

Interesting Items.

The Comma.—One of the most sacred privileges of a compositor on a morning newspaper, used one in the exercise of which he is seldom interrupted by the proof-reader, is the use of the comma. There are some printers who are not admitted to the comma, and who do not spare their lines with it; but no reader ought to question their right to do so. When it becomes necessary to announce that "Mr. John Smith has always been a good Democrat," a few commas make the expression read "Mr. John Smith, has, always, been a good Democrat," are ornamental and never do any harm. There seems to be an insane prejudice against overworking the comma, but time will probably soften this feeling.

[Louisville Journal.]

DIFFERENT KIND OF READING.—Keep your view of men and things extensive, and depend upon it that a mixed knowledge is not a superficial one. As far as it goes, the views that it gives are true; but he who reads deeply in one class of writers only, gets views which are almost sure to be perverted, and which are not only narrow, but false. Adjust your proposed amount of reading to your time and inclination—this is perfectly free to every man; but whether that amount be large or small, let it be varied in its kind, and widely varied. If I have a confident opinion on any one point connected with the improvement of the human mind and faculties, it is on this.—Dr. Arnold.

SOME PUMPKINS.—Our old and respected colored friend, Robert Hewlet, called on us the other day to view eighteen pumpkins raised on his patch of ground within the corporate limits of the town of St. Francisville, which weigh 847 1/2 lbs. The heaviest weighed 76 1/2 lbs., and measured 51 inches around. Horace Greely, make a note of this, and when you lecture upon what you know about farming, please remember that the soil in West Feliciana is better than that of your Chippequa farm.—Feliciana Republican.

The following comparative statements concerning the two great tunnels of the world are interesting: Mont Cenis Tunnel—length, 12,236 meters, or nearly eight miles; width, 26 feet 8 inches; height, 20 feet; cost, \$13,000,000; time occupied in construction, nine years; number of workmen employed, about 2000. Hoosic Tunnel—length, 26,061 feet, or nearly five miles; width, 24 feet; height, 21 feet; cost, about \$9,000,000; time of construction, when completed, nearly twenty years; number of workmen employed, about 700 at present, but much less during most of the time the work has been prosecuted. There is every reason to believe that the Hoosic Tunnel will be completed before March 15, 1874—the date named in the contract.

Chicago is not burned up. While 18,000 houses have been swept away, 42,000 yet remain; and while 92,000 persons have been rendered homeless, an immense city of 245,000 persons has not been disturbed. The whole of the immense area of the West Division, with its miles of dwelling-houses, stores, school-houses, churches, and manufactories, is almost intact; while upon the South Side a great many fine residences yet remain, with splendid business blocks, churches, and innumerable manufacturing establishments.

The law which forbids our foreign ministers wearing the dress exacted by court etiquette has caused no little embarrassment. Mr. Adams used to apologize for his absence on state occasions by saying that "unavoidable circumstances" kept him away. This led the London public to nickname black trousers "unavoidable circumstances." General Schenck proposes to solve the difficulty by wearing his major-general's uniform, which he is legally entitled to do. After the settlement of the "Alabama" question we hope there may be no breaches between England and America.

The Pennsylvania, New York, and Ohio portions of the Atlantic and Great Western Railway have been purchased by Senator Thurman for \$5,710,500. The sale was made last July.

The number of cotton-spinning spindles in the United Kingdom in 1856 was 28,011,000; in 1861 it was 20,387,000; and in 1870 it was 37,359,293.

Medill, for Mayor of Chicago, had 11,037 majority. The average majority of the fire-proof ticket is 9,757.

Fun and Fancy.

A Clergyman, on reading the twenty-seventh verse of the eighteenth chapter of the First of Kings, incorrectly placed the emphasis, rendering the verse an absurdity. "And he spake to his sons, saying, saddle me the ass, and they saddled him."

A gentleman having occasion to call upon an author, found him in his study, writing. He remarked the great heat of the apartment, and said, "It is as hot as an oven." "So it ought to be," replied the author, "for 'tis here I make my bread."

An author, who had given a comedy into the hands of Foote for his perusal, called on him for his opinion of the piece. Foote returned the play with a grave face, saying, "Sir, depend upon it, this is a thing not to be laughed at."

A fellow who was tried at Dublin, for some private offence, received the following sentence.—Judge:—The sentence of the Court is, that you be flogged from the Bank to the Quay. Prisoner:—Thank you, my Lord! you have done your worst.—Judge:—And be flogged back again.

A lady advertises in a Glasgow paper that she wants a gentleman "for breakfast and tea."

At a wedding after the clergyman had united the happy pair, an awful silence ensued; "which becoming rather irksome to a young gentleman, he cried out, "You need not be so unspeakably happy."

A professor lecturing upon heat, observed, that one of its most conspicuous properties was the power of expanding all bodies. A student arose and asked, "Is that the reason why the days in warm weather are longer than those in cold?"

A young gentleman who had quarreled with a lady to whom he had paid his addresses, threatened to publish the letters she had written him. "That," she replied, "would be truly vexatious, for though I need not be ashamed of the contents, I certainly ought to be ashamed of the direction."

A person had been relating many incredible stories, when professor Engel, who was present, in order to reprove his impertinence, said, "But gentlemen; all this amounts to very little, when I can assure you, that the celebrated organist, Abbe Fogier, once imitated a thunderstorm so well, that for miles around the country, all the milk turned sour."

When Milton was blind, he married a shrew. The Duke of Buckingham called her a rose. "I am no judge of colours," replied Milton, "and it may be so, for I feel the thorns daily."

A neighboring lawyer boasting that he was as true as a scalebeam, a countryman coolly observed, that "it was possible, for a lawyer always turns in favour of the heavier purse."

"There's two ways of doing it," said Pat to himself, as he stood musing and waiting for a job. "If I save me four thousand dollars I must lay up two hundred dollars a year for twenty years, or I can put away twenty dollars a year for two hundred years. Now, which way will I do?"

A celebrated judge, who stooped very much when walking, had a stone thrown at him one day, which fortunately passed without hitting him. Turning to his friend, he remarked, "Had I been an upright judge, that might have caused my death!"

The man that plays at once on the trumpet of fame and the horn of dilemma got his first idea of music on hearing a bay-cock crow, while he was tying a knot in a cord of wood.

The Duke of Wellington's saying connected with early rising was, "Let the first turn in the morning be a turn out."

A French wit said of a man who was exceedingly fat, that nature only made him to show how the human skin would stretch without breaking.

"Pat, you are wearing your stockings wrong side outward." "Och, and don't I know it, to be sure—there's a hole on the other side, there is."

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