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The Virtue of a Comma.

Small and insignificant though the comma looks, its absence in ancient times made it possible for the pagan oracles to reap a golden harvest on predictions which "never failed." because they could be interpreted any way the event happened to fall out.

For example: "Pyrrhus I tell you the Romans will conquer." If the comma is placed after "you." the meaning is that the Romans will conquer. Poor Pyrrhus, however, put a meaning upon the sentence as if the comma had been after "tell." and this gave him the idea that the oracle meant that he would conquer. He didn't.

Even after the introduction of commas and other modern punctuction marks—the memorial—English lawyers in the Middle Ages, down as far as the time of the famous Blackstone less than two centuries ago, made it a point never to punctuate pleadings or other important documents. They knew that a comma, one way or another would change the meaning and fearing they might place the comma in the wrong part of the sentence, they eschewed its use altogether.

True, it was not always a matter of punctuation that gave the ancient oracles their dual meaning. This frequently depended upon the grammatical construction of the sentence, which no possible kind of punctuation could have obviated.

of the best known is that given to Croesus, king of Lydia, and one of the to inquire concerning a portent which long had his eye on Persia, which un- ter receiving the reply, they made fur-der Cyrus had grown to be a mighty ther inquiry on their own "book" as New Flags the empire. Before attacking Cyrus he ask- to who should be their father's suced the Oracle at Delphi what the outcome of his campaign would be. The reply was, "If you cross the River Halys you will destroy a great em- eign power at Rome," was the reply.

Destroyed His Own Empire.

between Lydia and Persia. Conse- filial kiss first upon their return from be timely. quently Croesus felt that the meaning Greece, and they gave orders that no of the oracle was conclusively in favor of his conquest of Persia, and accordingly he crossed the Halys with an army of mercenaries. His army was

captive by Cyrus and ordered to burned to death.

The great empire which he had desthe memory of Cyrus it should be added that the death sentence was revoked in the nick of time, just as the flames were beginning to reach out for the fagots on which the feet of Croesus were resting.

In the heyday of his prosperity Croesus had entertained at his court Solon, the great Athenian lawgiver, and had shown him his treasurehouses and other evidences of wealth, and then asked him whether he did not consider him happy. "No one," replied the sage Solon, "can be called happy as long as he lives, for the vicissitudes that one life and fortune are so treacherous that one can never know just what misfortune the morrow may

bring forth." And so now, when he saw the flames drawing nearer and nearer, the hapless king, recalling the words of the Athenian sage, exclaimed, "Oh Solon Solon, Solon!

Cyrus demanded to know what he meant by this exclamation, and when Croesus told him, the conqueror, realizing that the same instability of fortune which had hurled Croesus from the throne might also fall to his own lot, ordered his release and took him into his friendship.

Kissed Our Universal Mother. ment ever given as far as Rome was Of the historic Delphic replies one concerned was that given to the sons NEWFOUNDLAND FOOD of Tarquin, who had gone to Delphi wealthiest men of antiquity. He had had appeared to their father, and af-

> cessor as king. "Whichever of you shall first kiss our mother shall possess the sover-

Titus and Aruns, the young princes. drew lots as to which of them was to The Halys was the boundary line have the privilege of bestowing the their varied colors and designs may one should dare tell their brother sextus, who had remained at home, what the oracle had predicted.

The ambitious young men had taken

mily at the hands of Tarquin, had eigned imbecility from early childod and was accordingly allowed to live as incapable of being dangerous to the rule of the royal family. On account of his apparent difficulty of speech they had nick-named him Bru-

tus, in allusion to the brute animals. When Brutus heard the prediction of the oracle he fell into a fit of what seemed to be insane laughter, and laughing, stumbled and fell, and, unobserved by the princes, kissed the carth, our universal mother.

How the Oracle was Verified.

Those who are familiar with the story of the chaste Lucrece know in what manner the cracle was verified, when Brutus, chasing the Tarquins out of the city, ended once for all the kingship of Rome and established republican form of Government.

Another famous oracular saving which was misunderstood until the moment when it was verified was that given to the great Theban general, Epaminondas. He was the man of whom history speaks, as one who would never tell a lie. In the case of Epaminondas this love of truth was carried to so sublime a height that he

would not even tell a lie in jest. But to return to the oracle. He had peen told never to trust himself to Pelagos. Now Pelagos in Greek means sea, and, believing that the oracle meant to warn him against ever trying the fortunes of war at sea, took great pains to avoid any sea conflict. with his country's hereditary foe Sparta.

During the most famous of the bat tles against the Spartans, the battle of Mantinea, the fighting led into a troyed was his own. But in justice to forest, where Epaminondas fell morta!ly wounded while performing prodigies of valor. He lived just long enough to discover that the name of the forest was Pelagos.

SUGAR.

The Newfoundland Food Control Board have, in the interests of the general public, taken over the control of all Sugar Sales.

In accordance with the plan worked out, by which the price of sugar will be stabilized until the end of year at least, the maximum retail price of sugar is today fixed at THIRTY

CENTS PER POUND. Regulations governng sales will in due course be published.

This action has been taken in order to protect the public against the probable price of forty cents per pound in a few months, which would have been inevitable if this step had not

CONTROL BOARD.

War Has Made.

Never has there been such a flutter ing of new flags as at the present time, and as "Peace" and other celebrations have revived much interest recently in national emblems, an account of

It must be admitted that in most cases a great opportunity has been missed, and not much originality or imagination shown, for certainly none of the newcomers can challenge combeaten and in the end he was taken along with them Lucius Junius, their parison with our own splendid Union Jack, the Stars and Stripes of the Unted States, or the effective Sunburst

One of the most successful is the new flag of Poland, consisting of white and red horizontal stripes, with a red shield appearing in the centre of the upper half, upon which is emblazoned the white eagle of Poland, curiously enough (seeing that it is the flag of a

republic) still wearing a crown! There has been a great moulting of 'eagles" recently in European heraldry, but the bird of war flaps its wings and again raises its (double) head as the emblem of rock-bound Albania. Incidentally, in this flag is committed what might almost be called the heraldic "crime" of emblazoning "color on color"—that is black or red. If one had been a "metal" (yellow or white) it would have made all the dif-

The flag of Ukraine, modest in its design of blue over yellow, horizontally arranged, aims at least at being symbolic, the official description explaining that it represents the blue sky over the golden wheatfields of Eu-

rope's richest granary.

The new flag of Czecho-Slovakia incorporates the colors of Bohemia, white over red, with a triangular patch of blue let in at the "hoist" end, emblematic of the blue hills of the Car-

The flag of Latvia (otherwise Lettand or Lettonia), one of the new Baltic states carved from the side of Russia, is red, white, red, horizontally, the two red strips being each double the width of the central white. As an instance of the persistence of warlike

Kearneygrams



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* * *

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Do you want to wear one of the world's two best Hats made by manufacturers whose products cover the heads of All the World and His Son?

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I hree statements that would apply, any or all of them, to the World's Best Hat. Perhaps meone has told the same things to you when he sold you your last hat. If he sold you the World's Best Hat he naturally would be enthusiastic about it. But it's hard to tell who sells the World's Best Hat when everyone claims to have it.



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"If the hat fades its colour, if it loses any of the finelyblocked lines of its shape that the makers know so well how to put into it; if it does not give you greater value than any other hat made at ANY price—KEARNEY FIRST is willing to 'make good' your loss"—just to prove that we have the World's Best Hat.

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realism, it may be added that the red is officially described as the "color of coagulated blood.

Futuristic Combination.

Two other states that have broken away from Russia have chosen horizontal stripes, but in these cases tricolors of equal width, Esthonia flying cupied by equal stripes of black and blue, black and white and Lithuania the gay "Futurstic" combination of yellow, green, and red, in both in-

stances reading downward. Another flag that will soon be familiar in Baltic and British waters is that of Finland, with its simple but effective device of a dark blue upright cross up- black, white and red horizontally, but on a white ground, oblong for the merchant service and swallow-tailed when

flown as the ensign. The new emblem of Austria is very liable to be mistaken for that of Latvia, equal width. This design only differs Trade.

in not having the lowest stripe half red, half green, the latter color representative of Hungary.

The newly-recognized Caucasian republic of Georgia has chosen a rather striking flag, crimson in color, the upper "canton" (or quarter) being oc-

white. Finally, from official information received it is stated that the new flags

of Germany are as follows: The national flag is to be horizontal stripes of black, red and yellow, while the mercantile flag retains the old with a "canton" of black, red and yellow in the corner.

NOMINATED FOR MEMBERSHIP. -Capt. A. Kean and Mr. Geo. T. here again the colors being red, whits, Hayward, broker, have been nominatred, horizontal, but in this case of ed for membership in the Board of



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