

English language, as it stands at this moment, on both sides of the Atlantic.

We had a pleasant discussion on the use of what are called Americanisms, during which he gave me some new views on this subject. He contended that his countrymen had not only a right to adopt new words, but were obliged to modify the language to suit the novelty of the circumstances, geographical and political, in which they were placed. He fully agreed with me, however, in saying, that where there was an equally expressive English word, cut and dry, it ought to be used in preference to a new one. "Nevertheless," said he, "it is quite impossible to stop the progress of language—it is like the course of the Mississippi, the motion of which, at times, is scarcely perceptible; yet even then it possesses a momentum quite irresistible. It is the same with the language we are speaking of. Words and expressions will be forced into use, in spite of all the exertions of all the writers in the world."

"Yes," I observed; "but surely such innovations are to be deprecated?"

"I don't know that," he replied. "If a word become universally current in America, where English is spoken, why should it not take its station in the language?"

"Because," I said, "there are words enough already; and it only confuses matters, and hurts the cause of letters to introduce such words."

"But," said he, reasonably enough, "in England such things happen currently, and, in process of time, your new words find their way across the Atlantic, and are incorporated in the spoken language here. In like manner," he added, "many of our words, heretofore not used in England, have gradually crept in there, and are now an acknowledged part of the language. The interchange, in short, is inevitable; and, whether desirable or not, cannot be stopped, or even essentially modified."

I asked him what he meant to do in this matter in his dictionary.

"I mean," he said, "to give every word at present in general use, and hope thereby to contribute in some degree to fix the language at its present station. This cannot be done completely; but it may be possible to do a great deal."

I begged to know what he proposed to do with those words which were generally pronounced differently in the two countries. "In that case," said he, "I would adopt that which was most consonant to the principles of the English language, as denoted by the analogy of similar words, without regard-

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