

amples of the origin of a slang expression is to be found in the word "sand," which has been transferred to mean "courage" or "endurance." It came about thus: The old English word "grit" meant "sand" or "gravel." It gradually came to mean the grain of grinding stones upon which their efficacy depends. Then some person thought that, since the efficacy of a man depends to a great degree upon his courage and endurance, the word might be substituted for those expressing these qualities. It existed for a time as slang, and afterwards was accepted by the best writers, and found for itself a place in dictionaries. As soon as this was accomplished, as if an equivalent slang expression were necessary, the inventors set to work to find one to take its place. As a result we have now the slang-word "sand" a synonym of "grit," which in the course of time, may, like its predecessor, come into general use.

Now as to the evils resultant from the use of slang. Its most deplorable feature is admittedly impoverishment of vocabulary. The political user makes use of it on every possible occasion, and as one slang expression is applicable to an indefinite number of things, a narrowing of the vocabulary is inevitable. Not only has each slang expression no definite meaning, but it is changing from day to day. Thus the tendency of slang is to wipe out those nice distinctions between word and word, so highly perfected in our language. Everything is "swell", from mountain scenery to a foot-ball match; from the latest coon-song to a noble oration. The word "swell," cited above, is a good example of a slang word which has, because of its adaptability and expressiveness, almost forced itself into the recognized vocabulary of good usage. In fact a prominent author states that in "the dictionary" of the next generation the word must appear. It is of course derived from the "swell." The only meaning of this word from which the idea contained in the slang derivation could be obtained is,— "to act pompously or arrogantly." First the slang word was applied adjectively to a person displaying those traits. Gradually it acquired a better meaning, and was applied, both adjectively and substantively to a person of extreme taste in matters of dress. From this it was but a step to its present signification, *viz*, fine, grand or pretentious, and is now supplanting an indefinite number