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IMPORTANCE OF THE COMMA.

Rev. Forbes Phillips Cites Disastrous Results of Misplacing It.

The Rev. Forbes Phillips, in Answers

Early in the world's history, philosophers urged upon their generation the necessity for considering small things. The comma is about the smallest thing in practical life, but it is far away from being the least important. In a domestic difficulty, where a husband and wife quarreled and sought separation, a legal gentleman was kind enough to try and patch up a peace. He recommended overtures from the husband, and suggested that he should write to his spouse the simple and touching message: "May Heaven cherish and keep you, from your affectionate husband John." This John duly dispatched on a picture-postcard, but he omitted the comma, and the message ran: "May Heaven cherish and keep you from your affectionate husband John."

The misplacing of a comma involved two big commercial houses in a lawsuit. A memorandum was sent: "Can let you have the hundred pieces at sixteen and nine thousand more at same rate." When the message arrived it read: "Can let you have the hundred pieces at sixteen, and nine thousand more at same rate." A careless clerk had transposed a comma, unconscious of the part it was desired to play.

Clerics are fond of quoting the proverb "For one point Raynhard lost his priory." The story goes, that in pre-reformation days, a good and holy prior, Clement, ruled over his religious house with great wisdom and liberality. Over the entrance to the priory he caused to be written up:

"Be open evermore, O thou my door,
To none be shut, to honest or to poor."

This free invitation was generously interpreted by the mendicants, and people came far and wide to honor it.

When the good Clement died, a very different man was appointed as his successor, a priest of the name of Raynhard, who was as niggardly as his predecessor had been lavish. The sign over the entrance of the priory did not interpret his sentiments or his outlook on life. His meanness could not tolerate it, nor would it permit him to go to the expense of a fresh motto. He simply changed the meaning by altering the position of a comma, which made the couplet read:

"Be open evermore, O thou my door,
To none, be shut to honest or to poor."

At a dinner in New York a well known man gave the toast, "Woman—without her, man is a brute." A paper reported, Mr. A—as saying, "Woman without her man is a brute."

Most people have heard of the message, "Don't come too late," which by the insertion of a comma became, "Don't come, too late." Then there was the barber who advertised on his sign-board:

"What do you think
I'll shave you for nothing
And give you a drink."
Of course, there was a rush of customers at once, but the barber's rendering was:

"What! Do you think
I'll shave you for nothing
And give you a drink?"
Care has to be exercised in noticing the comma when reading. There is the case of the curate

who had to give out the notice, "A sailor, going to sea, his wife desires the prayers of the congregation." But when the nervous curate gave out the notice, the congregation was startled by being informed that "A sailor going to see his wife, desires the prayers of the congregation."

Intemperate Temperance Leaders.

The national Anti-Saloon league in session in Ohio, took occasion to pass resolutions concerning a political fight in Alabama, for no better reason than that one of the candidates has been charged by his opponent with being a tool of the liquor interests. The fact that the man thus condemned is one of the largest figures in American statesmanship today, that there is no blemish on his record of 20 years' service, and that he is conceded to have one of the biggest brains and one of the strongest characters to back it in the country, had not the weight of a feather against the fact that his opponent had made prohibition speeches. Hobson was endorsed, and the Anti-Saloon league struck a staggering blow at its own reputation.

We have no hesitation in saying that one of the great obstacles to the cause of temperance in America is the intemperance of some of the so-called leaders of the movement. Temperance consists in far more than mere abstinence from intoxicating liquors. Intemperance in the use of the tongue, for instance, has done the world much more hurt than intemperance in the use of alcohol.

Moreover, a cynical world will be slow to believe that the national leaders of the Anti Saloon league had studied the political situation in Alabama closely enough to be able to render an unbiased verdict. The endorsement savors more of political manipulation by the henchmen of Hobson than anything else, and the suspicion that it can be manipulated in favor of any political candidate will do a great deal more damage to the influence of the league than all the attacks of the liquor men.

Running the Railroads.

From the Pittsburg Press.

"Where's the president of this railroad?" asked the man who called at the general offices.

"He's down in Washington, attendin' th' session o' some kind uv an investigatin' committee," replied the office boy.

"Where is the general manager?"

"He's appearin' before th' Interstate Commerce Commission."

"Well, where's the general superintendent?"

"He's at th' meetin' of th' legislature, fightin' some bum new law."

"Where is the head of the legal department?"

"He's in court, tryin' a suit."

"Then where is the general passenger agent?"

"He's explainin' t' th' commercial travelers why we can't reduce th' fare."

"Where is the general freight agent?"

"He's gone out in th' country t' attend a meetin' o' th' grange an' tell th' farmers why we ain't got no freight cars."

"Who's running the blame railroad, anyway?"

"Th' newspapers and th' legislatures."

The ROANOKE-CHOWAN TIMES and Bryan's Commoner \$1.65.

HOW BABY TALK BEGINS.

"Mum" Instinctive Sound, Which Parent Translates into "Mother."

From the Pall Mall Gazette.

Baby language was discoursed upon in an interesting way by Prof. Rippmann before the Child Study Society, Buckingham Palace Road.

The child first uses its voice, he said, to express hunger, temper, and feelings of pleasure. Noises alone suffice for such expression. Then the baby utilizes its voice as a plaything, and afterward as a recognized mode of expression. The child makes sounds of its own before any opportunity has occurred to imitate. Trilling of lips takes place only at teething time. Gradually there is less variety of sounds, as the child learns definite associations with definite sounds. Some little people can hum tunes perfectly, yet are too young to pronounce the accompanying words.

On the other hand, they are often credited with words they never say. "Mum" is an instinctive sound, not an intentional call. Doubtless fond mothers will protest, but Prof. Rippmann laid it down that the child of any nationality when in need cries "Mum." The mother comes. After a time the infant associates "mum" with the arrival of mother and the cessation of distress. Then it expresses the word intelligently, but not before this association has occurred.

Definite words, it was explained, are comprehended between the twelfth and fifteenth months. Often one word forms the entire vocabulary for a long time. Comprehension of words takes place earlier than the power to speak.

There was a great difference between boys and girls. The former were slower than the latter. Girls were more receptive and imitative, and spoke correctly according to the conventional way earlier than boys; boys, however, seemed to be cleverer and more ingenious in making use of the limited means at their disposal.

The Negro Nurse.

Charlotte Observer.

Of peculiar interest to Southern readers should be the story which comes from Chicago of a Southern white boy taken suddenly and desperately ill with pneumonia who was hurried by the doctors to a negro hospital as the one most convenient. His mother telegraphed urging his removal to some other hospital. It was too late for that. For 36 hours continuously the nurse assigned him fought for his life and won. The mother, while doubtless not affected in just the way some Northern people might expect her to be, pays heart-felt tribute to the qualities exemplified by this negro trained nurse. She had probably known before, as Southern people generally know, that the negro woman household nurse is the best and most faithful in the world. She could not have expected less of a negro nurse professionally trained for the care of the sick. Very, very few of us who had negro nurses in our childhood can ever forget the debt of kindness we owe the negro race.

"I hear your daughter married against your wishes. Why didn't you stop the match?"

Well, it wasn't seriously against my wishes. I just wanted to be able to say I told her so if anything goes wrong."—Washington Herald.

"SUCH AS I HAVE."

The little maid sat in the high-backed pew,
And raised to the pulpit her eyes of blue;

And the prayers were long, and the sermon grand,
And oh, it was hard to understand!

But the beautiful text sank deep in her heart,
Which the preacher made of his sermon a part:

"Silver and gold have I none," read he;

"But such as I have give I to thee,"

And the good old pastor looked down and smiled
At the earnest gaze of the little child.

The dear little maid carried home the word,
Determined to use it as chance might afford,

She saw her mother unceasingly toil for the needs of the family,
So she cheerfully helped, the long day through,

And did with her might what her hands found to do.

"Silver and gold have I none," said she,

"But such as I have give I to thee."

And the joyful mother tenderly smiled,
As she bent to kiss her little child

On her way to school at early morn
She plucked the blooms by the wayside born;

"My teacher is often tired, I know,
For we're sometimes naughty, and sometimes slow;

Perhaps these may help to lighten her task."

And she laid the flowers on her teacher's desk.

"Silver and gold have I none," said she,

"But such as I have give I to thee."

And the weary teacher looked up and smiled
As she took the gift of the little child.

As she played with her sisters on the grass,
She saw a dusty traveler pass.

"Poor man," she said. "He is tired; I think,
I'll go and get him a nice cool drink."

And she hastened to fetch her little cup,
And dip the sparkling nectar up.

"Silver and gold have I none," said she,

"But such as I have give I to thee."

And the thirsty, dusty traveler smiled
As he took the cup from the little child.

Sweet and innocent, clad in white
She knelt by her little bed at night.

With a childish trust she longed to bring
Some gift to her Savior and her King.

"So much from thee every day I receive;
But my heart is all that I have to give."

"Silver and gold have I none," said she,

"But such as I have give I to thee."

And our Father looked down and tenderly smiled
As he took the gift from the little child.

—Elizabeth Rosser in The Watchman.

In Doubt.

From the Ladies Home Journal.

An insurance agent was filling out an application blank.

"Have you ever had appendicitis?" he asked.

"Well," answered the applicant, "I was operated on, but I have never felt quite sure whether it was appendicitis or professional curiosity."

"I see where an Ohio village is kept awake nights by fish that sing."

"Yes. I've seen the same sort of fish hanging over a bar at 11 p. m."—Indianapolis Star.

Subscribe to the Times.

THE MODERN NEWSPAPER.

No Regard for the Feelings of Even the Man Who "Never Scratched the Ticket."

From Charity and Children.

The time was, and it has not been so long ago, when it was considered high treason for a newspaper to say a word that could be construed as a criticism of party policy or a party leader. The political bosses were lambasted only by the opposition papers, and they were discredited of course, by the faithful followers whose chief claim to political distinction was that they had never scratched a ticket. Now all this has changed, and those newspapers are the most popular and the most influential that speak the plain truth about men and things and bend before no party pressure. The party organ that at one time was looked upon as the proper and necessary exponent of party policy has fallen into disrepute. Its day is over. The independent journal has come into its own, and the more independent and fair and truthful it is in its editorial expressions the larger the place it holds in public favor. This is a good omen of the better day ahead. We were little better than slaves under the old regime. We are freemen now, and our newspapers voice the day of the new freemen which has come. We are beginning to look back with horror to that dark time in our history when it seemed necessary to bow our heads to the yoke, and submit to whatever our political bosses saw fit to put upon us. Party loyalty is none the less binding because the members of the party are free to exercise their own judgment—it is more so, because freedom inspires loyalty where slavery represses it. The newspapers that bring us the tidings from the great world beyond, tell us the truth about our own party politics as well as about those of our opponents, and thus put us in possession of the facts from all sides, and make us more intelligent voters. It is a great mistake for a party or Church to cover up the truth. If a cause can not stand white light of truth it ought to go down. The editorial pages of the modern daily paper have become reliable and valuable and therefore the increasing power and influence of these independent journals.

Conditions of Egyptian Cotton Crop.

Consul Arthur Garrels, Alexandria, November 1,

A bulletin issued by the Egyptian Department of Agriculture states:

The first and second pickings of cotton in Lower Egypt are completed in all except the outlying northern districts; they are satisfactory and above the average; the third picking promises to be very bad. The cotton in Upper Egypt is all picked. The Minia crop is poor in quality and yield. The late bolls have been severally attacked by the common boll worm and the pink boll worm (cottonseed worm) everywhere. Hence there will be no third picking, or very inferior cotton will be the result.

Once upon a time a manager asked George Ade if he had ever been taken for a minister.

"No," replied Ade, "but I have been treated like one."

"How was that?"
"I have been kept waiting for my salary six or seven months."
—Ladies' Home Journal.