

thority for it, the meaning is naturally uncertain. It seems to fluctuate between *wilfully concealing* something and *unintentionally omitting* something, and this vagueness renders it a convenient tool for an unscrupulous orator or writer.

The word *lengthened* is often used instead of *long*. Thus we read that such and such an orator made a *lengthened* speech, when the intended meaning is that he made a *long* speech. The word *lengthened* has its appropriate meaning. Thus, after a ship has been built by the Admiralty, it is sometimes cut into two and a piece inserted: this operation, very reprehensible doubtless on financial grounds, is correctly described as *lengthening* the ship. It will be obvious on consideration that *lengthened* is not synonymous with *long*. *Protracted* and *prolonged* are also often used instead of *long*; though perhaps with less decided impropriety than *lengthened*.

A very common phrase with controversial writers is, "we *shrewdly* suspect." This is equivalent to, "we *acutely* suspect." The cleverness of the suspicion should, however, be attributed to the writers by other people, and not by themselves.

The simple word *but* is often used when it is difficult to see any shade of opposition or contrast such as we naturally expect. Thus we read: "There were several candidates, *but* the choice fell upon — of Trinity College." Another account of the same transaction was expressed thus: "It was understood that there were several candidates; the election fell, *however*, upon — of Trinity College."

The word *mistaken* is curious as being constantly used in a sense directly contrary to that which, according to its formation, it ought to have. Thus: "He is often mistaken, but never trivial and insipid." "He is

often mistaken" ought to mean that other people often mistake him; just as "he is often misunderstood" means that people often misunderstand him. but the writer of the above sentence intends to say that "He often makes mistakes." It would be well if we could get rid of this anomalous use of the word *mistaken*. I suppose that *wrong* or *erroneous* would always suffice. But I must admit that good writers do employ *mistaken* in the sense which seems contrary to analogy; for example, Dugald Stewart does so, and also a distinguished leading philosopher whose style shows decided traces of Dugald Stewart's influence.

I shall be thought hypercritical perhaps if I object to the use of *sanction* as a verb; but it seems to be a comparatively modern innovation. I must, however, admit that it is used by the two distinguished writers to whom I alluded with respect to the word *mistaken*. Recently some religious services in London were asserted by the promoters to be *under the sanction* of three bishops; almost immediately afterwards letters appeared from the three bishops in which they qualified the amount of their approbation: rather curiously all three used *sanction* as a verb. The theology of the bishops might be the sounder, but as to accuracy of language I think the inferior clergy had the advantage. By an obvious association I may say that if any words of mine could reach episcopal ears, I should like to ask why a first charge is called a *primary* charge, for it does not appear that this mode of expression is continued. We have, I think, second, third, and so on, instead of *secondary*, *tertiary*, and so on, to distinguish the subsequent charges.

Very eminent authors will probably always claim liberty and indulge in peculiarities; and it would be ungrateful to be censorious on those who