

THE COMPLETE WORD HUNTER

John Taylor Gause

New York

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PUBLISHER'S FOREWORD

The Complete Word Hunter has the word you want when you want it. It is a constant source of unusual and exciting words—words which will enlarge your vocabulary and increase the effectiveness of your writing. This book is a new idea in publishing: it finds, it defines, it discriminates, combining a thesaurus, a dictionary, and a book on word usage.

A thesaurus is arranged according to subject categories, and *The Complete Word Hunter* has some ninety categories, such as FRIENDSHIP, GRAMMAR, LITERARY TERMS, TRAVEL, and THE WEATHER. For example, under FRIENDSHIP are such words as “affable,” “amity,” “amiable,” “convivial,” “fellowship” and “pal.” If you want to find a new word, turn to the category that represents the subject you have in mind and select the word you want.

As a dictionary, *The Complete Word Hunter* includes two types of definitions. First, most of the words listed under each subject category have appropriate, easily grasped definitions, especially written to show the proper use of each word within that category. For example, under LOGIC you will find the word “thesis” defined as “the general direction or significance of an argument, as ‘You don’t prove your thesis that all men are naturally good.’” Second, for each of the more difficult words or phrases an extended discussion about its origin, its development in our language, and its precise meaning is added. Thus every word in *The Complete Word Hunter* is carefully defined in terms of its use.

These discussions are very important. They really constitute in themselves a work on word usage. For example, under COLOR you can find a clear discussion of how to use “grey” and “gray.” Or under GOVERNMENT there is a careful analysis of the distinctions between “administrative” and “executive.” In this way *The Complete Word Hunter* discriminates words of similar meanings. But it is not only these discussions that are so valuable. The grouping together of words with related meanings helps you see their subtleties and their differences one from another. You cannot fail to find at a glance the pertinent word.

For many years Mr. Gause has been interested in philology (he is the author of two earlier books about words), and he has a wide and original knowledge of our language. Mr. Gause's style is free and easy: you can quickly understand even the most complicated discussions of complex words.

The Complete Word Hunter is an indispensable word book. It gives you exactly the right word in the shortest possible time. The words and phrases are defined with respect to each other in such a way that you always choose the word of maximum expressiveness. Subtle meanings are carefully explained and proper usage discussed and demonstrated. And constant use of this book will incalculably enrich your vocabulary.

The sources of *The Complete Word Hunter* are various but, of course, largely lexical. The author wishes to acknowledge most freely and gratefully his appreciation of aid and counsel from other books about words, especially from the larger dictionaries. The author also wishes to acknowledge the aid of Gorton Carruth, who edited the manuscript and wrote most of the shorter definitions in the text.

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AILMENTS

See also Health and Remedies

AFFECTION *n.* an abnormal or morbid bodily or mental condition; a disease.

AGUISH *adj.* pertaining to ague or malarial chills and fever.

ALOPECIAN *adj.* pertaining to baldness (from a Greek word that meant fox-mange and also baldness). The spelling of this adjective is not formalized.

Amnesia - see **Aphasia & Amnesia**
Aphasia & Amnesia

BACILLAR OR **BACILLARY** *adj.* pertaining to **BACILLUS**, a rod-shaped bacteria.

CARCINOMATOUS OR **CANCEROUS** *adj.* pertaining to cancer.

CARIOUS *adj.* pertaining to tooth or bone decay.

CHIRAGRIC *adj.* pertaining to gout in the hand.

Comatose

COMPLAINT *n.* a cause of bodily pain or uneasiness; a malady; a disease or ailment.

COSTIVE *adj.* pertaining to constipation, or to its causes.

CROUPOUS *adj.* pertaining to the croup.

DAMAGE *n.* injury in general; harm; hurt.

DIARRHEAL *adj.* pertaining to **DIARRHEA**.

DISEASE *n.* a morbid physical condition, acute or chronic, that may result in death.

ALLERGIES

APPENDICITIS

ARTHRITIS

ATHLETE'S FOOT (**EPIDERMOPHYTOSIS**)

BRIGHT'S DISEASE

CANCER

CHICKEN POX (**VARICELLA**)

DIABETES

DIPHTHERIA

DYSENTERY

ECZEMA

GALL BLADDER DISEASE
(**CHOLECYSTITIS**)

GALL STONES

GOUT

INFANTILE PARALYSIS (**POLIO-MYELITIS**)

MALARIA

MEASLES

MUMPS

POISON IVY

RABIES (**HYDROPHOBIA**)

RESPIRATORY DISEASES

ASTHMA

BRONCHITIS

INFLUENZA

PNEUMONIA
SINUSITIS
STREPTOCOCCAL NOSE & THROAT INFECTIONS
TONSILLITIS
TUBERCULOSIS
RHEUMATIC FEVER
RINGWORM
SCARLET FEVER & STREPTOCOCCAL INFECTIONS
SMALLPOX (VARIOLA)
TETANUS (LOCKJAW)
TRENCH MOUTH (VINCENT'S INFECTION)
TYPHOID FEVER
TYPHUS FEVER
UNDULANT FEVER (BRUCELLOSIS)
VENEREAL DISEASES
GONORRHEA
SYPHILIS
WHOOPING COUGH (PERTUSSIS)
DISTEMPER *n.* a disease, malady, or indisposition. Most commonly applied to diseases of animals.
DISTRESS *n.* pain or suffering in body or mind. *v.* to cause pain and suffering.
DIURETIC *adj.* causing urination.
EMETIC *adj.* causing vomiting.
ANTIEMETIC refers to any remedy for vomiting.
FEBRILE, PYRETIC or PYREXIAL *adj.* pertaining to fever. see **HECTIC**
FLATULENT *adj.* pertaining to gas in the alimentary canal or stomach.
FRAMBESIAL *adj.* refers to yaws, a contagious skin disease prevalent in certain tropical regions.

GERATIC or, in biology, **GERONTIC** *adj.* pertaining to decadent old age.
HARM *n.* physical or material injury. *v.* to damage or to hurt.
HECTIC *adj.* pertaining to fever, esp. to the fever of consumption, with its flushing of the face; hence, to a gay or wild time.
HEMORRHOIDAL *adj.* pertaining to piles or **HEMORRHOIDS**.
HERNIAL *adj.* pertaining to a rupture or **HERNIA**.
HURT *n.* an injury, esp. one that gives physical or mental pain; a wound, an insult. *v.* to injure, harm, wound; to cause pain and suffering.
HYDROPIC or DROPSICAL *adj.* pertaining to **DROPSY**.
ICTERIC *adj.* pertaining to jaundice.
ILL *adj.* in a disordered state physically; diseased; impaired.
INJURY *n.* that which inflicts damage, hurt or harm. A broken leg is an **INJURY**. Battle fatigue may also be considered an **INJURY**.
Lesion & Trauma
LETHARGIC *adj.* morbidly sluggish or drowsy; dull; torpid.
MALADY *n.* a physical disorder or disease, esp. a chronic, deep-seated or dangerous disease.
Malaise
Mal de mer
MIASMAL or MIASMIC *adj.* pertaining to pollution originally, then to malarial swamp mists,

- then to malaria itself—now, any foul and noxious vapor.
- MORBIFIC** *adj.* pertaining to disease or its causation, or to morbidity.
- MYOPIC** *adj.* pertaining to nearsightedness.
- NAUSEOUS** *adj.* pertaining to seasickness, from Greek *naus*, 'ship.'
- NOSTALGIC** *adj.* pertaining to homesickness, esp. to an acute or morbid desire for one's native land.
- ODONTALGIC** *adj.* pertaining to toothache.
- OTALGIC** *adj.* pertaining to earache.
- PAIN** *n.* bodily or mental suffering.
- PANDEMIC** *adj.* pertaining to a widespread epidemic. Hence, it sometimes means general, or universal.
- PARAPLEGIC** *adj.* pertaining to paralysis from the hips down. Also a *n.*
- PAROTITIC** *adj.* pertaining to mumps.
- PHRENETIC** *adj.* pertaining to frenzy, brain fever, or phrenitis.
- PHTHISICAL** *adj.* pertaining to consumption, or tuberculosis of the lungs.
- PNEUMONIC** *adj.* pertaining to pneumonia, or simply to the lungs.
- PODAGRIC** *adj.* pertaining to gout, esp. of the foot.
- PUERPERAL** *adj.* pertaining to the state or condition of a woman at childbirth or following it.
- SABURRAL** *adj.* pertaining to foulness of stomach or mouth or, thus, of breath.
- SCABROUS** or **SCABIETIC** *adj.* pertaining to mange, scabies. But **MANGY** is the better adjective.
- SCIRRHOUS** *adj.* pertaining to hardness, as in cancer.
- SCLEROTIC** *adj.* pertaining to hardening of the tissues.
- SCORBUTIC** *adj.* pertaining to scurvy. *n.* one having scurvy.
- SENESCENT** *adj.* pertaining to growing old.
- SEPTIC** *adj.* pertaining to putrefaction, sewage. **ASEPTIC** is the antonym. **PUTREFACTIVE** is a synonym, and so also is **PUTRID**, which includes the idea of a bad smell or of moral foulness.
- SICK** *adj.* pertaining to physical or mental disorder; indisposed. *n.* in distinction to **MALADY**, **SICKNESS** may be more or less temporary.
- SPASTIC** *adj.* pertaining to **SPASM**, esp. tonic spasm.
- SPHACELOUS** or **GANGRENOUS** *adj.* pertaining to gangrene.
- STERNUTATIVE** *adj.* sneeze-causing.
- STRUMATIC** or **STRUMOUS** *adj.* pertaining to a goiter.
- SUDORIFIC** or **DIAPHORETIC** *adj.* causing sweat.
- TOXIC** *adj.* poisonous.
- Trauma** see **Lesion & Trauma**
- TUSSAL** or **TUSSIVE** *adj.* pertaining to cough.
- URTICARIAL** or **URTICARIOUS** *adj.* pertaining to hives.
- VARICOSE** *adj.* pertaining to an

enlarged (literally 'bent by dilation') condition, as of tumors, veins, ulcers.

VESICANT *adj.* causing blisters.

VESICATORY is the medical ver-

sion, extended to include capability of causing blisters.

VOMICOSE *adj.* pertaining to ulcerous cavities. Hence, also, pockmarked.

Aphasia and Amnesia APHASIA weakens or destroys your use or comprehension of speech and writings. AMNESIA impairs or purloins your memory. If you are suffering from AMNESIA and cannot remember who you or your antecedents are, it is said that a familiar tune or perfume may evoke a single recollection that will bring back all of your past with it.

APHASIA requires a word or two more. There are several kinds arising from different causes. Usually it is the result of brain injuries. Without paralyzing your vocal chords it may strike you dumb or so obfuscate you as to make you unable to talk or follow a conversation clearly. It does not impair your other intellectual powers.

Comatose This is an adjective that means 'stupefied'—and not because it suggests commas and grammar, which may also stupefy. This coma is Greek, and some say it comes from *komē*, the hair of your head, and others that from the beginning it meant 'slumber,' *koma*. In medicine a coma is a stupor or an unnaturally heavy sleep, as if from drugs. On the other hand, the silvery-haired head of a comet is a coma. So there you are! For laymen the chief virtue of the word is that it sounds pretty nice. Like comical it is clear and full-measured in your mouth. It even has a whimsical sound. Some slothful clerks have a COMATOSE look about them. They are almost comically lethargic.

Lesion and Trauma A LESION is an 'injury' or 'loss.' Physiologically, it is a damaged organ or tissue. Legally, LESION is the relative loss you suffer when you don't get your money's worth or your service's worth. A TRAUMA is simply a 'wound.' The adjective is TRAUMATIC.

Malaise In varying degrees of hyperbole we can be scared to death or merely feel uncomfortable in our bones. Neither discomfort can really be called a malady. But the second of the two is MALAISE, and is described by the medicos: 'an indefinite feeling of uneasiness, or of being ill; also, generally, a feeling of discomfort.' When we are afflicted with MALAISE we are distressed in our feelings, which is exactly what the French meant by *malaise*, 'ill ease.' The 's' in it sounds like a 'z,' and the whole word slides off our tongues with a sibilant suggestion of sickness.

Mal de mer Interesting as an illustration of fluctuations of usages, MAL DE MER in the sedate '80's and even in the comparatively gay '90's was esteemed as an 'elegant' term. Its English equivalent 'seasickness' was thought to be too physically expressive for refined tastes. In the preceding century the purists had begun attacking words that bordered on slang: such words as 'jilt,' 'shabby,' 'touchy' and 'humbug,' and even 'fun,' 'flirtation,' 'enthusiasm' and 'sham' have had to fight for their lives. As for the word 'sick' it is probably a thousand years old, even in English; but at length in England it has come to mean only 'nauseated.' In America it retained its broader meaning of 'ill' or 'ailing,' so that now when we are not polite enough to use the Greek word 'nausea' we usually explain: "I was sick to my stomach." But such expressions were offensive to the Victorians. But how could they speak of a 'nausea from the ship's motion' when 'seasickness' was so much shorter? A soft French phrase proved to be euphonious, and became fashionable: *mal de mer*, meaning 'illness caused by the sea.' But fashions do not always endure. In the hurly-burly of successive World Wars people quite forgot about MAL DE MER, and now you can buy pills for seasickness.

ANGER

See also War

Abhor see Detest, Despise, etc.

Acrimonious

Aggressor see Assailant & Aggressor

Altercation & Dispute

Anger & Wrath

ANIMOSITY *n.* ill will, often resentment, tending toward hostile action.

ANNOYANCE *n.* act of disturbing, irritating, molesting, or harassing someone; a nuisance.

Antagonism see Pugnacity & Antagonism

ANTI-PATHY *n.* aversion or dislike; repugnance; distaste.

Assailant & Aggressor

Avenge & Revenge

BAD HUMOR *n.* a disagreeable or unpleasant state of mind or mood.

Bellicose & Belligerent

Belligerent see Bellicose & Belligerent

BITING *adj.* sharp, cutting; sarcastic, caustic.

BITTER *adj.* stinging, caustic, acrimonious.

CONTENTIOUSNESS *n.* quarrelsome; the quality of being given to brawls or wrangling.

CROSSNESS *n.* ill humor.

Deplore see Deprecate, Depreciate, etc.

Deprecate, Depreciate, Deplore
Depreciate see **Deprecate, Depreciate, etc.**

Despise see **Detest, Despise, etc.**

Detest, Despise, Abhor, Loath, Hate

Diatribes, Invective, Vituperation.

See also **Philippic, Tirade, etc.**

DISCORD *n.* disagreement; dissension; conflict.

DISLIKE *n.* antipathy or aversion to something.

DISPLEASURE *n.* the feeling of one who is displeased; also, that which gives offense or injury.

Dispute see **Altercation & Dispute**

ENEMY *n.* a foe; one hostile to another.

Enmity & Inimicalness

Expostulate

FERVESCENT *adj.* becoming hot, even 'hot under the collar.'

Flaunt & Flout

Flout see **Flaunt & Flout**

FRICITION *n.* disagreement that tends to slow progress.

FURY *n.* violent anger; rage.

GRUDGE *n.* cherished ill will. *v.* to give reluctantly.

Hate see **Detest, Despise, etc.**

HATRED *n.* strong aversion coupled with ill will.

HOSTILITY *n.* an act of open enmity; a hostile deed; an act of warfare.

ILL HUMOR *n.* a disagreeable mood; an unwholesome, sick or painful state of mind.

INDIGNATION *n.* anger resulting from what is unworthy or base; righteous wrath.

Inimicalness see **Enmity & Inimicalness**

Intransigent see **Recalcitrant & Intransigent**

Invective see **Diatribes, Invective, etc.**

IRASCIBILITY *n.* state of being testy, cranky, cross.

IRE *n.* anger; wrath.

IRRITATION *n.* annoyance; anger.

Lampoon

Leer & Sneer

Loath see **Detest, Despise, etc.**

MALEVOLENCE *n.* ill will.

MIFF *n.* a petty quarrel; tiff.

Militate

NIPPY *adj.* biting.

OFFENSE *n.* a hurt or damage; act of attack or assault; breach of conduct or law.

Opprobrium

PASSION *n.* a violent or intense emotion, for example, rage or wrath, lust, deep love or zeal.

Philippic, Tirade, Diatribe

PIQUE *n.* an offense taken by one slighted. *v.* to nettle or offend by slighting.

Pugnacity & Antagonism

Quarrel & Querulous

Querulous see **Quarrel & Querulous**

RAGE *n.* anger accompanied with raving; fit of fury.

RANCOR *n.* vehement ill will; intense spite.

Recalcitrant & Intransigent

REPUGNANCE *n.* deep rooted antagonism; aversion, antipathy.

RESENTMENT *n.* indignation because of a wrong or insult.

Retort

Revenge see **Avenge & Revenge**

Sneer see **Leer & Sneer**

STRIFE *n.* altercation; conflict; fight; contest for superiority.

SURLY *adj.* ill-natured; abrupt; rude; cross.

TANTRUM *n.* a fit of ill temper.

Thwart

TIFF *n.* a slight fit of anger; a petty quarrel.

Tirade see **Philippic, Tirade, etc.**

UMBRAGE *n.* offense or resentment.

VEXATION *n.* trouble; irritation; state of annoyance or anger.

VIRULENCE *n.* bitter enmity; malignity.

Vituperation see **Diatribes, Invective, etc.**

Wrath see **Anger & Wrath**

Acrimonious Perhaps the best of our adjectives for 'sharpness, bitterness, extreme tartness' of a person's manner or disposition. It combines the qualities of two small companion words, 'acerb' (soft 'c') and 'acid' (hard 'c'). All three words derive from the Latin *acer*, 'sharp, fierce, piercing.' *Acerb* means sour and astringent; *acid* means sharp and cutting (or burning). **ACRIMONIOUS**—a bigger word packed with more meaning—suggests also a note of 'human bitterness.' It suggests, besides sharpness, the bite of a sarcastic temper and the corrosion of a sullen mood. Unlike its two small companion words, **ACRIMONIOUS** can modify only persons.

Altercation and Dispute You can **ALTERCATE** probably more easily than you can **DISPUTE** since to **DISPUTE** always requires some mind-work while to **ALTERCATE** is only 'to bicker, to accuse back-and-forth, to quarrel thoughtlessly.' When a debate, for example, grows angry, and points are wrangled over rather than reasoned through, it is no longer a debate, nor even a **DISPUTE**. To **DISPUTE** is 'to reckon' or 'to reason,' often in a contentious and aggressive way. But **DISPUTE**, no matter how heated or biased it may be, is always of the mind. The main idea in **ALTERCATION** is simply that of 'taking turns,' like in the word 'alternate.' The beauty of **ALTERCATION** is in its rhythm, which suggests the bandying back and forth of words. "He blocked the whole road and I stepped over to his car to tell him so. Quite an altercation followed." We might more often say, "Quite an argument followed." But in this case 'argument' is probably not as precise a word as **ALTERCATION**. 'Argument,' like **DISPUTE**, suggests some mind-work. 'Argument' is often used to indicate the persuasive content of an essay or an editorial.

Anger and Wrath **WRATH** suggests a blast or, the old meaning of blast, a blowing; but **ANGER** means something harder, deeper, fiercer—a clangor, almost, of hard hate. **WRATH**, like the wind, may blow be-

yond you and be gone. But ANGER is poised, with a throaty yet metallic growl, to crush you and to hold you beneath its weight until you are dead. An ANGRY sea smashes and sinks the ships which a wild or rough sea only buffets or flings upon a shore. An ANGRY sore in your body festers until it devours you. ANGER swells from the depths of a man and is lasting. WRATH flashes quickly from a man's mind or emotions, and may soon pass.

In the Old Norse, ANGER means 'trouble,' and in Chaucer's day 'affliction.' ANGER is the steadier and deeper word. WRATH is authentic Anglo-Saxon and it means ANGER in the hostile sense. WRATH stems from the root of 'wroth,' which in the Anglo-Saxon is a form of the verb meaning 'writhe' or 'twist.' The force of your hostility makes your enemy writhe, or perhaps in your excitement you writhed yourself.

It is perhaps a good practice that we say so often "That makes me mad," or "He was mad at me," presumably reserving such deeper or more stirring adjectives as ANGRY, 'furious' and 'infuriated' for really important occasions. Incidentally, 'to be angry *at*' refers to the *reason* for your ANGER: "I was angry at all the delay that might be costing lives." But 'to be angry *with*' refers to the *object* of ANGER: "I was so angry with him I couldn't see straight!"

Assailant and Aggressor Today we have come to know AGGRESSOR too well and we have too many occasions to use it with its fullest implications. Our Victorian grandparents probably used it sparingly in polite references to thugs and holdup men. For us it now intimates war and signifies how most of our big troubles begin. ASSAILANT, and especially its verb, to ASSAIL, are softer words and less used. They are expressive. To ASSAIL suggests the expression "I sailed right into him," which implies high courage and lofty purpose but which does not convey blood and thunder. There is, therefore, a certain insouciance in to ASSAIL; its soft sounds are not misplaced.

You do not admit that your ASSAILANT in a dark and narrow thoroughfare subdued you. He did sail into you, it is true; but whether or not he knocked you down and captured your purse is not implied or stated. Had he *assaulted* you, the story would be blunter; Had he *attacked* you, it would be sharper. 'Assault' suggests both 'insult' and 'injury,' perhaps 'slaughter.' 'Attack' indicates 'suddenness,' and you are thrown back astoundedly on your heels. Each word has its implications of your discomfiture. But if you are ASSAILED, there is nothing to show your defeat. To ASSAIL is simply 'to essay, to attempt a conquest with vigor and élan.'

Avenge and Revenge Melodious words that ring softly with anger. Grammatically, REVENGE is the intensive of AVENGE, or rather the iterative, as 'reiterate' is of 'iterate.'

They are cousins of our verb 'to vindicate,' which means that one 'defends,' rather than 'destroys,' an object of blame or suspicion. The originator of all three words was the Roman *vindex*, 'righter of wrongs.' The verb deriving from *vindex* took on all the meanings that could arise from the righting of a wrong: 'to defend,' hence 'to preserve or restore'; 'to free, save or deliver from danger or wrong'; 'to maintain,' and before that 'to lay claim to'; 'to excuse' and 'to vindicate' but also 'to punish'; finally 'to avenge, revenge.' Nevertheless the idea of 'redressing a wrong,' rather than 'satisfying a hatred' dominated these meanings. Today even an avenger in a blood feud has, or feels he has, a clear conscience since he is vindicating his own honor, or his clan's honor, or a wronged friend.

In usage there are two sharp distinctions between AVENGE and REVENGE not always observed even by the best speakers. AVENGE means 'one's vindication of someone else's wrong.' REVENGE is 'one's vindication of one's own wrong.' This distinction was recognized when we derived from 'vindictive' (the adjective for 'vindicate') a new adjective, 'vindictive.' 'Vindictive' has invariably a grim meaning suggesting personal retaliation. A 'vindictive' action is essentially REVENGEFUL though sometimes 'vindictive' is used impersonally, e.g., a vindictive fate. 'Vindicative' action, on the other hand, describes the action of the AVENGER, who wishes to see justice done.

With two words so similar we expect their meanings to become to some extent reciprocal. We expect REVENGE should seem sometimes righteous, or an AVENGE often less than ideal. It is possible to be more unjust or bloodthirsty in AVENGING the death of a friend than in taking REVENGE for a personal wrong.

There is in REVENGE a strong suggestion of 'retaliation.' Just as wars are sometimes said to have no excuse, so REVENGE connotes the wreaking of vengeance for its own sake. 'Vengeance,' itself, from Tudor times on, has identified itself in colloquial phrases with the horror of plagues and pōxes. It has no relation to justice. As for AVENGE it is good that we have it. It is good to have a word that suggests the freeing of a friend from blame or unjust wrong.

Bellicose and Belligerent Both of these adjectives derive their war-like meaning from Latin *bellum*, 'war.' BELLIGERENT usually implies actual participation in hostilities, or an actively hostile frame of mind.

BELLICOSE suggests a constant readiness or willingness to fight or to stir up a fight, and it is more often applied to a mood or temper. A soldier is a **BELLIGERENT** man; a baseball fan who loudly protests an umpire's decision is a **BELLICOSE** man.

Deprecate, Depreciate, and Deplore **DEPLORE** means 'to bewail'; **DEPRECATE** means 'to pray away or against.' **DEPLORE** is an earnest and a strong word. When you **DEPLORE** something you really pour out your grief or your regret about it. But **DEPRECATE** is a more useful word because it has no good synonym. You can pray *for* rain or good fortune, but when you beg or plead for something *not* to happen, or for someone *not* to do something, you **DEPRECATE** the event or the act. When you **DEPRECATE** an evil you strongly want deliverance from it, and you also express disapproval of it. When you **DEPLORE** an evil you are telling the world how bad it really is in the hope you can avert or deter it.

The words **DEPRECATE**, **DEPRECATORY**, and **DEPRECATIVE** are often confused with **DEPRECIATE**, **DEPRECIATORY**, and **DEPRECIATIVE**. To **DEPRECIATE** means 'to disparage' or 'to belittle' someone or something. A truck **DEPRECIATES**, or loses value, when it is parked continually in an open lot.

Detest, Despise, Abhor, Loath, and Hate Let us see how these five old stand-bys can serve to express our dislikes effectively. First of all, what is **HATE**? It is the old Anglo-Saxon word for the fierce dislike which is 'malignity.' **HATE** is a rudimentary word, too strong for mere sniping and lampooning. **DETEST**, **ABHOR**, and **LOATH** convey in part **HATE**. **DESPISE** may be free of **HATE**. (**DETEST**, **DESPISE** and **ABHOR** are all Roman.) **DETEST** originally meant a 'calling on the gods to witness against someone.' To **DETEST** is now 'to dislike intensely, to hate intensely.' A **DESPISER** originally looked down his nose at you (*de* for 'down,' *spectare* for 'to look'). He now regards you as contemptible, and scorns and disdains you. So does the **ABHORER**, but in doing so he also **HATES** you. **ABHOR** has a suggestion of repugnance (*ab* for 'from,' *horre* for 'to shrink'). The first **LOATHER** was an Anglo-Saxon **HATER**. But now he regards you with mingled **HATRED** and 'disgust.'

Diatribes, Invective, and Vituperation A **DIATRIBE** is a 'protracted scolding.' It is Greek for 'a wearing away, a rubbing in of abuse'—abrasive verbal abuse, as it were. Today **DIATRIBE** is even rougher, more a knocking and a tearing. 'To **INVEIGH** against' is 'to launch a verbal assault' or 'to assail with words.' You may be vehement and even abusive with this **INVECTIVE**; but when you become vicious or defamatory, and extremely personal, you are descending to **VITUPERATION**.

VITUPERATION is 'excoriating,' and especially aimed at all tender spots where the skin is thin and easily scored off. It is 'raillery directed against the faults of a single individual.' In other words, **VITUPERATION** is a meanly calculated and viciously vulgar form of abuse, reserved especially for persons—and persons only—who rile you.

Enmity and Inimicalness **ENMITY** is your state of being if you are **INIMICAL** to someone or to someone's ideas or actions. It would therefore be synonymous with **INIMICALNESS** except that it acquired more force somewhere in its evolution. **INIMICAL** is a rather weak negative of 'friendly.' The Latin *amicus*, 'friendly,' with a negative prefix, produced it. **ENMITY**, with the same origin but a more various history, has more character. It grew from the original *inimicus* to *inimicitia*, and then gathered strength and sound as it drew itself together into **ENMITY**. We can say it is a 'dignified or formal kind of animosity.' But where animosity is spiteful, **ENMITY** is broad and perhaps grim. It also cuts deeper than animosity. But notwithstanding its formal uses and, in fact, by virtue of its formal flavor we often use the word playfully. The **ENMITY** existing between gridiron rivals is a favorite theme of sports writers.

Expostulate A useful word with a delicately balanced multiple meaning. Its emphasis may be shifted according to the situation. When you **EXPOSTULATE** with a friend your discussion and arguments are designed to make him understand and correct his errors. If your friend looks kindly on your good offices, then your **EXPOSTULATION** approaches mere remonstrance or complaint. But if your friend continues stubbornly in his errors, your **EXPOSTULATION** is likely to veer towards exasperation or vehemence.

Flaunt and Flout Truly a treacherous pair. Each is constantly inveigling us into using it for the other. This is because the two can approach each other in meaning; but they are never one and the same.

FLOUT is probably Dutch and meant merely 'to play the flute.' How flute-playing, unless it was impudently done, became synonymous with 'jeering' has not been exactly explained. But **FLOUTING** now means 'to mock, to insult,' or 'to fly obnoxiously in the face of.' **FLAUNT** is probably Swedish, and at first meant 'to waver.' To **FLAUNT** has now come to mean 'to wave,' as to wave a banner. If you wave a red flag in a bull's face, you are **FLOUTING** or insulting the bull. That is one way the two words approach each other.

But **FLOUTING** has less to do with what you say or do than with your