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PRACTICAL MATTERS.

Punctuation—How to Use the Hyphen.

Perhaps there are few subjects of more importance to the compositor (not the "blacksmith") than the question of correct punctuation. We know of compositors who are excellent grammarians, good readers of conglomerated manuscript, quick type-setters, etc., but who, in the eyes of A 1 proof-readers, are next thing to worthless on account of their bad—aye, horrible—punctuation. However, there may be a balm for even those unfortunates to whom we allude; for we have equally well known authors, editors, poets, and their kind, the writings of whom, were it not for the *managing* mind of the compositor or proof-reader, would be considered unintelligible vagaries, and not worthy of perusal by the ordinary reader. Much might be written in this strain, but our purpose at present is more to furnish a few rules for the guidance of compositors than to go into a long dissertation on what ought and ought not to be. First, we will take up that much-abused point (and as such we may fully consider it), the hyphen. An essay might be written on this one little useful mark, but we will content ourselves with giving in this article, as concisely as possible, the most prominent and commonest uses to which it may be put. Perhaps, at some future time, we will go more fully into the various intricacies of punctuation, at which time, of course, we will pay court again to the hyphen. It may be as well to add that we are indebted to a standard author on punctuation for the various rules, etc.

The word *hyphen* is derived from two Greek words meaning *under one*; and its use denotes that the parts between which it stands belong to one and the same word. It is used both to join and to separate. As a mark of junction it is inserted between the simple words of which certain compounds are formed; and, in peculiar circumstances, between a proposition, or a portion of a word, and the word to which it is prefixed, viz., "press-room," "pre-eminence." As a mark of separation it is used to divide words into syllables, and to disunite portions of words that

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