SYNONYMIC DELETIONS

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Each sect, cult or specialized denomination has a Scripture from which its adherents draw inspiration. For logophiles, there's little doubt that it has long been, and continues to be, Dmitri Borgmann's Language on Vacation (Scribner's, 1965). Scanning past issues of Word Ways, one quickly becomes aware that many of its articles extend concepts earlier described in this book.

However, certain areas have received a great deal of attention, but others have been allowed to lie fallow. Lest anyone think the latter are incapable of improvement, I turn the spotlight on one of them: Synonymic Deletions.

A synonymic deletion is a word from which one or more letters can be deleted to leave a second word that is a synonym of the first: for example, delete d, e, and f from ENDONTOT to get IDLE.

This is an interesting and relatively easy diversion. The challenge lies in two restrictions that should be observed. The first states that the two words should be etymologically unrelated; thus, one is enjoined from using FACade, FairY, or Gamble, all of which generate from the same roots. The second states that the letters of the shorter word should be scattered through the longer word, not bunched together. This eliminates such tempting possibilities as deVIL, dRUGget, peRimeter, intiMATE, corpoREAL, moLDy, and bROADway.

Keeping these two restrictions in mind, here is a liberal sprinkling of synonymic deletions:

- behAvIoR blaCkguArD caRrIaGe
- BouncInG ChARgE pArtiClE
- CAlcUaTION MAzeD ApproPriaTe
- CharActerIStic ApiCIDaTe AsseVERaTe
- ACUInina TE ASSevERaTe CAbRiolet
- because forBiddANce conT AInINa Te
- BlackheArte D cOInPartInENt DEceAseD
- COlOrLess CUrTail deTe RIoRatE
- sCoUndRel deSTinATION DecOrate
- deSOLatE DeclInE DeCoroUSLy
- DeInIsE di s Co URTeous obSErvE
- DIscordaNce aDeqUatE aBOllA
- dRoughtY AdePT CApSulE
toLEraTe BeLlOW Dete rIoratE

caRRJaGe pArtiCLE
AppropriaTe
AsseVERaTe
CABriolet
conTAmINaTe
DeceAseD
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