

sure the success of an apparatus of this construction, by the *incandescence of the ignited material*."

In reference to the mispronunciation of Scripture proper names, I have had several anecdotes sent me. The only one worth recounting is, that an informant, whom I well know, heard the name of the returned slave in St. Paul's Epistle to Philemon, read, "One (monosyllable) Sinus," instead of Onesimus.

A correspondent is highly offended with the very common expression, "I beg to inform you," "I beg to state," etc., requiring that the word "leave" should be inserted after the verb, otherwise, he says, the words are nonsense.

In this case, I conceive that custom has decided for us, that the ellipsis, "I beg," for "I beg leave," is allowable.

If ingenious derivations are often wrong, so also are ingenious corrections of common readings. I may give as an instance, a correction, often made with some confidence, of a word in the famous passage in Shakspeare's *Tempest*, beginning, "The cloud-capt towers." We commonly read in the modern editions, "And, like the baseless fabric of a vision, leave not a wreck behind." No, says the corrector, not wreck, but "rack;" rack being thin floating vapour, such as is seen on the blue sky before a change of weather. Now the original word, it is true, is "rack;" but there is every probability that by this Shakspeare meant *wreck*, not *floating vapour*. Two reasons may be given for this opinion: 1. In this very play, he calls the wreck of a ship by the name "wreck."—"The direful spectacle of the wreck, which touched the very virtue of compassion in thee;" and in *Measure for Measure*, III. i., "her brother Frederick was wracked at sea." 2. The word rack, in the sense of the thin cloud spread over the blue sky, is never found except with the definite article, "the rack." Thus in Hamlet, "We often see against some storm, a silence in the heavens, the rack stand still." And Bacon, in his natural history, says, "the clouds above, which we call 'the rack.'" In all other examples given in the dictionaries, the same is the case; and it would appear as contrary to usage to say "a rack," as it would be to say "a north," or "a zenith." This being so, we have no resource, but to face the corrector boldly, and to maintain that "leave not a wreck behind," means, leave not behind so much as a ship when she has broken up,—not even a spar to be remembered by.

Another erroneous correction (if one may venture on such an Hibernianism in terms) is the inserting the word "may" in the sentence of the general thanksgiving, "and that we shew forth Thy praise not only with our lips but in our lives." This construction without "may," was not uncommon, when the contemplated result was to be stated. Thus in the first Prayer Book, in the collect for St. Mary Magdalen's day, we have, "Give us grace that we never presume to sin through the example of any creature."

A statement is sometimes made about this word, which is not in accordance with fact. I remember, a short time since, seeing in a book of instructions how to read the Liturgy, that the omission of the word "may" is only a blunder of the printers, for that it exists in the "sealed book," from which our prayer-books ought to be copied. This is true, and it is untrue. It did exist in the sealed book, but was erased by the bishops, who put the pen through it. Thus its omission was no mistake, but a deliberate act, and intended to convey a particular meaning.

I will conclude with a few scraps which I have collected, as specimens of broken or imperfect English.

Really ambiguous sentences are to be found even in our most careful writers. One would think that Miss Austen, if any one, would not be caught tripping in this matter. But I read in "Pride and Prejudice," ch. xxviii., pt. 1: "Mr. Collins and Charlotte appeared at the door, and the carriage stopped at the small gate, which led by a short gravel walk to the house, amidst the nods and smiles of the whole party." And again, ch. xiii. pt. ii: "Elizabeth hesitated, but her knees trembled under her, and she felt how little could be gained by an attempt to pursue them." I also find in the same novel, ch. xx. pt. ii: "Each felt for the other, and of course for themselves." In this case the correction is easy, as the two persons were Jane and Elizabeth: "Each felt for the other and of course for herself;" but had the genders been different, it would have been impossible to write the sentence in this form at all.

I find the following sentence in Thackeray's "Virginians," Part IV.:

"He dropped his knife in his retreat against the wall which his rapid antagonist kicked under the table."

A letter in the *Pall Mall Gazette* about a fortnight ago, (Oct. 23, 1866), begins, "Sir, I have been spending this autumn in the vicarage of a pleasant village in Blankshire, famous for its cricket, which I have rented during the parson's holiday."

In a review in the same paper of Aug. 24, 1866, we read as follows:

"We defy any sensible bachelor anxious to change his condition, to read Lady Harriet Sinclair's book without drawing a painful contrast in his mind between a future passed with that gifted lady, and with (the writer means, and one passed with) the fast, very fast, young women with whom he rides in the morning, plays croquet and drinks tea in the afternoon, sits by at dinner, and dances with at wisely abstains from marrying."

One of the commonest of newspaper errors is to use a participial clause instead of a verbal one, leaving the said clause pendent, so

that in the reader's mind it necessarily falls into a wrong relation. Thus we had in the *Times* the other day, in the description of the York congress, assembled under the presidency of the Archbishop: "His Grace said, &c., and after pronouncing the benediction, the assembly separated." And again, in the account of the Queen's visit to open the Aberdeen waterworks, "In 1862 the Police Commissioners, headed by the Provost, set themselves in earnest to the work of obtaining a new Police and Water act, and succeeding in their labours, the splendid undertaking opened to-day is the result."

The notable and often exposed vulgarity "and which," or "and who," when no "which" or "who" has before occurred, seems as frequent as ever." This is an answer to an address presented to the Princess of Wales, and is the composition of an English nobleman:

"H. R. H. the Princess of Wales acknowledges, &c., and for which she is profoundly recognizant."

I quote the following from a novel which shall be nameless: "His having been with Lorenzo at the time of his death, and who had wished to confess to him, raised him prodigiously in the opinion of all those who had been the admirers of that prince?"

I have received a notice this very day from a London bookseller to this effect:

"A. B. C. begs to announce the above important contributions by Dr. T. to Biblical Criticism as nearly ready, and which he will have for sale as soon as published."

Mistakes in the arrangement of words and clauses are found in high quarters not less frequently than of old. In the *Times* of Saturday last, a paragraph is headed "The late Queen's Huntsman," when "The Queen's late Huntsman" is intended. A correspondent sends the following from a letter describing the great hurricane at Calcutta in 1864: "The great storm wave which passed up the lower Hooghly is said to have been of the height of a man at a distance of ten miles from the bed of the river."

The ignorant use of one word for another continues to give rise to curious mistakes. A letter to a newspaper says: "There is in the parish of Helmingham, Suffolk, an ancient graveyard of human skeletons, bearing much resemblance to, if not identical with, that mentioned in your impression on Thursday last as being recently discovered on the farm of Mr. Attrim at Stratford-on-Avon."

In this sentence let me notice that "as being discovered" is also wrong. The writer meant, "as having been discovered."

The secretary of a railway publishes in the *Times* of Oct. 17, this year, the following notice. I suppose he is an Irishman. "The present service of trains between Three Bridges and East Grinstead, and the coach now running between Uckfield and Tunbridge Wells, is now discontinued."

In the leading article of the *Times*, the same day, appeared this sentence: "To our mind it was impossible to entertain any doubt on the subject, at least not since the intimation conveyed by the American minister." You will observe that there is here a "not" too much. The writer meant, "at least since the intimation, &c."

A correspondent sends me a very rich example of this confusion of ideas. It occurs in a leading article of the *Standard*: "The progress of science can neither be arrested nor controlled. Still less, perhaps, in this hurrying nineteenth century, can we expect to persuade men that, after all, the most haste may finally prove the worst speed, and that as a rule it must be of less importance to arrive at your journey's end quickly than it is not to arrive at all." Of course the writer meant "than it is to make sure of arriving at all."

I have one or two more illustrations of the blunder of using one word when another is meant. In a well-known novel by one of our most popular writers, we read: "He had not learned the heart (sic) of assuming himself to be of importance wherever he might find himself."

This can hardly be a misprint.

In another novel of the day, we read: "For these pious purposes a visible and attractive presentment of the newly promoted Saint is indispensable."

The author meant "presentment," "presentment" being a foreboding within the mind, not a demonstration before the eyes.

In the *Times* of April 20, of this year, we read: "The prisoners are allowed . . . to receive food from their friends outside, an indulgence which has been in many instances abused by the secretion of tobacco and written communications in the food sent in."

Had the writer consulted his dictionary, he would have found that secretion means "that agency in the animal economy that consists in separating the various fluids of the body. He meant "secreting."

If our last example presented a physical curiosity, our next even surpasses it. The *Times* Law report of Feb. 13, last year, told us of a plaintiff or defendant, "He, though a gentleman of property, was unhappily paralysed in his lower limbs." What a delightful idea this writer had of the usual exemption of the rich from the ills of humanity!

Nor does the level of physical intelligence rise in our next example,—an advertisement of Keating's Persian Insect-destroying powder. It states that "this powder is quite harmless to animal life, but is untrivalled in destroying fleas, bugs, flies, cockroaches, beetles, gnats, mosquitoes, moths in furs, and every other species of insects." We thought we had more frequently found the converse mistake made, and the appellation "animals" applied somewhat exclusively to the unlovely genera here enumerated. The advertisement loses none of its richness as it proceeds: "Being the original importer of this article, which has found so great a sale that it has tempted others