

AMERICANISMS.

IN the three articles of this brief series upon Americanisms which have been already published,¹ some positions were taken, and, I believe, some points were established, which, for the sake of old readers no less than of new, it may be well to reconsider. The first of these is that in language whatever is distinctively "American" is bad. That is, the language of the country being English, all deviations from the best English usage are solecisms, provincialisms, or, in the original sense of the word, barbarisms. This seems indisputable so long as we profess to speak English and do not set up for ourselves a standard of our own, in which case our speech would be not English but "American," — a dialect of the English language. It is true that English is our language by inheritance, our mother tongue, and that therefore it is ours, to do what we please with it, and to use as it suits our convenience, just as it is that of the English people. Its literature is ours just as it is theirs, and for the same reasons. Our political severance from the mother country did not affect our rights in this matter; for language and literature are questions of race, not of politics. The distinction sometimes made between English literature and American literature is factitious. English literature is the literature of all the English-speaking peoples. As well talk of Australian literature or Canadian literature as of American literature; of Prussian and Austrian literature, both being simply German; for place has as little to do with the question as politics. But in all languages there is, and must be, a standard; and this is the usage of the best society, that is, the most intellectually and socially cultivated society, by which it is spoken. Now, in regard to the English language, that society is the aristocracy and the upper middle class of England; the mass

¹ In the *Galaxy* for September and November, 1877, and January, 1878.

of people who have their education chiefly at the great English universities, and all the members of which, if not personally educated at those great schools, are constantly under their influence. Moreover, in addition to this point of higher culture, there is the fact that English is, and must of necessity be, the speech of the English people. Another language might be supposably better, but if it were other, however good it might be, it would not be English. But the American people, although to all intents and purposes an English people, at least until within the last twenty-five years, are not *the* English people. That distinction pertains peculiarly to the people of England, and must continue to do so until they emigrate in a body and leave that country as bare of Englishmen as their forefathers left, a thousand years ago, the little scrap of the earth's surface known of late years, to the confusion of politicians and historians, as Schleswig-Holstein, which is the cradle of the English people, — an England older than Old England herself.

When, however, we come to decide the question, What is an Americanism? a difficulty at once presents itself. For we have to decide what is American and what is an American. For myself, I avow that the word "American," as applied to a man, is entirely without meaning, except in the sense (itself quite conventional and illogical) of a citizen of the United States of America. To call a man an American because he happens to be born in America, or rather in a certain part of North America, is entirely to reverse the natural and logical order of things. It brings up the old joke of calling a man a horse because he was born in a stable. Countries have their names from the people who inhabit them: England is the country of the Angles, the English, — Angle-land; France, the country of the Franks, and so forth. An Englishman is so called not because

he was born in England, but England is so called because he and his forefathers were born there. Mr. Thackeray was born in India; but no one thinks of calling him an Indian or a Hindoo. He was a British subject, and he might have been a citizen of the United States of America. In the latter case would he have been any the less English? There is this strange and anomalous peculiarity about the name "American:" that whereas, for example, a British subject may be an Irishman, a Scotchman, a Welshman, a Hindoo, a Parsee, or what not, and if any one of these he preserves his proper name as such, if a man is a citizen of the United States, particularly if he be born so, he is called "an American," and nothing else. If birth in what is merely for convenience called "America" makes an American, we have then no distinction between Henry W. Longfellow, Patrick MacShane, Hans Breitmann, Bone Squash Diavolo, and the lately arrived son of Ah Sin; and what is the worth, the distinguishing value, of a name which lumps Anglo-Saxon, Celt, Teuton, Negro, and Mongol together? The name "American" has a certain rough conveniency; but it also has a very decided inconveniency when we come to use it with any thought or exactness, and that inconveniency is felt in a very perplexing way when we undertake to decide what is American, particularly in language.

Assuming the name, however, as it seems we must, the question What is an Americanism in language? is still to be answered. We may instructively work down to the point we seek by throwing out of consideration what are not Americanisms. And first, words and phrases which are new, or have ever been, received in the current speech or literature of England in the modern period cannot justly be called Americanisms. A word in use in America which was brought here from England may be out of fashion in cultivated circles there, but it is difficult to see how that can make it in any way American. Words pass out of use from mere caprice, and sometimes come in again with as little reason. This

being the case, if mere fashion is to decide this question as to a word of indisputably English origin and acceptance, we might be reduced to the absurdity of classing a word of purest Anglo-Saxon lineage as English in one generation, an Americanism in the next, and as English again in the third.

Words which are the names of things peculiar to this country are not Americanisms, except under certain conditions. *Maize*, *potato*, *moccasin*, *squaw*, *wigwam*, are not Americanisms. They are merely the names of things peculiar to the aborigines of this country (with whom we have no relations of race, society, or language), and which are necessarily adopted by speakers and writers of all languages in describing or mentioning those things. If these and their like are Americanisms, *elephant*, *crocodile*, *upas*, *tea*, *banyan*, and the like are Orientalisms, which no one pretends or would admit. If, however, any such word is adopted here as the name of a thing which had already an English name, as, for example, *wigwam* for hut, *moccasin* for shoe, *squaw* for wife, or *papoose* for child, it then becomes properly an Americanism.

Strictly, therefore, that is, according to reason, an Americanism in language is a word or phrase found in the speech of the descendants of the European settlers of this country which is peculiar to them, either in itself or in the sense in which it is used, and which is not the name of anything peculiar to the land itself or to its aboriginal inhabitants. We shall find that a very small proportion of the words and phrases which are loosely called Americanisms, and even of those which are classified as such by the compilers of glossaries and dictionaries, are within these limits. Of the books upon this subject, the one which is best known, and which, from the extent of its compiler's researches and the fullness of its illustrations, has become what is called an authority, Bartlett's Dictionary of Americanisms, of which a fourth edition enlarged and corrected has lately appeared, is the most misleading. With high respect for the

author of this work, and admiration of his patient and conscientious investigations, I cannot but regard the result of his labors as misleading, and therefore pernicious in its effect. Fault enough may be justly found with English as it is generally spoken in this country; but the presentation of this huge collection of words and phrases as a dictionary of Americanisms is, in part at least, a gross misrepresentation of the language of the people of the United States. Apart from the slang and the cant words and phrases which swarm upon its pages, and which, although a considerable number of them are correctly classified as Americanisms, should have been collected by themselves and labeled as slang and cant, the volume is crowded with other words and phrases which are English pure and simple, English by origin, English by continued usage from time immemorial to the present day, either in colloquial use or in literature, or in both, and which in fact lack nothing required for the completeness of their Englishhood. The effect of such a publication is one of gross and injurious misrepresentation. It supports and confirms the erroneous assumption in England and on the continent of Europe that the language spoken by Americans generally is a barbarous, hybrid dialect of which English is only the stock, upon which Indian, Dutch, French, German, Irish, and Negro stems and branches have been freely grafted. Dictionaries and glossaries are not read through; they are merely glanced at or referred to; and the discovery in this careful and copious collection of a few examples of such perversion as that mentioned above leads to, if it does not warrant, the inference that the whole book is filled with such examples. Here, it is said, is a dictionary of Americanisms compiled by an American, a New England man, and it is a large, closely printed octavo volume. To what a condition has the English language been brought in America! I have heard such remarks made more than once by intelligent Englishmen; I have seen them more than once in print. Now, no intel-

ligent American who knows anything of English, past and present, as spoken and written in England and in the United States, will for a moment admit the truth of such an assumption. Every such person knows that a very few pages of such a volume as Mr. Bartlett's dictionary would contain all the words and phrases, not slang or cant, which are properly American, either by origin or by peculiarity of use.

The favor with which this work has been received and the authority which has been accorded to it are due to two causes. First, it is a collection made with careful and laborious research, which is manifest upon its every page; and all such collections have some value, and are apt to attain a certain authoritative position. They are almost sure to do so, unless their defects or faults are so great as at once to provoke exposure; and this position they maintain until they are superseded by something of the same kind which is better and more trustworthy. Mr. Bartlett is not exactly a pioneer in this field, for he was preceded by Pickering many years ago; but his book is much more pretentious than its predecessor, which is almost forgotten, except by students of language; and it is in its kind and for the present generation as authoritative as Webster's Unabridged. It would have been so even if its merits were less and its faults—faults of design, not of execution, be it observed—greater than they are.

Next, this dictionary wins favor by satisfying, or seeming to satisfy, a certain uneasy craving for Americanism which is very common the world over, and which exists in a great degree among intelligent and thoughtful Englishmen. There is constantly manifest in Europe, and particularly in England, a desiring expectation of the development of something new in America, some peculiar and characteristic traits, moral, mental, social, political, physical. What, it is asked, is the use of your great experiment in a new country, if it does not produce something new? If you merely adhere to the old forms and the old ideas, and work upon the old models,

you are unprofitable servants; you do not fulfill your function. Give us something new; something peculiar to yourselves in philosophy, in politics, in art, in literature, even in language. Europe fails, or seems to fail, to see that Americans are merely Europeans who have been transplanted to a country in which they have sought first, and thus far chiefly, their material prosperity, their physical well-being, freed from the restraints which were imposed upon them by the political, social, and physical conditions of the countries in which they or their immediate progenitors were born. European inquirers do not accept the attainment of these ends as at all a satisfactory result of what they call our "experiment." The diffusion of comfort, of a moderate degree of education, among thirty or forty millions of people, a large proportion of whom, if there were no America, would be in poverty and ignorance, is well enough, and indeed is to be regarded with a certain degree of satisfaction; but this, which is to these Americans themselves the chief, if not the only, object of their wishes and their exertions, is a minor matter to the European writer of essays and leading articles and criticisms. He looks ever for some "new departure." Hence there is a craze for "the American thing." There is a cry for the novel of American society, for the American poem, the American what-not. What is welcomed with interest is that which is peculiar. That which is a mere repetition, probably a pale and distorted reflex, of the society and the literary models of Europe is looked upon with eyes cold and unsatisfied, if not averted. Let the American thing be bad, only let it be something new. To this uneasy craving it may charitably be attributed that certain poets and humorists and immoral moralists, of whom few of us are very proud, have received marked attention in Europe, far more than they have received at home. These Old World *quid nuncs* would be delighted if a new language were rapidly developed here; and as that has not yet happened, and is not rationally to be looked for, they regard with

interest, if not with favor, an enormously large collection of words and phrases which shows, or seems to show, to what a monstrous degree we have perverted and degraded the language that we inherited from our forefathers.

Nor are they alone in this desire. It exists to a certain degree among Americans themselves. But it is futile. It must be so. Originality, true and worthy originality, never comes by striving to be original. It springs spontaneously, unconsciously, into being. It is the utterance of that which seeks expression only for its own sake. The man who says within himself, "Go to, I will be original," may possibly produce something which is unlike what has been produced before; but that the thing will be of any intrinsic value or beauty is, to say the least, extremely improbable. It is likely to be only grotesque and monstrous. Literature and art and language in America will assume peculiarity and originality just as soon as Americans themselves develop unconsciously peculiar and original traits of intellect and morals. Whether they are now in the way to do this, or in that of assimilating themselves to the rest of the world, every careful observer may decide for himself.

Strangely enough, however, the very first manifestation of this desire for originality was in regard to language. This was strange, because language is of all things that in which originality is most nearly impossible. For language must endure. It is transmitted from generation to generation, with only such change as comes from what may be called the wear and tear of use. It cannot be otherwise. If it were otherwise, communication between one generation and another would be impaired, or become impossible, and language would fail in its only function. Yet when the constitution of the United States was adopted, at the celebration of the event in New York, a book was borne in procession by the philological society of that city, on which was inscribed, "The Federal Language." What it was supposed that language might be, and how it was to be

formed, is beyond the reach of human conjecture. But Noah Webster himself was the advocate at that time of an American form of the English language. As to his views in particular I must refer those of my readers who care to have further information upon this subject to the article in the *Galaxy* of November last. Suffice it here to say that he plainly supposed that there could and should and would be a divergence between the language of America and that of the mother country, consequent upon their political separation. It is almost needless to say that the result has been exactly the reverse of what he supposed and wished that it might be. The language of the two countries has not only remained the same, but time and freedom of intercourse, physical and intellectual, have removed gradually any differences that existed. There are provincialisms, vulgarisms, barbarisms, and solecisms in both countries; but the standard of speech in both is exactly the same, and so it must and will remain.

I shall now refer very briefly to the more important and significant of the so-called Americanisms which I have previously shown to be entirely without the limits assigned above to the meaning of that term, and shall then pass on to the consideration of others, taking my examples chiefly, but not altogether, from Mr. Bartlett's dictionary.

Notion, in the sense of small, trifling wares, is probably the word which of all Americanisms is regarded as the most absolutely American, both in origin and in usage. "Yankee notions" is a phrase known the world over. But so grave and didactic a poet as Young, than whom none could be less American, used it nearly a hundred and fifty years ago exactly in the sense in which it is now used in New England:—

"And other words send odours, sauce, and song,
And robes, and notions framed in foreign looms."
(*Night Thoughts*. Night II.)

Guess, in the sense of believe, suppose, think, which is regarded almost as the Yankee shibboleth, is used exactly in that sense by Wycliffe, by one of his followers (name unknown), by Chaucer,

by Bishop Jewell, in an old north of England or Lowland Scotch ballad, in the *Mirror for Magistrates* (1587), by Bishop Hale (1599), by John Locke twice, and by one of the personages in Anthony Trollope's *Orley Farm*. Doubtless many other examples from standard English authors might be produced, and I am sure that I have memorandums of others, but they are not at hand.¹ These are, however, quite enough to show that this so-called Americanism is not American in any proper sense of the word.

Fall, for autumn, which has been regarded almost as absolutely American as *guess* and *notion*, is used by Dr. Cains (1552), by Vaughan (1624), by Gilbert White repeatedly in his *Natural History of Selborne* (1771, 1775), and by Froude in his *History of England* (vol. vi., chap. xxi.). With what semblance of propriety is a word which was in use in England at least two generations before the sailing of the *Mayflower*, and which has continued in use there until now by authors of repute, called an Americanism? And our very "Indian summer," which so many of us regard as peculiar to our country, is known in Europe, and is mentioned under various names from the time of the Greek poets to the present day.

Admire (as, I admire to see, I admire that, etc.) has long been set down among Americanisms of the most emphatic sort; and not only so, but is regarded by ourselves as being more than a mere Americanism,—a Bostonism. I should not hesitate to say even in Beacon Street or on Boston Common that I cannot regard it as an altogether lovely phrase; but it is used by Chapman in his translation of Homer, in the *Comical History of Francion* (1655), by Charles Cotton in his translation of Montaigne, by Charles James Fox in the fragment of his *History of England*, in Ashley's *Cyropædia* (1811), and by many other old English writers of high standing.

Baggage, meaning the *impedimenta* of a traveler, which is frequently scoffed at by British writers as an Americanism,

¹ The examples were given in detail in previous articles. I can here, however, only refer to them.

and is so set down by Mr. Bartlett, is used by Fielding, by Sterne, by Walter Scott, by Thomas Hughes in Tom Brown, and by many other British writers of recognized position.

Blackberry, as to which Mr. Bartlett says that "this term is universally used in the United States for the English brambleberry," has been used in England just as we use it for nearly a thousand years, — from the earliest Anglo-Saxon times to the present, both by the people at large and by writers of the best repute. Indeed, *blackberry* is the rule and *brambleberry* the exception during all that period.

Blow, meaning to boast, to brag, to talk big, and *bluff*, as a noun meaning a bold prominence, and as a verb meaning to bluster, to attempt to put down an opponent by big pretension, are known to English literature from its earliest days down to the present.

Bug, for beetle, is another test Americanism, according to the average British critic and book-writing traveler. And yet it was so used in England more than two centuries ago, and has continued in use there both in literature and in folk-speech. Mr. Jennings, in his lately published book of Walks through Field Paths and Green Lanes, mentions having heard it so used in the south of England.

Catamount, which we ourselves regard as not only American but peculiarly Western, has the support of at least two centuries of English usage; and *crevasse*, which we look upon as a Southwestern Americanism, is used by Chaucer.

The Rev. Archibald Geikie read, in 1857, before the Canadian Institute, a paper in which he undertook to instruct Canadians, Americans, and the world at large upon Americanisms; and from this paper Mr. Bartlett has taken what he sets forth as some "excellent illustrations." One of Mr. Geikie's points is that in England "great offenders are *hanged*," but that in America "they are all *hung*." That in England beef, gates, and curtains are *hung*, but felons are *hanged*; while in America all are *hung*. Now, this is a beautiful and a

characteristic example of the way in which men write about Americanisms; for, so far as what Mr. Geikie says on this point from being true, that *hung* was used in England to express death by hanging in Queen Elizabeth's days, and later, down to the present time, as I have showed by examples from Ben Jonson, Shakespeare, Fuller, Southey, Hartley Coleridge, Mrs. Trollope, Froude, Mr. Bain, M. P., Sir Henry Holland, Charles Reade, William Morris, Smiles, The Greville Memoirs, Anthony Trollope, the London Spectator, the Saturday Review, and the London Times; and on the other hand inanimate objects have been said to be *hanged*, as I showed in like manner.

These instances of the exposure of gross errors in the classification of words and phrases as Americanisms are selected from the previous papers of this series for reference here because they are characteristic, and because it should seem that they are well suited to lead the mind of the reader into a healthy condition of doubt as to the Americanism of much that is so labeled, and of receptiveness as to what will be hereafter presented to him.

At the same time it must not be supposed that I appear as an advocate to get a verdict of "Not guilty of Americanism" for words and phrases invented or perverted in this country. On the contrary, to show that there are such, and which they are, will be one of my objects. Among such words, as I have already shown, is *corn*, which is here perverted from its proper function as a general name for all cereal grain, wheat, rye, oats, barley, to mean maize, a kind of corn unknown to the people who made and used the word for centuries. Another is *creek*, which, meaning properly an indentation greater or less in a coast line, and hence a narrow inlet from the sea, is used by many Americans, and in some parts of the country by all the inhabitants, to mean a running stream of fresh water, which in English is called a brook or a river. These are examples of genuine Americanisms in single words. Of like phrases is *right away*, absurdly used for at once,

now, instantly, immediately, and so generally thus used that it is to be feared that there is no hope of its future exclusion even from the speech of educated people. Its absurdity is so great as to be ridiculous, as any intelligent person will see by reflecting upon it briefly; and yet the immovable barrier between its right and its wrong use is very thin and transparent. For to say that a person went right away is good English and good sense; but to tell a person to do a thing right away is neither sense nor English. This perversion of the phrase is an Americanism, and one of the worst and most generally diffused that deform our speech.¹ I may now resume the examination in detail of examples of Americanisms real and pretended.

Darn is one of the slang words which we ourselves long regarded as an Americanism of pure New England origin; why, it is difficult to imagine, except that we assumed that any deviation on our part from standard English must be of our own motion, a step toward that originality and independent Americanism for which some of us are pining. The word as a euphemism for *damn* is known all over England, and is freely used by the rustic population, as it is here. And I found even Anthony Trollope using it thus, "that darned lecture," in the *Fortnightly Review*. Mr. Bartlett cites from the artificial ballad of Noakes and Styles, in the Essex dialect, an example of its use. The following stanza is from a ballad, doubtless genuine, given in Mr. William Black's charming *Princess of Thule*, chap. ii. Its dialect is not sufficiently marked to be distinguished from that of many parts of England.

"It happened on a zartin day
Fourscore o' the sheep they rinned away.
Says vather to I, "Jack, rin arter em, du!"
Says I to vather, "I'm darned if I du!"

I quote this, not because it is needed to show that *darn* is not an Americanism, but to call attention to *du*, the Yankee pronunciation of *do*. I have heretofore suggested that this sound, which is not

oo,—that is, the Italian *u*,—nor the French *u*, nor yet the English iotized *u* (*e-oo*), but something between the first two, and which is very unlike the snarling nasal caricature of it which is heard upon the stage, is the original English *u*. When in England I found that this sound was apparently quite unknown to the British phonologists, and I spent some time in teaching one of the most distinguished of them how to utter it. And indeed there are not many Americans who can do so correctly unless they have lived in rural New England and caught the sound unconsciously.

Deck, meaning a pack of cards, appears in Mr. Bartlett's collection; and yet he himself says "deck is defined by Ash, a pack of cards piled one upon another." This makes it almost superfluous to remark that it probably did not occur to him that in Henry VI., Part iii., Act v., Sc. 1, is the following passage:—

"But, whiles he thought to steal the single ten,
The king himself was slyly finger'd from the
deck!"

which, by the way, shows that the game at which Ah Sin so effectually demonstrated the ruinous effects of Chinese cheap labor is not of American origin. But with what propriety does a word used by Shakespeare and defined by Ash appear at all in a dictionary of Americanisms? Its only proper place is in a glossary of words which are not American.

Department. Of this word we are told that "the principal offices of the federal government at Washington are called departments," and that the word is "borrowed from the French." But it is in constant use in England, where I heard it frequently; and countless examples of its use in literature might be produced, but I have at hand only the following:—

"If it was one of the younger clerks, you know, we should tell him it was discreditable to the *department*." (A. Trollope. *Small House*, etc., ii. 14.)

¹ For a more detailed examination of this phrase in reference to Mr. Lowell's suggestion of a con-

nection with *straightway*, see the *Galaxy* for November, 1877.

[Mr. Kissing, a martinet, speaks.]
 "Somerset House is not a *department*. The treasury is a *department*; the home office is a *department*." (Idem, iii. 5.)

"I was for ten years a clerk in the *department* of the public service,—civil service we liked to have it called." (London Society, August, 1864.)

"At present the British government, of which the secretary for India is only a member, whether he likes the position or not, and the India House only a *department*." (London Spectator, July 20, 1867.)

Deputize is possibly of American origin; but I notice it chiefly for the purpose of pointing out that it and its congener *jeopardize* are spurious, words that are not words, formed by adding *ize* to *depute* and *jeopard*, two good and sufficient verbs, instead of which the monsters are used without any variation of meaning. But they, particularly the latter, are in common use now by good writers in England; and an Oxford LL.D and bright light of the Athenæum Club (the swell literary club of London) not long ago wrote to me complaining of my censure of his use of *jeopardize*, and saying that he did not know that there was any objection to it; certainly there was none in England, although there might be in America. This was putting the saddle on the other horse with a vengeance.

Different from. Mr. Bartlett gives this as an Americanism, with the remark that "we say one thing is different from another. In England this expression is *different to*." This is quite incorrect. I must not repeat myself too much even on this occasion, and I shall merely now remark that, as I have heretofore shown, "*different from*" is the form in use by the best English writers, "*different to*" being in general a mark of the second or third rate writer, and that the form "*different to*" was censured so long ago as A. D. 1770, by Robert Baker, in his Remarks on the En-

glish Language. Yet the erroneous assertion abounds unmodified in Mr. Bartlett's fourth edition of his dictionary just published.

Dod rot it and *Dod drat it* are given as American euphemistic forms of swearing. On the contrary, the softening of *God* into *Dod* is an English verbal trick of long standing, and continues to the present day. In Cartwright's Poems, ii. 73, we find even "*Dod's blessing on 't*;" and in a recent number of Punch, a sentry being asked by an officer "Why don't you salute, sir?" replies, "*Dod, man, I clean forgot*." *Rot* and *drat*, too, are peculiarly British forms of ob-jurgation, rarely heard in this country.

Dove for *dived* is possibly a genuine Americanism. It is unjustifiable; but, like many other Americanisms, it is creeping into use in England among careless speakers and writers. But it is to be remarked that the strong preterit, as it is called (*hung* is strong, *hanged* is weak), is used in provincial English speech in the case of many verbs which are properly of the weak conjugation.

Drink for river, as "the big drink," meaning the Mississippi, is Western American slang. It is an interesting and comical illustration of the assumption that the chief use of any fluid is for potation; although, as the rivers of the West do not yet run whisky, the application of the word to them in that quarter is remarkable.

"It beats the Dutch" is an American phrase, peculiar, as Mr. Bartlett correctly remarks, to New England and New York. It is, however, passing, or has passed, out of use. Not uncommon thirty years ago, it is now rarely or never heard. It has a historical value and interest, as it is a relic of the old animosity between the Dutch of New Amsterdam and the English settlers of New England, which Irving has so humorously recorded and illustrated. It was applied by the latter to anything monstrous, extravagant, and inexplicable.

Richard Grant White.

such hopes is scant as yet. In the Lenten pastorals, to which reference has been made, there is indeed no mention of the Virgin or of the saints; the Holy Scriptures are alone spoken of as the source of divine truth, Christ alone offered as our exemplar, and the English and Protestant Faraday is cited among distinguished scientists who were also profoundly religious men. These are facts to be noted; but they prove little by themselves. The new Pope may discourage Mariolatry, as the Protestant press have been eager to repeat on the authority of some correspondents impatient for indications of his religious policy; but if so, it is perhaps less indicative of an approaching reform in dogmatic theology than of the Pope's knowledge that such extravagances have driven men of intellect and education from the church, and impaired its influence over educated and prosperous communities and nationalities.

In fine, with such information as may be gathered from the best informed Roman journals, including the *Osservatore*

Romano itself, the organ of the Vatican, as well as from private correspondence, it seems wiser to doubt the hasty conclusions of foreign correspondents, and, for the present, to be sure only that Italy has no impetuous visionary or irreconcilable doctrinaire to deal with in the papacy, but rather a *Fabius Cunctator*, who will know how to take advantage of every error of the Italian government, and who will make few or no blunders of his own; with one who will quickly and quietly embarrass himself of the political complications in which his predecessor entangled the papacy, and who will be a reformer just so far as his practical knowledge of men and of the world prompts him to feel it necessary, in order to secure to the church that influence in society and over governments which is still hers, or to enable her to recover the influence which she has lost.

From the old Pope to the new is indeed a great transition, but we do not know as yet what this transition is to signify in history.

Wm. Chauncy Langdon.

AMERICANISMS.

II.

WRITERS upon Americanisms are frequently led, by a union of unlimited self-confidence with limited knowledge, into positive assertions as to usage which are at variance with fact, and therefore entirely misleading. A man may safely assert that such or such a word or phrase is used in England or the States, if he has so heard it or met with it in print; and it is quite proper for him to express, however strongly, his liking for it or his dislike of it, and to show, if he can do so, reasons for his opinion or his feeling in regard to it. As to the latter, if he be wrong, that is if the taste of the best speakers and writers does not agree

with his, or if his reasons for the faith that is in him are unsound, he has merely erred, as any man may err; but he has justly exposed himself to no censure excepting that of legitimate criticism of his views, which some other writer may show him good reason for changing, and which, if he is candid, he will change, and thus merely "be wiser to-day than he was yesterday." But a positive and general assertion which proves to be at variance with fact places him in another and a far more unpleasant position. He has revealed, to a certain degree at least, an insufficient knowledge of the subject upon which he professed knowledge and undertook to teach others. And the knowledge of very few men,

however wide their acquaintance with language and literature, is sufficient to enable them to assert with safety that a certain word or phrase is not used in one country, or that its use is limited to or even characteristic of another, particularly when the people of both the countries in question have a common origin and a common language and literature.

It is this condition of things in regard to the English language which makes assertions of limited usage so dangerous to writers upon Americanisms.

These remarks are suggested by my finding among the Addenda of the last edition of Mr. Bartlett's dictionary the word *bureau* defined as "a chest of drawers for clothes, etc., especially made an ornamental piece of furniture;" to which definition is added the remark, "In English the article is *invariably* called 'a chest of drawers.'" Of my own knowledge I can bear witness to the contrary. I have heard such a piece of furniture called a bureau twenty times in different parts of England, and by persons of various conditions of life; and although the word has not attracted my particular attention (for it appears now for the first time in Mr. Bartlett's work), I am able to refer to the following instances of its use by English writers of repute in past generations and in the present.

In a chapter giving a very lively description of a scene which results in the turning of a chamber-maid out of the house by her enraged mistress (the wife of a rustic inn-keeper), Fielding writes: "It accidentally occurred to her that her master's bed was not made; she therefore went directly to his room, where he happened at that time to be engaged at his *bureau*." (Joseph Andrews, Book I., chap. xviii.)

Sterne also uses it as follows: "My father . . . returned to the table, plucked my mother's thread-paper out of Slawkenbergius's book, went hastily to his *bureau*, walked slowly back," etc. (Tristram Shandy, chap. lxxxv.)

And Horace Walpole thus: "I found her in a little miserable bed-chamber of a ready-furnished house, with two tallow

candles, and a *bureau* covered with pots and pans." (Letters to Horace Mann.)

Mrs. Leycester, thus: "And a little dressing-room out of our bedroom was furnished with a book-case and *bureau*." (Memoirs of a Quiet Life, i. 7.)

The rooms (bedrooms and dressing-room) in which the article is said to have been made its functions plain; and this suggests a reference to the derivation of the word and how it came to be applied to a clothes-press, or a chest of drawers for clothes. *Bureau* meant originally, in French, a coarse kind of cloth. Then, because this cloth was used to cover the tops of writing-tables, such a table came to be called a bureau. The writing-table next received the addition of drawers to hold paper, and still, of course, retained its name. Finally the table proper disappeared, and over the drawers there was a folding leaf, which shut at an angle and could be locked, and in the cavity thus produced there were smaller drawers made, and some eight or ten pigeon-holes for papers, with a lockable recess between them still more private. The inside of the leaf and the corresponding space before it were at first covered with cloth, and when the leaf was let down this formed the writing-table. On top of the whole was an upright case with folding doors, which was used for papers, or as a book-case. This was the bureau which was found in many houses of the last century, both in England and the States, and, as we have seen by the passages quoted above, and as some of us can remember, they were very frequently placed in bedrooms. A natural consequence of the presence of such an article of furniture in a bedroom was that the lower and larger drawers came to be used for clothes. I am writing at one of these old bureaus now; and such, doubtless, was the sort of bureau that Fielding and Sterne and Walpole and Mrs. Leycester had in mind. Finally, as the name of the cloth was given first to the writing-table which it covered, and was then transferred to the piece of furniture of which the drawers had become the larger and the more important part, it was naturally again

transferred to the new piece of furniture composed entirely of drawers, and intended and exclusively used for the same purpose to which the former had been converted, — the holding of clothes. In olden times, down to two or three centuries ago, clothes were laid away in chests or hung up in wardrobes; but chests of drawers for that purpose, under whatever name, are comparatively modern pieces of furniture. But what now becomes of the assertion that in England they are "invariably" called chests of drawers? The assertion is one of those imprudent ones into which a writer with perfectly correct purposes may be led by overestimating the extent of his range of observation. It would have been safe to say that *bureau* is more common in the States than in England, and *chest of drawers* much more common here than there.

But chief of all those whom overweening self-confidence misleads into unwarrantable assertions upon this subject is Dr. Fitzedward Hall, who is a professor of philology and of Sanskrit, and who undeniably is widely read in English literature. Yet upon the English language he can write very few pages, I might almost say paragraphs, without exhibiting a notable incompetence to pronounce upon its usages, coupled with an enormous pretense and a disposition not only to contradict (which he has a perfect right to do), but to treat with the most offensive disrespect (to do which he has no right), all other writers, of whatever sort and upon whatever subject. He sets down without hesitation the following words, among others, as Americanisms: *divine* (noun), *conclude* and *conclusion* (in the sense of deciding with a purpose), *parlor*, and *make a visit*. Of the first (*divine*) he says that its use to mean a clergyman, a minister of the gospel, is "now uncurrent in England." (Recent Exemplifications of False Philology, page 73.) Let us see what the evidence of "current" English literature is upon this point. Walter Scott, in the Introductory Epistle to The Fortunes of Nigel, says that "nobles, statesmen, and *divines*, the most distin-

guished of their time, have not scorned to square accounts with their book-sellers." But setting Scott aside as a little old-fashioned, although he certainly comes within the three generations which Alexander Ellis says form the current language of any period, let us come further down towards the present day. Macaulay, in his famous chapter on the condition of English society in the seventeenth century, speaks of "the *divine* who quitted his chaplainship for a benefice." Lord Houghton applies the word to Sydney Smith in the following characteristic passage: "I am very glad I have amused you," said Mr. Sydney Smith at parting, "but you must not laugh at my sermon to-morrow." "I should hope I know the difference between being here and at church," remarked the gentleman with some sharpness. "I am not so sure of that," replied the visitor. "I'll bet you a guinea on it," said the squire. "Take you," replied the *divine*." (Monographs, 1873, page 251.) Mrs. Trollope, most English of English writers of her sex, and mistress of a very pure and charming style, says, "I really think the commander of this Danube *ordinari* must receive wages from some practical *divine* who wishes to impress on all men . . . the uncertain nature of human happiness." (Vienna and the Austrians, 1837, Letter xxii.) George Eliot, greatest of all English female authors, says, "The providential government of the world . . . in our favored land was clearly seen to be carried forward on Tory and Church of England principles, sustained by the succession of the house of Brunswick and by sound English *divines*." (Felix Holt, chap. i.) And again, with the same dry humor, in which she is almost peculiar among her sex: "There is a resident rector who appeals to the consciences of his hearers with all the immense advantages of a *divine* who keeps his own carriage." (Scenes from Clerical Life, Janet, chap. ii.) Matthew Arnold has, "Surely this is enough to expect a sixteenth century *divine* to give us in theology." (Literature and Dogma, page 22.) John Bright, the

greatest of living English orators, and one of the greatest living masters of "current" English, applies the word thus to Presbyterian ministers: "We may perhaps imagine an equality which would allow the Protestant establishment to remain; . . . and to complete the scheme a Presbyterian establishment also, having a batch of Catholic prelates and of Presbyterian *divines* in the House of Lords." (Letters and Speeches, vol. ii., page 532.) In the next example it is applied to a Jesuit priest, the eloquent Bourdaloue: "He was much surprised, and knocked at the door, when the distinguished *divine* laid down his instrument," etc. (History of the Violin, by W. Sandys, F. S. A., and S. A. Forster, London, 1864, page 163.) Dr. Newman, who is regarded by many persons, and particularly by Dr. Hall, as the most correct writer of English now living, uses it thus in a general sense: "So we must take it for granted, if we would serve God comfortably, that we cannot be our own *divines* and our own casuists." (Sermons on Subjects of the Day, 1869, page 50.) As Dr. Newman thus uses it in connection with casuists, so we find Dean Stanley using it in as general a sense in connection with statesmen. "The vast

political pageants of which it has been the theatre, . . . the wrangles of *divines* or statesmen which have disturbed its sacred peace." (His. Mem. of Westminster Abbey, 1868, page 37.) Next we have a well-known English writer upon the social problems of his country applying it to the rustic minister of a Wesleyan chapel: "A number of the farmers left the church and repaired to the Wesleyan chapel in the village. But the minister of the chapel, a plain-spoken *divine*, told them they had better go back." (F. G. Heath, The English Peasantry, 1874, page 152.) Lastly, the latest published English dictionary, by the Rev. James Stormouth, gives as the first definition of *divine* simply "a minister of the gospel;" then, following, "a clergyman, a priest." These examples are enough to establish the point in question; but I wish to add a few more, which, that my readers may not be needlessly wearied, I give in foot-notes to this page. They are from John Wood Warler,¹ Southey's son-in-law Angus,² Archbishop Whately,³ Blakey,⁴ Farrar,⁵ Arthur Helps,⁶ Ruskin,⁷ Thackeray,⁸ Goldwin Smith,⁹ Anthony Trollope,¹⁰ H. A. Mereweather,¹¹ Sir Henry Holland,¹² Leslie Stephen,¹³ a corre-

¹ To follow the poet's advice, coupled with the moralist's and the *divine's*, would yield, etc. (The Seaboard and the Down, 1860, vol. i., page 55.)

Like Luther, a good textuary and a good *divine*. (Idem, i. 364.)

Moreover they came often for advice, because they found in the person they appealed to the *divine*, the scholar, and the gentleman. (Idem, ii. 475.)

² On Sunday he read with them the Greek Testament, and gave them besides a scheme of theology founded chiefly on the writings of Dutch *divines*. (Hand-Book of English Lit. and Lang., page 165.)

³ Sometimes, indeed, when they are pressed with objections to their own explanations of Scripture doctrines, *divines* are apt to say, etc. (Cautions for the Times, No. xiv.)

⁴ On the balances of nature the *divine* thus speaks. (Old Faces in New Masks, 1859, page 51.)

⁵ An opinion for which at the present day not a single advocate could be found (except some popular modern *divines*), which formerly, etc. (Chapters on Language, 1865, page 191.)

⁶ I cannot see, my love, why in itself any costume would not become a clergyman which so many old *divines* . . . look well in. (Friends in Council, vol. ii., chap. iv.)

⁷ The most perfect and clear statement of the great evangelical doctrine of salvation by faith only which I ever heard from any English *divine*. (Fors Clavigera, Letter xx., page 24.)

It is the task of the *divine* to condemn the errors of antiquity, and of the philologist to account for them. (The Queen of the Air, 1863, page 2.)

⁸ And whom Tom Mooly remembers forty years back a slender *divine*. (Vanity Fair, chap. xlv.)

Neither *divine* allowed himself to be conquered. (Idem, chap. xlvii.)

⁹ May we not see *divines*, the authorized guardians of the truth, shaping their doctrine to the taste of the great bishop-maker of the day? (Three English Statesmen, 1868, page 162.)

The court *divine*, Mainwaring, said in one of his famous sermons, etc. (Idem, page 11.)

¹⁰ By the fostering care of perhaps the most pious set of *divines* that ever lived. (The American Senator, 1877, chap. xlii.)

¹¹ We started at two o'clock, and the archdeacon and another *divine* wished me good-by at the railway station. (By Sea and by Land, 1874, chap. xiv.)

¹² Disputes which few *divines* would reopen at the present day. (Recollections of a Past Life, 1872, page 269.)

¹³ If science could have proved *divines* to be apes themselves, etc. (Free Thinking and Plain Speaking, 1877, chap. iii.)

Philosophers, *divines*, and poets shrink with horror, etc. (Idem.)

Divines never tire of holding up to us the example of Christ. (Idem, chap. ix.)

spondent in Fors Clavigera,¹ Frances Power Cobbe,² The Liverpool Courier,³ the Saturday Review,⁴ and The Week.⁵ It thus appears that this word *divine*, in the sense simply of a minister of the gospel, whether Presbyterian, Roman Catholic, Wesleyan, Church of England, Congregational, or what not, is in constant use by the best writers and in the best journals in England. It has been so in the past, and it is so down to this very day; and yet we have here a scholar and a philologist pronouncing it without hesitation or qualification uncurrent in that sense. A man may hold to his opinions firmly and assert them strongly, and if wrong merely err in judgment; but what shall be said of him who, planting himself with much parade upon the professed knowledge of facts, makes corrections which are directly at variance with them!

He will have it, too, that *parlor*, meaning the room in which a family sits and receives company, otherwise called, but generally with reference to a room of some size and pretension in a large house, a drawing-room, is "obsolete," "except in the United States and in some of the English colonies." (Recent Exemplifications, etc., page 48.) And again "In England people who have a drawing-room no longer call it a *parlor*, as they called it of old and recently." (Modern English, by the same writer, page 247.) That this positive assertion is contradicted by the evidence of English writers of the present day the following examples show. They are all taken from novels, the best written guides to the phraseology of society; most of them from novels written by women, the very highest authority upon such points, except, perhaps, Mr. Anthony Trollope, whose books contain a more complete and correct picture of English upper and middle class society, both as to manners and

speech, than has ever before been made of any society at any period.

"The kitchen is warm; . . . its atmosphere is rich with unctuous and savory viands; the cook is kind; but the *parlour* is preferred by the dog from an innate love of high society." (Arthur Helps, Realmah, chap. xii.)

"The want of constant habitation makes itself felt in the state rooms of palaces as in the *parlours* of those houses in which the family do not live, but only receive company." (Idem, Ivan de Biron, Book VII., chap. ix.)

"It was the once hopeful Godfrey, who was standing with his hands in his side pockets in the dark wainscoted *parlour* one late November afternoon." (George Eliot, Silas Marner, chap. iii.)

"And the brother, he may await you in the *parlour*." (Mrs. Alexander, Which Shall it Be? 1873, chap. xxii.)

"But she soon missed me and came to the library, peeping in [and saying], 'Come with me and I will tell you.' When we were in the *parlour*," etc. (My Beautiful Neighbor, chap. xi., in Temple Bar Magazine, October, 1873.)

"Aunt Gray . . . awaited her in a large, comfortable *parlour*, cheerfully lighted by three windows." (Mrs. Alexander, The Wooing O't, 1874, chap. xxix.)

"In the evening they had dinner in a small *parlour*." (William Black, A Princess of Thule, 1874, chap. xxv.)

"Jane Grand, dressed in black, pale and listless as usual, training the roses in the way they should go above the *parlour* window." (Idem, A Point of Honour, 1876, chap. xiii.)

"Mr. Masters was sitting at home with his family in the large *parlour* of his house." (A. Trollope, The American Senator, 1877, chap. iii.)

"And upon that she turned back into the *parlour* with all the majesty of con-

¹ I don't know what school of *divines* Mr. Elwyn belongs to. (Fors Clavigera, xl., page 94.)

² For my own part I have never ceased to wonder how Christian *divines* have been able to picture heaven, etc. (New Quarterly, July, 1875.)

³ The Rev. Thomas K. Beecher, brother or cousin — we do not know which — of the eccentric *divine* of Brooklyn. (Liverpool Courier (leading article), May, (?) 1875.)

⁴ The author was selected by certain *divines* representing the Established, the Free, and the United Presbyterian churches of Scotland to found a mission, etc. (Saturday Review, December 29, 1877, page 511.)

⁵ This is so much opposed to the predictions of a large number of newspapers, historians, and *divines*, that they begin, etc. (The Week, January, 1873.)

scious virtue." (Mrs. Edwards, *A Blue Stocking*, 1877, chap. v., and *passim*.)

"Now, Jenny, here is Mr. George Lynton coming, and if he gets off his pony be sure you ask him into the best *parlour*." (Cecil Maxwell, *Story of Three Sisters*, 1876, chap. viii.)

"The damp haunts you from room to room, until you are all huddled together like Esquimaux in the small close *parlour* that happens to be over the kitchen fire." (Saturday Review, September 11, 1875, page 326.)

Other like passages are at my hand, but these are enough. I will add that I find among my memorandums clipped from a London newspaper of 1870 (the Times, I believe, for I neglected the irksome task of particularizing title and date) an advertisement of Drawing-Room Plays and *Parlour* Pantomimes by Clement Scott, and *Parlour* Pastimes by Riddleston.

It will be observed that in the first passage quoted Mr. Helps makes his meaning very clear: the parlor is the place for high society, with the usages and language of which he was as familiar as any man in England; and that in the second he also leaves no room for doubt, defining the parlor as the place where the family "do not live, but only receive company." In the other passages the meaning is not so sharply defined in words, but is none the less quite unmistakable. It may be wondered why a man of intelligence and a wide acquaintance with English literature should have made an assertion so manifestly untrue. His blunder is probably to be attributed, in the first place, to the lack of familiarity with the usages of society which seems to be implied in his remark (*Modern English*, page 274), "Mr. Thackeray's patrician slang affects, I know, many who live out of the world just as it affects myself." But it comes chiefly from an affectation among some English people of a word that seems to them to lift their domestic arrangements to the level of those of what are known in England as "great houses;" in which there is the great drawing-room, or the east and the west, or the red and the blue

drawing-room. This affectation is thus delicately satirized by Miss Broughton:

"At the hall door . . . Sarah meets her. Sarah is an Englishwoman.

"'Mr. Brandon is in the *parlour*' m."

"'Parlour! My good Sarah, how many times shall I adjure you by all that you hold most sacred to say drawing-room?''" (Red as a Rose is She, chap. ii.)

Dr. Hall also asserts of the phrase *make a visit* that "whatever it once was" it "no longer is English." (Recent Exemplifications, etc., page 48.) The implication here that the only other phrase now in common use, "*pay a visit*" or a call, is of very modern introduction is unwarranted, as will be seen by the following couplet from Samuel Wesley's *Melissa*, A. D. 1734:—

"Nor gads to *pay*, with busy air,
Trifling *visits* here and there."

Only little later Cowper uses the same phrase in his letters: "Since the *visit* you were so kind to *pay* me in the Temple." (July 1, 1765. Works, ed. Southey, ii., page 162.)

"Dr. Cotton, who was intimate with him, *paid* him a *visit* about a fortnight before he was seized with his last illness." (July 12, 1765. *Idem*, page 168.)

But there was another phrase then in vogue to express the same social event,—to *give a call*,—as the following examples, also from Cowper's letters, show:—

"Both Lady Hesketh and my brother had apprised me of your intention to *give me a call*." (*Idem*, vol. ii., page 171.)

"To *give a morning call*, and now and then to receive one." (*Idem*, vol. iii., page 61.)

"Mr. Throckmorton *gave* me yesterday a morning *call*." (*Idem*, vol. iii., page 341.)

That the phrase "to make visits" had not ceased to be English forty years ago, and has not now ceased to be what Dr. Hall calls "current" English, may be seen by the following examples of its use, half of them by female writers:—

"Or if you prefer *making visits*, you

have two or three hours before you that may be so employed." (Mrs. Trollope, *Vienna and the Austrians*, 1838, Letter lii.)

"After Moscheles had *made* a round of *visits* to the artists, he went off," etc. (A. D. Coleridge, *Recent Music and Musicians*, 1874, chap. vi.)

"In nothing was this more apparent than in the visiting card which she had prepared for her use. For such an article one would say that she in her present state could have but small need, seeing how improbable it was that she should *make* a morning call." (Anthony Trollope, *Barchester Towers*, chap. ix.)

"He tore a pair of new tea-green gloves into thin strips, like little thongs. He must find it rather expensive work, if he *makes* many morning calls." (Miss Broughton, *Nancy*, chap. v.)

On the other hand, the phrase "to make" visits or calls is no more common, nor "to pay" them less common, here than in England. Of the latter we are all aware from the usage with which we are familiar, of which take one example from a well-known American authoress:—

"The toilers in which a well-dressed lady now goes shopping on Broadway are as ruffled and puffed, as beflooned and befurbelowed, as those in which she *pays* calls or attends receptions on Fifth Avenue, the only difference being in the coloring and possibly in the texture." (Lucy Hooper, *Fig Leaves and French Dresses*, *Galaxy*, October, 1874.)

Here we may question the appropriateness of the epithet "well-dressed," and we may be annoyed by the unpleasant Scotticism and Southernism, "*on* Broadway" and "*on* Fifth Avenue," but the phrase "pays calls" will seem strange to no one. Nor is it at all of late introduction into this country, as the following extracts from the private writings of a distinguished Yankee show:—

"Wrote letters, *paid* a few visits, and at five went to dine." (Diary of John Quincy Adams, October 24, 1794.)

"Afterwards till two, dressing, receiving or *paying* visits." (Idem, December 31, 1797.)

"*Paid* visits to the president and Mr. Madison, both of whom I found at home." (Idem, October 31, 1804.)

The introduction of the word *pay* in reference to a visit, which appears to be so purely a matter of volition and of pleasure that without those motives on the part of the visitor it is worthless, seems to have accompanied the diffusion of a consciousness that calling had become a mere formality, — a mere matter of compliment, if not of etiquette. Cowper's "give me a call" seems much more significant of friendship and neighborliness; but it is now almost exclusively appropriated to the uses of trade. The supposition that the call is assumed to be paid as the mere performance of a social duty receives illustration, if not support, from the following interesting passage in John Quincy Adams's Diary, in regard to the etiquette of full dress on occasion of diplomatic visits in Russia:

"There is so much punctilio in this usage that it admits of no substitute; . . . nay, if you go yourself, unless it be in full dress, the visit is not *fully paid*. . . . This is called a diplomatic visit paid in person." (Diary, 1811, vol. ii., page 265.)

Dr. Hall's assertions on this point, and others of like nature, are merely negative testimony, and have the inherent inconclusiveness of such testimony. But they are something more: they are witnesses to the limitation of a knowledge which — with a display of great reading, and an assumption that sometimes misleads others — he sets forth as, if not absolutely perfect, at least as near perfection as is permitted to human creatures, and far beyond that of any other merely finite being.

Of like nature is his condemnation of the words *conclude* and *conclusion*, as implying resolution. On the sentence, "Ralph, however, like most disappointed lovers, *concludes* to live," he thus remarks: "Conclude means 'come to a conclusion,' in one sense of the phrase; that which gives to conclusion the meaning of inference. *Conclusion*, in this phrase, also signifies 'resolution;' but conclude, as equivalent to the phrase

when it attaches this sense to *conclusion*, has long ceased to be English." (Recent Exemplifications, etc., page 110.) Disentangling the "snarl" and resolving the discords of Dr. Hall's English, we make out unmistakably that he means simply that *conclude* implying to resolve, and *conclusion* implying a resolution, have long ceased to be English. The assertion is very positive, and the period to which it refers is clearly enough defined. How true it is the following passages from English books written during the last few years will show:—

"The queen *concluded* on keeping the bulk of the prize to herself." (Froude, History of England, chap. lxiv.)

"So, as these thoughts flashed through his mind, Saxon *concluded* to stay where he was and not to stop his ears." (Mrs. A. B. Edwards, Half a Million of Money, 1866, vol. ii., chap. xix.)

"Having the whole of Salisbury Plain to think about it upon, interrupted only by an occasional charge of Colonel Marshall and his cavalry, I soon came to the *conclusion* to go." (H. A. Mereweather, By Sea and by Land, 1874, chap. i.)

"And finally he went to sleep on the *conclusion* that he would wait until that visit had been made." (George Eliot, Daniel Deronda, Book III., chap. xix.)

My list is short; but, like Mercutio's wound, 't will do. It begins with Froude and ends with George Eliot; its second item is furnished by one of the most popular British female novelists, and its third is by "one of her majesty's counsel," and a Wiltshire gentleman of family and standing. The point is not one as to correctness or etymology, but simply whether the word has "long ceased to be English" in a certain sense; as to which the fact that it is used by such writers as Mrs. Edwards and Mr. Mereweather is evidence quite as good as its use by the eminent author of Adam Bede and Romola. I should have had a much longer array of examples showing that it had not ceased to be English, but my attention had never been drawn to it in that light until after the publication of Dr. Hall's Recent Exemplifica-

tions, etc., in 1872; and my reading for language' sake having practically ceased long before that time, and my labors in other respects having increased, I have only such examples as I have since then lit upon by chance in books that I took up casually or which were sent to me for review.

But although I had never thought of the word as being charged with Americanism, when used in the sense considered above, it had attracted my attention; for, strange to say, this sense, so common, is passed over entirely by the dictionary makers. Not one English dictionary known to me, from Bailey and Johnson to Webster and Stormouth, gives *conclude* in the sense of to come to a final resolution, to settle a purpose. It is therefore interesting and of some importance to show what long and well-rooted use it has in our language and literature, which will appear by the following passages:—

"Then the bishops of Greece and the emperors gathered them together to provide a remedy against that mischief, and *concluded* that they should be put down for the abuse, thinking it so expedient." (Tyndale, Answer to Sir Thomas More, 1530. Works, ed. 1827, vol. iii., page 191.)

"Though [thou] art in as ill a taking as the hare which, being all the day hunted, at last *concludes* to die; for, said she, whither should I fly to escape these dogs?" (Gabriel Harvey, Trimming of Thomas Nash, 1597, ed. 1871, page 51.)

"The voice of the whole land speaks in my tongue. It is *concluded* your Majestie must ride From hence unto the Tower: there to stay Until your coronation." (Thomas Dekker, Sir Thomas Wyatt, 1607.)

"In Baynards Castle was a counsell held, Whether the Maior and Sheriffes did resort, And 't was *concluded* to proclaim Queene Mary." (Idem.)

"As touching the Gentiles which believe, we have written and *concluded*,¹ that they observe no such thing; but that they keep themselves from things offered

¹ Κριναυτες. Wicliffe version, "deeming;" Tyndale, 1534, and Cranmer, 1539, "concluded;" Rheims, 1582, "decreeing."

to idols." (Acts xxi. 25, King James's Translation, 1611.)

"Our power no further doth extend;
For with this year the Consuls end.
But reverend Lords, your powerful state
Is not confin'd to any date.
Therefore *conclude* among you all
That Pompey be your Generall."

(Sir Arthur Gorges' Translation of Lucan's Pharsalia, 1614, Book V., page 168.)

"Matters standing in this woful case, three French noblemen projected, with themselves, to make a cordial for the consumption of the spirits of their king and countrymen. . . . Hereupon they *concluded* to set up the aforesaid Joan of Arc to make her that she had a revelation from heaven," etc. (Thomas Fuller, The Profane State, 1648, V.)

"If up the hill I go into the wood,
And in some thicket there lie warra and sleep,
I fear I shall for beasts and fowls be food,
At last *concludes* into some wood to creep."

(Thomas Hobbes' Translation of Odyssey, 1677, Book V., l. 449.)

"What shall I say, but *conclude* for his so great and sacred service, both to our king and kingdome, . . . and for their everlasting benefit, there may be everlastingly left here one of his loynes, one of his loynes I say, and stay upon this Bench to be the example of all justice." (Chapman and Shirley, Tragedy of Chabot, Act iii., sig. Ei b, ed. 1639.)

"To whom we have transferr'd an absolute power to *conclude* and determine without appeale or revocation," etc. (Thomas Carew, Cœlum Britannicum, 1633, page 211, ed. 1870.)

"As Cato did his Africk fruits display,
Let us before our eyes their Indies lay.

All loyal English will like him *conclude*,
'Let Cæsar live and Carthage be subdued.'" (Dryden, Satyr on the Dutch, 1662.)

"This morning Sir G. Carteret, Sir W. Bolten, and I met at the office, and did *conclude* of our going to Portsmouth next week." (Pepys' Diary, April 18, 1662.)

"Which, having suffered by my supposed silence, I am persuaded will make her fear the worst; if that is the case she will fly to England, — a most natural *conclusion*." (Sterne, Letters, civ. August 11, 1767.)

Here we have a word, a common word, used in a certain sense from at least 1530 to 1877 by Tyndale, Nash, Harvey, Dekker, the makers of the authorized version of the Bible, Sir Arthur Gorges, Fuller, Hobbes, Chapman and Shirley, Carew, Dryden, Pepys, Sterne, Froude, George Eliot, and minor English writers of the present day; passed over entirely by all the dictionary makers; and also pronounced by Fitzedward Hall, LL.D., philologist and professor of Sanskrit, as having long ceased to be English. From which two things may be learned, — the untrustworthiness of dictionaries, and the fitness of Dr. Hall to write a book on Americanisms, which I observe that he has announced that he has in preparation. This is but a foretaste of what I may possibly find time to show upon the latter point, if not in these pages, elsewhere. It is what might be expected from a man who on his own confession and showing goes to Irving, Thackeray, and Hawthorne, for examples of bad English.

Richard Grant White.

THE CONTRIBUTORS' CLUB.

I THINK that Mr. Sedgwick's article, in the last Atlantic, on the Lobby is an excellent one, besides being timely and much needed. It deals with a semi-institutional thing which has become a

great public injury and a great national disgrace; and the writer handles his subject in a manner which happily unites sagacity and worldly wisdom with a nice sense of honor. The wrong to which he