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FASHION IN SPEECH.

Some Words Go Out of Favor and Win Their Way Back.

The history of the race is written in the words it uses. As we grow and change, so our language grows and changes. Mr. Leon Mead in his book "Word Coinage" points out that some words go out of fashion and come back, like tan shoes and wide rimmed hats, although the change in words is much slower than the change in dress.
In Spenser's day "forestall," "fain," "scathes," "askance," "embellish" and "dapper" were not considered good, but they have since gained respectability and won their place in the language. The seventeenth century regarded as obsolete a number of Chaucer's words —"transcend," "bland," "sphere," "blithe," "franchise," "[illegible]," "anthem." One by one these words came to life again and walk the pages of our literature in full vitality. Other words now indispensable which the seventeenth century rejected are "plumage," "tapestry," "tissue," "ledge," "trenchant," "resource," "villainy," "thrill," "yelp," "dovetail."
Bacon did not have the good word "encyclopedia," but used the heavy equivalent, "circle learning."
Fulke, the sixteenth century author who wrote "A Defense of the Sincere and True Translations of the Holie Scriptures Into the English Tong," did not admit "neophyte," "homicide," "scandal," "destruction," "tunic," "despicable," "rational." Another book published in 1658 puts the stamp of censure on "oblique," "radiant," "adoption," "caress," "amphibious," "horizontal," "concede," "articulate," "destination," "compensate," "complicated" and "adventitious."
It is hard to trace the history of a fashion in words. Seldom do we have the precise record that Chesterfield furnishes us in a letter in which he says that he was present at the birth of the word "flirtation" on the lips of a beautiful woman. Even with that record we cannot tell why "flirtation" remained in the language and was not dropped like hundreds of other new coinages.

QUEER SUPERSTITIONS.

The following are some curious superstitions that are still extant among English speaking people:
If you kill frogs your cows will "go dry."
Tickling a baby will cause the child to stutter.
To thank a person for combing your hair will bring bad luck.
To kill a ghost it must be shot with a bullet made of a silver coin.
To dream of unbroken eggs signifies trouble to come; if the eggs are broken the trouble is past.
If you boast of your good health strike wood immediately with your fist or you will become ill.
To dream of a live snake means enemies at large, of a dead snake enemies dead or powerless.
To allow a child to look into a mirror before it is a month old will cause it to have trouble in teething.
A child will have a nature and disposition similar to those of the person who first takes it out of doors.—Philadelphia Inquirer.

Johnson's First Tailoring Job.

President Andrew Johnson had never been ashamed of his humble origin; had, indeed, often narrated the unhappy story of his first job at tailoring.
He had been summoned, he would say, to the residence of an influential citizen and had been bidden to make over one of the citizen's old coats for the son of the house.
Johnson, a little nervous through excess of zeal, took off his coat, turned back his sleeves, measured the youth and set to work. He was getting along well—the job, indeed, was nearly finished—when dinner time came and he reached out for his coat in order to put it on and go home.
To his chagrin he discovered then that it was his own coat which he had cut up for the boy.

Swearing to Excess.

A cricket club in the south of Scotland, which has evidently found that the use of lurid language doesn't add to the amenities of play, has passed the following bylaw:
"Any member swearing to excess may be expelled."
I have not heard whether the club committee has yet arrived at a definition of "moderate swearing." The attempt to find one to meet all cases is likely to result in language both "painful and free."—Glasgow Times.

Curiosity Conquered.

"I thought Jane had such a dreadfully stiff neck."
"She has."
"Nonsense. There was a man painting the steeple of the brick church and she watched him for half an hour."—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

Just Vanity.

Papa—Dear me, Mary, whatever are you going to do with these trunks? Two, four, six, twelve of them! You can't fill more than one.
Mamma—I know it, my dear; but we must make a decent appearance on arriving at the hotel.

Cruel.

His Wife—Charles, I do think you ought to give me more of your time.
Her Husband—Give you more! Why, you take so much of my time that I couldn't be a second in a duel.—Harper's Bazar.

It Has Been Done.

"Still, of course," said the tobacconist to the wooden Indian, "it is possible sometimes to make a good round sum out of a perfectly square deal."—Syracuse Herald.

FACTS

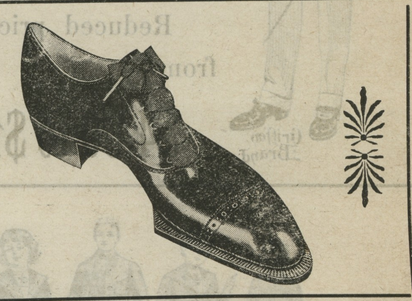
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