

There is here an advantage in putting these four statements together, instead of making four separate sentences. We can more easily combine the details, and so form a single picture—a picture of fertility.

II. As a rule the full stop is not to be inserted till the sentence be grammatically complete. But some parts of the sentence necessary to make it grammatically complete may be left for the reader to supply.

It is well said, in every sense, that a man's religion is the chief fact with regard to him. A man's or a nation of men's. By religion I do not mean here the church-creed which he professes, the articles of faith which he will sign and, in words or otherwise, assert. Not this wholly, in many cases not this at all.

III. When a sentence is purposely left unfinished, the dash takes the place of the full stop.

"Excuse me," said I, "but I am a sort of collector." "Not Income-tax?" cried His Majesty, hastily removing his pipe from his lips.

IV. A period is placed after most abbreviations, after initial letters, and after ordinal numbers in Roman characters.

Gen. i. 20; two lbs.; A.D. 1883; 3 p.m.; &c., and etc.; M.D., J. S. Mill; William III., King of England; MS., LL.D. (not M.S. and L.L.D.).

Note that the use of the full stop in these cases does not prevent another point from being used immediately after it. But if they occur at the end of a sentence, another period is not added; or, more correctly, it may be said that Rule IV. does not apply at the end of a sentence.

"Mr," "Messrs," "Dr"—abbreviations which retain the last letter of the whole word—are written without a point.

THE COMMA

V. The comma indicates a short pause in a sentence. It is used when we wish to separate words that stand together, and at the same time to stop as little as possible the flow of the sentence.

When the earl reached his own province, he found that preparations had been made to repel him.

Though it is difficult, or almost impossible, to reclaim a savage, bred from his youth to war and the chase, to the restraints and the duties of civilized life, nothing is more easy or common than to find men who have been educated in all the habits and comforts of improved society, willing to exchange them for the wild labors of the hunter and the fisher.

VI. Where there is no danger of obscurity, the subject must not be separated from the predicate by any point.

The eminence of your station gave you a commanding prospect of your duty.

VII. When the subject is long, a comma may be placed after it.

To say that he endured without a murmur the misfortune that now came upon him, is to say only what his previous life would have led us to expect.

In every sentence the subject, whether expressed in one word or in several words, must be grasped as a whole; and, when the subject is long, one is often assisted in doing this by having a point to mark its termination. The eye at once observes the separating line. Note the corresponding pause in the reading of such sentences.

VIII. When the subject consists of several parts, *e.g.*, of several nouns, a comma is placed after the last part.

*A few daring jests, a brawl, and a fatal stab, make up the life of Marlowe.
Time, money, and friends, were needed to carry on the work.*