

The True Democrat.

ELRIE ROBINSON
MRS. MAY E. ROBINSON / Editors.
Official Journal of the Parish of West Feliciana, the Towns of Bayou Sara and St. Francisville, and of the School Board.
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THE PHYSIOLOGY OF PROFANITY.

There are daily articles in a city paper, treating medical topics in popular form—sugar-coated intellectual pills as it were. One of these with the above caption says that it is perfectly natural for a human being to utter an expletive when surprised, frightened or hurt; that it is just plain human nature for a man to say something suggestive of a beaver when he mashes his thumb.

As for simple expletives like oh and ah no one would differ from the learned doctor, but as for profanity's being natural it reminds the writer of a story told by a Southern lady long ago. She was guest at a grand "in-fair" as wedding receptions were called then, and all was going merrily and well, when suddenly the bride, a beautiful and hitherto modest girl, stepped into the middle of the room and addressed the company, using the vilest oaths and the most obscene language, before she could be silenced. The general consternation can be imagined. It was heightened when it was discovered that the poor girl's mind, long on the balance between sanity and insanity, a fact carefully concealed by her people, had been tipped to the wrong side by the excitement of the hour. She was insane. The foul language was proof of it.

The lady, who told the story, would thus conclude: "I am assured that this tendency is always noticeable among the insane, and I shouldn't wonder (glancing teasingly the while at her husband, who was noted for the sharp seasoning he put on his remarks) if all who use strong language may not be entitled to the same excuse as the poor, ill-fated bride."

READING THE DICTIONARY.

An interesting editorial in a recent newspaper is given on this subject, wherein various instances are cited of famous men, who have regularly read the dictionary in whole or in part, and with full knowledge of and intent as to what they were doing, not like the man, who read the book throughout and found it "interesting but rather disconnected."

Putting disconnectedness aside, there are many more toilsome ways of acquiring a large vocabulary than by simply going to a dictionary occasionally and reading several pages at a time. A recent novel describes how a poor boy increased his store of knowledge by memorizing a cyclopedia, but failed on some point of information because he had only gone as far as Ath. One trembles at the amount of his learning had he persevered to the end. Certain old-time schools taught directly from the dictionary, instead of a "speller and definer," and where time was no object and books were few, the plan is not without merit.

It is undoubtedly true that although the English language is growing constantly, and people learn the new words that relate to the new inventions, like automobile and aeroplane for instance, as a rule the vocabulary of the average person is not nearly so large as the person educated twenty-five years ago.

The average person answers the question about his pleasures in a single word, "fine" or "grand," or alas, he may even

say "all right." His willingness to oblige you is expressed in the word, "sure." This word does duty for many other purposes, of which the attentive ear will easily be convinced.

And our language is so rich in words with every shade of meaning! And they who confine themselves to few words, and these of doubtful appropriateness, are like a millionaire who would go into a jewelry shop and content himself with a brass ring when jewels and fine gold could as easily be his. Therefore he, who owns a dictionary, needs to utter no magic word, "sesame," to possess himself of the riches of the English language.

He need only open and enter.

LAND IS NOT LESS VALUABLE.

A special from Clinton to the city press reads:

An improved farm of 650 acres sold here last Saturday for \$2092, under the sheriff's hammer. This farm would have sold for \$10,000 three years ago, which goes to prove the effect of the boll weevil in this country during the past few years.

We very much deprecate the publishing abroad of such an item as this, particularly in those words, as the injury it does the section of country far outweighs its value as a news item. Had the reason for the low price been given more in detail it might have been helpful. For instance, although the depreciation is due to the boll weevil and the consequent depression agriculturally and the scarcity of money, there can be no doubt that the farm in question—in fact any farm in the Felicianas—is as valuable now as it ever was if put into something besides cotton.

The fact that land brings a poor price is because the natives are in no mood, or not so situated, as to spend money for investment. There can be no doubt that the times are big with opportunity for any who can come in and buy on these foreclosures. Had the sale referred to above been as widely advertised beforehand, as it was afterward, there can be no doubt that a very much larger price could have been secured.

GOOD ROADS.

An exchange, the Lake Charles American-Press, in an editorial scores the factional influences that are working against the Governor's good roads plans. This paper is only authorized to speak for itself, and to report what it sees in its own immediate constituency, and speaking within these limitations it can truthfully say that any private antagonism to the Governor has nothing to do with the coldness with which his scheme was first received, or with the heavy hoar frost that has subsequently settled upon it. The people would be very foolish to reject anything good because they did not love the person who suggests it, particularly as the real responsibility and praise would be theirs and not the Governor's.

The cause of the frost is not due to factional feeling but to the criticism of methods and results in places where the work has already been started. The complaints of undue expense and ineffective work have not been without influence, while the agricultural depression undoubtedly has been the principal reason why the good roads plans are at present abortive.

PROBING COMMITTEE MEETS.

The Text-book Probing Committee met at Baton Rouge, Wednesday, with all present, including the newly appointed members B. F. Thompson and H. W. Newman, vice Judge Thornton and Maurice Stern resigned. Supt. Harris, Messrs. Weber and Allerman, and Judge Lawrason, member of the State Board, were heard. The State Superintendent, Mr. Harris, expressed the desire that the truth should be established. "It has been charged that we recommend bad books, and that the changes have cost the people of the State \$400,000

additional. If this is true it is very serious. Times are hard, and if this burden has been put on the people of the State through a blunder of ours, I wish it known," said he. Further he explained that the book on physics was changed as the new one was simpler, but he had made no effort to learn the opinion of teachers.

In the matter of the rejection of Tarr & McMurray's Geography, Mr. Harris stated that the committee recognized the great merit of the geography, but that the committee objected to the geography upon the ground that there was a Northern edition of the work in which the people of the South were maligned and harsh terms were used in referring to them. He believed that Frye's Geography suited the majority of the teachers, and for that reason the book was selected and recommended.

In the matter of the spellers he said the Aswell Spellers were accepted both on account of their merit as text-books and especially because they were the work of a Southern author and exceptionally good as to the subject matter which they contained. For a like reason Nicholson's Arithmetics were approved. Chamber's History was dropped because it was too hard, also King and Ficklen's Louisiana History. He said Mrs. Magruder had approached him about her book but he had declined to look at it until it was submitted in due course. He claimed the excuse of a precedent some years ago for examining the book in manuscript.

Judge Lawrason stated that he had heard the teachers discussing the grammar and geography as being too hard. He said that he was a new member of the Board of Education and that with other members he was of the impression that such changes were made every four years as the conditions required and that as the board had the utmost confidence in the committee selecting the books he had, with other members, accepted the report of the committee and had voted for the books recommended. Personally he had examined very few of the books. Had not seen Mrs. Magruder's History in manuscript.

Prof. Weber stated substantially what his chief did, although denying that he had been influenced by gratitude to approve the Brumbaugh Readers, but he nevertheless admitted that Prof. Brumbaugh had recommended him to the Louisiana authorities.

Traveling Auditor Smith had not completed his compilation of statistics with regard to the cost of the change of textbooks. His partial report showed that for the four years from 1905 to 1908 the total cost of text-books was \$483,515.80, and that while the number of pupils increased in the public schools every year—210,000 in schools in 1905; 225,000 in 1906; 243,000 in 1907, and 260,000 in 1908—the school book sales during these years decreased, due to the fact, it was explained to the committee, that the children exchanged books among themselves, and to the further fact that the last year before a textbook adoption the local dealers would not handle the books to any great extent.

Reports from teachers on the new books were largely favorable, two objecting to the readers, two to the geography and one to the physics. Several qualified their statements.

A protest was received from the Co-operative Presidents' Club of New Orleans, and the ladies were invited by wire to attend the next meeting. There were no other complaints. The Times-Democrat, although specially called upon, ignored the summons, taking the position—probably held by the objecting Louisiana press in general—that what it had to say had been already plainly set forth in print and its duty was to lay such matters before the public instead of investigating committees.

Is It Oil?

Undoubtedly it is, but the real question is, in what quantity? Thursday while some workmen were digging post holes to put in some piling at the levee, near the Compress, they were amazed to see one of the holes fill with a liquid bearing every evidence of petroleum. Moreover the hard clay bed was found to be completely impregnated with it, and the odor can be detected a block away.

The theory that a cask of oil might have been spilled there is hardly tenable as water would have long since washed it away. It is apparently from a vein but how far away the main feeder is remains to be discovered. Expert opinion will be obtained.

Meanwhile the excitement is naturally very great. Every one is going to see and smell for himself.

Mr. Braswell is working hard in his itinerary over the parish. He talked to a large audience of negroes at Independence Church on Mrs. S. H. Barrow's plantation. He met the white planters at Laurel Hill yesterday.

FOR SALE—Oakdale plantation and tenement houses included. Fertile land, well improved. For particulars apply to H. M. Gastrell, St. Francisville, or Mrs. H. C. Gastrell, 1022 Jena St., New Orleans.

The colored Baptist church at Pinckneyville, St. Peter's, was burned down, Tuesday morning between one and two o'clock. The members are asking their friends to help them rebuild. J. W. Washington is the pastor.

Some one rang up to ask why the Banks were closed Jan. 8. Fourth grade please answer.

Fred Magearl has made a neat job of painting the new galleries on Dr. Jones' residence.

W. B. Davidson and R. C. Brasseaux have bought the timber in Mrs. Ventress' swamp and will clear it out as rapidly as possible.

U. D. C. Items.

Miss Katie Childress, who is Acting Custodian in Mrs. Vaught's absence, writes to West Feliciana Chapter as follows: "The boxes which were sent by freight arrived safe and sound. Please let me thank you most sincerely for the interest the West Feliciana Chapter has taken in the Christmas celebration. The two boxes of jams, jellies and preserves will be used later, thus giving another treat to the men and not having all come on one day. Your check of \$14.00 sent to Mrs. P. J. Friedrichs was in turn given to me to be used for the Christmas festival. As per request \$4 was used as a special donation to the two Veterans from West Feliciana Parish, both Veterans greatly appreciating the remembrance from your Chapter."

From Miss May Gillmore, at one time a member of West Feliciana Chapter, but now active in Julia Jackson Chapter, Crystal Springs, Miss., the editor has a copy of the program that Chapter used on Lee Day. Miss Gillmore says also that they have a historical and literary program at each meeting, and issue year books for them. We must admit that this is advancing in U. D. C. work.

Meat is high but Louisianians have the means at hand to supply a cheap substitute: rice. If the canny Jap can wax and grow strong on the pearly grains, there is no reason to think that Americans may not do the same. In every native Louisiana home, rice is served at least once a day, but the new-comers who know it not need instruction as to how savory it can make a meal. As a component part of gumbo, as the thickening for soup, boiled plain and served with gravy, or in the form of custard, it furnishes a food, cheap, easily digested and full of nutrition. Its use makes meat unnecessary except in small quantity.

New Orleans and Return \$3.50
LOUISIANA RAILWAY
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ACCOUNT
MARDI GRAS

Tickets on sale February 1 to 7, limited to return February 19, 1910, with extension until March 7, 1910, by deposit of ticket with special agent and payment of \$1 at time of deposit.
Train leaves Bayou Sara 4:22 a. m. 2:40 p. m.
Arrives Baton Rouge 5:25 a. m. 3:40 p. m.
Arrives New Orleans (Canal St.) 8:40 a. m. 6:55 p. m.

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J. M. BELL, Agt.

FOR RENT OR SALE—My residence now occupied by Morris Burgas. For particulars inquire or write
SAM ROSENTHAL,
St. Francisville.

On account of removal I offer for sale a portion of my household furniture, also my milch cows and cattle and mules, one survey. Apply to
MORRIS BURGAS.

For Sale.
5 large mules in good condition.
1 1/2 inch Ericsson Hot Air pump.
1 10 ft. Imperial Windmill with 50 ft. steel tower.
Also grade Hereford cattle.
Horse and Mule Colts.
Lespedeza Hay and Seed for future delivery.
EDWARD BUTLER,
St. Francisville, La.

FOR SALE—Seed Oats, Lespedeza Hay, Berkshire pigs, registered stock.
W. B. SMITH,
Solitude, La.

FOR RENT OR SALE—Land known as the H. M. Williams' river plantation, also the Burgas tract, adjoining Myrtle plantation. The former place is well adapted for rice culture or truck growing. For terms, apply to
MRS. H. M. WILLIAMS.

WANTED TO BUY—One wagon scale. Must be in good condition. Apply to
MORRIS BURGAS.

The public is hereby warned against buying wood, timber or stock from tenants on Oakley, Ogden or Downs plantations or driving therefrom any cattle or stock, or hunting with dog or gun. These plantations are closed against agents of every description.
Miss L. L. Matthews.

FRENCH PUPILS WANTED.
Apply to
Mrs. J. P. Newsham.

For Sale—
RED RUST-PROOF SEED Oats, Grade Red Polled Cattle, Red Proof Oats, Lespedeza Strips, Native Grass Hay.
J. BURRUSS McGENE,
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Shucked
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At 12c a Bushel.
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