

SEMICOLON

The Past, Present, and Future
of a Misunderstood Mark

CECELIA WATSON

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politani etiam tractus extimantur. Nivibus per hyemem ferè totus mons canet: cacumen neq; per aestatem uiduatur. B. P. **Quid**, quod hyemare tantum eas meminit Strabo: B. F. At experientia ita te docet, usq; ipse auctor (quod quidem uenia illius dixerim) non deterior. **Quare** illud mi pater etiã, atq; etiam uide; ne quid te moueat, si aliqua ex parte huius nostri de Aetna sermonis cum uetustis scriptoribus dissentimus: nihil enim impedit fuisse tum ea omnia, quae ipsi olim tradere, quorum permãserint plurima in nostram diem; quaedam se immutauerit; aliqua etiam surrexerint noua: nam (ut caetera omittam); quod cinerosa partim esse summa cacumina dictaueret; eius rei nunc uestigium nullũ apparet: cinis enim, qui queat conspici, toto môte nullus est: neq; id tamen omnibus annis fuit: nam multorum testimonio accepimus, qui uidere, annos ab hinc quadraginta tan-

;

Bembo

;

Poliphilus

;

Garamond

;

Jenson

;

Palatino

;

Gill Sans

;

Didot.

(1) Some Writers have used *Ye* as the Objective Case Plural of the Pronoun of the Second Person; very improperly, and ungrammatically.

“ The more shame for *ye* : holy men I thought *ye*.”

Shakspeare, Hen. VIII.

“ But tyrants dread *ye*, lest your just degree
Transfer the pow'r, and set the people free.”

Prior.

“ His wrath, which one day will destroy *ye* both.”

Milton, P. L. ii. 734.

Milton uses the same manner of expression in a few other places of his *Paradise Lost*, and more frequently in his

Shakespeare and Milton, both very improper!

“ Oft have I seen a timely-parted ghost,
Of ashy semblance, meagre, pale, and bloodless,
Being all descended to the lab'ring heart,
Who, in the conflict that *it* holds with death,
Attracts the same for aidance 'gainst the enemy.”

Shakespeare, 2 Hen. VI.

It ought to be,

“ *Which*, in the conflict that *it* holds”——

Or, perhaps more poetically,

“ *Who*, in the conflict that *he* holds with death.”

Lowth giving Shakespeare a little lesson in grammar and poetry writing.*

P R E F A C E

It is often said that English Grammar is a lifetime study, and it is a fact not to be disguised, that students usually prosecute this branch of science for years, to little practical purpose, as grammar pupils rarely speak or write more correctly than others untaught. Now, grammar is unworthy of a lifetime study; life is too important, and labor and money are too precious to be thus invested, or, rather, wasted. "Time is money."—DR. FRANKLIN.

Is it not a little curious, that English Grammar should be a lifetime study? If so, who has yet mastered it? Who is competent to teach it? One would make rather an unprofitable effort, trying to teach what he did not understand himself. Would it not be more than unkind to require children to recite, and expect them to comprehend, what neither teachers nor authors understand, or can explain?

Isaiah J. Morris, "offensive" from the very first page

*"The Lord uplifts his awful hand
And chains you to the shore."*

(15.)



Compound sentence—transitive.

ANALYSIS.

<i>Principal parts.</i>	}	Lord—Subject of "uplifts" and "chains."
		Uplifts
		[And]
		Chains
<i>Adjuncts.</i>	}	Hand—Object of "uplifts."
		You—Object of "chains."
		The—Adjunct of "Lord."
		His
		Awful
		To the shore—Adjunct of "chains."

EXAMPLES OF COMPLEX SENTENCES.

Rem.—Let the pupil write the Diagram for each sentence on the black-board and insert the words in the proper places.



Blessed are the poor in spirit,

for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are they that mourn,

for they shall be comforted.

Blessed are the meek,

for they shall inherit the earth.

Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst
after righteousness, for they shall be filled.

Blessed are the pure in heart,
for they shall see God.

Blessed is the man that endureth temptation,
for, when he is tried,

he shall receive the crown of life,
which the Lord hath promised
to them that love him.

466. The principal stops are the following:

The Comma (,) the semicolon (;) the colon (:) the period, or full stop (.) the note of interrogation (?) the note of exclamation (!)

467. The comma represents the shortest pause; the semicolon, a pause double that of the comma; the colon, double that of the semicolon; and the period, double that of the colon.

468. The duration of the pauses must be left to the taste of the reader or speaker.

493. When, however, these phrases are not considered important, and particularly in short sentences, the comma is not inserted; as, "There is *surely* a pleasure in acting kindly." "Idleness *certainly* is the mother of all vices." "He was *at last* convinced of his error."

494. * * * The foregoing rules will, it is hoped, be found comprehensive; yet there may be some cases in which the student must rely on his own judgment.


Bullions and the tension between rules and taste

696. *Rule I.*—A semicolon must be placed between the members of compound sentences, unless the connection is exceedingly close; as “The wheel of fortune is ever turning; who can say, ‘I shall be uppermost tomorrow’?”

If the members are very short, and the connection is close, the comma may be used in stead of the semicolon; as, “Man proposes, but God disposes.”

697. *Rule II.*—A semicolon must be placed between the great divisions of sentences, when minor divisions occur that are separated by commas; as, “Plato called beauty a privilege of nature; Theocritus, a delightful prejudice.”

698. *Rule III.*—A semicolon must be placed before an enumeration of particulars, when the names of the objects merely are given, without any formal introductory words; as, “There are three cases; the nominative, the possessive, and the objective.”

699. *Rule IV.*—A semicolon must be placed before , when it introduces an example; as at the close of the last paragraph.

Quackenbos's rules for the semicolon

POWER OF POINTS

**Punctuation That Upset
Work of Solons.**

**Comma or Semicolon Has Spoiled
the Statutes.**

**Legal Decisions That Have
Settled Colons.**

**Massachusetts and Ohio
Cases Noted.**

**Baltimore Man Failed to Pay a
Bill with a Semicolon.**