

a picture under present conditions; for once the author has pried his way to acceptance or been violently projected there, the working of the system which produces a complete picture has barely been begun, and these

processes which he needs to know before he can ever write effective, direct motion-picture material, have not yet been put in motion. The torturing of the plot has, at acceptance, only been begun.

## THE ADVERTISER'S ARTFUL AID

BY BRANDER MATTHEWS

### I

The incessant expansion of the vocabulary of English is due primarily to the essential energy of the Anglo-Saxon stock, to its persistent voyaging, to its prolific inventiveness, and to its daring imagination. A people always makes its language in its own image; and the English language is as vigorous, as impatient, as unpedantic and as illogical as are the two mighty peoples who hold it in common as a precious heritage. As these two peoples have multiplied more rapidly than any other, so their language has constantly increased its resources, until English has now a vocabulary ampler than that of any of its rivals. As there is not yet apparent any sign of the relaxing of this essential energy in the far-flung British commonwealth or in these United States, there is no likelihood that the English language will surrender its right to make new words for new needs and to take over from foreign tongues any terms which it thinks it can use to advantage.

Exploration and colonization, invention and discovery, the advance of pure science and of applied science, progress in the fine arts and experiment in literature—these are all of them and each of them responsible for their several shares in the unending

increase in the vocabulary of our English speech. But there has been at work of late—that is to say, in the past score of years, in the first two decades of the twentieth century—another impetus, the full effects of which are not yet visible. In fact, this new source of new words has never been accorded the recognition it deserves and demands. We have had our attention called to words of warfare with which we have had to store our memories in the past five years—*slacker* and *tank*, *cooty* and *combing out*—vigorous words, born in the trenches and evolved by spontaneous generation; they are none the worse for their lowly origin, and in fact they owe to it their soldierly directness and swiftness.

Yet peace has her verbal victories no less than war; indeed, her linguistic conquests are more varied and of a more permanent utility. These peaceful words are made in the library and in the laboratory, in the workshop and in the street. They are made while you wait, on the spur of the moment, at haphazard; they may be well-made or ill-made; and they must push their way speedily into general use or they will die an early death from inanition. There is, however, one manufactory of new words where the utmost care

is taken to put together vocables which are reasonably certain to arrest attention and to win approval. A verbal factory of this sort is situated in almost every one of the advertising agencies, which are now so widely scattered throughout the United States. The words these advertisers make are not often taken over from any other language, dead or alive; they are compounded to order, with the utmost caution and with an uncanny skill. They are put together with the hope that they will cling to the memory of those who read them for the first time; and the more completely this hope is justified, the more successful is the new label for a new thing.

We are now so thoroughly accustomed to the exploits of the advertiser that we take them as a matter of course, rarely pausing to appreciate the art, or at least, the artfulness with which he has lured us into acceptance of the new name that he has manufactured for the new article he has been engaged to call to our attention. Nor is his inventive ingenuity confined to the creation of new words only; it extends even to the imaginative incarnation of non-existent persons. With some of these shadowy individuals, dwelling only in reiterated and constantly varied advertisements, we are as friendly as we are with the well-known characters in fiction; they are familiar in our mouths as household words; and we follow their adventures with unflinching and unflagging interest. It would never surprise us to learn that Sunny Jim had long ago made a runaway match with Phoebe Snow; that the offspring of this secret union had won fame on their own account as the Gold Dust Twins, and that the whole family had settled at last in Spotless Town.

So forcibly have these personalities impressed themselves upon our attention that we do not necessarily associate them with the specific wares which they sprang into being to advertise; and in so far as this is the case, we cannot but fear that their creators may have overshot the mark. This is, however, a mishap which the adroit artist in advertising is generally able to avoid. We are in no danger of separating the word *kodak* from the photographic apparatus it designates; indeed, we are more likely to accept this specific word as a generic term large enough in its application to include all the rival cameras of a similar portability. We may almost assert that *kodak* is winning acceptance as a word in good standing in English, even if it also serves as the trademark of the manufacturer whose product it identifies. It has already passed from English into French and into German; and the globe-trotting American is able to purchase a *kodak* and any of its kodakaccessories almost anywhere in the world. I can testify from personal experience that these accessories were to be had a score of years ago within sound of the first cataract of the Nile; and this was a direct result of the reiterated advertisement.

## II

What should have been prefixed to this rambling disquisition is a copy of verses which I found in the flotsam and jetsam of journalism, credited only to a nameless "exchange". I do not know, therefore, where it originally appeared or to whom the honor of its authorship should be ascribed. It may have been the product of the pen of that ubiquitous Mr. Anon who is perhaps the most constant of contributors to the unnamed "exchange". It was simply and boldly entitled

"Ode"; and, as will be seen, it has a full Horatian flavor. Read aloud, with due emphasis and with proper respect for its lordly rhythm, it is undeniably possessed of a sonorous dignity. Perhaps there would be excess of praise if the suggestion were ventured that it sounds a little as if Horace himself had composed it, in some lost language of the past, possibly Etruscan, undecipherable until some patient explorer shall discover its Rosetta stone. The fourth line, for example,

Postum nabisco!

has the very cadence of Horace's

Fusce pharetra:

#### ODE

Chipeco thermos dioxygen, temco sonora tuxedo

Resinol fiat bacardi, camera ansco wheatenae :  
Antiskid pebeco calox, oleo tyco barometer

Postum nabisco!

Prestolite arco congoleum, karo aluminum kryptok,

Crisco balopticon lysol, jello bellans, carborundum!

Ampico clysmic swoboda, pantasote necco britannica

Encyclopædia?

When we undertake to analyze the vocabulary of this delectable specimen of neo-classic versification, we discover that less than a dozen of its words are recorded in the dictionaries of English: *aluminum*, *barometer*, *Britannica*, *camera*, *carborundum*, *dioxygen*, *encyclopædia* and *tuxedo*. Two of these may be only doubtfully English, since *carborundum*—superbly suggestive of the orotund Latin *gerund*—is the name given by its American inventor to a product so useful that it is exported to manufacturers throughout the world; and *tuxedo* is the name generally bestowed by Americans on the article of apparel which the British prefer to call a dinner-jacket. With the exception

of *fiat*, the name of an Italian motor car, made by the Fabbrica Italiano Automobili, Torino, all the other words are to be credited to the ingenuity of the American advertiser; and at least one-half of them, familiar as they may be to us on this side of the Western Ocean, are not yet known to our kin across the sea.

To identify the majority of these trade-marks would be an excellent test of observation and of memory. First of all, we may single out a group of words artfully compounded to designate novelties of food and drink: *clysmic*, *crisco*, *jello*, *karo*, *nabisco*, *necco*, *postum* and *wheatena*. And it is with surprise that we note the absence of *uneeda*, which we were justified in expecting to find here in company with its fellows, many of them less indelibly imprinted on our memories. Of most of these words the origin is not a little obscure, although we perceive that *postum* perpetuates the name of its maker and that *nabisco* is a foreshortening of *National Biscuit Company*. *Jello* is plainly intended to suggest *jelly*.

Second, we descry a group of words put together to provide names for articles of the toilet and of the household: *ampico*, *ansco*, *balopticon*, *calox*, *congoleum*, *lysol*, *kryptok*, *oleo*, *pebeco*, *resinol*, *sonora* and *thermos*. Here again we miss *kodak* and *sapolio*, perhaps because they failed to fit into the meter. When we seek the materials out of which these words have been made, we cannot blunder if we decide that *oleo* harks back to the Latin and *thermos* to the Greek; and we can surmise that *ampico* is a summary telescoping of *American Piano Company*.

Third, and less numerous, is the group of names for patented and protected accessories of the automobile:

*antiskid*, *pantasote*, and *prestolite*, a group far smaller than we should have expected to find in the prevailing effulgence of automobile advertising.

As for the remainder of these hand-made words, I must confess that I am at a loss to suggest any satisfactory classification. Indeed, I do not identify all of them, although there are none with which I feel myself absolutely unfamiliar. I must admit that either my memory is at fault or my observation. I believe, however, that *swoboda* is a name belonging to or assumed by an exponent of physical culture, and intended to designate the specific exercises which he recommends. One or another of the rest of these more or less felicitous examples of trade nomenclature may have been made up to individualize an edible or a potable, a toilet preparation or an automobile accessory, a camera or a piano-player. Their origin may be abandoned to the researches of linguistic investigators more patient and more persevering than I am.

I have already noted that nearly all the artificial vocables, whose dexterous collocation lends to this Horatian ode its ample sonority, are of domestic manufacture. Only a very few of them would evoke recognition from an Englishman; and what a Frenchman or a German would make out the eight lines, it is beyond human power even to guess. Corresponding words have been devised in France and in Germany but only infrequently; and apparently the invention of trade-mark names is not a customary procedure on the part of foreign advertisers. The British, although less affluent in this respect than we are, seem to be a little more inclined to employ the device than their competitors on the continent. Every American, traveling on the

railways which converge upon London, must have experienced a difficulty in discovering whether the station at which his train has paused is Stoke Pogis or Bovril, Chipping Norton or Mazzawattee. None the less is it safe to say that the concoction of a similar ode by the aid of the trade-mark words invented in the British Isles would be a task of great difficulty on account of the paucity of terms sufficiently artificial to bestow the exotic remoteness which is accountable for the fragrant aroma of the American "Ode".

### III

Most of the incessant accretions to our constantly expanding speech have been the result of happy accidents and have slipped into general circulation without comment or resistance. They may have been derived from the place where the thing they describe originated, like *currants* (from Corinth) and *cambric* (from Cambrai). They may have kept the name of the originator of the object they designate, like *sandwich* and *gatling*, or they may preserve the name of the first user of the article, like *cardigan* and *son-tag*. But the new words devised by the advertising agents are not accidental or fortuitous in their genesis; they are the result of volition; and the maker of each of them knew what he was doing and did it with malice prepense. *Balopticon* and *kryptok*, for instance, do not fall as trippingly upon the ear and therefore do not as readily affix themselves to the memory, as do *kodak* and *crisco*, *uneeda* and *calox*.

As poetry ought to be simple, sensuous, and passionate, so an artistically compounded trade-mark word ought to be simple, euphonious, and emphatic; and perhaps emphasis is the most necessary of these three quali-

ties. The advertisers have mastered one of the secrets of persuasion; they are unhesitatingly bold in assertion; but they are not too bold. They seek rather to coax or cajole us than to command and compel us to purchase the wares they are vending. More often than not there is a sweet reasonableness in their appeal; their attitude is altruistic rather than selfish; they are advising us for our own good. They intimate that if we are wise, we will heed their monitions and let ourselves be guided by their counsel. Their modest frankness is engaging; and it inclines us to believe in their honesty.

This, indeed, is one of the advantages of the more recent development of the advertising art: it makes for honesty. It pays to advertise—but only when the object advertised is good of its kind and reasonable in its price. It does not pay to push an article with which the purchasers will be disappointed. The buyer must get his money's worth; he must be satisfied with his bargain and more than satisfied, or he will not repeat his purchase. The aim of the advertiser is to create a habit of buying. The plausible advertisement can make only the first sale; and the subsequent sales on which the maker relies for his profit depend on the value of the article itself. You cannot fool all the people all the time; and it is safe to say that anything which has been widely advertised for a succession of years must have merit, even if it may not be all that is claimed for it.

In most cases, however, the advertiser is careful not to overstate his case; rather does he understate it. Not for him are the flamboyant alliterations and the polychrome adjective of a three-ringed circus. He shrinks from excessive self-exhibition; in fact,

he seeks to be unobtrusive, strange as this suggestion may seem. He tries to focus the attention of the possible purchasers on his clear and simple statement of the merits of the article he is vaunting, without forcing them to observe the constructive skill with which his statement has been made. He strives to attain the art that conceals art, thus insinuating himself into the confidence of the public. Honesty is not only the best policy but it is the only policy which makes possible the success of a persistent advertising campaign.

The result of this combination of honesty and enterprise is that the American citizen and the American household are now buying an immense variety of things manufactured and distributed by the national advertisers, as they are called, to distinguish them from the local merchants who can appeal only to the dwellers in their own more or less restricted area. Probably very few of us have ever taken the trouble to count up the number of different articles daily delivered at our doors on orders which are the direct or indirect result of advertising. Even in staple articles of food—cereals, for example—we purchase “package goods” (warranted by the advertiser), in preference to the old-fashioned buying in bulk in which we had to rely on the integrity of the retailer. We do not now order a pound of oatmeal or of crackers; we specify the special brand which comes in a special container; and we thus assure ourselves as to quality and as to cleanliness.

#### IV

A century ago, not long after the end of the long Napoleonic wars, when Great Britain was staggering under a huge burden of debt, Sydney Smith

wrote an article in which he set forth the unescapable incidence of taxation which every Englishman had to bear at every moment of his life from the cradle to the grave. It would be possible to paraphrase this famous passage and to show the American as subject now to advertisement as the Englishman then was to taxation. The American, after sleeping on an advertised mattress, gets out of an advertised bed and stands on an advertised carpet. In the bathroom he uses an advertised soap and an advertised tooth-paste. He puts on his advertised shoes and his advertised suit of clothes. His breakfast, prepared with the aid of an advertised kitchen-cabinet and an advertised stove, probably includes an advertised fruit, fresh or canned, an advertised cereal, and an advertised coffee. He takes his advertised hat and goes to his office, where he sits at his advertised desk. His letters are preserved in an advertised file; and his answers to them are printed on an advertised typewriter. And there is scarcely a moment of the day, from dawn to darkness, when he is not engaged in work

or play made possible or more convenient by the use of advertised devices of one sort or another.

It may be going a little too far to suggest that advertising is one of the evidences of a high degree of civilization. To say this might be an overstatement of the fact; but it would not be a misstatement. Advertising is a very modern art, perhaps the youngest of them; the Greeks knew it not, and the Latins were in little better case—although they did scratch their *graffiti* on the walls of Pompeii. Even now the Chinese have not attained it—added evidence that their millennial culture is sadly backward. Perhaps there is even a hint of boastfulness in the suggestion that advertising may serve as an index of culture, when this suggestion is made by an American, since it is among us that the art flourishes most luxuriantly. But there is no vainglory in our pointing with pride to the fact that only on this side of the Atlantic could a bard find a sufficiency of resonant trademarks wherewith to build his ode, lofty in its aspiration even if it is likely to be less enduring than brass.

## LITERARY HYPNOTISM

BY JUNE E. DOWNEY

The grave-digger in "Hamlet", the little prince in "Pelleas and Melisande", the Ancient Mariner—that grey-beard loon—why is it they impress us as wise with an insupportable wisdom? They are only a clown, a little child, and a madman!

A singing cadence, a rhythmic dance, a reechoed refrain, a magic phrase cast spells upon us. How? They are but sound and lulling movement! Gorgeous palaces are seen beyond dim shadows; phantom ships sail phantom seas; beauty beckons to us from forest aisles; we wake as from a trance. Again, how and why?

"Hypnotized, your Honor", is a plea which when entered by the prisoner at the bar, thrills us with a sense of legal subtlety and psychic mystery; but when it is cited in explanation of our own experiences of fascination, we find ourselves questioning its validity. Does art really practise hypnotic spells? Are poet and dramatist ready adepts in the art of scientific magic so that they can capture our fancies willy-nilly, imprison us in their own worlds of phantasy, and bind us to the strange and halting philosophies of guileless folk? It is indeed an arresting question.

But before we can answer it properly we need to review briefly the main characteristics of that curious state called the hypnotic.

The hypnotic state is characterized, chiefly, by abnormal susceptibility to suggestion. With normal suggestibility each one of us has personal acquaintance. All of us, all the time,

are open to influences from without. An idea, a so-called suggestion, penetrates our defenses and suddenly we are tapping a foot in time with a whistled tune, or passing on a yawn that is circulating an audience, or following a circus parade or a political one. We are inflating our sleeves or depleting our pockets. The daily triumphs of fashions and creeds illustrate our dependence upon external influences, our uncritical following of sundry leaders.

But normal suggestibility has very definite limits. We may indeed follow our leader but always with a chance of rebellion if our dormant reason stir. If his antics become too fantastic, our fear of appearing ridiculous awakens; if his egotism becomes too pronounced, our own is put on the defensive. Possibly he violates some deep-seated prejudice or moral premise of ours; hence the parting of the ways. But in a state of excessive suggestibility our reason fails to enter protest even in the face of most ridiculous assertions. A national craze or a violent mob shows the outcome of abnormal suggestibility when our critical faculties are in abeyance; as they are in dreams, for instance, in which we commit murder with never a twinge of conscience, or butter our beautifully written love-letters with lemon jelly—and never a smile on the part of the complacent self.

Now the hypnotist knows how to throw the critical faculty out of gear. He induces a drowsy state of semi-sleep in which one's inhibitions are