addressed as Smith *mahyore*. But is he? Do masters say, 'Smith *mahyore*, stop pinching Jones *meenorel*' No; they have more sense.

A long time has passed since the horrid thing began. The Fathers have had a good knock, and I think that they might gracefully declare their innings closed. There are urgent national reasons why they should, quite apart from the sufferings of boys and masters. For I hope and believe that the study of Latin and Greek, so far from dwindling into an intellectual exercise for the sons of the rich or the secret indulgence of 'scholars', will come at last to be practised, to some extent, by every citizen. It will be a big surprise to the Business Man who says now 'What use is a knowledge of Latin or Greek to a salesman who is selling soap to a small shopkeeper—or for that matter, selling steel to a motor-car manufacturer?' (as Mr. Charles C. Knight

remarked at the Annual Conference of the Incorporated Sales Managers¹ Association, May 27th 1935). But as the years of education, the hours of leisure, and the opportunities for 'culture' are gradually extended, the 'unpractical' studies are more likely to increase than to perish; and it may even be that the good Mr. Knights and the other apostles of 'practical efficiency' and mechanical progress will, by securing our prosperity and increasing our leisure, prove to be the ultimate saviours of the 'dead' languages.

But if this is to happen, Bobby, the New Pronunciation must go. We may easily bring Latin into the docker's humble home (indeed, as we have seen, it is there already); but not the bogus Mediterranean accent. While we teach our boys that August is named after the Emperor Owgoostoos Mr Knight will have a right, or at least an excuse, to accuse us of wasting time. If Willie runs home to Hoxton Houses and delightedly tells his father that he has learned the meaning of 'alibi' or 'per cent' his father may be delighted also; but if Willie calls them 'ahleebee' and 'pair kentoom' it is not improbable, as the great men say, that his father will swear. And his father will be right.

'To condition'

We have already had a bout with the verb 'to recondition'; and here is 'to condition' raising its head more plausibly and in the best society. I look at the first sentence of *The Times Jubilee Number* and what do I see?

'It is not improbable that the circumstances conditioning the life of man have undergone

greater change during the reign of King George V than during any previous quarter of a century in human experience.'

We know that certain Americans speak of 'air-conditioning' (why not 'air-control?'). And Miss Toby Wing, in a New York paper, says:

'I eat everything I want, but I constantly condition myself with exercise.'

But who is *The Times* writer? The illustrious Professor G. M. Trevelyan, O.M. Are we afraid? No.

The circumstances conditioning the life of man.'

That is, the circumstances governing the life of man, or producing the conditions among which man lives.

Without explanation, you might think that the circumstances mentioned included all the influences upon human life, mortal and divine, climatic, mechanical, scientific, spiritual, material, and what-not. And, learning that these circumstances had changed, you might suppose that God and the weather had suffered great alteration during King George's reign. But from what follows it is clear that the writer has in mind 'the rapid application of scientific inventions to the service of man's needs.' etc.; mother words, the wireless, telephone, machine-gun, aeroplane and all the other mechanical nuisances.

In short, the material circumstances of human life, or the material conditions, controls or even things of human life, or the material influences on human life.

What the writer wants to say is not an easy thing to say shortly; but if so fine a writer can only say

it by calling to his aid the vile verb 'to condition', I must express my respectful regrets.

You say, maybe, that it is *not* a vile verb. *But obviously it is, you lump!* I will tell you why. Attend to this carefully, Bobby, for it is very important. A pint of bogus verbs in '-tion' would make more mischief in the language than a gallon of honest slang. I see with dismay that already the verb 'to position' has been admitted to the newspapers:

'The *positioning* of refuges also demands attention.'

(An official of the Automobile Association, as reported in the *Daily Telegraph*)

The *positioning* was to be modified so that the road would automatically come in conformity with the rest of the Borough.¹

(Alderman J. S. H. ABBOTT, as reported in the *Evening Standard*)

(Motor-matters—as usual.)

Now why, Bobby, is 'to position' a bad verb? Not only because we have already such verbs as 'to place' and 'to space': but because 'to position' is itself congenitally feeble. It is not formed from the main verb-root¹ but from a subordinate case (the comical accusative, *positionem*, Bobby) of a noun derived from the parent-verb. It is like a very distant cousin claiming an earldom. It is as if you planted a leaf instead of a tree. It is as if you said, 'I motion' instead of 'I move', or 'I obligation' instead of 'I oblige', or 'I valuation' instead of 'I value'. We have very few respected verbs of this kind, and rightly. There are 'to auction, caution, question, petition, sanction, station, and (not dear to me)

¹ *pono* (I place), *ponere* (to place), *positum* (the supine).

function'. Certain base novelists use the verb 'to motion' ('She motioned him to sit down'), which, I see without surprise, is in the *S.O.E.D.* and was first committed in 1476. I can recall no others. But if 'to position' is admitted without, mark you, the plea of necessity, which can be urged in aid of 'petition'¹, 'question', and, maybe, 'sanction'—then there is no reason why we should not have 'to ignition.' 'to diction', 'to fiction', 'to friction', 'to session', 'to coalition', 'to suction', 'to abolition', and 'to tuition' (which I have heard already in the skittle alley); or even 'to abortion', 'to ablution', 'to section', 'to fraction', 'to action' ('I actioned him'), and 'to proposition'—which would all be intolerable. And do not tell me that I am working analogy too hard, for in these wanton times anything can happen, and happen very quickly. When I began to write about 're-condition' I had never met 'to position'; I mentioned it as a remote possibility, and, a few days later, there it was in print!¹

Now, 'to condition' is a verb of the same weak breeding—'an adaptation', the dictionary says, of '*condicionem*' (later, *condit-*) apparently connected with '*condicere*'—to talk a thing over, to agree upon, concert. I should have thought myself that there was a touch of '*condo, condere, conditum* (I make, construct, build) in 'condition', where it means 'a mode or state of being'—that is, that we had *two* distinct nouns 'condition',² the stipulation (*condicere*) and the state (*condere*). But all the proper authorities assure me that I am wrong; and that is another nail in the coffin of this verb. Heaven knows how a noun meaning the 'stipulation', or

¹ 'Queen Ovationed'. (*The Morning Bulletin*, Rockhampton, Australia). 'Auditioned' (B.B.C.). 'Japaninumtionb' (newspaper).
² As we have two 'cases', see page 117

'indispensable requisite', in an agreement came to mean the 'mode or state of being, circumstances, or position' of Miss Toby Wing, but it seems to have done it. So you are taking a noun with a neutral, passive, non-committal meaning and lazily converting it into a verb with a positive emphatic sense. But if you may do that with 'condition' you may do it with 'state', with 'quality', with 'situation' or 'circumstance'. If you are right, you thoughtless egg, the Professor might as well have written:

'It is not improbable that the conditions *circum-*
dancing the life of man . . . ' or

'It is not improbable that the circumstances
situationing mankind . . . ' or

'The circumstances digestioning the human race.'

Or he might have said that human life was *qualified*, by scientific inventions, or *stated* by mechanical progress, or *positioned* by aeroplanes, or *amounted* by birth-control, or *languaged* by the cinema.

I know that physiologists talk about 'Conditioned Reflexes' and that queer manufacturers have 'conditioning rooms'; and no doubt it is impossible to stop them. But that is no reason why a learned layman should smuggle such a verb into *The Times Literary Supplement* and lend his encouragement to Miss Toby Wing. This must not happen again.

EXERCISE

Are the following passages correctly quotationed?

'Where the bee suctions, there suction I.'

(SHAKESPEARE)

'Are you salvationed?'

'I am unable to conception. . . .'

(The Rt. Hon. P. Q—, M.P.)

'O reformation it altogether.'

(SHAKESPEARE)

'Let not the heavens hear these tell-tale women
Rail on the Lord's unctioned.'

(SHAKESPEARE)

'Not perditioned but gone before.'

(EBENEZER ELLIOTT)

'The duty of an Opposition was . . . to oppo-
sition everything and proposition nothing.'

(LORD STANLEY)

'The circumstances dispositioning the British
people include the weather.'

THE SHIP OF STATE, ETC.

'The only answer is a national government that
will scrape the barnacles off the ship of state, and
will see that those who are feeding at the public
trough are ruled out of court.'

(Dr. D MACDONALD, Chairman of the Board of
Governors of the University of Toronto)

'We are a race of mariners', as the Mayor of
Burbleton said at the opening of the West Pier and
Fun Drome. And, being a race of mariners, we use
a great many sea-terms in ordinary life, that is,
when on land. But the odd, and bad, thing is that,
being a race of mariners, we so often use them
without knowing what they truly mean, without
realizing, sometimes, that they are sea-terms.

When a British politician is, literally,¹ at sea, he
mentions the various parts of the ship with extreme

¹ Here, Bobby, is a good one at last for we ungrateful citizens
have a way of saying that the politician is, metaphorically, at sea
But even here I think that 'actually' would be better.

caution, and rather than commit himself to a nautical term will often remain silent or speak vaguely of 'that thing'. I am sure that our seven statesmen on their voyage to Ottawa thought twice and more before they spoke of such difficult matters as 'companion-ways' and 'knots'.

But when the politician is on the platform or in the House he becomes fearlessly nautical; and the splash of the sea is heard all through his speech. The 'Ship of State' is storm-tossed in the earlier parts, rides on an even keel about the middle, and (in the peroration) is steered safely into harbour.

All might be well if he confined himself to the Ship of State, which never does any very complicated manoeuvres and is not likely to lead him into grave peril.¹ But when he begins to criticize other politicians (for 'trimming their sails', 'sailing too close to the wind', and so forth) he may fall into error. So let us try to be clear about these things.

You have all heard one politician accuse another of '*tacking backwards and forwards*'. This, in politics, means that the other fellow is reckless or insincere. Heaven knows why. 'Tacking' or 'beating', or 'turning to windward', is the only way of proceeding against, or into, the wind under sail. It is a scientific and extremely skilful proceeding; it might be said to savour of the miraculous; but it is quite straightforward and reflects nothing but credit upon the man who does it well.

Sometimes the statesman, or financier, or theatrical manager is darkly accused of '*sailing very near the wind*'. This means sharp practice, going as far as you can in dirty work without bringing yourself within the law. But this is nonsense.

¹ Unless, as in the passage quoted above, navigated by those who are feeding at the public trough.

For it is the whole art of tacking (in a contemporary fore-and-aft-rigged vessel) to sail as close to the wind as possible, that is, without losing speed and distance. If you sail *too* close to the wind your vessel will go slower, and, though pointing more nearly towards her destination, will be making less real progress; and, if you sail closer still, you may be caught 'in irons' or 'in stays' and stop. You will then be inefficient, careless, or foolish, but not tricky, clever, or dishonest.

If the politician is thinking of the old-fashioned square-rigged vessel the situation is different, for then the mariner who sails *too* close to the wind risks the real danger of being 'taken aback'. But even he sails 'as near to the wind as he (safely and sensibly) can', and if he 'overdoes it' he is not cunning and unscrupulous but careless or unskilful.

Leader-writers and others, then, may safely talk about 'sailing *too* close to the wind' if they wish to suggest that the other fellow is failing in his object through (a) trying to be too clever, or (b) not knowing his job; but not in embezzlement or corruption cases, nor when attacking a tricky politician.

And it is vain to say, as the Bishop of London said of the theatrical managers, that they are 'sailing as near to the wind as they can in regard to the indecency of the nudity of girls on the stage': for that means, or should mean, that they are sailing as near to the wind as is safe and proper. If the Bishop had said '*too* close to the wind' I should not have had to call him to order, as I reluctantly do.

The truth is that, as a rule, the politician or public man has not the faintest notion what kind of vessel he is talking about, or what the phrase which he is using means. He will, for the same cause, accuse his enemy of 'sailing close to the wind', 'trimming

his sails', or 'tacking to and fro', as if these operations were all the same and equally discreditable.

You all know the politician who is said to '*trim his sails to every wind that blows*'. This poor fellow is an object of universal contempt; he is a time-server, an opportunist, insincere, self-seeking. But at sea he is a skilful, patient, and painstaking seaman, doing his job. To trim the sails', says my *Manual of Seamanship* (written by an admiral), 'signifies to set them in the most favourable direction for the wind.' And how else, one may ask, is the Ship of State (unless she has an auxiliary engine) to be brought safely into port?

By the way, is the Ship of State a sailing-vessel or a steamer? The point should be decided.

Another marine favourite of politicians is the '*sheet-anchor*'.

Twice, or thrice, in the summer of 1935, Mr. Baldwin said, The Covenant of the League of Nations is the *sheet-anchor* of British policy.'

Anchor-work is always difficult, and sometimes dangerous. I am not going to bet that I have mastered the 'sheet-anchor', or know exactly what was in the Prime Minister's mind. But for his benefit I assemble here some evidence:

The *S.O.E.D.* says:

'Sheet-anchor (origin obsc.): A large anchor, formerly always the largest of a ship's anchors, *used only in an emergency*, *b. fig.* That on which one places one's reliance when all else has failed.'

The official *Manual of Seamanship*, published by authority of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, says:

'Sheet or spare bower anchor is a spare anchor to the bowers and is of the same weight, and is

used in case of emergency when the ship is moored.
. . . *Merchant vessels do not usually carry a sheet-anchor.'*

And I think it was said by my friend the Ruler of Pilots at Gravesend that, in these days and in those parts, he never hears the expression.

The 'sheet-anchor', then, it appears, is no longer used, except by a very small proportion of British ships; but I may be wrong. It is only used by them when they are stationary and are themselves in distress or danger; and your sheet-anchor is obviously useless to other vessels which may be facing storms or enemies at sea. The captain of a great ship passing a small boat distressed in mid-Atlantic would cause but meagre satisfaction in the latter craft by crying across the waves, 'Cheer up! We have a sheet-anchor!'

Mr. Baldwin knows best whether this is the kind of thing he wished to say about Britain's attitude to the League of Nations. But, to me, it sounds perilously like the assertion of our critics, at home and abroad, that we do not regard the League as an agent of progression, to be employed continuously for the benefit of all, but as a spare protection for use only when we ourselves are (*a*) moored and (*b*) in difficulties.

I recommend, then, with respect, that the 'sheet-anchor' be most warily employed in politics. It is difficult, I admit, in this context, to think of a better metaphor. 'Mainsail', 'carburettor', or 'back-axle' will not do, for again they are directly useful only to the single vehicle to which they belong. I have it!—'Lifeboat!' For the lifeboat is ready to save not only the occupants of our Ship of State, but can be dispatched to the assistance of others, and may be

employed whether the ship is moored or in motion at sea. For 'sheet-anchor', then, read 'lifeboat'. Unless we really do mean 'sheet-anchor'.

But we all splash about in sea-language without knowing it; and even these expensive dictionaries do not seem to be sure whether some of my favourite terms were born by land or sea. Did you know, Bobby, that '*aloof*' was, originally, the order to 'luff'? 'Bear up', meaning 'Be comforted' or 'Be brave'—does this come from '*Bear up*,' meaning 'to bear the helm to windward, to alter course, turning the ship's head more away from the wind', or from 'Bear up a rein . . .'? I cannot discover.

'*All plain sailing*,' we merrily say, or write. But I am told that there is no such term. It should be 'plane sailing', which does not mean an easy progress but 'The art of determining a ship's place on the theory that the surface of the earth is plane instead of spherical'.

We say that so-and-so is '*chock-a-block*', meaning 'full up'; how many of us know that it means, technically, 'when two blocks¹ of a tackle have been hauled close together', and is still in common use among seamen hoisting sail? We speak figuratively of our friends '*falling off*'; so, indeed, did the poet Shakespeare. I suggest that he did not mean falling off a pedestal, a horse, or anything ashore, but got the term from the sailors who speak of 'falling off' the wind, i.e. falling off the wind to leeward. We speak of '*making headway*' and '*forging ahead*', and both these expressions, I believe, we owe to the mariner; also the saying that so-and-so '*goes by the board*', i.e. overboard. The stage-manager, too, cries '*Strike*' [i.e. '*dismantle*'] 'the bedroom scene', as the captain cries, or used to cry, 'Strike the fore-

¹ Pulleys.

top-gallant mast!' One day, perhaps, the politician will cry, 'Strike the Gaming Act of 1835.' Certainly I think that, since they go so far in marine figures of speech, they should go farther. They should have the Ship of State much more clear and active in their minds and not be content with keeping her on an even keel or steering her safe into port. It is odd, by the way, that, so far as I know, she has never been caught sailing too close to the wind. I do not think that she was ever 're-conditioned', 'neaped', 'kedged off', 'quarantined', 'deinsectized', 'redecontaminated', or even 'deratized'. The sentence at the head of this lecture records, I believe, the first appearance of barnacles on the Ship of State. It has always been decently assumed by orators that a Ship's Bottoms Anti-fouling Composition was employed. But let us have more. Let the statesmen study my charming Manual and put the Ship of State through some manoeuvres of a complexity parallel to the complexity of our times.

EXERCISE

How, for example, would they sling the sheet-anchor of the Ship of State under a launch of State without using the trunks?

ANSWER: The cat pendant (or chain) is rove through the cat davit and shackled on to the gravity band. . . . The anchor is lifted off the anchor-bed by the cat pendant, the third leg of the anchor sling is shackled to the gravity band, and as the anchor is lowered in the water the other two legs of the sling are brought round the boat of State and secured together by a slip or toggle.

'This is a very quick method of laying out a sheet-anchor. . . .'

Yes, let us have more fresh air from the sea; let us brighten our politics with hawse-holes and coamings, bucklers, navel-pipes, fish-davits, bill-boards, knees, stanchions, fife-rails, and belaying-pins, clew-lines and clew-garnets, slack-lines and reef-tackles, parrels, burtons, spankers, and vang. The vocabulary of the sea is inexhaustible; our modern speeches are all the same. But let us try to get the metaphors *right*.

'Drive' and 'Drift'

The Government should back their policy with all the . . . *drive* of which they are capable. . . . Discouragement has been caused in the past by a tendency to let matters *drift*. . . .'

(Mr. GEOFFREY LE M. MANDER, M.P., in *The Times*: and see page 131, 'the attitude of drift').

No cause for alarm, Mr. Mander. We all do it. But how odd! For 'drive' and 'drift', which you contrast, mean the same thing. (Indeed, in my dictionary the first meaning given to drift is 'the act of driving'). When the skipper of a sailing-berge says that his vessel is 'driving' he means that she is doing what you would describe as 'drifting'. And so, if we are using 'drive' in some other sense, it is best not to set it, in the same sentence, in opposition to 'drift'.

But are we? What is in your mind when you say that a Government has no 'drive'? Do you see the Government as a cricketer, having no off-drive? No. As a driver of a team of horses, dogs, or slaves? Probably. But I wonder whether this was the thought of the man who used this metaphor first. I can find no note, by the way, of the figurative political 'drive' in my dictionary. The constant

drive of work' is quoted, and dated 1864. But that seems to support my theory that the metaphorical 'drive' referred originally to the nautical drive or drift. You must remember, brother land-lubbers, or rather, you must know, that drifting is not always an aimless, lazy, uncontrolled, and dangerous form of locomotion. You can see from the Victoria Embankment any day a solitary lighter 'driving' up or down on the tide, but this 'drifting' is very skilfully controlled by the lighterman with a heavy 'sweep'. The sailing-barges lower their gear (i.e. masts and sails) in the Mud Hole at Wapping and 'drive' all the way up to Wandsworth (though when they drag their anchor over the ground to give them steerage-way they are 'dredging' or 'drudging'). It is a highly technical and anxious operation. You may have heard of a 'drifter', which is short, I believe, for a 'drift-trawler'.

Now, all these mariners, if the wind is adverse or their craft is light, might say disgustedly 'She don't *drive*', meaning that she is not moving fast enough. On the other hand, if they lie at anchor and the high wind plucks their anchor out of the ground and their vessel drags it over the bottom, again they speak of her 'driving', but now with anxiety and fear. They pay out more chain and still she 'drives'. A man who had had such an experience might well speak of the 'constant drive of work'. The background of the word, for the mariner, is not laziness but *power*—the mighty forces of the wind and tide.

And so, Mr. Mander, I suspect that here is another case of the land-lubber stealing a word from the sea and misusing it. And you, who have done such noble work for the Water-Bus, for which I thank you, should be more careful than the common crowd on the beach.

'Prejudice'

'Would the undertaking of these tasks interfere *prejudicially* with the ordinary trade and business of the country by taking away labour . . . ?'

(Mr. D. LLOYD GEORGE at Glasgow)

'Alcohol exerts a more or less constant action which may be *prejudicial* to the body tissues.'

(Board of Education Handbook)

It is a pity about 'prejudice', Bobby. This was once a useful word with a plain and individual meaning. There is still no other word which can do the proper work of 'prejudice' (a pre-judging); but it has been needlessly set to do the work of other words, and serve for 'hurt'¹, 'harm', 'injury', 'damage', 'disadvantage', and one or two others which are quite strong and numerous enough to do their own jobs. It is easy to see how this has happened, Bobby. For prejudice, properly used, did often contain the suggestion of harm or injury. But our careless race, perceiving this, began to use it for hurt and harm, where there was no element of (*a*) pre- or (*b*) judging.¹ And now Mr. Lloyd George does it.

The error, I must admit, is very old. My dictionary (feeble, as usual), dates its first example of 'prejudice—sb. *gen.* Injury, damage, loss,' 1790; and, more feebly still, it gives the wrong, and later, sense first. But 'prejudice—preconceived opinion; bias

¹ Possibly the layman was encouraged in his error by misunderstanding the lawyers' beloved phrase 'without prejudice'. When a man writes, 'We admit, without prejudice, that we did kill your client, and, without prejudice, will settle for £100', the layman may be pardoned for translating simply 'as long as no harm comes of this admission'. But the lawyer, though he may be misleading, is at bottom correct, for he means, 'We admit this and that for the sake of argument or negotiation, but by this admission we must not be taken to have prejudged or settled the matter if it ever comes to trial before a real judge who must know best.'

favourable or unfavourable' (mark that, Bobby!) is dated 1643; and prejudice 'an unreasoning predilection or objection'¹ 1654.

Macaulay, according to the same authority, wrote: The existing system was *prejudicial* both to commerce and to learning/

But Milton wrote: 'It was no time then to contend with their slow and *prejudicial* belief/

My dictionary makes no comment. But I say boldly that Milton was correct, and Macaulay and Mr. Lloyd George were not.

I do not care if Macaulay and the Cabinet and the House of Lords are against me: I am right. (The Master is generally right, Bobby, but once in a hundred assertions there may be the faintest possibility of error. Here he is unmistakably and demonstrably right.) 'Prejudice' is one of the few English words of Greek or Latin parentage which wear their hearts and meanings on their sleeves.

'Prejudice' means a premature thought, opinion, belief, statement, suspicion, assertion, commendation, decision, judgment, which is formed or expressed before the proper time for judging—before, that is, all the facts and arguments are known, or before the full forces of testimony and reason have been allowed to operate. *Prejudice must be related to an act or state of the mind*; and therefore, Milton's 'belief may be 'prejudicial' but not Macaulay's 'system' nor 'alcohol' nor 'public works'.

Prejudice may be favourable or adverse, as all the early authorities agree; and therefore it is ridiculous and wrong to use it as if it meant nothing but harm. If 'prejudicial' can mean simply hampering or harmful it can equally mean beneficial or eueptic, favourable or encouraging. On the other hand, if 'prejudicial' is to be used as a maid-of-all-bad-work

there is much more bad work for it to do. Let us talk of a prejudicial instead of a 'black' eye; let the dyspeptic have a prejudicial digestion, and snow in May be described as prejudicial weather.

But perhaps our meaning and purpose are now clear, my brothers. The orders are that we are to try to restore 'prejudice' to its proper and private position. The Master will set the example, snapping his fingers at the statesmen; and you, warriors all, are to support him.

EXERCISE

Are the following correct? And if not, why not?

- (1) 'An arrow prejudiced him just above the heart.'
- (2) 'The poor child is prejudicial with spots.'
- (3) 'Waiter, there is a prejudicial draught.'
- (4) 'The cat got into the fowl-house and did a lot of prejudice.'
- (5) 'He done the prejudicial on her.'
- (6) 'You prejudicial ass!'

SCOTLAND EXPECTS . . .

'England' or 'Britain'?

'Sir,

It is almost incredible that such a distinguished personage as Sir John Squire could seriously write that "England" is seldom mentioned now. . . . Mr. Kipling, in his otherwise admirable speech to the Royal Society of St. George a fortnight ago, stated that "the rest of the world outside England was openly or furtively trying to arm itself", while England set the world an example. Are we to believe from this that Mr. Kipling suspects that Scotland is secretly arming,

or is it merely the usual use of England for the "United Kingdom"?"

This is a typical letter from a 'Disgusted Scot', though it is boldly signed with a fine name which I will not record.

I sympathize with 'Disgusted Scot'¹, though I think that sometimes, like the rest of us, he over-estimates the magnitude of his sufferings. He feels as I feel when I see a dishonest Question-beggar or lazy Labour-saver—'intoxicating liquor'—'forces of reaction'—'undesirable friends', etc. I understand; he likes precision and logic. He wants to rush out and chastise the person guilty of the implication that Scotland does not exist; and whenever he glances at a book or paper which is written and printed in English he may find, or think he finds, that wounding implication.

It is difficult to see what we can do, Bobby, to set 'Disgusted Scot' at ease. We can assure him, first, that we do not wilfully go about (as I think he thinks we do) seeking opportunities to wound him. Our fault, if any, is lack of care, tact, and knowledge, and we can (if we think right) take more care to avoid wounding him. The passage he complains of here, for example, is certainly not essential; it would have been as easy for Mr. Kipling to say 'the United Kingdom' (or 'Great Britain') as it was to say 'England'.

But (1) would it have been equally pleasing—first, to the speaker, and secondly, to his audience?

And (2) was there, in his mind, or the mind of a single hearer, a single flicker of uncertainty or envy such as would justify 'Disgusted Scot' in his disgust? Is it not clear that both Mr. Kipling and the Society were thinking not of geographical England

but of that well-known collection of English-speakers which (call it what you will) includes the Scots? In short, though I still sympathize with him, is 'not Disgusted Scot inclined to look for trouble—and disgust? And cannot this old complaint be hushed (or cared) at last?

For, though we do our very best to scratch out 'England' and write 'United Kingdom' wherever we can, there will still be places where we shall have to say 'England'—and refuse, at any peril, to say anything else.

Consider, Bobby, this

EXERCISE

Are the following passages correctly quoted?

- (1) 'A fine old British gentleman.'

(Old Song)

- (2) This the United Kingdom never did nor never shall

Lie at the proud foot of a conqueror . . .

Come the three corners of the world in arms
And we shall shock them: naught shall make
us rue

If England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern
Ireland to themselves do rest but true.¹

(SHAKESPEARE)

- (3) This blessed plot, this earth, this realm, this
Great Britain.¹

(SHAKESPEARE)

- (4) 'Oh, to be in Scotland now that April's there!'

(BROWNING)

- (5) 'Here and here did Great Britain help me,
How can I help the United Kingdom?—
say. . . .'

(BROWNING)

- (6) 'The stately homes of the British Isles,
How beautiful they stand. . . .'
(FELICIA HEMANS)
- (7) 'What should they know of Great Britain who
only Great Britain know?'
(KIPLING)
- (8) 'Oh, the roast beef of Great Britain!
And oh! for the old British roast beef!¹
(Old Song)
- (9) 'Britons wha hae wi' Wallace bled.'
(BURNS)

Although I have the will for peace of an Anthony Eden, I shall never consent to speak of the 'British' language, 'British' prose, 'the King's British', or 'British literature', as I should not insult the Scots by asking for a large British and soda, or British broth, keeping a British terrier, or playing Hop-British.

Though Nelson was born long after the Act of Union, I shall continue to believe that his celebrated signal began '*England expects . . .*' I am, of course, acquainted with Professor Maconochie's theory that the original message was basely curtailed or mutilated by an unscrupulous Yeoman of Signals born at Margate, and that what Nelson really wished to say was '*England, Scotland, Ireland, Wales, and the Isle of Man expect this day et cetera*.'

Lastly, Bobby, we can remind him that the erroneous use of 'England' does work, sometimes, to the advantage of the Scot. He makes no protest, I imagine, when he reads the passages quoted below, though some at least of the authors had all the inhabitants of these islands in their minds:

- (i) 'The English are a dumb people.'

¹ See '*The Scottish Empire*' (Prof. Angus Maconochie—6d.).

(2) 'Of all the nations in the world at present the English are the stupidest in speech, the wisest in action.'

(3) That vain ill-natured thing, an Englishman.'

(4) That heterogeneous thing, an Englishman.'

(5) The English (it must be owned) are rather a foul-mouthed nation.'

(6) 'A perfect Englishman, buying modern antiques at great cost.'

(7) 'Allah created the English mad.'

'Pretty lousy'

'But the public may be sure now that the Forestry Commission's *pretty* steady annual increase in its planting of hard wood will be encouraged to the highest point. . . .'

(*The Times*—leading article)

'No.' said she, 'I have been *pretty* chief with two-three lasses on the braes, but not to call it friends.'

(*Catriona*, R. L. STEVENSON)

'. . . and a gibbet to clatter your bones on, and the *lousiest*, lowest story to hand down to your namesakes. . . .'

(*Catriona*, R. L. STEVENSON)

I was reproached by one or two citizens because in one of these lectures I wrote that something was 'pretty lousy'. I see what they mean.

Let us forget lousy' for a moment, and consider 'pretty', a happier theme.

I know that I have no very good defence. I know that 'pretty' is not an adverb, and, strictly, cannot qualify even an adjective so low as 'lousy'; I know that my quotation from *Catriona* helps me little, for

it is taken from a passage of dialogue, and when an author is writing dialogue he may, and must, make his characters speak *in character*, whether they have good grammar or not (a thing which many critics forget). I shall not even press strongly in argument my quotation from *The Times*, for it was Jubilee week and I think that the leader-writers must have gone deliciously gay. It is very odd and indefensible (though, as I think, pleasing)—this use of 'pretty' as an adverb, with the sense of moderately, or slightly, or, as the politicians would say, in some measure. But we began this practice, I see, in the year 1565, and I, for one, shall not object if we continue it. We once, in the same way, made an adverb of 'fair' ('He speaks me fair'); some do so still ('I was fair bewildered'). Then there is the adverb 'fine' ('fine-featured'—'Tine-spirited'—'fine-cut'). Shakespeare wrote 'Who art so lovely faire', and I have heard contemporaries say 'You done that beautiful.'

There does seem to be some magic in adjectives of beauty which tempts our race to use them as adverbs. I am writing on Jubilee Sunday, in generous mood, and I conclude that sanity should here prevail above precision. We have so many slippery enemies, brothers, much more worthy of our powder. So let 'pretty' pass.

And so to 'lousy'. Again, I see what my correspondents mean. But perhaps they do not realize what the word 'lousy' means to the men of my generation. Here is no mere casual vulgarity or artificial raciness. I see that some poor street in Battersea, at Jubilee time, flew the sturdy signal, 'Lousy but loyal'. Well, most of the men of my age have been lousy for King and Country. To be lousy was one of the honourable but inglorious afflictions of military service in the Great War. I was lousy

two or three times—'due to'¹ (as the word-hog would say) many days in the line without a change of clothes. And I am not ashamed of it—though I disliked it very much. So, when we say that a thing is lousy, you hear, at least, the ring of sincerity. We are not using a formal figure of speech, as when you say that the Royal Academy is 'moth-eaten' or 'fly-blown', that the rats are preparing to leave the——Party, or that So-and-So has bats in the belfry. And, blow me, by the way, if I can see that it is more elegant to be eaten or frequented by moths, flies, rats, or bats than by the little creatures to which I am not permitted to refer! And—by the way, again—I was talking to some other old soldiers not long ago who told me that in their part of the Expeditionary Force men used to speak not of 'being lousy' or 'having——', but of 'being chatty' and 'having chats'. This interested me very much: for I never heard of the word 'chat' with that significance. If my friends are right, it means that many of our British soldiers, even in the face of the enemy, showed a charming delicacy of speech which does them credit, and myself some shame. The matter is of some importance: for it is possible that many who dislike the use of 'lousy' in artistic or political discussion would not object to 'chatty' (as some timid souls prefer perspiration to sweat¹). I cannot, by the way, find 'chatty' in the *SOED*.; but there is a 'lousy', recorded above, in the works of R. L. Stevenson.

Well, now, where was I? Ah, yes—'pretty lousy'. The conclusion is, brothers, that 'pretty lousy' is quite all right.

¹ A thought well expressed by the poet Herbert in 'Derby Day'
 'For this is the law in all the Shires
 That horses sweat but Man perspires.'

'Quite all right'

Yes, you are quite right, Bobby; this is quite all wrong. For either the 'quite' or the 'all' is redundant. Indeed, there is a school of thought which maintains that both words are redundant. We use these three sledge-hammers, as a rule, to adjust a drawing-pin. For we mean that everything is not right, but that we will overlook it. A colloquialism, Bobby; it does no great harm, by itself. But, if you never fight the habit, you will find that everything you say is a 'harmless colloquialism'; and one day, when you wish very much to express yourself clearly and well, you will not be able. You may go now.

'Winding up'

EXERCISE

A curiosity. Why do we talk, not only in common speech but in Acts of Parliament,¹ about 'winding up' a company?

ANSWER

When you 'wind up' a watch or a clock you set it going; when you are 'wound up' for battle or what-not you are ready to go or begin; when a bucket is 'wound up' from the bottom of a well success is achieved and cooling draughts ensue. When the old ladies 'wind up' their wool it is put in order, ready for action. Dickens wrote, 'Her twin-brother couldn't wind up a top for his life', but there, again, is a *beginning*.

But you say of an orator that he 'wound up' or *finished* his speech with a moving (or drivelling)

¹ See the Companies (Winding-up) Rules, 1909; and the Companies (Consolidation) Act, 1908, section 129:

'Whenever the Court is of opinion that it is just and equitable that the Company should be wound up.'

peroration; and when the company is 'wound up' it stops and dies.

'To wind up', my dictionary says, means 'To coil (thread, etc.) into a compact mass', but my Law Lexicon defines 'winding up' as:

'The process by which an insolvent estate is *distributed* as far as it will go, amongst the persons having claims upon it.'

'Distributed'! But we have just learned that 'winding up' meant 'coiling into a compact mass'.

The conclusion is, then, that 'winding up' means:

(a) starting (of a clock).

(b) finishing (of a speech).

(a) assembling or concentrating (of wool, thread, etc.).

(b) distributing or dispersing (of an insolvent estate).

A very useful word.

I agree with you, Bobby, that it doesn't really matter; but it is a wholesome exercise for you to think about the meaning of the words you use.

And what fun the French must have learning our language!

'*And which*'

'An armoured car escorting a food lorry in Holborn when the experiment in Direct Action was made, and which was defeated by volunteer workers in nine days.'

(Captured under a photograph in an illustrated weekly paper)

Yes, good warrior, that is a fine specimen; but 'and

which' and 'Split Infinitives'¹, etc., cannot be tackled here. For light and learning on these deep matters you must go to Fowler's *Modern English Usage* (but I hope that his publishers will properly reward me).

UPS AND OUTS

The man who has a clearly-formed ambition, who has dreamed *out* an ideal . . . '

(Advertisement in *The Times*)

SCIENTIFIC COSTING

	I	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	0	10
A	F	A	C	E						
B	F	\	C	E		U	P		I	()

A ('Face') occupies 4 spaces.

B ('Face up to') occupies 10 spaces.

Addition to cost of typing, printing, paper, etc.

150%

Addition to significance-value

NIL

Economic waste on B

150%

I	2	3	4	5	()	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
W	E		M	U	S	T										
I	T		1	S		U	P		I	()		u	S		r	O

Old style 7 spaces

Modern style 17 spaces

'We must face it. He may not have checked the receipts.' (53 spaces).

'It is up to us to face up to it that he may have slipped up on checking up on the receipts' (99 spaces).

INTERVAL FOR GOOD STUFF

Sir Austen Chamberlain, at Liverpool, November 17th, 1921 (during the negotiations which led to the Irish Treaty and the founding of the Free State). Simple and straight, Bobby—and no bogus mouthfuls such as 'unilateralism'.

The South African War was a just and necessary war. But for the issues then fought out and settled there could have been no lasting peace in that country. But though peace was signed, though allegiance was sworn, reconciliation lagged behind. Then came a change of Government, and with the new Government a new policy. By a great act of daring faith they conferred upon our recent enemies in the Transvaal and Orange Free State, on the morrow of our victory, full self-government.

I voted against them. I thought it a rash and wicked thing to do. If I could have seen further into the future, if I could have voted in that division with the knowledge I have to-day, I should have known that that great act of faith was not, as I thought it, the destruction of our policy, but its completion and its fulfilment.

That is the vote that I would undo if I could undo a vote once given. That great act, that daring act of faith, led directly to the reconciliation of the races in South Africa; it led to the Union of South Africa; it brought South Africa into the War with us; added German East Africa and German South-west Africa to British territory.

'Now and again in the affairs of men there comes a moment when courage is safer than prudence, when some great act of faith, touching the hearts

and stirring the emotions of men, achieves the miracle that no arts of statesmanship can compass. Such a moment may be passing before our eyes now as we meet here. I pray to God with all my heart and soul that to each of us to whom responsibility is brought there may be given vision to see, faith to act, and courage to persevere.¹

¹ From *Peace in Our Time* 'Addresses on Europe and the Empire', by the Rt Hon Sir Austen Chamberlain, K G (Philip Allan & Co, to whom my thanks)

VII

IPS AND ANGLES, AVENUES AND ISSUES, WEDGES, GET, ETC.

(*Studies in Political Philology and
Metaphor-work*)

If

Collect 'ifs'. Erroneous 'ifs'. They are growing in numbers, but at any moment they may begin to fall out of fashion and have a collector's value.

You know the kind of 'ifs' I mean. The If Elliptical, the If Redundant, the If Contradictory and so on. '*The day was fine, if chilly.*' We all use it. We do not mean that if the day was chilly it was fine. We mean—do we not?—that it was fine *and* chilly or possibly fine *but* chilly; or strictly that the day was fine, *though* it should be added that it was chilly too.

'A very great publicist, if second-rate thinker '
(*Morning Post*)

The action of the police was mistaken, if well meant.' We do not mean that if the action of the police was well meant it was mistaken, for that would be nonsense and must suggest to any thinking mind the extraordinary converse proposition that if the action was *not* well meant it was wise and good.

What do we mean? In this case, I suppose (though I'm biowed if I know), that the action was mistaken *although* well meant.

'*The revelation is tactless, if true.*' This is a difficult and interesting example. At first sight it looks like a genuine 'if. But is it? Do we mean that if it was

true it was tactless? Well, very often in practice we might mean that. Indeed, as they say in the criminal-libel world, 'the greater the truth the greater the libel'. But if we mean that in words, we must also mean (once more applying the converse test) that if the statement was false it was tactful. And we don't mean that. We mean—don't we?—that the revelation was tactless *even* if it was true. The If Elliptical.

Here is a beautiful exhibit from a *Times* leading article-

'Lord Londonderry supported his *sound, if limited*, Bill . . .'

Now here, I will bet a bag of sovereigns, *The Times* did not mean to say that *if* the Bill was limited it was sound. It meant that the Bill was sound, *though* limited, for earlier in the article the Bill had been criticized *because* it was limited. This, then, I *think*, is a pure specimen of the If Contradictory, which says something precisely contrary to what is intended. These are valuable.

My favourite writer, *The Times* Racing Correspondent, is a bit of an 'if-er'. But he covers his tracks cunningly. Here are two finds in the same column:

'The going, if perhaps a little soft, was not too soft . . .'

'The remainder of the afternoon's racing, if not of the importance of this race, was at least interesting and not without importance.'

Why not 'though'?

When the day's papers do not yield a good 'if' or two (which does not often happen) the student may

console himself by manufacturing a few of his own and trying them on his friends—as thus:

'Her lovely, if cross, eyes.'

'Waterloo Bridge is a good bridge, if unsafe.'

'He was a man of high principles, if frequently drunk.'

'Milk is nourishing, if tuberculous.'

'Your face is handsome, if spotty.'

While in the 'if' country, I should, I suppose, pursue 'if and when'. But the late H. W. Fowler, in that great, if headachy, book, *Modern English Usage*, has already given the world some useful, if severe, advice; and it would be impertinent in me to attempt to improve it. Consider this crushing passage:

'Any writer who uses this formula lays himself open to entirely reasonable suspicion on the part of his readers. There is the suspicion that he is a mere parrot who cannot say part of what he has often heard without saying the rest also; there is the suspicion that he likes verbiage for its own sake; there is the suspicion that he is a timid swordsman who thinks he will be safer with a second sword in his left hand; there is the suspicion that he has merely been too lazy to make up his mind between *if* and *when*. Only when the reader is sure enough of his author to know that in his writing none of these probabilities can be true does he turn to the extreme improbability that here at last is a sentence in which "if and when" is really better than *if* or *when* by itself.'

That is the sort of thing that puts the poor scribbler off scribbling for weeks. Indeed, if everybody read this humbling book far fewer than eleven

or twelve thousand new books would be published by my reticent countrymen every year.

However, about 'if and when'. You know the sort of thing:

'If and when the right honourable gentleman fulfils his promises . . . !'

'If and when I win the Irish S——p . . . !'

Nearly always, it seems, either the 'if or the 'when' is redundant and loathsome. The formula is a high favourite in politics, where, as a rule, it has a jeering intention. The collector, therefore, should keep a keen eye on public speeches and leading articles. But he must be careful, for even the great Fowler admits that 'cases are conceivable in which the *i.*' and the *when* may be genuinely and separately significant. Such cases arise when one desires to say that the result will or does or did not only follow, but follow without delay. They are not, in fact, rare, and if a really good writer allows himself an *if and when*, one such must have presented itself; but in practice he hardly ever does it then . . . !'

Have you got that, Bobby? Well, for example, you might say:

'If and when I win the Irish S——p I shall purchase the *Codex Sinaiticus* for the nation.'

You might, in speech, put a world of sardonic meaning into that *and when*] but that would not satisfy the expert. It is redundant.

On the other hand, if you said:

'Play will be resumed *if and when* the rain stops' both *i.*' and *when* would be significant and jolly (I *think*), though the statement would probably not be

true, for it would mean that play would be resumed at once.

What the good writer or speaker does, it seems—to suggest a minimum of delay—is to leave out the *and when* and put a time-signal in the 'result-clause';

'If the rain stops, play will be resumed *at once*.'

And what the bad utterer does is to use both, thus:

'If and when the rain stops, play will be resumed at once.'

So now you know. And I hope that these few hints will assist you, Bobby, if and when you wander among the interesting, if ill-expressed, utterances of our great men, if any.

EXERCISE

What does this 'if mean?

'Chahar is the back door into a huge, if still undelimited, coal-cellar.'

(*The Times*)

ANSWER

'But', I think; but who can tell?

'Avenues'

Mr. J. H. Thomas, on his return from Ottawa (bless him!), is reported to have said, concerning Ireland:

'I am quite sure we have cleared the ground and that the discussions have done good. My attitude before the breakdown is well known. I never deviated

from it, but I certainly did not shut the door to any avenue of peace.'

I have long collected avenues; they are now hard to find (which may be my own fault), and, truly, I shall be sorry to see them disappear from public life.¹ This is one of the best in my collection. An 'avenue' with a door is very rare; and all the surroundings are good—the breakdown, the cleared ground, the statesman firmly refusing to deviate from his attitude (though it is not plain how that could be done); and there in front of him is the avenue with the invitingly open door.

I suppose that we shall never know who first explored an avenue; I can find no record of the phrase in any book of quotations. Yet how much more splendid service it has done than many a well-respected expression; what hope it has given to the people, what comfort to the Ministry, in times of doubt and danger innumerable! What was its origin? No matter. The poor old phrase, I think will not be heard again. But at least, Bobby, there shall be one reference-book that preserves it for the eager study of posterity.

And here, to conclude, is the noblest avenue of all. It was found in the foreword to a cookery book.

'Mass-feeding experiments have been carried out on children and their effect noted. Every avenue has been explored, even the stomach of a cow has been fitted with a trap-door so that the progress of her meals could be explored. . . .'

¹ But they are to be found in New Zealand 'HAND WEAVING ADVOCATE . . . It would be a great comfort for women to know that they had an avenue which was not affected by climatic conditions and through which they could supplement the family income' (*Auckland Weekly News*)

EXERCISE

'We are exploring every avenue.'

What are our statesmen to say instead of this, at times of national emergency or difficult negotiation?

ANSWER

*'We shall leave no stone unturned.'*¹

(But N.B.—the meaning of this expression is that we are looking for worms.)

'We have set all sail and are steering in all directions.'

'We are travelling towards Peace by every possible train.'

'We are closing on the quarry from all four quarters.'

'No fox will be left unholloaed, no burrow undug.'

'We are putting dynamite to every obstruction.'

Or, perhaps:

'We are doing what we can.'

'Angles'

'Angles' are rapidly becoming as undisciplined and tedious as 'avenues' and 'issues'. For many years, as a warrior remarks, prelates, statesmen, and Mrs. Potts have been announcing their desire to look at problems 'from a different angle', meaning, we presume, from a different place. They have been nobly obeyed by certain North American citizens who state that they have 'got a new angle on religion', or even 'got their angles on God straight'¹ (a difficult but no

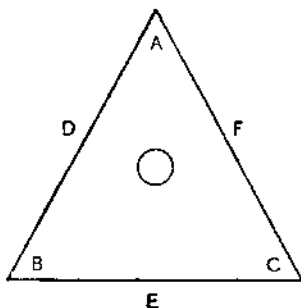
¹ There was a grim specimen of this absurd saying in one of our great papers in 1935: 'The Government have left no stone unturned to assist the survivors of Quetta.'

doubt spiritually beneficial manoeuvre). And now, in a *Times* article on the problems of police work, we read of the police

'discovering new angles of approach to their solution'.

Let us draw some angles and get our angles on angles straight, if we can:

(a) THE BISHOPS

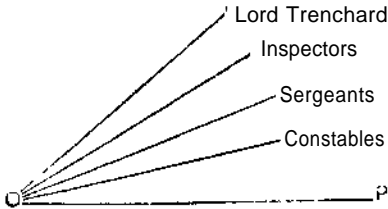


Now, an angle is 'the space included between two meeting lines or planes; hence in *Geom.* the degree of inclination of two lines to each other. 2. The meeting-point of two lines not in the same direction . . .' (*S.O.E.D.*) In the triangle delightfully printed above there are three angles— ABC , BCA , and CAB ; and the O in the centre is the problem which the Bishops wish to inspect. The Bishops (who, clearly, accept interpretation 2) are now, I suppose, at A , and when they wish to get a new view of O they can move down to B ; and if the point B does not satisfy them they can pass farther down the car to C . But the important thing (already visible to my gallant warriors) is this: that for the purpose of inspecting O the points A and B are

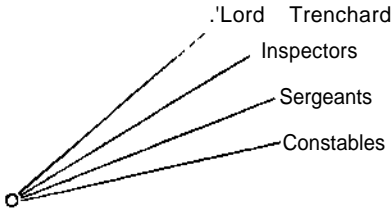
no more advantageous than the point D half-way between them; and an equally good view can be had from the points E and F. In short, those who say that they look at things *from* different angles are merely saying that they go from one corner to another, which is feeble and may be misleading.

(b) THE POLICE

But the police, in the passage quoted, are behaving with more respect for geometry and language; for they are approaching the problem O not *from* but *at* different angles to the line O—P, thus:



But even the police are not behaving quite correctly; for what is the point P? It is not really there. I have had to invent the point P in order to create the line O—P in order to give the police something which will form an *angle* with their lines of movement, since they insist on having angles. To speak strictly, what they are doing is this:



That is, they are approaching O in different *directions* or upon different *lines* of approach. However,

I am willing to waive the last point and permit the police to approach their problems *at* new angles. But never, my Lord Bishop—never FROM!

'At this juncture',¹ Bobby, having endeared myself to all, I will be silent on the theme of angles.

'Get'

'Get!'

What a word!

One of the most wonderful words in the language; certainly the most industrious and obliging. We use it all day with a rich variety of meaning. But how it worries me!

In all the long years of my school career no one, to my recollection, attempted to teach me anything about the English language. I spent years upon the grammar of Latin, Greek, and even French, but never an hour upon the rules of English grammar. I believe that things are different now; but in those days the English language was supposed to come to an English gentleman naturally, without effort, like clean-living or an aptitude for ball-games. We picked up the rules of composition casually while we studied chemistry or practised fielding.

But I know that somewhere, sometime, some pastor or master did sternly remark to me that the popular word 'get' means 'acquire or obtain', and that to use it with the sense of 'become' or 'go', for example, was slang, slovenly and horrible.

That was all the instruction I ever had in the English tongue, and it has worried me ever since.

Here, in the august *Observer*, a distinguished literary critic says that the Thames 'is getting cleaner'.¹ This spoiled my Sunday.

A literary critic must be right; but I know that

¹ *Publisher's Reader*. 'Juncture of what?' Me 'Who can say?'

my pastor and master would have said that he was wrong.

I will get up and get a dictionary.

What a word!

The nearest dictionary is old, tattered and cheap, and rather reticent about most words. But there is nearly a column about 'get'.

I am right.

'GET, *v.t.* [Anglo-Saxon—*gitari*]. To procure, to obtain, to gain possession of by any means, to acquire . . .'

But stay, what is all this?

'. . . to deserve; to meet with; to possess, to have; to beget, to procreate; to earn, to gain by labour; to win, to induce; to put or cause to be in any state or condition; to receive, to obtain; to learn, to commit to memory.'

What a word! Imagine the feelings of a Frenchman who looks up 'get' in the dictionary and reads that!

My dictionary, I fancy, began with the same austere theories about 'get' that I hold myself. The verb is transitive only, and 'get out', for example, means only 'to draw out, to extract'.

But I see now that half-way down the column the lexicographer abandons the struggle. 'Get' suddenly becomes a '*v.i.*' and means almost anything:

To be a gainer, to profit; to arrive at any place, state, condition, or posture; to go, to remove, to depart; to find the way.'

I hope that no Frenchman will ever get—read as far as that, for if he does he will get—become—or go barmy.

And, in my judgment, my dictionary has weakly surrendered to slang.

What about 'to get at'?

To be able to reach.' says my dictionary.

And then there is this:

'§ To banter, to tease; to corrupt (a jockey); to hocus (a horse).'

That little § means 'figurative'. But I maintain that there should be some other sign meaning 'slang, slovenly, and incorrect' before 'To be able to reach'. For 'to get at a Member of Parliament' seems to me to be an expression no less irregular than 'to get at a horse'.

But, waiving all that and admitting or not that every time we use it we use it disgracefully, we must say—what a word!

Put it with any adverbial particle or preposition and it is happy. 'Get on, in, into, off, out, under, through, over, past, by, beyond, between, at, after, away, to, up, down, back, round, about, ahead, among, before, behind.'

Only two prepositions, I think, defeat 'get'. You can 'go for' or 'go with' a man, but you cannot 'get for' or 'get with' him.

And think of the enormous and various meanings that this little word with a particle or preposition (or two) can compass:

'To get off (with).'—To excite the affections of another person and establish satisfactory communication with her, or him.

'To get on.'—To be successful in some trade, business, or calling.

To get at.—To mock a person with words or

expressions which do not appear to be addressed to him or refer to him directly.

'To get (the wind) up.'—To be influenced by the emotion of fear, but, as a rule, in such circumstances as to excite small sympathy among impartial observers.

'To get about' (of a rumour or story).—To be circulated, not through the ordinary channels of public information, but quietly and, as a rule, by verbal gossip,

'To get (the hang) of.'—To acquire the art or knack of some difficult feat or, after an effort, to begin to understand something which has appeared mysterious, complex or obscure.

'To get (the better) of.'—To vanquish, to overcome an adversary, generally one who seems to have some advantage or superiority.

'To get round.'—To evade some law or regulation, but in such a way as to avoid committing any legal or technical offence; to wheedle or persuade a person into some action to which that person was at first unfavourable.

'To get across (or over)' (of a theatrical performer or performance) —To convince, amuse, or satisfy thoroughly an audience, as opposed to a praiseworthy attempt which fails to secure the full effect desired.

'To get down to.'—To begin to work hard and seriously, generally at a task which has received only half-hearted attention before.

'To get (the right side) of.'—To obtain by taking pains the goodwill or approval of a person to such an extent that in due course he may be considered likely to grant a favour.

'To get away with.'—To pursue with impunity and success some course of action which might normally

be expected to result in misfortune, punishment, or blame.

'To get through to!'—To establish telephonic communication with.

'To get in'—To be elected to the House of Commons, Westminster.

'To get away.'—To leave the scene of a crime unaccompanied by a police-officer.

'To get above (oneself).'—To develop a sense of self-satisfaction which is not in strict proportion to one's merits.

The above rough interpretations are my own, and I make no claim to be a lexicographer; but they do show, I think, how many long words this little word saves us, how manifold are its riches. Indeed, if it does not drive him crazy, the best way for a Frenchman in a hurry to visit England might be to begin with 'get' and a few little nouns, prepositions, and adverbs. He would, I think, get along very well. 'Get up—get about—get off—get together—get drunk—get away—get home'. There is a full day for you, packed with drama.

Yes, life must be easy for you wise folk who do not write and can use this expansive little word without a qualm, this skeleton-key, this universal store, this monstrosity, this chameleon of a word. How you must love 'get'!

But for a poor scribe who still has a conscience, imagine the temptations, the agonies of 'get'! How I detest 'get'! 'Get' gets my goat. Whenever I write 'get' I get thinking of my pastor or master and wonder if he was right. And then as a rule I scratch out 'get' and have to write about fifteen other words instead. I believe he was right; and whatever the literary critics may do I shall never desert the old

man. For he was the only man who taught me anything about English; and that was the one thing he taught me. But he may have been wrong. So, whenever I get to 'get' I get worried; and in future I hope that the thoughtless mob will get worried too.

EXERCISE

Amend the following familiar narrative, eliminating 'get':

'I got up late this morning, and by the time I had got shaved and got my clothes on, it was getting on. I got downstairs, got through my breakfast as quickly as I could, got my hat and coat, and got along to the station, getting there just in time to get my train, in which I got off with a girl.'

*'Measure'*¹

This good word is much overworked in politics and gets a strange new job every day. Indeed, in politics it can mean almost anything. The late Prime Minister one day said that he was 'distressed beyond measure'¹ to hear of Mr. Eden's illness (which is very nice, but leaves him little to say if he should have to speak of an even greater calamity—say, the death of the King or an outbreak of plague). A legislator in a House of Commons debate said that there had been 'a great measure of inevitability about the Government's policy'. Lord Cranborne, speaking a little before him, contributed two measures to the same column of *The Times*. 'A first step had to be taken . . . in setting up a committee to consider economic measures . . .'¹ and

¹ 'He speaks with a measure of nervous hesitancy.'
(Mr R Churchill)

'The second measure was to strengthen our own armed forces . . . ' Sir Herbert Samuel spoke of 'specific measures' (such as the formation of an Air-Raid Department); Mr. Winston Churchill scored two measures—'our measures of defence' and 'a large measure of agreement'¹.

Mr. Attlee said that the Government's policy had contributed in no small measure to something or other. Nobody said that the 'measure of the Right Honourable Gentleman's sincerity was his failure to do this or that'; but as a rule somebody says that. We know that measure may mean a Bill or Act of Parliament—as in the catch-cry, 'Men—not Measures.' And then there is 'measured language' and 'unmeasured abuse'¹.

Clearly a useful word. I am not very hot about \|.—yet\ but I am curious. And I suspect that, if we are not watchful, measures may become as overbearing as issues, angles, avenues, and values. I do not, for example, see why any man should say, 'There is a wide measure of agreement in the House to-night',¹ when all that he means is, 'Many of us agree' or 'We agree about much.' And I warn both Houses that 'measure', in the sense of 'amount' or 'quantity', is employed too much and must have a rest.

'Issues'

Collect 'issues'. They are an even more fascinating object of study than 'avenues', and, if I know anything about the market, have already a higher collector's value.

I picked up many nice little 'issues' in a single morning.

¹ Mr Winston Churchill.

Mr. Henderson said that:

There was no hope of a successful issue¹ from a premature discussion in the General Commission' [on Disarmament].

A leading article in the same paper (and, by the way, the same 'issue') said:

'We hope that the Opposition will force the issue² ruthlessly on the Government's attention.'

A leading article in another paper says that somebody intends to

're-open the issue³ in the House of Lords'.

Sir Samuel Hoare (in an India debate) scored four issues in one speech. He began by deprecating the discussion of 'all these second-reading issues',⁴ since 'every one of these issues is being considered in all its aspects', went on to speak of 'considering the issues' of any future Indian Constitution', and ended by asking the House not to 'confuse the issue'.⁶

Mr. Churchill, on the other hand, said that 'it was hardly a heroic statement of the issues which the Government, etc.' and that 'every direct issue⁷ had been avoided, whether in the House of Commons or in the Party conference out-of-doors'.

The Times' leading article (same issue) is headed:

THE ISSUE IN EUROPE',

speaks severely of

'a failure to come to grips with this all-important issue',

and (eighteen lines lower down)

¹ meaning 'result' ² meaning 'matter' " meaning 'discussion'

⁴ meaning 'question of principle'. ⁶ meaning 'details'

⁶ meaning 'the fundamental question'. ⁷ meaning 'conflict'

'the countries most closely concerned with the issues of revision'.

Turning to the Financial Page I see that in the motor-group

'—issues were sold, the Ordinary falling is. 6d. to 57s. 6d. and the Twenty Per Cent. Preferred dropping 2s. 6d. to 23s. 6d.'

And in the Law Reports there is the report of a case about 'two issues of *The Daily*—'.

Not a bad bag for one day, you must admit (and eleven from *The Times*).

Mr. Baldwin, a few days later, contributed a superb piece of issue-work in two consecutive sentences.

'We shall use every energy and force that we possess to bring the work upon which we have embarked to a successful issue.¹ Surely we have enough domestic issues² about which we can fight and wrangle. . . .'

(*The Times*)

This is the best right-and-left that I have found. Issue is a 'conclusion' in one sentence and 'question' in the next, and the embarkation on the work is new.

We must now attempt some classification of issues:

ISSUE (*substantive*), according to my ancient dictionary,³ means 'the act of passing or flowing out; a means of exit or escape¹, and a great many other things. ISSUE (*verb intransitive*) means 'to pass

¹ meaning 'conclusion' ' meaning 'question'.

⁸ Not the *S O E D*.

or flow out', and ISSUE (*verb transitive*), 'to send out; to deliver for use'.

Transitive-verb issues are not much collected. Reports, pronouncements, threats, ultimata, and newspapers are always 'issued', and specimens can be picked up anywhere. Intransitive issues are rarer.¹ Governments, for example, still fall or go out, but never issue. The word, however, is so rapidly extending its popularity that new uses may be expected and should be sought.

Substantive-issues offer the best opportunities for collectors, and they may be classified as follows:

I.—*The Issue Legal*

(a) Meaning children (legitimate).

'There was issue of the marriage four girls and a boy.' (In 'devises', by the way, 'issue' is *pnma facie* a word of limitation and equivalent to 'heirs of the body'.)

(b) Meaning the profits arising from lands or tenements, amerciements or fines.

(c) Meaning *the real point of a law-suit*, arrived at by the process known as pleadings. The issue is then 'joined'.

(Legal issues, though perhaps the oldest specimens of all, vary little and are not much collected.)

2.—*The Issue Military*

'An issue of rum.' (Compare the unfortunate person in the Scriptures who had an issue of blood.)

From this use has sprung certain quaint verb-specimens, as:

Quartermaster-Sergeant: 'I issued Private X with a tooth-brush.'

¹ But see page 69. 'Our quotation will issue'.

Or,

'He *was issued with* a Prayer-Book and Bible.'

This usage, I note with regret, has spread into civilian life. The B.B.C. said that the police in Vienna had been 'issued with revolvers'. And even that good writer, Mr. Peter Fleming, in his book *One's Company* committed these offences:

'A Japanese official who . . . issued us with the new Manchukuo visas' (page 67); and 'We had been issued by the Japanese Consulate General with automatic pistols.' (page 137.)

This is black.

3.—*The Issue Commercial*

'A new issue of capital will be made (or even "floated").'

These at the moment are very rare and valuable, for the thing signified is hardly ever done. Also, when it is done, it is not what is said to be done. That is, the person responsible does not, as the phrase suggests, distribute capital or cause it to flow out, but, on the contrary, collects it in one place by causing it to flow in.

4.—*The Issue Political*

Here is the widest and most delightful field for collectors.

The issue political, it is thought, was modelled on the issue legal, meaning *the essential point of a conflict*, though how an exit or passing out came to mean that I do not know. But the politicians are less exact than the lawyers, and 'issue' now, it seems,

is not the main point, but any point. True, if you ask them at election time to pronounce their opinion upon this or that they will tell you sternly (if this or that is difficult) to concentrate on the 'major issues'. But anything they want to talk about may be an issue, and as a rule there are several issues. As we have seen, you may (if you are a politician) discuss, raise, confuse, re-open, avoid, state, ruthlessly force upon, come to grips with, or stabilize issues. And that is by no means all that you can do to issues. You can burke them, shirk them, stake them,¹ face up to them, dwarf them, cloud them or fog them, you may bring your work or whatever it is to successful issues, or you may leave grave issues with confidence to the electorate. Grave issues and successful issues are common and have little appeal to the collector. Direct issues are rarer and should be snapped up, for, though there is no recorded case, an indirect issue may turn up any day and would be a delightful companion-piece.

The Wavertree election produced a very large bag of 'issues'. A Stroud warrior sends me the following beautiful piece of issue-work which was attributed (in *The Sunday Times*) to Mr. Platt, the Conservative candidate :

'While the India question is a vital one to Liverpool and Lancashire, the main plank is the fight against Socialism. The issues are clear-cut, however much one's opponents may try to side-track the main issues down to one particular question.'

I *think* (speaking timidly) that this is the first case of issues being side-tracked. Moreover, they

¹ 'His Majesty's Government fully realize the gravity of the issues that are at stake'—(Mr Anthony Eden, at Geneva)

are clear-cut issues; and they are also (see the first sentence) (*a*) a plank (presumably in a platform) and (*b*) a fight. So that the full picture shows the main plank in a platform being side-tracked down to (but why 'down to'?) the one particular question of India (India, I suppose, being a buffer).

I think it is very hard that such a master of issue-work should have failed to enter Parliament. He would have had a great welcome.

I have not yet found a vague issue, though, browsing in the report of a Borough Council meeting one day, I discovered a dirty issue (very rare): I have a capitalized and a sabotaged issue, I have two delicate issues and am searching earnestly for an indelicate one. Nor have I a bogus, unpatriotic, nebulous, trumped-up, dastardly, or ephemeral issue. But I am sure that these are to be had (or will be soon); and for any one of them I am prepared to swap three graves, one trivial, two deads and an out-standing.

Golly, what a word!

'Wedges'

What should we do without the Thin End of the Wedge? No argument in England would be complete without it. The 'forces of obstruction' would be lost without it. No Town Council could carry on for a week without it. I confess that I have had to use the argument (though not the phrase) on certain pages of this Work. Whenever I hear this battle-cry I leap and dance and sing patriotic songs. And some kind friend, knowing of these queer habits, sent me a glorious example in a cutting from *The Essex Weekly News* headed, 'Should the Museum be Open on Sunday?'

It records a meeting of the Chelmsford Town Council. There were present the Mayor, five Aldermen, eighteen Councillors, and the Town Clerk, the Borough Accountant, the Medical Officer, the Acting Borough Engineer, the Sanitary Inspector, the Gas Engineer, and other officials.

And this company of dignitaries discussed a recommendation of the Public Library and Museum Committees that the Museum at Oaklands be open, in addition to the existing hours, on week-days from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., and on Sundays from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m.

I will not relate the full course of the debate, which followed the usual lines. Councillor Taylor, to avoid seven-day labour for the caretaker and expense for the ratepayer, moves the very sensible amendment that the Museum be opened on Sunday afternoons (when the people can visit it) and be closed on one week-day (when most of them cannot). And a few bold councillors supported him.

Councillor Ashton (Chairman of the Committee) said, in reply to a question by Councillor Bolingbroke, that there was undoubtedly a demand for the Museum to be opened on Sunday afternoons. We may assume, I think, that the Council's Museum is an edifying and 'cultural' exhibition and proper for examination by the young on Sunday. There is no evidence on the exact nature of the Museum, but Councillor Smith-Tyrrell spoke of its containing 'beautiful things'.

In short, the case for Councillor Taylor's proposal would seem to you and to me to be fairly strong, especially as Parliament was at that moment conducting through its final stages a Bill which conferred the rights of respectability on all museums and

permitted them to be opened on Sundays without licence from any one.

But Parliament had not reckoned with Councillor Fox.

Councillor Fox rose and said that *'This was the Thin End of the Wedge towards the "Continental Sunday" and seven days a week'*.

And Councillor Fox won. A great victory for the Thin End of the Wedge.

Another pretty piece of wedge-work comes to me from *The West Briton and Cornwall Advertiser*. A gentleman, speaking at a meeting of the Phillack Urban Council, is reported to have said: The Council were already overburdened with Acts of Parliament and red tape, and this was *the thin end of the wedge for fastening another collar around the neck of the council*.¹

Very high wedge-value.

INTERVAL FOR GOOD STUFF

Lord Hewart, Lord Chief Justice of England, on the late Mr. Justice Avory (an article in the *News of the World*, whose editor I thank for kindly permitting me to quote this passage):

' . . . "that dear old man"¹¹ So we all think of him Gentle, kind, affectionate, unselfish, modest and warm-hearted, beloved and revered by all who knew him well, Horace Avory has left with us for ever the impression of a deep and unwavering sincerity.

'If I were asked to state in a single word the intimate essence of that shining character, I should, without hesitation, say "Sincerity, sincerity, sincerity."

'He never said a word that he did not mean. His full meaning was expressed in what he said.

'He never paid an idle compliment, nor uttered meaningless praise. He went through life effacing himself, and living for others, with a sublime and serene modesty and mastery.'

VIII

WITCH-WORDS

THOSE who say 'Deeds—not Words' should note how, in politics, one cunningly chosen word may have more power than a thousand irreproachable deeds. Give your political dog a cleverly bad name and it may do him more harm than many sound arguments.

There are two main kinds of Witch-words. The chief kind is the Question-beggar, the epithet or phrase which assumes or imputes that the question under discussion has been conclusively answered already. Then there are the Lying Labels—labels which, though they may be verbally accurate, are so highly coloured or ingeniously placed that they are, in effect, lies.

The political Witch-word may be fierce or friendly. Take 'war-veterans'. This word suggests to us an aged white-haired man, tottering on the brink of death and mumbling anecdotes of the Crimean—or, at the latest, the South African—War. In the United States, a man is a Veteran' who for two weeks played a small part in the European War of 1914-18. (I, by the same reckoning, am a Veteran', though I am only 44) True, the Great War was ended seventeen years ago. But the young American soldier has been a Veteran' ever since he was demobilized in 1918 or 1919. Most of us know these facts. Yet when we see that the President of the United States is stubbornly resisting the distribution of 'bonuses' to the Veterans' we feel uncomfortable and wish that the President could be kinder to the

poor old gentlemen. 'Veteran', in these affairs, is a powerful witch-word.

Ideals', 'propaganda', and 'provocative', are beauties. 'Ideals' means anything in which you believe strongly; 'propaganda' (as we have already seen) is what the other fellow believes in; and if he makes an effective speech about it he is 'provocative'.¹

The Liquor Controversy is full of Witch-words. 'Liquor' is one of them. 'Wine' or 'Beer' or even 'Brandy' may be mentioned in polite society; but 'Liquor' is disgusting.

The militant teetotallers understand this game very well. The poet sings of 'golden glasses' and 'beaded bubbles'. The Frenchman and the Italian give glorious names to their wines—Chateau Neuf du Pape and Lacrima Christi. But the British legislator calls it 'intoxicating liquor', whether it be Lacrima Christi or a glass of stout. And this is one reason why our laws are so different from the laws of the Continent.

All the language of the 'Temperance' Party is cunningly (and, from their point of view, rightly) calculated to make the rest of the world feel guilty. A man who sells a bottle of Chateau Neuf du Pape² is partaking in 'the Liquor Traffic'. 'Traffic' is a terrible word. It means a form of trading which is sinister and wicked—think of 'White Slave Traffic', 'Opium Traffic', 'Arms Traffic', etc. The wine-seller

¹ Mr Lloyd George, in his 'Council of Action' speech (1935), used, inaccurately, a similar distinction which I made many years ago: 'By statesmen I mean the leaders of my political party, and by politicians I mean the leaders of yours' (*More Misleading Cases*) Obvious, no doubt, but it was the only passage in the speech which any one thought worth repeating, and I mention it here for the benefit of the biographers, who may be tempted to record it among the statesman's *mots*

² To be fair, I suppose that these are 'witch-words' too.

is intended to feel that he is subtly related to these low 'traffics'; and, by degrees, he does.

It was clever to attach the name of 'publican'¹ to the innkeeper or 'licensed victualler': for almost every British citizen learns at a very early age to speak of 'publicans and sinners'; and few of them learn that 'publicans', in that phrase, meant a man who 'farmed' the taxes, justly detested by all decent people.

Then there is 'redundant'. What a word! When 'they' want to get rid of a pub they do not say that it is riotous, disorderly, or the haunt of drunkards. They do not even say that a great deal of 'alcohol' is consumed there. They simply say that the licence is 'redundant'. Which means, strangely enough, that very little alcohol is being consumed there. So it is 'redundant'—unnecessary. And that is how the little old-fashioned houses with character and quaintness are destroyed. If they said 'This is a quiet old-fashioned house where very little drinking is done' the answer would be 'Then why in the world should it be interfered with?' But when the poor little fifteenth-century place is called 'redundant' it sounds wicked and is extinguished.

On the other hand, 'Teetotaller' and 'Kill-Joy' are contemptuously used for all those who would put any restraint upon the consumption of alcohol, though some of them enjoy it.

If you do not believe how much mere words affect our opinions and our laws you must play the game of 'Witch-words'. Think of something you dislike, give it a question-begging epithet and draft an imaginary Act of Parliament against it.

Wine sometimes intoxicates—that is 'poisons'. Therefore, on the Statute Book, all wine is always 'intoxicating liquor'.

Now, suppose that your favourite enemy is the motor-car. Motor-cars sometimes kill men. Suppose that we called them, not motor-cars, but 'homicidal vehicles'. Suppose that there were statutes like this :

'THE HOMICIDAL VEHICLES ACT 1933

'It shall not be lawful for any person to possess drive or travel in a homicidal vehicle (within the meaning of the Dangerous Locomotives Act, 1931, as amended by the Road-Slaughter and Homicidal Vehicle Act, etc., etc.) unless he be duly licensed, registered, and certified. . . .'

Suppose that in every 'running-down' case it was common form for the policeman to say, not 'I saw defendant in charge of a motor-car' but 'Defendant was employing a homicidal vehicle. . . .'

We should all feel ashamed w^hen we went to the Motor Show.

We speak affectionately of Mr. Baldwin's pipe; poets have written of the joys of smoking; even doctors, sometimes, commend the habit. But it may, and often does, become a harmful indulgence. Suppose that cigarette-sellers were described as persons engaged in the Nicotine Traffic.

Water, sometimes, harbours the germs of typhoid and diphtheria, and milk the bacillus or what-not of tuberculosis (none of these germs and things, I believe, have an enjoyable time in intoxicating liquors). So that, instead of the Metropolitan Water Act, we might have

THE DANGEROUS LIQUIDS (METROPOLIS) ACT.

Milk, though I like the stuff, is, I believe, from

all they say, more dangerous than alcohol. Champagne, for example, does not have to be pasteurized, boiled, graded, and so forth, in order to prevent the spread of tuberculosis or undulant fever.

I have never heard of a man getting tuberculosis from a glass of beer. The cow, in short, might be said to be more dangerous than the cup. There might be a Bill about Tuberculous Beasts; and, instead of the Milk and Dairies (Consolidation) Act, 1915 (which is about tuberculosis and the Sanitary Authority) a nice new

BACILLIFEROUS BEVERAGES (TUBERCULOSIS) ACT.

Suppose that over the door of every dairy there had to be 'conspicuously fixed or painted' the name of the licensee:

'Licensed to sell bacilliferous beverages.'

You would say 'Unfair!' (Yet, in 1928 there were 100 death^c from 'alcoholism' and 36,000 from tuberculosis.)

The brewers, in spite of their vast expenditure upon advertisement and their reputation for unscrupulous 'propaganda', are children at the game. They have few good Witch-words.

Think of tea. Tea contains *caffeine*. Tea, infused longer than three minutes, takes up *tannin*, which causes indigestion. Tannin turns any meat eaten with it into a 'leather-like substance'¹, and by degrees produces an un-Christian tendency to gossip and find fault. How would you like, dear tea-merchants, to be described as one who for purposes of *private profit* (disgraceful!) is engaged in the Caffeine Traffic? And you, virtuous lady, enjoying your fourth or fifth cup, do you realize that you are absorbing caffeine and tannin, with a dash of bacilliferous

beverage? And, if you do know it, and don't care (as I hope), how would you like your favourite drink to be constantly referred to in such unfavourable terms?

The doctors, for many a year, have been telling us what foods are indigestible, deficient in nutritive value, acid, starchy, fattening, and what-not. We don't care a hoot—so long as we are well; we go on eating what we like, though we know (or ought to know) that we are laying up trouble for the future. I often wonder why the doctors' prohibitions have never been translated into law. Why, for example, is there no

FATTENING FOODS ACT?

Why are not all foods classified and labelled by the law, and taxed, like 'intoxicating liquors', according to their capacity to do harm? Lobster, for example, our delicious lobster—there would have to be a special Act about him:

THE INDIGESTIBLE CRUSTACEANS ACT.

Chocolate-sellers, who now look down their noses at the 'publicans', would have to apply for licences to sell Foods Dangerous to Teeth or Likely to Cause Corpulence. We should speak bitterly of the Toffee Traffic and the 'redundant'¹ sweet-shop.

But to the uses of the word 'redundant' there is no end. For all other people's pleasures are 'redundant', and generally, in our opinion, dangerous as well.

'Undesirable' is another lying label. 'Undesirable company' means exactly the contrary to what it says. For the company *is* very much desired by the persons enjoying it, though not by those who speak of it.

The first kiss of young love may be to others but a germ-distributing gesture. What one calls the

lovely violin may be to another but a nerve-racking instrument. The high-souled temperance reformers do not like to be called kill-joys (which is very often an unfair appellation); but they would like still less to see themselves labelled in a Bill as Vexatious Agitators or Pleasure-diminishers. Then there are 'capitalist classes', 'the workers', 'socially valuable expenditure', 'Continental Sunday', 'bourgeois', 'hooligans', 'slave-camps', 'the dole', the 'reactionary forces' and 'Reds'.

Let us have less of these question-begging phrases: they make life too difficult.

EXERCISE

'The band of the Coldstream Guards played national airs. The bride was toasted in champagne. Her father kissed her and the happy couple drove away to happiness in a milk-white car.'

Translate the passage above into Witch-words:

ANSWER

'A party of nerve-racking-instrument-players performed certain redundant melodies having Jingo associations. Those present consumed intoxicating liquor. The female party to the contract was exposed to infection by germiferous embraces; and both parties proceeded to a destination undisclosed in a homicidal vehicle painted in the colour of a bacilliferous beverage.'

APPENDIX I

ENTRANCE EXAMINATION FOR WORDS, PHRASES, AND USAGES SEEKING ADMISSION TO THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

QUESTIONS

- (1) *Are you intelligible?*
- (2) *Are you pleasing?*
- (3) *Are you legitimate?*
- (4) *Are you needed?*

Or, the same questions put into English verse for the assistance of the student:

'Understood?
Can we admire you?
Are you good?
Do we require you?'

(NoxE. Candidates must answer every question; and they should not be deterred from competition by the consideration that they are unable to answer all the questions in the affirmative. A maximum of 10 marks will be awarded for each question, and, to secure election, a candidate must gain at least 20 marks. Full marks for (1) and (4) may secure election though nothing is scored under (2) and (3). That is, an inelegant and ill-bred word may be admitted if it is both intelligible and necessary. Also a clear, pleasing, well-bred word which we could well do without. But the Ideal Standard of Perfection, High-water Mark, or, as it were, Bogey, is reached only by the Candidate able to answer all four questions in the affirmative.)

SOME REMARKS ILLUSTRATING THE MEANING OF THE
QUESTIONS SET OUT ABOVE

(1) *Are you intelligible? (Understood?)*

Are you intelligible to a reasonable proportion of the audience to which you are addressed? (Technical or trade jargon need not be intelligible to the general public—for example, Stock Exchange and 'Market' reports.)

If you are to secure full marks, the audience should understand, not only what you mean but why you mean it.

'Stockist', for example, gets 10 marks here, but 0 for the other questions (*see* specimen Table). 'To sabotage' (7), 'acid test' (4), 'sailing near to the wind' (3), 'exploring avenues' (7), 'psycho-physiological equilibrium' (i), 'inferiority complex' (4), 'liquidate (political)' (4), *inst.*, *ult.*, and *prox.* (6), 'readability' (0).

(2) *Are you pleasing? ('Can we admire you?')*

This is the aesthetic test, and individual taste will be the principal examiner. Is the new word elegant? Is it affected, pompous, or pretentious? Is it a parrot phrase? Is it unnecessarily long? Is it difficult to say aloud? Does it make any sentence which contains it incapable of possessing *rhythm*, that is, *flow*, when spoken aloud?

I condemn here 'vernacularization', 'your favour to hand', 'effectuate', 'check up on.' 'face up to', 'in back of', 'psycho-physiological equilibrium', 'nonchalantly', 'interdenominational', 'it climaxes', 'parasitize', 'deinsectization', 'debureaucratization, *inst.*, *ult.*, and *prox.*

(3) *Are you legitimate? (Are you good?)*

That is, do you break any important rules? Are you well-bred? Are you ignorantly constructed? Are you, when analysed, seen to be nonsensical? 'Television' and

'aquadrome' fail to pass this test—being hybrid monsters: half Latin and half Greek. 'Aerodrome' passes but not 'air-drome' (but *sec* Question 4). By this test I give few or no marks to 'stockist', 'knowledgeable', 'check up on', 'face up to', 'phenomenal', 'premiate', 'to position', 'only too glad', 'try out', 'diarize' 'beat up', 'recondition', 'sterilize' (town-planning), 'anticipate' (in the sense of 'expect'), '*alibi*' (meaning excuse), 'reactionary' (of a politician), 'following . . .', 'due to . . .' (Hanging Nominatives), and of course dear old '*instant*', '*ultimo*', and '*prox*.'

(4) *Are you necessary? ('Do we require you?')*

Assuming that your answers to (2) and (3) are unsatisfactory, is there a gap which *must* be filled and can only, or best, be filled by you?

'Television'—probably Yes. 'Airdrome'—No. 'To sabotage'—No. 'To motivate to hospitahzation'—No. 'To recondition'—No. Redecontammation'—No. 'Stockist'—No. 'Deratization'—No. 'Reactionary'—No. 'In back of'—No. 'Check up on'—No. 'Face up to'—No. 'To service'—No. 'To position'—No. 'To coronate'—No. 'Eventuate'—No. 'Effectuate'—No. 'Air-conditioning'—No. *Inst.*, *ult.*, and *prox*—NO!

ENTRANCE EXAMINATION FOR WORDS AND PHRASES
SEEKING ADMISSION TO THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

(N.B. Not more than 10 marks will be awarded for any question. A candidate must receive at least 20 marks to be elected.)

<i>Word</i>	<i>Under- stood?</i>	<i>Can we admire you</i>	<i>Are you good?</i>	<i>Do we require you?</i>	<i>Elec- ted?</i>
To service .	8	6	0	0	No
To motivate .	10	4	2	2	No
Television . .	10	0	0	10	Yes
Ticketeers . .	10	10	10	5	Yes
To condition .	8	4	0	0	No
Recondition	5	2	0	0	No
Stockist .	10	0	0	0	No
To stenlize (land)	10	0	0	0	No
Inst., ult., prox. .	5	0	7	0	No
To sample (page 83)	10	7	0	8	Yes
Redecontamination	10	0	0	0	No
Force landed .	8	4	0	0	No
Further favour	10	0	0	0	No
Reactionaries .	6	5	0	0	No
To diary . .	8	6	3	4	Yes
To diarize .	8	4	0	0	No
To position .	10	2	0	0	No
To hospitalize .	9	0	0	0	No
To sabotage .	7	6	3	2	No
Ideology (pop.) .	4	5	5	2	No
Try out . .	8	1	0	0	No
Knock out . .	10	5	8	10	Yes
Unilateralism .	0	0	0	0	No

(The publisher, Bobby, has kindly consented to leave a few columns blank, in which you can conduct your own examinations as the new words arrive. Be just but merciless.)

<i>Word</i>	<i>Under- stood?</i>	<i>Can we admire you?</i>	<i>Are you good?</i>	<i>Do we reqmre you?</i>	<i>Elec- ted?</i>
Motorcade (General Evangeline Booth's)	6	0	0	0	No
To audition (B.B.C.)	10	3	0	0	No
Unforgetabilia (Mel- bourne Age)	7	0	0	0	No

WHAT A WORD!

<i>Word</i>	<i>Under- stood?</i>	<i>Can we admire you?</i>	<i>Are you good?</i>	<i>Do we require you?</i>	<i>Elec- ted?</i>

APPENDIX II

WICKED WORDS

A Family Game

This game, Bobby, can be played by two or more persons. Below 'please find' ten wicked messages, each consisting of nine words. Get some cards, and on each card write one word (hyphenated words—'stomach-awareness', for example—count as one). Shuffle the cards and deal nine cards to each player, any remaining to be in the 'pool'. The game is to get as many complete sets as possible. It is played like other games of the kind: each player, in turn, asks another for one of the words he requires, and, if he gets it, has another turn; or, if he chooses, may take one from the pool. The player who holds 'deratization' (or, if that is in the pool, 'redecontaminated') has the right to begin. But you can make your own rules and your own messages, when you are tired of mine.

(1) Due to intoxicants, wonder horse became motivated to hospitalization.

(2) Your further favour of the 5th instant to hand.

(3) Ship of State nonchalantly commences sailing near to wind.

(4) Forces of reaction centre round bid to sabotage disequilibrium-issue.

(5) Stockist of toiletries and phenomenal beautician guarantees lovelify proletariat.

(6) Get your angles straight on air-mindedness, class-consciousness, peace-mentality, stomach-awareness.

(7) Evacuate inhabitants from parasitized area to re-conditioned, re-decontaminated location.

(8) Prerequisite desiderated for anti-malnutrition optimum protein-content in dietary.

(9) Anticipate to completely finalize and liquidate situation even date.

(10) Beg acknowledge esteemed order and valued cheque with same.

Or, Bobby, you may take your 'Snakes and Ladders' board and adapt that admirable game to 'Wicked Words'. Write a word or phrase in every square, some good, some wicked—the wicked on the tails of the Snakes and the good at the bottom of the Ladders. When the dice bring a player to the snake-tail or square COMMENCE he will read

<p>COMMENCE</p> <p>Go back to BEGIN</p>

From SABOTAGE he must go back many squares to WRECK, from STOCKIST to STOCKER, from DERATIZATION to RAT-KILLING, from RECONDITION to IMPROVE (or REFIT), from ISTULT. to MAY IST, from MALNUTRITION to UNDER-FEEDING, from AMAZING to CUSTOMARY, from ANTICIPATE to EXPECT, from PREPARED TO ADMIT to ADMIT, from As THOUGH to As IF, from IMMEDIATE ATTENTION to LIAR! At the bottoms of the ladders you may put such words as SIMPLE, LUCID, READABLE, CLEAR, MUSICAL, EUPHONY, RHYTHM, SINCERE, NATURAL, INTELLIGIBLE, NATIVE, SHORT, SOUND, WELL-BRED, or what you will. And at the tops of the ladders you will put your favourite words, words which make you proud to speak the English language: HOME and HARMONY, THUNDER and STAR, FOREST and SHIP, RAIN, BLOSSOM, and SUNSET, JUSTICE, LOVE, KING, COURAGE, and KIND. Here and there you will have statesmen in White Sheets, with Withers Unwring. Up and down the

board you will have the Ship of State encountering all kinds of misfortune, as thus

SHIP OF STATE
Wants Try-out
Go back to
General Election

or

SHIP OF STATE
Verminous
Go back to
Deratization

or

SHIP OF STATE
Aground on
Rocks of Reaction
Go back for
Forces of Progress

You can have the Ship of State neaped, in irons, taken aback, lefitted, quarantined, anchored in fog, kedged off, hove to, caught on a lee-shore, shattered by bombshells, conducted through 'the usual channels', turning the corner, emerging from the tunnel, coming to the parting of the ways, and, if any one insists, exploring an avenue. But, at last, I think, the lucky player will come to

SHIP OF STATE
Fitted with Engines
Go forward to
HAVEN
On an even keel

and that will take him out.

But you can play the game as you like, Bobby; indeed, you are not bound to play it at all.

INDEX

AM

See 'Dead Languages'

A *Priori*

See 'Dead Languages'

Ab *Initio*

See 'Dead Languages'

ABLATIVE

Shameless indifference to the, of Business Man, 66

ABOVE

The adverb, has become an adjective, 77

ACID TESTERS

Stubboin Society of, 121

ADDENDUM

See 'Dead Languages'

ADESTE FIDELIA

See 'Dead Languages'

Ad *Hoc*

See 'Dead Languages'

Ad *Lib*

See 'Dead Languages'

Ad *Nauseam*

See 'Dead Languages'

Ad *Valorem*"

See 'Dead Languages'

ADVERBIAL PARTICLES

Enthralling lecture on, 150

ADVERTISERS

Inefficiency of, 41, 45, 46, 51, 54, 85, 121, 127

Mistaken belief that bad words can make a good advertisement, 45, 50, 59

No right to injure English language with barbarous inventions or wanton errors, 6, 40, 41, 46, 50, 52, 53, 59, 85, 116, 127

See 'Leagues of Decency'

AFTERMATH

Impregnated (*see* 'Novel Inn Signs')

Why sinister?, 104

AGATE, JAMES

Becomes an Ofer, 158

Projected poem concerning, 158

AGENDA-

IS plural already, 169

Learnedly discussed, 169

No Business Man disliking Latin is obliged to use, 169

And see 'Dead Languages'

ALCOHOL:

Odd description of Chateau Neuf du Pape, 230
See 'Witch-words'

ALIBI:

Correct use of, explained, 165, 174
See 'Dead Languages'

ALL OF Us, So SAY.

Believed not, strictly, correct, 159

AMAZING

Thoroughly discussed, 134
And see 'Journalist'

AMERICAN SLANG

Brief, out adequate, discursion on, 42
 Described as 'baby-talk', as 'a nervous disorder', as 'St
 Vitus's Talk', 42
 Exercise in, 43
 Tribute to, 42

AMERY, RT HON. L. S , M P :

Sad lapse, 107

ANALYZE

Is wrong (*see* 'Zee')

AND WHICH

Errors attached to, not within scope of this work, 200

ANGLES.

Analysed, 210
 Bishops' ambiguous relations with, 211
 Correct use of, in public life, explained, 212, 213
 Drawn, 211, 212
 Strange uses of, in North America, 210

ANIMUS

See 'Dead Languages'

ANNEAL

Alleged correct word for process described by certain base
 persons as 'normalizing', 58

Anno Domini'

See 'Dead Languages'

ANSWER is IN THE NEGATIVE, THE-

See 'Courtesy'

ANTICIPATE

Erroneously used for 'expect', or 'foresee', 81, 102, 133
See 'Garvir'

ANYHOW:

Considered, 122
 The Master wobbles about, 123

ARCHITECTS

Justly resent offensive use of 'sterilize' (q.v), 18

ARENA:

See 'Dead Languages'

- As NEAR AS MADE NO MATTER'
Puzzling example of, 120
- As THOUGH
Condemned, 119
What is the point of?, 119
- As To-
Characteristic offences by 'L C C ' and Board of Education, 104
- ATTENTION-VALUE:
Not the sole criterion in adding a word to the English language, 46, 50, 52, 59
- ATTITUDE OF DRIFT.
See 'Bargeman'
- ATLEE, C R , M P
Sad lapse, 100, 157
- AUDITORIUM
See 'Dead Languages'
- AUGUST
See 'Dead Languages'
- AUSTRALIA
Alleged guilty of 'meet up' and 'rest up', 154
Believed responsible for birth of 'finalize', 60
Deserves credit for creation of 'wowser', 60
Should be watched, 60
- AUTHOR, To
See 'Septic Verbs'
- AUTHORITARIAN
Fails to impress the Master, 124
- AVENUES
Charming examples, 209
Deplored, 209
Explored, 209
History of, considered, 209
Queer use of, in relation to cow's stomach, 209
- BACILLIFEROUS BEVERAGES
See 'Intoxicating Liquors'
- BAER, MAX
Extraordinary announcement (*see* 'Alibi'), 163
- BALDWIN, RT HON STANLEY, M P
Sayings of, 124, 129, 130, 158, 184, 221
- BANK'
Guilty of 'diarize', 56
- BANKRUPTCIES
Attributed to time and treasure squandered in verbose business correspondence (*and see* 'Officese'), 72, 73, 201
- BARGEMAN
Surprise oi, on learning that 'attitude of drift' is contemptible, 189

BARNACLES:

Believed first appearance of, on 'Ship of State', 187

BASIS

See 'Labour Savers'

BAUGHAN, E. A.

Sad lapse, 155

BEAT UP:

Not, on the whole, considered an economical or idiomatic way of saying 'beat' (even of eggs), 154, 155

BEAUTICIAN

See 'Valuable Neologisms', 59

BEER

Alleged absence of tubercular bacilli in (*see* 'Milk' and 'Witch-words'), 229

BEGGING'

Strange prevalence of, in Business Letters (*see* 'Oificese'), 78, 79, 81

BELOW.

Will become an adjective (*see* 'Above'), 77

BENGAL, GOVERNMENT OF

Sad lapse, 25

BEHIND

Old-fashioned English way of saying 'in back of' (q v), 42

BID.

Considered, 140

Deprecated, 142

Disease of recent origin, 141

Not found in private life, 141

BILLINGSGATE

Theory that a knowledge of Latin would increase contentment of fish-porters at, 163, 168,

BISHOP OF LONDON

Incorrect employment of nautical term, 183

BISHOPS

Erroneous attitude to angles, 211

Frank dismay among, on learning that they possessed no crystallized viewpoint, 16

BOMBSHELLS

Alleged superfluity of, 143

Believed more numerous in afternoon, 137

Dangers of, believed exaggerated, 143

And see 'Journalist'

BONA FIDE

See 'Dead Languages'

BOND MARKET.

Odd manoeuvre, 86

BONELESS WONDERS

Specimens 26, 84, 144, 145

BONUS:

See 'Dead Languages'

BREVITY:

Not a noticeable quality of Officese, the Snappy Young, or the Tough School of North American literature, 42, 43, 64, 68, 69, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 81, 154, 156, 157,

201

BREWERS

Pitiful lack of imagination in choice of language (*see* 'Witch-words'), 233

Reputation for cunning 'propaganda' exaggerated, 233

BRIDGE.

Secretary of State oddly invited to build a, without climbing down, 132

'BRITAIN EXPECTS'

Believed correct version of historic signal (*see* 'Scots'), 195

BRITANNIA.

See 'Dead Languages'

BRITISH.

Language, 6, 195

Literature, 195

Terrier, 195

The King's, 195

BRITISH AND SODA

Popular beverage in Scotland, 195

BRITISH FILM INSTITUTE-

Accessory to 'deratization', 26

BROCHURE

Epidemic of, in British hotels (*see* 'Snob-words'), 112

BROWNING, ROBERT

Glowing tribute to the month of *tms* , 65

BURKE-

Correct use of 'climax', 61

BUSINESS CORRESPONDENCE

Courtesy of, questioned, 75

Reform of, among first essentials of trade revival, 72

BUSINESS MAN.

Addicted to *dohchologia*, 85, 127

Alleged verbosity, 67, 68, 72, 73 *et seq.*, 82

Hatred of 'dead languages', 64, 66, 106, 168, 169, 175

Love of Latin, 64, 167, 168

Sensitive nature, 75, 85

Victim of *logorrhoea*, 68, 73 *et seq.*

And see 'Plain Enghbh'

CADBURY, P S.

Receives Emerald Star, for homily on 'Business Letters ,

81

CANNIBAL ENGLISH

- Defined, 146
- Deprecated, 146
- Exercises in, 147

CAPITALIZE

- Correct use of, explained, 08
- Excessive use of, deprecated, 97
- And see* '-Ize'

CASE

- Except in the case of 'in the caie of, defended, 117
- Learned examination oi, 117

Casus Belli

- See* 'Dead Languages'

Caveat Emptor

- See* 'Dead Languages'

CENSOR

- See* 'Dead Languages'

CENTRE ROUND

- Deplored, 02
- See* 'Chamberlain'

CHEQUE, VALUED

- See* 'Officese'

CHAHAR

- An undehmited coal-cellar, I[^]T, 208

CHAMBERLAIN, RT HON SIR AUSIEN, M P:

- Good stuff, 202
- Sad lapse, 92
- Tribute to, 92

CHAPEL

- Unseemly scene in, directly attributable to New Pronunciation of Latin, 172

CHARACTERIZE

- Disliked, 54
- See* '-Ize'

CHARWOMAN

- Strange use of 'feasible', 107

CHASTISE

- Not spelt with a 'z', 161

CHECK UP ON

- Swift modern method of saying 'check', 42, 157, 201

CHELMSFORD

- Averts 'Continental Sunday' with Thin End of Wedge, 226

CHOCOLATE

- The, Traffic, 234
- See* 'Witch-words'

CHURCH

- Unusual episode m (*see* 'While'), 93

CHURCHILL, RT HON WINSTON, M P:

- Sad lapse, 219

- CINEMA
 See 'Dead Languages'
- CLIMAX, To:
 See 'Septic Verbs', 'Valuable Neologisms', *and* 'Dead Languages'
- COAL-CELLAR
 An undchmited (*see* 'Chahar')
- COMMENCE
 Deplored, go
 Exerciseson, QO
 Reasons fordeploring, 91, 92
- COMMERCIAL KNC.USH
 Amended, 70, 76-78
 Analysed, with examples 67-82
 Defences of, considered, 74, 75, 81
 Economic waste, directly attributable to, considered, 71
 Exercises in, 70, 71, 73-78
 Inefficiency of, demonstrated, 70
 Politeness of, questioned, 75
 Slump in world-trade, to what extent responsible for, 71, 72, 201
 Spreads to the U.S S.R , 80
- CONCRFTK POINT, THE
 See 'Novel Inn Signs'
- CONDITION, To
 Deplored, with learned reasons, 176
 And see 'Septic Verbs'
- CONNEXION Wirn, IN:
 See 'Commercial' *and* 'Jungle' English
- CONSENSUS
 See 'Dead Languages'
- CONTACT, To
 An author, 100
 Wedgwood pottery, 100
 See 'beptic Verbs'
- CONTENT
 (As in 'Vitamin content') overworked, 9
- CONTRA
 See 'Dead Languages'
- CONTRIBUTING FACTOR.
 See 'Logorrhoea', 17
- CO-ORDINATE
 See 'Jungle English', 8
- CORONATE, lo
 Brief substitute for old-fashioned verb 'to crown', 38
 Presence oi, in dictionary does not impioess the Master, 47
 See 'Septic Verbs'
- CORPSE.
 Extraordinary behaviour of, 84

CORPULENCE-CAUSING FOODS'

See 'Chocolate', 'Milk', and 'Witch-words'

COUNCILLOR Fox:

Staves off 'Continental Sunday', with Thin End of Wedge, 226

COURTESY:

The great excuse for circumlocution, 75

Cow's STOMACH-

See 'Avenues'

CRIPPS, SIR STAFFORD, M P.:

Sad lapse, 31, 109

CRISIS

A somewhat severe, 130

And see 'Dead Languages'

CRUX

See 'Dead Languages'

CRYSTALLIZEDVIEWPOINT'

Not found among Church leaders, 16

And see 'Novel Inn Signs'

Cui Bono'

See 'Dead Languages'

CULTURE-

Disappointing fruits of, in Soviet Russia, 80

Gallant fight for, by Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, 26

Striking contribution of Film Institute to, 26, 93, 112

Valiant exhibition of, by Educational Authorities, 15, 26, 93,

104, no, 112, 113, 145, 157, 173, 181, 190

Weak pretensions to represent, of Cinema Christian Council,

15

CUM DIVIDEND

See 'Dead Languages'

CURT :

Considered poor alternative to 'May', 66

D V

See 'Dead Languages'

Daily Herald, The

Dismay of, at news concerning Larwood, 139

Daily Telegraph, The

Is an 'esser', 160

DANGEROUS LIQUIDS

See 'Milk' and 'Witch-words'

DATA-

See 'Dead Languages'

DAWSON, SIR PHILIP.

Sad lapse, in

DE-:

See 'Dead Languages'

De Minimis

See 'Dead Languages'

*De Mortuis:**See* 'Dead Languages'

DE PROFUNDIS

See 'Dead Languages'

'DEAD' LANGUAGES:

Contempt for, of Business Man, 64, 66, 166, 168, 169, 175
 Excessive use of, in Business Correspondence, 64, 66, 80, 81
 If used, should be used correctly, 66, 166, 168, 169
 Obstinate vitality of, 163-168
 Should be taught in national schools, 99, 163, 168
 Ubiquitous, in contemporary speech and writing, 163-168

DEBABELIZATION

See 'De-Fever' and 'Septic Verbs'DECREE *Nisi*.*See* 'Dead Languages'

DE-FEVER

De-babehzation, 124
 De-bureaucratization, 53
 De-contamination, 21
 De-dirting process, 168
 De-humidiy, 30
 De-insectization, 30
 De-limitation, 9, 33
 De-marcated, 9
 De-rati.'ation, 24
 De-restriction, 20
 De-water, 30
 De-zmcification, 30

DERATIZATION

Not, on the whole, considered a desirable addition to the
 English language, 24
 Outbreak of, Ill Bengal, 25
 Strange attitude of Film Institute to, 26
See 'Men of Action' and 'Septic Verbs'

DERBY, THE

A wager on the horse placed second in, does not excuse the
 assertion that you have 'practically' backed the winner,
 123

DIARIZE

See 'Septic Verbs'

DICTATORS

Of business letters, offences attributed to, 67

*Dies Non**See* 'Dead Languages'

'Dis-'

See 'Labour Savers' and 'Dead Languages'

DISASSEMBLE

(Of an engine) not, in the Master's judgment, desirable (*see*
 'Strip'), 29

DISEQUILIBRIUM:

Cool welcome of, by the Master, 29

DISINTERESTED.

May as well be kept distinct from 'uninterested', 128

DOLICHOLOGIA

Grave epidemic of, 16, 19, 20, 21, 30, 31, 32, 127

DOMINIONS

Bad case of 'centring round', 92

DONATE-

Exercises on, 47

See 'Valuable Neologisms' and 'Septic Verbs'

DONS-

Un-English refusal to carry principle into practice, in pronouncing Latin words, 175

DRAMA

See 'Dead Languages'

DRAMATIC.

Incidents, most frequent about lunch-time (*see* 'Evening paper'), 137

DRAMATIS PERSONAE.

See 'Dead Languages'

DRIFT.

Attitude of, believed difficult, but not ignoble, 131, 189

Means 'drive', but not in the House of Commons, 188

DRIVE.

Fanciful use of, as in 'lack of drive' denoting anaemic policy of H M Govt, learnedly discussed, 188

Means 'drift', but not in political speeches, 189

DROME.

Air-, Aqua-, Fun, and Sports, condemned, 41

DUCHESS OF ATHOLL.

Sad lapse, 73

DUE To

Bestial use of, 145 (and *see* 'Boneless Wonders')

DULY

See 'Ofncese'

DUTY TO MY NEIGHBOUR.

Charmingly done into Jungle English, 10

E G :

See 'Dead Languages'

Ecce Homo

See 'Dead Languages'

ECONOMY

In use of words, recommended, 70, 71

Not obviously victorious in 'check up on', 'm back of', 'face up to' (q v)

EDUCATION, BOARD OF

Sad lapse, 104, 190

- EDUCATION CONTENT:
See 'Jungle English', 9
- EFFECTUATION:
 Disliked, 32
See 'Slug-words' and 'Men of Action'
- EGO
See 'Dead Languages'
- ELASTICATE
See 'Septic Verbs'
- ELEGANCE
 In words, desirable, 44
- EMERSON
 No evidence that, would have approved the verbs 'to
 premiate', 'coronate', 'service', etc , 38
 Quoted, 38
- EMPORIUM
See 'Dead Languages'
- ENCLOSED PLEASE FIND
See 'Dictators' and 'Officese'
- ENDORSAIION
See 'Jungle English'
- ENDORISING
 Queer case of, 129
- ENGLAND EXPECTS . . . :
 Believed erroneous version of famous signal, 195
- 'ENGLISH':
 In some connexions believed preferable to 'British', 195
- ENGLISH LANGUAGE
 Believed to be in greater danger than English morals, 27
 Commended, i, 244
 Conditions of entry into, 40, 41, 44, 237
 Stiange neglect of, by bodies and Societies eager to interfere
 in every other human activity, 2, 15, 26, 27, 39
- ENSEMBLE, To:
See 'Septic Verbs'
- ENTERTAINMENT VALUE-
See 'Jungle English'
- ENVISAGE
 Of a railway-station, *in*
See 'Snob-words'
- EQUILIBRIUM-
 Harmonious psycho-physiological, doubt whether Woman is
 equipped with, 16
And see 'Jungle English'
- EROS-
See 'Dead Languages'
- ERRATUM-
See 'Dead Languages'

ESCAPEE:

See 'Australia'

ESSENTIALIZE.

See '-Ize' and 'Septic Verbs'

ESSERS-

Enviably ease of mind of, a' compared with 'Zedders' (q v), 162

ESTEEMED ORDER'

Surprising appearance of, in go-ahead Moscow, 81

And see 'Orhcese'

Ex CETERA

See 'Dead Languages'

Et seq '

See 'Dead Languages'

EVACUATE:

Meaning 'Send home', 'transfer', or 'move', deprecated, 25

See 'Men of Action' and 'Septic Verb^'

EVENING PAPERS'

Special difficulties of, as to sensations, bombshells, etc., 137

EVENTUATE, EVENTUALITY.

See 'Slug-words', 31

EVERYHOW

Condemned, 123

EXCLUSITIES

See 'Valuable Neologisms', 50

EXIT.

See 'Dead Languages'

Ex *Officio*

See 'Dead Languages'

EXTRA

See 'Dead Languages'

EYE-WEAR

(For 'spectacles') deprecated, 116

FACE UP To

Considered foul, 157

Demonstrated wasteful, 157, 201

Not used by MACAULAY in celebrated poem, 157

Typical contribution of Short and Snappy School to economy in use of words, 42, 157, 201

FACTOR-

Overworked, 17, 114

See 'Labour Savers'

FATTENING FOODS

See 'Witch-words'

FAVOUR

Meaning 'letter', considered imbecile, 58, 73

See 'Officese'

- FEASIBLE:
Not synonymous with 'probable', or 'likely' (*but see* 'Char-woman'), 107
- FEATURE:
See 'Septic Verbs', 147
- Felo de se*•
See 'Dead Languages'
- FIAT
See 'Dead Languages'
- FILM INSTITUTE:
Intends to put 'culture' on the screen, 26
Undismayed by 'deratization' and Boneless Wonder, 26
- FINALIZE
See '-Ize' and 'Australia'
- FIRM UP, To:
See 'Up', and 'Septic Verbs'
- Flagrante Dehcto*
See 'Dead Languages'
- FLEMING, PETER.
Serious charge, 223
- FLYING
Alleged unimportance of, i
- FOLLOWING:
(For 'after') a rare piece, in *The Times*, 144
Some horrible examples, in London papers, 144
- FOOT-CONSCIOUSNESS:
Deprecated, 33
- FORCE LANDED
To describe the involuntary descent of a bird-man, deprecated, 145
- FRANKENSTEIN:
Correct use of, in political controversy, explained, 100
Every use of, in political controversy, deprecated, 101
Gives a party for Nemesis, 101
Odd behaviour of, in trial for murder, 102
- FRENCHMEN:
Sympathetic attitude adopted towards, learning our language, 200, 214, 217
- FUN:
See 'Entertainment Value'
- FURTHER FAVOUR:
See 'Officese'
- FURTHER TO MINE:
See 'Ofhcese'
- GARVIN, J L:
Sad lapse, 103
- GENIUS:
See 'Dead Languages'

GERMIFEROUS GESTURE-

S' 'Kiss' *and* 'Witch-words'

GET, To:

Correct use of, explained, 213

Manifold services of, recognized, 214

Numerous idioms constructed with, 215-217

GIBSON, WILFRID-

Sad lapse, 52

GIFT, To-

See 'Septic Verbs'

GLADNESS

Extravagant display of, by High Court Judge, 123

GOD-HUNGER.

Deprecated, 91

GOOD STUFF

Mr Justice Best, 62

Mr Justice Blackburn, 133

Sir Austen Chamberlain, 202

Lord Hewart, L C J , 228

The King, 13, 14

Lord Justice Moulton, 88

Sidwell, W'ilham, 34

Slocum, Captain, 148

Mr Speaker, 37

GOVERNMENT, THE

Singular or plural, ingenious theory concerning question
whether, is, or are, 118

GRATIS-

See 'Dead Languages'

HABEAS CORPUS

See 'Dead Languages'

HAMILTON, GENERAL SIR IAN-

Guilty of excessive emphasis in describing financial state of
his grandfather, 155

HAVER

Unfortunate use of, concerning Geneva, 113

HENRY VIII.

Rationalization of desire by, alleged, 147

HEWART, LORD

Apt quotation, I

Good stuff, 228

HILTON, JAMES:

Sad lapse, 46

HIPPODROME:

See 'Dead Languages'

His MAJESTY'S ARMY:

Are 'zedders', 160

- His MAJESTY'S NAVY:
 Are 'essers', 160
- HOARB, RT HON SIR SAMUEL, M P:
 Sad lapse, 99
- HOMICIDAL VEHICLES:
 See 'Witch-words'
- Honoris Causa*
 See 'Dead Languages'
- HOOLIGAN-
 See 'Witch-words'
- HOSPITALIZATION
 Not welcome, 46, 53
- HOT, To-
 (Of an engine) sanctioned, 156
- HOT UP, To
 (Of an engine) deemed to be of questionable value, 156
- HOXTON
 'New Pionunciation' of Latin deemed unbuitable in, 176
- HUXLEY, ALDOUS
 Sad lapse, 46
- HUXLEY, PROF JULIAN:
 Sad lapse, 52, 55
- HYPOTHESIS
 See 'Dead Languages'
- I UNDERSTAND'
 See 'Opposite'
- IBIDEM
 See 'Dead Languages'
- IDEALS-
 IS what I believe in (*see* 'Propaganda' and 'Witch-words'), 230
- IDEM
 Month of, believed unwanted, 65
 Should be *eodem*, or possibly *ejusdem*, 66
 And *see* 'Dead Languages'
- IDENTIFIED WITH
L'affaire Potts, 143
 The well-disposed Dutchmen, 34
- IDEOLOGY
 Suffering caused, at 'progressive' revels, by erroneous use
 of (*and see* 'Snob-woids'), 108
- I E.:
see 'Dead Languages'
- IF
 'And when', 206
 Contradictory, 204
 Elliptical, 204
 Redundant, 204

IF NOT:

Ambiguous use of, 116

IGNORAMUS

See 'Dead Languages'

IMMEDIATE ATTENTION

'In the course of a few days', 76

See 'Officese'

IMPEDIMENTA

See 'Dead Languages'

IMPLEMENT, To

See 'Septic Verbs'

IMPLY

Charmingly distinguished from 'infer', 107

IN BACK OF

Brief American way of saying 'behind' (q v), 42

IN CAMERA

See 'Dead Languages'

INDEX

See 'Dead Languages'

In Esse

See 'Dead Languages'

In Extensa

See 'Dead Languages'

In Extremis

See 'Dead Languages'

In Forma Pauperis

See 'Dead Languages'

In Loco Parentis

See 'Dead Languages'

IN MEMOKIAM

See 'Dead Languages'

In Perpetuo

See 'Dead Languages'

In Re

See 'Dead Languages'

IN RECEIPT OF

See 'Ofrictse' and 'Duchess of Atholl'

In Toto

See 'Dead Languages'

INDIGESTIBLE CRUSTACEANS'

See 'Lobster' and 'Witch-words'

INDUSTRY.

Captains oi (*See* 'Latin') 175

Deadweight of unnecessary words an intolerable burden upon, 72, 201

INFER

Not the same as 'imply', 107

INFRA DIG :

See 'Dead Languages'

- INNER, AN-
 (At Bisley) will not excuse the statement that you 'practically' hit the bull's-eye, 123
- INNUENDO:
 See 'Dead Languages'
- Iipse Dixit*
 See 'Dead Languages'
- Iipso Facto*
 See 'Dead Languages'
- INST
 Delights of England during month of, vividly evoked by poet BROWNING, 05
 Stands for '*instante*', not 'instant', 65
 Strange passion of Business Man, loathing the unpractical study of 'dead' languages, for month of, 04
- INIER-.
 Availability,condemned,127
 Imperial,derided, 126
 And see 'Dead Languages'
- INIFRFST.
 See 'Entertainment Value'
- INIERIM
 See 'Dead Languages'
- INTERNATIONALIST
 Considered ambiguous and over-long description of a gentleman who has played for England, 127
- INTOXICATING LIQUORS
 Not to be confused with 'Baciliferous Beverages', 233
 See 'Witch-words'
- INTRIGUING
 Considered inept epithet for a bowler hat, in
 Does not mean 'interesting', no
- In Vino Veritas*
 See 'Dead Languages'
- IsE or -IzE?
 Problem discussed, 160
 Master's ruling, 106
 Navy and Army divided about, 160
- ISSUE.
 Avoided, 220
 Bulked, 224
 Capitalized, 225
 Clear-cut, 224
 Clouded, 224
 Come to gups \\ith, 220
 Confused, 220
 Dead, 225
 Delicate, 225
 Direct, 220

ISSUF' (*contd*)

- Dirty, 225
- Discussed, 220
- Dwarfed, 224
- Faced up to, 224
- Finalized, 2
- Floated, 223
- Fogged, 2.24
- Fought about, 221
- Grave, 224
- Joined, 222
- Left to electorate, 224
- Main, 224
- Major, 224
- Minor, 224
- Of a newspaper, 220
- Of blood, 222
- Of capital, 223
- Of marriage, 222
- Of rum, 222
- Raised, 224
- Re-opened, 220
- Ruthlessly forced upon, 220
- Sabotaged, 2, 5, 225
- Shirked, 224
- Side-tracked, 224
- Sold, 221
- Stabilized, 2
- Staked, 224
- Stated, 224
- Successful, 220
- With (vb), 223

ITEM

See 'Dead Languages'

IT IS UP TO US TO

Brief modern method of saying 'We must', 158, 201

IT WILL BE OUR ENDEAVOUR

Short, sharp, business-like method of saying 'We shall try', 82

-IZE-

Deplorable fecundity of verbs in, 53

Ignorant affection for, amounts to a mama, 52-58

Or '-ise'?, 160

JOURNALIST'

Capacity for continual amnagement, considered, 134

Difficulties of, admitted, 137, 140, 146

Hard lot of, recognized, 135, 137, 140

Impossibility of surprising, in private life, noted, 134

JOURNALIST: (*contd*)

Injuries to English language by, viewed in just proportion,
134
Tribute to, 134, 135

JUBILATE'

See 'Dead Languages'

JUNCTURE, AT THIS

Deprecated, 20, 213

JUNGLE ENGLISH

Analysed considered deprecated, 8-10
'Duty to my neighbour' translated into, 10
Exercises in, 13, 15, 32
King's speech, extract from, done into, 14

KILL-JOY-

See 'Witch-words'

KING, THE-

Public utterances, commended, 14
Respectful suggestion that II M, should make up his mind
about '-ise' and '-ize', 160

KIPLING, RUDYARD

Annoys Scots (q v), 192

Kiss

Scientific description of (*see* 'Witch-words'), 234

KNOCK OUT

Acquitted (*see* 'Adverbial Particles'), 153

KNOWLEDGEABLE.

Considered, 114

Disliked, 114

Ill-bred, 115

Must not be made a precedent for invention of similar
woids, 115

LABOUR-SAVERS:

Basis, 30

De-, 20, 29, 30, 53, 168

Dis-, 29

Factor, 114

Inter-, 127

Non-, 29

Re-, 14, 20, 22, 23, 27, 29

Un-, 29

LACUNA

See 'Dead Languages'

LANGUAGE:

Theory that there is a British, exploded, 195

Lapsus Linguae

See 'Dead Languages'

LARWOOD:

Bowls slowly, 139

Sensation, 136

LATIN

Alleged impossibility of understanding English newspapers without some knowledge of, 163

Contempt of Captains of Industry for, 64, 66, 166, 168, 169, '75

Importance of, in English literature, law, political and business life, explained, 163-168

'New' pronunciation of, 1-1

Passionate delight of commercial men in, 64, 80

Proper pronunciation of, 171

Surprising quantity of, in Business Correspondence, 64, 80

Laudator Tempons Acti

See 'Dead Languages'

LAUNCHING

From a tree (see 'Novel Inn bigiis' and 'Rathbone'), 132

LAWYERS

Tribute to, 63

LEAGUES OF DECENCY

Recommended to devote some attention to pollution of English language, 2, 27, 39

LEJELNE, C A

Sad lapse, 49

LEXICOGRAPHERS

Applauded, ix, 40, 04

Blamed, 48, 55, 190

Charge of feebleness resented by 48

Charge of feebleness ruthlessly repeated, 48, in, 119, 190, 215

LIQUIDATE.

See 'Septic Verbs' and 'Jungle English'

LIQUOR

Is disgusting, 230

See 'Witch-words'

LITERALLY'

As a rule, means 'not literally', 105

Avoid, the citizen advised to, 105

Eatuous examples of, 100

Valid examples of, 106, 181

LLOYD GEORGE, RT. HON D , M P:

Sad lapse, 150, 190

LOAN, lo

See 'Septic Verbs'

LOBSTERS.

Legislation projected concerning (see 'Witch-words'), 234

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Believed, could not continue, without Thin End of Wedge, 225

- LOCATION, To ADOPT A-
 See 'Jungle English', 15
- LOCUM *IFC*NENS
 See 'Dead Languages'
- Locus Standi*
 See 'Dead Languages'
- LOGORRHOL.A.
 Three out of four believed affected by, 17
- LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL
 Loathsome but characteristic use of 'as to', 104
- LOUSY
 Considered, 197
 Defended, 198
- LOVELIFY, TO
 See 'Septic Verbs' and 'Valuable Neologisms'
- LUMBAGO
 See 'Dead Languages'
- LYLE, R. C.
 Sad lapse, 105
- MS
 See 'Dead Languages'
- MACKINNON, MR JUBICE:
 Sad lapse, 125
- MAGNA CARTA
 See 'Dead Languages'
- MAGNIFICAI
 See 'Dead Languages'
- Magnum Opus*
 See 'Dead Languages'
- MAJOR
 See 'Dead Languages'
- MANDER, G. L. M., M.P.
 Sad lapse, 188
- MASTER, THE
 As a rule, is right, 191
 Fearless use of preposition at the end of a sentence, IT8, 142
 Generous admission of capacity for error, 2, 115, 122, 160,
 170, 185, 191, 199
 Sad lapse, 122
- MAIRIMONIZE
 See '-i.e' and 'heptic Verbs'
- MAXIMIZE
 See '-Ize' and 'Septic Verbs'
- MAXIMUM
 See 'Dead Languages'
- MEASURE
 Excessive use of, in political oratory, 218
 In House of Commons, can mean anything, 218

MEASURE (*contd.*)

Noted and forbidden, 219

'Of nervous hesitancy' judged inept, 218

MECHANIZE:

Meaning 'convey by motor' (*see* 'Septic Verbs'), 53

MEDIUM:

See 'Dead Languages'

MEET UP WITH, To.

Brief alternative to 'meet', found in Australia, 154

MEMORANDUM

See 'Dead Languages'

MEN OF ACTION

Cruel imposition of long words upon, by superior authorities,

25

MILK:

See 'Tuberculosis' and 'Witch-words'

MILLENNIUM-

See 'Dead Languages'

MILTON.

Commended (*see* 'Prejudice'), 191

MINIMUM WAGE

See 'Dead Languages'

MINOR

See 'Dead Languages'

MINUS

See 'Dead Languages'

Modus Operandi

See 'Dead Languages'

MORATORIUM

See 'Dead Languages'

MORGAN, SIR HERBERT

Alleged Protector of the Pub, 128

MOTIVATE

Considered, and, on the whole, disliked, 46

See 'Septic Verbs'

MOTOR-TRADE

Startling output of insanitary words by, 50, 156, 178

Multum in Parvo

See 'Dead Languages'

N.B.:

See 'Dead Languages'

NAUTICAL TERMS.

Fondness of Britons for, 181

Odd ignorance of Britons concerning, 181-187

NEARBY

Considered, 77

NEIGHBOUR, MY DUTY TO MY:

Put into Jungle English, 10

Nem. Con.:

See 'Dead Languages'

NEOLOGISMS

Rules governing the entry of, into English language, 40, 44
(and see Appendix I)

NERVF STRAINERS

Ancient Order of, 126

New Statesman, The

Grave case of 'facing up to', 157

Habitual saboteur, 95

NICETIES

Repugnant use of (and see 'Valuable Neologisms'), 50

NIL:

See 'Dead Languages'

NONCHALANTLY

Deprecated, 112

How pronounced?, 44, 112

Non Compos Mentis

See 'Dead Languages'

Non Sequitur

See 'Dead Languages'

NORMALIZE, To

Permission given for use of, as technical term believed necessary to the Steel Trade, 58

Permission withdrawn, on receipt of other information from the Admiralty, 58

NORTH AMERICANS

Frequently right, 42, 151, 152

Often wrong, 42, 151, 152

NOVEL INN SIGNS

The Acid Test, 121

The Adopted Location, 15

The Amazing Revelation, 129

The Attitude of Drift, 131

The Bid and Bombshell, 128

The Biological Status, 16

The Bourgeois Ideology, 109

The Bridge in the Tree, 132

The Clean Slate, 130

The Comb and Aeroplane, 129

The Concrete Point, 131

The Crystallized Viewpoint, 16

The Dangerous Veil, 130

The Decontaminated Area, 21

The Demsectisized Airdrome, 30

The Elasticated Income, 125

The Endorsed Pacifist, 12g

The Evacuated Infantryman, 25

The Four Jolly Nerve-strainers, 126

NOVEL INN SIGNS- (*contd*)

- The Frankenstein and Nemesis, 101
- The Further Favour, 73
- The Heaitfelt Echo, 131
- The Honeycombed Wilderness, r 30
- The Implemented Pre-obhgdtion, 4
- The Impregnated Aftermath, 104
- The Intensive Turn, 130
- The Liquidated Centre, 17
- The Measure of Agreement, 219
- The Minister Without Portfolio, 130
- The Moat m the Sky, 129
- The Onentable Visor, 85
- The Parasitized Road, 52
- The Phenomenal Sensation, 136
- The Psycho-physiological Equilibrium, 16
- The Retrograde Strangulation, 131
- The Sabotaged Issue, 2
- The Serious Door, 131
- The Somewhat Severe Crisis, 130
- The Sterilized Field, ig
- The Summed-up Key-note, 129
- The Undehmitcd Coal-cellar, 131
- The Unexplored Avenue, 209
- The Unurung Withers, 130
- The \aletudmarianized Conception, 20
- The White Shee t, 130

Nulli Secundus

See 'Dead Languages'

Obiter Dictum

See 'Dead Languages'

OBLIVIOUS

Does not mean 'unaware', 124

O'CONNOR, T J , K C , M P

Sad lapse, 101

Ofr, INTRUSIVE

(As in 'all of my worldly goods') condemned, 159

(As in 'bo say all of us') considered, 159

OFMC ESE

Condemned, 69-82

Considered, 69-82

Examples of, 73-82

Exercises m, 70, 73, 76-78

Inefficiency, 69-79

Verbosity, 67-82

Waste, caused by, 71-72

OIL

Caught 'proceeding', j 12

- OK :
 Irreverent reference to, 39
- OLYMPIA
 See 'Dead Languages'
- OMNIBUS
 See 'Dead Languages'
- ONLY Too (BLADDERS)
 Queer sect of, surprisingly reinforced by Maclunnon, J , 125
- ONUS
 See 'Dead Languages'
- OPPOSITE, WORDS WHICH MAY MEAN THE EXACT.
 Drive, 188
 If, 204
 'I understand', 108
 Literally, 103
 Practically, 123
 Quite, 120
 Undesirable, 234
 Unthinkable, 94
- OUT-
 Piegnant uses of, commended, 152-1=54
 Unfruitful uses oi, condemned, 152-154, 201 (*see* 'Try out'
and 'Adverbial Paitides')
- OXFORD
 Home of 'eye-wear', no
- OVERHEAD CHARGES
 Much augmented by literary style of commercial corre-
 spondence, 71, 72,
- PM -
 See 'Dead Languages'
- PS
 See 'Dead Languages'
- PALLADIUM
 See 'Dead Languages'
- PAR
 See 'Dead Languages'
- PARASIIIIZE
 See 'Septic Verbs'
- Pan Passu*
 See 'Dead Languages'
- PARROT-WORK
 See 'Phenomenal'
- PATERFAMILIAS
 See 'Dead Languageb'
- Pax Rntanmca*
 See 'Dead Languages'
- PER ANNUM
 See 'Dead Languages'

Per Capita

See 'Dead Languages'

Per Centum

See 'Dead Languages'

Per Contra

See 'Dead Languages'

Per Diem

See 'Dead Languages'

Per Pro

See 'Dead Language'

Per Se

See 'Dead Languages'

PERSONALIZE, To

See '-Ize' and 'Septic Verbs'

PERSONELLED

See 'Septic Verbs'

PHENOMENAL

Political use of, derided, 109

True meaning of, explained, 40 (*and See 'Snob-words'*)

PICTURIZE

See 'Septic Verbs'

PLAIN ENGLISH

Queer delusion of Business Man that he talks, 64, 66, 69,
84, 201

PLAIN SAILING

No such thing, 186

PLUS

See 'Dead Languages'

PLUSAGE

See 'Valuable Neologisms', 83

POINT, THE CONCRETE

See 'Novel Inn Signs'

1pOMPOSITIVITY-VALUE

Examples, 8, 9, 16, 17, 19, 20, 21, 22, 30, 31, 33, *passim*

POPULAR USAGE

No longer a trustworthy guide, 39, 166

POSITION, lo

Deplored, with learned reasons, 178 (*and see 'Septic Verbs'*)

POST MORTEM

See 'Dead Languages'

PRACTICALLY

As a rule, means 'Not practically', 123

Permissible uses of, explained, 123 (*and see 'Derby' and
'Inner'*)

PREJUDICE, PREJUDICIAL

Correct use of, explained, 190-191

Muht relate to an act of the mind, 191

PREMIUM.

See 'Dead Languages'

- PREPARED To:
 Admit, 123
And see 'Dictators'
- PREPOSITIONS-
 At the end of a sentence, 118
 Pleasant relations of, with 'get', 215, with Greek verbs
 152
- PRETTY:
 (As an adverb) considered, 197
 Defended, 197
- PRIMA FACIE
See 'Dead Languages'
Pro Bono Publico
See 'Dead Languages'
- PROCEED:
 Oil, like the rest of the world, proceeds to, 112
- PROCESS, To
 Surprising example of, 59
- PRODIGY CROONETTE
See 'Cannibal English'
Pro I-'orma
See 'Dead Languages'
- PROPAGANDA
 History of, 170
 Is what my enemy believes in, 170, 230
 Not considered a valuable addition to English language, 171
 (*see 'Ideals', 'Witch-words', and 'Dead Languages'*)
Pro Rata
See 'Dead Languages'
- PROTAGONIST
 Correct use of, explained, 99
 Foul use of, exposed, 99
Pro Tanto
See 'Dead Languages'
Pro Tern
 Queer use of, 169
See 'Dead Languages'
- PROVOCATIVE-
 Describes a speech made by your opponent to which you
 have no effective reply, 230 (*see 'Witch-words'*)
- PROX, MONTH OK
 Believed best for weddings, 67
 Considered poor substitute for 'April', 'May', or 'June', 64
 'Queen of the', fine poem concerning the, 65
- PROXIMAL
 Brief modern synonym for 'near', 113
- PUBLICANS:
 And sinners, clever exploitation of familiar phrase, 231 (*see*
 'Witch-words')

Punch.

Sad lapse, 124

Q E IX:

See 'Dead Languages'

QUESTION-BEGGARS

See 'Witch-words'

Qmd Pro Quo

See 'Dead Languages'

QUITE:

Meaning 'entirely', 126

Meaning 'not at all', 126

QUITE ALL RIGHT-

Frank admission of error by the Master, *igg*

QUORUM.

See 'Dead Languages'

QUOTA:

See 'Dead Languages'

Q.v.

See 'Dead Languages'

RACKET:

(In North American sense) a venerable English word (1812)

⁴³
RAT-CATCHER'S DAUGHTER, THE

Out of date (*see* 'Deratization'), 27

RATHBONE, Miss

Amazing metaphor-work, 132

RATIO

See 'Dead Languages'

RATIONALIZATION

Elimination of redundant words deemed essential feature of any rational scheme of, 72

What a word', 71, 147

RAT-KILLING.

Briefly described (*see* 'Deratization'), 24

Re:

Overworked in Business Correspondence, 80, 81

Pronounced 'ray' in schools and colleges, 171 (*and see* 'Dead Languages')

REACTION

Discreditable history of, related, 27 ,

Forces of, referred to, 28

True meaning of, explained, 27

REACTIONARY-

See 'Question-Beggars' and 'Reaction'

RECONDITION:

Attacked, 22

Defended, 23

- RECONDITION: (*contd.*)
 Redundancy of, demonstrated, 24
 Why not 'improve', 24, or 'refit', 22?
 (*And see* 'Septic Verbs')
- REDECONDITION:
See 'Re-condition'
- REDECONTAMINATION
See 'Jungle English' and 'Men of Action'
- REDEDICATION.
 Considered inadequate summary of the King's 'I dedicate myself anew', 14
See 'Re-words', and 'Jungle English'
- REDUNDANT'
See 'Witch-words', 231, 234
- REFERENDUM
See 'Dead Languages'
- REJUVENILITY:
See 'Re-words' and 'Jungle English'
- RENDITION
 Rightly or wrongly, detested, 116
Res Judicata
See 'Dead Languages'
- RE-SPEAK.
See 'Re-words' and 'Septic Verbs'
- RESTORED PRONUNCIATION OF LATIN-
 Considered an obstacle to spread of culture, 163, 173, 176
 Detested by wholesome English boys, 172
 Ignored by Courts, by doctors, by schoolmasters, 174, 175
- RE-WORDS:
 Excessive manufacture of, deprecated, 14, 20, 21, 22, 23, 27, 29
- REX-
See 'Dead Languages'
- RIBBON-WRITING
 Examples, 14, 15, 17, 18
- ROADABILITY:
 Obscurity of, in an advertisement, condemned, 51
 Possible meanings of, considered, without result, 51
And see 'Motor-trade'
- RUSH, To.
 Considered unsuitable formula for transportation of sick persons, 142, 143
- RUSSIA
 Adopts Commercial English, 80
- SABOTAGE, To
 Deprecated, 2, 48, 95, 97, 99
 Exposed, 95
 Method of dealing with, suggested, 3

SABOTAGE, To: (*contd.*)

Obstinately recurs, 95, 09

Probable development into 'sabotidge' apprehended, 95

Verb transitive, discussed, 95 (*and see* 'Witch-words')

SAILING NEAR THE WIND

Nothing underhand or discreditable in, 183

Ship of State not yet recorded as, 187

ST VITUS'S TAI K:

Fanciful description of North American slang, 42

SAME, THE-

Habitual abuse of, condemned, 83, 84

Temptation of, recognized, 83

Wordy method of saying 'it', 84

SCIENCE MUSEUM.

Sad lapse, 145

SCOTS

Objection of, to 'England', considered, 193

Placated, 195

SECRETARIES

Vindicated, 67, 80, 85

SECRET SOCIETIES

Ancient Order of Nerve-strainers, 126

Guild of Only Too Gladders, 125

Stubborn Society of Acid Testers, 121

SELL, SELLERS'

Squeamish refusal of commercial men to use such brutal words as, 85

SENSATION

As a rule, occurs about lunch-time, 137

History of, 138

Mild, 140

Rare examples of, in morning paper, 137

And see 'journalist' and 'Larwood'

SEPTIC VERBS

Archacologize, 52

Author, 49

Backwardate, 87

Celluloid, 49

Climax, 61

Commence, 90

Condition, 176

Contact, 100

Coronate, 38

Debabelize, 124

Debureaucratize, 53

Decontaminate, 21

De-dirt, 168

Dehumidify, 30

Demsectize, 30

SEPTIC VERBS: (*contd*)

- Deratizate, 24
- De-restrict, 20
- De-water, 30
- De-zincify, 30
- Diarize, 56
- Differentiate, 32
- Disassemble, 29
- Disassociate, 32
- Disencourage, 49
- Donate, 47
- Effectuate, 33
- Elasticate, 125
- Endorsate, 16
- Ensemble, 59
- Envisage, in
- Essentiahze, 52
- Evacuate, (*mil*), 25
- Eventuate, 31
- Feature, 147
- Feminize, 98
- Filmize, 53
- Finalize, 52
- Firm, 87
- Gift, 47
- Hospitalize, 53
- Implement, 4
- Intrigue, no
- Liquidate (*pol*), 17
- Loan, 03
- Lovelify, 59
- Matrimonize, 55
- Maximize, 53
- Mechanize (meaning 'Convey by motor'), 53
- Motion, 179
- Motivate, 46
- Normalize, 57
- Obituanze, 52
- Oratorize, 52
- Ovation, 179
- Parasitize, 52
- Personalize, 55
- Personnel, 58
- Picturize, 53
- Position, 178
- Premiate, 38
- Process, 59
- Quota, 169
- Rationalize, 147

SEPTIC VERBS: (*contd.*)

- Recondition, 22
- Redecontaminate, 21
- Rededicate, 14
- Renovize, 53
- Re-orientate, 32
- Re-speak, 23
- Sabotage, 95
- Script, 58
- Service, 50
- Slenderize, 52
- Spectate, 85
- Sterilize (for 'keep green'), 18
- Tenderize, 52
- Three-putt, 60
- Transpire, 93
- Vacuuraize, 52
- Valetudinamize, 20
- Vernaculanze, 52
- Vernaculate, 56
- Vinlize, 98
- Vocalize, 53
- Voice, 107
- Youthify, 59

SERIATIM-

See 'Dead Languages'

SERVICE, To

Condemned, 50

And see 'Septic Verbs'

SHAPE OR FORM, IN ANY'

Deprecated, 102

SHEET-ANCHOR:

Not perhaps the happiest metaphor for description of Great Britain's connexion with League of Nations, 185

What is the?, 184

SHIP-

See 'State'

SHIP'S COOKS:

Surprising gift for vivid but simple expression displayed by (*see* 'Sidwell' and 'Slocum')

SHOOT UP:

Wordy addition to English language, by North Americans, 154

SHORTHAND, SCHOOLS OF:

Believed responsible for perpetuation of worst features of Commercial English, 79, 80

Sic:

See 'Dead Languages'

- SIDWBLL, WILLIAM:
 Hanged, 36
 Masterly defence, 34, 35
 Power of vivid exposition, 35
- SILENT SERVICE:
 Hatred of verbiage, 25, 30, 33 (*see* 'Deratization'¹)
- Sine Die*:
See 'Dead Languages'
- Sine Qua Non*:
See 'Dead Languages'
- SLENDERIZE, To
 A straightforward lie, 54
- SLICKNESS, VERBOSITY OF.
See 'Check up on', 'Face up to', 'Further favour', 'American slang', and 'Business Man'
- SLOCUM, CAPTAIN
See 'Good Stuff', 148
- SLUG-WORDS:
 Alarming fecundity of, 31
 Trodden on, 32
- SNOB-WORDS:
 Advise, 77, 78
Brochure (hotel's), **112**
 Commence, 90
 Contact (to), 100
 Discussant, 113
 Display-artist, 85
 Donate, 47
 Drome, 41
 Envisage, in
 Ideology, 108
 Intriguing, no
 Measure, 218
 Mentality, 109
 Perspiration, 198
 Phenomenal, 109
 Rendition, 116
 Stockist, 45
 Unadvised, 79
 Vend, 85
 Vicinage, in
- SOBRIETY, TESTS OF:
 Psycho-physiological equilibrium, 16
 Rehabilitate parJiamentananism, 19
 Valetudmarianizm, 20
 Vernaculanzation, 56
- SOCIALISTS:
 Panic among, on hearing the latest about Larwood, 139

SOMEWHAT:

Sensational report, a, 136

Severe crisis, a, 130

SOUND:

Not to be neglected, in choice of words, 44, 45, 54, 61, 92

SOVIETS:

Surprisingly invite an 'esteemed order', 81

SPIN:

Queer use of, to describe dignified progress of Oxford University Eight, 96

STADIUM:

See 'Dead Languages'

STANDPOINT GLACÉ

See 'Crystallized Viewpoint'

STARTABILITY.

Examined, 50

See 'Motor-trade'

START UP:

Verbose method of saying 'start', much in favour among the Slick and Snappy School, 156

STATE, SHIP OF:

Absence of variety in manoeuvre deprecated, 187

A steamer or sailing-vessel?, 184

First appearance of barnacles on, 181

STATESMEN.

Reticence and caution of, when at sea, contrasted with fearless use of nautical metaphors ashore, 182

STATUS:

Has newly emancipated Woman a sound biological?, 16 (*and see 'Dead Languages'*)

Status Quo.

See 'Dead Languages'

STERILIZE.

Use of, to describe reservation of land exclusively for animal and vegetable life, condemned, 18

STET:

See 'Dead Languages'

STOCK EXCHANGE:

Queer goings-on on, 86

Scattered hedge selling on, 86

STOCKIST:

Three good reasons for disliking, set out, 45

(See 'Motor-trade')

STONE, UNTURNED, No-

Grim specimen of, 210

True meaning of, 210

STRAINING EVERY NERVE:

Deprecated, 120

- STRATA-
 See 'Dead Languages'
- STRIP-
 (Of an engine) H M Navy's admirable alternative to loathly
 'disassemble', 29
- SUB-'
 See 'Dead Languages'
- Sub Judice*
 See 'Dead Languages'
- Sub Poena*
 See 'Dead Languages'
- SUBSTANTIAL PERCENTAGE, A-
 Brief modern fashion of saying 'some', 82
- Sin Generis'*
 See 'Dead Languages'
- SUPER:
 See 'Dead Languages'
- Sursum Corda:*
 See 'Dead Languages'
- SWIM-WEAR:
 Weakly condoned, by Master, 116
- TACKING-
 (At sea) not necessarily evidence of a cunning or reckless
 disposition, 182
- TAIL-TWISTERS
 See 'Adverbial Particles'
- TANNIC ACID:
 See 'Tea' and 'Witch-words'
- TANNIN:
 Alleged properties of, 233
 See 'Witch-words' and 'Traffic'
- TEA-
 See 'Tannin', 'Traffic', and 'Tuberculosis'
- TEETOTALLERS:
 See 'Witch-words'
- TENDERIZE, To:
 (Of prunes) deprecated, 54
 And see 'Septic Verbb'
- TERMINUS:
 See 'Dead Languages'
- Tertium Quid:*
 See 'Dead Languages'
- THREE-PUTT, To
 Coldly received, 60
- TICKETEERS.
 Boldly approved, 61

Times, The'

Alleged curiosities discovered in, 9, 17, 18, 20, 21, 25, 29, 49, 102, no. in, 126, 130, 131, 140, 144, 155, 169, 176, 188, 196, 201, 205, 211, 218, 220

Believed incapable of amazement, 135

Is a 'zeddcr', 160

Issues captured in, 220, 221

Sad lapse, 9, 20, 21, 25, 29, 86, 126, 130, 131, 140, 144, 176, 210

-TION:

Verbs in, rare—and not to be encouraged, 179

TOWN-PLANNERS-

Laudable motives of, no excuse for imbecile use of 'sterilize', 18

TRAFFIC:

Sinister significance of, in relation to Alcohol, Arms, Caffeine, Chocolate, Coffee, Sweets, Tannin, Tea, Toffee, White Slaves, etc (*see* 'Witch-words'), 229

TRANSPIRE, To:

For 'happen' (*see* 'Septic Verbs')

TREVELYAN, PROFESSOR G. M., O.M.:

Sad lapse, 177

TRIMMING THE SAILS-

Not truly parallel to political opportunism or mental instability, 184

TRY OUT:

Brief modern way of saying 'try' or 'trial', 150

Condemned, 150, 154

Is found in the Psalms (Prayer Book version), 150

Is not found in the Psalms (Biblical version), 150. (*See* 'Adverbial Particles')

TUBERCULOSIS

Connexion with milk examined (*see* 'Witch-words')

Tu Quoque.

See 'Dead Languages'

TYPIST:

Sufferings of, under illiterate directors, 67, 68

Turns, 68

ULT.:

Month of, declared redundant, 64

Poem about, 67

Unintelligible to majority of Britons, 64, 168 (*and see* 'Dead Languages')

ULTIMATUM:

See 'Dead Languages'

Ultra Vires:

See 'Dead Languages'

UNAUTHORITARIAN STATE:

What, and where, is an?, 124

UNCOORDINATED:

See 'Jungle English';

UNDELIMITED COAL-CELLAR, THE:

See 'Novel Inn Signs' and 'Chahar'

UNDERSTAND, I:

Rarely means 'I understand', 108

UNDESIRABLE:

Means 'very strongly desired by the other person', 234

See 'Question-Beggars' and 'Witch-words'

UNEMPLOYMENT:

How far due to high costs of production caused by verbose composition of business letters?, 72

UNILATERAL:

Considered inappropriate as description of treaty between two parties, 20

UNILATERALISM:

Not a desirable, nor indeed intelligible, recruit to the English language, 21

UNIQUE:

Unique use of, 147

UNITED KINGDOM-

Difficulty of treating, in verse, exposed, 194

UNTHINKABLE.

Denotes that the thing so designated is the subject of much thought, 94

UP:

Add, 153

Beat, 154

Bestial American phrases constructed with, 154

Charming English idioms employing, 153

Check, 154, 157

Dress, 153

~Dnnk, 151

Face, 157, 201

Firmed, 87

Hasten, 155

Hot, 156

Hurry, 154

Kiss, 153

Learnedly compared with Greek, 152

Love, 153

Marry, 153

Meet, 154

Play, 151

Rest, 154

Ring, 154

Shoot, 154

Sleep, 153

Slip, 156

UP: (*contd.*)

Sold, 155
 Speak, 154
 Start, 156
 Touch, 153
 Wind, 199
 Write, 153

V (VERSUS):

See 'Dead Languages'

VALETUDINARIANIZING:

See 'Dohchologia', and 'Slug-words'

VALUABLE NEOLOGISMS

Conditions of entry into English language, 40, 44

Master's refusal to accept every new word as one of our, 40

VALUED CHEQUE.

See 'Officese'

VEND. To.

See 'Sell' and 'Snob-words'

VENITE:

See 'Dead Languages'

VENUS-

See 'Dead Languages'

VERBATIM

See 'Dead Languages'

VERBOSITY'

A deplorable feature of the Snappy School, the Modern
 Young, and much American slang, 42, 156, 157, 201

Verbum Sap..

See 'Dead Languages'

VERNACULATE, VERŃACULARIZE.

Not to be confounded with 'Funiculi' Tunicula', 56

See 'Septic Verbs' and 'Dohchologia'

VETERANS:

See 'Witch-words'

VETERANS' BONUS VETO:

Striking example of deadness of dead languages, 163

VIA

See 'Dead Languages'

VICE:

See 'Dead Languages'

VICE VERSA'

See 'Dead Languages'

VICINAGE-

HOW pronounced, by speculative builder?, 112

VICTIMIZE:

Overworked, 97 (*see* '-Izc')

VICTORIA'

See 'Dead Languages'

- VIDE:
 See 'Dead Languages'
 VIEWPOINT-
 A crystallized, not found among Church leaders, 16
 VIRILIZE:
 See '-Ize' and 'Septic Verbs'
Viva Voce
 See 'Dead Languages'
 Viz;
 See 'Dead Languages'
 VOCALIZE
 Brief modern method of expressing the complicated thought
 'sing', 53
'Vogue':
 Sad lapse, 156
 VOICE, To
 Can a *letter* be said to?, 107

 WAKELAM, H B T :
 Sad lapse, 105
 WE ARE IN AGREEMENT-
 Business-like method of saying 'We agree', 82
 WEDGE, THIN END OF:
 Charming examples, 226
 Glorious victory of, 227
 Oddly employed for fitting a collar, 227
 Saves Chelmsford from moral degradation, 226
 WEDGWOOD POTTERY:
 Contacted, 100
 WHILE:
 " Loose use of, conveys unfortunate impression, 93
 WILES, C E :
 Receives the Emerald Star, 82
 WINDING UP-
 (Of a company) discussed, 199
 Manifold meanings demonstrated, 199
 Origins explored, 200
 WITCH-WORDS.
 Defined, 229
 Excessive use of, in political controversy, 230-235
 Increase of, feared possible, 231
 WITH A VIEW TO:
 See 'Jungle English'
 WITH REFERENCE TO
 See 'Officese'
 WONDER-
 IS not an adjective (*see* 'Cannibal English'), 145

WORDS:

Believed important, I, 2
Tools of every trade, i, 7

WORRY, TO.

About words, a duty, pleasure, and source of profit, I, 40

WORTHWHILE:

Extraordinary pronouncement by the Master, 77

WOWSER:

See 'Australia', 60

WRECK, TO.

Believed preferable to alleged verb 'sabotage', 95

YOUNG, THE:

Garrulity of, examples, 42, 156, 157

Z:

(The British) in danger, 161, 162

ZEE:

(The American) barbarous use of, 161
Believed inferior to British 'Zed', 101
Historical origin, fanciful theory concerning, 161

ZEDDERS:

High moral qualities of the, 162
Include *The Times*, 160
Unceasing anxiety of, 162

PRINTED BY
JARROLD AND SONS LTD
NORWICH

METHUEN'S
GENERAL LITERATURE



A SELECTION OF
MESSRS. METHUEN'S
PUBLICATIONS

This Catalogue contains only a selection of the more important books published by Messrs. Methuen. A complete catalogue of their publications may be obtained on application.

ABRAHAM (G. D.)

MODERN MOUNTAINEERING

Illustrated 7s 6d net

ARMSTRONG (Anthony) ('A. A.')
of Punch)

WARRIORS AT EASE

WARRIORS STILL AT EASE

SELECTED WARRIORS

PERCIVAL AND I

PERCIVAL AT PLAY

APPLE AND PERCIVAL

ME AND FRANCES

How TO DO IT

BRITISHER ON BROADWAY

WHILL You WAIT

Each 3' 6d net

LIVESTOCK IN BARRACKS

Illustrated by E. H. SHEPARD

3s 6d net

EASY WARRIORS

Illustrated by G. L. STAMPA

5' net

YESTERDAILIES. Illustrated

3s 6d net

BADEN-POWELL OF GILWELL
(Lord)

INCIDENTS AND ACCIDENTS

Illustrated. 5' net

BALFOUR (Sir Graham)

THE LIFE OF ROBERT Louis

STEVENSON 10l 6d net

Also, 3l 6J. net

BARKER (Ernest)

NATIONAL CHARACTER

10' 6d net

GREEK POLITICAL THEORY 14s net.

CHURCH, STATE AND STUDY

lot td net

BELLOC (Hilaire)

PARIS

8f. 6d net.

1 Ht PYRENEES

8' td net.

MARIE ANTOINETTE

18. net

A HISTORY OF ENGLAND

In 7 Vols Vols I, II, III and IV

Each 15l net

BINNS (L. Elliott), D.D.

THE DECLINE AND FALL OF THE

MEDIEVAL PAPACY 18s net.

BIRMINGHAM (George A.)

A WAYFARER IN HUNGARY

Illustrated 8' net

SPILLIKINS ESSAYS 3' 6d net

SHIPS AND SEALING-WAX. ESSAYS

35 6d net.

CAN I BE A CHRISTIAN? 1. net.

CANE (Percy S.)

GARDEN DESIGN OF TO-DAY.

Illustrated 15s net

CASTLEROSSE (Viscount)

VALENTINE'S DAYS

Illustrated 12s 6d net.

CHALMERS (Patrick R.)

KENNETH GRAHAME • LIFT, LET-
TERS AND UNPUBLISHED WORK

Illustrated. 10' 6d. net

CHESTERTON (G. K.)

COUCCIED POEMS

7' td net

THE BALLAD OF THE WHITE HORSE

35 6d net

Also illustrated by ROBERT

AUSTIN 12l. 6d net

CHESTERTON (G. K.)—continued

AVOWALS AND DENIALS *bs net*
 ALL I SURVY
 ALL is GRIST
 CHARLES DICKENS
 COME TO THINK OF IT ...
 GENERALLY SPEAKING
 ALL THINGS CONSIDERED
 TREMENDOUS TRIFLES
 FANCIES VERSUS FADS
 ALARMS AND DISCURSIONS
 A MISCELLANY OF MEN
 THE USES OF DIVERSITY
 THE OUTLINE OF SANITY
 THE FLYING INN
Each 3s td net.
 WINE, WATER AND SONG 15 *bd net.*

CURLE (J. H.)

THE SHADOW-SHOW 6' *net.*
Also, 35 bd net
 THIS WORLD OF OURS 6s *net*
 TO-DAY AND TO-MORROW 6s *net.*
 THIS WORLD FIRST 6' *net*

EDWARDES (Tickner)

THE LORE OF THE HONEY-BEE
 Illustrated 7' *bd* and 31 *bd net*
 BEE-KEEPING FOR ALL
 Illustrated v 6d' *net*
 THE BEE-MASTFR OF WARKILOW
 Illustrated ys *bd net*
 BEE-KEEPING DO'S AND DON'TS
 2s 6d *net*
 LEFT-LEFT ON SOUTHERN ROADS
 5s *net*

EINSTEIN (Albert)

RELATIVITY THE SPECIAL AND
 GENERAL THEORY 5' *net*
 SIDELIGHTS ON RELATIVITY
 3s 6d *net*
 THE MEANING OF RELATIVITY
 5s *net*
 THE BROWNIAN MOVEMENT
 5s *net*

EISLER (Robert)

THE MESSIAH JESUS AND JOHN THE
 BAPTIST
 Illustrated. £22' *net*

FINER (H.)

THE THEORY AND PRACTICE OF
 MODERN GOVERNMENT 2 vols
 £3 21 *mt*
 ENGLISH LOCAL GOVERNMENT
 £1 n. *net*

FYLEMAN (Rose)

HAPPY FAMILIES
 FAIRIES AND CHIMNEYS
 THE FAIRY GREEN
 THE FAIRY FLUTE *Each 2s. net*
 THE RAINBOW CAT
 EIGHT LITTLE PLAYS FOR CHILDREN
 FORTY GOOD-NIGHT TALES
 FORTY GOOD-MORNING TALES
 SEVEN LITTLE PLAYS FOR CHILDREN
 TWENTY TEA-TIME TALES
Each 3' 6d. net
 THE BLUE RHYME BOOK
 Illustrated 35 *bd net*
 THE EASTER HARE
 Illustrated 35 *bd net*
 FIFTY-ONE NEW NURSERY RHYMES
 Illustrated by DOROTHY BUR-
 ROUGHES 6s *net*
 THE STRANGE ADVENTURES OF
 CAPTAIN MARWHOPPLB
 Illustrated. 35. 6d *net.*

GIBBON (Edward)

THE DECLINE AND FALL OF THE
 ROMAN EMPIRE
 With Notes, Appendixes and Maps,
 by J B BURY Illustrated 7 vols
 15s *net* each volume *Also, un-*
illustrated, 7s bd net each volume.

GOLDMAN (Bosworth)

RED ROAD THROUGH ASIA
 Illustrated. 125 6d *net*

GRAHAME (Kenneth)

THE WIND IN THE WILLOWS
 7s. *bd. net* and 5s. *net*
 Also illustrated by ERNEST H.
 SHEPARD *Cloth, 7' 6d. net.*
Green Leather, 12. bd. net.
Pocket Edition, unillustrated
Cloth, 3' bd net
Green Morocco, 3s bd net.
 THE KENNETH GRAHAME BOOK
 ('The Wind in the Willows',
 'Dream Days' and 'The Golden
 Age' in one volume).
 7. 6d. *net.*
 See also Milne (A. A.)

GREGORY (T. E.)

THE GOLD STANDARD AND ITS
 FUTURE 3. 6f. *net*

HALL (H. R.)

THE ANCIENT HISTORY OF THE
NEAR EAST £i 1s net
THE CIVILIZATION OF GREECE IN
THE BRONZE AGE £i ios net

BEATON (Rose Henniker)

THE PERFECT HOSTESS
Decorated by A. E. TAYLOR
is dd net Gift Edition, £i i' net.
THE PERFECT SCHOOLGIRL
3s 6d. net.

HEIDEN (Konrad)

A HISTORY OF NATIONAL SOCIALISM
15s net

HERBERT (A. P.)

HELEN 2s 6d net.
TANTIVY TOWERS and DERBY DAY
in one volume Illustrated by
Lady VIOLET BARING 5s net
Lack, separately, unillustrated
2,5 bd net

HONEYBUBBLE & Co 3s 6d net

MISLEADING CASES IN THE COMMON
LAW 5s net

MORE MISLEADING CASES 5' net.

STILL MORE MISLEADING CASES
5s net

THE WHFREFORE AND THE WHY

'TINKER, TAILOR

bach, illustrated by GEORGE

MORROW 2s 6d net.

THE SFCRET BATTLE 3' td net

THE HOUSE BY THE RIVER
3' 6d net

MR PEWTTR 5s net

'No BOATS ON THE RIVLR'

Illustrated 5\$ net.

HOLDSWORTH (Sir W. S.)

A HISTORY OF ENGLISH LAW

Nine Volumes £i 5' net each.

Index Volume by EDWARD POTTON.

£i is. net.

HSIUNG (S. I.)

LADY PRIUOUS STREAM :

An Old Chinese Play

Illustrated 8s 6d net

Limited and Signed Edition

£2 25 net.

HUDSON (W. H)

A bHPPHIT«>'S LIFE

Illustrated iw. 6d. rut.

Also unillustrated 3' 6d. net.

BUTTON (Edward)

CITIES or SICILY

IlluHtiited. ios. 64. net.

MILAN AND LOMBARDY

HUTTON (Edward)—continued

THE CITIES OF ROMAGNA AND THE
MARCHES

SIENA AND SOUTHERN TUSCANY

NAPLES AND SOUTHERN ITALY

Illustrated. Each 8s 6d net.

A WAYFARER IN UNKNOWN TUSCANY

THE CITIES OF SPAIN

THE CITIES OF UMBRIA

COUNTRY WALKS ABOUT FLORENCE

ROME

FLORENCE AND NORTHERN TUSCANY

VENICE AND VLNETIA

Illustrated Each js (6d. net.

INGE (W. R.), D. D., Dean of St. Paul's

CHRISTIAN MYSTICISM. With a New

Preface 7' (6d net

JOAD (C E. M.)

COMMON-SENSE ETHICS 6s net

JOHNS (Rowland)

DOGS YOU'D LIKE TO MEET

LET DOGS DELIGHT

ALL SORTS OF DOGS

LET'S TALK OF DOGS

PUPPIES

LUCKY DOGS

LVLRY DOG ITS DAY

Each, Illustrated, 3' 6d net

So You LIKE DOGS !

NURSE CAVELL DOG LOVKR

Each, Illustrated, 2s bd net.

THE ROWLAND JOHNS Doo BOOK.

Illustrated 51 net

'OUR FRIEND THE DOG' SERIES

Edited by ROWLAND JOHNS.

THE CAIRN

THE COCKER SPANIEL

THE Fox-Tun'ILK

THE PEKINGESE

THE AIRLDALE

THE ALSATIAN

THE SCOTISH TEURIER

THE CHOW-CHOW

THE IRISH SFITTER

THE DALMATIAN

THE LABRADOR

The SFALYHAM

THE DACHSHUND

THE BULLDOG

THE BULL-TERRIER

THE CHEAT DANE

THE POMERANIAN

THE COLLIE

THE ENGLISH SPRINGER

THE HOUSE-DOO

Each 21 td. net.

KIPLING (Rudyard)

BARRACK-ROOM BALLADS
THE SEVEN SEAS
THE FIVE NATIONS
DEPARTMENTAL DITTIES
THE YEARS BETWEEN

Four Editions of these famous volumes of poems are now published, viz. •—*Buckram*, 75 6d net
Cloth, 6s net. *Leather*, 75 6d. net
Service Edition Two volumes
each book 3s net each vol

A KIPLING ANTHOLOGY—VERSE
Leather, 75 6d net
Cloth, 6s net and 35 6d net

TWENTY POEMS FROM RUDYARD
KIPLING is net

A CHOICE OF SONGS 2s net
SELECTED POEMS is net

LAMB (Charles and Mary)

THE COMPLETE WORKS
Edited by E. V. LUCAS Six
volumes 6s net each

SELECTED LETTERS
Edited by G. T. CLAPTON
35 6d net

THE CHARLES LAMB DAY-BOOK
Compiled by E. V. LUCAS 6s net

THE LITERS OF CHARLES LAMB
Edited by E. V. LUCAS Two
volumes 6s net each

THE BEST OF LAMB
Edited by E. V. LUCAS 25 6d net.

LANKESTER (Sir Ray)

PRINCE FROM AN EASY CHAIR
First Series

SCIENCE FROM AN EASY CHAIR
Second Series
GREAT AND SMALL THINGS
Each, Illustrated, 75 6d net.

SECRETS OF EARTH AND SKY
Illustrated 8s 6d net.

LENNHOFF (Eugen)

THE FREEMASONS
Illustrated 21s net

LINDRUM (Walter)

BILLIARDS. Illustrated. 2s 6d net.

LODGE (Sir Oliver)

MAN AND THE UNIVERSE
7s 6d net and 35 6d net.

THE SURVIVAL OF MAN 75 6d net.

RAYMOND los 6d net.

RAYMOND REVISED 6s net

MODERN PROBLEMS 35 6d net

REASON AND BELIEF 35 6d net.

THE SUBSTANCE OF FAITH 2s net.

RELATIVITY is net

CONVICTION OF SURVIVAL 2s. net

LUCAS (E. V.), C.H.

READING, WRITING AND REMEM-
BERING js 6d net

THE COLVINS AND THEIR FRIENDS
£1 15 net

THE LIFE OF CHARLES LAMB
2 Vols. £1 15 net

AT THE SHRINE OF ST. CHARLES
55 net.

POST-BAG DIVERSIONS 75. 6d. net.
VERMEER THE MAGICAL 55. rut.

A WANDERER IN ROMB

A WANDERER IN HOLLAND

A WANDERER IN LONDON

LONDON REVISITED (Revised)

A WANDERER IN PARIS

A WANDERER IN FLORENCE

A WANDERER IN VENICE

Each ios 6d net.

A WANDERER AMONG PICTURES
85 6d net

E. V. LUCAS'S LONDON £1 net

THE OPEN ROAD 6s mt

Also, illustrated by CLAUDI- A.
SHEPPLERSON, A. R. W. S.
105 6d net.

Also, India Paper
Leather, 75 6d net

THE JOY OF LIFE 65 net

Leather Edition, 75 6d net

Also, India Paper

Leather, 75 6d net

THE GENTLEST ART

THE SECOND POST

FIRESIDE AND SUNSHINE

CHARACTER AND COMEDY

GOOD COMPANY

ONE DAY AND ANOTHER

OLD LAMPS FOR NEW

LOITLERER'S HARVEST

LUCK OF THE YEAR

EVENTS AND EMBROIDERIES

A FRODED ISLE

A ROVER I WOULD BE

GIVING AND RECEIVING

HER INFINITE VARIETY

ENCOUNTERS AND DIVERSIONS

TURNING THINGS OVER

TRAVELLER'S LUCK

AT THE SIGN OF TUB DOVE

VISIBILITY GOOD

LEMON VERBENA *Each* 35 6d. net

SAUNTERER'S REWARDS

65 net

FRENCH LEAVES

ENGLISH LEAVES

THE BARBER'S CLOCK *Each* 5s net.

THE BARBER'S CLOCK *Each* 5s net. e t

LUCAS (E. V.)—continued

Our OF A CLEAR SKY
 IF **DOCS** COULD WRITE
 ' . . . AND SUCH SMALL DEER '
 Each 3. 6d net
See also Lamb (Charles).

LYND (Robert)

BOTH SIDES OF THE ROAD
 THE COCKIKSHFIL *EaCh 55 net.*
 RAIN, RAIN, Go TO SPAIN
 IT'S A FINE WORLD
 THE GREEN MAN
 THE PLEASURES OP IGNORANCE
 THE GOLDFISH
 THE LITTLE ANGEL
 THE BLUE LION
 THE PFAL OP BELLS
 THE ORANGE TREE
 THE MOMEY-DOX *Each 31 6d net*
 'YY.' An AntholoRV of essays by
 ROBERT LYND Edited by EILEEN
 SQUIRE *7 6f net*

McDOUGALL (William)

AN INTRODUCTION TO SOCIAL
 PSYCHOLOGY *IQJ 6f net*
 NATIONAL WELFARE AND NATIONAL
 DECAY *65 net*
 AN OLTLINE OF PSYCHOLOGY
 ioj 6d net
 AN OUTLINE OF ABNORMAL Psyc HO-
 LOGY *155 net.*
 BODY AND MIND *12' 6d net*
 CHARACTER AND THE CONDUCT OF
 LIFE *10'. 6d net.*
 MODERN MATERIALISM AND EMER-
 GENT EVOILTION *35 6f net*
 ETHICS AND SOME MODERN WORLD
 PROBLEMS *7 6d net*
 THE ENERGIES OF MEN *85 6d net*
 RELIGION AND THE SCILNCES OF
 LIFE *8'S 6d net*

MAETERLINCK (Maurice)

THE BLUF BIRD *6S net*
 Also, illustrated by F CAYLEY
 ROBINSON *lot. 6d. net.*
 OUR ETERNITY *6' net.*
 THE UNKNOWN GUIST *6. net.*
 POEMS *5'. net.*
 THE WRACK OF THE STORM *6. net.*
 THE BETROTHAL *6. net.*
 MARY MAGDALENE *2S. net.*

MARLOWE (Christopher)

THB WORKS. In 6 volumes.
 General Editor, R. H. CASE.
 THE LIFE OF MARLOWE and DIDO,
 QUEEN OF CARTHAGE *8. 6d net.*
 TAMBURLAINE, I AND II *ios. 6d net.*

MARLOWE (Christopher)—cont.

THE WORKS—*continued*
 THE JEW OF MALTA and THB
 MASSACRE AT PARIS *ios. 6d. net*
 POEMS *ioj 6d net*
 DOCTOR FAUSTUS *85. 6f net*
 EDWARD II *8s 1d net.*

MARTIN (William)

UNDRFRSTAND THF CHINFSF
 Illustrated. *75 6d net.*

MASEFIELD (John)

ON THF SPANISH MAIN *8' bd net*
 A SAILOR'S GARLAND *3' 6d net.*
 SEA LIFE IN NELSON'S TIME
 7s 6d net

METHUEN (Sir A.)

AN ANTHOLOGY OF MODERN VERSH
 SHAKESPEARE TO HARDY • An
 Anthology of English Lyrics
 Each, Cloth, 6s net
 Leather, 75. bd net

MILNE (A. A.)

PE/CE WITH HONOUR *5' net*
 TO/D OF TOAD HALL
 A Play founded on Kenneth
 Grahame's 'The Wind in the
 Willows' *5s. net*
 THOSE WERE THE DAYS • Collected
 Stones *6d. net.*
 BY WAY OF INTRODUCTION
 NOT THAT IT MATTERS
 IF I MAY
 THE SUNNY SIDE
 THE RED HOUSE MYSTERY
 ONCE A WEEK " "
 THE HOLIDAY ROUND
 THE DAY'S PLAY
 MR PIMPASSES BY *Each 35 6a' net*
 WHEN WE WERE VERY YOUNO
 WINNIE-THE-POOH
 Now WE ARE Six
 THE HOUSE AT POOH CORNER
 Each illustrated by E. H. SHEPARD
75. 6d net. Leather, ios 6d. net.
 THF CHRISTOPHER ROBIN VERSES
 ('When We were Very Young'
 and 'Now We are Six' com-
 plete in one volume). Illustrated
 in colour and line by E. H.
 SHEPARD *8r 6d. net.*
 THE CHRISTOPHER ROBIN STORY
 BOOK
 Illustrated by E. H. SHEPARD.
 5'. net.
 THE CHRISTOPHER ROBIN BIRTH-
 DAY BOOK
 Illustrated by E. H. SHEPARD.
 3'. 64. net.

MILNE (A. A.) and FRASER-SIMSON (H.)

FOURTEEN SONGS FROM 'WHEN WE WERE VERY YOUNG'

TEDDY BEAR AND OTHER SONGS FROM 'WHEN WE WERE VERY YOUNG' 7. 6d net.

THE KING'S BREAKFAST 3. 6d net

SONGS FROM 'Now WE ARE Six' MORE 'VERY YOUNG' SONGS 7. 6d net.

THE HUMS OF POOH 7. 6d net.

In each case the words are by A. A. MILNE, the music by H. FRASER-SIMSON, and the decorations by E H SHEPARD

MITCHELL (Abe)

DOWN TO SCRATCH 5' net.

MORTON (H. V.)

A LONDON YEAR

Illustrated, (a net.

THE HEART OF LONDON 3. 6d net

Also, with Scissor Cuts by L.

HUMMEL 6' net

THE SPELL OF LONDON

THE NIGHTS OF LONDON

BLUE DAYS AT SEA Each 3l. 6d. net.

IN SEARCH OF ENGLAND

THE CALL OF ENGLAND

IN SEARCH OF SCOTLAND

IN SCOTLAND AGAIN

IN SEARCH OF IRELAND

IN SEARCH OF WALES

*Each, illustrated, 75 6d' net***NOMA (Seiji)**

THE NINE MAGAZINES OF KODANSHA: The Autobiography of a Japanese Publisher. Illustrated ios td net

OMAN (Sir Charles)

THINGS I HAVE SEEN 8. 6d net.

A HISTORY OF THE ART OF WAR IN THE MIDDLE AGES, A D 378-1485.

2 vols. Illustrated. £1 16; net

STUDIES IN THE NAPOLEONIC WARS 85. 6d net.

PETRIE (Sir Flinders)

A HISTORY OF EGYPT In 6 Volumes.

Vol. I FROM THE 1ST TO THE XVTH DYNASTY 12. net.

Vol. II. THE XVIIITH AND XVIIIITH DYNASTIES 6. net.

Vol. III. XIXTH TO XXXTH DYNASTIES 12l net.

Vol. IV. EGYPT UNDER THE PTOLEMAIC DYNASTY By EDWYN BEVAN. 155. net.

PETRIE (Sir Flinders) continued

Vol V EGYPT UNDER ROMAN RULE

By J. G. MILNE. 12l. net

Vol. VI. EGYPT IN THE MIDDLE AGES

By S. LANE POOLE 10' net

PHILLIPS (Sir Percival)

FAR VISTAS Illustrated 12' 6d net

POLITICUS

VISCOUNT GREY OF FALLODON

Illustrated. 6. net.

POLLOCK (William)

THE CREAM OF CRICKET

Illustrated 5S net.

RAGLAN (Lord)

JOCASTA'S CRIME 6s net

THE SCIENCE OF PEACE 3' (jd net

ROBSON (Philip A.)

A MANUAL OF HOCKEY

Illustrated 3' 6d. net.

SELLAR (W. C.) and YEATMAN

(R. J.)

1066 AND ALL THAT

AND Now ALL THIS

HORSE NONSENSE

Each illustrated by JOHN REYNOLDS.

5S net.

STEVENSON (R. L.)

THE LETTERS Edited by Sir SIDNEY

COLVIN. 4 Vols. Each 6. net

STOCK (Vaughan)

THE LIFE OF CHRIST

Illustrated. 6r net

SURTEES (R. S.)

HANDLEY CROSS

MR. SPONGE'S SPORTING TOUR

ASK MAMMA

MR FACEY ROMFORD'S HOUNDS

PLAIN OR RINGLETS?

HILLINGDON HALL

Each, illustrated, 7s. 6d net

JORROCKS'S JAUNTS AND JOLLITIES

HAWBUCK GRANGE

*Each, Illustrated, 6S n't***TAYLOR (A. E.)**

PLATO THE MAN AND HIS WORK

£1 u. net

PLATO TIMÆUS AND CRITIAS

6. net

ELEMENTS OF METAPHYSICS

12. 6d. net.

TILDEN (William T.)

THE ART OF LAWN TENNIS

Revised Edition.

SINGLES AND DOUBLES

Each, Illustrated, 65. net.

TILESTON (Mary \V.)

DAILY STRENGTH FOR DA...? NEEDS
31. *dd. net.*
India Paper. Leather, (a *net.*)

UNDERHILL (Evelyn)

MYSTICISM *Revised Edition*
i55 *net*
THE Lira OF THE SPIRIT AND THE
LIFE OF TO-DAY 7. *bd. net*
MAN AND THE SUPERNATURAL
3J 6d *net*
THE GOLDEN SEQUENCE
Paper boards, 3. *bd. net*;
Cloth, *ss. net.*
MIXED PASTURE • Essays and
Addresses 55 *rfjt*
CONCERNING THE INNER LIFE
2s *net*
THE HOUSE OF THE SOUL 2s. *net*

VIEUCHANGE (Michel)

SMARA : THE FORBIDDEN CITY
Illustrated. 8; 6J. *net.*

WARD (A. C.)

TWENTIETH CENTURY LITERATURE
55 *net*
THE NINETEEN-TWENTIES 5S *net*
LANDMARKS IN WESTERN LITERATURE
51 *net*
AMERICAN LITERATURE 75 6d *net*
WHAT IS THIS LIFE ? 51 *net*
THE FROLIC AND THE GENTLE A
CENTENARY STUDY OF CHARLES
LAMB 6. *net*

WILDE (Oscar)

LORD ARTHUR SAVILE'S CRIME AND
THE PORTRAIT OF MR. W. H.
6. 6d. *net*
THE DUCHESS OF PADUA
38. 6d. *net.*
POEMS 6. 6d. *net.*
LADY WINDERMERE'S FAN
6. 6d. *net.*
A WOMAN OF NO IMPORTANCE
6. 6d. *net.*
AN IDEAL HUSBAND 6r 6d. *net.*
THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST
6s. 6d. *net.*
A HOUSE OF POMEGRANATES
6s 6d. *net.*
INTENTIONS 6. 6d. *net.*
DE PROFUNDIS and PRISON LETTERS
6. 6d. *net.*
ESSAYS AND LECTURES 6s 6d. *net.*
SALOME, A FLORENTINE TRAGEDY.
and LA SAINTE COURTISANE
2s 6d. *net.*
SELECTED PROSE OF OSCAR WILDE
6s 6J. *net.*
ART AND DECORATION
6s 6f. *net.*
FOR LOVE OF THE KING
5s *net.*
VERA, OR THE NIHILISTS
6s 6d. *net.*

WILLIAMSON (G. C.)
THE BOOK OF FAMILIAR ROSE
Richly illustrated. £8 8s. *net.*

WOLFE (Humbert)
THE UNKNOWN GOUNISS'
PORTRAITS BY MILKINCE
Each 5' *net*

METHUEN'S COMPANIONS TO MODERN STUDIES

SPAIN E ALLISON PI-FRS 12' 6d. *net.*
GERMANY. J. BITHELL. 15. *net*
ITALY. E. G. GARDNER. 12' 6d. *net*
FRANCE. R. L. G. KITCHIE. 12s 6d. *net.*

METHUEN'S HISTORY OF MEDIEVAL AND MODERN EUROPE

In 8 Vols Each *ids net*

I. 476 to 911. By J. H. BAXTER
II. 911 to 1198. By Z. N. BROOKE
III. 1198 to 1378. By C. W. PREVITE-ORTON.
IV. 1378 to 1494. By W. T. WAUGH.
V. 1494 to 1610. By A. J. GRANT.
VI. 1610 to 1715. By E. R. ADAIK.
VII. 1715 to 1815. By W. F. REDDAWAY.
VIII. 1815 to 1925. By Sir J. A. R. MARRIOTT

Methuen & Co. Ltd., 36 Essex Street, London, W.C.2

