

rightly, to FIND OUT." It can only apply to things future, things yet to be discovered, and invariably implies a *previous uncertainty or incomplete knowledge*. If, therefore, I guess at any thing, I inevitably mean, *I am endeavouring to discover something, which I am not yet fully informed*. But the vulgar use of the word "guess" violates the rules, and applies it indiscriminately, to those cases of which the guesser is already thoroughly cognizant, and which are actually past and accomplished. Thus, one will enquire, "Did you see Mr. S. yesterday?" the reply will be, "I guess I did;" or if the question be, "Did you see Mr. S. yesterday?" the answer will be, "I guess I saw him myself;" although the event was neither uncertainty, nor information to be discovered by the guesser, nor future occurrence involved in the guessing; the person guessing, well knowing at the time that the event had already happened, and that he was himself the actor in it.

The adjective "*Smart*," rightly expresses the idea of being smart, apparent to and affecting two only of the bodily senses, viz., those of *sight* and *feeling*, and has no legitimate reference to moral qualities or corporeal endowments. Thus, a thing gaudy or showy in appearance, is properly "*smart*;" and we speak correctly when we say, that a person very finely or brightly dressed, is very smart: this is the definition of the term, in reference to objects judged of by the eye: with regard to the *feeling*, or *taste*, which is only a species of feeling,) anything elegant, brisk, acute, quick, or giving lively pleasure, is correctly termed *smart*. But when the adjective is applied to *personal* qualities, whether mental, moral or corporeal, it is an abuse and corruption; and therefore to speak of a *smart man*, when we mean a clever man, an ingenious man, an active man, an intelligent man, or an upright man, is an unwarrantable perversion of the true meaning of the word, and a vulgarity which should be carefully avoided.

Similarly abused is the adjective "*clever*," the genuine definition of which is "*skillful, dexterous, or ready*." Hence, this term is properly applied only to denote mental or mechanical talent; and when we speak of a *clever man*, we ought to intend, that he is a *skillful*, an *ingenious*, a *dexterous*, or a *well-formed* man. The vulgar practice, therefore, of using the word "*clever*," to denote *good character, amiability of disposition, mildness of temper, and similar qualities*, is an unjus-

tifiable innovation, and cannot be tolerated in an educated society.

We come now to a term which, more perhaps than any other, is commonly used, on this side the Atlantic, in a broad and comprehensive manner, to express every modification of its original or relative meaning, for which the polite usages of the old country have long since substituted other appellations. The adjective "*sick*," correctly means, "*afflicted with disease, disgusted*." The first of these definitions may strictly be considered to apply, to every description of malady or indisposition, and in this sense it appears to be universally used on this continent. No matter what the nature, the quality or the degree of disagreeableness with which the unhappy patient may be afflicted, he is invariably pronounced "*sick*;" and this nauseating term is used by all classes on all occasions, to denote every personal malady. It should be remembered, however, that among the educated classes of the mother country, this indiscriminate use of the word "*sick*" has long been utterly obsolete; and it is now never employed, to denote any other grade or species of disorder, than actual *nausea*, the effect of a revolting and painful derangement of the viscera, such as is commonly produced by the motion of the sea. The term "*sick*," therefore, should on no account be used, by those who pretend to ordinary refinement of speech, for any other purpose than to express something nauseous or disgusting; but in all cases of speaking of disordered health, the words "*ill*," "*unwell*," or "*indisposed*," should be preferred. Frequently have I witnessed the astonishment of persons arriving here from the old country, on hearing among us the common utterance of this unpleasant adjective; which, to their ears, conveyed only impressions of disgust and vulgarity; and to avoid, therefore, the continuance of this offence against the polite usage of society, let us abolish the objectionable expression, and substitute a more refined and delicate phraseology.

By a perversion similar to that already alluded to, with regard to the term "*clever*," the word "*ugly*" is also frequently misemployed among us. "*Deformed, offensive to the sight*," is the legitimate meaning of this formidable adjective; it is strictly applicable, therefore, only to the visible appearance of objects, and cannot be correctly employed to describe moral or mental qualities or infirmities. Hence, the common error, of speaking of a person of unhappy temper or crabbed disposition, as an