

cidents, their surroundings, their developments, and their results are infinitely varied in the progress of the ages. The execution of Charles I. in England, and of Louis XVI. in France, have been triumphantly cited as proofs of the so called fact that there is nothing new in history; but where is the repetition in the fate of Charles I. and Louis XVI. in the subsequent history of both countries? It does not exist, and the constant iteration of the phrase is not merely a misleading platitude, but a weariness of spirit to the thoughtful few who study history for themselves and draw rational conclusions from its teachings.

"*Reading between the lines.*"—This well-worn phrase is constantly employed by writers who imagine themselves to be wiser than their neighbours, and who fancy they can discover ambiguous meanings in the plainest statements, and detect treachery in the mere assertion that two and two are four. They "read between the lines," as they say, and find that two and two are intended to represent five, or perhaps five hundred, in the apparently plain statement to which they give their sinister interpretation.

Several other phrases, unobjectionable in themselves, but rendered offensive by perpetual reiteration, affront the eyes of newspaper readers every morning and evening; and infest the pages of the multitudinous novels that serve to amuse or to weary the leisure of those who have nothing to think about. Among these are "The spur of the occasion;" "The courage of his convictions;" "That goes without saying;" "We are *free* to confess;" "We have a *shrewd* suspicion;" "Equal to the occasion;" "The devouring element;" "Within an *inch* of his life," and many others equally familiar.

Among single words that may fairly come under the designation of news-

paper slang, are *ventilate*, instead of to discuss, *succumb* instead of to die, *demise* instead of death; *form* instead of condition or manners; *lengthy*, instead of long. It must be said for lengthy when used for tediously long, that it is a good word in itself, as marking a difference between *long*, which is not too long—and long which is much too long; but when a writer describes a "*lengthy* journey by rail," the adjective is so misapplied, that the reader may be justified in asking if the traveller did not undertake the journey in a *strengthened* carriage?

The novelists in some respects are greater adepts in slang than the newspapers; and borrow the language of the sculptor and the stonemason. In describing the personal beauty of their heroes or heroines, they almost invariably write that their noses are beautifully *cut*, and their lips and chins finely or delicately *chiselled*; while eyebrows are neither *cut* nor *chiselled* but *carved*.

Paint is a word applied to the colour of natural objects, for which may be pleaded the great example of Shakespeare, when he wrote:—

When daisies pied and violets blue
Do *paint* the meadows with delight.

But it is an example which ought not to be frequently followed—and never by any one whose genius does not warrant him in taking liberties with the language. *Transpire* is a word that careless writers continually employ instead of to "happen." *Transpire* originally signified to emit insensible vapour through the pores of the skin. It was afterwards used metaphorically in the sense of to become known, to emerge from secrecy into comparative or positive publicity. This was a perfectly permissible and correct employment of the word; but when a newspaper writer, commenting upon the outrages committed by the Communists of Paris in 1870, spoke of "the events that have re-