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RONALD SETH'S

BROADCAST
COMMENTARY

FOR
MARCH
ON
"GREENERY STREET"
BY
DENIS MACKAIL

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Note.

Mr. Seth sincerely apologises to his subscribers for the terrible delay in publishing these notes.

These will be the last commentaries as he finds the number of subscribers too small to cover the cost and trouble of publishing.

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Commentary on "Greenery Street".

March 3 rd.

Rule.

The principal uses of the comma are illustrated by the following sentences.

- (a) He went to London, but failed to make his fortune.
- (b) The King decided, however, that the man should be free.
- (c) I saw his uncle, the colonel, last Saturday.
- (d) The general, who had just returned from Palestine, spoke of his experiences.
- (e) Do what I advise, my friend.
- (f) I am afraid there will be no dividend, business being so bad.
- (g) His address is 38, Mount Street, Reading, Berkshire.
- (h) That happened on Monday, Jan. 23, 1937.
- (i) He was a fine, well-proportioned figure of a man.
- (j) I saw Tom, Dick, and Harry at the station.

(k) I said, "Come what may, I'll be there".

(l) "You should not say that", he answered.

All these cases may be summed up by saying that we ordinarily put a comma wherever it is natural or useful to make a pause within the sentence.

(a) to mark off clauses or make a break in the sense. (b) however. (c) explanatory words. (d) relative clause. (e) forms of address. (f) as (a). (g) parts of an address. (h) parts of a date. (i) lists of adjectives. (j) lists of nouns. (k) the speaker in direct speech.

Greenery Street.

O. E. 50. N. E. 48.

line 4/21. *Pulsations* means *regular throbbing, as of the heart.*

O. E. 52. N. E. 50.

16/32. *Equitable*. N. B. Stress on first syllable.

30/ *Disbursements* means *amounts spent.*

O. E. 53. N. E. 51.

20/36. *To stick to it* means *to make up your mind and remain firm in your opinion.*

March 10th.

Rule.

This week I want to give one or two exceptions to the rules of the comma I gave last week.

Exception to (i).

In the following sentence:

She saw a big white dog,
"Big" qualifies not "dog" but "white dog", so no commas are used to separate "big" and "white". Thus in similar cases where an adjective of quantity or quality is followed by an adjective of colour.

Exception to (d):

Note the following sentence:

The man whom I described to you is sitting in the front row. The clause "whom I described to you" is a defining clause, necessary to the meaning of the sentence, and not a qualifying clause like that in (d) last week. In such cases no commas are used.

Greenery Street.

O. E. 53. N. E. 52.

line 40/15. *flash* means a brief glimpse of bright colour.

O. E. 54. N. E. 53.

34/7. *two stalwart print dresses*. *Print* is the blue material of which nurses or maids dresses are made. Here, of course, *print dresses* means *two maids*.

O. E. 57. N. E. 56.

33/6. *Conscientiously*. N. B. Stress conscientiously.

March 17th.

Rule.

Occasionally the need is felt for a slightly longer pause than the comma. In such cases the

semicolon is employed. The following sentences give illustrations of its use.

- (a) He did not seek peace; he provoked war.
- (b) I could not find my friend in the crowd; therefore, I went home.
- (c) The signal was given; then the enemy advanced in full force.
- (d) The rest of the camels were unloaded and turned loose to browse upon the shrubs of the Desert, where shrubs were, or where these had failed, to wait for the small quantity of food that was allowed them out of our stores.

(a) Where the conjunction is omitted, the comma is not felt adequate. (b) A longer pause is needed to mark the sharp contrast between two clauses, and a semicolon is used. Generally with the conjunctive adverbs *so, hence, therefore, however, nevertheless, moreover, accordingly, besides, also, thus, then, still* and *otherwise*. These are stronger than *and* or *but*; so a stronger stop is used. (c) to separate two simple sentences in a compound sentence. (d) When a comma has already been used in a long sentence to denote a pause, where a longer pause is needed, the semicolon is used.

Greenery Street.

O. E. 59. N. E. 57.

line 13/29. *Registering relief*. To portray an emotion as an actor.

O. E. 59. N. E. 58.

31/5. *Epithet* another word for *adjective*. Don't mix up with *epitaph*, an inscription on a tombstone.

O. E. 60. N. E. 59.

34/8. *Myriad* means so many that they cannot be counted.

O. E. 61. N. E. 60.

37/10. *Sink*, is the kind of basin attached to the wall beneath the tap in a kitchen.

March 24th.

Rule.

The use of the hyphen is to join words so that they become compounds, to all intents and purposes, single words.

It is not always easy to know whether words should be hyphenated or not, and a good deal of confusion exists in practice. As H. W. Fowler (Author of *The King's English*) has pointed out, however, pronunciation is almost an unfailing guide.

If I say :

When you see me on Sunday I shall be wearing a blue jacket,
I stress both *blue* and *jacket*. It is a tendency here in Estonia when reading or speaking, to stress the adjective before a noun, and not the noun. This is quite wrong. Both must receive *equal stress* if they are monosyllables; and the noun must be stressed in the usual way if polysyllabic. E. g. country house; Sunday hat; and so on.

Now, if I say :

As I was going down the street I saw two bluejackets, I stress *blue*, but not *jackets*. That is to say, *bluejackets* meaning *sailors*, has become a

single word, bearing but a single stress. So if I speak of *sugar-basins*, *chimney-pots*, *snuff-boxes*, and so on, I merely make a single stress on the first syllable of each. (These words have not, like *blue-jacket*, become completely joined, so are separated by a hyphen.)

Now, when I say *Lòrd Màyor*, *country hòuse*, *full stòp*, and *rùling clàss*, the equal stress on each shows that they have not lost individual values, and are therefore separate words, not hyphenated.

There are also many compound adjectives made up of two or more words joined by a hyphen. These will not cause much difficulty. The difference between *an ivy-covered bridge* and *a grey old bridge*, is obvious.

The forms *to-day*, *to-morrow* and *good-bye* are hyphenated, or not according to taste.

A word is also hyphenated when it is split between two lines. In this case great care must be taken to divide the words into complete syllables.

To sum up :

If an adjective and a noun are equally stressed a hyphen is required; but if the first syllable of the adjective or a noun used as an adjective is stressed and not of the noun, a hyphen is required.

March 31st.

Rule.

The purposes for which capital letters are now used in English may be summarized thus :

- (a) The first word of a sentence.

- (b) The first word of each line of poetry.
- (c) Proper nouns, including the *days of the week*, and *months*.
- (d) Titles of persons when they are associated with proper names.
- (e) Nouns and adjectives of nationality e. g. Estonia, Estonian.
- (f) The *important* words of titles.

The names of the seasons and points of the compass are not capitalized.

But in :

The North defeated the South,
North and *South* are the names of separate geographical entities, and so take capitals.

The first word of a quotation takes a capital:
 He said, "Come and see me tomorrow", unless the quotation forms a part of the containing sentence:
 It was clearly "the last rose of summer".

Greenery Street.

O. E. 67. N. E. 65.

line 20/36. *Sweet peas* are a sweet-smelling flower.

O. E. 68. N. E. 67.

line 31/5. *White heather* is considered to be very lucky to wear.

O. E. 71. N. E. 69.

9/24. *Serpentine* is the name of a very large lake in Hyde Park, London.