

# **SLIPS OF TONGUE AND PEN**

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Slips of Tongue and Pen by J. H. Long

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**J. H. LONG**

**SLIPS OF TONGUE  
AND PEN**



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SLIPS OF  
TONGUE AND PEN

BY  
J. H. LONG, M. A., LL. B.

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## COMMON ERRORS

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- Do not say, "The truth of that is *apparent*." [Use *obvious* or *evident*. *Apparent* or *seeming* is opposed to *real*; *obvious* or *evident*, to *obscure*.]
- Do not use *anticipate* for *expect*. [*Anticipate* means to reach before, to take before, to forestall, as: "I anticipated all his wishes."]
- Do not say, *all of them, both of them, for they* [or *them*] *all, both*, respectively.
- Do not spell with *z* *analyse, paralyse*, and other words derived from the Greek *luo, luis*.
- Do not use *ale, tea, sugar, &c.*, in the plural. [Instead of saying, "I have excellent teas, ales and sugars," say, "I have excellent tea, ale and sugar, of various qualities [or, at various prices, &c.]"
- Do not use *accord* for *grant* or *give*. [*Accord*, intransitive, means to agree or harmonize; transitive, it means to give or grant; but it carries with it the idea of great condescension, *e.g.*: "Pallas accords their vow." In ordinary prose it should be employed but rarely.]
- Do not use *accident* for *wound* or *hurt*. [*Accident* means misfortune or calamity, *e.g.*: "In the railway accident the man was badly injured."]

- Do not use *aggravate* for *irritate* or *vex*. [*Aggravate* means to render heavy or more difficult, *e.g.*: "The guilt was aggravated by the circumstances of the crime."]
- Do not use *alternation* for *series* or *succession*. [*Alternation* is reciprocal succession, *e.g.*: "The alternation of red and white balls on the string produced a very pretty effect."]
- Do not use *alternative* [in the plural] as equivalent to *things to be chosen from or among*. [*Alternative* is the choice itself, and should, properly speaking, be restricted to a choice between two things, *e.g.*: "My alternative was escape or death."]
- Do not use *antiquarian* [as a noun] for *antiquary*. [*Antiquarian* is an adjective.]
- Do not use *abortive* of acts. [It may be used of plans or attempts; but it is, at the best, an inelegant word.]
- Do not say, "The measures *adopted* by Congress for the quelling of the rebellion &c." Say, "The measures decided upon or taken &c." [*Adopted* is correctly employed in such a sentence as, "The report upon ways and means was adopted."]
- Do not say, "His *antecedents* are bad." Say, "His past history [or, his reputation] is bad."
- Do not use *appreciate* for *value highly*. [*Appreciate* is to value correctly or justly.] Say, therefore, "I prize [or value] that horse highly;" not, "I appreciate &c."

- Do not say, *at auction* but *by auction*.
- Do not say, "The wind was *accompanied* [or attended] *by* rain &c." Use *with* of things [unless personified]; *by*, of persons.
- Do not use *anniversary* of celebrations that are not yearly. Thus, not, *a centennial anniversary*; but, *a centennial celebration, festival, &c.*
- Do not use *affable* as an exact synonym for *kindly* or *good-natured*. [*Affable* is properly applied to the bearing of superiors towards inferiors, not to the bearing of equals towards equals.]
- Do not say, "Both are *alike*;" say, "They [or they two] are alike. *Both* denotes union; *alike*, separation.
- Do not say, "I am *afraid* it will rain." Say, "I *fear* it will rain."
- Do not say, "That *admits of* no doubt." [Leave out the *of*.]
- Do not say, "He *alludes* [or refers] to Mr. Smith," when you mean that he merely names Mr. Smith. Say, "He means Mr. Smith." [The real meaning of *allude* or *refer to* is to touch lightly upon, to call attention to, delicately or indirectly.]
- Do not say, "He went *around* the world." It should be, "He went *round* &c." [*Around* denotes rest—"The shelves are around the room;" *round* denotes motion.]