

and sufficiently expressed by either of the legitimate nouns, "*condition*," "*situation*," or "*dilemma*." These examples may perhaps be sufficient, to turn your attention to the common and varied abuse of this particular term.

Another American innovation is the use of the word "*Progress*" as a *verb*. The pure English language recognises this word only as a *substantive*, denoting an advancement, a going forward, an onward course, an improvement. Its use as a verb is wholly of American origin; and its adoption as such was quite unnecessary, as the different operations which it is now indiscriminately employed to denote can be more definitely and clearly expressed by the several verbs, "*to advance*," "*to go forward or onward*," "*to increase*" and "*to improve*." It is but very recently, indeed, that this new verb has been suffered to creep into English dictionaries; the best writers still deem it illegitimate and refuse to admit it in composition; and although, perhaps, it has now obtained too much currency to be wholly abrogated, yet it is at best an inelegant term, as a *verb*, and should be avoided by those who wish to speak or write well.

The next verbal corruption borrowed from our neighbours is a most gross and glaring one; viz., the misapplication of the verb "*to convene*." This verb means "*to call together*, *to assemble*," and has no other definition or application whatever. But ignorant persons, happening to know that the adjective "*convenient*" signifies "*fitting, suitable, commodious, apt*," &c., sagely imagined that there must also be a verb "*to convene*," denoting "*to make apt or fitting, to accommodate, to render suitable or convenient*," &c.; and such persons, doubtless being quite innocent of any knowledge of the qualities of either verbs or adjectives, have perverted the use of the verb "*to convene*" accordingly. This term I have heard used even in legislative halls, when members, instead of saying that such and such a measure would *accommodate* a great number of persons, have gravely stated that it would "*convene*" a numerous body of people! This corruption is so gross, that it needs merely be thus pointed out, to enable any reasonable person to avoid it.

Another perversion is in the American use of the verb "*to conduct*," *absolutely*, and without a subsequent pronoun, thus giving it a meaning which cannot possibly belong to it. The *substantive*, "*conduct*" signifies "*behaviour*" or "*self-management*;" but the verb "*to conduct*" does not mean "*to behave*." It

is a transitive verb, derived from the Latin "*Conducō*," and from its relative nature, it invariably requires a pronoun or noun after it to complete its signification. "*To conduct*" simply to "*guide or direct, to manage, lead*," the sense of any one of which definite is incomplete without an *object* following the verb. To conduct a person or thing, therefore, or to *conduct myself*, (meaning, to manage or guide my own behaviour,) is a complete and correct expression; but the American mode of using the verb without an object, as "*How does he conduct?*"—"She conducts very well," is a barbarous and unwarrantable corruption. The innovation has arisen, from forgetting that the *substantive* is formed from the verb, and not the verb from the *substantive*. The original meaning of "*conduct*" has no reference to behaviour or deportment; the *substantive* "*conduct*," therefore, being derived from the verb, merely means, "*the manner in which a person manages his behaviour, or conducts himself*," and is a useful term, to express a sense which would otherwise require several words; but being a comprehensive and figurative word, its metaphorical meaning cannot be reflected back to the verb from which it was itself derived, so as to enable "*to conduct*," (*absolutely*), to signify "*to behave*."

Many other verbal abuses have been borrowed from our neighbours, more or less glaring than those already exemplified; all of which, although very commonly perpetrated, even by those who might be supposed to be more careful in their phraseology, are grossly inelegant and vulgar; and should be studiously avoided by all, who are desirous of acquitting themselves gracefully in general society. Some of these common errors consist merely, in continuing to use words to express meanings, originally legitimate, but which have long since become obsolete; others are positive perversions of the words, by applying them to senses to which they have really no reference; and as it is our business to maintain, in a British Colony, the purity of the English language, we should carefully study the genius and idiom of that language, and regulate our colloquial practice according to the most authentic models.

A few of the many corruptions thus alluded to may be instanced, in the vulgar use of the words "*Guess*," "*Smart*," "*Cleaver*," "*Sid*," "*Ugly*," "*Grand*," "*Right-away*," "*Hasome*," "*Some*," &c. Let us briefly consider the nature of these abuses.

"*To Guess*" legitimately means, "*to conjecture*,"