SECOND COLLEGE EDITION

WEBSTER'S NEW WORLD DICTIONARY

of the American Language

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David B. Guralnik, *Editor in Chief*

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FOREWORD

The appearance of *Webster's New World Dictionary of the American Language*, College Edition, on the lexicographical scene in 1953 elicited, in the first major review of that work (*Library Journal*, May, 1953), the encomium "a great advance in American lexicography." In the years immediately following, others made their own assessment of that work, scholars, teachers, students, writers, and workers in every field of endeavor. Unanimity in assessing so complex an undertaking, and one so dependent upon subjective evaluation, is hardly to be expected, but the consensus, as evidenced by rapidly growing acceptance of the dictionary on college campuses and its regular appearance on the bookshelves and desks of researchers, professional persons, and the like, suggested substantial agreement with that first assessment.

Efforts were continually made to maintain the currency of the dictionary through annual, later biennial, updating. These efforts were for a time successful, at least in incorporating the more visible of the newest accretions to the language into the written record of that language. Eventually, however, it became apparent that the flood of new terms inundating the staff's citation file, the subtle changes in pronunciation reflected in the aural citations, and the changes in group attitudes toward numerous locutions had made a total revision of the dictionary mandatory. The first decades of the second half of the 20th century have witnessed not only a population explosion, but an information explosion of unprecedented proportions. Rapid advances in the physical sciences and in technology are bringing with them countless new terms and new applications of established terms. Vast sociological and political upheavals have had lexical consequences, and the young of our land, both alienated and unalienated, have made full, vigorous contribution to the slang sector of the language. Free borrowing from other languages, always a salient feature of English, continues unabated (see Dr. Umbach's article *Etymology*, on p. xxxi).

The science of lexicography makes it possible for the dictionary staff of our times to keep up with these shifts and turns in language and to accumulate large stores of data with which to work. It is still, however, the art of the lexicographer that must be employed in sifting the masses of data, selecting those items and details that fall properly within the scope of the dictionary under construction, and assembling these into an instructive, useful, and graceful whole. Most often, a period of incubation is required for new words to prove their vitality and establish their right to entry in the dictionary. Sometimes, however, the swift current of events brings startling changes, and the items of vocabulary resulting from such events are firmly fixed in our speech from the day of their coinage. Not long before this work went to press, we witnessed a milestone in the human saga, man's first, halting steps on the moon's surface, an event that demanded the insertion of such an entry as *mascon* and a biographical listing of Neil Armstrong, whose feat—and feet—made history.

Those who are familiar with the first College Edition of *Webster's New World Dictionary* will find here the same reassuringly large and clear type and the same single alphabetical listing that makes it unnecessary to leaf through numerous supplementary lists of biographical and geographical entries, proper names, and abbreviations. They will also find in this Second College Edition the same devotion to careful, detailed definitions as in the previous edition and the same generous use of illustrative examples to help clarify both meaning and usage. As they continue to use this new work, they will, however, discover many thousands of new entries and new meanings not to be found in the earlier edition, many of them, indeed, not to be found in any other dictionary. They will discover, too, small but significant changes in the diacritical key that lend phonemic precision to the pronunciations, and they will discover the changes that the record shows have taken place in the prevalence of certain pronunciations since the first edition. Such change is a phenomenon that has always characterized living languages, and it is a special characteristic of the language of America.

The users of this dictionary will find, again, that each entry block has been ordered to show logical semantic extension from the etymology through the earlier uses of the word to the current, often specialized or informal applications. The result is a single coherent paragraph that clearly shows the history and development of the word and the relationship among the meanings, rather than an assemblage of fragmented bits of disconnected information. The etymologies, always a strong feature of the *New World Dictionary*, have been carefully reviewed by Dr. Umbach, who has incorporated the latest etymological findings and has still further extended the practice of showing cognate relationships between words in English and between English words and those in other Indo-European languages. For the first time in any general dictionary of the language, the origins of American place names have been included, prepared by Dr. Mathews, where these could be ascertained. Also for the first time in any general dictionary, every Americanism has been clearly identified as such (see the "Guide to the Use of the Dictionary," paragraph I.,E. on p. ix and Dr. Mathews' article *Americanisms* on p. xxxiii).

Foreword

The art of the lexicographer is further displayed in the help that is given the user of the dictionary who must decide the aptness of any term or phrase to the use he wishes to make of it. The editors of this work believe that one who consults a college dictionary is entitled to the informed collective determination by the staff as to whether a particular term is appropriate to a standard or formal context or is suitable only in an informal context or as an item of slang, whether a given word is current or obsolete or archaic or now rare, whether it is current only as a regional, or dialectal, term, and whether it is, in spite of widespread usage, held in low repute by those who take a stricter, or purist, view of these matters. The issue is not one of "permissiveness" versus "authoritarianism." No lexicographer, at least in this country, has been given a mandate either to permit or to disallow any usage. He has, however, assumed the responsibility of informing the public of the state of the language as of the time during which his dictionary was being compiled. The status of any usage, as determined by the trained lexicographer after a careful study of current writings and speech and disregarding the crotchets and prejudices of individuals, is a part of the record and should be incorporated among the data made available to the writer and student.

The absence from this dictionary of a handful of old, well-known vulgate terms for sexual and excretory organs and functions is not due to a lack of citations for these words from current literature. On the contrary, the profusion of such citations in recent years would suggest that the terms in question are so well known as to require no explanation. The decision to eliminate them as part of the extensive culling process that is the inevitable task of the lexicographer was made on the practical grounds that there is still objection in many quarters to the appearance of these terms in print and that to risk keeping this dictionary out of the hands of some students by introducing several terms that require little if any elucidation would be unwise. In a similar vein, it was decided in the selection process that this dictionary could easily dispense with those true obscenities, the terms of racial or ethnic opprobrium, that are, in any case, encountered with diminishing frequency these days.

The vocabulary entered was chosen to meet the needs of students and others in this particular period of history, and so it will be seen that there is here a heavier proportion of terms from the sciences than was true for the previous edition. In response to numerous requests, it was decided to include the taxonomic designation, or scientific name, for every animal and plant entered. The taxa shown herein reflect the process of continuous adjustment and reclassification that is taking place in this discipline. In general, the technical definitions were written by, or prepared in direct consultation with, leading specialists in every field.

Population figures for geographical entries and other similar statistical data have been checked with authoritative sources. Unofficial estimates have been avoided; only the latest official counts or estimates were considered reliable.

On the editorial staff page preceding this foreword are listed the names of those who labored to produce the dictionary. Titular designations, however descriptive in intention, often fail to describe adequately the roles and responsibilities carried out. For example, Dr. Mitford M. Mathews, dean of American lexicographers and editor of the *Dictionary of Americanisms*, has over the past decade had a lively impact on nearly every aspect of this work to a degree improperly conveyed by the designation "Special Consulting Editor."

A major advantage in the preparation of the second edition of a dictionary is the inevitable exposure to the collective wisdom of those who have put the first edition to the test of repeated usage. Over the years we have benefited immeasurably from the suggestions, queries, emendations, and citations offered by scholars, experts, and lay people throughout the United States and, indeed, throughout the world. However desirable, it would be impractical to attempt to acknowledge individually those many who have given us, and in many instances continue to give us, aid and advice. They will know who they are and, we trust, will accept our generalized thanks.

Special acknowledgment must be made of those scholars who participated in the staff's planning sessions and whose good counsel has served us so well in the execution of those plans: Professor Charlton Laird (whose article *Language and the Dictionary* on p. xv you are urged to read), Professor Donald Lloyd, and the late Professor George Grauel. Our thanks are also herewith extended to the many individuals at institutions and agencies, private and governmental, who so graciously served as sources of information and verification, and to those persons who served as regular informants on matters of pronunciation and usage. Special thanks are due the editors and custodians of the unpublished records of the Linguistic Atlas of the North-Central States for making those materials available to us, to Miss Dorothy Fey, of the United States Trademark Association, for her invaluable help in determining whether terms suspected of being trademarks do currently in fact have such status, and to Professor Frederick McLeod for his expert assistance in the preparation of the supplementary "Guide to Punctuation, Mechanics, and Manuscript Form." For their helpful cooperation in solving a number of problems in typography, thanks are due to Mr. Donald M. Snyder and Mr. Willis Larson of the American Typesetting Company.

The editors of *Webster's New World Dictionary of the American Language*, Second College Edition, firmly believe that the years of work expended on its production will be well justified by the many services it will perform for those who turn to it. To ensure that the greatest possible benefit is obtained from this reference work, the user is urged to read the "Guide to the Use of the Dictionary" on the following pages.

David B. Guralnik
Editor in Chief

GUIDE TO THE USE OF THE DICTIONARY

I. THE MAIN ENTRY WORD

A. *Arrangement of Entries*

All main entries, including single words, hyphenated and unhyphenated compounds, proper names, prefixes, suffixes, and abbreviations, are listed in strict alphabetical order and are set in large, boldface type.

black (blak) *adj.* . . .
Black (blak), **Hugo** (La Fayette) . . .
black alder . . .
black-and-blue (-ən bloo′) *adj.* . . .
black·ber·ry (-ber′ē) *n.* . . .
bldg. . . .
-ble (b′l) . . .

Note that in the biographical entry only the last, or family, name (that part preceding the comma) has been considered in alphabetization. When two or more persons with the same family name are entered, they are dealt with in a single entry block, arranged in alphabetical order by first names. Biographical and geographical names that are identical in form are kept in separate blocks.

Jack·son (jak′s'n) [after Andrew JACKSON] **1.** capital of Miss., in the SW part, on the Pearl River; pop. 144,000 **2.** city in S Mich.: pop. 51,000 **3.** city in W Tenn.: pop. 34,000
Jack·son (jak′s'n) **1. Andrew**, (nickname *Old Hickory*) 1767–1845; U.S. general; 7th president of the U.S. (1829–37) **2. Robert H**(oughwout), 1892–1954; U.S. jurist; associate justice, Supreme Court (1941–54) **3. Thomas Jonathan**, (nickname *Stonewall Jackson*) 1824–63; Confederate general in the Civil War

The name prefixes "Mac" and "Mc" are listed in strict alphabetical order.

MacDowell, Edward Alexander
mace
MacLeish, Archibald
make
maser
McCormack, John
McKinley, William

Strict alphabetical order is also followed for "Saint" and "St." when they appear as a part of proper names other than the names of canonized persons.

Saint Bernard (dog)
Saint-Gaudens, Augustus
squint
St. Clair (river)
steel
St. Helena (island)

Canonized persons are alphabetized by their given names, which appear in boldface. The designation "Saint" follows in lightface type, either directly after a comma or, within a proper-name block, at the beginning of a numbered sense. Thus **Augustine**, the saint, will be found in the A's, but **St. Augustine**, the city in Florida, will be found in the S's.

B. *Variant Spellings & Forms*

When variant spellings of a word are some distance apart alphabetically, the definition for the word appears at the spelling known or judged to be the one most frequently used. Other spellings of the word are cross-referred to that spelling in small capitals, and unless such a cross-reference indicates that the variant is British, dialectal, slang, obsolete, or the like, each form given is as acceptable in standard American usage as the one carrying the definition, though usually not as commonly used.

aes·the·si·a . . . *n. same as* ESTHESIA
kerb . . . *n. Brit. sp. of* CURB (*n.* 5)

If two variant spellings are alphabetically close to each other, they appear together as a joint boldface entry. In some such cases, usage is about evenly divided between them. In still others, the evidence of collected citations indicates a greater frequency of occurrence for the one given

first. In no case is the first spelling considered "more correct" or the one necessarily to be preferred.

the·a·ter, the·a·tre . . . *n.* . . .

If one variant spelling, or several, are alphabetically close to the main-entry spelling and pronounced exactly like it but are somewhat or considerably less frequent in usage, such spellings are given at the end of the entry block in small boldface.

Par·chee·si . . . : also sp. **par·che′si, par·chi′si**

In some cases, the variants may involve diacritics, hyphens, or the like.

co·op·er·ate, co-op·er·ate . . . *vi.* . . . Also **co·öp′er·ate′**

When words having exactly the same meaning would fall alphabetically next to or close to each other, the less frequently used word is given in small boldface at the end of the definition for the predominant word.

laud·a·to·ry . . . *adj.* . . . : also **laud′a·tive**
-lep·sy . . . : also **-lep′si·a**

C. *Cross-references*

In all main entries that consist simply of a cross-reference to another entry of the same meaning, the entry cross-referred to is in small capitals.

gay·e·ty . . . *n.* . . . *same as* GAIETY
aer·o·plane . . . *n.* . . . *Brit. var. of* AIRPLANE
slap-bang . . . —*adj. colloq. var. of* SLAPDASH
me·grim . . . *n.* . . . *obs. var. of* MIGRAINE
yellow daisy ☆*popular name for* BLACK-EYED SUSAN
☆**ma·jor·ette** . . . *n. short for* DRUM MAJORETTE
log·o . . . *n. clipped form of* LOGOTYPE

D. *Homographs*

Main entries that are spelled alike but are different in meaning and origin, as **bat** (a club), **bat** (the animal), and **bat** (to wink), in addition to being entered in separate blocks are marked by superscript numbers immediately following the boldface spellings.

bat[1] . . . *n.* . . .
bat[2] . . . *n.* . . .
bat[3] . . . *vt.* . . .

When these need to be referred to in etymologies, definitions, etc., the cross-reference is made to the numbered homograph.

Main entries that differ from others with the same spelling by having such markings as accents, hyphens, etc. or by being capitalized are not considered homographs and are not marked with superscripts.

E. *Americanisms*

Words and phrases having their origin in the United States, as well as those senses of previously existing words or phrases that first came into use in this country, are marked as Americanisms by an open star (☆). (See article *Americanisms* by Mitford M. Mathews, p. xxxiii.)

If the star precedes the entry word, all senses in the block and run-in derivatives, if given, are Americanisms.

☆**las·so** . . . *n.* . . . a long rope or leather thong with a sliding noose at one end, used to catch cattle or wild horses —*vt.* to catch with a lasso —**las′so·er** *n.*

If the star precedes a particular part of speech, all senses of that part of speech are Americanisms.

squid . . . *n.* . . . —☆*vi.* **squid′ded, squid′ding 1.** to take on an elongated squidlike shape due to strong air pressure: said of a parachute **2.** to fish for squid or with squid as bait

If the star precedes a single definition or part of a definition, only that definition or part is an Americanism.

liv·er·y . . . *n.* . . . **4.** *a*) . . . *b*) . . . ☆*c*) *same as* LIVERY STABLE
load . . . *n.* . . . ☆**6.** the amount of work carried by or assigned to a person, group, etc. [the class *load* of a teacher, the *caseload* of a social worker]
stuff . . . *n.* . . . **6.** something to be drunk, swallowed etc.: specif., a medicine or ☆[Slang] a drug, as heroin . . .

F. Foreign Terms

Foreign words and phrases encountered with some frequency in English speech and writing but not completely naturalized are marked with a double dagger (‡) preceding the boldface entry. The user of the dictionary is thus signaled that such terms are generally printed in italics or underlined in writing.

‡au na·tu·rel ... [Fr.] ...

Commonly used abbreviations for non-English terms are not marked with the sign (‡). Their etymologies show the language of origin and the full, unabbreviated form of the term.

i.e. [L. *id est*] that is (to say)
R.S.V.P., r.s.v.p. [Fr. *répondez s'il vous plaît*] please reply

G. Prefixes, Suffixes, & Combining Forms

Prefixes and initial combining forms are indicated by a hyphen following the entry form.

hem·i- ... *a prefix meaning* half *[hemisphere]*

Suffixes and terminal combining forms are indicated by a hyphen preceding the entry form.

-la·try ... *a combining form meaning* worship of or excessive devotion to *[idolatry]*

The very full coverage given these forms, which are also pronounced when pronunciation in isolation is feasible, makes it possible for the reader to understand and pronounce countless complex terms not entered in the dictionary but formed with affixes and words that are entered.

H. Syllabification

Center dots in the entry words indicate where the words can be divided if they need to be broken at the end of a written or printed line. In actual copy, a hyphen is used in place of the center dot. For example, **her·biv·o·rous** can be broken at the end of a line variously (**her-** or **herbiv-** or **herbivo-**), depending on how much space is available before the right-hand margin is reached.

The syllabications used in this dictionary are in the main those in general use by printers since the 18th century. While they are not scientifically based on a consistent system, either morphological or phonological, they have developed as the most practical solution to a complicated problem. The only useful purpose of syllable markings is to signal the reader at the end of a line of written or printed matter and help him to anticipate what is to follow on the next line. More often than not, a syllabification based on a phonological division of the word best serves this purpose. Sometimes, especially when affixes or other fixed clusters are involved, a division based on the morphemes of a word is preferable. The syllabifications shown in this dictionary conform in most instances with those in use by the Government Printing Office.

Complicating any system is the fact that our language is in a continual flux and that changes in pronunciation and spelling gradually occur over a period of time. Thus, the syllabification shown at the entry word may be in conflict with one or more of the alternative pronunciations (e.g., **recondite**). Similarly, if a shift of stress occurs for a new part of speech (e.g., **progress**), the syllabification shown will properly apply only to the use of the word as the first part of speech given. In such a case a writer may wish to alter the syllabification (as from **prog·ress** for the noun to **pro·gress** for the verb) to accommodate the only real purpose of the syllable markings, that is, their signaling function. The variant pronunciation shown will usually, but not always, serve as a guide to such change.

All the syllables of a word are marked for the sake of consistency (e.g., **might·y**, **a·ban·don**). It is not, however, customary in writing or printing to break a word after the first syllable or before the last if that syllable consists of only a single letter, or, in the case of a long word, of only two.

II. PRONUNCIATION

A. Introduction

The pronunciations recorded in this dictionary are those used by cultivated speakers in normal, relaxed speech. For technical words of a kind that occur in conversation, a relaxed pronunciation is recorded, but for more recondite ones that are found mostly in writing and are not often spoken, a formal pronunciation based essentially on analogy is given.

The pronunciations are symbolized in as broad a manner as is consistent with accuracy so that speakers of every variety of American English can easily read their own pronunciations into the symbols used here. For some words, variant pronunciations that are dialectal, British, Canadian, slang, etc. are given along with the standard American pronunciations. Contextual differences in pronunciation also have been indicated wherever practicable, as by showing variants in unstressed or shifted stress form. See Charlton Laird's article, *Language and the Dictionary*, p. xv, for further discussion of American pronunciation.

B. Key to Pronunciation

An abbreviated form of this key appears at the bottom of every alternate page of the vocabulary.

Symbol	Key Words	Symbol	Key Words
a	asp, fat, parrot	b	bed, fable, dub
ā	ape, date, play	d	dip, beadle, had
ä	ah, car, father	f	fall, after, off
		g	get, haggle, dog
e	elf, ten, berry	h	he, ahead, hotel
ē	even, meet, money	j	joy, agile, badge
		k	kill, tackle, bake
i	is, hit, mirror	l	let, yellow, ball
ī	ice, bite, high	m	met, camel, trim
		n	not, flannel, ton
ō	open, tone, go	p	put, apple, tap
ô	all, horn, law	r	red, port, dear
o͞o	ooze, tool, crew	s	sell, castle, pass
o͝o	look, pull, moor	t	top, cattle, hat
yo͞o	use, cute, few	v	vat, hovel, have
yo͝o	united, cure, globule	w	will, always, swear
oi	oil, point, toy	y	yet, onion, yard
ou	out, crowd, plow	z	zebra, dazzle, haze
u	up, cut, color	ch	chin, catcher, arch
ʉr	urn, fur, deter	sh	she, cushion, dash
		th	thin, nothing, truth
ə	a in ago	th	then, father, lathe
	e in agent	zh	azure, leisure
	i in sanity	ŋ	ring, anger, drink
	o in comply	'	[see explanatory note
	u in focus		below and also *For-*
ər	perhaps, murder		*eign sounds* below]

The qualities of most of the symbols above can be readily understood from the key words in which they are shown, and a speaker of any dialect of American English will automatically read his own pronunciation into any symbol shown here. A few explanatory notes on some of the more complex of these symbols follow.

ä   This symbol represents essentially the low back vowel of *car*, but may also represent the low central vowel sometimes heard in New England for *bath*. Certain words shown with ä, such as *alms* (ämz), *hot* (hät), *rod* (räd), etc., are heard in the speech of some persons with vowel variation, ranging all the way to ô (ômz), (hôt), (rôd), etc. Such variation, though not generally recorded in this dictionary, may be assumed.

e   This symbol represents the mid front vowel of *ten*, and is also used, followed and hence colored by *r*, to represent the vowel sound of *care* (ker). For this sound, vowels ranging from ā (kār *or* kā'ər) to a (kar) are sometimes heard and, though not here recorded, may be assumed as variants.

ē   This symbol represents the high front vowel of *meet* and is also used for the vowel in the unstressed final syllable of such words as *lucky* (luk'ē), *pretty* (prit'ē), etc. In such contexts, reduction to i (luk'i), (prit'i), etc. is often heard. Such variants, though not here recorded, may be assumed.

i   This symbol represents the high front unrounded vowel of *hit* and is also used for the vowel in the unstressed syllables of such words as *garbage* (gär'bij), *goodness* (good'nis), *preface* (pref'is), *deny* (di nī'), *curate* (kyoor'it), etc. In such contexts, reduction to ə is commonly heard: (gär'bəj), (good'nəs), (pref'əs), (də nī'), (kyoor'ət), etc. Such variants, though not here recorded, may be assumed. This symbol is also used, followed and hence colored by *r*, to represent the vowel sound of *dear* (dir). For this sound, vowels ranging to ē (dēr *or* dē'ər) are sometimes heard and, though not here recorded, may be assumed as variants.

ô   This symbol represents the mid to low back vowel of *all*. When followed by *r*, as in *more* (môr), vowels ranging to ō (mōr *or* mō'ər) are often heard and, though not here recorded, may be assumed as variants. Certain words shown with ô, such as *cough* (kôf), *lawn* (lôn), etc., are heard in the speech of some persons with vowel variation ranging all the way to ä (käf), (län), etc. Such variation, though not generally recorded in this dictionary, may be assumed.

ʉr and ər   These two clusters of symbols represent respectively the stressed and unstressed r-colored vowels heard successively in the two syllables of *murder* (mʉr'dər). Where these symbols are shown, some speakers, especially in the South and along the Eastern seaboard, will, as a matter of course, pronounce them without the r-coloration, that is, by "dropping their r's." Such pronunciations, though not here recorded, may be inferred as variants.

ə   This symbol, called the schwa, represents the mid central relaxed vowel of neutral coloration heard in the unstressed syllables of *ago*, *agent*, *focus*, etc. The degree and quality of the dulling of such vowels vary from word to word and from speaker to speaker. In many contexts, as for *-itis* (īt'əs), the vowel is often raised to i (īt'is). Such variants when not shown may be inferred.

t This symbol represents the voiceless alveolar stop of *top* or *hat*. When it appears between vowels, especially before an unstressed vowel, as in *later* (lāt′ər), or before a syllabic *l*, as in *cattle* (kat′'l), it is often heard as a voiced sound that approaches the sound of *d* in *ladle*. Although such variants are not shown in this dictionary, the symbol (t) is generally placed in the same syllable with the preceding vowel to help the reader infer the voiced alternative.

ŋ This symbol represents the voiced velar nasal sound indicated in spelling by the *ng* of *sing* and occurring also for *n* before the back consonants *k* and *g*, as in *drink* (driŋk) and *finger* (fiŋ′gər).

′ The apostrophe occurring before an *l*, *m*, or *n* indicates that the following consonant is a syllabic consonant; that is, that it forms the nucleus of a syllable with no appreciable vowel sound accompanying it, as in *apple* (ap′'l) or *happen* (hap′'n). In the speech of some persons, certain syllabic consonants are replaced with syllables containing reduced vowels, as (hap′ən). Such variants, though not entered here, may be inferred. See *Foreign sounds*, below.

Foreign sounds

Most of the symbols in the key above have been used to transcribe pronunciations in foreign languages, although it should be understood that these foreign sounds will vary somewhat from language to language. The additional symbols below will suffice to cover those situations that cannot be adequately dealt with using the general key. Several of these symbols are, again, intended to convey varying sounds in different languages, where the similarities are sufficient to permit the use of a single symbol.

á This symbol, representing the *a* in French *bal* (bál) can best be described as intermediate between (a) and (ä).

ë This symbol represents the sound of the vowel cluster in French *coeur* (kër) and can be approximated by rounding the lips as for (ô) and pronouncing (e).

ö This symbol variously represents the sound of *eu* in French *feu* (fö) or of *ö* (or *oe*) in German *Göthe* (or *Goethe*) (gö′tə) and can be approximated by rounding the lips as for (ō) and pronouncing (ā).

ô̂ This symbol represents a range of sounds varying from (ô) to (ō) and heard with such varying quality in French *coq* (kôk), German *doch* (dôkh), Italian *poco* (pô′kô), Spanish *torero* (tô re′rô), etc.

ü This symbol variously represents the sound of *u* in French *duc* (dük) and in German *grün* (grün) and can be approximated by rounding the lips as for (ōō) and pronouncing (ē).

kh This symbol represents the voiceless velar or uvular fricative as in German *doch* (dôkh). It can be approximated by arranging the speech organs as for (k) but allowing the breath to escape in a stream, as in pronouncing (h).

H This symbol represents a sound similar to the preceding but formed by friction against the forward part of the palate, as in German *ich* (iH). It is sometimes misheard, and hence pronounced, by English speakers as (sh).

n This symbol indicates that the vowel sound immediately preceding it is nasalized; that is, the nasal passage is left open so that the breath passes through both the mouth and nose in voicing the vowel, as in French *mon* (môn).

r This symbol represents any of various sounds used in languages other than English for the consonant *r*. It may represent the tongue-point trill or uvular trill of the *r* in French *reste* (rest) or *sur* (sür), German *Reuter* (roi′tər), Italian *ricotta* (rē kôt′tä), Russian *gorod* (gô′rôd), etc.

′ The apostrophe is used after final *l* and *r*, in certain French pronunciations, to indicate that they are voiceless after an unvoiced consonant, as in *lettre* (let′r′). In Russian words the "soft sign" in the Cyrillic spelling is indicated by (y′). The sound can be approximated by pronouncing an unvoiced (y) directly after the consonant involved, as in *Sevastopol* (se′väs tô′pəl y′).

C. *General Styling of Pronunciation*

Pronunciations are given inside parentheses, immediately following the boldface entry. A single space is used between syllables. A primary, or strong, stress is indicated by a heavy stroke (′) immediately following the syllable so stressed. A secondary, or weak, stress is indicated by a lighter stroke (′) following the syllable so stressed All notes, labels, or other matter inside the parentheses other than the actual pronunciation symbols are in italics.

D. *Truncation*

Variant pronunciations are truncated wherever possible, with only that syllable or those syllables in which change occurs shown. A hyphen after the truncated variant marks it as initial; one before the variant, as terminal; and hyphens before and after the variant, as internal.

ab·duct (ab dukt′, əb-) . . .
fu·tu·ri·ty (fyōō toor′ə tē, -tyoor′-, -choor′-) . . .
rec·ti·tude (rek′tə tōōd′, -tyōōd′) . . .

Truncations of variant pronunciations involving different parts of speech in the same entry block appear as follows:

pre·cip·i·tate (pri sip′ə tāt′; *also, for adj. & n.*, -tit) . . .

Truncated pronunciations are also given for a series of words with the same base after the pronunciation of the base has been established.

ju·di·ca·ble (jōō′di kə b'l) . . .
ju·di·ca·tive (-kāt′iv, -kə tiv) . . .
ju·di·ca·to·ry (-kə tôr′ē) . . .

Similarly, with a series containing compounds and derived forms:

time·keep·er (tīm′kē′pər) . . .
time·lapse (-laps′) . . .
time·lei (-lis) . . .
time loan . . .
time·ly (-lē) . . .

Full pronunciations are given with words in a series of the following kind when there is a shift in stress affecting the base.

bi·o·ce·no·sis (bī′ō si nō′sis) . . .
bi·o·chem·is·try (-kem′is trē) . . .
bi·o·cide (bī′ə sīd′) . . .
bi·o·cli·ma·tol·o·gy (bī′ō klī′mə täl′ə jē) . . .
bi·o·de·grad·a·ble (-di grā′də b'l) . . .

E. *Variants*

Where two or more pronunciations for a single word are given, the order in which they are entered does not necessarily mean that the first is preferred to or more correct than the one or ones that follow. In most cases, the order indicates that on the basis of available information, the form given first is the one most frequent in general cultivated use. Where usage is about evenly divided, since one form must be given first, the editors′ preference generally prevails. Unless a variant is qualified, as by *now rarely* or *occasionally* or some such note, it is understood that any pronunciation here entered represents a standard use.

Compounds or phrases of two or more separate, unhyphenated words (e.g., **bill of attainder** or **launch pad**), each of which has been entered and pronounced separately in the dictionary, are not repronounced.

III. PART-OF-SPEECH LABELS

Part-of-speech labels are given for lower-case main entries that are solid or hyphenated forms, except prefixes, suffixes, and abbreviations. The following labels for the parts of speech into which words are classified in traditional English grammar are used in this dictionary. They appear in boldface italic type following the pronunciations.

n.	noun	*prep.*	preposition
vt.	transitive verb	*conj.*	conjunction
vi.	intransitive verb	*pron.*	pronoun
adj.	adjective	*interj.*	interjection
adv.	adverb		

In addition, the following labels are sometimes used:

n.pl. plural noun
v.aux. auxiliary verb
v.impersonal impersonal verb
n.fem. feminine noun
n.masc. masculine noun

When an entry word is used as more than one part of speech, long dashes introduce each different part of speech in the entry block and each part-of-speech label appears in boldface italic type.

round[1] . . . *adj.* . . . . —*n.* . . . . —*vt.* . . . . —*vi.* . . . . —*adv.* . . . . —*prep.* . . . .

Two or more part-of-speech labels are given jointly for an entry when the definition or definitions, or the cross-reference, will suffice for both or all.

lip-read . . . *vt.*, *vi.* . . . . to recognize (a speaker′s words) by lip reading . . .
hal·lo, hal·loa . . . *interj.*, *n.*, *vi.*, *vt. same as* HALLOO

Part-of-speech labels are not used for names of persons and places, or for given names, figures in religion, mythology, literature, etc. However, usages have sometimes developed from these that can be classified as parts of speech and these are indicated.

A·don·is . . . *Gr. Myth.* a handsome young man loved by Aphrodite: he was killed by a wild boar —*n.* any very handsome young man . . .

It is theoretically possible to use almost any word as whatever part of speech is required, although most such uses would be only for the nonce. Thus any transitive verb can be used absolutely as an intransitive verb, with the object understood (e.g., he *defined* the word; you must *define* discriminatively). Such absolute uses are entered only when they are relatively common. In the same way nouns used as adjectives (e.g., a *cloth* cover; a *family* affair) are indicated only for the most frequent uses.

IV. INFLECTED FORMS

Inflected forms regarded as irregular or offering difficulty in spelling are entered in small boldface immediately following the part-of-speech labels. They are truncated where possible, and syllabified and pronounced where necessary.

A. *Plurals of Nouns*

Plurals formed regularly by adding *-s* to the singular (or *-es* after *s*, *x*, *z*, *ch*, and *sh*), as *bats*, *boxes*, are not normally indicated.

Plurals are shown when formed irregularly, as for nouns with a *-y* ending that changes to *-ies*, and for those with an *-o* ending, those inflected by internal change, those having variant forms, those having different forms for different meanings, compound nouns, etc.

cit·y . . . *n.*, *pl.* **cit′ies** . . .
bo·le·ro . . . *n.*, *pl.* **-ros** . . .
tooth . . . *n.*, *pl.* **teeth** (tēth) . . .
a·moe·ba . . . *n.*, *pl.* **-bas**, **-bae** (-bē) . . .
die² . . . *n.*, *pl.* for 1 & 2, **dice** (dīs); for 3 & 4 **dies** (dīz)
son-in-law . . . *n.*, *pl.* **sons′-in-law′** . . .

If an irregular plural is so altered in spelling that it would appear at some distance from the singular form, it is entered additionally in its proper alphabetical place.

lice . . . *n. pl.* of LOUSE

B. *Principal Parts of Verbs*

Verb forms regarded as regular and not normally indicated include:

a) present tenses formed by adding *-s* to the infinitive (or *-es* after *s*, *x*, *z*, *ch*, and *sh*), as *waits*, *searches*;
b) past tenses and past participles formed by simply adding *-ed* to the infinitive with no other changes in the verb form, as *waited*, *searched*;
c) present participles formed by simply adding *-ing* to the infinitive with no other change in the verb form, as *waiting*, *searching*.

Principal parts are given for irregular verbs, including those in which the final *e* is dropped in forming the present participle, those which always or optionally repeat the final consonant in all principal parts, those in which *-y* changes to *-ie-* in the past tense and past participle, and those inflected by internal change.

Where two inflected forms are given for a verb, the first is the form for the past tense and the past participle, and the second is the form for the present participle.

make . . . *vt.* **made**, **mak′ing** . . .
sip . . . *vt.*, *vi.* **sipped**, **sip′ping** . . .

Where three forms are given, separated from one another by commas, the first represents the past tense, the second the past participle, and the third the present participle.

swim . . . *vi.* **swam**, **swum**, **swim′ming** . . .

Where there are alternative forms for any of the principal parts, these are indicated as follows:

trav·el . . . *vi.* **-eled** or **-elled**, **-el·ing** or **-el·ling** . . .
drink . . . *vt.* **drank** or archaic **drunk** (druŋk), **drunk** or now colloq. **drank** or archaic **drunk′en**, **drink′ing** . . .

If a principal part of a verb is so altered in spelling that it would appear at some distance from the infinitive form, it is entered additionally in its proper alphabetical place.

said . . . *pt.* & *pp.* of SAY

C. *Comparatives & Superlatives of Adjectives & Adverbs*

Comparatives and superlatives formed by simply adding *-er* or *-est* to the base, as *taller*, *tallest*, are not indicated. Those formed irregularly, as by adding *-r* and *-st* (*rare*, *rarer*, *rarest*), by changing final *-y* to *-i-* (*happy*, *happier*, *happiest*), or by some radical change in form (*good*, *better*, *best* or *well*, *better*, *best*), are indicated with the positive form.

The positive form is also noted at the comparative and superlative forms when these are entered and defined at some distance from it.

best . . . *adj. superl.* of GOOD . . . —*adv. superl.* of WELL²

Conjugations are given for those irregular verbs that are used as auxiliaries (**be, have,** etc.) and declensions are given for the personal pronouns. The various conjugated and declined forms for these important elements, both current and archaic, are also entered separately.

V. THE ETYMOLOGY

Etymology has been made a strong feature of this dictionary because it is believed that insights into the current usage of a word can be gained from a full knowledge of the word's history and that a better understanding of language generally can be achieved from knowing how words are related to other words in English and to words in other Indo-European languages. Particular attention is paid to showing these relationships as fully as possible and to carrying the

etymologies back where possible (either directly or through cross-reference) to the Indo-European base.

Etymologies appear in entry blocks inside heavy boldface brackets that make them clearly distinguishable in their position before the definitions proper. The symbols, as < for "derived from," and the abbreviations of language labels, etc. used in the etymologies are dealt with in full in the Abbreviations and Symbols list immediately preceding page 1 of the vocabulary.

The form and content of a typical etymology is demonstrated in the following entry for **life.**

life (līf) *n.*, *pl.* **lives** [ME. < OE. *lif*, akin to ON. *lif*, life, G. *leib*, body < IE. base **leibh-*, to live, whence L. (*cae*)*lebs*, unmarried, orig., living alone (cf. CELIBATE)] **1.** that property of plants and animals which makes it possible . . .

The first portion of this etymology, dealing with the history of the word within English itself, indicates that in Middle English the word is found in the same form and with the same meaning as in Modern English, and that this form derives from the Old English word *lif*. Cognate forms from other Germanic languages are next introduced by the words *akin to*, the first cognate, Old Norse *lif*, with the same meaning, "life," and the other, German *leib*, with an interestingly related meaning, "body." The word is then taken back to the reconstructed Indo-European base (its hypothetical character is indicated by *) and its meaning, "to live." Following is a Latin word derived from this base, *caelebs* (note the similarity in the last syllable), whose meaning, "unmarried," although seemingly unrelated to the meaning of the base, is shown to be directly related through the original meaning, "living alone." Finally there is a cross-reference (in small capitals) to an English word in the dictionary, *celibate*, which derives from the Latin word *caelebs* and which the user can consult further if he is interested. Thus we have traveled back in the history of an entry word across language barriers to the very root of the word and forward again to a modern English word related to it.

Some words are etymologized by means of cross-references (in small capitals) to their component elements, which are dealt with separately in the dictionary.

pro·to·ste·le . . . *n.* [PROTO- + STELE] . . .
si·lox·ane . . . *n.* [SIL(ICON) + OX(YGEN) + -ANE] . . .
splurge . . . *n.* [echoic blend of SPL(ASH) + (S)URGE] . . .

Note that in two of the etymologies above, the parentheses are used to set off parts dropped in telescoping the words that were used to form the entry word. It is always the whole word, however, that will be found in the dictionary.

No etymology is shown where one would be superfluous, as because the elements making up the word are immediately apparent to the user (e.g., **preconscious**) or because the definition that follows clearly explains the derivation (e.g., **bluebottle**).

Where no etymology can be ascertained and no reasonable conjecture can be made, that fact is indicated by the following: [< ?]

A special effort has been made to include as many etymologies as possible for place names in the United States.

VI. THE DEFINITIONS

A. *Order of Senses*

The senses of an entry have, wherever possible, been arranged in semantic order from the etymology to the most recent sense so that there is a logical, progressive flow showing the development of the word and the relationship of its senses to one another (see, for example, the entries **stock** and **common**). In longer entries, where the treatment would not greatly disturb the semantic flow, technical senses have been entered, with special field labels in alphabetical order, usually following the general senses, to facilitate their being found quickly. For the same reason, senses that are colloquial, slang, archaic, obsolete, dialectal, or the like are generally entered, with suitable usage labels, just before the technical senses. Sometimes labeled senses will appear earlier in the block, if it is desirable to tie them in semantically with general or standard senses. Obsolete senses that bridge the gap between the etymology and the definitions proper often occur first. Such senses are generally preceded by "originally" or "formerly" rather than by a formal usage label.

B. *Numbering & Grouping of Senses*

Senses are numbered consecutively within any given part of speech in boldface numerals. Numeration is begun anew for each part of speech and for each idiomatic phrase.

aim . . . *vi.*, *vt.* . . . **1.** . . . . **2.** . . . . **3.** . . . . **4.** . . . . —*n.* **1.** . . . . **2.** . . . **3.** . . . . **4.** . . . —**take aim 1.** . . . . **2.** . . . .

Where a primary sense of a word can easily be subdivided into several closely related meanings, this has been done; such meanings are indicated by italicized letters after the pertinent numbered or labeled sense. The words "especially" or "specifically" (abbreviated "esp." and "specif.") are

often used after an introductory definition to introduce such a grouping of related senses.

hack² . . . *n.* . . . . **1.** *a)* a horse for hire *b)* a horse for all sorts of work *c)* a saddle horse *d)* an old, worn-out horse **2.** a person hired to do routine, often dull, writing; literary drudge . . .

low¹ . . . *n.* something low; specif., ☆*a)* that gear of a motor vehicle, etc. producing the lowest speed and the greatest power; also, an arrangement similar to this in an automatic transmission *b)* a low level, point, degree, etc. *[the stock market low for the day]* ☆*c) Meteorol.* an area of low barometric pressure . . .

Where a basic word has very many senses that can conveniently be arranged under a few major headings, such a division has been made (e.g., **go, time**). The sections, indicated by boldface Roman numerals, are then further subdivided into numbered (and, where necessary, lettered) senses.

C. Capitalization

If a main-entry word is capitalized in all its senses, the entry word itself is printed with a capital letter (e.g., **European**).

If a capitalized main-entry word has a sense or senses that are uncapitalized, these are marked with the corresponding small-boldface, lower-case letter followed by a short dash and enclosed in brackets.

Pur·i·tan . . . *n.* . . . **1.** . . . **2.** [p-] . . . —*adj.* **1.** . . . **2.** [p-] . . .

Conversely, capitalized letters are shown where pertinent with lower-case entries. In some instances these designations are qualified by the self-explanatory "usually," "often," "also," or "occas." in italics.

north . . . *n.* . . . **1.** . . . **2.** . . . **3.** . . . **4.** [*often* N-] . . . —*adj.* **1.** . . . **2.** . . . **3.** [N-] . . .

D. Plural Forms

In a singular noun entry, the designation "[*pl.*]" (or "[*often pl.*]," "[*usually pl.*]," etc.) before a definition indicates that it is (or *often, usually*, etc. is) the plural form of the entry word that has the meaning given in the definition.

lim·it . . . *n.* . . . **1.** . . . **2.** [*pl.*] bounds; boundary lines . . .
look . . . *vi.* . . . —*n.* **1.** . . . **2.** . . . **3.** [Colloq.] *a)* [*usually pl.*] appearance; the way something seems to be . . . *b)* [*pl.*] personal appearance, esp. of a pleasing nature . . .

If such a plural sense is construed as singular, the designation "*with sing. v.*" is added inside the brackets.

bone . . . *n.* . . . **7.** *a)* [*pl.*] flat sticks used as clappers in minstrel shows ☆*b)* [*pl., with sing. v.*] the end man in a minstrel show . . .

The note "*usually used in pl.*" at the end of a singular noun definition means that although the definition applies to the given singular form of the entry word, the word is usually used in the plural.

lead² (led) *n.* . . . **1.** . . . **2.** anything made of this metal; specif., *a)* . . . *b)* any of the strips of lead used to hold the individual panes in ornamental windows: *usually used in pl.* . . .

If a plural noun entry is construed as singular, the designation "[*with sing. v.*]" is placed after the *n.pl.* label or, in some cases, with the numbered sense to which it applies.

☆**ger·i·at·rics** . . . *n.pl.* [*with sing. v.*] . . . the branch of medicine that deals with the diseases and hygiene of old age . . .
a·cous·tics . . . *n.pl.* **1.** . . . **2.** [*with sing. v.*] . . .

E. Prepositions Accompanying Verbs

Where certain verbs are, in usage, invariably or usually followed by a specific preposition or prepositions, this has been indicated in the following ways: the preposition has been worked into the definition, italicized and enclosed in parentheses, or a note has been added in parentheses indicating that the preposition is so used.

strike . . . —*vi.* . . . **10.** to come suddenly or unexpectedly; fall, light, etc. (*on* or *upon*) *[to strike on the right combination]*
strike . . . —*vi.* . . . ☆**17.** *U.S. Navy* to try hard to qualify (*for* a rating) . . .
fig² . . . *vt.* . . . to dress showily (with *out* or *up*) . . .
hit . . . —*vi.* . . . **3.** to knock, bump, or strike (usually with *against*) . . .

Such uses of verbs with specific prepositions should not be confused with verb sets consisting of a verb form with an adverb, which are entered as idiomatic phrases under the key verb (e.g., **make out, make over,** and **make up** at the entry **make**).

F. Objects of Transitive Verbs

In definitions of transitive verbs the specific or generalized objects of the verb, where given, are enclosed in parentheses since such objects are not part of the definition.

ob·serve . . . *vt.* . . . **1.** to adhere to, follow, keep, or abide by (a law, custom, duty, rule, etc.) **2.** to celebrate or keep (a holiday, etc.) according to custom **3.** *a)* to notice or perceive (something) *b)* to pay special attention to . . .

In **3***b* above, it will be noted no object is shown; the definition is formulated so that it is apparent that the verb takes an object. In some such cases the transitive verb can be defined jointly with the intransitive verb.

chis·el . . . —*vi., vt.* . . . **1.** to cut or shape with a chisel . . .

G. Additional Information & Notes

Additional information or any note or comment on the definition proper is preceded by a colon.

mag·ne·to·sphere . . . *n.* . . . . that region surrounding a planet in which the planetary magnetic field is stronger than the interplanetary field: the earth's magnetosphere extends about 3.5 million miles in the direction away from the sun . . .
ma·ture . . . *adj.* . . . **4.** due; payable: said of a note, bond, etc. . . .
mil·li·gram . . . *n.* . . . : also, chiefly Brit. sp., **mil'li·gramme'**: abbrev. **mg.** (*sing. & pl.*)

If the note or comment applies to all the senses or parts of speech preceding it, it begins with a capital letter and no colon introduces it.

old hat [Slang] **1.** old-fashioned; out-of-date **2.** well-known or familiar to the point of being trite or commonplace Used predicatively

Where the explanatory material consists of a series of items, as in geographical and chemical definitions, the colon precedes the first item and the others are separated by semicolons (e.g., **hydrogen, Ohio**).

H. Illustrative Examples of Entry Words in Context

Examples of usage have been liberally supplied, enclosed in lightface slant brackets, with the word that is being illustrated set in italics. These brief illustrative examples are helpful in clarifying meaning, discriminating a large stock of senses for a basic word, showing level of usage or special connotation, and supplying added information.

com·mon . . . *adj.* . . . **1.** belonging equally to, or shared by, every one or all *[the common interests of a group]* **2.** belonging or relating to the community at large; public *[common carriers]* **3.** widely existing; general; prevalent *[common knowledge]* **4.** widely but unfavorably known *[a common criminal]* **5.** met with or occurring frequently; familiar; usual *[a common sight]* **6.** not of the upper classes; of the masses *[the common man]*

I. Internal Entry Words

Entry words occasionally occur within definitions, parenthesized and in small boldface type. In such cases, the meaning of the inserted entry word is made clear in the definition.

☆**time clock** a clock with a mechanism for recording on a card (**timecard**) the time an employee begins and ends a work period

J. Cross-references

Entry words (or tables, illustrations, etc.) to which the reader is being cross-referred are given in small capitals.

ca·tab·o·lism . . . *n.* . . . : opposed to ANABOLISM
con·sub·stan·ti·a·tion . . . *n.* . . . : cf. TRANSUBSTANTIATION
fa . . . *n.* . . . : see SOLFEGGIO
Gem·i·ni . . . : see ZODIAC, illus.
natural law 1. . . . **2.** . . . : see LAW (sense 8 *a*) . . .
natural selection . . . : see also DARWINIAN THEORY
sol¹ . . . *n.* . . . : see MONETARY UNITS, table

VII. USAGE LABELS & NOTES

It is generally understood that usage varies among groups of people according to locality, level of education, social environment, occupation, etc. More specifically, it must be remembered, usage varies for an individual in any given day depending upon the particular situation in which he is involved and the purpose his language must serve. The language that a scientist uses in preparing a report on his work may be quite different from the language he uses in writing a letter to a friend. What is good usage in a literary essay may not be the best usage in the lyrics to a popular song or in casual conversation. None of the modes of using language in the cases cited is in an absolute sense more correct than any of the others. Each is right for its occasion and any attempt to interchange styles can result in inappropriate language. Certain occasions call for language

that is more or less formal, and others, language that is more or less informal.

Dictionaries can reasonably be expected to assign usage labels to those terms that the record shows are regularly used in informal or highly informal contexts. The editors of this dictionary decided that the familiarity of the conventional usage designations makes their use advisable if the meaning of these labels is clearly understood in advance. The labels, and what they are intended to indicate, are given below. If the label, which is placed in brackets (and in some cases abbreviated), occurs directly after a part-of-speech label or after a boldface entry term, it applies to all the senses given with that part of speech or that term; if it occurs after a numeral or letter, it applies only to the sense so numbered or lettered.

Colloquial: The term or sense is generally characteristic of conversation and informal writing. It is not to be regarded as substandard or illiterate.

Slang: The term or sense is not generally regarded as conventional or standard usage but is used, even by the best speakers, in highly informal contexts. Slang consists of both coined terms and of new or extended meanings attached to established terms. Slang terms either pass into disuse in time or come to have a more formal status.

Obsolete: The term or sense is no longer used but occurs in earlier writings.

Archaic: The term or sense is rarely used today except in certain restricted contexts, as in church ritual, but occurs in earlier writings.

Poetic: The term or sense is used chiefly in poetry, especially in earlier poetry, or in prose where a poetic quality is desired.

Dialect: The term or sense is used regularly only in some geographical areas or in a certain designated area (*South, Southwest, West,* etc.) of the United States.

British (or *Canadian, Scottish,* etc.): The term or sense is characteristic of British (or Canadian, etc.) English rather than of that spoken in the United States. When preceded by *chiefly,* the label indicates an additional, though less frequent, American usage. *British dialect* indicates that the term or sense is used regularly only in certain geographical areas of Great Britain, usually in northern England.

In addition to the above usage labels, supplementary information is often given after the definition, indicating whether the term or sense is generally regarded as vulgar, substandard, or derogatory, used with ironic, familiar, or hyperbolic connotations, etc. Where there are some objections to common usages, that fact is also indicated (e.g., **who, whom**).

VIII. FIELD LABELS

Labels for specialized fields of knowledge and activity appear in italics (in abbreviated form where practical) immediately before the sense involved. In long entry blocks having many general and specialized senses, these labels, arranged in alphabetical order, help the user to quickly find the special sense or senses he is seeking.

form . . . *n.* . . . . 17. *Gram.* . . . 18. *Linguis.* . . . 19. *Philos.* . . . 20. *Printing* . . .
hit . . . *vt.* . . . . ☆12. *Baseball* . . . ☆13. *Card Games* . . .

IX. SCIENTIFIC NAMES OF PLANTS & ANIMALS

When the name of an animal or plant is entered in this dictionary, its scientific name is included parenthetically in the definition.

All animals and plants have been given Modern Latin or Latinized names by biologists in accordance with rules prescribed by international codes of zoological and botanical nomenclature and have been systematically classified into certain categories, or taxa, that discriminate the similarities and differences among organisms.

Taxonomists are continuously studying and comparing basic materials in order to classify organisms more precisely or to modify, when necessary, current classifications. The taxonomic designations used in this dictionary reflect the most recent and most reliable information available from such constant scrutiny, including current revisions in classification.

The basic taxa are phylum or division, class, order, family, genus, and species. When these or any additional taxonomic names appear in this dictionary, they are enclosed in parentheses and, in conformity with the international codes, have an initial capital with the regular exception of the names of species and taxa ranking below species.

The scientific name of every species of animal or plant is an italicized binomial that consists of the capitalized name of the genus followed by the uncapitalized specific name or

epithet. In those taxa where a trinomial is used, as for a variety, the third term is uncapitalized and italicized.

car·rot . . . *n.* . . . . 1. a biennial plant (*Daucus carota*) of the parsley family . . .
mus·tard . . . *n.* . . . . 1. any of several annual plants (genus *Brassica*) . . . —*adj.* designating or of a family (Cruciferae) of plants . . .
cab·bage[1] . . . *n.* . . . . 1. a common vegetable (*Brassica oleracea capitata*) of the mustard family . . .
chor·date . . . *n.* . . . . any of a phylum (Chordata) of animals . . .
mam·mal . . . *n.* . . . . any of a large class (Mammalia) of . . . vertebrates . . .
car·ni·vore . . . *n.* . . . . any of an order (Carnivora) of fanged, flesh-eating mammals . . .
wolf . . . *n.* . . . . 1. *a)* any of a large group of wild, flesh-eating, doglike mammals (genus *Canis*) . . .
☆**gray wolf** a large, gray wolf (*Canis lupus*) . . .

X. IDIOMATIC PHRASES

Idiomatic phrases are run in on an entry block alphabetically after the definition or definitions of the main-entry word, each phrasal entry set in small boldface with a dash preceding it. Such phrases have been entered wherever possible under the key word.

busi·ness . . . *n.* . . . . —**business is business** . . . —**do business with** . . . —☆**give** (or **get**) **the business** . . . —**mean business** . . .

Alternative forms are indicated inside parentheses, as above in **give** (or **get**) **the business.** In the phrase (**at**) **full tilt** under the entry **tilt,** both the longer phrase, **at full tilt,** and the shorter, **full tilt,** are being recorded.

XI. RUN-IN DERIVED ENTRIES

It is possible in English to form an almost infinite number of derived forms simply by adding certain prefixes or suffixes to the base word. It has been the purpose of the editors to include as run-in entries in small boldface type only those words one might reasonably expect to encounter in literature or ordinary usage, and then only when the meaning of such derived words can be immediately understood from the meanings of the base word and the affix. Thus, **greatness, liveliness,** and **newness** are run in at the end of the entries for **great, lively,** and **new,** the meanings of the derived forms being clearly understood from the base word and the suffix **-ness,** which is found as a separate entry in this dictionary and means "state, quality, or instance of being." Many words formed with common suffixes such as **-able, -er, -less, -like, -ly, -tion,** etc. are similarly treated as run-in entries with the base word from which they are derived. All such entries are syllabified and either accented to show stress in pronunciation or, where necessary, pronounced in full or in part. Each run-in derived form is preceded by a dash.

If two synonymous run-in derived forms share a part-of-speech label, the more frequently used form appears first and the part-of-speech label is given after the second form. Note the plural form following the first run-in:

prac·ti·cal . . . *adj.* . . . . —**prac'ti·cal'i·ty** (-kal'ə tē), *pl.* **-ties, prac'ti·cal·ness** *n.*

When a derived word has a meaning or meanings different from those which can be deduced from the sum of its parts, it has been entered in a block of its own, pronounced, and fully defined (e.g., **producer**).

XII. THE SYNONYMY

The dictionary contains many short paragraphs in which synonyms are listed and discriminated. Each such synonymy is entered after that word in the group which may generally be considered the most basic or comprehensive. Although synonyms have similar or closely related meanings, they are not always interchangeable with one another. The subtle differences that distinguish them are of great importance to precision in language. These distinctions are briefly stated and typical examples of usage given where these will be helpful.

The abbreviation *SYN.* in boldface italic capitals at the left indented margin of an entry block introduces a synonymy for the main-entry word. Each of the words discriminated in the paragraph carries, at its own place of entry in the vocabulary, a cross-reference to that synonymy. Thus, following the entry for **guffaw,** there is a note "—*SYN.* see LAUGH."

In many cases antonyms are given at the end of the synonymy and these, in turn, may receive discriminative treatment themselves, following their own entries in the dictionary.

LANGUAGE AND THE DICTIONARY

by Charlton Laird

I. *The Making of Dictionaries*

Language can be thought of as articulate mind, as the means of becoming human, as the record of wit at play, as the right hand of thought, or as the great reservoir of symbol, but as a working tool it results from the use man has made of it. The general record of that use is the dictionary, a useful tool in the twin senses that it has many uses and that use has formed its contents.

Although this introduction is intended to promote the first of these understandings, that a dictionary has manifold uses, this end may be served by observing the second, that man has shaped language by his use of it, and that dictionary makers work from this fact. All good dictionaries have been based directly or indirectly on this principle, that any language at any time will be what it is because of the way the previous and current users of the language have employed it. Literally, no one can discover how a language is being employed, since language is always changing, and the shifts and innovations may become apparent only later. Practically, however, we have devices for discovering what a language has been, what it is now, and even what it is becoming. Modern lexicographers profit from these techniques and can, through the dictionaries they edit, tell us how the language is being used, and how we can use it well.

Not always has man enjoyed such tools. Men have always sought to order information, using language to do so, but early lists of words have, in the main, not survived. The modern dictionary has a more recent origin, seeming to stem from linguistic confusion during the Middle Ages in Europe, when Latin was the universal learned language but was known to relatively few people, with most communication relying upon a welter of vernacular tongues and dialects, many of them highly regional. Fluent readers of Latin did not know all the local languages with which they came in contact, and most speakers of local dialects knew Latin only imperfectly. Accordingly, we find medieval manuscripts in which a Latin word like *puer* will have a vernacular equivalent like *boy* written above it. Similarly, *hyde and gaine* was an early English phrase for as much land as a man could till and the profit he might expect from it, but a priest involved in canon law, born in Rome, educated in Paris, and now serving in London, could not be assumed to know this. Accordingly, such an English phrase might be adorned with a gloss, for example, a synonym in Latin, or perhaps the Anglo-Norman used in the courts.

Such a gloss when combined with the glossed word becomes, in effect, a simple dictionary entry. It provides the word itself, an accepted spelling of it, and by implication, since the spelling was roughly phonetic, a suggested pronunciation. It implies something about the grammar, since presumably the word or phrase could be used in the same way in either language, and it offers an acceptable usage. It even provides a definition of sorts, since the gloss includes a synonym in another language. Thus the user of such manuscripts had ready-made materials for a simple dictionary if he wished so to use them; he had only to assemble them in some kind of order, preferably alphabetical.

Such books were compiled. The earliest we know in English was called *Promptorium Parvulorum* (the title might be translated *A Treasure House for the Children*), apparently intended for youngsters learning Latin, though it probably served some of their elders as well. Such collections became the ancestors of bilingual dictionaries; Shakespeare, for example, could have used quite a good Italian-English dictionary published by one John Florio just before 1600, and at about this time dictionaries of English began to appear, although from our point of view they are poor things. They were small, and like *A Treasure House for the Children* and the bilingual dictionaries, they were calculated to help people ignorant of a language or of a dialect of it, in this case a social dialect, learn the speech of the supposedly best people. A typical introduction to one of these dictionaries of English is likely to explain that the book is intended for foreigners, artisans, farmers, and the like—presumably gentlemen and professional people would know the fashionable dialect already. The entries themselves are devoted to what were called "hard words" or to meanings assumed to be rare. Even as late as 1676, Elisha Coles in compiling *An English Dictionary Explaining Difficult Terms*, the best English dictionary of its day, defines a horse only as "a rope fasten'd to the foremast shrouds, to keep the sprit-sail sheats clear of the anchor-flukes."

Apparently he saw no reason to waste good printed paper on the more common uses of the word, and even in the next century, Nathaniel Bailey, often called "the father of English lexicography," dismisses the Englishman's favorite equine quadruped with the epithet, "a Beast well known," adding only that the word could be used for both the male and the female.

Thus the essential problems involved in dictionary making appeared early, presenting such questions as these: For whom is a dictionary made? To what purposes should it be put? What words should be included, and what uses recognized? And most difficult of all, what should be said about the words included, particularly, how should they be defined? The early answers were limited and practical; dictionaries were conceived to be helpful little books, useful to persons ignorant of language in one way or another, including children, foreigners, and underprivileged adults.

Meanwhile, more sophisticated philosophies and better editorial practices were being developed on the European continent. Two ideas predominated: (1) that all important words, and all of the most important material about these words, should be included in the dictionary, even though much of the resulting matter would be familiar to many people, and (2) information about the word should be based upon recorded evidence, upon samples of the language as it is known to have been used. Thus the job of the lexicographer was now being seen as the studying, the ordering, the evaluating, and the interpreting of linguistic evidence, and not merely the digesting of what the editor happens to know or prefers to believe. In effect, this means that the lexicographer must first collect vast numbers of citations, selected for their revealing qualities, from all sorts of writers; he must then study these citations for their significance, consulting experts if necessary, and order the result into a book. A dictionary so prepared can be described as edited on historical principles.

As a matter of course, these two basic ideas did not spring full-blown from any single brain, nor were they immediately grasped in their entirety. Consider one of the best-known definitions from the best-known English lexicographer, Samuel Johnson, who wrote as follows: "OATS. *n.* A grain which in England is generally given to horses, but in Scotland supports the people." Johnson was here quite possibly twitting his friend and biographer, the Scotsman James Boswell, and the witticism would have been appropriate in Johnson's satirical writings or in his table talk, but it is palpably a poor definition, at least partly because it comes from Johnson's wit, his playfulness, his prejudices, or something of the sort, and not from the recorded use of the word. If a contemporary Chinese, presented with an oat, had relied only on Johnson's dictionary, he would not have known how to recognize the object or even what to do with it, being neither a horse nor a Scotsman. Similarly, early lexicographers, inheriting little tradition as to what constitutes use, tended to consult the writings of famous literary figures, and thus to miss technical words, and if they had little objective evidence concerning a term, they took the easiest way to a ready answer by resorting to their own memories. Such an editor, being well-informed, would usually have been right, but a modern lexicographer refuses such shortcuts, feeling that in the end his product will be more objective and more reliable if he restricts "use" to documented use. On the other hand, he has learned to supplement written use with oral use, which earlier recorders of the language mainly ignored.

If modern lexicography arrived a little late on the island of Britain, it thrived in the good soil of the English-speaking peoples. Bailey, mentioned above, was conversant with the best Continental lexicography of his day, and he embodied its principles in *An Universal Etymological Dictionary* (first edition, 1721), which Johnson used as the basis of his great *Dictionary of the English Language* (1755). As a result, Johnson has been popularly credited with developing much that he only inherited from Bailey, who had imported it from abroad. Yet if, confirmed conservative that he was, Johnson has been given too much credit as an innovator, he can scarcely be given too much as an editor. He brought to his work a sharpened command of his native language, a mind stored with the Latin and Greek classics, indefatigable energy, and a disciplined judgment. The result was that, probably without a close second, he did more to bring order and good sense into our concept of English meaning than any other man before or since. All subsequent

English and American dictionaries have stemmed from him and the lexicographical tradition he inspired.

For whatever reasons—and they are not entirely clear—dictionaries have become a sort of specialty of the English-speaking world. A possible explanation may be sought in the size of the vocabulary, since English seems to have more words and more uses for words—many more than two million named uses—than any other known language. Speakers of English have uncommon need for dictionaries, and Americans, who constitute the largest single body of English speakers and who have been uncommonly well provided with the means of buying reference works, have augmented this need through what would seem to be a mania for linguistic correctness, a zeal for rectitude which they have built into their elaborate school system. Thus, for whatever reason, the speakers of no other known language have ever brought to fruition such a work as the *Oxford English Dictionary* (also called *A New English Dictionary on Historical Principles*), whose editors endeavored to trace every use of every word that has ever gained wide currency in the native tongue. The creation of the modern American desk dictionary is scarcely less remarkable.

American lexicography has its own glories and its own character. The founder of the American school was Noah Webster, whose *An American Dictionary of the English Language* (1828 and frequently revised and enlarged) was a truly remarkable work, especially for its day and place, a New World still very much a colony, socially and intellectually, of the Old. Webster was as untiring and self-assertive as Samuel Johnson himself, and if he was less well read and probably less intellectually endowed, he suffered from no false modesty and he possessed a genius for definition. His work was rivaled in many ways by that of his one-time employee, Joseph E. Worcester, and the "War of the Dictionaries" waged between the successors to Webster's volume and Worcester's *A Dictionary of the English Language* (1860) lent to lexicography the zest of a sporting event. Dictionaries were news in the New World, and a great century of dictionary making was crowned by the labors of William Dwight Whitney and his colleagues in editing *The Century Dictionary: an Encyclopedic Lexicon of the English Language* (1889 and following), a work variously printed in as many as fourteen volumes, probably the best dictionary in English of its day published on either side of the Atlantic Ocean—the *Oxford* was then being edited but was thirty-five years from complete publication.

Modern desk dictionaries grow in part from the great descriptive dictionaries like the *Oxford*, but they are also distinct from these works, not merely smaller imitations of them. They resemble the more comprehensive, purely descriptive dictionaries in that they are based upon use, use revealed in objectively collected evidence, and when necessary evaluated by experts, although in the interests of economy—economy of space, and thus eventually of economy in cost—and for convenience in handling, desk dictionaries are made to rely upon this evidence more or less indirectly. All editors of desk dictionaries depend in part upon the citations assembled for descriptive dictionaries; for example, all editors of English dictionaries must rely in part upon the *Oxford*, and upon the more specialized dictionaries like the *Middle English Dictionary* and *A Dictionary of Americanisms* that were inspired by it. No commercial publisher of a desk dictionary could afford to pay for the reading that has gone into assembling the citations used in such works, and endeavoring to do so would be both foolish and wasteful. In addition, all good desk dictionaries rely upon reading done by their own staffs (*Webster's New World Dictionary* also maintains a corps of full-time readers constantly collecting citations), although, on the whole, this material is digested by the lexicographers and only the results are printed in the ensuing volume.

Like the descriptive dictionaries, the desk dictionaries have their own history and tradition, from which their modern philosophy stems. Many of the practices embodied in desk dictionaries go back to the dictionaries of "hard words," whose editors tended to put into their books anything they thought the users would want. Johnson and Webster prided themselves on what they called the purity—that is, the elegance—of the language they included in their volumes, but the makers of the smaller, highly practical works did not. Elisha Coles (d. 1680), who wrote into his dictionary what he called "canting terms," the language of the underworld, defended them by insisting, "'Tis no disparagement" to understand such terms, since "it may chance to save your throat from being cut." For other practical purposes he included proper names from the Bible, along with "all the Market-towns (and other considerable places) in England, with all the places of note in other Countries." Studying rival dictionaries he noticed that for most purposes "Some are too little, some are too big," and accordingly he endeavored to make a book of just the right size and with just the right content to combat "Confusion and Barbarity."

Practical wordbooks proliferated, and editors learned to assemble more useful collections. Less than a century after Coles, the lexicographer Benjamin Martin, although he was still dismissing a horse as "a beast well known," devoted a paragraph to the town of Horsham, pointing out that it has "two bailiffs and burgage-holders"; he gives us dates of the fairs held there and records that the place is "distant from London 28 computed, and 35 measured miles." Martin's younger contemporary, John Ash, provided brief statements about historical and mythological figures. This tradition, of including biographical and encyclopedic entries within an alphabetical list of words to be defined, matured in the great *Century Dictionary* mentioned above; as its full title suggests, it is a concise encyclopedia as well as a great descriptive dictionary, with articles by specialists, an atlas, and a dictionary of proper names. Its editors endeavored to include, copiously, any material they assumed the user of the book might want when he looked up a word. Thus one can distinguish the modern desk dictionary by observing that it is based upon the principles of the *Century Dictionary*, that like their predecessors of the *Century* the new generation of lexicographers has profited from the most recent linguistic discoveries, but that the sorts of material which were spread through the *Century's* fourteen volumes have here been comprised in one.

II. *Linguistics and Lexicography*

Recent linguistic developments warrant our examination, since they have entered extensively into lexicography, and editors of desk dictionaries, especially, have been alert to utilize them. Most changes in language are slow; language must have required millenia to form into anything like an ordered system. Even writing, a secondary development, took thousands of years to evolve into an adequate complex of skills. Devices and understandings which promote the study and use of language, however, may be rapid and sweeping, and recent decades have witnessed a linguistic revolution, a revolution that embodies new thinking and new tools with which to implement new thought.

Since they are fundamental, we might take the ideas first; until scholars had learned to think straight about language and had sufficient reliable evidence from which to think, new tools could not be expected, or at a minimum could not be refined. Some of the most important of these new understandings might be phrased as follows: (1) languages rest upon use; (2) they have been shaped and directed by man's nature; (3) they change and grow; (4) they tend to proliferate; and (5) in their development they are at once centrifugal and centripetal, working through dialects. These principles are neither exclusive nor definitive, but they should warrant more detailed consideration.

1. *Language rests upon use; anything used long enough by enough people will become standard.* As we have seen in our sketch of the growth of lexicography, the importance of use has been recognized for some centuries. Dictionaries became possible in any real sense only when this principle concerning language use could be applied, but even lexicographers appreciated its implications only gradually as they worked with it, and as they became convinced that users of reference books would tolerate the changes that such a principle dictates. They understood, at least vaguely, that if use determines language it must also determine usage, what is fashionable in language. However, they did not at once apply this principle to dictionaries in an orderly manner, partly because they knew that people want to be told what is right and what is wrong, and partly because they misunderstood the nature and the power of the dictionary.

A dictionary, like any other delicate tool, can be misused, and if it is misused it will not work well. The readiest way to misuse it will follow from a misunderstanding of its nature and purpose. The Académie Française, for example, embarked upon its great dictionary to save the French language from decay; the academy assumed that French was so nearly perfect that it could only decline if it was permitted to change, and the members thought to arrest change by putting the language into a vast book. They did succeed in making one of the first good dictionaries, but they did not stop the French language from changing, and it has gone on doing so quite rapidly, as have most European tongues, and seems not to be the worse for that. So far as we know, no language has ever decayed from within in the sense that it has become progressively less useful; no speech has ever languished from not having been put into a dictionary, and no moribund tongue has ever been saved as a functioning tool by being enshrined in a book. Dictionaries have great powers, but rescuing doomed languages is not one of them. Many tongues have been destroyed as an incidence to military, social, or economic conquest, but although individual locutions can and do waste away, change in language seems mainly to be a sign of growth, not of decay. A good dictionary can promote order in inevitable growth. It will also promote stability in the language by preserving evidence of the past, but it should not be treated mainly as a means to ensure linguistic atrophy.

Similarly, lexicographers were a long time learning that they need not—or at least they could not—purify a language. Of course there is no such thing as a "pure" language. All languages are corrupt, if we conceive that change is to be equated with corruption, and all languages are mixtures, since all have borrowed from other languages. In moderate quantities, both change from within and borrowing from without seem to help languages thrive—perhaps we should call such phenomena fertilization, not corruption—but many of the earlier lexicographers did not understand this. Samuel Johnson, mentioned above, collected subscriptions

Language and the Dictionary

to his great dictionary on the theory that he would refine and purify the language. The American, Noah Webster, asserted with great confidence that single-handedly he would be able to standardize American speech.

Both failed in their efforts to police language, however much they may have triumphed otherwise, and lived to learn that language can be described, that within limits it can be influenced, but that it cannot be controlled. Johnson tells us that he "found our speech copious without order, and energetic without rules; wherever I turned my view, there was perplexity to be disentangled, and confusion to be regulated." He found that in spelling, "caprice has long wantoned without control." Accordingly, he had "endeavoured to proceed with a scholar's reverence for antiquity, and a grammarian's regard to the genius of our tongue." He cautioned that we must not allow "our written language to comply with the corruption of oral utterance." He could scarcely have had much foresight regarding the manner in which the written language was to follow the oral during the subsequent two centuries, but he had grown to understand the language enough so that he appears distinctly nostalgic when he concludes, "I am not yet so lost in lexicography as to forget that *words are the daughters of earth, and that things are the sons of heaven.* Language is only the instrument of science, and words are but the signs of ideas; I wish, however, that the instrument might be less apt to decay, and that signs might be permanent, like the things which they denote." Similarly, Webster, although he had earlier been concerned with "correcting a vicious pronunciation, which prevailed extensively among the common people of this country," had gained perspective by the time he had spent half a lifetime compiling a dictionary. With the years, he became more concerned to "complete a system for instruction of the citizens of this country in the language," and to do so he had discovered that he must study "the origin and progress of our language." He was learning that to deal with language he had to rely upon language more, upon the knowledge of even oral speech, and upon prejudice less. Neither Johnson nor Webster ever grasped what use means in understanding and employing language, but they knew the principle, and as they worked with language they approached the practice.

With the years, lexicographers grew to understand more clearly the role of use in language, and to apply linguistic findings to dictionary making. Philology, which studied the history and growth of language, provided an insight into modern use and usage by tracing the phantasmagoric play of language change. Meanwhile, once lexicographers had learned to select citations to determine and illuminate meaning, they observed, also, that citations could be chosen for other purposes, notably to refine statements about usage. Now, quite recently, scholars have developed a new technique, known as *dialect* or *linguistic geography*, essentially a controlled device for language sampling. We shall need to consider it more particularly when we raise problems concerning dialects, but for the moment we may notice that it is already bringing more order into our statements about usage, and that it promises eventually to provide answers to all sorts of linguistic questions, perhaps especially to problems of usage, with something approaching scientific accuracy.

2. *However language started, it has been shaped and directed by man's mind, his society, and his vocal equipment.* How early man's shaping power was exerted on language we know not, because we know not how, when, or where language originated, but we can infer some things about its beginning. Language seems to be universal among men but not to exist outside the human tradition. All men of whom we know anything speak a native language, and whereas other creatures—bees, ants, monkeys and apes, porpoises, and many more—can communicate within limits, none of these creatures, so far as we know, have developed communications systems sufficiently elaborate so that we can properly use the word *language* to describe them. Human linguistic systems may well have developed from more primitive communicative devices, as the human body presumably developed from the simpler vertebrates; quite probably they did, but the differences between language and the nonhuman signaling devices are so great that we must assume that the growth of language is uniquely associated with human beings, and that once language became possible it developed with a rapidity beyond that of either biological or geophysical evolution, and in accordance with its own laws and principles.

Theoretically, language could have had a single origin, multiple origins, or no origin at all—if by *origin* we mean a single action or a relatively brief series of actions closely limited in time and space. Unique inventions are possible; in fact, for many devices they seem to be the rule. Anthropologists believe, for example, that the wheel was invented only once, or at the most very few times, and that all uses of the wheel spread from few centers. So language might have spread, but logic would encourage one to doubt it. The wheel, however it has proliferated, utilizes a simple principle; language, on the other hand, is anything but simple. It employs sound, which must be used in various patterns, and it relies upon extensive and dexterous handling of the tongue, a bundle of muscles which requires long and purposive training. It grows from brains, brains functioning

in many ways, including the development of a sense of meaning, the amassing of great bodies of linguistic phenomena, and the generating of a sense for grammar. That anything so complex, anything so rooted in physical and mental skills not easily acquired, could have been brought to a functioning state by any one person at any one time, or even by relatively few people cooperating for a brief time, seems highly improbable. Such skepticism gains confirmation, apparently, from the fact that people learn language over a relatively long period, and that the child learns various linguistic activities which must coalesce before he can command anything that can properly be called language.

All this variety in linguistic evidence seems to accord with the fact that we have not been able to find a single plausible explanation for the origin of language. Various theorists have suggested that language sprang from cries of fear, from expressions of love and sympathy, from exclamations associated with the dance, from work songs, from patterns of chattering—the thesis most pursued at this writing—from the imitation of sounds, especially the sounds of babies and of wild creatures. This last guess must have some validity; certainly such words as *whippoorwill* rely upon echoic practices, upon what is formally called *onomatopoeia.* An Algonquian word for an owl, *uhu,* must have a similar origin, along with words like *murmur* and *choo-choo,* and terms like *mama, daddy,* and *baby,* the latter clearer in the pronunciation of French *bébé.* All these theses seem rather too limited to account for much, however, and especially because language as we know it is more the product of the human mind than it is the product of the human vocal apparatus.

A somewhat more plausible thesis associates language with symbol and the human power to generate and control symbols. According to this theory, man, surrounded by a bewildering world, ordered what was otherwise inexplicable by reducing it to symbols. Indisputably, the mind does work through symbols, which have the great advantage of being at once concrete, and thus readily apprehensible, and capable of almost indefinite expansion. Indisputably, also, although art supplies striking symbols and many of them, language provides incomparably the greatest body of symbols, and on the whole those that are the most readily defined. At a minimum, all words are symbols, and many locutions involve very complex symbols—the word *cross* is a symbol for the object, a cross, but it also comprises much of the symbolism involved in the cross itself.

This thesis, if a little vague, dovetails with other plausible guesses, notably that language is intimately associated with the nature of man and that it must have grown slowly. It permits us to assume that man as an organism, art and civilization as social phenomena, and language as a means of thought and growth are so interreliant that no one of them could have developed without each of the others, that they grew by being continually interactive. When man was sufficiently human so that he became capable of language, language as organized symbol provided him with the means of cultivating his own humanity, including his mental and artistic powers, and these made society possible, which in turn permitted the greater development of man and of man's prime tool, language.

Thus language need never have had a beginning, except as man can be defined as a beginning, man with his creative desire and his aptitude for symbol, his love of rhythm and ritual, his innate playfulness, his physical dexterity, and his remarkable aural and oral abilities. Man as we know him would not have been possible without language, without the use of language over long periods. Similarly, language was not possible without man, without man improving his own invention, in many ways and over many millennia. Society as we know it, of course, was not possible without both man and language. By this thesis, then, language grew as part of a sort of multiple hen-and-egg sequence, with better hens producing better eggs to hatch into better hens. If so, language resulted not from a single action but from interaction, and prolonged interaction at that.

Certainly, this is what has happened in historic time. We cannot imagine that any complex society was possible without language; we know of no very complex society that has existed without written language; and we cannot conceive modern society without mass media. There were no Einsteins or Freuds among unsophisticated men; a potential Einstein among the Cro-Magnons would have had no body of thought organized by language. Similarly, how could modern medical terminology be supported without modern medicine? In our day, mankind, language, and society have grown as an interreliant trilogy, and we have no reason to suppose that such interreliance has been restricted to modern, or even historic, times. This understanding of the nature of language and of its growth provides the basis for our convictions as to what a dictionary should be and our awareness of what it can do. Such a book consists of a listing of symbols, symbols in the simple sense that words are symbols, and the etymologies of these words and the considerations of their use and meanings shadow forth the symbolic power of words. Furthermore, this thesis, that the nature of man shapes the nature of his language, can be observed even in the minutiae of human communication, as we shall see when we consider the third principle.

3. *Language grows and changes, and although unbridled*

Language and the Dictionary

change may be harmful; language possesses its own inner restraints, and most change in language is apparently healthful —or, at the least, not readily amenable to conscious, human interdiction. This principle is a corollary of the second; if always in flux, we must assume that any given language will be changing at any given time, whether individual users of the language are aware of these developments, or dislike the changes if they become aware. Even if a language were to die, that would be change, and as we have observed, languages do die, but not of themselves. Most languages that have flourished during the millennia of linguistic time must have died; some have vanished when their speakers were killed, as have most Amerindian tongues. Some have been overrun by other languages; the Norse and French spoken in England were smothered by English. Others have survived only in such changed form that we call them by new names; Latin has reappeared in modern languages like French and Spanish. But all languages seem to have served their users well, and so far as we know none has ever died because of its inadequacy or from internal linguistic change. Languages do not commit suicide or suffer from senility. Accordingly, we must assume that language change is at least as much growth as it is decay, that new forms, new devices, new principles compensate, and usually more than compensate, for any losses. And if we know relatively little about how language got started, we know a great deal about how it has grown.

Here our knowledge is both specific and philosophic. For example, the plural of the word *lip* is formed by adding the hissing sound associated with the letter *s*. On the other hand, the plural of the word *bug*, although it is spelled with an *s*, is made by adding a buzzing sound associated with the letter *z*, in phonemics /z/. At this point anyone familiar with sounds would notice that the consonants /p/ and /s/ are voiceless, that is, they are made without vibration of the vocal cords, whereas /g/ and /z/ are voiced, made with vibration of the vocal cords. He would be likely to guess that formerly these signs of the plural had all been the same, whether voiced or unvoiced, and that they had changed so that the voiced or voiceless sounds present a continuing sequence. But what about words like *hues* or *toes*, in which the plural uses the voiced sound /z/ although it is not preceded by a voiced consonant? Again, the answer is easy, since all vowels in English are voiced. Thus we can start generating principles like the following: In English all recently formed plurals will be made of the voiceless fricative /s/ if the signal of the plural is preceded by a voiceless consonant, and will be formed with the corresponding voiced fricative /z/ if it is preceded by a voiced sound, whether vowel or consonant. We could now state a broader postulate, making it tentative until we have supporting evidence, somewhat as follows: In language, sounds may be influenced by adjacent sounds.

Thus, in language, we can observe that sounds significant for speech may be influenced by the nature of the hmuan vocal apparatus. Nor is this intimate relationship between man and speech restricted to sound. Similar phenomena can be observed in vocabulary, even perhaps in grammar. For example, the vaulting of man into space has inspired a flood of new words and new uses of old words. *Sputnik*, a Russian word for a satellite, has become an English word for a Russian satellite, and a Russian voyager into space has become a *cosmonaut*, a word related to dozens of terms in Western languages deriving from Greek *kosmos*. Words already with us have taken on new uses; a word like *orbit* has been long in the language, but not as a verb meaning to project an object into space so that it will go into orbit. Similarly, the great urbanization of modern American society, and the resulting need to deal with urban problems, have led to terms like *city planning*, *urban renewal*, and *zoning* in the sense that buildings constructed within a given area must be restricted to certain uses.

Usage, what might be called the etiquette of language, can also change, and sometimes quite rapidly. For example, *like* has now extensively replaced *as in as it should* and in similar locutions, and this change has engendered its proportion of fury, probably because it has been blazoned in full-page advertisements. That is, this use of *like* has become a problem in usage. Actually, this is only one of many shifts among *like* and *as*, most of which have not become problems in usage, because so few people noticed them that they went unchallenged. For example, Richard Mulcaster, a schoolteacher contemporary of Shakespeare, discussing the forms of Latin words, could write, "when theie be used English like." This can scarcely be called bad grammar or bad usage either; if anybody in the sixteenth century knew what was correct and proper in English it would have been Mulcaster —courtier, writer on language, and university professor. If he had been writing two centuries later, he might well have used a construction like, "When they are used as they are in English," and now, after another two centuries, many speakers would say, "like they are in English." In the end, the language will probably work as well one way as the other, but while the change is taking place, purists will feel that the new locution is "wrong," or "bad grammar," and even careful but tolerant speakers may be irked by the innovation if they happen to notice it. Usually they do not. For some time *any more* has been moving into the semantic area formerly served by *now*, and becoming *anymore*. This drift might well infuriate purists, but to date it is not doing so. *Any more* has not become a problem in modern usage because few users of the language have noticed the change, and those have mainly been professional linguists, on the whole not the sort of people who readily lose their tempers—at least not about usage.

Meanwhile, grammar, in the broader sense of the way in which language works, has changed very slowly. Nonetheless, we must assume that grammar, like all other aspects of language, changes constantly although in the main imperceptibly. Some thousands of years ago the ancestor of English, called Indo-European, was what we may describe as a highly synthetic language. That is, the language worked chiefly by altering the form of linguistic units or by putting linguistic units together. During the subsequent millennia the grammar changed so much that variations in form, like those apparent in *go–goes* and *boy–boys*, are rare, and the grammar works by word order and through other devices in which words have grammatical use, whether or not they have much meaning. Hundreds of millions of speakers must have been involved in this change, but so far as we know nobody ever noticed it until recent centuries, when scholars were able to compare the current form of the language with earlier recorded and reconstructed forms. Apparently grammar changes so slowly that most people assume that it does not alter fundamentally, and hence they never examine it to see whether it may not be changing. And anyhow, the change is so gradual that only an expert is likely to detect it, and even he may miss most of the contemporary drift in grammar.

Thus we must assume that some change is inevitable in language, and if we cannot confidently say that it is healthful, certainly it helps the language adapt to new responsibilities, and most language change does no harm. Theoretically, it could do harm. If English changed so rapidly that constitutions had no meaning, contracts written last year could no longer be understood, and last year's novels were now gibberish, we should be worse off. But only under the most extreme circumstances does language ever change so fast that it ceases to be useful as a means of communication, so fast that common locutions rapidly lose their currency. This has happened, and could happen again. In Jamaica, for example, languages have been so blended that no one of them has survived in readily recognizable form; this is what is called *creolizing*, and it may account for the difference between modern French and the other Romance languages, but even creolizing does not last long. Soon another language grows from the wreckage of the earlier tongues and finds means to serve its users well. Any such change for English is not predictable in the near future. Barring some major disaster, we may expect English to change continually and in an orderly manner, and however much individual users of the language may deprecate particular changes, the language itself is not likely to suffer.

4. *Languages tend to proliferate.* Awareness of this phenomenon, that filial relationships in language are much like those among human beings, that the concept of family seems to be as pertinent in linguistics as it is in society, helps the lexicographer understand the language with which he is dealing.

Ignoring the present for the moment, we can observe that languages have proliferated in the past. Consider the word for *horse* in Romance languages; in Italian it is now spelled *cavallo* and in Spanish *caballo*. This is surely not coincidence, especially because the differences are mainly in spelling, not in sound. The French is *cheval*, but we know that French has changed enough so that it uses *ch* to spell the sound /š/ or (sh), while other Romance languages have a spelling *c* and a sound /k/. Thus, even if we did not know Latin, we would guess that it included a word for *horse* that would have been spelled something like *caballus*. We do know Latin, of course, and the word *caballus* appears frequently in it. Furthermore, what is true of *caballus* is true, also, of other Latin words, that they occur with minor differences in the various Romance languages, with the differences falling into regular patterns. Thus we could infer that languages like Italian, Spanish, and French stand in relation to Latin roughly as children do to their parents. But we need not guess; we have the record in thousands of manuscripts of this proliferation and of growth from Latin into the daughter languages.

But what about Latin? Was it part of a family of languages, very much as one's grandfather was part of a family? This would be the obvious guess, but it was not confirmed until the past century, when almost simultaneous observations by an Englishman, Sir William Jones, working in India, and a Dane, Rasmus Rask, led to the conclusion that most European languages descend from one common ancestor, the reconstructed language called Indo-European. Nor was this the end; once scholars had the key to the relationships of European languages, that they had a common ancestor and had proliferated from that common source, the next question was obvious: Were not all languages, whether surviving or extinct, related by descent to other languages? The flood of confirmation was overwhelming, so that scholars have now been able to relate practically all languages to other languages, living or dead. A few, like Basque, along the mountainous border of Spain and France, for which no relatives have been discovered, are presumably