

LANGUAGE AND GRAMMAR

A few weeks ago, a student of mine submitted a paragraph for correction and suggested, upon my pointing out certain errors, that if she knew more grammar she could produce better work. My reply was that her trouble was not lack of grammar but lack of reverence—lack of respect for the real significance of words.

Many years ago, Spencer wrote that language was made before grammar and should be taught before grammar. In the case of the student, she knew as much grammar as is necessary for the average person, but she had fallen into the habit of "cheap" methods of expression. Such a habit cannot be cured by grammar; it can be cured only by a strict inward searching and a determination to use words carefully and rightly.

The story is told of a learned man who conducted a young lady to the edge of a crater which exhibited most wonderful evidences of volcanic phenomena. Her exclamation was "Isn't it cute!" Such an appreciation of one of the most striking of Nature's wonders is an evidence of a poverty-stricken state of mind which, unfortunately, is typical of far too many people.

One can call to mind, too, certain individuals who have apparently only one descriptive word in their vocabulary. They get up after a "swell" sleep, followed by a "swell" breakfast, a "swell" day, and a "swell" time in the evening.

OCCUPATIONS AND JOKES

Some time back, during a discussion on the status of the teacher, the suggestion was advanced that in many quarters the teacher was not esteemed as highly as he might be and that one evidence of this was the number of times he figured in the joke column in lighter literature.

It is doubtful, however, if the teacher and his work are unduly emphasized in the comic paragraphs. The doctor, the lawyer, the plumber, the soldier and the butcher seem to share joke honors equally with the teacher. Nor are nationalities exempt. There would be some serious gaps in the comic columns were our friends the Hebrew and the Scotchman (not to mention the Irish) excepted from jocular treatment.

THE FARMER

Man builds his castles fair and high
Wherever river runneth by;
Great cities rise in every land,
Great churches show the builder's hand,
Great arches, monuments, and towers,
Fair palaces and pleasing bowers;
Great work is done, be't here or there,
And well man worketh everywhere:
But work or rest, whate'er befall,
The farmer he must feed them all.—Leland.

THE FOREST FIRES

In the year of grace, 1920, there are many things for which Canada may be justly thankful, but in the matter of the forest fire and, indeed, fires of every kind, we have little of credit to our record. Of our country it seems particularly true that "fire is a good servant but a bad master." The problem is one to which the young man might well devote a little attention. It is unnecessary to quote here the staggering losses we have incurred this year from fire-material losses and, infinitely more tragic, loss of life. Any fire, anywhere, is not confined in its influence to a particular locality; it affects the nation. Had we ten commandments for the prevention of fire we might do worse than name prudence for the first.

A PHILOSOPHER

"Those who speak know nothing;
Those who know are silent."
These words, as I am told,
Were spoken by Lao-tzu.
If we are to believe that Lao-tzu
Was himself one who knew,
How comes it that he wrote a book
Of five thousand words?
—Chinese of the eighth century.

A NEW HOME

After living for ten years in a cottage, I have taken advantage of a state's generosity, and builded a new house; a little larger, a little warmer, I hope, and with a regard more for simplicity than for luxury. Altogether, it has been rather a wonderful experience, and as the house has taken shape and our plans and castles in the air have materialized, the little vexations consequent upon promises unfulfilled, have been forgotten. The school holiday provided me with many opportunities for watching the progress of the work, though I was careful to

The Young Man and His Problem

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inform the workmen that I was watching not for faults but for the purpose of seeing how the thing was done.

To me, perhaps the most interesting part was the work of the masons in the construction of the basement. The apparent ease with which they fitted awkwardly-shaped stones into place, building straight to the string, furnished a striking demonstration of good workmanship in action.

In conversation with the different mechanics as the work proceeded, I was surprised at the number who expressed the opinion that "if they had their time over again, they wouldn't take up this line of work." Perhaps this is the common human feeling to think that far-off fields look green and that almost any occupation but our own would be more attractive.

If the quality of this page is more below par than usual, I hope these paragraphs will furnish the reason, for the page is being written in the middle of a moving "festival" and I have just rescued my typewriting machine from under a mattress.

GOD GIVE US MEN

God give us men! the time demands
Strong minds, great hearts, true faith and willing hands—

Men whom the lust of office cannot kill;
Men whom the spoils of office cannot buy;
Men who possess opinions and a will;
Men who have honor; men who will not lie;
Men who can stand before a demagogue
And damn his traitorous flatteries without winking.
Tall men, sun-crowned, who live above the fog,
In public duty and in private thinking.
For while the rabble, with their thumb-worn creeds,
Their large professions and their deeds,
Mingle in selfish strife, lo! Freedom weeps!
Wrong rules the land, and waiting Justice sleeps!
—Rolland.

THREE THOUGHTS

I love no peace which is not fellowship,
And which includes not mercy.—Mrs. Browning.
Not what has happened to myself to-day,
But what has happened to others through me—
That should be my thought.—F. D. Blake.
If a man does not know to what port he is steering,
no wind is favorable to him.—Seneca.

THE MARKET

Commercially speaking, the world is a great market, and it is upon the market that the manufacturer depends for the disposal and distribution of his products.

It is interesting to note the way in which the economist classifies the four industrial agencies upon which the organization and practice of the modern market depends, namely,

A monetary system,
A banking system,
Transportation, and
The organization of intelligence.

In these days, this last factor is very often overlooked by unthinking people. Modern conditions are such that the system of intelligence is very finely organized indeed, and to the extent that ill-considered plans are forced upon a community, so does the whole system of marketing suffer.

GAINING DOMINION

All thought of ill;—all evil deeds,
That have their roots in thoughts of ill;—
Whatever hinders or impedes
The action of a nobler will;—
All these must first be trampled down
Beneath our feet, if we would gain
In the bright fields of fair renown
The right of eminent domain.—Longfellow.

RAPIDITY VERSUS EFFICIENCY

A prominent commercial school president once said, as related by J. S. Knox, that no prospective student had ever come to his school and asked him what kind of a faculty he had, or what kind of an education his school could give. He said the prospective student asks just two questions. The first is: "How much will it cost, or rather how little will it cost?" and the other is "How soon can I finish?"

GOVERNMENT

There are two theories respecting the place government should occupy in the business world. According to the one, government should assume complete control over all co-operative activities; according to the other, government and industry should be kept entirely apart.

The former relies on the political principle of control; the latter on the free play of commercial forces. The former is called industrial socialism; the latter may be called industrial individualism.

As a matter of fact writes H. C. Adams neither of these two theories has ever been adopted to the exclusion of the other. Every society of which we know has made use of both principles of control, and this will be true to the end of time.

Modern governments have thought it wise to enact certain laws in order to secure the highest welfare of citizens. These laws are of four fairly well-defined classes as follows:

Factory legislation,
Enforcement of competition,
Exclusion of competition, and
Supervision of competition.

One who understands these phrases, and appreciates the legislative policies for which each phrase stands, has a fairly satisfactory grasp of the kind of problems that present themselves to those who frame and administer our industrial laws.

BEAUTIFUL WORDS

A prize was once offered to pupils of the Public Speaking Club of America, a New York institution, for a list of the twenty-five most beautiful words in the English language. Words were judged according to their beauty of sound and beauty of meaning. Sixty-five persons submitted lists. The prize was won by James Shea, a lawyer of the city.

Mr. Shea's list contained twenty-one accepted words. The judges objected to the word "grace" because of the harshness of the "g" and the "j" in "justice" disqualified the word. "Truth" was turned down because of its metallic sound. The following is a list of Mr. Shea's accepted words:

Melody, Nobility, Splendor, Sympathy, Adoration, Heaven, Virtue, Eloquence, Love, Divine, Innocence, Hope, Modesty, Harmony, Faith, Happiness, Joy, Purity, Honor, Liberty, Radiance.

BATTLE-SONG OF FAILURE

We train toward Heaven and lay hold on Hell;
With starward eyes we stumble in hard ways,
And to the moments when we see life well
Succeeds the blindness of bewildered days,—
But what of that? Into the sullen flesh
Our souls drive home the spur with splendid sting.
Bleeding and soiled, we gird ourselves afresh.
Forth and make firm a highway for the King.
—Burr.

PROTECTION

It is not to be expected that all men at all times should feel that they receive justice at the hands of the business world. Strikes on the part of laborers; lockouts on the part of employers; the outcry against high prices and monopolies; the charge of tyrannical use of power on the part of managers who are entrusted with large funds of capital; these and other complaints that are common, show the leaven of unrest to be working in our business world. There is nothing improper in this unrest. Indeed, among free people, it is the forerunner of those changes that mark the path of social and industrial reform. It is essential, however, that the peace of society should not be disturbed, or the entire industrial structure will tumble; and it is the peculiar task of government to protect the existing order against violence that sometimes goes along with the expression of even just complaints. —Adams.

NATURAL ACTIVITY

Activity, says Warren, is "the normal state of mind. It is as natural for thought to be active as it is for the earth to move on its axis. When you see a man who thinks and acts as if he were impelled by some unusual force, don't consider him abnormal. He is only normal. It is the less active persons who are abnormal. It would be more wonderful for the world to stop revolving than for it to keep on.

How can a man become more active, more productive of intelligent work? By thinking. First, let him clear away obstructions to his activity, so that he can act normally. Convince yourself that activity is the right thing, and that inactivity is stagnation.

Everything worth having is within the reach of the man who works actively towards his ideals. Think more of the result to be attained than of your present comfort. Become absorbed in your work, enjoy the mental growth which comes from wholesome activity.