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A FEW THOUGHTS ON CONVERSATION.

We have never yet been able to satisfy ourselves positively as to the exact time when conversation was first made use of in the communication of thought between different individuals. If history be true, we may infer that conversation was first employed by Adam in his courtship of Mother Eve. Their language was undoubtedly without any very extensive grammar, and their vocabulary was probably limited; but, as very little tongue talk and a good deal of eye talk will carry on a courtship successfully, we may conclude that

"Adam, the goodliest man of men since born
His sons, the fairest of her daughters, Eve."

as Milton describes the happy pair, got along very well in this first grand courtship, even if their vocabulary contained, as some authority maintains, only about seven or eight simple, monosyllabic words. How Adam could have proposed intelligibly to Eve is a mystery to me. Just imagine this lordly man pouring out his full heart in such endearing sentiments as *a baa bo*; and Eve, with cheeks flushed with "Celestial rosy red, love's proper hue," whispering in return *O bou*. It may be, however, that conversations of similar intent have taken place since the

time of Adam with no better display of rhetoric even than this. But we will leave the discussion as to the probable origin of conversation, and proceed to point out some of the necessary requisites for making it pleasant and profitable.

One of the first things to be observed in conversation is moderation. Scaliger describes Ramus as "a river of words, and a drop of intellect." The same observation might be made of many conversationalists. They have a very ready command of language, and their conversation, like a river, flows on and on without check or exhaustion. "From morning till night," like Miss Lillie of the old poem, they "chatter and talk without ceasing." Sentiments and thoughts instead of being brought out and vivified by conversation, are swallowed up in it, until as Scaliger remarks they become intellectually but a "drop." The man who talks much, rarely commands so great respect for his opinions, and attention to what he may say, as the more moderate talker. Washington never spoke in conversation or assembly without having carefully weighed his thought beforehand. The consequence was, that whenever he did speak, he commanded the closest attention of his auditors.

Obscure and euphuistical expressions should be avoided in general conversation.