

if a word or phrase survives both treatments, it is likely to be worthy the place it has won in the face of earnest criticism. It is only by chance, then, that we can coin a word; no one can say that this word or that, from henceforth will be a perfectly good word. It is largely both a principle of decay and growth in language. Slang is language in the making; it is the sign of life; it is imagination at work in words, and some writers go so far as to say that our mother tongue would become a stagnant river, if slang did not pour into it fresh streams. Many of the words in our language today were slang in their origin.

The sources of slang words are many. It is true that every trade or profession has a real slang of its own; indeed, there are few family circles that have not certain peculiar expressions used only within the household. Wars have always had the effect of enriching language. Although the crop of new words from the recent war has naturally not yet been fully garnered, yet the English sallies during the war, spoke of the charm of the native slang of the soldiers from this side of the water. "Camouflage", "whiz bangs," "can the Kaizer", and many other words and phrases were common during the war. "Khaki" was a product of the Boer War.

College slang is full of abbreviations which seem useful to the users. "Prof" is common for Professor, "exam" for examination; "track" for track athletics, and who in college hasn't used expressions like these: "bluff", "crib", "flunk", "hot air", "eats", "on the rocks", "broke, and many others. Sometimes at a ball game we have even been guilty of saving, "he's up in the air", or at the restaurant we have asked for "two sinkers and a glass of Adam's ale"; some of us have even had the "flu." Slang metaphors such as "put it over", "make a hit" (meaning success), may survive when they are expressive, provided that the innate vulgarity of the word is not so strong that we cannot forget it. Many phrases such as "deliver the goods", "get away with it", "call down", "turn down," now strike the fastidious ear with varying degrees of offense, but it is by no means