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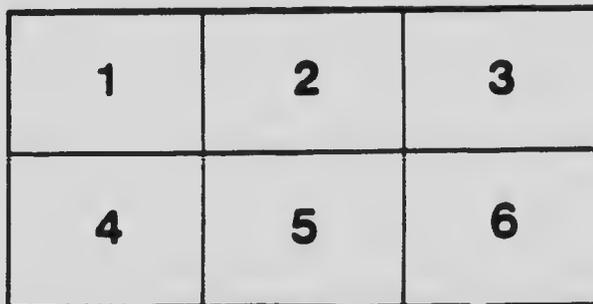
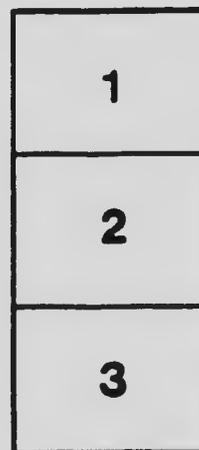
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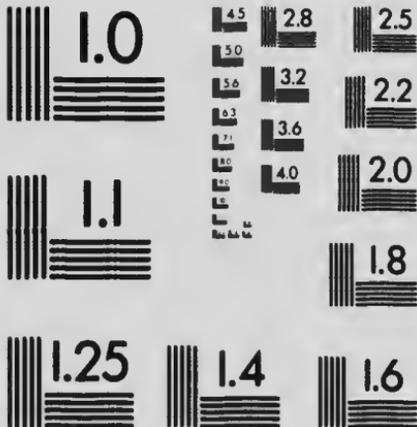
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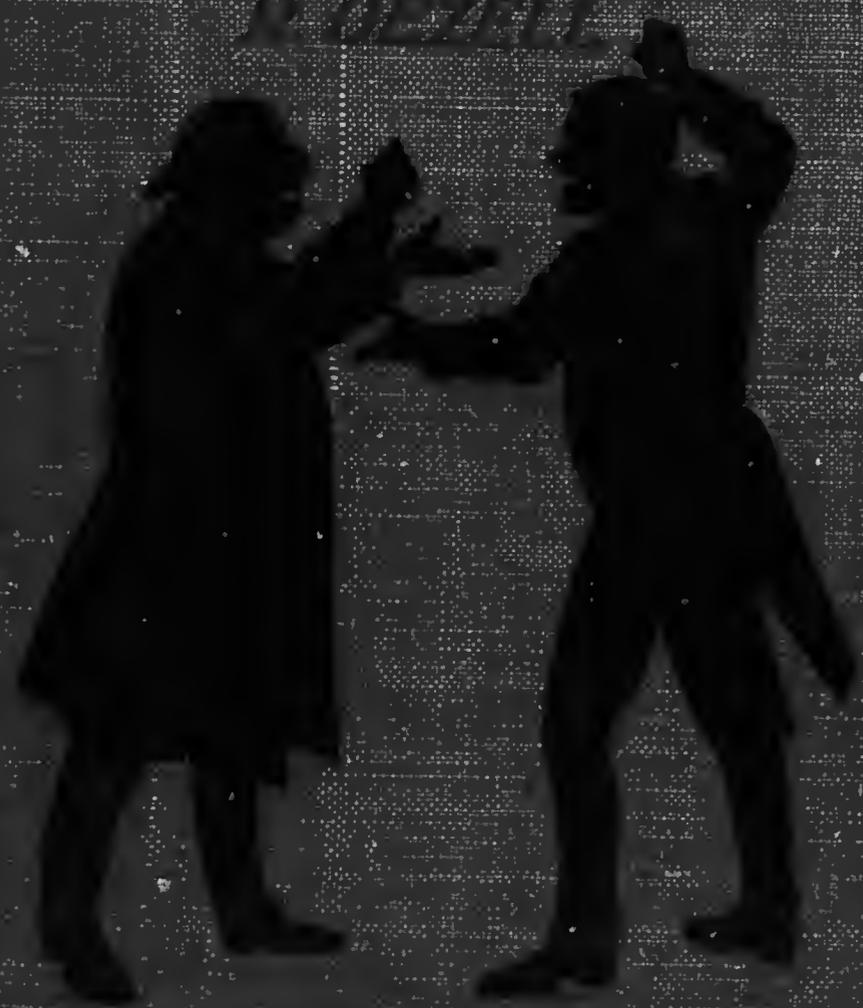


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# THE SEZ SEZI

R. B. BELL













DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY.

# "I SEZ, SEZ I"

A SERIES OF TALKS TO TALKERS ON

WHAT TO SAY AND  
HOW TO SAY IT

By R. DEZELL

*Author of "Lost Track of a Day," "A Night on the Prairie," etc.*

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ILLUSTRATIONS BY J. E. LAUGHLIN

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R. DEZELL  
ALLENFORD, ONTARIO

1911

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## THE LAST WORD

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AGE  
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THE final act in connection with the completion of a book may possibly be looked upon as an effort on the part of the author or some other person to justify its existence. A preface which fails to do this is not a success; and that, no doubt, accounts for the fact that so many prefaces are a failure.

These thoughts call to mind a time when the author went to a small Ontario town to deliver a lecture on "What to Say and How to Say It." Upon entering the place, a woman was observed standing on the street a short distance away addressing a small boy, who was detained long enough to get loaded up with various instructions and commands which terminated in the remarkable climax, "*Note skin.*"

32  
45  
80  
82

No doubt many will think as I did just then, that I had not been sent for any too soon.

The lecture having been developed into a book, it is scarcely necessary to say, in view of the many nasty unauthorized words and unhappy slips of speech heard on every hand,

## THE LAST WORD

that a corrective word is much needed to-day.

And now, that the book is ready to pass from publisher to reader, the last word to the reader (who may find it necessary to pardon the presumption of the author) is simply, "Profit as you please by the perusal of the pages which follow."

To the sober-minded, the ungrammatical words used as a title to the book—"I Sez, Sez i"—may not command as much favorable consideration as some more stately or conventional style of announcing a treatise on such a technical subject as speech and speech-making. That it is not in keeping with the object of the work may be quite true; but that is neither here nor there, to use a common phrase, if something is hit or some one is helped. It takes some artifice as well as a polished rod to land the kind of game you are after. The most fastidious, we trust, will be gracious enough to accede the point and then be wise enough to say nothing about it to the other chap who (don't you fear) can always be depended upon to pass over anything written anywhere in the front of a book.

R. DEZELL.

## “I SEZ, SEZ I”

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### I

#### First Talkers

TALKING is a tongue exercise. The tongue in performing its functions calls into action the lungs and sometimes the fists. The uselessness of this exercise has been proved time and time again by talking on. Once the decision is reached, that there is no use in talking, the usual practise is to give it a longer trial. This always secures to one or the other the advantage of having the last word.

To talk simply for the sake of talking is a waste of words. Talk that is not tied to any subject is as unwise as wanderers who can not tell whence they came or whither they are going. Those who are disposed to talk must remember the injunction—"Talk sense."

Uselessness of talk, however, depends equally upon the person addressed. A word to the wise is sufficient, and if you are looking for trouble, a word to the wicked is sufficient

## "I SEZ, SEZ I"

also. There is reason in everything except some human heads. If a man is a mule, there is certainly no use in talking unless you have been waiting for a long while to get an insight upon human nature.

Talking when a man is mad, or when a woman is sure of her point, is really useless. When a woman puts her foot down and steps off the car the opposite way from which the car is going, you might as well try to convince her that she really did not see any stars as to exonerate the company.

There is no use in talking, is a statement more often heard than is exemplified by the silence supposed to punctuate the sentence. The uselessness of talk has been talked over by the talkative ones time and again; but useless as talk is said to be, you cannot make a success out of anything without a great deal of talking. You must talk it up or some one will talk it down; you must talk it over or so ne one will talk it under.

Men must talk if they have anything to talk about. Women must talk, I suppose, if they are to keep up their reputation for talking. However, the talking must be done. The

## FIRST TALKERS

men cannot do it all, though they are doing remarkably well, notwithstanding their generosity in giving women credit for doing so much better.

All are not gifted alike. Some talk little. Some talk big. Some, it is claimed, talk through their hat; others, it is said, talk through their nose. Some speak for themselves, and they say all that is necessary to be said. Some speak for others, and they are heard for their much speaking. Many good things are said and many mean things are said; and much has been left unsaid either because the world was not prepared to receive it or because words could not begin to express the sublime thoughts that have come to minds unused and unprepared for such visitations.

The half of what is in human hearts has never been told. One-half of the world does not know what the other half is thinking about. We know each other in part, and is it not well that there is so much in other's lives, which must remain a sealed book to us? It is the unknown and the unsaid which makes human nature such a deep and delightful study. If we could read the secrets of hearts

## “I SEZ, SEZ I”

we would scarcely take time to read them. It is not what is made bare which interests us so much as what is placed under cover. Curiosity is a curious thing. It would have us pry into particulars, wait for words, and wonder what it is that is guarded with reticence. It is none of our business to be sure, but we would just like to know and just like perhaps to have the happiness of telling it to others, with the doubtful stamp of valuation but certain guarantee of currency, “I was told not to tell anybody.”

There are several hundred languages in the world, yet there are people who claim that they cannot find words to express themselves. It may be they want to express more than the express companies will carry. The real trouble, however, with those who say they cannot express themselves, or who maintain that they didn't know what to say or couldn't say a word, is that they did not know what to do or what to think. The only time when people really didn't know what to say or couldn't say a word was when they had something to say and no language to say it in.

Did you ever think of what a difficult and

## FIRST TALKERS

unsatisfactory effort that would be to try to talk without a language? Somebody must have run up against that difficulty. Someone had to speak first. Doubtless our first parents were our first talkers, and though we have nothing to warrant us in saying that they had *a few words* or that *some words passed between them*, yet we believe *it came to words* upon more than one occasion.



CAN'T EXPRESS HIMSELF.

The Egyptians imagined that they were the most ancient people and that the honor of originating language was due to them until the reign of Pysammiticus, which was from 658 B.C. to 619 B.C. This king was desirous of proving this claim, and the ancient historian Herodotus relates a whimsical experiment which he adopted to find out the primeval language. He shut up two new-born infants in a solitary cottage for two years under the care of a shepherd, who was not to suffer anyone to speak in their hearing and who was to cause them to be suckled by goats. One day the shepherd entering the cottage, both the

## “ I SEZ, SEZ I ”

children ran to him holding out their hands, and crying, “ Bekhos, bekhos ! ” This they repeated afterward, and bekhos being found upon inquiry to signify “ bread ” in the Phrygian dialect, the Egyptians yielded the palm of antiquity to the Phrygians, but this experiment was by no means conclusive, for the children evidently imitated “ bek ” stripped of the Greek termination, hos, the bleating of the goats. One obvious and useful result, however, from the inconclusive experiment, says Doctor Hale, was to show that the faculty of speech was considered as innate, or “ the gift of nature,” by the Egyptians then reckoned the wisest and most argumentative people of antiquity.

Modern philosophers represent the faculty of speech as a “ talent acquired like all others,” as an invention discovered posterior to several others and after the formation of societies. In answer to this theory, Doctor Johnson says: “ Language must have come by *inspiration*; a thousand, nay, a million, children could not invent a language; while the organs are pliable, there is not understanding enough to form a language, and by the time there

## FIRST TALKERS

is understanding enough the organs are grown stiff."

We would not accept one of these theories to the exclusion of the other. We would not accept the theory of Inspiration carried to the extent of saying that language was obtained without any mental effort or process. The mind of the infinite opening up the understanding of the finite mind is the starting-point of all human attainment. But we believe the Inspiration of the Almighty as regards language has other conditions on the human side than that of a lazy brain. An exercise of the powers of acquisition would naturally come in somewhere.

Man found himself possessed of vocal organs. Other created animals could make sounds peculiar to their kind, but man could make a variety of sounds; could imitate the beast of the field and the birds of the air. Then thoughts came into the heart of man, and those thoughts would struggle for expression. Instinctively sound would be associated with thought, but sounds which had been acquired through exercising the vocal organs would have to become intelligible before they

## “I SEZ, SEZ I”

could be considered a channel for communicating thought. And when once a sound became intelligible to any two persons, that sound could then be said to be a word.

Here we stop to observe that the conditions were such as not to require very many words. They were not supposed to talk upon questions which did not belong to their day. There is scarcely any instance in real early days where very much talking was required up to the time when Abraham's servant went out to seek a wife for Abraham's son Isaac. You will remember on that occasion he had to do a great deal of talking. Not so much, however, as when a man goes out to hunt a wife for himself. In that case there is no end to talk—I mean in the community. It's a regular talking match, and one that engages a much larger circle than the match-makers. Some things, however, had to be said then as now. Actions must be indicated, news communicated and thoughts exchanged. Perhaps without any words no serious difficulty would be encountered in indicating a simple action. Even though Adam could not say to Eve “Go,” he could point with the finger and she could

## FIRST TALKERS

understand from that simple act that she was not wanted around there; and though Eve could not say to Adam "Come," she could beckon with the hand, and he, you would think, could understand from that, that man's supreme mission was to walk close by the side of woman. That is evidently how it comes that men got possessed of that peculiar inclination to go after the hand of a woman, and it is interesting to note that even in the long ago woman had acquired some fine art, some sly way of calling the attention of men toward herself.

But we want to know how language got a start. Was an alphabet constructed first; then syllables, then words, then compound words? If they went right about it, it would be as easy as A, B, C. But we cannot say exactly what way they went about it. We think, however, that they would naturally build up from the simple to the complex. Doubtless some particular sounds were first acquired. We will say a particular sound, such as "hi," or "ho," was acquired. Of course, if they were English, they would drop the "h." It's not worth our while to investigate the nationality of the Edenites, but they were evidently not English.

## “I SEZ, SEZ I”

No Englishman would wait to be tempted to eat forbidden fruit on any occasion. Our first parents were evidently Irish. There is no doubt that Home Rule started in Eden. And you will observe that the Irishman to this day, in the use of the expression “Be dad,” always swears by his first parents. But whatever the nationality, some particular sound was first acquired, and that sound would stand for something definite—some definite action or thing. It would then become a recognized word. Suppose they got two or three words in that way to start with. They would then discover that elementary sounds could be combined, and later that a complexity of sounds could be broken up into simpler elements. To form a new word they could either add an extra element or drop one from a recognized word. Just as with the word “any,” by adding another elementary sound you get the word “many.”

In connection with this general law of development certain principles would doubtless work themselves in to guide in the formation of new words. For instance, where there would be a sameness in character or idea there would be a sameness in sound or in name.

## FIRST TALKERS

Telegraph, telegram and telephone are words which fully illustrate this point. The relation of the telephone to the telegraph has suggested a name similar to that of its rival in regard to telling things which cannot always safely be told except at a distance.

Again, the sense would often suggest the sound. How did we come to talk of the falling of a tree as making a great *crash*, or of the *whissing* or *sizzing* noise? These words were formed as were many others, by an attempt to indicate the character of a noise by imitation of it. In the Hebrew language that principle is very evident. The word for water in Hebrew, for instance, is *v*. This word was evidently suggested by the peculiar noise which water makes when poured out of enclosed vessels, such as bottles or jugs. In the primeval language this principle would, doubtless, very largely prevail.

A street Arab was once asked who was the greatest hero he ever read about. His prompt reply was "Robinson Crusier; 'cause he hustled when there was nothing to hustle with." The idea of hustling when there was nothing to hustle with may possibly size up the situation

## “I SEZ, SEZ I”

as met by first talkers. It belonged to them to say the first word. That first word would lead to another and another, until, perhaps, as is often the case, there was more said than necessary. Practice makes perfect; and thus man developed into a perfect talking instrument, or institution. We said man was a talking instrument. What shall we say about woman? I guess we had not better say she is a talking-machine, or we might discover to our sorrow that we had not half estimated her talking propensities.

I must compliment the men upon the fact that they are not to be considered as talking-machines, for, as I understand the principle of the phonograph, a talking-machine is something you can shut up when you have a mind to, but such is not the case with some talkers of the male—Mail Department and many other departments; I speak after the manner of men who contrive ever to embrace the other sex—in every commendable enterprise. The talkers referred to are so constituted that they talk the whole long day, and when night comes they talk in their sleep. Who says that perpetual motion is impracticable?

## II

### Things Well Named

How THANKFUL we should be that we were born into a world where a ready-made language awaits the development of our understanding and our organs of speech. I have no doubt that we all love the language which we have learned to lisp in early childhood, whatever language that may have been. There is a law of attachment in words which not only binds us to them, but which also binds them to the things or ideas they specify. And it is remarkable how well named things seem to be. Our own names, for instance, seem to be a part of our lives. Other people's names would be a misfit to us. "John Smith," of course, excepted, as that name was designed to fit anybody except a few fortunate enough to have a name that did not admit of general application. "All's in a name" is not strictly true every time, but we can scarcely get over thinking that the name is the very thing itself. Had a rat been called a cat, and a cat called a rat, then young rats would have been kit-

"I SEZ, SEZ I"



"IN STUDYING THE USE OF WORDS, I FIND THAT 'MAN' EMBRACES WOMEN."

tens, but it would be difficult for most of us to understand how anything else than a cat could catch mice. Habits of thought stay with us, though not in accord with our logical deductions at times.

The same peculiarity of adaptation appeared in the words "man" and "woman." To reverse the application of these words would in turn reverse the sexes, and woman would still be woman unless she adopted the title "new

## THINGS WELL NAMED

woman." It does not sound so very ridiculous to hear a person say, "Mrs. A. is best man," but it seems very inappropriate to hear "Mr. B. is an old woman." Try and not cast such mean reflections upon the old woman.

We would note that "man" is a term often used in a broad sense, inclusive of the whole human family. A speaker upon a certain occasion used the term "man" indefinitely; whereupon a young lady turned to a young man behind her and asked, "Does man embrace woman?" In an undertone of reluc-



"IN STUDYING THE SUFFRAGE QUESTION, I FIND THAT MAN  
EMBRACES THE UNIVERSE."

## "I SEZ, SEZ I"

tance he replied: "Not under the present circumstances."

This point of adaptation of names is a feature of language that gathers interest from the fact that while certain things challenge contempt, others excite admiration, and in connection with this it may be said that the names of things are suited for the expression of the kind of feeling which is invariably held for the thing for which the name stands. We at least fancy that the name is very fitting, but it may simply be like the coat that fits the man after he has worn it a long time. The law of association must be taken into account.

But following up the thought that the name in its very construction has something to do with the ideas we have of the thing for which the name stands, we take, for instance, the two animals, the horse and the dog. The horse, as a general thing, excites admiration, while the dog, in the minds of men (dog-fanciers excepted), stands in a position very much the reverse. Did you ever notice how much contempt a person can express in giving intonation to the word "dog"—especially if it's a neighbor's dog? The possessive form,



HIS "DAUG" WAS IN THE ROAD.

## "I SEZ, SEZ I"

of course, has a very modulating effect. Notice the difference in the sentences: His *daug* was in the road. My dog was in the parlor.

The word "hog" is also admirably adapted for giving expression to contempt and feelings of that kind. The polite name, of course, for the latter animal, when used in the form of address, is "pig," but people are never exceptionally polite when the characteristics of that animal are under review.

A good story which strongly emphasizes the points to which our attention has been called, comes from eastern Texas, where a party of surveyors were at work. Mose, the colored cook, was greatly annoyed by the razor-back hogs that roamed around the camp. One evening while he was at the spring a particularly ravenous band of these "piny-wood rooters" *raised* the cook's tent and ate up everything edible and some things that weren't. For several moments after his return from the spring, Mose could find no words to express his feelings. "Wa'al," he finally exclaimed, "de good Laud suhtainly knowed his business when he named 'hawgs' hawgs! Dey sho' is hawgs!"

### III

#### Practical Points

“WHEN I was a child,” says St. Paul, “I spake as a child; but, now that I am become a man, I have put away childish things.” The wise sayings of the great apostle, as compared with things said when he was a child, indicates an exercise of liberty along lines that are very commendable. How many full-grown persons there are who yet speak as a child. I do not mean altogether in the sense of indulging in childish talk; I refer to the child’s way of running words together. How often we hear “That’s a good un”; “Where yer going ter?” “House yer father”; “House everybody?” “House yerself?” is tolerably sensible if taken as advice in severe weather, but when you are asked to house everybody “yer up,” as they say, against a brick wall, and nothing more. “He was married on ter her sister and she was married on ter his brother”; “I’ll tell ye fer why,” and “As I was a’tellin’ on ye,” are among the numerous

## "I SEZ, SEZ I"

instances of garbled words and corrupt speech which we often hear.

Our sympathies soar heavenward with the sentiment of that mother's song, "Have courage, my boy, to say No." But while recog-



"HAVE YOU THE COURAGE, MY  
BOY, TO SAY 'NO'?" "YEP."

nizing the timeliness of this admonition from a moral point of view, we think what is much needed in these days, from a grammatical point of view, is the admonition to say "Yes," not "Yah" or "Yep." We have all reverence for the tearful appeal to say "No," but for

## PRACTICAL POINTS

sound sense nothing in the realm of poetry or fiction exceeds the back-yard scene of father, with stick in hand, saying, "Have a licken', my boy, or stop saying, 'Yep.'"

### HOW TO IMPROVE

To talk right is one of the first things to learn, and we may all talk with a fair amount of correctness if we are careful and observant, even though we may never have seen the inside of a college or high-school. We can all improve ourselves upon this point if we but take the trouble to do so: and I would like to stir up in every one, especially the youth, an ambition to improve upon the line of talking. We do not purpose to turn this lecture hall into an advanced school of elocution. We can only hope to throw out some suggestions that we trust will be of practical help to the average talker.

How to improve is the question. There is no royal road to learning other than that of faithful application, and there is no other way to correct wrong methods than to learn and practise right ones. You may get on without a grammar; but, if you are not too old to

## "I SEZ, SEZ I"

learn, I would advise you to get one, and, if you cannot master everything, master the agreement of verbs with subjects, and the uses of the personal pronouns and other things that will do a person no harm to know. Get the theory and then go on to the practical. Don't say "them people" for "those people," "youse folks" for "you folk." Don't say "I seen it" for "I saw it," or "I done it" for "I did it," etc. Be careful to not use "him" when you should use "he," or "me" when you should use "I." Think twice before you say "My umbrella" in case it may be a borrowed one. And it is just as well not to say "My lands" until you have got your pre-emption papers. Do not make a habit of referring to your wife as my missus, unless you are one of the kind she misses from home every night except Sunday night. Guard against the use of such qualifying words as "awful" and "terrible," etc. Awful means awe-inspiring. A thunder-cloud is *awful*. The awful nice girl we often hear about, I suppose, has the same characteristics. Do her eyes flash fire? Does she wear a cloudy countenance and is her attitude such as to make

## PRACTICAL POINTS

you feel that you are about to be embraced by a cyclone?

I have heard of a terribly good man. If he lives near you keep a lock on your chicken-coop, as it is hard to say in what direction the terrorizing tendency of his goodness will manifest itself.

In response to an inquiry from her pastor about her health, a lady made the following expressive reply, "Oh, I'm getting some better, but I'm powerful weak." This reminds us of the Irish woman who, upon being asked about her husband's health, replied, "He has been enjoying poor health for some time, but this mornin' he was complainin' of feelin' better."

More pronounced, perhaps, was the aptitude for getting things wrong in the case of the little girl's hurried explanation of inattention to a commanding voice in the distance: "Her is not calling we; us don't belong to she."

Fully as good was the remark of the Devonshire man who, upon hearing that a certain acquaintance had removed to a distant town, exclaimed: "Him not bide'er long; hus know 'ee."

## “I SEZ, SEZ I”

Another point is pronunciation. Test yourself upon the pronunciation of words. You may be almost sure you are right, but make yourself altogether sure. If a person is too conceited to look up a dictionary for information he should look it up for corroboration, and sometimes he may be surprised to find it is information that is most needed. It was a school trustee who made the striking comment upon an applicant's qualifications for the position of teacher: “She has no axperience, no rackemendation, and no certifikat.” Possibly a teacher would not require a certifikat to be qualified to teach some folks in that section a thing or two.

Another point is to avoid extravagant statements such as, “It pesters the life out of a body”; “I do declare, I never saw the beat,” etc. Nothing betrays a lack of self-possession more readily than the habit of charging up to some person or Providence invariable disregard when, in reality, the unfavorable turn of circumstances is possibly only one occurring with ninety-nine exceptions. When I hear people say, “It always rains when I want to go somewhere,” or “It is always my luck



HER IS NOT CALLING WE: US DON'T BELONG TO SHE.



## PRACTICAL POINTS

to be away from home when anybody wants to see me," I feel that a better statement of the case would be, "The Providence of God is always hard upon grumblers." A sensible bit of advice is that given by E. A. Brinstool in the Los Angeles *Express*, which we insert for the benefit of those disposed to knock the weather and other things that happen to be handy to knock:

Don't be a-knockin' the weather!  
Thank the good Lord for the rain!  
Sunshine an' clouds go together,  
Just as do pleasure an' pain.  
All of the blossoms are singin',  
Sweet from the green-tinted hills;  
An' there is music a-ringin'  
Forth from the glad, runnin' rills!

Don't be a-knockin' the weather,  
Lift up your heart an' rejoice!  
Let's swell the anthem together,  
Sing it with joy in each voice.  
Look at the rose that is smilin',  
See how the white lillies nod.  
Just as though they were compilin'  
Hymns of thanksgivin' to God!

## "I SEZ, SEZ I"

Don't be a-knockin' the weather!  
Seasons will come an' will go;  
Seedtime an' harvest together,  
God sez 'twill alus be so.  
Look at the blooms that are flingin'  
Sweetest of incense on you!  
Listen! The birds are a-singin'!  
Look! See the sunshine stream through!

Another thing that is worthy of attention is that of making a complete statement. Try hard not to stop in the middle of a sentence. Carry it through to completion even though you say something different from what you started out to say. It was better for the aspiring poet engaged at splitting his father's wood to say, "I'll soar aloft on angel's wing and light on father's wood-pile," than to have a stand-still in the soaring. It was rather a sudden come-down for a poet, but he carried his sentence to completion, and we may expect to hear from him again some day—if he ever gets the wood split up.

Another very important point for the talker is to avoid vain repetition of words. It is altogether unnecessary to say, "You see," "you see," "you see," for anybody can see

## PRACTICAL POINTS

that is just a habit some have of repeatedly poking things in your eyes. "You understand," "you understand," "you understand," is just as objectionable. How frequently we hear, "You know, you know, you know, you know." You know that it is not necessary to say you know; but, "You know, you know you have said it yourself quite often, you know, you know, *you know*." Like this, "like" is another instance.

I remember hearing a man sum up the situation in the almost *striking* terms: "Sez I, sez I, sez I, sez he, sez he, sez he, sez I, sez he, sez I, sez I." I guess they both said too much that time.

A young lady in my hearing once expressed herself somewhat in this fashion, "So, I said," "So, she said," "So, that was all that was said." "So we didn't say any more." "So so-o, so-o-o." Now "so" is a good word, and can be used with fine effect at the proper time. That time, of course, is milking-time upon a fractious cow, "So-o-o, bossy; so-o-o-o." The habitual repetition of words reminds one of the choir that was given to vain repetition in song and in the rendition of the

## “I SEZ, SEZ I”

line, “All we like sheep,” one of the members sang: “All we like sheep.” Then another repeated, “All we like sheep.” Then another and another, and by the time it came the turn of the bass to bawl out “All we like sheep,” a man in the audience got up and in angry tones said, “I wish you to understand that I don’t like sheep.”

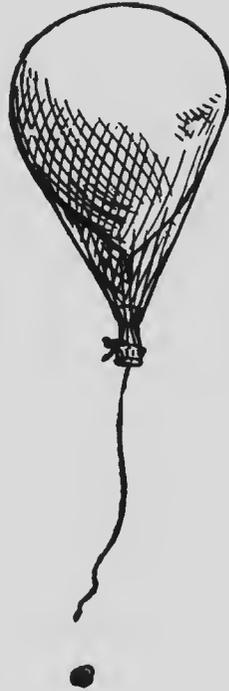
A good stock-in-trade of words, vocabulary, as it is called, is not enhanced in value by such expressions as “Great Scott,” “Corker,” “Be dad,” “Phiz,” “You bet,” “You bet ’cher life,” etc. It is hard to trace or understand the origin of some of these choice pearls of speech. It cannot be said that they are good English. “Be dad” is evidently good Irish or of Irish extraction. “So long,” used as a parting word, is senseless, and should never be allowed to displace words of good usage, such as, “Good-by” or “Good-evening,” or “Farewell.”

“I’ll warrant ye,” or “I’ll be hanged” are very expressive phrases, but lack in point of elegance. Hanging is quite proper—just the thing for some people, judging by the way they murder English. We might repeat in

## PRACTICAL POINTS

this connection the words of the Irish judge to the prisoner: "You are to be hanged by the neck until you are dead—and I hope it will prove a warning to you."

Of course, we must allow that some words of exclamation are necessary. However, do not have too big an assortment. "Good gracious!" and "Goodness me!" are enough for any one, and then should only be used upon special occasions, such as house-cleaning or putting up stove-pipes. If you ever happen to be dropped down suddenly from a balloon in the air, "Gee-whiz" would be quite allowable under the circumstances, and possibly "Gee-rusalem" would be correct enough upon reaching the solid ground, as the station you are destined to stop at might look as much



## FIRST TALKERS

like Jerusalem to you as any other point on the earth's surface. "Gee-whiz" is a wonderful word. There is no word that expresses so much that is inexpressible. Its inflection is its big feature. The best circles of society



HIS IMPEDIMENT.

like lots of whiz, and accordingly put plenty of inflection upon the last part of the word.

Let us see if we have all got that word with intonation complete. Try it altogether, "Gee-whiz-z-z." That's good! Once again: "Gee-whiz-z-z." "Gee-whiz; that s great!" Eskew-g is a companion word to gee-whiz. Use both frequently if you want to have others think and say that your language is eskew-g.

## PRACTICAL POINTS

How to overcome the difficulty of talking with a pipe in the mouth is a problem which all smokers have solved to their own satisfaction, but not to the satisfaction of those who have to listen. It requires a lot of patience to hear a man say: "Just wait [puff, puff], boys [puff], till I tell! [puff, puff, puff] you something." Talk that is punctuated by puffs of smoke may be well seasoned, but it is dreadfully slow.

### SLIPS IN ENGLISH

In reply to numerous inquiries concerning certain words and phrases often misused, writes an observing editor, we submit herewith a list of common slips in English. Do not use:

"Guess" for "suppose" or "think."

"Fix" for "arrange" or "prepare."

"Ride" or "drive" interchangeably.

(Americanism.)

"Real" as an adverb in expressions "real good" for "really" or "very good," etc.

"Some" or "any" in an adverbial sense. For example, "I have studied some" for

## “I SEZ, SEZ I”

“somewhat”; “I have not studied any” for  
“at all.”

“Some” ten days for “about” ten days.

Not “as I know” for “that I know.”

“Storms” for it “rains” or “snows”  
moderately.

“Try” an experiment for “make” an ex-  
periment.

Singular subject with contracted plural  
verb. For example, “She don’t skate well.”

Plural pronoun with singular antecedent:  
Every “man” or “woman” do “their”  
duty; or, if you look “any one” straight in  
the face “they” will flinch.

“Expect” for “suspect.”

“First-rate” as an adverb.

“Nice” indiscriminately.

“Had” rather for “would” rather.

“Had” better for “would” better.

“Right away” for “immediately.”

“Party” for “person.”

“Promise” for “assure.”

“Posted” for “informed.”

“Post-graduate” for “graduate.”

“Depot” for “station.”

Try “and” go for try “to” go.

## PRACTICAL POINTS

Try "and" do for try "to" do.

"Cunning" for "smart," "dainty."

"Cute" for "acute."

"Funny" for "odd" or "unusual."

"Above" for "foregoing"; "more than" for "beyond."

Does it look "good" enough for "well" enough?

The matter "of" for the matter "with."

"Like" I do for "as" I do.

Not "as good" for not "so good" as.

Feel "bad" for feel "badly."

Feel "good" for feel "well."

"Between" seven for "among" seven.

Seldom "or" ever, for seldom "if" ever, or "seldom or never."

Taste and smell "of" when used transitively.

More than you think "for" for "more than you think."

"These" kind for "this" kind.

"Nicely" in response to an inquiry.

"Healthy" for "wholesome."

Just "as soon" for just "as lief."

"Kind of," to indicate a moderate degree.

The school is doing a good work as regards the forming of good language and the cor-

## "I SEZ. SEZ I"

rection of slovenly speech. The home should come to the assistance of the school in this work, but, as it is, the home is often the place where the garbled dialect is learned. If our public-school teachers would occasionally make out a list of some pupils' misused, mispronounced, and unknown words and objectionable phrases, it might in some cases prove an education to the home and possibly create a sense of watchfulness, resulting in a constant check being placed upon the youthful proclivity to adopt slangy phrases and express thoughts in garbled sentences and half-mutilated words. The home should come to the assistance of the school, it is clear; but, perhaps, it is the place of the school to call in the assistance of the home in some such way as here indicated.

### SELF-CORRECTION

The applying of one's self to the task of correcting faults of any kind is in itself a helpful exercise, as it cultivates the watchful spirit. To those who are thus disposed the following lines on "Curing Habit," by John Boyle O'Reilly, may prove suggestive:

## PRACTICES

"How shall I a habit break?"  
As you did that habit make,  
As you gather, you must lose;  
As you yielded, now refuse,  
Thread by thread the strands we twist  
Till they bind us neck and wrist;  
Thread by thread the patient hand  
Must entwine ere free we stand.  
As we builded stone by stone,  
We must toil, unhelped, alone,  
Till the wall is overthrown.

But, remember, as we try,  
Lighter every test goes by;  
Wading in the stream goes deep  
Toward the center's downward sweep.  
Backward turn, each step ashore  
Shallower is than that before.  
Ah, the precious years we waste  
Leveling what we raised in haste;  
Doing what must be undone,  
Ere content or love be won!  
First across the gulf we cast  
Kite-borne threads till lines are passed,  
And habit builds the bridge at last.

One very satisfactory feature about self-correction is that there is a free field. The words we weeded out of our own language could only have worked injury to others by

## "I SEZ, SEZ I"

letting them grow. Doing it yourself relieves all others of a task which no one can do without some feeling of aversion.

At first thought, correcting one's own habits of speech may seem as easy as writing out a list of articles to be purchased. What is to hinder any one from sitting down some morning with pencil and paper to write out a list of words habitually used which should be avoided. A faithful trial will reveal three things before the day is over: (1) The list, according to the talker's own observation, was very incomplete. (2) The words to be avoided came as freely as before. (3) The nature of language is such that its inaccuracies are far more easily observed in listening to others than in listening to ourselves. Fully nine out of every ten talkers say "you know." It cannot be said that the expression is improper, unless we maintain that unnecessary words are improper. You know what I mean. In reality, the objection simply is the too oft recurrence of the words. There is a peculiar fascination about the way some people say, "You know." You are at once interested, complimented, and one in points of sympathy

## PRACTICAL POINTS

and knowledge with the speaker. Very often the words appeal to our sense of understanding as no other words in the same connection could possibly do so successfully. The following list of sentences will suffice to illustrate this point.

I feel so worn and tired out, you know.

She is so very nice, you know.

Cook discovered the North Pole, *you know*,  
YOU KNOW.

The self-corrector, to be successful, must be observing. We hear our own language spoken by others every day. Are we observing enough to know our own, and when we hear an objectionable word are we shrewd enough to say, "That is mine"; and then are we heroic enough to—well, to swear off, if you have no objection to that expression.

Attempts at correcting others are often very unsatisfactory. Of the many instances illustrative of this fact we give the following, as furnished by some unknown contributor: My cousin's auntie, who was a school-teacher, met her on the street one day, and asked if she was going to a surprise party. "No, I

## "I SEZ, SEZ I"

ain't going," she said. And her aunt told her she must say, "I am not going, you are not going, he is not going, we are not going, you are not going, they are not going; now, can you say all that?" she concluded. "Sure, I can," said her small niece, "there ain't nobody going."

### A QUESTION OF GENDER

A good story, with the above heading, illustrative of the difficulties encountered in correcting speech, has been going the rounds of the press.

It was not so very long ago that a Japanese minister, who shall be nameless, made a visit of ceremony upon Lady Lansdowne. He was a charming fellow, and conversed on many subjects of interest with his hostess. In bidding her adieu, bending low over her hand, he murmured: "Forgive it me, madam, if I have cockroached on your time to-day." Lady Lansdowne laughingly told her husband the story, adding, "He is such a nice little man, you know, that I think it would be right to tell him of his mistake." I shall explain that encroached, not cockroached, is the correct

## PRACTICAL POINTS

expression in English. To make a long story short, the little minister and Lady Lansdowne soon met again. It was at the Foreign Office, and Lady Lansdowne drew her new friend apart.

“I want to make a little explanation,” she said. “You talk English all but perfectly. Indeed, I have only heard you make one mistake. Now, instead of saying to me, ‘I am sorry to have cockroached,’ you should have said, ‘I am sorry to have encroached on your time.’ That is the word, encroached, you understand?”

The Jap was silent for a moment, then the cloud lifted from his face. A flash-light must have passed over it.

“I see, I see,” he cried. I may say, then, when addressing Lord Lansdowne, ‘I am sorry to have cockroached on your time’; but it is to you, madam, I must say, ‘I am sorry to have hencroached on your time.’”

" I SEZ, SEZ I "

ENGLISH " AS SHE IS SPOKE "

Oh, why should the spirit  
Of grammar be proud,  
With such a wide margin  
Of language allowed?

Of course, there's a limit—  
"I knowed" and "I've saw,"  
"I seen" and "I done it,"  
Are rather too raw.

But, then, there are others  
No better than they,  
One hears in the talking  
He hears every day.

"Where at?" asks one person,  
Quite thoughtless. And, "Who,"  
Ask another, "Did Mary  
Give that bonnet to?"

Hear a maid as she twitters:  
"Oh, yes, I went out  
With she and her fellow  
In his runabout."

## PRACTICAL POINTS

And hear a man saying:  
"Between you and I,  
That block of Pacific  
Would make a good buy."

And this from a mother,  
Too kind to her boy:  
"I had rather you shouldn't  
Do things to annoy."

And this from a student,  
Concerning a show,  
Who says to the maiden:  
"Let's you and I go."

There's lots of good people,  
That's talking like that,  
Who should learn from we critics  
To know where they're at.

—ANON.

## IV

### Clearness

MOTHER EVE has been faithfully charged up with the responsibility of all the evils that come upon us in this life, but it is well to bear in mind that the young maiden, so sweetly unconscious of sin, Miss Understood, may be credited with responsibility for a great deal of the unhappiness and ill will that has entered into the world of yesterday and to-day.

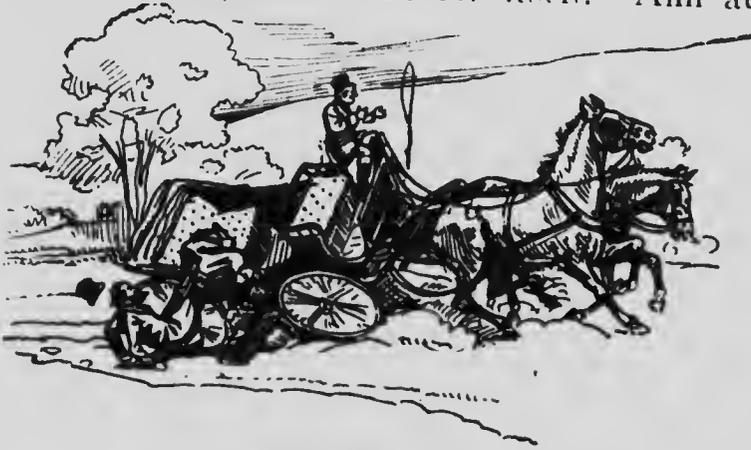
Miss Understood lives upon ambiguities of speech. She thrives upon statements capable of being invested with more than one meaning. She sees through a glass darkly. Plain statements bring her down to plain living. Make everything clear and she will keep clear of the premises and conclusions and uncalled-for complexities. Miss Understood and Miss De-meanor are twin sisters, and they look so much alike at times that it is difficult to distinguish one from the other.

Our artist faithfully shows the different meanings which may be attached to the word

## CLEARNESS

full, and it is very clear that it is nothing short of a misdemeanor to say that the Brigham Youngs were full in the sense in which the driver in the other scene is full.

Let language look out for itself. Aim at



THE DRIVER IS FULL.

clearness. Words will come if the track of thought will keep for a moment in one direction. If you find any difficulty about expressing yourself fully, and find that you have a whole lot of things on your mind that you cannot get off right at once, commence to single out a thought or two and get delivered of it, and, thus, by taking things in order you may be surprised how easy it is to talk. The worst thing a person can do is to throw

## "I SEZ, SEZ I"

up both hands and sigh, "Oh, that words might come to me." Think clearly if you would express yourself clearly. If the person has muddled ideas, all the big words in the dictionary will not help him any.

The story is told of a sophomore in college,



THE BRIGHAM YOUNGS ARE FULL.

who brought his composition to the tutor for examination and correction. Its subject was "Conscience," and one of its sentences read, "The nature and province of conscience are such that, in view of the revealed and perfect standard of truth and duty, this inward monitor enables us to discriminate between that

## CLEARNESS

which, on the one hand, is forbidden and evil in its tendency, and that, on the other, which is commanded and correct in theory and beneficial in practise."

As the tutor read the sentence, he said to the student: "What, exactly, do you mean by that?" "Why," said the student, "I mean that conscience tells us when we do right, and when we do wrong." "Then why didn't you say so?" said the tutor. "The lesson is, 'Say what you have to say in a few words.'"

It is an abuse of language to multiply words at the expense of clearness when a plain statement is required. And even in cases where an accumulation of words is not necessarily at the expense of clearness, it will generally be found that brevity is better than bigness and plain words more fitting and effective than words largely lettered.

"To the men of Boston who died for their country" is a statement that could easily have been enlarged without improvement. How many would have written, "To the citizens of Boston who sacrificed their lives for their country?" Did not the chisel do well when

## "I SEZ, SEZ I"

letters were put to flight and immortality was wrought out of stone and the simple? No one, except law-makers, should attempt to pile up words to obscure things that people want to know.

There is no bigger piece of humbug than that of sending men to parliament to word the laws that govern us in such a form that it requires an expert to interpret them. If there is anything that should be stated clearly, it is a statement of the conditions upon which men are to live.

The importance of clearness is a matter which law-makers are thoroughly seized of when it comes to devising ballots for the voter. The idea has ever been to make the ballot as simple and clear as it could possibly be made. And this is very important, for how would a man know who he was paid to vote for if the candidate's name had to be marked in the first parcel of the third part of the fifth section of the paper, etc.

There should be no ambiguity when it comes to giving directions, whether those directions emanate from the government or from the man on the roadside, who has been asked

## CLEARNESS

about the road to a certain place. In the matter of giving directions to travelers there are some points it is well to observe: (1) Do not trust to a stranger upon a strange road knowing the directions, north, south, east, and west. It is always safer to say, turn to the left or right than to bring the points of the compass into the map laid out in the traveler's mind. (2) Never tell a person to go straight ahead on a crooked road. (3) Be sure you are right. As a satisfactory assurance that the directions had passed all doubts about their correctness, we have heard nothing better than the straight advice of a German: "You shust turn at the next corner and go straight ahead and ask nopody." That was certainly more to the point than the way an Englishman once answered our inquiry about the road to a certain farmhouse: "You go on up and you will find a house beside a little woodpile. That's it."

In the matter of giving directions the Scotchman beats the Dutch and every other nationality. It is said that a traveler in Scotland once asked a man on the road: "Is this the way to Dunkirk?" "Ah, well," said

“I SEZ, SEZ I”

the Scotchman, “whar did ye cam frae?”  
“What is that to you?” said the traveler. “Tut,  
man, just as muckle as whar yer a gaun tae.”

There are some minds that must insist upon knowing a lot of things that is not necessary to know before they can attempt to elucidate a subject. In fact, the more some try to simplify a thing the more bewildered they become. Everything can be overdone. While visiting the South recently, a traveler chanced upon a resident of a sleepy hamlet in Alabama.

“Are you a native of this town?” asked the traveler.

“Am I a what?” languidly asked the one addressed.

“Are you a native of the town?”

“What’s that?”

“I asked you whether you were a native of the place.”

At this juncture there appeared at the open door of the cabin the man’s wife, tall, sallow, and gaunt. After a careful survey of the questioner, she said: “Ain’t you got no sense, Bill? He means was you livin’ heah when you was born, or was yo’ born before yo’ begun livin’ heah. Now answer him.”

## CLEARNESS

In vivid contrast to this overdone attempt at explaining things is the hopelessness of attempting an explanation as it appeared to the man charged with chicken-stealing in a Southern court, when the judge asked how it was he managed to lift those chickens right under the window of the owner's house, when there was a dog loose in the yard.

"Hit wouldn't be no use, judge," said the man, "to try to explain dis thing to yo' all. Ef you was to try it you like as not would get yer hide full of shot an' get no chickens, nuther. Ef yo' want to engage in any rascality, Judge, yo' better stick to de bench, whar yo' am familiar."

## V

### Contraction of Words

THE greater part of us are as lazy as we can afford to be. Some of us are as lazy as the police will allow us to be. Laziness accounts very often for short crops, short pay and short notice. It accounts also for a great many short words. It takes too much labor to write long words, and through sheer laziness of first one and then another, the long word becomes contracted.

Take, for instance, the word examination. The students, never having any special liking for the word, which is not to be wondered at, began first to write the last seven letters with a period. When it became generally understood what exam. stood for the whole word was seldom pronounced and thus "exam." came into popular use. Other long words are sure to be shortened in the same way. "Husband," now very often put in the form of "hubby," will in the course of time drop to

## CONTRACTION OF WORDS

“hub.” And why not, since in many cases he creates a revolution in his wife’s expenditure? Catalogue is another long word that is destined to change. The tail-end of this word (a-log) is too heavy for the first three letters and the word must necessarily be contracted to “cat.” Canine is likely to be *cur*-tailed, and the employment of “cane” adopted, which, it is to be hoped, will greatly reduce the nuisance aimed at but so often missed.

Attempts have even been made, we are informed, to contract the word “customer,” and men, who are so hurried in business that they haven’t time to use good English, have been heard to designate patrons by such peculiar terms as “cus.” and “cusses.” The contraction, or whatever you wish to call it, is brought into use largely in cases where the customer fails to pay up. Good customers are ever customers, but bad customers are designated in shorter order. The difficulty, however, of teaching the new word in school and framing sentences in which it can be gracefully used without suggesting other relations militates much against its popularity, especially with good people.

## "I SEZ, SEZ I"

"Marriage" is in danger of being contracted to "mar," and it is said that the responsibility for it rests with married people.

"Matrimony" will certainly have the "i" put out. If "i" is to be used in this word it should be capital "I." Imagine a man getting married in these days who has not any capital.

"Auto" is now extensively used to designate that aristocratic word "automobile." The manufacturers evidently foresaw that a machine with its horse-frightening, dust-raising, bad-smelling features was in danger of having names applied to it that were not at all elegant, and, thinking that a big name was preferable to a bad name, "automobile" was decided upon. The contractor of words, however, decided that the word was too big to live, and, consequently, "auto" came into general use. Everybody talks of the auto: the officers of the law in making arrests; the magistrate in imposing a fine; the mortgage company in viewing the wreck; the sufferers in the hospital; the newspapers in reporting the killed and wounded—one and all use the word "auto." And even the judge in address-

## CONTRACTION OF WORDS

ing the jury, if he ever intends to pose as a friend of the farmers, will find that "auto" (ought to) is the word to use and emphasize.

The tendency to contract now threatens our forms of salutation, of which it may be said that the old salutation, "Good-morning," "Good-day," or "Good-night" is much preferable to the modern "How do you do?" Good-morning or good-night is not so liable to be mutilated as the "How do you do?" expression, though we sometimes hear "Good'm" and "Good'nt." The one objection to "How do you do?" is the repetition of the word "do." From a grammatical point of view, the latter "do" implies action rather than state, as may be seen in the sentence, "How do you do this sum?" But aside from the grammatical construction, the repetition of two similar sounds tends to lead to contraction, and as a result seldom do we hear anything but "How do?" or "How d'ye do?" or, as a resort to meet the requirements of the occasion, "How dude do?"

The contractor of words, however, did not arrive any too soon, for, with the heterogeneous population of our land, we are getting

## "I SEZ, SEZ I"

some words intended as names of persons and places that will prove "jaw-breakers" unless broken up a little. Here is a sample taken from the Winnipeg directory: Kon Krzyzinorski, Zavvodoffski, Zawerszenink, Zawidoski, Zawogowsk, Zazangts, Zborowski.

Rev. Hamilton Wigle, pastor of Zion Methodist Church, Winnipeg, ran into a Welsh name recently, which, he thinks, is just about a record-breaker. A couple came to the parsonage to be married. The groom was W. J. H. of Elston, Sask.

"Where is your place of birth?" asked Mr. Wigle.

The groom rattled off a name which fairly knocked the pastor over. Finally, he got him to write it down, and here is what appeared: Llanfairpraovothgwyrsgyphogerythwyrndroblellandionigogoch. There are just fifty-nine letters in the word.

About the only possible way to contract this word would be to chop out the center and cut off both ends. Success to the contractor.

## CONTRACTION OF WORDS

### REFORMED SPELLING AGAIN

Captain Harry Graham, the witty Englishman whose verses have long tickled the American as well as the English sense of humor, takes a fling at President Roosevelt and simplified spelling in a little book called "Familiar Faces" (London: Edward Arnold). Among these verses the following are to the point:

When Theo: Roos: unfurled his bann:  
As Pres: of an immense Repub:  
And sought to manufact: a plan  
For saving people troub:  
His mode of spelling (termed phonet:)  
Affec: my brain like an emet:.

I grudge the time my fellows waste  
Completing words that are so comm·  
Wherever peop: of cult: and taste  
Habitually predom:  
'T would surely tend to simpli: life  
Could they be curtailed a trif:

For is not "Brev: the Soul of Wit"?  
(Inscribe this mott: upon your badge).  
The sense will never suff: a bit,  
If left to the imag:  
Since any pers: can see what's meant  
By word so simp: as "husb:" or "gent:"

**“ I SEZ, SEZ I ”**

**“When at some meal (at dinn: for inst:)  
You hand your unc: an empty plate,  
Or ask your aunt (that charming spinst:)  
To pass you the potat:  
They have too much sagac:, I trust,  
To give you sug: or pep: or must:”**

## VI

### **Slang**

WITHOUT the metaphorical our language would be very plain: it might also be said that it would be very pure; for what has done much to enrich language has also done much to corrupt it. Slang or slang phrases are metaphorical in their nature. With the pure vine of metaphor and simile they have been grafted in. The pruning-knife is the only remedy.

Some expressions, such as "catchy," "catch on," and "swear off" are very convenient. Of others, such as "thingamajig," "to beat the band," or "to beat two of a kind," it may be said that they are more convenient than proper. It may require a little more exercise of the mind to single out the correct name of an article than to say, "Thingamajig," but exercise is what some minds need.

Refinement is also what some minds need, and such expressions as, the bloody thing, it played the deuce, etc., are sure and certain foes of refinement. If slanguage is the only

## “I SEZ, SEZ I”

language acquired and the slang user is more than satisfied with it—proud of it—the chance of reform is very poor. We will not dispute any man's right to be proud of the slang gathered into his vocabulary. He has a right to be as proud as a parrot, and proud of the same thing as a parrot, repetition of others' words. Unfortunately, however, the constant repetition of street and shop phrases tend to pamperize language and operate against originality.

It is better to be satisfied with a tame statement of an action of truth than to introduce comparisons that are unfitting, far-fetched and almost odious on account of coarseness. “He ran very fast,” conveys the idea of swift movement just as forcibly as the sensational statement, “He went like a shot.”

The faculty of illustration should be carefully cultivated. The use of slang destroys the sense of illustration. We hear a person say, “The wind blew to beat the band.”

In what way does band music illustrate the velocity of the wind? The band discoursed music. The wind simply *whistled*.



ACCUMULATED

"WHEN I FIRST STRUCK BUMVILL I DIDN'T HAVE A BLOOMIN'  
(S)CENT, NOW—SMELL ME BREFF."

## “I SEZ, SEZ I”

The wonderful success which some talkers have had in accumulating expressions of doubtful value is well illustrated by the character on the opposite page, who has accumulated on lines that possibly are no credit to small beginnings. Often we hear it said of some loose holders or handlers of money that they have money to throw away. Other things beside money are thrown away, and language is no exception. How well some succeed in this may be described in accord with their own loose use of grammar, as *sling, slang, slung*.

## VII

### **Freedom of Speech**

Now, WHILE we have a ready-made language expressive of our varied thoughts and feelings to be thankful for, how thankful we should be that we live in a land where liberty of speech is tolerated. But let us not carry this boast of liberty into a contention to say what we please regardless of the rightful strictures of society upon the improper use of the tongue. Let it be understood that freedom of speech is not an established right of the slanderer, the swearer, or the senseless critic. The thoughtless talker has no claims for a free field in which to discharge words without weight.

Of all talkers to be delivered from, it is the thoughtless talker. The thoughtless talker is one whose mind is made up of moods as changeable as subjects. Here is a man who is as nice as pie one minute, and the next minute is more like pie than ever—more like the top and bottom part; I mean, crusty.

## “I SEZ, SEZ I”

The thoughtless talker thinks he is right because he is mad, and because he is right he thinks he has a right to get mad. But he hasn't. If he was right to start with, he did not stay that way very long.

It is a good thing to be always right, but a bad thing to always entertain the conviction that you are always right. The person who does so always has a grievance—another is always wrong.

The wilderness or the waste and uninhabited places of the earth are the only places where some speakers should be given liberty to exercise their so-called freedom of speech. If a man is going to say mean things, send him on a mission to the sand-banks or remove the entire audience of mankind to a serener clime. If a man gets so enraged with anger that users of improper words hesitate not to say, “He has started to blow off,” the proper thing to do is to grant him a free site in the inside of a crater to accomplish his work of wreck and ruin.

## FREEDOM OF SPEECH

### BLOWING-OFF

This most violent form of liberty of speech is so prevalent that a special chapter might well be devoted to it. It is, moreover, a difficult subject to treat, and as our experience goes, a hard case to handle. If, instead of taking up the path we had taken up the prize-fighting business, we would have considered ourselves in a better position to offer proper treatment to that class of talkers who make it their business to come around and "blow-off."

Usually the person disposed to blow off is gifted in the direction of "blowing" as well. He can outfight, outrun and outtalk any other person in sight. Paying no attention to him only encourages him in the blowing business. His contrary attitude makes him a hard man to do business with. When he gets on, committed to a foot-race, he turns his attention to the heroes who have bravely fought and is prepared to stand his ground; when he provokes one to resort to scientific handling, he turns his attention to the low records made on the track and is prepared to run.

## “I SEZ, SEZ I”

There is something always wrong when a person starts to blow off. It may have been that the price was higher or the door was lower than was calculated upon and, as a consequence, our friend has a sore head.

It may have been that the conductor punched the ticket too soon or that the man disposed to fight the railroads was not punched soon enough. In any and every case there was something wrong. But in most cases the wrong is in allowing one's self to get unnecessarily excited or irritable over little things that are of no consequence. Lots of people blow-off simply because they don't know better or don't know what else to do. If a door opens they blow-off. Apparently they don't know enough to get up and shut it. If a pane of glass gets broken they try to drive the cold air back by blowing off hot air as if that would replace the broken glass.

It is easier to blow-off than to fix things or to find things that are lost; but the fixing and the finding has yet to be done, and very often is, by some other more level-headed person, in less time than it takes to blow-off.

If the pressure of provocation becomes very

## FREEDOM OF SPEECH

great—so great that patience ceases to be a virtue—we think it well to make allowance for an explosion. In a case of that kind we go to the 'phone and simply say: "Blow-off, if you have a mind to." Ours, of course, is a long-distance telephone. Blowing-off under provocation brings us to that very scriptural allowance and often very worthy claim of

### RIGHTEOUS INDIGNATION

It is not right sometimes to not get angry. When we see the poor oppressed, or the innocent condemned, or the unworthy preferred to the worthy, or the helpless made to suffer, we have a right to get angry and should forever kick ourselves if we have missed the opportunity to protect the weak or protest against the wicked. Righteous indignation is often called for; but is often forthcoming when it will do no good; and, further, righteous indignation, if not properly controlled, soon becomes indignation, which is no longer righteous. A good deal of so-called righteous indignation, if properly analyzed, shows about five parts pious swearing to ten parts indignation and one part righteousness,

## "I SEZ, SEZ I"

mixed with a lot of prejudice and ignorance and a grain of common sense.

There is nothing better to apply to an enemy. If it does not kill or cure, repeat the dose till the righteousness is clear exhausted, as may be truly reckoned upon if the indignation keeps good and hot. Unfortunately, the freer the application the less friends. Look out, then, for this freedom of speech, which makes people feel freer to stay at a distance.

Nothing better has been written upon this subject than the familiar words to lovers of Scripture: "Cease from anger, and forsake wrath: Fret not thyself, *it tendeth* only to evil-doing." (Ps. 37: 8, Rev. Ver.)

To get angry is one of the experiences of life. Some pride themselves upon the fact that they get angry, and with much gusto tell of different occasions when they mustered up courage enough to call this one or that one down. The railway engineer takes no pride in losing control of his engine, and we fail to see how any one can be proud of losing control of temper.

But who has not felt the hot flush of anger

## FREEDOM OF SPEECH

as occasioned at times by the irritating thought of injured pride and insolent injustice and irrepressive feelings of resentment. Whatever the temperament, we can scarcely expect to get through this world without temper arising once in a while. Offenses will come and, shall we say, allowances must be made. This much is clearly recognized in the oft-quoted dictum of Scripture: "Be ye angry, and sin not." That there are many ways of meeting the human allowance goes without saying. That part is easy. It is as easy to get angry as to slide down hill. It is not so easy to meet the divine requirement "and sin not." There is one way worthy of all acceptation, and that is, *cease* to be angry. A storm cannot exhaust its energy without leaving blockades or broken branches in its wake. A fire cannot expend its fury without leaving charred remains behind. It is just as true of the flame of passion and tempest of temper; it cannot continue its course and sin not.

Cessation is the only safe plan. Cease from anger, first, because of its hurtful influence upon yourself. Anger is active. The mind knows no rest under the strain of swiftly

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revolving thoughts. The same ground is covered again and again. The track of thought is beaten hard by the same train of thought starting up to-day which was in motion yesterday and the day before yesterday. The constant circling on the same level is of no use, since it lifts nothing any higher or further ahead. It is well to consider this. Anger does not open any doors of exit, and it lives too low to let the light of love get a chance to drive it out. It is wearing and tearing, and a waste of time and moral tissue.

That is not all. Its outward action is its dangerous element. "Fret not thyself, or do not allow yourself to be agitated, because it tendeth only to evil-doing." How true that is. Getting mad at one is a position that cannot be maintained without fostering the desire to get even. What does it mean to get even? Getting even is simply getting another down or putting another back. Unfortunately a person has to get somewhere to get even. A person has to get on the same level of ground as the evil-doer. How deceiving that thought of getting even; it gets you going from one step to another until you may just

## FREEDOM OF SPEECH

be in the position to get even. How important at that juncture to have the checking hand laid upon the shoulder and to hear the corrective word, Cease! Stop! Don't go any further. You have been following wrath—forsake it. Words have been whetted to cut, actions have been planned to wound. Let the words be kept back and the retaliatory action be abandoned. Pretty good advice that; if it were more generally acted upon, the cogs of life would run a lot smoother and the world would be much happier.

But it means more to cease from anger than to cease saying things suggested by the spirit of revenge. This is no easy task. Saying things or not saying things is not reversing the engine or smothering the fire. Singing has been suggested. A lady tells us that when things arise to provoke anger, she starts to sing. This she recommends: it changes the channel and lifts the spirit into a serener clime, where anger subsides and ceases to be. Try the experiment; but don't tell your neighbors, as they may form some conclusions if the singing starts seventy times seven in a single day.

## VIII

### Swear Words

As to swearing, what shall we say? It is senseless, it is sinful, and it is saddening in the extreme. Once was our Lord nailed to the cross; again and again wound-prints as cruel are made by men, who hesitate not to take the name of God in vain. Swearing is often passed over as only a habit, but who can estimate the damning influence of that habit? Because of swearing the land mourneth. We know not what visitations of evil are invited by swearing, such as is heard to-day. What is going to be done to check the awful profanity of the present time? This is not only a problem for Sunday-schools or churches. It is a question that should interest governments and officers of the law. Profligacy, profanity and the consigning of souls to perdition with or without provocation calls for measures stern as the stoning of the transgressor under the law. Swear not at all. "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord

## SWEAR WORDS

thy God in vain," is the message that might well be emphasized with police clubs where appeals to reason fail.

Oh, that some mouths might be stopped! They will. The foul mouth and the blasphemer's lips will some day wear a deathly hue and be sealed with the silence of the grave.

A few years ago, in northern Minnesota, three men took refuge in a vacated house during a heavy thunder-storm. One man, stationed near the door, was advised by his companion to seek a safer place, and instead of doing so, he straightened himself up and, in a bold, defiant spirit, said, "I'm not afraid of the damn'd storm." The words had scarcely been uttered when a sudden flash of lightning struck him, and, with the rude insult scarce from his lips, he was hurried into the presence of his God.

The writer was in the vicinity at the time when comments were being passed upon the awful affair. It called to the mind of a young man of undoubted veracity the following awful story of judgment without mercy. Some men on a passenger train in one of the Western

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States had been gambling in the early morning, possibly through the night. One man had been losing heavily, and as the cards were adjusted and preparations made to commence another game, this man took the awful position of calling upon God, in the event of his losing the next game, to damn his soul. The game was played in silence. The heavy loser lost again. The train pulled into a small station, where the narrator of the story stood and saw the profligate gambler come out of the train, take a few steps up the platform and drop down a corpse. He lay there with blackened face—a trifier with God—taken at his word.

By-words, such as "By Jingo," or "By George," are merely substitutes for stronger words, and the habitual use of such by-words tends to the use of words employed by the more advanced swearer.

Another thing that tends to develop swearing is the flippant way in which many good-intentioned people, even preachers at times, use the name of the Lord in expressing surprise or emphasizing an argument. We sometimes hear a man, in ventilating his scorn for

## SWEAR WORDS

some theory or practise, put on the climax: "The Lord help us"; "God knows, I don't"; or, "Bless my soul." A flippant, thoughtless, careless, irreverent use of such expressions is actually in itself a taking of the name of the Lord in vain, and should be avoided.

Artisans think too much of their reputation as artisans to turn out a poor article. A tradesman is known by his work, and cannot afford the loss sustained by the testimony of poor work. Who can afford to be known by language, which is a testimony against true manhood or true womanhood? Then learn a lesson from the mechanic. Lay in a good stock, cull all rotten material; weed out words that are worse than useless, and adopt words which have the sanction of good usage.

"Let our communication be yea, yea; nay, nay; and whatsoever is more than these is of the evil one." Think of the numerous, unnecessary, and unseemly additions to yea and nay; and think of where they come from. Have we discovered ourselves to be Satan's speaking-tube in the using of many words for the sake of effect or the sake of being emphatic.

## IX

### **Lying**

LIARS are always interesting. Professional liars, at least. Everybody is not adapted to the business, because it requires good imaginative faculties to make a success out of it. Had George Washington been able to tell a lie, he might have secured the independence of the United States without lifting his finger or shedding a drop of blood. But it's poor business doing something without passing through the experience which is required as a guarantee that it is really done. It is very unsatisfactory to be worth \$100,000 banked away in the minds of the credulous when the rent is unpaid, and credit no good, and promises to pay discounted as soon as made.

It is a strange life to live—rich and great in the realm of imagination, poor and ordinary in reality. How unfortunate that the rough boards of practical experience will remind the professional liar of his real condition.

But this is a serious subject. It affects

## LYING

character and reputation. Lying is bad, utterly bad. So-called white lies blacken the character, and black lies bring a deathly white hue over the moral sensibilities. Henry Ward Beecher said, "A lie always needs a truth for a handle to it." In that case, it is wise to pass on the handle and let the lie work its own passage.

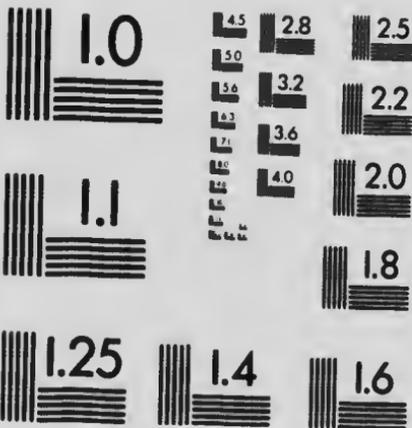
Lying is often the result of loose methods of thought. There is a lot of guesswork which passes for accurate statement, simply because it was not thought worth while to ascertain the facts or figures. The real number, for instance, to state it precisely, is four; but it is too big a job to count four; it is considered quite near enough the truth to say, "Oh, about half-a-dozen."

It is easy to exaggerate, and the habit once begun is hard to break. Tie to the truth. What is there to be gained by exaggeration? Possibly a few dollars are at stake; a better bargain may be driven. But what is that compared with the loss of self-respect? If the sense of honor has been bartered away, what doth it profit? Lying is in the long run and in the short run a profitless business.



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## “ I SEZ, SEZ I ”

Figures, it is said, cannot lie. This may have been true before statistics came into vogue, but it is as well to not credit the statement to-day.

Sometimes, in cases of sickness especially, it is deemed necessary to deceive. A child lay in a critical condition in a hospital recently. The mother of the child had been sick as well, and died while the child's life hung in the balances. The constant inquiry of the child was, "How is mother?" To tell the truth under the circumstances would have been too great a shock for the child, and thus the child was assured that the mother was all right. Such cases, however, afford no relief to the sinfulness of deceiving children, so often practised by parents in one form or another.

Often again there are those who want to know things that are none of their business; and it is not always an easy matter, with a sincere desire to be truthful, to decide upon a course consistent with fidelity to those who have invested you with confidences and commands perhaps to keep silence.

Is an evasive answer a right one? Whether or not, it sometimes seems necessary to satisfy

## LYING

questioners without really giving them the information wanted, or which they think they have.

Since writing the foregoing, our scissors, from a habit of running ragged lines around anything considered good, got a very suggestive article, cut out of a Canadian periodical, from the pen of Rose E. Wakefield, which we here reproduce in its entirety for the benefit of readers who may not have had the pleasure of reading it or the chance of profiting by the hints and hits which it freely and forcefully gives.

It was such a pertinent remark and the why of it was in this fashion. It was when the peaches of the Niagara district were at their best, a lady friend brought me a basket of splendid Crawfords. They were large, well colored, and altogether delicious, and there's no use denying the fact that they faded away in a most indecantly brief space of time. Said the boy of the family, as he helped himself to "number seven":

"Well, what were they made for, if it wasn't to eat, and I'm sure they'll never taste any better than they do to-day."

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“Are they really good?” my friend asked squarely; and when the boy replied, “Sure,” she laughingly said: “You don’t seem to be in the fix I was in last week.”

We all stood at attention ready for a story, and this small incident was promptly related.

“You’ve heard me speak of my old Irish washerwoman, Mrs. McGuire. Well, despite the fact that she knew that we had quantities of big, bouncing Crawfords going to waste, nothing would do but we must sample a basket of peaches from her garden. I s’pose it’s her big Irish heart that makes her always want to share up, but it did seem a trifle like ‘carrying coals to Newcastle’ when she came in, with that heaped-up basket of peaches.

“Now, in order to appreciate my story, you must know that the McGuires’ three solitary peach-trees all grew from some specially prized peach stones, and, as you know, this kind of fruit-culture isn’t guaranteed to give the most reliable results. Mrs. McGuire’s trees are fine and healthy; but the peaches, though large, are sour, and quite inferior to the fruit she desired to reproduce. Strange

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to say, she is entirely oblivious to this very patent fact, and her pride in her sturdy trees is almost pathetic.

"Well, of course, I thanked her heartily for her kindness, and the next week, as I sat on the veranda, darning the baby's stockings, didn't I hear Mrs. McGuire out under the peach-trees questioning Joe, my young cousin, as to the respective merits of our Crawford peaches and her basket of sour fruit. 'Now, sir, weren't they pretty nigh as fine as your own,' she asked in eager, expectant fashion; and if you'll believe me, I heard Joe respond enthusiastically, 'Why sure, Mrs. McGuire, they were perfectly elegant peaches.'

"A half an hour afterward, when I took him to task for this very glaring departure from the white line of truth, he said, in his gay, careless fashion, 'Do you think, cousin *mine*, I was going to hurt that old creature's feelings? No; I was too much the gentleman to speak the hard, cold truth.'

"Now, of course, I didn't agree a bit with Joe's summing up of the case, and I told him so; but when Mrs. McGuire began to question me about those troublesome peaches, I

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felt, as I have hundreds of times in my life, that telling the truth was often downright hard work. For a moment I hesitated, and I verily believe, in answer to my upward look, an inspiration came to me.

“‘They’re a splendid size, Mrs. McGuire,’ I said; ‘but they’re a more sour peach than ours, and so I pickled them, and they turned out beautifully.’

“Mrs. McGuire seemed pondering the full import of my reply, and in the lull I made my escape down cellar, and brought her up a couple of my finest pickled peaches. She tasted them, and declaring, ‘They’re foine, ma’am,’ went contentedly on with her washing.

“‘Now,’ said my friend, ‘I contend that those McGuire peaches gave me a chance for sanctified, truthful ingenuity,’ but Joe says his method was just as good, and far less trouble. What say you?”

“Say,” I replied vigorously, “with all due respect for Cousin Joe, I say that one of the marks of the real gentleman is absolute truthfulness, and as for your tact and skill, I declare it to be worthy of all imitation; but,”

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I added, curiously, "what would you have done if you couldn't have found a tactful, graceful way out?"

"Well," my friend replied, "I hope I should surely have told the clear-shining truth, which, after all, can never be absolutely unlovely, but usually I do believe there's no need to even seem to fail in courtesy."

And then it was that she made that pertinent remark.

"Yes," she said meditatively, "I like to call straight-up-and-down truthfulness one of the cardinal virtues, but there are a lot of Cousin Joes, who, with all their kindly, bright, winning ways, don't seem to know the value of a sincere, truthful use, of just common, everyday words."

## X

### Softness and Kindness

A SOFT answer turneth away wrath, and in so doing accomplishes a greater feat than one hundred readnoughts can ever hope to accomplish. There is a high order of softness in speech—the kind that takes the hardness out of hearts. There is also a low order of softness in speech—the kind that testifies to softening of the brain. What a lot of disgusting twaddle is worked out of words when the heart gets into the mouth and flows over with exuberance of affection. Hear the fond mother saying to her child, “Oo’s mamma’s ’ittle toodsy doosey, oo is.” What advantage is there in resorting to such rubbish? It is easy enough to find more suitable words. The plain language of the neighbors—*cross little patch*—as applied to the subject under discussion, is not just what is wanted, but what is wrong with “mother’s little child” or “crying baby?” Surely, there

## SOFTNESS AND KINDNESS

is as much solace in sense as in "goosish gush." Did our fathers, we might ask, make language for our mothers to mutilate in this fashion?

It is related that as the famous Dr. Johnson was driving in a carriage through London one rainy day, he overtook a poor woman carrying a baby, and without any protection from the weather. Making the driver stop, he invited the woman to enter the carriage with her child, which she did. After she was seated, the doctor said: "My good woman, I think it most likely that the motion of the coach will wake your child in a little while, and I wish you to understand that if you talk any baby-talk to it, you will have to get out and walk." As the doctor anticipated, the child soon awoke, and the forgetful mother exclaimed to it: "Oh, the little dear! Is he going to open his eyesy-pysy?"

"Stop the coach, driver!" shouted Johnson; and the woman had to get out and finish her journey on foot.

The kind of talkers the world wants is kind talkers. You cannot expect good words where there is not good feeling. A sharp tongue

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and a dull sense of propriety go together. A short answer is one shortened down to the point of ill-will. Sarcasm is the secret of many a one's success in isolating themselves from the sympathy of those who hear.

The world wants cheerful talkers; bright, vivacious talkers. There is magic in words fitly spoken, wisely chosen. We cannot all talk with the fluency of a Talmage or a Beecher, but we can all say what we have to say in a cheerful spirit and courteous manner. Rude words and hard sayings harden the hearts of others against us. Some seem to covet the reputation rough-and-ready. Ready to be rough is what it generally amounts to. Many good-meaning people think it a good rule to say what you think. It's a better one to think what you say. A very small percentage of the thoughts which pass through the mind are worthy of expression; yet a great many think they have a covering for all the uncharitable things they may say when they have that peculiar criterion of politeness and propriety to fall back upon—I said what I thought. It is well to have an honest correspondence between the thinking and the say-

## SOFTNESS AND KINDNESS

ing, but if the thoughts are astray, the expression of them does not help it any.

Now, a word to those who talk of going out of the talking business. You are not on speaking terms with someone, and you have vowed you would not speak to that person. As a restraint upon words that will eat as doth a canker, this policy may be justifiable. It is better to say nothing than to give expression to hard feelings. But the best thing to be done in that case is to restore the breach, for of blockades there is none so bad as results from a break in the circuit of social intercourse. Never let the fire within finish your freedom with friends or acquaintances.

## XI

### **The Humorous in Speech**

SAY something humorous if you can; but, if you cannot, don't try to be funny and fail. The man who lies awake at nights trying to think of something funny, has no business to pose as a humorist. Good humor is conditioned upon good sleep, good appetite, and a lot of other good things.

The humorous in speech is not something to be cultivated, but rather restrained. You would not think of trying to cultivate a spring of water. The humorist is one who has within him a spring of water bubbling up into everlasting mirth.

It is a serious blunder to make of one's self a professional humorist. Life is not a huge joke. If it were, lots of us would die laughing, and the funniest thing in the world would be to look serious. No; you cannot talk nonsense all the time. Sense is supreme except in a fool's paradise. Witticisms have their best effect when they come in as a relief

## THE HUMOROUS IN SPEECH

to the strain of serious thought and feeling.

The professional humorist lives to make people laugh; and in so doing lives away from a lot of higher ideals. Character is not a thing to be abnormally developed for fun. Oliver Wendell Holmes made the whole world laugh when, after making his first photograph, he wrote upon the back, "Taken by O. W. Holmes and sun." The beauty of this appeal to our sense of humor is that professionalism, if at all in sight, stays with the art of photography. It was this same genial humorist who gave the sensible talk: "Do you know that you feel a little superior to every man who makes you laugh whether by making faces or verses."

Holmes' humor was maintained without losing his hold upon readers when he came to dwell upon sensible themes. Talk sense he could; so could Mark Twain; but as soon as Mark Twain ceased to be funny, his readers got to running over his writings to see how soon he was going to return to his profession.

When a man abandons himself to mere fun-making he is expected to keep at it. He

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may have his opinions upon the questions of the day, but newspaper representatives never run after him to get his opinions. If the public listens to him, he is pronounced a failure if he fails to arouse a laugh. That is what is expected of him. He may possibly be able to give a brilliant address; but however convincing the argument, majestic the thought, or eloquent the language, it falls flat because he is built up in the minds of the people as a humorist.

The mechanical placing of words in giving expression to a humorous thought is not to be considered as the whole thing—soul and substance. "Brevity is the soul of wit" is a statement that scarcely deserves the currency obtained. Originality is the soul of wit. Wit may be defined as a new and novel combination of ideas. No single idea is funny in itself. It is in the association with other ideas that the soul of wit shines out. Here is, for instance, the simple case of a teacher's pupils going away and forgetting to pay him for the exercises. In this there are two distinct ideas—the exercises given by the teacher and the forgetfulness of the pupils. There is

## THE HUMOROUS IN SPEECH

nothing that appeals to our sense of humor in that combination until there is added the idea that the teacher was engaged at giving memory exercises. With that combination one idea simply laughs at the other, and makes you forget what a serious thing life is. A certain amount of fact and a much larger amount of fancy is a very popular mixture for producing mirth. A good instance of this is Artemus Ward's joke at the expense of Brigham Young: "All the pretty girls in Utah marry young."

Josh Billings says: "There are two things none are too well prepared for in this life, and that is—twins." Here there is a meeting of fact with fact; it is the sudden reversion of direction and unexpected meeting of two things so very much out of proportion to each other which gives the humorous effect. Sometimes a fact will laugh at fancy, and the meeting of one with the other is so exceptionally strong as to suggest anticipation on both sides. The bringing of fact and fancy together, or combination of ideas for humorous effect requires originality. To employ a multitude of words in so doing would

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have the effect of obscuring the points. It would simply kill the effect. Brevity prevents burial, and thus it insures immortality of the soul, but is not the soul.

The professional comedian and circus clown have little claim for attention as humorists. Making faces is not very intellectual, and leaves no bond of sympathy between the artist thus employed and the people entertained.

A witty tongue is not necessarily a withering tongue. Wit that wins applause at the expense of withering friendships suggests the need of bit and bridle. A man by the name of James has a patent for this article. See what he has to say in his catalogue.

Senator Depew, citing instances of happy plays of wit, gives the following. Governor Morris was visiting Bishop Moore. He remarked during dinner, “Bishop, I have just made my will. You are a beneficiary. I have left you my whole stock of impudence.” The Bishop gave a loud laugh. “My friend,” he said, “you are too generous. You have bequeathed to me by far the greater part of your estate.” Mrs. Moore looked shocked. She raised to her husband a rebuking finger.

## THE HUMOROUS IN SPEECH

"My dear," she said, "haven't you come into your inheritance remarkably soon?"

Clever, indeed, are the attempts to make fun, but perhaps the most refreshing humor comes from sources where there is no intent to be funny. One-half the world is amused at the way the other half talks, and while the aim has ever been to bring speech to the same level of correctness, it must be remembered life owes much of its merriment to the expressions that may be as lacking in elements of correctness as awkward arrangement and the queer choice of words can make them.

According to an American paper, some years ago an English periodical offered a prize for the best collection of curiously worded advertisements as found in the London papers, and the following is the result:

A lady wants to sell her piano, as she is going abroad in a strong frame.

Furnished apartments suitable for gentlemen with folding doors.

Wanted a room by two gentlemen about thirty feet long and twenty feet broad.

Lost, a collie dog by a man on Saturday

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answering to Jim, with a brass collar round his neck and muzzle.

A boy wanted who can open oysters with references.

Bull-dog for sale; will eat anything; very fond of children.

Wanted, an organist, and a boy to blow the same.

Wanted, a boy, to be partly outside and partly behind the counter.

Lost, near Highgate archway, an umbrella belonging to a gentleman with a bent rib and bone handle.

To be disposed of, mail phaeton, the property of a gentleman with a movable head, piece as good as new.

Mouths that are manufacturers of just such sentences are not always to be considered as the property of the illiterate or careless class. The *Baltimore American* tells us that a young Baltimore man has a habit of correcting carelessness in speech that comes to his notice. The other day he walked into a shop and asked for a comb.

“Do you want a narrow man’s comb?” asked the clerk.

## THE HUMOROUS IN SPEECH

"No," said the customer, "I want a comb for a stout man with rubber teeth."

In an article on "Humor in the School Room," by Mr. James L. Hughes, Inspector of Public Schools for the city of Toronto, and published by the *Canadian Magazine*, many funny things are reproduced which seem to show how much we are indebted for our supply of humor to those sources which have no intent to be other than serious.

Much at his own expense, the writer tells us that the words, "His Satanic Majesty," occurred in a story read in one of the Toronto public schools.

"How many know who His Satanic Majesty is?" asked the teacher.

Several hands were raised, and the first pupil named promptly replied, "The Inspector."

"It is encouraging to know that she was a very young child," writes the Inspector, and then proceeds: History and Scripture were never more thoroughly mixed than by the boy who wrote, "Titus was a Roman Emperor—supposed to have written the epistle to the Hebrews—his other name was Oates."

The ridiculous answers given at written

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examinations would fill many volumes. Sometimes they are the result of an improper questioning, sometimes of mental peculiarities in pupils, often of poor teaching, which is satisfied with giving words, instead of ideas, to children.

The ecliptic had been taught as “an imaginary line representing the apparent path of the sun through the heavens,” but at the examination it was defined as “an imaginary line going round the equator; it seems to be the path which the earth goes round, but it is really the path to heaven.” A student preparing to be a teacher wrote: “The aim of geography is to fit a man for the business of life, and lead him to prepare for death and the other world.” Another believer in the uplifting power of geography wrote: “A person ignorant of geography is wrapped up in his own narrow sphere of ignorance, and is generally a bore.” An English girl wrote: “Oliver Cromwell was a man who was put in prison for his interference in Ireland. When he was in prison he wrote ‘The Pilgrim’s Progress,’ and married a lady called Mrs. O’Shea.”

## THE HUMOROUS IN SPEECH

When hygiene was taught in the form of notes dictated by the teacher, to be repeated orally by the pupils or written down to be committed to memory, the answers given in this subject were often very amusing, on account of their incongruities. Reading a few of them must convince even skeptics that we are "fearfully and wonderfully made":

"We call the kidneys the bread basket, because it is where all bread goes to. They lay up concealed by the heart."

"The food passes through your windpipe to the pores, and thus passes off your body by evaporation through a lot of little holes in the skin called capillaries."

"We should die if we eat our food roar."

"The food is nourished in the stomach."

"We should not eat so much bone-making foods as flesh-forming and warmth-giving foods, for if we did, we would have too many bones, which would make us look funny."

"Sugar is an amyloid: If you was to eat much sugar and nothing else, you would not live, because sugar has not got no carbon, hydrogen, oxygen, nitrogen. Potatoes is another amyloids."

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The poor boy who wrote that will not live long if he crams his stomach as badly as his teacher crammed his brain.

A few answers relating to other subjects will close my "examination department."

"Prose tells things that are true right along just as they are, and poetry makes it up as you go along."

"A circle is a round straight line with a hole in the middle."

"Things which are equal to each other are equal to anything else."

"The chief products of the United States is earthquakes and volcanoes."

"The rapids of the St. Lorence is caused by the canoes of the Indians."

"In Austria the principal industry is gathering Austrich feathers."

"The two most famous volcanoes in Europe are Sodom and Gomorrah."

"Climate lasts all the time and weather only a few days."

"John Bunyan lived a life of scantity."

"John Locke's works are full of energy and lack no little want of thought."

"Julius Cæsar was quite a military man on the whole."

## THE HUMOROUS IN SPEECH

"By the Salic laws no woman or descendant of a woman could occupy the throne."

"Alfred the Great reigned 872 years. He was distinguished for letting some buckwheat cakes burn, and the lady scolded him."

Good teachers give their pupils every possible opportunity to use new words, and give their own ideas of their meaning. Such exercises reveal the most extraordinary misconceptions, sometimes.

"What is guilt?" "Telling on another boy."

"What is love?" "It's going errands," said little Mary.

A poor boy was asked, "What is a gentleman?" "A fellow that has a watch and chain," he replied, adding, when he saw that his answer was not perfectly satisfactory, "and loves Jesus."

He evidently thought the latter portion of his answer should atone for any weakness in the former part. A Sunday-school child told her day-school teacher that "Missionaries are men who get money."

"Epicure is a man who likes a good dinner."

"Alias was a good man mentioned in the Bible."

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"Medieval is a wicked man who has been tempted."

Sometimes a pupil comes nearer the truth than might be expected in defining a word he does not understand, as did the boy who wrote, "A demagogue is a vessei containing beer and other liquids." Even when pupils have a clear conception of the meaning of words they often give amusing applications of them when asked for illustrative definitions. "Write a sentence with the word nauseous in it," brought out the answer, "This examination makes me feel nauseous."

The oral answers given in class are often mirth-provoking.

"Give the future of drink." "Present, he drinks; future, he will be drunk."

"The plural of pillow?" "Bolster."

"Compare ill." "Ill, worse, dead."

"What are the chief imports of Canada?" "Immigrants."

"Did you ever see an elephant's skin?"

"Yes, sir."

"Where?"

"On the elephant," said the innocent youngster.

## THE HUMOROUS IN SPEECH

"What do you know of Wellington?"

First boy: "He won the battle of Waterloo."

Second boy: "He was Prime Minister of England."

Third boy: "He is dead."

"What do you call a man from Poland?"  
"A Pole."

"One from Holland?" "A Hole."

"What is the difference between foot, and feet?"

"One foot is a foot, and a whole lot of foots is a feet," explained the young philosopher.

Many people imagine that boys and girls are not philosophers. This proves that they are not well acquainted with boys and girls. They are great reasoners with their proper range of thought. They think quickly and accurately, as far as their knowledge extends. They get out of a difficulty by their wits as if they were trained lawyers.

"How did that blot come on your copy book, Sam?"

"I think it is a tear, Miss Wallace."

"How could a tear be black, Sam?"

"It must have been a colored boy who

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dropped it,” suggested the reflective Samuel.

The teacher told her class that Charles II was a Roman Catholic. Independent Lulu said she thought he was an Episcopalian.

“Why, Lulu?”

“Because we read that he did things that he ought not to have done, and left undone things that he ought to have done.”

“Would you believe that a star is bigger than the earth?”

“No,” said Chester; “if it was, it would keep the rain off.”

“What made the tower of Pisa lean?” “The famine in the land.”

“We can only hear sound; we cannot feel sound,” said the teacher.

“You can feel a sound thrashing, can’t you?” asked Fred.

“What makes the ocean salt?” “Salt fish,” answered reflective Donald.

“What does sea water contain beside sodium chloride?”

“Fish, sir,” said a boy who trusted to his shrewdness more than to preparation of his lessons.

The same boy, when asked to draw a pic-

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ture of Jonah and the whale, drew the whale only.

"Where is Jonah?" asked the teacher, sharply.

"Inside the whale," said the imperturbable boy.

"Now, children," said the teacher, "we have gone through the history of England. Tell me in whose reign would you live if you could choose for yourself?"

"In the reign of King James," said philosophic Alex, "because I read that education was very much neglected in that time."

"Susan, if I were a little girl I would study my lessons," said the teacher reprovingly.

"Then I guess you are glad that you ain't a little girl," shrewdly answered Susan.

"If you wish to be good-looking when you grow up, you should go to bed early," was the advice of a lady teacher to her class in hygiene.

Isabel rather rudely ventured to say in reply: "I 'spect you set up late when you was a girl."

Oh, yes! girls and boys can think and apply their thoughts.

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The humor of the school-room, concludes Mr. Hughes, is too valuable to be lost. Every teacher should record the humorous answers, and the amusing incidents in connection with their class. Teachers' associations should appoint recorders of humor, to whom all teachers should send the merry sketches of their school-rooms. An hour spent in reading these stories in conventions would be profitably spent. The publication of a volume of such stories periodically would enrich the literature of humor.

## XII

### **What to Talk About**

THE Reformation is not agitating the minds of the people. The abolition of slavery, the Wesleyan revival, the clergy reserves and other topics which once excited fierce debate have passed into history. Yet the world never had more topics than it has today. Time accumulates topics. The fact that topics of other days have passed into history assures of a constant inflow of subjects of conversation. The usefulness of history is its conserving of subjects of interest for all time. If, then, nothing is going on worth talking about, get back through the pages of history to world movements of the past.

Present-day topics there are, however, just as interesting as those of ancient times. The newspapers come to our door laden with them. In a world like this we may always be sure that something is going on. It is

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not to be supposed that we can have millionaires without divorce cases of unusual interest. And so long as there is badness in society, we may expect to see the big headlines inviting the closest possible following of the footsteps of crime and the workers of darkness. And so long as we have editors who are so horrified at the thought of such a disgrace to our civilization as the prizefighter that he unhesitatingly kicks him out of his sanctum into the reporter's realm to be glorified, we need not expect to run short of material for minds base and bellicose.

Topics enough haven't we when punchers of faces are given more prominence in the American press than the President of the United States. Let us have less of these pugilistic attitudes reproduced for readers in public prints. It has a very bad influence. It fosters the bullying spirit and fills vacant minds with ideals and ideas that are destructive to true manhood. Swine would stampe if the same amount of evil entered into them which is being furnished in the name of sport to the newspaper reader of to-day. Swine would refuse to swallow some

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things in the shape of subjects that men lay hold upon with a remarkable avidity.

But the present-day topics are not all trash. Achievements of a high order are being discussed freely and fully. The discovery of the North Pole is undoubtedly an achievement of a high order, and the attention it has received is certainly not lacking either in variety of thought or warmth of expression. Possibly there is an illustration here of the fact that some men will do anything to be talked about, though the thought which most clearly strikes us is that the vast majority are just waiting to discover someone who has done something worthy of mention. The man who has done something big is the man whom not only the king, but the people delight to honor. Hero-hunters will find their hero and they see him afar off. It would be better all around to discover no hero than for the acclamations of honor to be sounded forth only to reverberate with disappointment and disgust.

Touching the questions raised as to who was the first to discover the Pole, we do not expect any further light upon this sub-

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ject until Santa Claus comes around. We have had enough speculations. Let us have positive evidence from one who was there.

What practical good will come out of the discovery we cannot say, further than that attention has been directed to a great enterprise, and many minds stimulated by daring adventure without the pernicious influence inseparable from much that passes for adventure.

In connection with the interest manifest in achievements won in the face of obstacles as big as icebergs or as broad as regions untraversed, it is pleasing to note the prominence given to the heroes and heroines in the ordinary walks in life who have risked their lives to save someone in danger, or who, through much sacrifice, brought great relief or blessing to others. Perhaps we do not recognize as readily as we should the high service of the ordinary newspaper in bringing the good and noble things done in obscurity into the marvelous light of the publicity of the press.

We are told that as a man thinketh in his heart, so is he. It is just as true as a

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man reads, so is he, for as he reads, he thinks. Following up this observation, we might say as a man subscribes, so is he. If he subscribes to a scurrilous paper, he is, at the end of the year, a scrap-heap.

If he subscribes to a scientific or sporting paper, he partakes largely of the nature of those papers. If he subscribes to an almanac, he is a weather prophet. If he subscribes to a work of art, he is an artist. If he subscribes to a religious paper—well, he feels that he can depend upon the bargains announced in its advertising columns.

Have your choice of papers and books and magazines, and in that choice you have your choice of things to think of and things to talk about.

The man who chooses the Bible will talk of the Beatitudes; the woman who chooses Eaton's catalogue will talk of the bargains.

Topics crowd upon us. They come uninvited, postage paid, and with blank forms and addressed envelopes to afford every facility to keep up the topic. Really the question is not, what are we going to talk about, but who is going to do the work while we do the talking?

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Talk about your neighbors. They call that gossip. What is gossip? Well, it is something condemned, and just as faithfully practised by those who condemn it as those who never thought anything of it. Our neighbors are interesting, and we have just as good a right to talk about them as they have about us. There are good neighbors, and we can say good things about them. Of course, there are neighbors that, which, to say the least, are not good, and they do some queer things and mean things, some perfectly awful, unimaginable things—but there, we won't say any more, as it is not nice to talk of one's neighbors.

Talk about yourself. That is a topic some are well up on. As a general topic it is not popular, but for me, as an individual, it is a good topic—as good as I am. It is certainly allowable. Absolute self-forgetfulness is a station we are not supposed to arrive at in this world. All recognize this; hence, you may say a great deal about yourself and yet retain the attention and sympathy of those who hear. Personal experience is valuable. It will do others good, no doubt, to hear you

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narrate the adventures you have had, the successes realized, or the failures and disappointments bravely borne. But there are two temptations in talking of one's self everyone should fortify himself or herself against. The first is that of making a hero of one's self. Egotism or self-praise never leaves a good impression. The other is that of making one's self an object of pity. So many have a tendency to think that hard lines and hard times belong exclusively to themselves or their class.

We hear so much about the poor farmer, the poor laboring man, the poor teacher, or the poor preacher, that you would think every avocation tended to poverty, or that every path led to the poorhouse. Talking about one's traits or one's troubles, when developed to a habit, is very injurious to the person thus engaged, as it keeps the mind on these things to a greater extent than is necessary, and eventually leads to chronic grumbling. From the standpoint of the hearer, it is no indication of broad sympathy to seek to close up the souls of suffering ones by insisting upon strict silence. How

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many a one has felt in time of great stress of mind that it would have brought a sense of relief to have the privilege of telling all to some heart that was truly sympathetic. Tears often bring relief, words as well. It is nature's outlet. When we hear that a person should not talk about the things that weigh upon them and depress their lives, we are inclined to look upon such advice as an excuse for a lack of sympathy.

Laugh and the world laughs with you;  
Weep, and you weep alone;  
For the sad old Earth must borrow its mirth,  
It has trouble enough of its own.

It is a mistake to talk of one's self or things which belong to one exclusively of all other subjects. When some get through talking about my and me, there is not much time left for anything more. It is very tiresome to hear a person continually introducing *my* into his discourses. My wife, my horse, or my George, or myself, are very interesting to myse'f, but there are others to consider as well.

Talk sense, talk facts, and talk about some-

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thing feasible. Of course, we did not think the flying-machine feasible a few years ago; but that makes no difference, we do not propose to put stock into the concern on the representation that through the connection which it affords with certain "castles in the air" house rents will come down, etc. If present conditions are to be changed "livin' will be high." Talk to that soloist upstairs singing "I want to be an angel and with the angels dwell." Doubtless, she will take stock if she has not already taken wings.

Again, talk about something of interest to those with whom you are talking. It is hard to interest a person upon a subject that he does not take an interest in. Find out what he is thinking about, talk on those lines, and you are sure to interest. If the man is a financier and thinking of money, talk about money. Talk to the lawyer about law, it is better not to mention money. You may trust to his sense of propriety to introduce that subject at the proper time.

Talk to the doctor about medicine. You have no necessity for making mention of money to a doctor. His time is precious,

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and to avoid all questions upon the financial side of his services he has, for the convenience of the public, put the terms, money down, in contracted form after his name. It's time some patients understood what M.D. stood for. With all fairness, it may be said that when the doctor thinks of money instead of medicine, he is a little mixed, as is forcibly illustrated by a little bit of medical talk reported as follows:

Medical student to specialist: “What did you operate on that man for?”

Specialist: “Five hundred dollars.”

Medical student: “I mean, what did he have?”

Specialist: “Five hundred dollars.”

Talk to the minister, if he is a Methodist, about moving. It is out of place to mention money in this case. The time could be better occupied in a discussion of moving expenses, allowances and calls upon a minister's resources. For the sake of your soul and other interests, don't talk about money to the minister. Make him feel that he must live above such things as his money and his means.

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If it is a politician, you just let him do the talking and you do the thinking. That evidently was the attitude of the Southern farmer, who, upon being asked what a certain politician was noted for in that district, said: "He is noted for arguments that won't go down and seeds that won't come up."

The farmer is a thinking man and interested in every new thing that makes for advancement, economy and convenience. Just now he may be in a frame of mind to talk freely upon such topics as "the rotation of swindles," etc.

A few words to the hired man who is working for wages along the line of what he is thinking about will be quite effectual in drawing him out upon the subject of "wages."

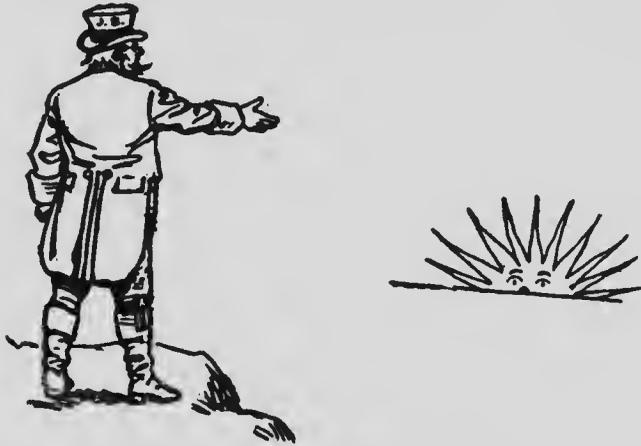
Talk to the hired girl—no; the granting of such privileges is extremely unwise. Talk to her mistress, if you wish. Topic to be discussed: Civil Service Reform.

To the sentimental, talk upon sentimental subjects. To the practical, talk upon practical subjects. Pure sentiment is elevating and refining, but pure gush is of no use to anyone. It might be well for some to

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develop more of the sentimental in their natures.

The American is more sentimental than the Englishman. An American will go into ecstasies over a sunset. An Englishman looks upon it as an every-day affair. All that



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concerns him is the fact that the sun never sets upon British territory. If it did, John Bull would be up next morning shouting at the top of his voice, “Begone there, this is British territory.” John Bull is not to be “sat on,” and the sun that sets upon British territory will be obliged to “Move on.”

No one, not even an Irishman, should talk

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upon any subject without having first made a study of that subject. Let those talk about Shakespeare who understand Shakespeare, but those who don't had better talk about Roosevelt, or some other man capable of making himself understood. It is better to be an authority on "How to grow turnips" than to discourse upon Lamb's Tales or Bacon in such a way as to lead others to think that you were a butcher. It is better to be posted upon post-holes and know the sale price sent C. O. D., than to air your knowledge of Burns in such a style as to lead others to conclude that you were a fireman.

Study, study, study, if you intend to talk, or else people will say that "You don't know what you are talking about."

## XIII

### **Time and Place**

If pen or lips would keep from dips,  
Five things observe with care:  
Of whom you speak, to whom you speak,  
And how and when and where.

—LONGFELLOW.

You may invest all confidence in those who have proved worthy of confidence; but it is not a good plan to tell everything to everybody. Confidences are often betrayed, and we say woe to the one who is so mean and unworthy. It is very possible, however, that the one who invested the confidence was unreasonable in expecting it not to go any farther. It may not have been worth guarding with reticence. It may have been an unworthy suspicion affecting the character of another. It may be that the one, who was told not to tell, was told something about friends that came closer than the one who had made the request. These are things to be considered in making another a deposi-



TELEGRAM.



TELEPHONE.



TELL-A-WOMAN.

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tary of confidences as well as in accepting such confidences.

As an illustration of how confidences are invested and betrayed, Miss Jones says to Miss Smith, "Miss Brown told me that you told her that secret which I told you not to tell her."

"Yes," says Miss Smith; "but I told her not to tell you that I told her."

"Well," says Miss Jones, "she told me not to tell you that she told me, so don't you tell her that I told you."

It has been said that a woman cannot keep a secret. Upon investigation it is found that a woman's secret is very often one that came from some man who could not keep it himself. It is important that this point be kept in mind, for someone in attempting to illustrate how the secret goes, puts it in this form. A man knows it; that is one (I). He tells his wife; that is another one (II). She tells another woman; that is (III)—one hundred and eleven!

This way of putting things can scarcely be considered fair to the fair sex. There are woman talkers, to be sure, and to be

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feared as well. As we see it, there are some men when they get started—well, it's a blessing when they stop; and there are some women, mind you, of whom it may be said that it is a mercy when they don't begin. If anybody deserves a good tongue-thrashing, it is the man who makes figures lie about woman's talking proclivities in this way, and no doubt the III can be found capable for the task.

It is supposed, however, that the man responsible for the above libel has since died of a broken heart, because he sought about III of them, and not one of them could be induced to say anything favorable or satisfactory from the standpoint of a man seeking a wife. And thus we may consider that the reproach has been taken away, and that the revenge was characteristic of the sex.

When and where, in connection with speech, implies that place and time are to be considered. It is really regrettable that this point is not more observed. In the most solemn funeral occasion some may be found forgetful of the solemnity of the occasion and indulging in playful and inappropriate con-

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versation, and in that sweet hour of prayer which calls for the devotional spirit, we find some guilty of the awful sin of placing the strange fire of idle conversation upon the altar of divine worship.

It is a most lamentable fact that many are found so lacking in self-discipline that the spirit of the occasion is constantly grieved by word or deed. Unconsciously this is done, for sinners of this sort are not by any means necessarily to be regarded as irreverent or of a frivolous turn of mind. At the graveside of a dear friend stood a man who, at heart was in the spirit of the occasion, but, unfortunately, he had a habit of giving a little laugh after making a set statement of his, about his condition or the weather, and at the close of the burial service he passed a remark scarcely in keeping with the occasion, accompanied with a faint “ha, ha,” which did not at all sound right. What a pity that Silence is deprived of its right to reign, especially at times when that right entails injustice upon no one.

The wrong place or wrong time is more often urged as a criticism of what has been

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said than is any inherent weakness in the address.

### THE CHURCH ENTERTAINMENT

affords abundant evidence of this fact. What to say or what not to say at the social gathering in the house dedicated to the worship of God is a very large subject, and one that has some difficult questions in connection with it. When the last word has been said dealing with the sacred and the secular, we will all be in a better position to determine what is and what is not suitable to the occasion.

Some years ago the writer was giving a lecture in a Presbyterian church, and was surprised to find that some humorous remarks which had met with hearty response in other places failed to provoke even a smile upon this occasion. The pastor gave the explanation afterward that the members of the flock at that appointment were of a very antiquated type, and had as long as he knew them, held to the belief that it was not right to even smile in the church, and hence the absence of smiling faces.

This is drawing the line very close. If I

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did not have enough of religion to make me happy, I would take my smileless face to the sanctuary every time and present it as a memorial of the many good things I was shutting out of my life while passing through this wilderness of woe. God intended his creatures to be happy, and surely a smile in the sanctuary is not going to shut us out of heaven.

Then there is the other extreme. Some are prepared to turn the house of God into a play-house, and though the entertainment may be an abandonment to the comic in speech, song, and act, the question is asked, “What harm is in it, anyway?” The walls of the church are made of the same material as any other building. Why should we discriminate against certain features of the entertainment on the ground that they were more suitable for a hall than for a church?

This much must be conceded that a place of worship is not a place for everything. Whatever may be said in favor or in defence of the dance, we have never heard anyone seriously suggest the holding of a dance in a church edifice. Throw the church-doors

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open to everything that comes along and you challenge the spirit of irreverence to enter in.

There are those who maintain that everything is sacred, and there are those who try to secularize everything. From different altitudes as a starting-point, it may be seen that both reach the same level. The man who makes everything sacred—the man who makes splitting wood as high and holy a calling as preaching the Gospel, will find out that, instead of exalting the wood-pile, he is lowering the pulpit to the pile of wood. There is certainly a spiritual condition involved in the delivery of the message of life that does not necessarily enter into other things.

The church stands for sober thought. It stands for the elevation of men. Does the church entertainment keep those ideals in view? Very often, we fear, it does not. Very often the big feature of the entertainment is of a disgustingly low order. Time and again things have been heard in church concerts that sensible people would not care to listen to in a hall or anywhere else. But, of course, the class were there who just knew how to appreciate that kind of thing, and, un-

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fortunately, were far more demonstrative than the class who knew how to appreciate what was really good and in place. It does seem too bad that in a good crowd a few noisy representatives of the back-line or nuisance street can so successfully monopolize the expression of the sense of appreciation of the whole audience, however much it may be to the humiliation of the chairman, who has seen the thundering applause given to the inferior and even objectionable numbers in preference to what really merited appreciation. It is really a question at times if the ordinary applause might not be taken, in view of the class interested, as a very doubtful compliment to the performer, and it would be a great relief to many if the one thus favored would take note of the situation.

There is a general conviction among church-members, at least, in the community that the church is not the place for plays, the professional comedian, or for the rendition of what may be regarded as unutterably silly speech. The temptation to run chances of losing favor with those thus minded for the sake of popularity with the crowd is too often

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yielded to by those who have been honored by a request to take part in the exercises. This is a mistake. Many a number on a program is received with far less favor than it apparently obtained. Many a person will laugh at what they do not at the time or afterward approve of.

Another thing which should receive more careful attention is the peculiar position in which the pastor of the church is placed by any objectionable feature of the entertainment. When you come to fix responsibility for it, you must fix it upon the minister in charge. A superintendent of a railway, or a department store, or of a schoolhouse is held responsible for anything that goes wrong under his superintendency. A superintendent of a church is in exactly the same position. A committee, of course, has been appointed to prepare the program; but it must not be forgotten that the pastor, by virtue of his position, is a member of that committee; and if the committee fail to recognize that point, he is none the less responsible, for it is his place to keep in touch with the committee.

The irresponsible way things are run in

## “I SEZ, SEZ I”

many churches is not good and not fair to those who have been invested with responsibility. Many will easily recall to mind the days of the old magi lantern in the rural districts. When the operator would strike the locality for business, the first thing to be done was to trot around and see all the trustees, and having gained their consent, the wonderful treat in store for all was then announced. It is well to bear in mind that there is a trustee board in connection with church as well as school. Would it not be the proper thing to recognize the responsibility of that board before going ahead with a church entertainment?

One trustee board, to our knowledge, has passed a resolution, that before any entertainment is held in the church the matter must be laid before the board; and, accordingly, if the Ladies' Aid or Young People's Society decide to have an entertainment in the church, the consent of the board has first to be obtained. This is right. Recognition of authority works no ill to anyone.

In a church well known to the writer the young people, desirous of having something

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novel in the way of entertainment, introduced a play in which a young lady was carried into the church to act the part of one dead. A young man, supposed in the scene to be her lover, acted the part of mourner, and this he did by making great lamentations over her. How successfully the parts were played we know not, but in about a week (possibly a few days more) the same performance was repeated in that church, but this time with a much more realistic effect, for the same young lady, who a week before had feigned death, was carried into the church a corpse, and the young man, who was really her lover, was again on the scene, and played his part with an exercise of sorrow that was real, and it is said that the real sorrow manifested was more marked than was the affected sorrow of the previous week. His lamentations were most affecting.

Making a mockery of death was an awful piece of impropriety, especially in the house of the Lord, and the sudden appearance of the messenger "Death" upon the scene may be rightly considered as an awful comment upon the desecration by the Lord of the house.

## “I SEZ, SEZ I”

The thought of time and place, if fully considered, would save the situation from many an impropriety. Time and place, however, while affording the main ground for criticism of things said or done, is never to be regarded as affording a license for things that are in their very nature wrong. There is no time or place for unkind, hard, or mean sayings. It is poor policy to adopt standards for the sake of policy. As a matter of policy, the business man considers it necessary to be pleasant and agreeable in business. Does it follow that he is at liberty to be unpleasant and disagreeable in his home? It does not pay to “rip and tear” in business, as that would soon tear the business to pieces. Under what system of valuation does it pay to tear the finer fabric of home into a place of discord and strife. If all reports are correct, there are men who act as though there was a time and place where they can cease to be gentlemen. And if all reports are correct, there are women whose voices are much more pleasant and agreeable when out making calls than when calling their husbands down for their late hours or when calling the children down for a late breakfast.

## XIV

### Say So

“AND now, if ye will deal kindly and truly with my master, tell me; and if not, tell me; that I may turn to the right hand, or to the left.” Thus did Abraham’s servant insist upon a decided definite answer touching the matrimonial deal in the interests of his master’s son, Isaac. The necessity of carefulness and prayerfulness before making a committal, promise, or bargain is recognized on all hands, but the time comes when the decision must be “yes” or “no.” A great responsibility may be involved, but that is no reason why a decision would be postponed from time to time. Just as great a responsibility may be involved in deciding not to come to terms. Some, it is true, are too hasty in committing themselves to this or that; others, again, are altogether too slow. A man will go into a store, see the thing he wants, and is satisfied with article and price; but he hems and haws, and thinks and thinks, and

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goes back home to make up his mind what to do. He needs to learn to make up his mind on shorter order. Hurry up, slow-poke; say so and be done with it.

The brusque business style of doing things in these days has crystalized itself in language to a very noticeable degree. One man says, "I will stand for two dozen." Another says, "Book me for one crate or put me up five pounds." Our friend, Longshanks, says, "Look me up when you come to our town." And the old farmer, at great risk of reputation, sure enough, put the climax on the well-accentuated brusqueness in business when, in addressing the



## SAY SO

live-stock dealer, he said, "Put me down for a calf."

The using of many words in buying or selling, or the using of many words and no buying or selling, is one of the principles of trade in which the buyer and the seller have equal rights and may be credited with equal wrongs.

"It is naught, it is naught," saith the buyer; "but when he is gone his way, then he boasteth." (Prov. 20, 14.)

We are not told what the seller said upon this occasion, and we have no guarantee that the buyer who boasted came out the best in the end.

"It is naught, it is naught," he said in sizing up the points of the animal under review. "He has got poor feet; that looks like a spavin on his hind-leg; and, if I know anything about it, he has the heaves and is threatened with the glanders. He is no good, simply no good. I don't want him for myself. I would not give \$10 for him. In fact, I would not have him for his keep, but I want him for a friend, a particular friend—and I'll give \$45 for him."

That closed the bargain, and the buyer took the useless brute, and had scarcely got

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five hundred yards away when he started to blow about its splendid qualities, declaring it worth \$200. But Jew Sharp, from whom he bought it, wasn't the man to give away a good thing. His side of the story, if it had been told, was just as interesting as the other fellow's. Had the seller been made to speak he would have said:

“He is the most deceivin' beast I ever had on the place. He looks all right and goes pretty good when there is no weight behind him. The man that's got him thinks he has got a snap. I see him down there in the flat boasting about him now; but just wait till he gets him on yon hill. He's as balky as sin.”

Leaving things unsaid that should be said is as fruitful of evil as saying things that should not be said. You may have intended that person to come to your house, but you failed to say, “Come,” and someone felt slighted. You thought your guest would understand that he or she was welcome, but you did not speak the word, “Welcome,” and someone wondered what was wrong with you. “Much obliged” or “thank you” are not hard



"IT IS NAUGHT, IT IS NAUGHT," SAID THE BUIER



## SAY SO

to say, and there is no reason why the person who feels under an obligation to another should not say so. Money does not meet every obligation, and it's a good thing that commercialism does not enter into the whole of the large area of "favours received." The formal expression of "thanks" is generally taken for what it implies—a sense or feeling of obligation; and where formal expression is lacking, it is at once assumed that there is a lack of appreciation as well. This, of course, does not apply to a host of insignificant services where the term "thank you" is forthcoming as a contribution to the formality of the occasion pure and simple. The passing of plates—collection plates excepted—or the picking up of a handkerchief from the floor are cases to point.

While it may be said of some delinquent, he couldn't even say "thank you," we are not to think that manners are being forgotten in general. Really our "thank you" was in danger of becoming a habit of speech until a few years ago, when some unusually wise person foresaw this danger and started up a corrective word to our excessive thanksgiving—

## “I SEZ, SEZ I”

“don’t mention it.” Since then there has been trouble.

“Did you say thank you to that man?” asked a thoughtful mother of her boy. But no reply was forthcoming though the question was repeated again and again. An explanation was called for, and the boy, thus thrown off his guard, said, “I was told not to mention it.”

Leaving things unsaid under the conviction that others can speak so much better is not always a wise course. Attendants upon conventions and conferences well know what a nuisance a man can make of himself by jumping up and insisting upon being heard on every question that may arise. Yet it is not a good plan to maintain silence simply because there are others to speak. The wisdom of the world has not been wholly invested in one wise man, or one hundred wise men.

Some years ago a religious paper solicited and published articles from the leading theologians and thinkers in two of the most prominent churches in Canada upon the subject of Christian Union. Upon reading the first article the conviction came: “That man has

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treated the subject fully; there remains nothing more to be said." The next and the next was read, each in turn leaving the same conviction upon the mind. Each one, down to the last, had something to say which the others had left unsaid. The lesson here is—it takes more than one person to exhaust a single subject. There is something for every body to say, and though others can say what they have to say in better form, that is no reason why I should seek an excuse to be silent. In the multitude of counsellors there is safety, and if you have anything to say feel free to speak it out; but wait your turn and time, and do not always and under all circumstances insist upon being heard.

Someone has said, never give advice. If it is a wise man, he don't need it; if he is a fool, he won't take it. A word of advice, however, is often very acceptable. Too much advice is a bad thing. That man or woman is a busybody who goes into the sickroom and advises other treatment and other doctors, simply on the ground that someone was benefited by such treatment or such a doctor. The man who gives advice wholesale is sure to have

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the satisfaction once in a while of being able to say, “I told you so.” Others, though, will have occasion to say just as often of him, “I told you that old fool did not know what he was talking about.”

Saying something complimentary when called for is really important. It would almost appear that paying compliments was not a paying business. The word “blarney” fairly sizes up the estimate generally placed upon words of that character. It is not everybody who knows how to give a compliment, but everybody should know how to get one—ask for it. Not as one would ask for other things—this is a science in itself. It is known as “fishing for compliments.”

To fish for compliments is generally considered a great weakness, but it is something we may all be doing every day to some extent, unconsciously—not by hook or by crook, but simply opening little doors for words of praise to enter in. From all conditions and classes there comes the constant call, congratulate me on what I have or have done.

Before deciding to withhold words, it is well to ask, in the first place, “Is the person prompted by the natural desire to know if his

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services are satisfactory, or is he prompted by pride to seek for food to feed pride upon?" There is all the difference in the world between asking, "How does that suit you?" and saying, "Didn't I do it?" If you are suited there is no harm in saying so, but if a person knows he can do it, it is not necessary to tell him what he already knows.

The most of us seem to think it better for a person to die of depression than to run the risk of being inflated by a compliment. On this point, Dr. H. C. Trumbull very wisely says, "No person was ever harmed or could be, by being assured of the love, the confidence, or high regard of another or others generally. "It is self-confidence," he says, "not a consciousness of having the confidence of others which endangers a man's right estimate of his own powers or position. Flattering or praising him may, indeed, promote his own estimate of himself, but assuring him that he is loved or trusted or honored is only laying upon him a new sense of responsibility, and giving him another call to prove worthy of the good opinion thus accorded him.

A good story is told of Miss Julia A. Ames, at one time editor of the *Union Signal*. Her

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office was quite near to that of Miss Alice Gurnsey, associate editor of the *Young Crusader*. One day she entered the office of Miss Gurnsey, and, standing by her desk, said: “Alice, we all lead lives so busy here that we sometimes fail to speak the good we think, and I came in to-day to say, ‘I love you.’” That was all, but it doubtless required an effort to thus break the seal of silence and pour forth the ointment of loving and appreciative words. The most of us seem to think it is time enough to be sentimental when our friends are dead and a flower is placed on the coffin—a last act of respect which, in some cases, might very properly be considered as a first or a belated atonement for kind words and flowers withheld when the ears might very joyfully have heard them or the fragrance might have brightened life.

If any little word of mine  
Can make a life the brighter,  
If any little song of mine  
Can make a heart the lighter,  
God help me speak that little word,  
And take my bit of singing,  
And drop it in some lonely vale,  
To set the echoes ringing.

## XV

### **Public Speaking**

IN THE average mind, and even in accepted works upon the subject, public speaking is recognized as an art in itself, separate from that of ordinary conversation. It would certainly be futile to combat this view if by public speaking we mean vastly formal occasions and "thousands of upturned faces." If, however, we hold in mind that the greater part of our speech-making is done upon semi-public occasions, it will be seen that there is no essential line of demarcation between such speech-making and ordinary conversation.

The speaker or would-be public speaker should bear this in mind, as there is nothing more certain than humiliation to the person who expects to thrill an audience or command applause without having first given attention to the framing of consecutive thought or to the expression of thought in a clear and deliberate manner where the two or three are gathered together.

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To consider public speaking as an exercise in which the beginner must either sink or swim, is a view that has not much in it to keep any public-speaker afloat. A man cannot learn to swim until he gets into the water. Neither can a public speaker get used to publicity until he faces the public; but it is not right to think that there is no ground for preparation before putting oneself afloat upon the public. We are not in this connection to ignore the opportunities afforded in everyday life for preparation and practise. Otherwise it will be found advisable to keep out of deep waters.

If some may swim, others may sink in such deep humiliation that they will never rise to the platform again.

Notable exceptions there are, of course, to this fatality among unsuccessful beginners. The maiden parliamentary speech of Benjamin Disraeli, it is said, was greeted with shouts of laughter, till, losing patience, he cried: “I have begun several things many times, and have often succeeded at last; aye, and though I sit down now, the time will come when you will hear me.” A prophecy fulfilled before

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many years when they heard him as Earl of Beaconsfield, Prime Minister of England.

Speakers are as widely different in their make-up as spring bonnets, and what would be good advice to one might prove disastrous to another. For one it is very important to speak up, but we would not say to the loud talker, speak up, for fear he would bring down the ceiling.

Sound is important, but it is not everything. The first consideration is: "Have something to say." Many a man can talk by the hour and yet have nothing to say. There is no more provoking public nuisance than the man who usurps the time of an audience and says nothing.

It is worth while, then, to ask: "Have I really anything to say?" The man who repeats what he hears from the man on the street is very likely to have the man on the street for an audience. The man on the street may be sensible, but it is evident he would have been just as sensible had he stayed away. The speaker is sure to make a fine hit upon that occasion. He is on safe ground, as an audience can always be depended upon to cheer its own convictions.

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The source of the substance of an address may not necessarily have a direct bearing upon the question.

It is not absolutely necessary to have something original in order to have something to say. The test to be applied is, “Have I a definite conviction touching the rightness or wrongness, the feasibility or unfeasibility, of some movement or plan of action?” It may be original; it may not be. But if it has taken hold upon me, and has the approval of my judgment, then I am right in passing it on with the added force of concurring conviction.

Have something to say is the first thing; the next is to say it in good form. The significance of public speaking over ordinary conversation is simply in the fact that you have to adapt your message to a hundred minds instead of one or two, or, in other words, you have to interest a crowd instead of a single companion.

Aim, then, at interesting. When a speaker abandons that aim, and talks simply to get through with it, he is down and out. Only so long as a speaker can interest is he master

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of the situation. Maintain a hold upon hearers, even though flowers of oratory have to be sacrificed. The love of display should never determine what to say. Freedom of speech will be tolerated, but people will not listen when led off upon lines that don't count in the strengthening of a subject. What I want to say and what people want to hear may be two different things. It is never wise to weaken on principle, but often it is not principle that is at stake so much as pride in parading words. Much better attention might often be received if much useless introduction, illustration, and enlargement of plain statements were left out.

Clearness of thought, statement and intonation are what is wanted to insure interest. The embarrassments which the novice in public speaking may experience are not to be regarded "as some strange thing that happened unto you." It may be very trying, and you may be tempted to give up in despair, but there has no temptation taken you but such as is common to man.

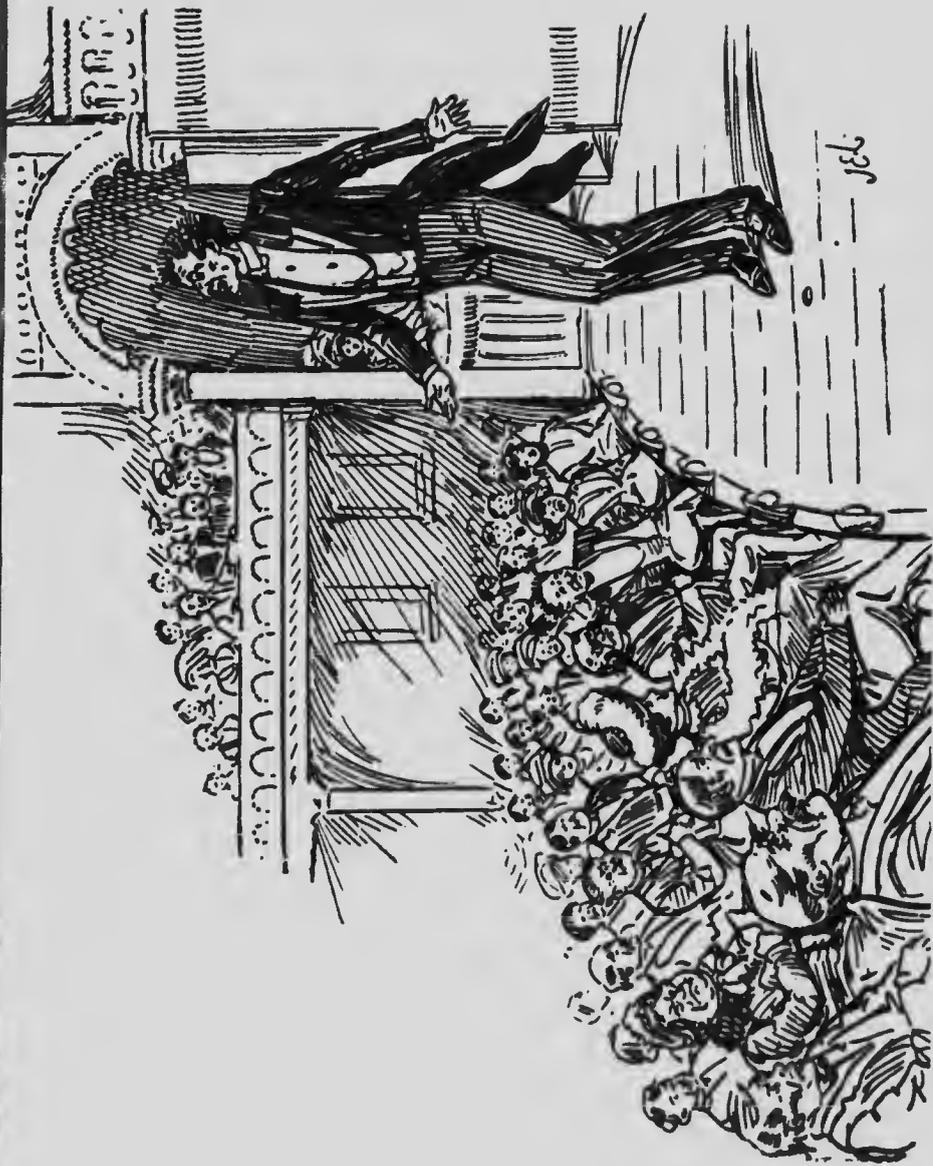
Actual publicity is something that speakers in all ages have felt at times to be more than

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a match for them. If anyone is proof against such embarrassments, we will guarantee it is not the man who strengthens himself for such emergencies by musing at the family fire-side upon the easy job that preachers and other public men have in this world of work.

It is one thing to be brave when there is nothing doing, but it is another to face a real issue with a real audience with teeth and ears and other characteristics which go to make one feel uneasy in the presence of such a foe to serenity and self-control. Success to Mr. Confident Novice. We know he will keep afloat, though it may possibly be only the head that swims. Our sympathies are with him and our tears will be mingled with those of others as we read in the morning papers the glowing account: “The horrors of the sweat-shop were never more forcibly presented than upon the occasion of his first appearance in public. It might also be said of that memorable occasion that feeling ran high—as high, it appears, as the top of his hair.

Embarrassments will come, but it is quite possible that in many cases the embarrassment is due to other conditions than a mind



THE HORRORS OF THE SWEAT-SHOP WERE NEVER MORE FORCIBLY PRESENTED THAN  
UPON THE OCCASION OF HIS FIRST APPEARANCE IN PUBLIC

## “I SEZ, SEZ I”

wrought up through over-consciousness to the fact that the people were all there.

Very often embarrassments are due to a blockade of thought or a mix-up of things the person had in mind to say.

This is an experience that all can guard against to some extent by exercising greater deliberations in speech. Don't slow up to a stop, but speak deliberately enough to give every idea a chance to get definitely fixed in the mind of the listeners. This is very important from the standpoint of the listener and speaker as well; for the speaker must be conscious of being understood, or he will at once feel that he is “not getting anywhere” with his speech.

Remember that you have the floor, and that the floor has no drop-down contrivance to carry you out of sight. Stand your ground; and if you find yourself yielding to the impulse to get through without trying to carry the audience with you, check the impulse at all hazards. You are there to control the audience, not to be controlled by it. This can only be accomplished by having yourself under control.

# PUBLIC SPEAKING

## GESTURES

With regard to the matter of gestures, position of the body, or other incidentals, such as the subject of oratory calls for when treated upon in its entirety, it is, perhaps, as well for the beginner to ignore them further than to avoid rigid and ungainly postures. To make these considerations a subject of conscious thought while engaged in delivering a speech would necessarily tend to draw the mind from what is vastly more important, the subject itself.

The movement of the hand, however, is a feature of public speaking that is of interest to others besides the advanced orator or elocutionist, from the fact that the hand is a moving member. If it would only keep quiet and keep its place, it would be a great relief to many a speaker. This it is not disposed to do, so long as there is a hiding-place in the form of a pants pocket. This is the first move. The next is to grasp the side of the coat, and then proceed to the watch-guard, or some other unguarded point. How to keep those idle hands under control is something that

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even the experienced speaker finds difficult. To keep them throwing out bright ideas or making graceful curves in the air to assist in the expression of eloquent thought is, possibly, more objectionable if overdone than hands unused or left to afford employment for themselves.

A movement of the hand to give expression is supposed to act in obedience to an impulse from within. If there is an impulse to move the hand, move it. Nature has its own laws of expression, and what is natural is really the standard that prevails in the matter.

The elocutionist asks what is the natural tone of voice to be employed, and trains the pupil accordingly. And so with the movements of the hands, while acting in accord with the impulse from within it can yet be trained to greater naturalness by a careful observance of the rules which govern in the elocutionary art.

Elocutionary training is by no means antagonistic to naturalness in the delivery of speech, as some would have us believe. The horse with go-ahead proclivities is trained to

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do his work in faster form, and in accomplishing this end the purpose has been to develop the natural gait of the horse. The purpose of elocutionary training is identical, in that the attempt is to develop along natural lines. Some trainers of horses, it is true, put on hobbles to insure a certain gait without which, perhaps, a more natural gait might be developed. It is evident that some who may be considered as authorities upon elocution have a horror of hobbles. They would leave the impression that to be natural is simply to be "in the rough." Be natural, is the declaration given and emphasized in such a way as to discount attempts at improvement by following a course of elocutionary training.

What if a person is naturally awkward, or has some impediment of speech to overcome? Demosthenes, by almost superhuman exertion, had first to conquer the lisp of his own speech before he conquered assemblages by his eloquence. Be natural, but be not as the night-owl, making a screeching sound, which puts elocutionary ideals to flight.

A few of the hand indications, as furnished by some of our standard works on ad-

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vanced elocution and here given, will serve the purpose of giving a general knowledge of the positions which plainly express the varied sentiments desired.

The hand supine (palm away from the earth): It is the giving and deciding hand; it is free, open, genial. Therefore it may be said that it affirms, invites, declares, invokes, petitions, accepts, defines, concedes, reveals, entreats, acknowledges, permits, dismisses, intensifies, and persuades.

The hand prone (palm toward the earth): This is the controlling hand—protective, restrictive, secretive, mystical. Thus it indicates guardianship, benediction, dependency, suppression, cessation, prohibition, imprecation, hopelessness, concealment, and awe.

The hand vertical (palm outward, fingertips upward): It is evasive, repellent, aversive; its position is used to indicate calamity, surprise, amazement, fear, terror, disdain, loathing, also that of separation, dispersion, and disruption.

To indicate scorn, contempt, accusation, derision, warning, threatening; the position to be taken is the index finger. It is used in dis-

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criminating, forcibly asserting, and in making conspicuous some one object among a number or collection.

The clenched fist should never be used except to show anger, determination, and defiance.

Hands clasped or folded are positions taken to express veneration, humility and adoration.

### GENERAL HINTS

If it's a short address you are booked for, the points to be observed are: (1) start on time; (2) strike oil every stroke; and, (3) stop when you have said what you have to say.

If it's a long talk, there is no better way than to follow the pace set by all long talkers, of saying a great deal about the intention just to say a few words. Have a few words by way of introduction. This should consist of an apology for lack of preparation, a preface as long as it is uninteresting, a plea for sympathy, a prayer for patience, and an assurance of expedition.

All the long talker needs is an extension

## "I SEZ, SEZ I"

of time; let him have it, and he will land you in eternity. There is no limit to his vocabulary, wind, or staying powers. He is a well that never runs dry, and a wizard that never dries up. If he happens to say, "By way of conclusion," you don't need to grab your hat, for that is something he intended to say anyway, and he put it pretty well to the front so he wouldn't forget it.

If, through force of habit, he says, "One word more," you are just as safe in concluding that he has just begun as that he has got to the long end of the rope or the last rung in the ladder. He has yet to review all that has been said, repeat it, draw some lessons and conclusions, and emphasize them with great deliberation, patience, and perseverance.

I have never known a long talker that could be cured. The only way to deal with him is: if he ever stops, never give him another chance.

In a certain Western town, or rather village, where the writer was staying over Sunday, there was no provision made for Sunday services, and, though not in the ministerial

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ranks, public services were arranged for. The sanctuary was a schoolhouse. The audience was orderly, except one incorrigible in the form of a little girl five or six years of age. She would not keep quiet, but was into every corner, and all over the room pretty much at the same time. After I had been talking for some time, she got hold of a pair of scissors and marched straight up to the desk and handed them to me. I took them as gracefully as I could, at the same time making the inward comment—that is the first intimation I have ever had to cut it short.

That was only a schoolhouse, but it strikes us it was away ahead of many well-equipped auditoriums in that the necessary tool was forthcoming in the event of speech or sermon being too long, to cut it short. The device is worth trying. There is no necessity for scissors to be scarce where they are much needed.

The consideration of time is a very important one, as it is not only the speaker's time, but other people's time as well.

Time is often taken on the platform which should have been taken in the preparation to get things arranged in order. Many a man

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has good thoughts, but so badly arranged that nobody gets any good of it.

In that case, it very often happens that the hearer condemns himself rather than the speaker: The fact of not being able to follow being accepted as an evidence that the speaker was deep.

If I wanted to pose as a deep thinker, I would get hold of some solid subject which I did not understand myself, and dress it up with enough of my own conjectures to make it interesting and original, and then present it with all the unquestioned authority of a "Thus saith the Lord." Failing that, I would take some simple subject in which the meaning lay exposed on the surface, and dig around it until its roots were trained to run aground. Having obscured everything that was apparent, I don't see how anybody could withhold from me the acknowledgment that I was deep. It's a trick that's worth knowing, but, after all, the reputation counts for little. Mud is deep, and it's the man who keeps on clear ground who is useful. The man who has truly earned the reputation "deep" is the man who gets after things

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obscure and brings them to the surface. He digs deep to expose the roots, not to make a grave for the branches; he uses words to elucidate the subject, not to conceal it. Edward Everett once said that he had long since found that the great mass of what are sometimes called plain and common people could always understand a speaker if he understood himself and used plain and simple language.

### DELIBERATION AND ITS DANGER

A calm, deliberate style insures correctness. The pedagogue invariably is deliberate in utterance; and from the fact that the pedagogue has a high standing, many there are who adopt the pedagogic style without always possessing the qualifications supposed to be identified with it.

Teaching is certainly a high ideal for the public speaker, and a right one, whether it is platform or pulpit. There are other considerations, however, than that of instruction. There is a spirit of chivalry in human nature; there is an emotional side as well as intellectual. An audience may be likened unto an

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instrument of many keys to which the true orator will bring the skill of the majestic player, under whose electric touch feelings that lie buried will vibrate once more.

People want to get warmed up, and it is essential that the speaker, especially the preacher, should warm up to his subject. Be deliberate, but do not be deliberate enough to kill. Blood-earnestness is essential to the highest order of pulpit or platform eloquence.

Unless the message is surcharged with some intensity of conviction, it can never prove effective to the breaking down of human prejudice and the bombardment of the strongholds of the enemies' territory.

Unfortunately, two things are seldom found together, the passionate appeal and faithful conformity to the principles of composition.

## XVI

### **Preaching and Praying**

No form of public speaking affords as much interest to people in general the year round as does preaching. Other speakers come and go; but the preacher is here to stay, at least, until a more suitable man can be secured. Preaching, people must have, and preachers they must have, even though there may be some difficulty about choosing the preacher or holding the preacher or paying the preacher. A poor preacher is a great misfortune—a misfortune, perhaps, to the preacher that he did not have a people capable of appreciating him.

No church ever advertised for a poor preacher. There is no demand for him, except in some callings in life for which he was better fitted and which he could fill with greater acceptance.

What is invariably meant by a poor preacher is a poor speaker. If a man talks freely he is acceptable to the majority, even

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though he gives little evidence of thoroughness, originality, or productiveness. Consecutive arrangement of thought is not thought of by people who come to get a shower-bath of words. It is their meat and drink to get soup-bones and separator milk; but so long as they are satisfied, who is going to object to the diet. Anybody can preach to those who are satisfied with talk, and, naturally enough, it is from this class that we hear the high estimate of a preacher's work—"anybody can preach."

"Let us see what truth there is in this estimate. Preaching employs the exercise of the tongue and the lungs, but that does not constitute preaching any more than multiplying words constitutes prayer. In the first place, preaching contemplates a spiritual condition on the part of the one who proclaims the Word. It is a spiritual exercise, and whatever the temperament of the preacher there must be to some measure a realization of the help of the Spirit in the matter of utterance as well as in the understanding of the truth.

Again, preaching contemplates study. Preaching might be defined as an attempt, at

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least, to convey God's thoughts as gathered from His word and the inspiration of the Spirit to the minds of men.

In order to understand the thoughts of God there must be the careful, prayerful study of the Scriptures. Whether it be teaching or exhorting, doctrinal or evangelistic, study is involved, and weak is the preacher who does not apply himself along this line.

Preaching is educative in its design, and in order to teach a man must know whereof he speaks. The message has a higher source than the channel through which it is conveyed. Getting a grip upon God's word is the first preparation for getting a grip upon men. The blind cannot lead the blind without becoming partners in the ditch business. What is wanted is more light in order to make leadership successful. Thy Word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.

Helpfulness is what the pulpit stands for. Its aim should be the greatest good to the greatest number. How many miss their aim by losing sight of the opportunity to help the ordinary hearer. It was that very successful preacher and eminent man of God, Rev.

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Theo. Cuyler, D.D., who said, in speaking of his own preaching, "I aim at the great middle class intelligence, the commonality of the people." A well-known college president, it is said, told him that he read with great pleasure everything he wrote, and Dr. Cuyler expressed surprise, hinting that he did not write for such as him, but for the minds of a lower grade. The president's answer is a remarkable one, as it goes to show how much men are alike when it comes down to practical things: "That is just the reason I read and enjoy you; if you aimed high, you would not reach me."

Earnestness is the supreme essential in all pulpit ministrations. Flippancy and funny sayings are out of place, as a general thing, in the declaration of God's Word. Wit may be faithfully employed in storming the citadel of sin, but the attempt to be funny for the sake of popularity with a certain class must certainly lower the spiritual tone of the service. It is a great mistake to thus surrender a grip upon serious minds that may not be easy to regain. Same Jones's style should end with Sam Jones.

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To be earnest, however, is not to be lugubrious or out of sorts with men because of their indifference and other bad qualities. A scolding preacher or one with a severe demeanor is sure to win empty seats and work up an interest in the watch business. "Let a little sunshine in" is a hint that many a preacher would do well to heed. Brighten up or you will get dull, and if dull you are "done for."

Some years ago three American ministers went to preach to the Cherokee Indians. One preached very deliberately and coolly, and the chiefs held a council to know whether the Great Spirit spoke to them through that man; and they declared He did not, because he was not so much engaged as their head men were in their natural concerns.

Another spoke to them in a most vehement manner, and they again determined in council that the Great Spirit did not speak to them through that man, because he was mad. The third preached to them in an earnest and fervent manner, and they agreed that the Great Spirit might speak to them through him, because he was both earnest and affec-

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tionate. The latter was ever after kindly received.

But whatever the manner, what is wanted is Bible preachers. Sensational themes may attract for a time, but Bible truths can never be exhausted. The history of many sensational preachers might be summed up in a series of sensations: First sensation, seats in the aisles; second sensation, an increase of salary; third sensation, friends falling off and crowd breaking up; fourth sensation, the preacher announces his resignation and his board passes resolutions calculated to make it easy for him to close the deal with the other church.

What is meant by Bible preachers is not simply taking a text from the Bible as a starting-point, and running off with it over all creation. Many get the starting-point all right, but ramble into fields far and near. There is no more interesting matter to pack into a sermon than what is furnished by the Scriptures, and it is the business of the preacher to present this interesting matter in interesting form. The material for a sermon is there to the faithful student who searches

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the Scriptures to lay hold of words and thoughts and truths that will be helpful to others.

In the matter of illustrations, nothing new can be said. Everybody knows the effectiveness of a suitable illustration. To depend, however, upon illustrations is to lean upon a system of sermonizing which is sure to produce leanness, no matter how much discrimination may be exercised. It will never do to calculate upon hearers being satisfied with a story. It is safer to calculate upon the criticism so often made of an over-illustrated discourse: "It was a mess of little stories."

An illustration that does not fit the thing designed to elucidate had better be laid aside till such times as its use is warranted. An illustration should always apply to the subject in hand. It will never do to pound the subject out of shape to take on more than belongs to it.

The relative importance of the illustration and the subject should be faithfully observed. The subject is there to be continued. The illustrations are to be tripped off with celerity and skill. A very good preacher not long

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since, in our hearing, weakened his discourse by making too much of the illustration. In describing a certain work of architecture he waxed unusually eloquent, the effect of which was to disappoint when it came to the application. It fell flat on account of the inflation received at the wrong time.

Preachers are not all constituted alike, and cannot all preach alike. Some excel on expository lines, some excel on a topical discourse, and some excel in pronouncing the benediction—a very excellent feature to excel on from the viewpoint of the sleepers. The plan which may be practicable to one may not be to another. Some find it necessary to write the sermon fully and commit largely to memory. Others write the mere outline and trust to their gift of speech to develop the subject at time of delivery. In either case there must be plan and preparation.

It may be observed that the sermon which has not seen much pen and ink is more liable to lack in language and arrangement than the one that has been carefully written. As a rule, sermons that were not written before delivery do not make much of a showing when

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put upon paper after delivery. But that is not the intention of a sermon—not to live on paper, but to live in the consciences of men and women.

In either system there must be painstaking preparation. Repetition is sure to result from an attempt to cover the ground without having the track of thought clearly laid and a few stakes set out here and there.

Tie to your text is a good idea if not carried to the extent of continually tramping on it. Picking out a word and a half or two words out of a sentence for a text is a practise older preachers would do well to avoid. No one but the novice quite understands how to do this. Whittling off connections and preaching from such texts as "hang all the law and the prophets" is not a safe plan, however, for even the most inexperienced.

### PRAYING

The Pharisee's prayer, however suitable for the Pharisee, can never be considered suitable for a public prayer, because there is no common ground of appeal. It takes in

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others unquestionably; but how are the others to say, “Amen” to any clause in that prayer without the Pharisee thinking he has prayed them into penitence. Every clause is a charge of wrong-doing on the part of others. It is praying with a vengeance, and that is the beauty of all attempts to pray at others. Praying at others simply puts God out of His position as Judge, and consequently puts the ones prayed for in a worse position than they were before—judged by one who does not understand or mind his business; his own business, if you please. Praying at others diverts prayer from its right direction, and when prayer loses its direction it ceases to be prayer. It is then time to say, “Amen.”

The Pharisee is not the only one who gets his prayer wrongly directed. There are some ministers who seem to avoid all forms of direct prayer and indulge in rambling reflections, introspections, and disquisitions on Providence and mankind in general. A man or minister who thus prays forgets that he is there to voice the common want of a congregation as well as some special needs and

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wants of some which may have come to his knowledge.

The Lord does not require minute information about the moral condition of this round world at every praying station on the Eastern, Western, Northern, and Southern prayer line.

Prayer, it is true, should have a world-wide view, but the constituency from which the congregation is drawn should be considered the biggest half of the hemisphere when it comes to right-down pleading with God. What a wonderful scope for the prayer of the pulpit is this ground if faithfully covered. In the first place, there is that high office of prayer of giving utterance to the desires and longings of devout, spiritual worshippers which every true shepherd should be able, in a measure, at least, to anticipate.

Then there is the prayerless condition of the many, there are those to pray for who are out of the way. Pray for the heathen, pray for the sinners, great and small, forgetting never "those in authority over us."

No pulpit prayer fully covers the ground that takes no cognizance of sin and sorrow.



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## “ I SEZ, SEZ I ”

The personal subjectivities of the minister, whether uttered in flowing diction or incoherent ramblings is not what the occasion calls for, and therefore, is out of place. Too often it may be said of some prayers that the form was more that of an address to the congregation, and suggests the remark of a Boston paper, in an account of a memorable occasion many years ago, that “Edward Everett made the most eloquent prayer ever offered to a Boston audience.”

Praying to be heard of men is not acceptable to God, and praying that is not heard of men is not acceptable to men. A clear voice counts with men, and a clean heart counts with God. Therefore clearness and cleanness are required to an acceptable hearing by both God and man.

Undue familiarity in prayer is very objectionable. It adds nothing to the dignity, utility or spirituality of a prayer to have such words as “you” (for “thou”), “Dear Lord,” etc., recurring throughout. “Let your words be few.” Such praying may be characterized as vain repetition.

But some may say, “If my heart is right it

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does not matter about my language." Such was not the position of the Psalmist who prayed: "Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my Rock, and my Redeemer."

## XVII

### **The Convincing Word**

SUPPOSE that close to my farm lives a bad neighbor, who keeps fierce hounds in his house, worrying my sheep exceedingly, and also killing some. What, then, would you have me do? Should I kill the hounds to be free of this worry? Truly, my neighbor would say unto me: "Thou hast killed my hounds, yet their value is greater than the value of your sheep. Pay thou me!" Is it not better that I should take the hounds, and going into my neighbor's house, say, "These are thine; now pay me for the harm they have done my flock." These words were spoken at four o'clock in the morning to a group of very excited men who had been talking all night and had not been able to agree as to what they would do. They were at the home of President Kruger, in South Africa, and the parable was spoken by General Joubert. They had caught Jamieson and other Englishmen, who were their enemies, and most

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of them were determined to put these men to death as soon as day dawned. General Joubert had told them that if they killed the Englishmen, the English nation would make them suffer, but the angry men would not listen to him.

Then at last he told them this parable, and he added his meaning in these words: "We have caught the pack. Is it not better to send them to the British Government with demands for satisfaction, lest the British send more hounds to worry us anew? The angry men who would not listen to his advice before were now convinced of the folly of following out their purpose, and changed their mind in regard to the action determined upon.

To say that all argument up to this point was of no avail, or really useless talk, might not possibly be borne out, were we in the position to closely follow the workings of those men's minds. It is very possible that under the influence of effective speech much had been done toward changing these men's minds before the convincing word was spoken. However, it is significant that a simple word

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or a certain way of putting the case has often proven under God as an effective instrument in convincing and convicting of wrong and turning the heart and mind to saner views than was previously entertained.

How often hearts that have yearned over erring ones have found speech futile, and in the dark hours of despair have wished that some word could be spoken that would break the spell and bring the wayward one back to right conceptions of duty and right views of life. Darker, indeed, would be that despair were it not that faith holds on to the possibility of the convincing word.

How are we to know what that word may be? It is certainly one of the things worth knowing, but it does not belong to our province to know what will prove either effective or ineffective.

Tact has a wonderful lot to do toward making speech fruitful or forceful. We are fearfully and wonderfully made. Our minds are a mechanism that requires an expert. We are not all alike in our mental make-up. Some minds are open for conviction the year round, and begin every new year

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with new theories, new ideas, and a new religion.

We may concede that the proper attitude is to be open for conviction, but as a rule there is a great big stretch of territory in us that is not open for conviction. Much has long been settled, and the chances are not good for unsettling. Closed are we to fads and fanaticism and follies.

In this day, as in all other days, the injunction is timely. Prove all things; hold fast that which is good. It is fatal to hold fast what has never been proven to be good.

Leaving aside fine definitions as to what is truth and what is error—questions which have been the battle-ground for many controversialists—we want to get after outstanding error, and after it believing in the ultimate triumph of truth.

Carefulness and cleverness count for much, but tactful as we may be, and successful as we may be at times in side-tracking thought out of erroneous grooves, we have no guarantee that tact is going to turn this world upside down. While we may be depending upon our tact, some blunderbuss may come

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along and be the awkward instrument of influencing lives that we have failed to reach with our approved methods of reaching men. This is the way of the world. Nay; rather the way of infinite wisdom.

## XVIII

### **Affectation in Speech**

DECEPTION is at the root of all affectation. To appear to be taken by surprise or to appear to be sympathetic when there is no real surprise and no genuine sympathy, is a form of hypocrisy that no one can afford to "put on." Words should ring true.

The professional eulogist never gets much thanks for his eulogies, even from those whose virtues have been eulogized. A hearty well done makes anybody feel good, or at least better, but a lot of unwarranted praise makes you feel that somebody is after your money, your influence, or the return of like compliments.

Frequently there comes the urgent exhortation to shake hands and speak kindly to your neighbor. This hand-shaking is very good as far as it goes, but it does not go very far unless there is some real interest back of it. A shake of the hand and a "how do you do?" may only be a polite way of saying, "that is

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all I want to know about you.” A shake of the hand hurts no one unless the grip is exceptionally tight; in that case you may generally reckon upon sincerity. Affectation of friendship has a fashion of finding out where you are with finger-tips.

A genuine liking for people in general is more to be desired than any formal expression of friendship, though, perhaps, there is no better way to cultivate the desired condition than to make the good beginning of inquiring after people. It is not considered etiquette to shake hands with a man who has his hands in his pocket. It stands to reason that there are other times more advantageous for putting your hand into his pocket. You are also excused, according to the best authorities—the police—from shaking hands with a man who has his hands in your pockets. Formalities are not called for under certain conditions.

The world is cursed with mere formalism. We have formal friendship, formal prayers, and a formal religion. Let us not make the mistake here of charging up form with the responsibility for the lack of fervor. As a

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matter of fact, form is calculated to preserve fervor, whether as applied to friendship or religion.

The Lord's Prayer is a form of words calculated to preserve the true spirit of prayer, and although it may at times be as lacking in fervor, as the vain repetitions it was intended to supplant, yet much has been accomplished through this formal prayer to make prayer intelligent and a truly devotional exercise.

Affectation is the employment of forms to create an impression that is wrong from the simple fact that the condition of heart and mind is not truly expressed. Affectation in general is the overdoing of what the situation requires. A hand-shake is a form of friendship which may or may not be flavored with affectation. Making a fuss over a person, or making an extravagant display in the expression of thought as applied to friendship, loyalty or religion, is what is meant by affectation.

Some there are who are really overwhelmed by some trivial favor, but when we hear a person referring to some very ordinary stroke of service say: "It was so very, very kind

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of you, I am sure that I can never repay you,” we are inclined to wonder what discount might be placed on the words. A soldier in the Philippines who was nursed through the rice fever was evidently sincere in his thanks to the nurse upon his recovery, though the mistakes of overdoing things is very manifest: “Thank you very much, ma’am, fer yer kindness. I sha’n’t never forget it. If ever there was a fallen angel, you’re one.”

Affectation is based upon a desire to please, or, rather, upon the gratification of one’s own desire to see people pleased. To please people is a very worthy motive when honestly maintained. It is much more satisfactory than crossing people’s opinions. The desire, however, to be with you in everything, and the habit of assenting to everything that may be said, is a great weakness, and often puts one or more than one in a ridiculous position. Suppose Mr. Pessimist says: “We are having beastly weather”; and Mr. Optimist, failing to catch the sound of every word, says in reply: “Yes; it is beautiful weather.” This habit, or principle, of taking things as they come from other people’s mouths is no guar-

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antee that the weather is acceptable to everybody, or that opinions about the weather never vary. Time and again we have seen guileless souls thoughtlessly giving assent to find themselves disagreeably disagreeing rather than agreeing with what was said.

There are worse blunders made—it is not as bad as placing the signature to a promise to pay under the delusion that the document called for something in our favor. The difficulty of reversing the one, nowever, is about as great as that of reversing the other. People often have to pay up for this parrot-like repetition of what others say. It is a serious fault in speech.

Here we pause to reflect upon the importance attached to the way a person is taken up. Everybody has recognized the fact that there are different ways a person may be taken up. When we speak of Elijah being taken up, we say he was translated. There are a lot of people who should be translated if they are to be taken up right. The man who mumbles his words requires translation, as a safeguard against being taken up wrong. Modern methods of taking up people as pre-

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sented by the aeroplane are no guarantee that everyone will be taken up just so; for we see here a man taken up the wrong way, which may be accounted for by the common explanation—he put his foot in it. The policeman, who is considered an adept at taking up people,



INTENTIONAL—'PLANE ENOUGH TO BE SEEN.

sometimes takes up the innocent while the real culprit chuckles over the fact that he was not taken up at all.

To get free from conventional language is often a great relief. What is to be understood by conventional language? Simply, it is everybody expressing themselves according to set standards. It amounts largely to every-

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body saying the same thing or nearly the same thing under the same or similar circumstances.

However odd or peculiarly unfitting according to our standard, it is refreshing to come in contact with some original character whose speech betrays no attempt at copy and has an every-day, out-of-doors, made-to-wear, cast about it.

The Scotch farmer in the vicinity of Balmoral Castle, who had presented a pair of beautiful colliers to Her Gracious Majesty Queen Victoria, gave every indication of being free from the conventionalities of the occasion when Her Majesty expressed her thankfulness for the present. In recognition of his kindness, so the story goes, the Queen had invited him to the castle, and upon acknowledging her indebtedness, the farmer exclaimed: "Hoots, woman; hau'd yer tongue. What's the maiter o' a pair of daugs between me and you?"

While there is a danger of our speech being emphasized by affectation, a greater danger to be avoided is that of developing the stoical and self-centered spirit. Imagine a person

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so reserved in speech and act that a grunt is given for an assent to your views or a thankless demeanor shown for an act of service.



TAKEN UP WRONG.

Did you ever think how much the ordinary hand-shake has contributed to the maintenance of friendship the world over, notwith-

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standing the fact that at times policy accounts for the practise?

Did you ever stop to think, after you have used the form of address "mother," as to the influence attending the continuous use of that word in cultivating and maintaining due regard for the relationship expressed by the word? Did you ever stop to think how much the word "thanks" has done in the direction of encouraging generous acts of service, or in warding off unhappy conclusions, or perhaps in easing a sense of disappointment.

It is, of course, well to be guarded in the use of terms of endearment or of words expressive of feeling or genuine affection, but it is not well to close up the avenues of the soul by checking words or feelings expressive of the best possibly that is in us.

There are some who keep their place like a statue. Such will be remembered by the place they occupied and the length of time they stayed with us. A little effusiveness that is not wholly genuine is more refreshing than a block of bronze or a man of metal.

## XIX

### Formal Occasions

READY-MADE speeches will always be looked upon as the real thing for the man who feels a loss to know what to say when requested to give an address upon some formal occasion; but when it comes to apply the ready-made speech to the occasion, it is found that, like ready-made clothes, very often there is a poor fit. The thoughts do not fit the occasion; the language does not fit the man who thinks of using it.

Ready-made speeches, however, are useful as a guide. They suggest the order of developing an address, and that is, perhaps, what is most needed in many cases. As to what is proper for the special occasion, a person has to depend upon his or her own sense of propriety. The only rule is to say what you have to say in your own language.

A complimentary address is about as difficult a piece of composition as a person can

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undertake. It is easy to say a lot of favorable things, but, as a matter of first consideration, they must be true—really deserved.

Then the thought must be kept in mind that the writer or speaker is supposed to give expression to the convictions of those interested in the getting up of the address and presentation, if such is included. And thus, in the singling out of characteristics for favorable mention, it is well to ask if favorable features are so really pronounced as to be recognized by all. Many an address is weakened by being overdone on complimentary lines.

A very good order for a simple address is to denote first paragraph to a statement of circumstances which has led to present action—an explanation of the purpose of the gathering, etc. The next paragraph might then be devoted exclusively to the complimentary, and the third and last to business on hand—the getting of the present and address out of the hands of the donors into the hands of the one for whom they are designed.

The simple statement, "We ask you to ac-

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cept, etc.," is preferable to "We beg of you to accept, etc." No one was ever yet known to balk when it came to the acceptance of a substantial present. The following short address of a rural nature will suffice to illustrate the order outlined, though in the interests of neighborly relations some of the doubtful compliments which it contains had better not be incorporated into an address intended for a real character with genuine virtues.

"MR. FARMER JONES,

*"Dear Sir—*It is with a great deal of pleasure we are gathered here to-day to bid you a formal good-bye. In view of the fact that you have decided to move to another part of the country, your friends and neighbors looked upon it as a matter of simple duty and pleasure to tender you their appreciation of you as a friend and neighbor.

*"*Looking back over the ten years that you have spent among us, we find much to comment upon, and which contributes in a large measure to the happiness of the present occasion. Through your enterprising spirit as manifest in the promotion of the co-operation

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idea the community now controls its own stores, weigh scales and telephone system.

“Neighborly activities, due to the revival of the old system of borrowing and lending, were never so conspicuous, and we must assure you on this occasion that there is much along this line that calls for the recognition of all. The success which has attended your efforts in this direction is particularly gratifying, and must certainly be so to you. To your credit it may be said that you have accumulated much. You have prospered in everything that you laid your hand upon. We recognize how fortunate you have been while it has been the fate of many to have heavy losses—some losing cattle or sheep; others small articles of more or less value. We feel, therefore, that it belongs to us to give honor where honor is due, and we feel that no higher word of appreciation can be said of any man than we have repeatedly heard said of you—that you *did people good*.

“On behalf of your friends and neighbors, we, the undersigned, now ask you to accept, with these few words of address, this *bit and brace* as a token of our regard for you, and

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as a memento of many happy days, of which none should be more so than to-day in view of the honorable service you have rendered.

“JAMES SMITH.

“JOE BROWN.”

Upon such a formal occasion as the introduction of a public speaker, the thought of speaking for others applies as truly as in the framing of the complimentary address.

In a Western town, a short time ago, the writer went to hear a lecturer who was then touring the country under the auspices of the Young Men's Christian Association. The introductory remarks were given by a gentleman who had been favored with the privilege of hearing the address advertised upon some previous occasion. He evidently was most favorably impressed and devoted considerable time in eulogizing the address we were about to hear. The question that arose in my mind was, is there any advantage to either speaker or hearer in speaking thus? The speaker was there to stand or fall before the judgment of that audience. That he had made a great hit upon another occasion had nothing to do with the present occasion.

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It may be argued that the expectation around in the audience would have the effect of inspiring the speaker. Might it not prove the reverse by him considering that victory was already won. His reputation was already made with that audience, if he chose to look at it in that way.

Again, would it not mean a come-down for a speaker with a message and strong convictions to aim at meeting expectations thus aroused.

As for the people, it is doubtful if anyone felt under any obligation to time his appreciation to the eulogy that preceded the address. There can be nothing gained by overworking expectations unless, as was the case of the little girl, who said, "I did not get what I expected; but, then, I never expected to get my expects." In nine cases out of ten, when people hear a world-famed speaker for the first time, there is a sense of disappointment, due, of course, to the fact that great, unusual, wonderful things were expected. As a matter of fact, people like to make the discovery of a great man for themselves.

Hence, we conclude that it would have been

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better to have waited until the speaker made good the opportunity, and then presented the bouquet as voicing the sentiments of the crowd.

If the party to be introduced is noted as a public speaker or a public man, it is quite proper to refer to that fact in introduction; but of very few can it be said that their names are familiar to everybody. It is possibly just as safe to leave it unsaid that the speaker's name is a household word with the American people, unless, perchance, his name is John Smith.

Bishop Vincent, in introducing Dr. Henson to an audience upon a certain occasion, said: “You will now listen to a lecture on fools by one of the greatest—lecturers of the country.” Dr. Henson, in reply, said: “I would like you to understand that I am not so great a fool as Dr. Vincent—would have you think.”

## XX

### **Study versus Spontaneity**

IT MIGHT possibly be as sane to study to be a machine or study to be an explosive as to study to be spontaneous. Spontaneity might be represented as saying to Study, "You: keep out or you will defeat me." The subject, however, does not resolve itself into preparation or no preparation.

Too much preparation beforehand doubtless leaves little room for the adoption of words which may suggest themselves on the spur of the moment. The preparation which covers every detail certainly tends to stifle spontaneity. On the other hand, to make no preparation is to ignore the condition of mind required for spontaneity in speech. If the mental soil is not constantly enriched by study, the spontaneous sayings which shoot up will amount to nothing more than a "say over" of what has been said time and again. The mind gives out but little more of real value at the time of delivery than it gets in shape for giving out by premeditation.

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The gracious and general appreciation given to what is known to represent little previous study amounts to nothing when it comes to the market. A good colt for the chance he has had is a poor system of valuation, though a system applied everywhere to the disadvantage of anything wrought up to the highest possible attainment. A poor chance does not elicit a big price, whether it is a colt or a contribution to the world's thought.

The difference in the product of study and spontaneity is in the feeling and finish. Studied words do not seem to convey the exuberance of feeling which the spontaneous does. In the former, there is a choice made of words, a selection made of one hundred things which might be said; whereas, in the latter, words and thoughts rush with such force for the door of expression that there is no chance for revision, no time for alteration. The difference is to be seen in the deliberate statement with rigid type and the ready answer or the spontaneous applause and the address which cost so much previous reflection in sifting and setting the subject.

With the rush of words referred to, it is

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seldom that such a censorship is exerted that will insure against the escape of words out of order from a grammatical or literary standpoint. Professor Beers relates that a stenographer once proposed to Henry Ward Beecher that he be allowed extra pay for reporting Mr. Beecher's sermons in consideration of correcting grammatical errors.

"And how many errors did you find in this discourse of mine?" asked the great preacher.

"Just two hundred and sixteen."

"Young man," said Mr. Beecher, solemnly, "when the English language gets in my way it doesn't stand a chance."

"Whether the young man exaggerated and supposed some passages ungrammatical which were merely colloquial, cannot now be ascertained," says Dr. Buckley, "but it is a fact that Mr. Beecher, in impassioned speech, uttered many unparsable expressions," and this is the case with nearly every great orator who speaks in any degree extemporaneously. The price of literary perfection is the suppression of passion.

## “ I SEZ, SEZ I ”

### THE SECRET OF SUCCESS

Not fancy, merely, or the rush  
Of feeling, guides the pen and brush,  
As tint by tint, and line by line,  
The verses grow, the colors shine!  
We find with these the crowning art,  
Whose magic can alone impart  
To genius all its highest gains—  
The faculty of taking pains.

Lo, for the joy of years to be,  
Destined for immortality,  
We hail the statue's marble grace,  
The loveliness of form and face.  
Nor dream what hours the sculptor wrought,  
With tireless hand and anxious thought,  
Till from the stone, with stroke on stroke,  
The unveiled beauty stirred and woke!

The rapt musician, whose sweet strain  
Bids vanquished sorrow smile again,  
Threw his whole soul, the while he wrote,  
Into each heaven-aspiring note,  
Pausing a thousand times before  
His judgment passed the perfect score;  
For, holding meaner work in scorn,  
He toiled for ages yet unborn!

## STUDY *V.S.* SPONTANEITY

They learn the secret of success,  
Who seek—content with nothing less—  
Perfection, with no aim beside,  
And, missing this, dissatisfied!  
And they alone, in life's brief day,  
To fame and honor win their way,  
Who first achieve, for such high gains,  
The strenuous art of taking pains.

—J. R. EASTWOOD.

## XXIII

### **The Ready Answer**

THE ready answer is so much appreciated by the masses that it is well to give it a short notice. The ready answer indicates a mind that is always on the alert, though not necessarily a well-employed mind. A ready answer may not be a right one; it may only be a smart subterfuge for any amount of ignorance. Some answer readily because they never have very hard questions to answer. The success which some odd geniuses have in satisfying their questioners without exposing their ignorance is remarkable.

Away down on the old plantation there was a colored man who had acquired quite a reputation for answering questions put to him; and some one, in recent years, seeking to get at the origin of a common expression, "You've got this coon, anyway," tells us that one day a coon was placed under a barrel and this dusky wizard was obliged to either tell what was in the barrel or take a flogging.

## THE READY ANSWER

He guessed and guessed in vain. Then, giving up in despair, he leaned against the barrel and confessed, "I guess you've got this coon this time;" when lo! to the man's great surprise, out pops the coon, and his championship was recognized on all hands.

There is no doubt that luck is a friend, indeed, to those who have no surer staff to lean upon, but an occasional hit does not stipulate that this guesswork can be depended upon to sustain ill-fed and ill-founded pretensions. The surest plan for success in giving ready answers is to inform yourself upon questions which may reasonably be anticipated. Of course, questions will come up which will prove "puzzlers" to the best of well-equipped minds.

Someone has well said: "A man must have the courage to be ignorant of a great many things that he may know some things well." It is equally true that the man who knows some things well is the man who can afford to say "I don't know," when asked for information he is unable to give.

A man cannot always be expected to answer questions that are out of his sphere, but every-

## “I SEZ, SEZ I”

one should prepare themselves to answer questions readily along lines upon which they are supposed to be interested. If a man has a theory, or a philosophy, or a business proposition, it is rightly expected of him that he will have an answer ready to prove the validity of his position. And what is essential in business or scientific research the Apostle Paul saw was essential in religion when he said: “Being ready always to give answer to every man that asketh you a reason concerning the hope that is in you.” We often hear the remark that many who are very conversant upon other topics are silent upon this subject. Yet we do not know how long ere we have said our last words and there is nothing can be left unsaid of such vast importance as the spiritual.

“By thy words thou shalt be justified or condemned.” “For every idle word that men shall speak they shall give account thereof on the Day of Judgment” are the comments upon language coming to us from the highest authority on “What to say and how to say it.”

Then take care of what you say! If you

## THE READY ANSWER

would save yourself from the humiliation of saying what afterward does not have the approval of sober judgment, keep the heart closed against evil suggestions, keep the judgment from being biased by prejudice, and keep the citadel of thought well guarded at the door of utterance, especially when anger asserts itself within or when the spirit of levity exerts its subtle influence upon the mind. Study well the influence your words will have for good or for evil before you decide to speak or to remain silent.

For many a friendship may be lost,  
And many a love link broken,  
Because of neglect to count the cost  
Of words that are lightly spoken.



# "Lost Track of a Day"

*A Stricture on Seventh-Day Teaching and  
Sabbath Desecration*

By R. DEZELL

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COMPRISING LECTURE ON THE PROPER DAY AND DISSERTA-  
TIONS UPON OTHER PHASES OF THE SABBATH QUESTION

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## COMMENTS

REV. J. G. SHEARER, B.A., Field Secretary of the Lord's Day Alliance of Canada, says:

"I have read with much interest 'Lost Track of a Day,' by Mr. R. Dezell. It is an argument against the position taken by our Seventh Day Adventist friends for the observance of Saturday instead of our Lord's Day as the Christian Sabbath. Their position is considered in the light of Scripture, history and science, the closing chapter dealing with practical questions on the observance of the Sabbath. On the whole, Mr. Dezell's position is sound. He writes with more than ordinary ability, and his style is popular and taking. I should be glad to see his book very widely read. It can do only good; it will do much good."

REV. WM. CAVEN, D.D., Principal of Knox College, and President of the Ontario Lord's Day Alliance for a number of years, says:

"Mr. Dezell writes with much ability, and shows throughout strong power of reflection. He is original and vigorous, and I cannot doubt that the circulation of his book will do good. He has evidently devoted a great deal of attention to the Sabbath question, and has presented several aspects of it in new and fresh lights."

REV. N. BURWASH, S.T.D., LL.D. President of Victoria University, writes:

"I have read Mr. Dezell's work through with care. He deals with the subject of the Sabbath in almost every variety of aspect, in vigorous style and cogent logic. As against the Seventh Day theory, his arguments are most conclusive. His distinction between the civil and religious obligation of the Sabbath is, I think, well made, and

answers many objections. His view of Sabbath obligation is at once spiritual, and placed at the highest standard. Here and there one might be disposed to criticize or modify the position taken or the form of argument employed, especially in the exegesis of Scripture proof; but these things will scarcely detract from the popular value of a strong and racy little book."

PROFESSOR J. F. McLAUGHLIN, Victoria University, says: "The spirit of the writer is good; he shows himself possessed of wide information and a fund of humor, as well as of sound common sense. In some respects I think the book to be a very effective reply to the vagaries of the Seventh Day Adventists."

REV. J. SOMERVILLE, D.D., says: "In 'Lost Track of a Day' we have a discussion of the Sabbath question which is very much needed. It gives in brief compass, and in a racy, readable form, the arguments for the Christian Sabbath, and will well repay a careful reading. This little book should have a wide circulation, for it will be the means of disseminating intelligent reasoning on a subject upon which views are not often clearly defined. The erroneous notions of the Seventh Day Adventists are being industriously spread in the community, and this discussion is admirably adapted to counteract their erroneous teaching."

REV. A. LANGFORD, D.D., says: "There is a freshness and originality about Mr. Dezell's book that will commend it to readers. It is just what is needed at the present hour. Even Canadians are becoming somewhat loose in their views concerning the Lord's Day. I sincerely hope that this excellent book may find its way into the homes of the people."

#### COMMENDED BY THE ALLIANCE

At the meeting of the Executive Board of the Ontario Lord's Day Alliance, Dec. 30th, 1902, Rev. T. Albert Moore, Secretary, introduced the book and brought up the subject of its distribution. Of its reception he writes the author: "Many kind words were spoken of your book, and both its argument and presentation were warmly commended. It was also hoped that you might succeed in placing in the hands of our Ontario people your whole edition at an early date, because of the good that must follow its circulation."

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