

drilled with a wimble, and yet so small that one would wonder how the kernel could be extracted through it the last picks an irregular ragged hole with his bill but this artist has no paws to hold the nut with, while he pierces it like an adroit workman he fixes it as it were in a vice in some cleft of a tree or in some crevice and when standing over it he perforates the stubborn shell.

#### 4. CHOICE OF WORDS

Having noted the principal divisions of our composition, the paragraph and the sentence, and the manner of indicating them, we must find out whether some words are not better than others to express our meaning suitably.

Consider the wording of these sentences :

1. Don't give me any back talk.
2. That boy takes the cake.
3. There were a lot of people present.

*Back talk* in the first sentence is a colloquial and decidedly vulgar expression. *Takes the cake* in the sense of "wins the prize" is slang. The phrase *a lot of* as the equivalent of "many", is very common in conversation. Properly, however the words mean "a division of". This expression should not be used in our written work. Our composition must contain no word not sanctioned by our best writers, and no good writer would employ any of these words as they are used here. One may readily ascertain whether a word is in good usage or not, by referring to a good dictionary.

Again, notice the language of the following :

1. At last we stood on terra firma.
2. I guess that you are right.

It is quite unnecessary to use any foreign expression in the first sentence. "Dry Land" fully expresses our