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ENGLISH

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FROM SANSKRIT TO BRAZIL: Essays on Language. Hamish Hamilton.

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ENGLISH

A COURSE FOR HUMAN BEINGS

By

ERIC PARTRIDGE

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For my daughter

ROSEMARY

from whom I have learnt
far more than ever she from me.

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PREFACE

I HAVE been much concerned with English ever since I could say 'No!'

At the age of sixteen I became a pupil-teacher in a State, i.e. an elementary, school in Queensland; during a period of four years in that State and in New South Wales, I taught both in elementary and in secondary schools. Some years later, I spent six months at an excellent grammar school in Lancashire—an experience I found most educational. (The Governors invited me to become a permanent member of the staff, an invitation I reluctantly declined.) I left it to become a University lecturer in English; work that, after two years, I gave up in 1927.

In those widely separated periods of schoolmastering and lecturing I learned much about teaching in general, the teaching of English in particular, from Class I in elementary schools, up through secondary schools, to third-year Honours students. Since those days, I have for many years acted as an examiner in English to three examining boards; published a book upon the art of précis, and several upon the English language; kept in touch with teachers of English, and incited them to air their views upon how English should, how it should not, be taught. I have even acquainted myself with not a few books upon the teaching of this subject: Courses in English, Guides to English, Lessons in English, Approaches to English, and several other varieties.

My concern with English remains no less lively, but perhaps better grounded, than when I knew only one word and made excessive use of it. My appetite is unjaded—a fact of some importance to one who attempts to write a Course in three stages, three Books. Yet probably my interest would have remained general and critical, distant and airy, had it not been for my good friend, Neil Bell, who, widely known for his novels addressed to adults, has, under the name of Stephen Southwold, written not only some of the present century's best stories for children but also, in *Man's Great Adventure*, one of its best books of history for that critical public. Neil Bell, having read—not merely dipped into—my *Usage and Abusage: A Guide to Good English*, sent me a letter in which he said, 'Why on earth do you not write, I know you would scorn to compile, "A Course of English"?'

'To cut a long story short', as all the worst story-tellers so eloquently phrase it, he persuaded me to write this 'Course'. I must, however, make it actionably clear that Neil Bell is not, in any respect, any degree, responsible for the plan of either the whole or the parts; nor, in any way whatsoever, for the execution. (Yes: I've heard that pun before.) The

credit of the idea is his: the blame for the scope, the planning, the treatment, the details is mine.[1]

The opening chapter of Book I is equally relevant to Books II and III; but, to put it mildly, it would be unusual to repeat it in the latter Books. The opening chapter of Book II might well have been included in Book III, even though the conventionalists would think its presence very odd, as also would those pupils who had survived Book II.

That is not intended as an objectionable piece of facetiousness. Far too many persons, whether teachers or preachers, affect to believe—one soon perceives why they affect to believe—that, to be good, one has to be dull; that, to be sincere, one has to be solemn; that a writer cannot at once be alive and reputable, have vision and be practical, be readable yet a scholar, be a scholar and yet a sharer in the hurly-burly.

As a whole, *English: A Course for Human Beings* is intended primarily for schoolboys and schoolgirls of approximately 10 to 18 years of age and for private students, whether newcomers or revisers in the subject and whether British or American or European or . . .; secondarily for teachers; and tertiarily for educationists,[2] whether practical or theoretical—that is, for examiners, inspectors, Directors of Education, Education Officers—and so forth.

Book I covers such knowledge and such practice as can reasonably be expected from children of 10—13½ (or 14); Book II, from boys and girls of 13½ (or 14)—15½ (or 16); and Book III, from young people of 15½ (or 16)—17½ (or 18). Since I have borne in mind the fact that children and young people alike rightly detest being talked or written down to, my treatment of English is, I believe, no less suitable to private students of riper years.

Book II, although not designed for that specific purpose, will be found adequate to the needs of candidates for School or Leaving Certificate, this or that Junior Examination, and similar tests; but it is also designed, quite specifically, to enable a boy or a girl to continue, after they leave school, to read profitably and intelligently in book or newspaper and to think independently and capably.

Book III has been planned both for candidates for Matriculation, Higher School or Leaving Certificate, this or that Senior Examination and so forth, and for private students. Moreover, those others who may wish to improve their thinking, their speech, their writing, as well as their

[1] I have to thank that admirable teacher of and writer about English, Mr Frank Jones, for several very useful suggestions. In a more general way, I owe something to the books of Mr George Sampson and Mr L. A. G. Strong; and also to the advice of the Very Rev. J. W. Dunne and the Rev. Peter Cooney, both of Cotton College.

[2] Many examiners, inspectors and others are, at the age of 55–75, still setting or asking, or presupposing, exactly the same kinds of question they were setting at the age of 30. The teaching of mathematics has progressed remarkably: but pupils and examinees are still, in Reported speech and in Précis, asked to write English as though it were Latin, and still expected to paraphrase the unparaphrasable.

acquaintance with language and literature, will find Book III not unhelpful.

For class work, a Book would be needed for every year. The Exercises or Questions, therefore, are to be understood as mere specimens or signposts for the incitement of teachers to devise, as always they must, their own sets of questions and exercises and for the guidance of private students. That partly explains the inclusion of general questions designed to widen interests and to encourage and ensure independent thought and study.

Postscript. Long after I had finished writing this book, I came, within a fortnight, upon two very heartening confirmations, both of my attitude towards English as a whole and of the value I place upon English as a study. Miss Dorothy Sayers has, in *The Lost Tools of Learning*, 1948, pleaded eloquently for a reconsideration of education: a pamphlet that should be in the hands of every Director of Education, every Education Officer, every headmaster.

'If dream sets the course of life, literature awakes the dream. We must never disown literature, our earliest nurse. Even among primitive peoples, she it is that opens the heart and eyes of man to what will be finest in his life'; Henry Fauconnier, *The Soul of Malaya*, in Eric Sutton's delightful translation (1931; reprinted as a 'Penguin').

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GENERAL INTRODUCTION TO THE COURSE

For the Teacher

MOST children are much more intelligent than grown-ups condescendingly admit them to be.[1] If their natural intelligence were cultivated and encouraged, they would grow up into spiritually and intellectually worth-while individuals and sane, resourceful citizens. But that intelligence, like their alertness and awareness and, above all, their dewy freshness, is educated out of them, by their parents on the one hand, and on the other by their teachers. Not all parents, not all teachers are guilty; far too many are.

Nor does this fault apply only to the teaching of mathematics, history, geography, Ancient Classics and Modern European languages. Although less than formerly—until (say) the early 1920's—it applies also and even more, much more, to the teaching of English.

A girl of ten writes what is, all things considered, a very good little essay on dolls; the maternal instinct emerges; the spinster mistress reproves the child with ' I don't think that is *quite* nice, do you, Mary? ' A boy of the same age writes of his ambition to become an airman. His vocabulary falls short of his imaginative flights, as obviously it must. His teacher implies that the result is childish: does he expect it to be mature? Perhaps, also, he condemns it for childishness when it is merely childlike. Contempt, sarcasm, irony, even a mild depreciation—any one of these may and probably will suffice to ' choke the boy off ' essays or stories for the rest of his life. A child of either sex may express a profound, naïvely-worded pleasure in a poem he has read: the teacher fails to perceive or chooses to ignore the (for the child) deep pleasure and crassly emphasizes the naïveté: a recruit to the ill-served cause of beauty is lost. An otherwise very bright pupil is doing badly at parsing and analysis, both of which can, by a good instructor, be made interesting—even exciting. But his teacher upbraids him with ' You're hopeless, John. I don't know what we're going to do about it.' That's the trouble. He doesn't know. He doesn't think. Evidently the boy, who has not ' got the hang of it ', does not see ' how it works '. That teacher has only to explain what the words are doing in a sentence (the roles they play, the work they perform), hence their relationship to other words; or what the sentences or clauses

[1] ' There's something devastating about the simple, needle-sharp intelligence of a child '; Charles Franklin, *Cocktails with a Stranger*, 1947.

do, the way in which they combine in a complex statement; and the pupil will 'catch on' quickly enough. I have known a teacher become impatient because, after he had dogmatically explained what 'the subject of a sentence' means, the form, confronted with 'The farmer gave young Tom an apple', confounded him thus:

Q. Which word is the subject, Willie? (More sensibly: 'What is the subject, Willie?')
A. Tom, sir.
Q. But didn't I carefully tell you that the subject of a sentence is a word denoting the person or thing we are talking about?
A. Yes, sir. But we are talking about Tom, aren't we, sir?
Q. Silly fellow! You, Harry! The subject?
A. Apple, sir, because we are talking about apples.

That teacher should have given himself an imposition for having so imperfectly explained the meaning of a subject.

In the teaching of English, the effects of repression and apathy are doubly injurious: injurious to English considered scholastically, i.e. as a subject in a curriculum; and, through English, injurious both to every other subject in that or any other curriculum and to all thinking, to all mental apprehension, to all intellectual activity—hence, also, to all moral and spiritual life.

At the risk of overstating the case, I shall quote the opinions of John Henry Newman, with Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch's remarks; the Rt Hon. Winston Churchill; Mr George Sampson; Professor L. C. Knights; Mr L. A. G. Strong; and Mr Frank Jones. I believe that the case can hardly be overstated, so imperfectly is it comprehended, so rarely is its lesson taught.

John Henry Newman in *The Idea of a University*, 1852, was the first Englishman to express, in a manner comprehensible by all, the essence of these seven statements.

> Thought and speech are inseparable from each other. Matter and expression are parts of one [merely two aspects of one thing]; style is a thinking out into language. . . . Not *things*, but the verbal symbols of things; not on the other hand mere *words*; but thoughts expressed in language. Call to mind . . . the meaning of the Greek word which expresses this special prerogative of man over the feeble intelligence of the lower animals. It is called Logos; what does Logos mean? it stands both for *reason* and for *speech*, and it is difficult to say which it means more properly. It means both at once: why? because really they cannot be divided. . . . When we can separate light and illumination, life and motion, the convex and the concave of a curve, then will it be possible for thought to tread speech under foot and to hope to do without it—then will it be conceivable that the vigorous and fertile intellect should renounce its own double, its instrument of expression and the channel of its speculations and emotions.

That remarkable passage was quoted by Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch in his lecture 'The Practice of Writing', delivered on February 12, 1913, at the University of Cambridge and reprinted, 1916, in *On The Art of Writing*. Sir Arthur's own comment not only serves as the true link between Newman and Sampson but also anticipates the statements and examples made and cited by Sampson's debtors.

> You cannot use the briefest, the humblest process of thought, cannot so much as resolve to take your bath hot or cold, or decide what to order for breakfast, without forecasting it to yourself in some form of words. Words are, in fine, the only currency in which we can exchange thought even with ourselves. Does it not follow, then, that the more accurately we use words, the closer definition we shall give to our thoughts? Does it not follow that by drilling ourselves to write perspicuously we train our minds to clarify their thought? Does it not follow that some practice in the deft use of words, with its corresponding defining of thought, may well be ancillary even to the study of Natural Science in a University?

Between Newman and Sampson I must interpose a quotation from one who, although not writing directly upon the thought-expression relationship, has yet made a notable point. Concerning the teaching of English at Harrow, the Rt Hon. Winston Churchill has, in *My Early Life*, said:

> Being so long in the lowest form I gained an immense advantage over the cleverer boys. . . . We were considered such dunces that we could learn only English. . . . I learned it thoroughly. Thus I got into my bones the essential structure of the ordinary British sentence—which is a noble thing. . . . Naturally I am biassed in favour of boys learning English. I would make them all learn English: and then I would let the clever ones learn Latin as an honour, and Greek as a treat.

In *English for the English*,[1] perhaps the twentieth century's most notable book upon the teaching of English, George Sampson has said:

> The word itself ['English'] is deceptively ambiguous. We use it to mean a teachable and examinable subject. . . . But we must never forget that English is something vastly greater than that. It includes and transcends all 'subjects'. It is for English people the whole means of expression, the attainment of which makes them articulate and intelligible human beings, able to inherit the past, to possess the present and to confront the future. It is English in this sense that we must teach our children all day long, at all stages in their school life. . . . Let those [teachers] who have tried any plans of individual work say whether their failures in such subjects as history and geography have not arisen through the pupils' lack of command over language. It is the possession of this ultimate English, this ability to understand and to communicate, that is the condition of progress in any form of study or intellectual occupation.

[1] In the Preface to the new edition, 1925 (1st ed., 1921).

In the chapter entitled ' Preliminary ', Mr Sampson goes a little further:

> Before the English child can awaken to any creative fulness of life he must become proficient in the use of his native tongue, the universal tool of all callings and of all conditions:

which, in ' A Plea ', he varies thus:

> In plain words and in the ordinary sense, English is not a school ' subject ' at all. It is a condition of school life. . . . Teachers seem to think that it is always some other person's work to look after English. *But every teacher is a teacher of English because every teacher is a teacher in English.*

The theme is developed with a literary skill no less remarkable than the logic and the good-sensible cogency of the argument. Every teacher should possess this book: and every teacher should study, ponder, remember ' A Plea '.[1]

In *Scrutiny*, September 1933, Professor L. C. Knights ('Scrutiny of Examinations ') acknowledges Sampson's influence and then approaches the subject from a slightly different direction.

> The [Scrutiny] project [of education] stresses English as a method of training in the use of words as ' the tools of thought ', as concerned with the quality of thinking and of emotional attitudes, and, therefore, as the point from which not only the ' appreciation of masterpieces ' but all education must take its start. . . . [English] has obvious associates, such as History, and the intelligent science master will not need to be told how it correlates with his own problems.

Eight years later, Mr L. A. G. Strong, novelist, short-story writer, dramatist, delivered to schools a series of broadcasts upon English[2]— English as a language, English as part of the school curriculum, English as the linguistic air we breathe. No less than Professor Knights he witnesses to the influence of George Sampson, especially in:

> *English* is not a subject: *English is everything.* For us who speak English, English is everything. English is what we say and what we think. . . .

Eloquently he continues thus:

> How do other people know you? They know you by what you say and do. How do they know what you want, what you like, what you hope for? They can only know from what you tell them and from what they can guess . . . all of it in English.

Rightly he shows his implicit contempt for those who might charge him with the horrible crime of repeating himself.

[1] Especially pp. 23–39.

[2] Published as *English for Pleasure*.

> English is not a subject. English is our life. English is what you and I use in order to think, to speak, and to show other people what we think. . . . If our choice of words is weak and wobbly: if we cannot say what we mean: then we are very badly handicapped in life . . . not only in our work and our career, but in all our dealings with other people.

He clinches that section of his closely knit argument by declaring:

> When you hear anyone say ' I'm no good at English ', what he or she really means is . . . ' I'm no good at thinking straight, I can't talk sense '.

Mr Frank Jones, formerly Second Master of King Edward's School, Birmingham, and a sanely provocative writer upon taught English, contributed to the *Sunday Times* of June 8, 1947, a very able article on ' The Importance of English '.

> The evil of the overcrowded syllabus is one of comparatively modern times. Today we are attempting too much and accomplishing too little. . . . Fortunately, there is one subject whose universal value is beyond controversy. Whether a boy is to be a doctor, a mechanic, a farmer, or a politician, an ability to express himself clearly is a *sine qua non.* A knowledge of English is for us, in fact, the basis of all knowledge.
>
> But [he continues] in the subject of English little progress has been made. From the potential office-boy's ill-spelt and ill-written application for a job to the ex-public schoolboy's letter to the newspaper and the turgid, incomprehensible Government ' regulations ', there is ample proof that the average Englishman cannot think clearly or express himself clearly in his mother tongue. For this our schools must take the blame.

Mr Frank Jones ends with a plea ' that much more time should be devoted to English ' and adds that ' it is everybody's job to teach it '. The plea expresses an obvious need; the statement is one of obvious fact; yet the need is ignored by many schools.

My plea is less ambitious: that, whoever the teacher, English be better taught. It will never be adequately taught until its value, its scope, its influence, its numerous connections, its richness, its power, its beauty have been clearly perceived and realized by its teachers and then communicated, along broad lines at first, to the pupils.

' Its scope, its influence, its numerous connections ': those are aspects of English which are far too often ignored and are almost as shamefully neglected as is the beauty of English. What Professor Knights neatly called the ' associates ' of English cannot receive much attention during the elementary stage of a course in English; and, quite rightly, they do not. Yet a few hints may be judiciously thrown out, especially in reference to history.

During the middle-school stage, approximately the years fourteen to early sixteen, the theme of the relationship between English and history

should be carefully developed. To boys and girls about to leave school at the age of (say) sixteen or after taking School Certificate or some corresponding examination, a brief, clear, cogent talk could advantageously be given concerning the links between English and other languages, between English and geography, between English and religion, law, medicine, and, if the 'year' be an intelligent one, between English and philosophy.

During the final stage—for instance, in higher school (ages sixteen to eighteen)—those various 'associates' should receive sufficient attention to enable the now rapidly maturing pupils or students to follow the fascinating cross-country roads leading from one region to another and to see that all subjects are inter-related and are but the particular aspects of knowledge in general; to conclude for themselves that he who is ignorant of Classical mythology knows English literature quite inadequately; to perceive that, to a reader without a knowledge of history, all historical plays and all historical novels, for instance, are a closed book and the allusions in newspapers a source of bewilderment; that for him who has no geography, both history and English are shorn of part of their interest, and travel literature simply doesn't exist; that without familiarity with at least one other European language, whether ancient or modern, it is difficult for anyone to form an adequate idea of the nature, worth, development and potentialities of the English language; and that . . . and that . . . and that . . .

Boys and girls at the advanced stage can, to some extent, look after themselves. But at the elementary and the middle stages they have a right to expect sympathetic and sensible guidance. That, in essays at least, they do not receive this guidance is distressingly clear to anyone who has read as many examination essays as I have.

Still worse, however, in many schools is the teaching of formal grammar: accidence and parsing: syntax and analysis. We have a society for the prevention of cruelty to dumb animals. We require also a society for the abolition of dry and unimaginative, when it isn't feeble or downright stupid, teaching of English to children. The parts of speech are too often explained by their form or appearance instead of by their function. Too often defined unsatisfactorily, as in 'A noun is the name of anything', whereas if *anything* occurs at all in the definition, that definition should be 'A noun may be the name of anything'; 'a noun is the name of something' is a good preliminary definition, but the word *something* has to be elaborated and particularized. 'An adjective is a qualifying word' is a definition appearing in many dictionaries and grammars. If the teacher called it 'a *describing* word' and gave numerous examples and showed how *dark* differs functionally from *darkness*, he would be more helpful. Mr Guy Pocock has, in *Grammar in a New Setting*, indicated the interest that can be aroused by pleasantly, unpedantically telling the pupils the etymology of the names attaching to the parts of speech, the cases in a declension, the components of analysis.

Children enjoy word-history, providing the teacher can tell the story. They remain interested until some dryasdust pedagogue quenches their curiosity with a brilliantly original remark about curiosity killing the cat or until some pedantic enthusiast begins to talk in terms of the so-called philological 'laws' or to use such terms as 'Sanskrit' or 'Low Latin' before explaining what these odd, remote languages are and where they belong in the scheme of languages. The differentiation of 'sentence', 'clause', 'phrase'; of 'active' and 'passive' voice (and the meaning and origin of that strange term *voice*); of 'indicative', 'conditional', 'imperative', 'subjunctive' mood (why *mood*?); of 'nominative', 'accusative' and 'genitive'—or 'subject', 'object', 'possessive'; of 'qualify' and 'modify': these very necessary differentiations are often explained—if *explained* at all—so haltingly, so inadequately, so dully that 'English grammar' becomes synonymous with boredom, tedium, dislike and, in nervous children, dread. To a teacher vague, bored and unconvincing, the children naturally respond with lack of interest and lack of understanding.

Turn now to the teaching of punctuation. How many teachers have worked out in their own minds the following simple scale of the various stops or punctuation marks?

no stops at all;
full stops;
commas;
semi-colons;
colons;
dashes;
question marks;
exclamation marks;
all the stops suitably employed.

By far the most important are the period (or full stop) and the comma; then comes the semi-colon; then, in teaching, the question and exclamation marks may profitably be interpolated; whereas colons require great care, dashes are simple—almost too simple. There are certain devices that can be profitably used in the teaching of punctuation, as there are in the teaching of parsing and analysis; several of these occur in the appropriate chapters, but they are to be regarded rather as reminders to teachers that they should more consistently exercise their imagination and their ingenuity, than as being entirely satisfactory devices (though I once found them so) or as exclusive of other devices. To call them 'devices' is perhaps slightly unfair to them, for they are practical, easily workable, and comprehensive. The most important thing for teachers to bear in mind is that punctuation is not a totalitarian framework to be rigidly imposed, but a flexible mechanism that can and should be adjusted to the needs of the tempo, the character, the context of the sentence or the passage to be punctuated.

Quite apart from punctuation, formal grammar, essay-writing in particular and composition in general, there are certain noteworthy aspects

of the teaching of English in a wider view—English as a preparation for life and as the basis of all intelligent study—to be considered and treated. The use of a dictionary and the art of reading are perhaps the most important: yet, in all such books about English as a school subject as I have examined (nor are they few), these general aspects and approaches are inadequately treated; the treatment being far too brief, the hints far too general, the method sketchy, the attitude one of perfunctoriness. One feels that too many writers of text-books upon English cannot forget that they are writing a text-book. If methodical, as many are, they tend to lack enthusiasm or, at any rate, spirit. And where enthusiasm exists, method is often to seek.

Method is part of the art of writing. It is better to conceal than to flaunt the art, the method. Boys and girls naturally and properly resent having a method imposed upon them, for they feel that instead of the method having been devised for their benefit, it has been designed to subserve the convenience of the teacher. But if they sense that the author of the method has put the benefit of the pupils before his own selfish pleasure (derived perhaps from the devising of a doctrinaire system) and before the teacher's delight in experimenting with an inhuman architecture, then they become sympathetic to it, especially if they feel that the author's enthusiasm springs, not from ignorance but from knowledge, not from theory but from practice, not from practice only but from vision too.

If a teacher cannot strike sparks from the anvil of young, impressionable, fresh and lively minds, then he should not be teaching. If he is so set upon his own ideas that he cannot, or will not, welcome the ideas of others, then he should not be teaching. If he cannot prepare for his pupils a plentiful supply of examples and exercises to supplement those examples and exercises which the author of this or that Course has furnished, then he should not be teaching. As a teacher he would make an excellent undertaker. All those requisites which I have mentioned are well within the range of the averagely intelligent teacher.

If a teacher thinks himself or herself back into boyhood or girlhood, remembers how the pupils must be feeling about this problem or that lesson, and then so acts upon that memory and that sympathy as to fuse them with present practice, he will succeed. Let the teacher remember the problems that confronted him when he himself was at school: doing this, he will soon resolve the problems confronting his own pupils.

The profession of teacher is a noble one: difficult, exasperating, wearying, humorous, moving, inspiriting; in short, worth-while. If a teacher is bored, he will bore his pupils; if weary, he will weary them: but if he is sincere, keen, alert, capable, sympathetic, he will find himself richly repaid. A good teacher is his own reward.

AN APPROACH TO ENGLISH

For the Learner

As you[1] know, there is a right way and a wrong way of doing everything. Or there may be many ways; some bad; others passable; and the best. Only the best way is the right way.

There are many ways to study English, and all of them depend upon how you approach English. To adapt a well-worn proverb: A thing begun the best way is already more than half done. Not, perhaps, in the matter of time; yet time is the least important factor for you who have years and delightful years of school to look forward to; but in difficulty. Any good writer will tell you that, unless he goes about his work in the most natural way, the *best* way, the work causes him much trouble. On the other hand, he may exclaim, 'At last I know just what is to be done and just how to do it. Now I have only to *write* the book!'

Very much the same thing applies to learning English. After all, those of you who are British or American have been speaking English from the age of nine or ten or eleven or twelve or . . . months. You have already done much of the work, especially if your home is one where good English is spoken. When you are excited or careless, you speak—well, not very good English. If a professional writer is careless, he writes—well, not very good English. Remembering that point, you will be wise to write as you speak. You will also remember that you both get and give much pleasure, and spare yourselves and others much trouble, by speaking and writing well. If you speak or write clearly, you are speaking or writing well.

There is no mystery about speaking. No mystery about writing. It's true that there are a few rules to learn: they are not hard to learn. They are there to help, not to hinder, nor to weary you: they are a convenience, like a train; a very great convenience to all of us. In a sense, these rules of speech (hence, of writing) are very much like the ordinary rules of life—the customs and the manners of those among whom we live, move, work and play. By observing these rules we make life easier; we make

[1] Unless someone else—for instance, the teacher—is specified, *you* means 'You, the pupil or the pupils; you, the private student'. Where the treatment does not demand the personal touch, it is impersonal; where, however, it does demand that personal touch, I say 'you'. I have, by a practising teacher, been told that pupils resent being addressed thus intimately: to that, I can only reply, 'In my not wholly negligible experience, I have not found it so'. A teacher does not address his class as 'one', but as 'you'. If a teacher does this, why cannot a writer—when it suits him? Is that understood? But then, I didn't really need to ask.

life harder if we fail to observe them. Especially if we fail to make our meaning clear to others.

The number of grammatical rules necessary to the ordinary give-and-take of life is astonishingly small. But to achieve power and distinction, sympathy and many-sidedness, whether in our thinking or, hence, in our actions, we need to learn, or to assimilate, much more than those few rules. That ' much more ' consists, not in rules but in ' the finer points ' of thinking and, hence, of speaking and writing.

We are, all of us, a part of history: and history is thought issuing in action. Remember that a kind word or a cruel speech, a friendly letter or a bad book, are actions in the same way as playing a game, digging in the garden, working for a living, discovering a cure beneficial to mankind are actions. Certain actions are more important than others. They may be more important morally or politically, artistically or scientifically.

The value or the uselessness, the importance or the unimportance, the goodness or the evil, the beauty or the ugliness of our actions—all these depend upon our abilities for good or evil, for service or hindrance. Those abilities may be manual or mental or spiritual. Our spiritual abilities depend in part upon will, in part upon mind; our mental abilities depend upon our powers of thought, our powers of observation and, in smaller part, our health; our manual abilities (skill, strength, and the like) depend upon our physical make-up. But each ability is affected by the other two.

In everything we do or wish to do, thought plays a part that could hardly be exaggerated. We can think *only* with words and we can adequately express our meanings only with words; we can satisfactorily live with others only by our ability to use words—or, if we are dumb, by our ability to understand them; we can take a useful place in life, as lawyer or librarian, as clerk or conductor, as tradesman or teacher, as workman or writer, as shoemaker or statesman, only if we can communicate, clearly and variously, with others.

The best—by far the best—means of communication is words, whether in speech or in writing. We can satisfactorily communicate only by thinking what we have to communicate: and we can think only with words. (Just try to think without them!)

Obviously, then, we must possess a store of words and we must understand those words; they are the tools of all our thinking. That is one of the two main needs. The other is that we should be able to put them into statements or, as grammarians call them, sentences. We should be able to put them into an order that everyone will understand; this implies putting our thoughts in order. We must, in addition, be able to add one thought, hence one sentence, to another; and we can do this better if we know how to connect our thoughts, hence our sentences. Not only our thoughts, but our feelings. To ourselves a feeling is hardly less real if we cannot describe it; to others it becomes real only if we can describe it. A fear may be horribly real without being put into words: but until

we can put it clearly into words—that is, think clearly about it—we cannot help ourselves, nor enable others to help us.

You are too intelligent to fail to grasp that what I am driving at is this: We must learn to think clearly, unless we are content to be useless and a danger to others, a deadly danger to ourselves. Yet we can think only with words.

The better we can use words, the better we can think; the better we can think, the better we can use words. The better we can do these two things, which are obviously inseparable, the better can we live—by being more useful and by being happier. From clear thinking, and only from clear thinking, comes clear action.[1]

Words, therefore, both separately and, especially, in sentences, are not merely important. They are vital. The more we think about *what* we say and of *how* to say it (or, of course, write it), the easier it becomes to speak or to write. The easier it becomes to speak and write well, the easier it becomes to think well. The better our thinking becomes, the better our speech and writing become. And so it goes on. It is a magic circle.

But not a magic circle in which we go round and round and round, forever ending up where we began. It is not one circle but many circles. The circles grow larger and yet larger. By increasing our powers of thought and speech, we widen the range of our interests, we strengthen our understanding, we enlarge our sympathies. We come to understand, hence to appreciate, more and more. More and more of persons and of things; of actions and of the reasons for those actions; of art and literature and music. We become better thinkers, hence better acters; we become better acters, hence better thinkers. We move more and more freely and confidently in the world of men and things—in the world of thoughts —in the world of the spirit. We come to see that these three worlds are but aspects of one world: the world in which we shall now be able to live by right. By the right of understanding and by the consequent right of sympathy and appreciation.

That understanding, that sympathy, that appreciation cannot increase without the co-operation of others. Those others can, and do, help us with words: the living by their spoken or written words; by their writings, the dead. Whether alive or dead, those others will perhaps aid us by their inventions or paintings or music. Or again, by their expressed thoughts concerning those things which we call spiritual; those lovely or those wondrous things, ' the intangibles ', which endure when all else goes.

To revert. History, we have seen, is thought in action. The history of the future will be thought in action. We can fully share in the history of the past only by reading, or by hearing, about it. We shall beneficially share in and therefore favourably influence the history of the future, which in its turn becomes the past, only by thinking before we act—or by acting

[1] This, I hope, will prevent anyone from insinuating that I believe words to be more important than actions. I merely state that actions spring, or should spring, from thought; but thought can function only by means of words.

unthinkingly, yet well, precisely because our previous good acts and feelings have been thought about.

The link between thinking and speaking (or writing) is now clear. The practical issue is this: By thinking about what you learn, whether at home or at school or elsewhere, you will cause everything you learn to come much more easily to you. And much more lastingly.

This gain will appear especially in your English. Yet the inevitable improvement applies not only to the lessons and studies in English itself, but also to English as it affects every other subject at school or in study. Hence, in short, every activity whatsoever. For upon your knowledge of English—*your* language, *your* instrument of learning, *your* means of communication with others—depend your knowledge of every other subject and your capabilities in every sphere and in every activity.

By your knowledge of English and by your ability to use it (an ability gained from lessons, from study, and from constant practice both in and out of school)—by the degree of your knowledge and ability, you will succeed or fail, be useful or useless or even a positive danger, be happy or unhappy.

You can do, or be, all these desirable things—and probably more—if you wish. The more will follow because of your ability to understand and to appreciate things, people, hearts and minds, fears and hopes and aims, worth and beauty and wonder, and because that ability depends, in the main, upon what you learn from parents, teachers, books, art, music. In the main, you will learn it through speech and writing, your own as well as that of others. Each of you can, if he wishes, make himself, not one who resembles the person in Wordsworth's:

> A primrose by a river's brim
> A yellow primrose was to him,
> And it was nothing more,

but one who, in Shakespeare's words:

> Finds tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,
> Sermons[1] in stones, and good[1] in everything.

Knowing these things, you will find English to be easy to learn and exciting to use. Thinking will become a pleasure; speaking and writing, a joy.

[1] Here, Shakespeare applies *sermon* to 'something that either instructs (or informs) us or serves as an example', and *good* to 'profit, mental and moral'.

PRONUNCIATION

LIKE reading, pronunciation can be taught only in class. Many children have the good luck to be able to pick it up at home, without even being aware that they are learning something both useful and valuable.

The ensuing paragraphs, therefore, are in no sense an attempt to teach pronunciation. They merely aim to tell you something about pronunciation and to point a few of the reasons why pronunciation is important.

> In treating of specific sounds, we should do well to keep in mind (preferably at the back of our minds) the meanings of the words in which they occur; but in building a theory of sounds, it is preferable to concentrate upon the sounds themselves. 'It is a simple consequence of the nature of the spoken language that it is possible to have a theory of human speech-sounds in general, the way in which they are produced by the organs[1] of speech,[1] and the way in which they are combined to form syllables and higher units'[2] (words, phrases, etc.): this may conveniently be called *phonetics*. 'By the side of this we have the theory of what is peculiar to the one particular language with which the grammarian is concerned': this may conveniently be called *phonology*, although *phonetics* is more widely used in this sense too.
>
> But phonetics and phonology are not—or should not be—learnt from a book. General phonetics should be taught in actual demonstration by one who has an elastic mouth and an indiarubber throat (children naturally have these advantages and necessities); and particular phonology should, in respect of its elements, be imparted in the same way.[3]

Ultimately it is impossible to treat form (spelling and pronunciation) and meaning separately: 'sound and signification [i.e., meaning], form and function, are inseparable in the life of language'. If you do not know how a word is pronounced—*correctly pronounced*—you are going to miss rather more than I could explain without recourse to philosophy, which is, I fear, beyond your present capabilities; unless you happen to be an adult student, presumably non-English.

That great teacher, George Sampson, has remarked that

> We [teachers] neglect to give the beginner the beginning of things. . . . It is specially upon Speech that our work must be bottomed [that is, based] if it is to hold firm. . . . From the beginning we must teach

[1] Tongue and palate and teeth; throat and lungs.

[2] Otto Jespersen, *The Philosophy of Grammar*: which every teacher might profitably study.

[3] A modified quotation from my *The World of Words*.

> our charges first to know clearly what they want to say, and next to say it clearly. . . . The word ' speech ' must be understood in all its senses. Clearness of enunciation is almost as important as clearness of expression, just as bad intonation is worse than incorrect pronunciation.

Now, here are some remarks by the author of *English for Pleasure*. They are particularly valuable, because Mr L. A. G. Strong is not only a famous writer but also an excellent speaker, whether on the wireless or as an elocutionist or as a raconteur. To hear him read one of his own short stories is a great pleasure. And what he says has yet another value: like myself, he began life (in the sense ' livelihood ') as a schoolmaster; he is not one of those slick educational theorists who, confronted with a class, are complete failures as teachers.

First, he makes a statement and leaves his audience to draw the ' moral ', as I shall do.

> If people could not understand me, if I had an accent that was difficult to follow, or a trick of speech that made me hard to understand, then I should not ever have been allowed to broadcast.

Most people's accents are not ' difficult to follow '. If one's pronunciation is tolerably correct and one's enunciation tolerably clear and one's intonation recognizably British, the accent (unless a very baffling one) is comparatively unimportant. Mr Strong very modestly says,

> My own speaking is a mongrel affair, part Irish, part West Country, part Oxford. . . . But it is recognizable English, and people can understand what I am saying.

My own is still more mongrel, being part New Zealand, part Australian, part Oxford and part London. But ' it is recognizable English, and people can understand what I am saying '—whether in a broadcast or in the ordinary way, although I lack Mr Strong's admirable enunciation. So don't let accent worry you unduly.

Some of Mr Strong's comments are so important that you, or your teachers to you, should read the chapter (originally a broadcast talk to schools) entitled ' How We Speak '.

> To give a good impression, a sincere impression, we need no tricks or refinements, no la-di-da nonsense. We need only to use our voice honestly and clearly.

True; he does, however, go on to indicate the advantages of speaking some form or other of Standard English or, in the United States, Standard American; it need not be Southern (or Public School) English, nor Boston American; what phoneticians call Modified Standard[1] will serve very

[1] Ask your teacher about this.

nicely, and don't let anyone tell you different! On the other hand, don't go imagining that a Manchester or Glasgow accent and vocabulary are superior to those of educated Oxford and Cambridge graduates; that Sydney or Melbourne speech is superior to that of England; that Cape Town speaks a better English than Edinburgh or Belfast does; that a Brooklyn ' boid ' chirps more sweetly than a Southern plantation-owner, or that the accent of Chicago is better than that of Philadelphia.

We were born with a throat and a tongue we cannot radically change: but we can at least learn how to use them.

Merely for reference, I append a table of the commonest of the symbols that go to form the phonetic ' alphabet ', there being far fewer letters than sounds.

PHONETIC SYMBOLS

The following symbols for the English speech-sounds are international and therefore understandable by everybody. Although phonetics can properly be learnt only orally, yet these phonetic symbols can easily be memorized without lessons in phonetics.

ɑ	= *a* as in ' rather '
a	= *y* or *i* sound in ' fly ' or ' sigh '
æ	= *a* as in ' cab ' or ' tab '
e	= *e* ,, ,, ' net '
ei	= the vowel in ' they ' or ' bay '
ɛ	= ,, ,, ,, ' fair '
ə:	= ,, ,, ,, ' bird '
ə	= ,, ,, ,, ' *a*bove ', ' Chin*a* '
i:	= ,, ,, ,, ' see ' or ' be '
i	= ,, ,, ,, ' it ' or '(to) live '
o	= ,, ,, ,, Fr. ' b*o*n '
ou	= ,, ,, ,, ' go '
ɔ:	= ,, ,, ,, ' saw ' or ' raw '
ɔ	= ,, ,, ,, ' got ' or ' not '
ʌ	= ,, ,, ,, ' up ' or 'sup '
u:	= ,, ,, ,, ' rule ' or ' food '
u	= ,, ,, ,, ' good ' or 'wood '
[ju	= the sound in ' tune ' or ' new ']

b	= *b* as in ' boy '
[dʒ	= *j* in ' jam '; *g* in ' gem ']
d	= *d* as in ' dance '
f	= *f* ,, ,, ' fair ' or ' foot '
g	= *g* ,, ,, ' go ' or ' good '
h	= *h* ,, ,, ' hay ' or ' hard '
j	= the consonant in ' yes ' or German ' ja '
k	= the consonant in ' *k*angaroo' or ' *c*old '
l	= the consonant in ' *l*ive ' or ' coo*l* '
m	= the consonant in ' *m*ad '
n	= the consonant in ' no '
ŋ	= *ng* as in ' long '
p	= *p* ,, ,, ' part ' or ' cap '
r	= *r* ,, ,, ' ready '
s	= *s* ,, ,, ' soon ' or ' sun '
ʃ	= *sh* ,, ,, ' show '
ʒ	= *s* ,, ,, ' treasure '
z	= *z* ,, ,, ' zeal '
t	= *t* ,, ,, ' tin '
[tʃ	= the *ch* of ' chain ', the *tch* ' watch ']
θ	= *th* as in ' thin '
ð	= *th* ,, ,, ' then '
v	= *v* ,, ,, ' very ' or ' vain '
w	= *w* ,, ,, ' water ' or ' wine '

The letter *q* (or *qu*) is pronounced k in ' conquer '; kw in ' queen '

ʍ = *wh* as in ' when '

Note.—The best books on the subject of English speech-sounds are Daniel Jones's *An Outline of English Phonetics* and his *An English Pronouncing Dictionary*; but make sure to consult them in the latest editions.

George Philip Krapp, *The Pronunciation of Standard English in America*, and Professor Kenyon's concise ' guide to pronunciation ' in *Webster's New International Dictionary*, are the best for American English.

For Australian English, see Sidney J. Baker, *Australian Pronunciation*, 1947.

EXERCISES

1. What do you suppose is the meaning of ' without rhyme or reason ' or, as it is sometimes quoted, ' neither rhyme nor reason '?
   (If you do not know what *rhyme* is, ask your teacher—or turn to a dictionary.)
2. What is phonology?
3. Are phonology and phonetics two different things, or merely two aspects of the one thing?
4. Can you sensibly separate sound and sense?
5. What are George Sampson's views concerning the value of good spoken English? How would they apply to America?
6. What is accent?
7. Who is L. A. G. Strong?
8. What sort of speech do *you* expect from (*a*) a radio announcer of news and (*b*) a ' talker ' on the radio?
9. What sort of English or American or Australian or South African, etc., do *you* speak?
10. What sort would you like to be able to speak well—and why?
11. If you had a shop in the fashionable part of a city, what sort of speech would you expect your assistants to use when addressing customers?
12. If, on the other hand, you owned a shop, or even if you merely managed a shop, either in the poor quarter of a town or a city, or maybe in a village, what would be the least of your speech requirements from your assistants?
13. How do you expect your ' English ' teacher to speak? State your reasons.
14. Would your teacher be unreasonable to expect the same of you?
    (Ignore the point that he or she probably knows a greater number of words than you do.)
15. If a dictionary gives the pronunciation of words, do you prefer the pronunciation to be in phonetic symbols or in ordinary characters, i.e. letters? The reasons for your preference would be useful.

'WHAT *IS* GRAMMAR?'

GRAMMAR. The art concerned with the right use and application of the rules of a language in speaking or writing. *Webster's New International Dictionary.*

La plus part des occasions des troubles du monde sont grammairiennes, Montaigne, *Essais,* ii, ch. 12 (published in 1580): Most of this world's misunderstandings[1] are caused by questions of grammar.

PERHAPS Montaigne's statement appears exaggerated. It isn't. If we spoke clearly, wrote clearly, understood clearly—none of which could we do without thinking clearly—we should not get ourselves and others, nor would they get us, into trouble.

Grammar, therefore, is an important word because it stands for an exceedingly important thing.

The word has come to us, through the French *grammaire,* from the Latin *grammatica ars* ('the grammatical art'), a rendering of the Greek '*grammatiké tekhné*', likewise meaning 'the grammatical art', where *grammatiké* derives from *gramma,* 'a letter of the alphabet', itself from *graphein,* 'to write'. In Greek or Latin, *grammatiké* or *grammatica* meant 'literature and philology', *philology* being the study of language; hence, a *grammarian* at first signified an authority on, or a writer about, literature and language; hence, often on language alone. In the Middle Ages, *grammar* was applied especially to the study of Latin: and this forms the origin of *grammar school,* grammar schools being originally—in the late Middle Ages—schools where the principal subject was Latin, beginning with Latin grammar. And so *grammar* naturally came to have the meaning it bears in that definition which figures at the head of this page.

> In one sense, a language may be said to consist of whatever is the number of words and phrases that this particular language possesses. One learns, however, only so many of those words and phrases as one needs to know; at least, that is the ideal, for actually one fails to learn a certain number that might be very helpful, and learns a few that are of no use whatsoever. But if one is learning a language . . . , one has to be taught, or to pick up, or, as a child does, assimilate . . . those rules which tell us *how* to put those words together into phrases and sentences:

[1] Perhaps 'quarrels' or, more probably, 'dissensions': in the sixteenth century the French word bore all these senses, which, obviously, are very closely interrelated. To translate the French *troubles* by the English 'troubles', in its predominant twentieth century sense, would be foolish.

this process is taught by grammar; the process itself is applied grammar and is, in fact, the *spirit* of grammar; a spirit that can be helped by the letter of grammar or, in other words, by the rules.[1]

It may comfort you to know that, in the first stage of any language, there were no grammatical rules; no rules governing the ways in which men express their thoughts; no rule, for instance, to tell them how to form a plural (*feet, horses*) from a singular (*foot, horse*); not even a rule warning them that such a change has to be made. The first rules were based upon speech as it already existed. Practice, in short, preceded theory: as it always has done in language. Language has been made for us, not we for language; that process continues; it is we who continue it.

As speech became fuller (more words) and subtler (more ways of expressing a single act or fact or thought), so the rules became more numerous. Only the thoughtless were inconvenienced or irritated by the rules; all the others regarded them as being extremely useful. For instance, it was, as it still is, convenient and agreeable to know how to grapple with, how to indicate, differences in time. Time past, present, future. The rules of tense enable us to tackle the difficulty: and we do it by using one or other of the tenses exemplified in the following graduated set of sentences:

I *am* well—I *see* the sky
I *have been looking* at the sky
I *have been* well—I *have looked* at the sky
I *was* well—I *saw* the sky
I *was looking* at the sky
I *had been* well—I *had seen* the sky
I *shall be* well again—I *shall see* the sky
I *shall be looking* at the sky
I *shall have looked* at the sky.

Now turn to such a sentence as this:

I had not known whether, even if he were able, Harry would come, because he might so easily have ignored my letter, for, after all, he was under no obligation to come; yet when I arrived, whom should I see but Harry?

In the early stages of a language, any language, the English language, it would have been impossible for men to express those thoughts at all except in five or six or seven sentences: and even then the central thought would not have been very clear.

Some of the rules governing such a sentence cannot easily be assimilated: they have to be learnt.

[1] The quotation comes from 'What Grammar Is—and Why' in my *The World of Words: An Introduction to Language* (Hamish Hamilton, London); that chapter is extensively drawn upon throughout this one. Teachers might find *The World of Words* not unuseful, for it deals with the problems facing beginners.

Hence the school; hence the teacher; hence also the grammar books, the textbooks on English; hence several chapters in this particular course.

Grammar falls into two main parts:

(1) Accidence, or the *accidents* of words, the things that happen to them—the changes in words; the flexions,[1] as grammarians call them. Examples of flexion are 'a *dog*', 'a *dog's* dinner', 'Two *dogs* make a fight, three a riot'; 'He hit *me*', 'That is *my* book, not yours. I tell you, it is *mine*'; '*He* came', 'It came to *him*', 'The red book is *his* book'.

(2) Syntax, which means 'organization; an arrangement'; hence, the arrangement of words in a sentence, the building or construction of sentences, as in 'John was a bad king', 'John, when he became king, showed himself to be a bad man', 'John, who, when he became king, showed himself to be a bad man, deserves less fame than those barons who forced the Great Charter upon him'.

From the two paragraphs preceding this, you may have gathered that grammar can, after all, serve a useful purpose. If you wish to express yourselves well (and who doesn't?), you will find that the rules of grammar help you to do so. This applies whenever, as at first and always, you intend to be clear—silence is preferable to speech that is not clear; whenever you wish to be brief—it is always better to be brief than wordy; and whenever you wish to go further by expressing yourself freshly, vigorously, arrestingly, beautifully, as we all sometimes wish to do—and some of us at all times.

It is necessary not merely to know the rules but also to understand them: to grasp what they mean, everything they mean; to learn why the rules were made; and to be able to apply them whenever we speak and whenever we write. For every rule, there is a good reason. Usually it is also a very interesting reason. You may feel surprised when, as you probably will, you discover that you can get much fun from grammar if you tackle it in the right way and in the right spirit. In the rules themselves—and in learning them—there is fun: provided that you, or your teacher, or, best of all, you and your teacher know how to find it.

Rules are not based upon theory and then thrown at you with a 'Take it or leave it!' They are based upon centuries of speech, the speech of men and women and children no brighter than yourselves. They had to form the language; that is, they had to learn how to speak, hence to write, in a way that would make it easier for them—and for us—to speak and write. We ourselves could have done that. But we are lucky: we have only to learn the results of all their efforts and all their experiments. We merely 'carry on'.

If you know what a rule safeguards you against and how it helps you to speak and write clearly and briefly, then the rule itself becomes human and speaks to you with the voices of our ancestors and benefactors. You will now realize that the rules of grammar were not designed to plague

[1] Or inflections.

you but to assist you. They are, as it were, laws: laws not to imprison you and me, not to enmesh us in a tiresome net, but to free us from the prison of our own ignorance.

Nor does grammar remain always the same. In Queen Victoria's day it was a sin to split an infinitive, as in 'even *to occasionally split* one'; a crime to put a preposition at the end of a sentence, as in 'This is the country I belong *to*'. Nowadays we are more tolerant; occasionally it is necessary or, at the least, extremely convenient to split the one or do the other. Language is used—spoken or written or read—by human beings. Language, therefore, is worthy of considerate, tolerant treatment. Language is not merely related to life, but an inescapable and valuable part of it. By rendering language a more intimate, better understood part of life, we vastly improve our chance of making a success of our lives.

The events and incidents of our lives, the emergencies with which, both when we are old and when we are young and therefore inexperienced, we have to deal, are hardly less various than numerous; the objects we must learn to recognize and understand are even more numerous, even more various. Many of these happenings and many of these objects puzzle and, if we let them impose upon us, may bewilder us. With all these events and objects and with all the new emotions we experience, language has to contend. On the one hand, language has to fit them all; on the other, it serves to reduce them to their due proportions and hence render them much less daunting. Especially, language has so to master all these happenings, objects and emotions that they acquire a definite meaning: become things we understand, not obstacles in the path of understanding: and finally, yet quite naturally, fall into a clear order with, so far as possible, clear values. In short, experience enables us to gain a sense of proportion, a sense of values.

It is sometimes difficult for language to do this. But as our personal problems become simpler if only we think clearly about them, so do our words and phrases and sentences—that is, our statements and questions—become more exact if we look squarely and alertly at the world and its contents and thus train ourselves to see them as they are. Phrased differently, that point of view might be expressed in the following way.

> Words do not exist in their own right, although they have rights of their own. Words stand for things, represent things, are the symbols of things; and by things we mean objects and acts and thoughts and feelings. Never think of a word as something apart from what it stands for—represents—pictures—indicates—symbolizes. Not even the most pedantic etymologist can treat a word as a mere shape or form. Separation[1] of a word from the act or thing or thought or feeling it represents or indicates is bound to cause trouble: to cause confusion in the mind and thus make us commit gross errors in naming those things and acts, those thoughts and feelings. Unnecessary trouble. Fortunately for us, it is difficult to

[1] Some grammarians call it *dissociation*. Others call it *distinction*.

think of a word apart from what it represents or symbolizes; it is foolish to try to do so.[1]

Since, in our minds, words are the things themselves, conflicts occur. For instance, there used to be long and bitter arguments about collective nouns (*herd*, *flock*, *mob*, *committee*): Do they take a singular verb (' The herd *has* fled ') or a plural verb (' The committee *have* decided to appoint a headmaster, not a headmistress ')? Commonsense has settled the point. If a collective noun is regarded as a unit, the verb is singular, as in ' The flock has disappeared over the hill ', but if it is viewed as a collection of individuals, the verb is plural, as in ' The committee are unable to come to an agreement '.

If you regard grammar as a bore, a nuisance, a waste of time, you are making it a bore to yourselves, a waste of the teacher's time, and a nuisance to everybody. By now, you will have seen how stupid it would be to do this, for you must have noticed that grammar results from mankind's attempt to speak and write coherently and, by speaking or writing clearly, to make language easier to understand; in a few words, it enables us to communicate with others, others with us. Grammar forms a notable aid to speaking, writing, listening; in short, to communication. More: without grammar, we should have difficulty in understanding anything except the simplest messages or warnings.

Most grammar is easy. But to express an involved state of things, a subtle idea, a complicated process or an intricate piece of machinery, we need a little more thought than we give to causing a big ball to fall between two posts or over a line, or a small one to hit three sticks or to not hit a net or to fall into a tiny hole. A difficult transaction, such as merging two businesses or starting a commercial company upon the right lines, or a difficult piece of story-telling, such as the narration of a long series of events involving many persons, or the communication of an abstract idea (for instance, ' The quality of mercy is not strained '), all these and many similar tasks or situations require a clear head. And clear grammar. Many of us understand that $1 + 1 = 2$. Not all reckoning is as easy as that, nor all statements so easy to make.

Only a fool is content to remain ignorant of the tools or instruments he is using; only a fool thinks it unnecessary to understand the words he is using. This being so, you will find it useful—you will, indeed, find it necessary—to bear constantly in mind the relationship between speaker and hearer, hence the only slightly less important relationship between writer and reader.

We can never hope to understand what language is and how it progresses (or doesn't) unless we remember that language is primarily the inter-activity of speech and hearing, and that writing is, in a sense, speech at second hand. Grammar is that wonderful and invaluable set of means and devices whereby we can render our words significant and make our

[1] Quoted, with a few changes, from *The World of Words*.

ideas pass easily, from within ourselves, to other persons. Language is the vehicle, the carrier, of our thoughts and feelings and of our stories, whether true or imagined; grammar is the machinery by which that vehicle is set and kept in motion; the motive power (the steam, the electricity, the turbine) is the mind; and the speech-sounds, or the printed page, are the air and space through which the vehicle moves.[1]

Speech falls into two groups or orders: formulas and free expressions. Formulas are those groups or collections of words which run together and form a unit, whereas free expressions are variable formations.

In English, whether of the British or of the American branch, and in most other languages, there are certain phrases and very short sentences that are formulas: they are unchangeable, or rarely changed. *Good day!*, as a greeting, is a formula; so are *How do you do?* and *Thank you!* (I thank you). They differ widely from *I gave the boy a lump of sugar* or *She guessed that the cat was hungry.*

I gave the boy a lump of sugar is of an entirely different order from *Good day!* or *How do you do?*, for it can be changed in every member or part, as, for instance:

You gave the boy a lump of sugar
She *lent* the boy a lump of sugar
We brought *that* boy a lump of sugar
They sent this *girl* a lump of sugar
He sent this girl *no* lump of sugar
Dick threw to the man a *loaf* of sugar

and there are many other variations, such as

Shall I send you twenty lumps of sugar?
To think that you sent that ungrateful woman a half-pound of sugar!

In formulas we have only to remember the formula, but in free expressions we have to create a new frame for every shade of the same basic idea and invent as many different expressions as there are thoughts. Nevertheless, most free expressions fall into a few familiar moulds, a few well-known types of phrase or sentence. In simple sentences, the mould is used almost automatically. For instance, *Jack and Jill went up the hill* is obviously of the same type or mould as *Humpty-Dumpty had a great fall*; no less obviously, *I gave the boy a lump of sugar* is of the same type as *The boy's father lent me five dollars.* Nevertheless, free expressions are, as you will have noted, far better fun than formulas: when we use formulas we are parrots; when we use free expressions we are inventors.

Yet our inventions are often makeshift. In writing, we think—or should think—beforehand. In speech, we go straight ahead and make the best

[1] *The World of Words.*

we can of the sentence; with practice that 'best we can' becomes very good. In conversation, mistakes and oddities are permissible and, except to the pedant, sometimes not unpleasing. Those mistakes and oddities are no longer permissible, usually they are downright unpleasant, in all writing except that in which conversation is repeated word for word.

The English language, like all other languages, is not merely its vocabulary; not merely that collection of words which is the set of tools it uses. English is not a mere storehouse of words manipulated in accordance with a number of rules. English is both a mass, a constantly changing mass, of words and phrases; and a set of speech-habits, some of which may change. That set of habits and that mass of terms require more than rules to render them intelligible: they require the constant exercise of our intelligence. (A good thing too! Otherwise our brains would rust. Many people's brains do rust.)

Neither sentences nor even words flow automatically from a speaker, nor yet from a writer. They are complex actions or processes, and they demand his unflagging attention if he desires to avoid making a fool of himself and wasting his companion's, his audience's, his reader's time. Whether speaking or writing, we can usually remember such a type of sentence as will serve our purpose; that is, to express our thought. But we still have to hit upon the right word; right, not only for the subject but also for our audience. We feel the need to vary the types of sentence; the more creative and imaginative of us occasionally feel that we should like to devise a—for us—new mould of expression, a fresh sentence-shape; for everybody, the one or the other excursion affords an exciting and beneficial exercise of the mind.

Take a boy or a girl willing, perhaps eager, to adventure among words, new words and phrases and new types of sentence—that is, fresh ways in which to express his or her thoughts and feelings. Such a student, such a creator, for that is what this pupil has already become, will practise speaking and writing and gradually attain skill in speech and composition. From willing he becomes practised, from ready he becomes fluent; from fluent, adventurous; from adventurous, rich in resource, rich in expression. Thus he (or she) will develop a gift from the stage of mere willingness or vague wish to the stage of an adequate, distinctive style. To an adequate, unmistakable expression of his thoughts, aims, emotions.

But he will not so develop it if, to him, syntax is either a joke or a mystery or if composition is a worry or a bore. If he does think them a joke, a bore, it is he himself who will become the bore and the joke. Grammar is far from being so difficult as to form a mystery; on the contrary it will, if you insist on understanding every step you take in it, every lesson and every phase of the subject, provide you with much exhilarating exercise and not a little entertainment. You will the sooner realize this to be so if you notice (it'll hit you in the eye) that grammar is not a matter of words only.

Grammar is based upon—and easily soluble by—the natural qualities and activities, and the deliberate exercise, of the mind. It helps you, the learners, as it helps the student, to deal competently with that large part of life which consists of talking, reading,[1] writing. It is indispensable to that still larger part of life which depends upon and results from talking and reading and writing. Grammar can be neither taught by a pedant nor learnt from a pedantic book. It cannot be explained woodenly nor conveyed as though it were drill on a parade ground, for there are numerous exceptions and variations, and sometimes there are alternatives or potentialities.[2] Exceptions, variations, alternatives, potentialities: all of them have a history, most of them a reason: both the history and the reason are instructive, and anything but dull.

The historical treatment of grammar has proved that those rules which formerly seemed to lack reason and those exceptions which formerly seemed to be mysterious have very good reasons and no mystery. Such exceptions to the rule of the plural as *man, men,* and *foot, feet,* will, in the next chapter, be shown not as irregularities but as survivals.

The historical treatment of grammar in the schools hardly antedates the twentieth century and was rare before 1920 or so. Another modern feature of the teaching of grammar is the abandonment of the old and arbitrary treatment of the aspects of language, especially the parts of speech, by description: with a consequent adoption of the treatment by function. The function of a word is the work it does—the part it plays—its duty and its job—in a phrase or a simple sentence; the function of a phrase is the activity it displays in the sentence in which it occurs; the function of a clause (*when he comes, if he comes, because he has come*) is the task it performs, its role, in a complex sentence (*When he comes, if he comes at all, he will be a great success simply because he has come after all*). Immediately you have perceived,[3] and you will very quickly perceive, what a word, a phrase, a clause *does,* you will find it easy to say what it is.

You will also find it easy to realize that sound and sense[4] cannot, either of them, be separated from the other; this suggests one very good reason why it is important to know how words are pronounced. As the late Professor Otto Jespersen, the great Danish writer upon language in general and upon grammar in particular, once remarked, ' Sound and signification, form and function, are inseparable in the life of language '.

[1] For the importance of the correct interpretation and a just evaluation of what one reads, see the chapter entitled ' How to Read '.

[2] Don't forget: there *are* dictionaries. It is wise to use them.

[3] To *perceive* is to *see with the eyes of the mind.*

[4] Another word, learnèd but often used, is *signification*; even more usual than *sense,* however, is *meaning.*

EXERCISES[1]

1. If someone, who has benefited less richly from his schooling than you have done, were to ask you, ' Well, what *is* grammar, anyway? ', how would you explain it to him?
2. Supposing this strange creature went on to say, ' That's very interesting. But what is the origin, what the history, of the word *grammar* itself? ' Would you be stumped or could you answer him sensibly?
3. Who was Montaigne and what did he say about grammar?
4. A certain boy once exclaimed, ' Why didn't you *say* so? I couldn't make head or tail of what you said at the start.'

   Make up a little story: how the situation arose; what you said at first; his facial expression, his remarks, when he failed to understand; what you then said in order to throw light upon what you had meant and to put an end to his pain.
5. How far is it true that a language consists only
   (*a*) of the words in a dictionary?
   (*b*) of the words and phrases we use in conversation?
   (*c*) the written language as we read it in the newspapers?
6. Try to picture a conversation held by two persons unable to distinguish between *man* and *men*, *one horse* and *two horses*, an *eel* and a *whale*, *is* and *are*, *if* and *when*, *why* and *because*. Invent a brief dialogue between *A.*, who is a hunter, and *B.*, who is a fisherman, and show how, without these distinctions (which you and I should make if we were talking), they contrive to say what they mean about certain horses and certain fish: when they caught them or saw them, why they did this, and so forth.
7. ' Language is made for men,[2] not men[2] for language.' Do you agree? If so, why? If you do not agree, why don't you?
8. ' Language is made by men and women, not by books.' What is your opinion about this?
9. ' Only the ignorant are inconvenienced by rules ': two pupils could debate this point, the teacher acting as umpire, keeping the debate on the rails and bringing the speech-train to its destination.
10. Why do the rules of grammar become more numerous as a language increases in subtlety[3] and suppleness?
11. Convert the following complex sentence into a number of simple sentences:

    ' When Jack, who at thirteen was too big for his boots (if you know what I mean), tried to play a leg-break that looked like a straight ball, he would have been caught if the fielder had not missed him because his attention was wandering.'
12. Now the other way about. Construct a complex sentence of this group of simple sentences:

    Molly was fourteen years old. She was not a pretty girl. She was a

[1] The more difficult exercises should be postponed until (say) the term before the pupils are promoted to Middle School.
[2] or ' mankind '.
[3] Consult your teacher or, if he is not at hand, your dictionary.

clever one. She tripped over a strange object in the grass. She heard a ticking noise. She ran away. She had never run so fast. The bomb exploded.

13. What are flexions?

14. What is the name for ' the orderly arrangement of words in a sentence; the building of sentences '?

15. A young foreigner, who forgets that he must have learnt the grammar of his own language, exclaims, ' Oh! what's the *use* of English grammar? ' How would you answer him?

16. Can you devise the one rule governing these three groups of words?
    (i) *rule, rules; can, cans; tin, tins.*
    (ii) *calf, calves; half, halves.*
    (iii) *knife, knives; wife, wives.*

17. Distinguish between *man* and *men, woman* and *women, foot* and *feet, cow* and *kine, sow* and *swine.*

18. Are the rules of English grammar exactly the same now that Queen Victoria is dead as when she was alive? If you think that they have changed, are they now more or less tolerant than in her day? Quote an example of change.

19. ' To name a thing is not to explain it.' Can you make this statement clearer?

20. ' Merely to label something with a name is useless.' Is this true?

21. Can you separate a word from what it stands for? If you think you can, how and how far can you do so? Give an instance.

22. ' Grammar is (*a*) a bore; (*b*) a nuisance; (*c*) a swindle.' Do you find grammar to be any of these unpleasant things? Frankly state your reasons, whether your verdict be for or against.

23. How long, if we were neither dependent upon someone nor pensioners of the State, should we survive without grammar in the active world?

24. Put $\frac{6 + 4 \times 3}{2} = 9$ into words.

25. Are the following words or phrases or sentences formulas or free expressions? *Sorry!, Good morning!, I beg your pardon, I said ' Good morning', Long live the king!*

26. In (*a*) conversation and (*b*) reading, who is the producer and who the consumer?

27. Is it easier to write fairly well or to speak fairly well? State the reasons for your opinion.

28. What is ' a mould of expression ' or ' a sentence-type '?

29. You can picture to yourselves the fate of the persons that fail to extend the vocabulary they have learnt by (say) the end of their fourteenth year. But can you picture the fate of boys and girls that remember even less grammar at the age of seventeen than they knew at that of thirteen?

30. (*a*) What is the general meaning of *function* ? Rewrite the definition you find in your dictionary.
    (*b*) What is the meaning of *function* in grammar?

GRAMMAR AT WORK: I. ACCIDENCE

§1. *Introductory*

You have been using grammar all your lives, although you have not; until recently, been aware of the fact. It has caused you very little trouble so far, nor is there any good reason why it should cause you much trouble in the future.

You go to school by bus, tram or train, or perhaps on a bicycle or your two feet. These means of transport, even by a stretch of the imagination your feet, are vehicles. Everything you say and everything you write—that is, your speech and your writing—are conveyances or vehicles: the means by which you travel from your own mind to those of others, and they from theirs to yours. Within your own minds, as they within theirs, you go from one thought to another thought by means of statements or sentences, arranged in a certain way, a way you have been using for many years.

Grammar is the vehicle by means of which you express a thought, also the vehicle by which you travel from one thought to another. You see something that interests you: from that point to the end of what you have said about it to a companion, you have gone on a journey, a journey in words; and for one reason only have you been able to travel at all: you had a vehicle at your command, that vehicle being grammar.

You can now understand a simple yet formal definition[1] of grammar. Grammar tells you what sorts of words there are; how those words behave ('fox', 'fox*es*'; 'is', '*are*'; 'I', 'to *me*', and so forth); what they do or what they undergo; how they combine to make clear statements. More briefly, grammar is the art of speaking and writing. It is the *how* you speak and write—including those hints and rules which enable you to speak and write, not just anyhow, but well.

Grammar, as you have already been told, consists of two main parts: (i) Accidence, or the changes in words (*fox—foxes*; *is—are*; *I—me*); and (ii) Syntax, or the use of words in sentences.

That may sound rather frightening. It only *sounds* frightening. You have, without knowing the words *Accidence* and *Syntax*, been using the former from the time you could say 'Dogs, Mummy!'—or it may have been cats; and the latter, ever since you could say 'Din-din, please!'—

[1] A definition is merely saying precisely what a thing is—giving an exact description of a thing—in as few words as possible. It must be exact or precise, not muddle-headed, because a definition stands for one thing only. The word *define* means, to state (lay down: Latin *de*, 'down') the boundaries or borders or limits (Latin *fines*, literally 'ends', hence 'boundaries') of a word.

or it may have been ' peese '. As soon as you could tell the simplest story ('I saw a cat, Mummy. It was a big cat and it looked at me '), you were using syntax in a sensible way, clear to you and clear to your mother. By the age of five or six, you could use it in quite long stories of what you saw, what you did, what someone else did. While you were telling a story you did not think about syntax, nor about accidence, yet you were using them. You will go on using them. But you will use them in more and better ways. In the following lessons you will be learning those various ways of expressing your thoughts. As you describe things and persons or tell how, or say why, something happened, you will be not merely employing accidence and syntax but also expressing, better and better, what you wish to say.

Think what would happen if we did not know any accidence. Suppose a little boy could say, ' There is a dog in the garden ', but, not knowing any accidence, could not say ' There *are two dogs* in the garden '. He could not tell anybody about it; he would find it impossible to tell even himself. Yet he was able to use syntax when he said ' There is a dog in the garden '. Suppose, however, he knew no syntax; suppose he could say only ' Dog—garden '. If he could not point, if he could not look in that direction, his parents would not know whether the dog had been or was still there.[1]

Now suppose that, instead of using accidence and syntax as you and I know it and as his parents know it, that little boy spoke of two dogs in the garden in this way, ' Doggy wented garden ' or ' In garden doggy wented '—well! it wouldn't be at all clear what he meant. And he might easily speak his thought much less clearly than that!

If there were no rules in a game of football or hockey, the game would no longer be a game. It would become a senseless muddle. And the players would soon grow bored with it.

As a famous writer[2] has said:

> There must be rules for a game of football, or it will turn into a free fight.
>
> There must be rules for traffic, or every city street will be all confusion and collisions.
>
> There must be rules for language, or there will be endless confusion and collisions of meaning.

[1] From this paragraph you will have guessed that syntax includes accidence; and that without accidence there could be no syntax. There are no hard-and-fast divisions, no water-tight compartments, in grammar. There are none in language. But it is a convenience to take accidence, the lesser part, before we take the greater part: syntax. A convenience, because this is the easier way, the natural way. We, all of us, learned separate words—just picked them up—months before we could form a sentence. (Syntax is ' *how* sentences are formed '; it is also ' the *art* of forming them in various ways ').

[2] L. A. G. Strong, *An Informal English Grammar*. This novelist and short-story writer, this dramatist and broadcaster, was once, like myself, a schoolmaster. In addition to the *Grammar* he has written another excellent book for schools: ***English for Pleasure.***

And syntax is the vehicle in and by which language travels from person to person. It is true that ' you can have a language without a grammar, but it will be a primitive language, and very inconvenient to all concerned ' (L. A. G. Strong).

For your further comfort, remember that language was made by everybody for everybody—and that therefore syntax was made by everybody for everybody, in order that people might speak and write more easily and that others might the more easily understand the speaker or the writer. Syntax is not an instrument of torture. It is a set of tools for you to use. The finished product will be good or bad according as you use those tools. Memorize these doggerel verses:

Here follow the rules:
Here, then, are the tools.
It is only fools
Who will blame the tools.

EXERCISES

1. Although you have not yet studied *grammar*, you can probably write your own definition of that word. ' Never say die! '
2. Turn the following words into sentences. (These three words can easily be turned into sentences, because they are short for sentences.)
   (*a*) Please!
   (*b*) Goodbye!
   (*c*) ('Have you a pencil? ') ' Yes! '
3. Think of those words by themselves. Are they examples of accidence or of syntax?
4. Now think of them in your answers to question 2: as you see them in your answers, are they examples of accidence or of syntax?
5. How would you separate[1] syntax from[1] accidence? And how would you class them together as one part of grammar?
6. The great English thinker, John Locke (1632–1704), has said that *definition* is ' nothing but making another person understand by words what a term stands for '.
   (*a*) Is pointing to a box of oranges and saying ' I want one of *those*, please ' an example of definition?
   (*b*) Is ' A cat is an animal ' a good definition?
   (*c*) ' Man is an animal that thinks '—' Man is an animal that cooks ': of these two definitions, which do you prefer? And why?
7. Tell a young friend, who doesn't know syntax from a centipede, what syntax is.
8. Is grammar made for mankind, or mankind for grammar?
9. Do you think that grammar was made by schoolteachers? State your reasons.
10. If a young child says ' Mummy want go home ', (*a*) what could he mean and (*b*) what, probably, does he mean?

[1] The usual and better term for *separate from*, as it is used here, is ' *distinguish* one thing *from* another ' or ' *distinguish between* two things ' or ' *distinguish* x *and* y '.

§2. *Accidence: General*

If I were trying to be funny, I might say 'Accidence is what happens to a word; syntax, what you cause to happen to words when you form a sentence'. But knowing just *how* funny you think the jokes made by grown-ups, I shall be deadly serious and say, 'Accidence is what may, or may not, happen to a word when you form a sentence; syntax, what happens to all the words in the sentence you form'—that is, if you consider them, not as a collection but as a unit; not as parts of a machine, but as the machine itself. The parts of the machine—i.e., the words as parts of the sentence—are examples of accidence; the machine as a whole—i.e., the entire sentence—is an example of syntax.

A machine works because its parts work. Yet there is more to it than that. Each part of the machine works smoothly only if it is the right part; each part of the sentence works well only if it is the right part. More, each part of a sentence, like each part of a machine, can work well only if every other part is in its correct position and is, of course, the right part for that position. But a machine doesn't work entirely by itself: someone has to start it. A sentence has to be started. By you.

'Yes,' you will say, 'but the machine is *there*. The mechanic has merely to press a button, turn a handle, engage this or disengage that. *I* have to build the sentence as I go along.' True; but when you have built the sentence, it has done its work—and so have you.

The analogy—the resemblance in work—between a machine and a sentence is not very close.[1] But it is close enough to be useful. You have now a slightly clearer idea of accidence[2] at work. Above all, you understand that accidence is not a set of rules but a number of things that happen to a word.

Keep your eyes (and minds) open and see what happens in the following sentence:

I felt very ill, 'cause he have hit I bad with an 'eavy 'ammer,

where both the syntax and the accidence are wrong. If we correct the syntax, we get:

I felt very ill, 'cause he hit I bad with an 'eavy 'ammer;

if we now correct the accidence, we get:

I felt very ill, 'cause he hit me badly with an 'eavy 'ammer;

[1] No analogy can be pressed very closely.

[2] Accidence does literally mean 'the things that *happen* to a word—any word—every word'.

we still have to remove the mistakes arising from ignorance, thus:

I felt very ill, because he hit me hard with a heavy hammer.

In that sentence we have a noun (*hammer*), three pronouns (*I*, *he*, *me*), two verbs (*felt*, *hit*), two adverbs (*very*, *hard*), two adjectives (*ill*, *heavy*), one conjunction (*because*) and one preposition (*with*); *a* is by some called the indefinite article (the definite article being *the*), by others an indefinite adjective.

From that sentence alone, if you study it closely, you can form a fairly good idea of the parts of speech (noun, pronoun, verb, etc.) you employ and of the roles they play, the work they do. Only the interjection is missing; and that is because it does not form a true part of a sentence—it has no syntax; being merely something *thrown among*[1] the other words, it doesn't do anything much.

The importance of a word consists, not in what it is called, but in what it does. A word is called this, that or the other thing, precisely because of what it does. Immediately you see what a word does, you will be able to give it the correct name, *noun* or *pronoun* or *verb* or . . . The definitions are useful, for you may, in your turn, wish to define the parts of speech for someone else's benefit. But when you come to parsing, you will say what part of speech a word is, less because this or that part of speech is defined as *being* something or other than because it *does* something or other. In short, what a word does—its *work* or, as grammarians say, its *function*[2]—is what you have to see. Being sensible, you will see it easily enough.

EXERCISES

1. Define *accidence* and *syntax*.
2. In what ways does a sentence resemble a machine?
3. Name the parts of speech.
4. What is *function* in grammar?
5. What parts of speech are the *italicized* words in—' *Tom went* to *town* yesterday *because* he felt *ill* '?
6. Correct the mistakes in:
   (*a*) Jack dog ranned away, Bill dog wented home. Both dogs is no good, me think.
   (*b*) He have wented home, for he were angry with I.
7. What is the literal meaning of *accidence* ?

[1] Either ask your teacher the literal meaning of *interjection* or wait until you come to it at the end of the following list of the parts of speech.

[2] From Latin *functio* (genitive *functionis*), ' accomplishment ': from *fungi*, ' to perform '.

§3. *Nouns*[1] *and Pronouns*

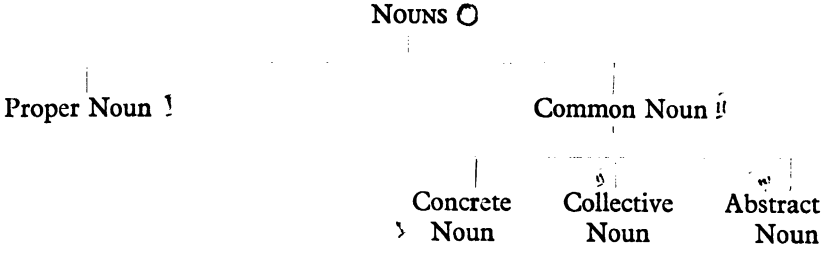
A noun is often defined as 'the name of a thing' or as 'the name of anything'. Better is it defined as 'the name of something'. But, since such brevity can be very baffling, better still is it to define a *noun* as 'the name of a person (*Julius Caesar* or *Queen Victoria* or *Tom*); a place (*America, New York, 78th Street*); a thing (*hammer, house*); a process, either of Nature (*thunder, hurricane, heat*) or of man; an activity (*gold-mining*) or a state (*whiteness, anger*) or a condition (*thinness*)'.

The names of persons and places are Proper[2] Nouns; to those we should add the titles of books and plays, pieces of music, paintings, sculpture; we write them with a capital letter. Thus, we speak of 'a house' but of 'Somerset House'; we speak of 'a horse', and the horse may be named 'Dobbin'; of 'a book', but 'The Book' is another name for the Bible.

All other nouns are Common Nouns. Common Nouns are usually divided into Concrete and Abstract. Concrete Nouns are those which indicate things you can see or feel or hear or smell or taste: a house, a hurricane, heat, gold-mining. Abstract Nouns indicate such 'things' as anger, gladness, hope, completeness, absence.

And so there are three chief kinds of noun: Proper Noun, Concrete Noun, Abstract Noun: names easy to remember, for *concrete* means 'solid, real' and is applied to something of which you are aware through one or more of your senses, and *abstract* is applied to something that you cannot see, feel, etc.—something *drawn away* from, apart from, the solid.

Some grammarians add a fourth kind, which belongs to the great class of Common Nouns and is, in fact, the same as a Concrete Noun except that it refers to a group or a collection of persons or things:[3] Collective Nouns, as a *crowd* of people, a *flock* of sheep, a *fleet* of ships.



[1] I prefer *noun* to *substantive*, used by so many grammarians. But it is only fair to learners to tell them of this synonym.

[2] *Proper* means 'particular; belonging to this person or place'.

[3] The word *things* is often taken to include birds, animals, fishes, etc. But it is prudent and sensible to divide things into *inanimate* (or lifeless) things and *animate* (or living) things.

It is, however, only fair to warn you that certain grammarians divide all nouns straight into four groups, which are the same as mine, except that my Concrete Noun is, by those grammarians, called a Common Noun.

Here are a few sentences that show not only the different kinds of noun but what work a noun does:

The *cat* sat before the *fire*:	both are Concrete (or Common) Nouns.
The *cat* ate the *mouse*:	both are Concrete.
The *cat* was chased by a *pack* of *dogs*:	in order, Concrete, Collective, Concrete.
Kindness is a *virtue*:	both are Abstract Nouns.
King Edward the Seventh did much for the *cause* of *peace*:	in order, Proper Noun, Abstract, Abstract.
Courage fitted *Nelson* as though it were a *cloak*, and the *fleet* admired this great *admiral*:	in order, Abstract, Proper, Concrete, Collective, Concrete.

EXERCISES

1. Make your own definition of a noun or substantive.
2. Name the two main classes of nouns.
3. Now name the four classes of nouns.
4. What are Proper Nouns? Give six examples.
5. Which of the following nouns are Collective Nouns:
   apples, cluster, grapes, bunch, sheep, cattle, flock, herd, mob, soldiers, sailors, army?
6. Make a list of five other Collective Nouns.
7. A *kind act* differs from *kindness*, and *cruelty* differs from a *cruel act*.
   (*a*) What sort of nouns are *kindness* and *cruelty* ?
   (*b*) Name four other nouns of the same kind or class.
8. Classify the nouns italicized in
   The *messenger* of the Greek gods was *Mercury*, but *mercury* is a *substance* known to *chemists* ; yet there is no *mystery* here, for there are *hosts* of such *words* as ' Mercury—mercury '. The same *thing* happens in such a *sentence* as ' The mild-looking little *man* turned out to be an absolute *tartar*—as daring and as hardy as any of the *Tartars* led by *Genghiz Khan* '.
9. Proper Nouns are also called Proper Names. Which term do you prefer—and why?

Plurals of Nouns. In the sentences preceding the Exercises, every noun except *dogs* referred to one person, animal, thing: *cat, fire, mouse, kindness, Nelson,* etc., are in the Singular Number. But *dogs,* referring to more than

one, is in the Plural Number. Usually we omit 'Number' and say Singular or Plural.

Most nouns, to become plural, simply add *s*: *cat—cats, dog—dogs, pack—packs, fleet—fleets.*

A few add *-es*:—

(1) those ending in *x*, as *box—boxes, fox—foxes* ;
(2) those ending in *-lf*, after changing *f* to *v*, as *calf—calves, half—halves, shelf—shelves, wolf—wolves.*
(3) a few others ending in *f*, with *f* changed to *v*, as *leaf—leaves, loaf—loaves, sheaf—sheaves.* Formerly *roof* became *rooves, hoof—hooves* ; the usual plurals are now *roofs* and *hoofs.*[1] *Scarf* and *wharf* may be *scarves, wharves,* or *scarfs, wharfs* ; *staff* is, according to the sense, *-ves* or *-fs.* (See the dictionary.) All other *-f* nouns have plural in *fs.*
(4) Several ending in *fe* take the plural in *ves,* as *knife—knives, life—lives, wife—wives.* Similarly, *thief* becomes *thieves.*

In much the same way, nouns ending in a *y*[2] following a consonant have their plural in *-ies*: *baby—babies, lady—ladies, lorry—lorries,* etc.

A change of vowel occurs also in a few nouns that do not take *s* at all: *man—men, woman—women; louse—lice, mouse—mice; foot—feet, goose—geese, tooth—teeth.* Compare the vowel-change and the non-*s* ending in the next paragraph but one.

End-change occurs in *die—dice* and *penny—pence.*

In a very few nouns, the old plural in *-en* has survived: *ox—oxen, cow—kine* (but only in Biblical language), *sow—swine* (usually *sows; swine* is now thought of as an alternative of either *pig* or *pigs*), *child—children, brother—brethren* (only in Biblical language).

And some nouns remain the same: one *deer*—six *deer*; a *sheep*—ten *sheep*; one *grouse*—three *grouse*; a *mackerel*—five *mackerel* (though *mackerels* would not now be thought incorrect); one *corps*—three *corps.*

There you have enough plurals to learn, although you knew most of them already. Such forms of plurals as *analysis—analyses, seraph—seraphim, stimulus—stimuli,* had better be left until Book II.

EXERCISES

1. What is the meaning of Number in grammar? Give examples. (You may find it easier to devise several examples and then write the definition.)
2. At least eight out of ten nouns in English form the plural in one extremely simple way: what is that way?

[1] But if, like myself, you prefer the sound of *hooves* and *rooves,* why then! use them.

[2] Except at the beginning of a word (i.e., as the initial letter) *y* is a vowel, although most grammar books fail to say so. Even initially, *y* is a semi-vowel.

3. How do you form the plural of nouns ending in
   (*a*) *-lf.*
   (*b*) *-by, -dy, -ry,* etc.?
4. Name three other nouns that, to form the plural, undergo a vowel-change as in *goose—geese* and *woman—women.*
5. List four words that, in the plural, end or formerly ended in *-en.*
6. What are the plurals of
   (*a*) *chief, relief, thief;*
   (*b*) *knife, scarf, hoof;*
   (*c*) *mackerel, moose, corps, corpse;*
   (*d*) *milady, Tory?*
7. What are the singulars of *lice, grouse, dice, deer, wharves?*
8. In the following passage, there are several wrong singulars and more than one wrong plural. Rewrite it correctly.

   A cat may have nine lifes, but a mice has only one. Or so one of my brethren said, although one of my sistern wasn't so sure. Children don't really know, and I'm only a childer. When the ladys come to visit our farm, they always want to see the gooses and the kines and the swines. One of them is afraid of being kicked with the hoove of a calve. If the leafs fall, she jumps and tries to climb onto the shelfs; what would she do if a wolve chased her, I wonder? Run like the sheepses, I expect. It would take an army corp to frighten me. When I bare my teeths the oxes run away. Sometimes I hide behind the sheafs in the meadowses until the womans that work on the farm come to look for me. Then I jump to my foots and run away. I am only six, but my daddy says I'm already a norful liar. He doesn't beat me, 'cause he says I'll make a fine pollytishun some day.

Pronouns and their Plurals. Closely linked with nouns are pronouns, for pronouns do exactly the same work as nouns. Pronouns are merely words used *for* (Latin *pro*) *nouns* (Latin *nomina*): as in '*I*, John Smith, do hereby declare' or '*They*, the Scottish team, beat *us*, the English'.

Here, we are concerned only with the plurals of pronouns. You have used all of them. Yet a list has its interest, the most important pronouns being:

Singular	*Plural*
I	we
thou or you	ye or you
he, she, it	they
myself	ourselves
yourself	yourselves
himself, herself, itself	themselves

Pronouns: Kinds. What concerns us now is the kinds or classes of pronouns. The classification is into:—

(1) Personal Pronouns, which, oddly enough, include pronouns that are applied to things:

The person or persons speaking:	*I—we*
The person(s) spoken to:	*you*
The person(s) or thing(s) spoken about:	*he, she, it—they.*

I saw *you* speaking to *him* the other day.
He came to see *us* a year ago, don't *you* remember?
It flew into the air with *us.*
They and *you* and *we* are, *I* think, astounded by her behaviour.

All these pronouns have forms that indicate possession[1]:

I — mine	we — ours
thou — thine[2]	you — yours
he — his	they — theirs
she — hers	
it — its	

That is *yours*, this is *mine.*
My book is red, *his* is green.
Their house is large, *ours* is small.
Our game is cricket, *theirs* is baseball.

(2) In the first sentence, *that* and *this* are another kind of pronoun: the Demonstrative Pronoun, so named because it points out (Latin *demonstrat*). There are three, *this* and *that* being the chief ones; their plurals are:

these, corresponding to *this*
those, „ „ *that*

The third Demonstrative Pronoun is *such*, as in ' Of *such* is the Kingdom of Heaven ' (with such men and women is Heaven peopled); we might have said, ' Of *those* '—or ' Of *these* '—' is the Kingdom of Heaven ' and by doing so we should not have changed the sense, but merely introduced a fine shade of meaning. *Such* is also singular, as in ' *Such* is the case ' (That is the case).

(3) But in ' That is Harry, *who* was once a hero ' and ' This is the house *that* Jack built ' we have yet another kind, the Relative Pronoun, because it *relates* to, or is concerned with, the noun that goes before it. It is easy to see that, in those two sentences, *who* and *that* are pronouns, for we could change them to

That is Harry, and Harry was once a hero.
This is the house and Jack built it.

The third pronoun of this kind is *which*, as in

The house, *which* is rather small, belongs to my uncle.

[1] These are Possessive Pronouns, a mere subdivision of Personal Pronouns.
[2] Now only in poetry and the Bible; so, too, *thou* and *ye.*

All three Relative Pronouns are the same in the plural as in the singular; they won't cause you any trouble.

(4) But if I ask '*Who* is there?' or '*Which* is my hat?' or '*What* are you making a fuss about?' I am obviously using another kind of pronoun: a question-asking pronoun. Only, we call it an Interrogative Pronoun: as *interrogation* means 'an asking of questions, a questioning', so *interrogative* means 'questioning'.

(5) If I politely ask, 'Have you hurt *yourself*, my dear?' or 'Has Sally hurt *herself*, do you think? I know that I *myself* am hurt pretty badly', I am using yet another kind of pronoun. The full list is

Singular	*Plural*
I — *myself*	*we* — *ourselves*
thou — *thyself*	*you* — *yourselves*
you — *yourself*	*they* — *themselves*
he — *himself*	
she — *herself*	
it — *itself*	

These are Reflexive Pronouns, so called because they are *turned back* upon the person or thing to which they refer: Latin *re*, back, and *flexus*, turned. Originally the name was applied to the 'I hurt *myself*'—'You love only *yourself*'—'He saw *himself* in the mirror' type of sentence; but soon it came to be applied to *myself*, *yourself*, etc., in sentences where they emphasize, as in 'He *himself* didn't know about it until this morning'.

(6) 'But', you may ask, 'what about *each*, *either*, *any*, *all*, *none*, for they too are pronouns, aren't they?' They certainly are! We call them Distributive Pronouns. Why? Well, look at these sentences:

Each of us must do well in the examination.
Either of us could do well in the examination.
Both of us shall do well in the examination.
Many of us should do well in the examination.
Few of us should do badly in the examination.
All of us might do well in the examination.
None (or *neither*) of us will fail in the examination.

In every sentence, the thing we have in mind is success in a certain examination: success affects us, in every sentence, whether one or a few or many or all of us: the thought of success is, as it were, *distributed* to, or over, all of us.

(7) There remains but one class of pronouns—the Indefinite Pronouns. *Indefinite* because no person, no thing, is precisely named. Thus:

Someone (or *somebody*) saw me.
Anyone (or *anybody*) could have seen me.

Something has happened, I feel sure.

Anything, literally anything, could happen in this place.

They say that something horrible is bound to happen (where 'they' does not refer to certain persons named or understood).

One never knows, does *one*?

Certain of the army staff are brilliant men (i.e., some few).

Some[1] say one thing, *some*[1] another, *others*[1] yet a third.

EXERCISES

1. Put pronouns for the nouns italicized in the following passage:
   John Smith went to town, where *John Smith* was well known, and there visited the cinema. *The cinema* stood at the cross-roads of *this town*; *this town* was small. At the entrance he met a friend; *the friend* asked him *his business*. The *two friends* talked for a long while.
2. What is the literal meaning of *pronoun*?
3. Say (*a*) what difference and (*b*) what resemblances there are between nouns and pronouns.
4. Name the classes of pronoun, with one example of each.
5. Classify the pronouns italicized in:
   It was a small town, *which* contained only one cinema. *This* served as a meeting-place for the two friends and *they* used to greet *each other* with '*Who* goes there?' and '*What's* cooking?' If *anybody* had overheard *them*, *he* would have murmured, 'Well, *one* never knows, does one?' *They* said of these two friends that each put the other before *himself*.
6. Why are Distributive Pronouns given that name?
   Make up four short sentences containing one or more Distributive Pronouns apiece.

Gender of Nouns and Pronouns. In Greek, Latin, German, there are three genders—masculine, feminine, neuter; in French, Italian, Spanish, two. In those six languages, the gender is decided by the form of the word, but in English, much more sensibly, *the gender of a word* is decided by the gender or sex of the person, animal or thing concerned. If a person or an animal is masculine or male (*man, boy, brother, uncle; bull, fox*) the noun is masculine; if the person or animal is feminine or female (*woman, girl, sister, aunt; cow, vixen*) the noun is feminine—but note that very few nouns have different forms for the two sexes; if the noun stands for a thing (*hammer*), an activity (*business*), a state or condition (*fear, thinness*), it is neuter—but the form is always the same.

With pronouns, you have even less to learn, for there is only one neuter pronoun: *it*; only one feminine pronoun: *she*; and only one masculine pronoun: *he*. All the others (*I, you, we, they*, and so on) refer to either

[1] This example of *some* and *others* shows that these pronouns might equally well be classified as Distributive.

sex; and *they* can refer to either sex and also to neuter nouns, as also can *this* and *that* and *each* and *some*. Of the Relative Pronouns, *who* refers to persons (either sex), *which* to things, and *that* to either persons or things.

Of the following list of the chief words that have a different form in the feminine, you already know many:

man	—	*woman*
boy	—	*girl*
lad	—	*lass*
bridegroom	—	*bride*
husband	—	*wife*
bachelor	—	*spinster*
brother	—	*sister*
uncle	—	*aunt*
nephew	—	*niece*
father	—	*mother*
son	—	*daughter*
grandfather	—	*grandmother*
gentleman	—	*lady*
master	—	*mistress*
(hence *schoolmaster*	—	*schoolmistress*)
mister (*Mr*)	—	*missis* (*Mrs*)[1] and *Miss*[1]
manservant	—	*maidservant*
widower	—	*widow*
god	—	*goddess*
king	—	*queen*
emperor	—	*empress*
prince	—	*princess*
duke	—	*duchess*
marquis (or *marquess*)	—	*marchioness*
lord	—	*lady*
baron	—	*baroness*
count	—	*countess*
viceroy	—	*vicereine*
host	—	*hostess*
traitor	—	*traitress*
actor	—	*actress*
author	—	*authoress*
poet	—	*poetess*
waiter	—	*waitress*
hero	—	*heroine*
abbot	—	*abbess*
monk (or *friar*)	—	*nun*
Jew	—	*Jewess*

[1] *Mrs* for a married, *Miss* for an unmarried woman.

boar	—	*sow*
bull	—	*cow*
cock / *rooster*	—	*hen*
(hence *peacock*	—	*peahen*)
colt	—	*filly*
dog	—	*bitch*
drake	—	*duck*
fox	—	*vixen*
gander	—	*goose*
hart (or *stag*)	—	*hind*
lion	—	*lioness*
ram	—	*ewe*
stallion	—	*mare*
tiger	—	*tigress*

But many of those pairs of masculine and feminine remind us that there are certain nouns that, like so many pronouns, can refer either to masculine or to feminine—and also to all the persons or animals of the kind or species. Either *father* or *mother* is a *parent*; together, they are *parents*. *Rams* and *ewes* together are *sheep*. Here is a list of the chief trios:

Common Gender	Masculine	Feminine
mankind (or *man*)[1]	*man*	*woman*
child[2]	*boy*	*girl*
young people or, poetically, *youth* (no plural)	*older boys* or *youths*	*girls*
child[2]	*son*	*daughter*
parent	*father*	*mother*
relation or *relative*	*father*, *grandfather*, *brother*, *nephew*, *uncle* and *cousin*	*mother*, *grandmother*, *sister*, *niece*, *aunt* and *cousin*
sovereign (rarely *monarch*)	*king*	*queen*
*Jew**	*Jew*	*Jewess*
*author**	*author*	*authoress*
*bee**	*drone*	*bee* (*queen bee*)
deer	*hart* or *stag*	*hind*
*dog**	*dog*	*bitch*
*duck**	*drake*	*duck*
fowl	*cock*	*hen*
foal	*colt*	*filly*

[1] Plural: *men* or *human beings*.

[2] A *child* may be a boy or a girl, as in ' That is a well-mannered child '; ' This is my child ' can also mean ' This is my son '—or ' my daughter '.

Common Gender	Masculine	Feminine
*goose**	*gander*	*goose*
horse[1]	*stallion*	*mare*
*lion**	*lion*	*lioness*
ox[2]	*bull*	*cow*
sheep	*ram*	*ewe*
swine or *hog* or *pig*[3]	*boar*	*sow*
*tiger**	*tiger*	*tigress*

You will have noticed that of the nouns that can be used of either sex, those marked with an asterisk (*) are the same as either the separate masculine or the separate feminine noun. All the asterisked words are, as applied to either sex, used freely in the plural; most are applied to either sex in the singular; but in the singular, *Jew* is only masculine, as *duck* and *goose* are only feminine, *lion* and *tiger* only masculine. With *ox* you have to be careful, for the grammatical plural is *oxen* but the collective noun is *cattle*. Note, too, that *host* and *hostess* have no common-gender noun in the singular; in the plural, however, the common-gender noun is *hosts* ('The Robinsons are such good hosts').

There is another group of nouns to engage our attention: those for the young. Some of these you already know:

parent	—	*child*
adult	—	*child*
adult (21 or over)	—	*minor* (under 21)
cow	—	*calf* (see also below)
dog	—	*puppy*, or *cub* (see below)
cat	—	*kitten*
horse	—	*foal*
sheep	—	*lamb*
goat	—	*kid*
lion and *tiger*, *bear* and *wolf*	—	*whelp*[4]
lion, *tiger*, *bear*, *wolf*, *fox*	—	*cub*
elephant, *hippopotamus*, *rhinoceros*, *moose*,[5] *whale*	—	*calf*
fowl	—	*chicken*
swan	—	*cygnet*
goose	—	*gosling*
eagle	—	*eaglet*

[1] *Horse*, besides being the common-gender term, is sometimes used instead of *stallion*.

[2] Usually, however, masculine.

[3] Of these three terms, *pig* is the most used, both in the singular and, as *pigs*, in the plural.

[4] But now usually *cub*, *whelp* being old-fashioned and literary. As the young of dogs, *cubs* is mainly a hunting term, as in 'the *cubbing* season'.

[5] Same in singular and plural.

It is not difficult to learn the terms in the preceding lists: you probably know already at least a half of them. In some families and at some parties, they play these games: 'What are the plurals'—or 'What are the feminines—of the following words?' and 'What do you call the young of the——?' These games are more intelligent than some you know of, and more fun than certain others. And when you've played these games a few times, you'll have learnt something useful, for you'll meet those terms in your reading and occasionally need to use them in your letters and essays.

But before we pass to the Cases of nouns and pronouns, we must pause to deal very briefly with the use of 'he' and 'she' for things. Thus, a ship is always mentioned as 'she', the sun as 'he'. Where a German speaks of his country as 'the Fatherland', an Englishman—if he used the word at all—would say 'the Motherland' and, if he had to employ a pronoun, 'she'. This is known as personification: the treatment of things as *persons.*

On the other hand, English tends to speak of an animal, a bird, etc., as *it* wherever there exists no need to differentiate. Except to its parents a baby is *it.*

Both of these minor aspects of gender belong to idiom. *Idiom*[1] is difficult to define, for it depends, not upon logic but upon the actual usage and practice of a language, its character. *Idiom* is a practice, *an idiom* a phrase, characteristic of the language. It just is so. Useless to argue about it!

EXERCISES

1. What is the meaning of *gender* and how is it used in grammar?
2. What genders are there in English?
3. Can you give examples of pronouns used in defiance of their gender?
4. What are the masculines of *Miss, lass, niece, grand-daughter, empress, duchess, abbess, waitress, heroine, nun* ?
5. What are the feminines of *ram, tiger, drake, boar, gander, fox, viceroy, man-servant, bachelor, bridegroom* ?
6. What are the common-gender nouns that cover the meanings of the following pairs: *stag* and *hind, boar* and *sow, tiger* and *tigress, king* and *queen, father* and *mother, son* and *daughter, uncles* (*aunts*) and *cousins, young boy* and *girl.*
7. What is the singular of *cattle* and of *hosts* (who welcome their guests)?
8. What have you to remark about:
   (*a*) *horse* and *horses;*
   (*b*) *man, men, mankind, human beings* ?
9. What are the names of the parents of *child, son, prince* ?
   And of *cub, cygnet, puppy, kitten, foal* ?
10. What are the feminines of *he, both, I, such, you, someone* ?

[1] From Greek *idiōma,* peculiarity, unique feature: itself from *idios,* one's own.

11. Name the various members of a family of *human beings, sovereigns* ; and of *cats, dogs, cattle, horses, goats, deer, foxes, lions, bears.*

12. What is the name of the male parent of a *prince* and a *boy* ; of a *foal,* an *eaglet,* a *gosling,* a *lamb* ?

13. Of the female parent of a *girl,* a *daughter,* a *princess* ; of a *gosling,* a *cub,* a *calf,* a *whelp* ?

14. A town boy, aged eleven, once wrote about animals in a verbal picture that seemed to confuse the Garden of Eden with the zoo. Correct his mistakes.

> The lion and her kitten lay down with the ram and her cub. There was no fighting. Birds and beasts were friends. The fowls and their cygnets, the swans and their chicks, the horses and their offspring, the elephants and their babies, the hippos and their calves, all mingled happily with the dogs and their children, the wolves and their puppies.

Case. In the following passage—

> *John* gave *Thomas, whose father* was ill, some *apples.* '*Jack,* how good *you* are!'
> '*Nonsense, Tom! I* like to help *him*'—

John, father, you, nonsense, I are in the Subjective Case or Nominative Case; *apples* and *him* are in the Objective Case or Accusative Case; *Thomas* is in the Indirect Objective Case or the Dative Case: *whose* is in the Possessive Case or Genitive Case; and *Jack* and *Tom* are in the Vocative Case.

Nominative, Accusative, Dative, Genitive, Vocative have been adopted from Latin grammar; the other terms—*Subjective, Objective, Indirect Objective, Possessive*—are names bestowed by English grammarians, who have, however, retained *Vocative.*

It will help you to understand the cases of nouns and pronouns if you first understand the meanings of the various terms used: *case* itself and the various kinds of case. Otherwise you'll be talking like parrots instead of like persons.

Case comes from Latin *cadere,* 'to fall', by way of *casus,* 'a falling, a fall'—hence 'an event', something that *befalls* or happens to someone. In grammar, a *casus* or *case* is *what happens to a noun* (or pronoun) in certain events and situations; Latin speaks of *casus nominativus, vocativus,* etc.

Nominative means 'naming'. *Nominative Case,* therefore, is 'the naming case'. The person or thing *named* is grammatically the most important noun in a sentence: the person or thing that does or is something, the one we are speaking about, the *subject* of the sentence; hence the *Subjective* Case. As in '*I* like him' and '*He* was badly wounded in that battle'.

Accusative means 'calling, or being called, to account' and it derives from Latin *accusatus*, 'summoned to show cause' (*causa*). The *Accusative Case* is that of the person or thing that is the *object* (target) of some action, as in 'I like *him*' or 'The bullet struck *him* in the shoulder': *him*, therefore, is in the *Objective Case*.

Dative, which means 'giving' or 'being given', derives from Latin *datus*, 'given'. The *Dative Case* indicates the person or thing that is the recipient—to whom something is *given*, as in 'I gave *him* an apple' and 'He gave an apple *to* his *sister*'. In those two sentences *an apple* is the Direct Object and is therefore in the *Objective Case*, and *him*, (*to*) *sister* are the recipients, the Indirect Objects, and are therefore in the *Dative* or *Indirect Objective Case*.

Vocative means 'calling or speaking'; the *Vocative Case* is 'the calling or addressing case'; from Latin *vocare*, 'to call, summon, invite' (*vox*, voice or word). As in '*Jack*, where are you?' or 'O *Heaven*, help me!' Note that as an interjection is a part of speech that stands outside the structure of a sentence, so the Vocative Case belongs to a word that stands outside—is an ornament, not an essential part of—a sentence.

Genitive means 'belonging to a family, class, group or kind' (Latin *genus*). In '*Arthur's* knights were brave men', '*His* books are valuable', the sense of belonging or possession is clear, hence the more English name the *Possessive Case*. In 'The house *of the master* is large, that *of the servant* is small', *master* and *servant* are also in the Genitive or Possessive Case.

That example is important. In 'The house *of the master* is large, that *of the servant* is small', *master* and *servant* are as completely and decidedly genitive or possessive as *master's* and *servant's* would be in 'The *master's* house is large, the *servant's* house is small'. If *him* and *to him* are dative in 'I gave *him* an apple' and 'I gave an apple *to him*', then so are *master's* and *of the master*, *servant's* and *of the servant*, genitive in the relevant sentences. Yet many grammarians will tell you that *master* and *servant* in 'The house *of the master* is large, that *of the servant* is small' are accusative or objective—simply because 'All nouns and pronouns preceded by a preposition (e.g. *to*, *in*, *for*, *of*) are in the accusative (or objective) case'.

In short, there are five cases if the count is made on the grounds or basis of *function* (the work done by the noun or pronoun), but only three if the *form* or shape of the pronoun is concerned—and only two if the form of the noun is concerned. Thus, *I* is *I* in the nominative, *me* in the objective, *mine* in the genitive; compare *he*, *him*, *his* and *she*, *her*, *hers*. But for the noun there are only two forms: *father* and *father's*. Yet it would be wrong to say that a noun has only two cases; it must have at least three. Plainly, *father* is nominative in 'Father gave me an apple', but objective in 'I love my father'.

If, therefore, form be the criterion, or basis of judgement, we have to say that a noun (*father*) has a genitive case (*father's*) and a common case—a case common to the nominative (*father*) and the accusative (*father*); in

of the father, father is, by form, common case and, in syntax, accusative. But the common case is common also to the vocative, which, as we have seen, stands outside the sentence—almost outside the syntax.

Well, some teachers and some examiners prefer *nominative, accusative, genitive*, etc.; others, *subjective, objective, possessive*, etc. You take your choice; *I* had no choice; I have been obliged to mention both systems of naming.[1]

And, whereas some teachers and examiners prefer five cases (nominative or subjective; accusative or objective; dative or indirect objective; genitive or possessive; and vocative), others prefer four (nominative, accusative, genitive, vocative); others three (common case: (1) nominative and (2) objective; genitive; vocative); yet others, two (common case: (1) nominative, (2) objective, (3) vocative; and genitive). Here, again, you—or your teachers for you—take your choice; I, on the other hand, had no choice; I have been obliged to let you know.

If, however, I am asked how many cases do *I* say there are in English, I reply, ' By *form*, only two—but that is to accept a silly criterion. By *function*, there are five '. And I prefer the *nominative, accusative* . . . nomenclature, which is regular, systematic and sensible.

Moreover, I say that the dative includes *him* in ' I gave *him* an apple ' and *him* in ' I gave an apple *to him* '; likewise I say that the genitive includes ' The *master's* house ' and ' The house *of the master* '.

Case of Pronouns. You know most of the case forms. It is, however, useful to have these tables for reference. While you read or study them, you will notice that whereas a noun has five functions but only two forms or shapes (*father, father's*), pronouns have five functions but either three forms (*he, him, his*) or only two (as in *one, one's*).

I. Personal Pronouns:

Nominative	Accusative	Genitive
I	*me*	*mine*
thou / *you*	*thee* / *you*	*thine* / *yours*
he	*him*	*his*
she	*her*	*hers*
it	*it*	*its*
we	*us*	*ours*
you	*you*	*yours*
they	*them*	*theirs*

For the sake of completeness, add:

[1] A system of naming is known technically as *nomenclature* (literally ' name-proclaiming ').

Vocative	Dative	(Phrasal) Genitive
—	*me* or *to me*	*of me*
(O) thou	*thee* or *to thee*	*of thee*
—	*him* or *to him*	*of him*
—	*her* or *to her*	*of her*
—	*it* or *to it*	*of it*
—	*us* or *to us*	*of us*
(O) ye or *(O) you*	*you* or *to you*	*of you*
—	*them* or *to them*	*of them*

II. Demonstrative Pronouns:

Nominative	Accusative	Genitive	Dative
this	*this*	*of this*	*this* or *to this*
that	*that*	*of that*	*that* or *to that*
	(and similarly for *these* and *those*)		
such	*such*	*of such*	*to such*

III. Relative Pronouns:

Nominative	Accusative	Genitive	Dative
who	*whom*	*whose*	*whom* or *to whom*
that	*that*	*whose* (person)	*that* or *to whom* (person)
		of which (thing)	*that* or *to which* (thing)
which	*which*	*of which*[1]	*which* or *to which*

IV. Interrogative Pronouns: who, which, what.

Nominative	Accusative	Genitive	Dative
who	*whom*	*whose*	*whom* or *to whom*
which	*which*	*of which*	*which* or *to which*
what	*what*	*of what*	*to what*

V. Reflexive Pronouns:

Nominative	Accusative	Genitive	Dative
myself	*myself*	*of myself*	*myself* or *to myself*

All the other reflexives follow that pattern.

[1] Purists and some grammarians condemn the application of *whose* to things; but usage is gradually imposing it upon speech and will probably impose it upon writing.

VI. Distributive Pronouns:

Nominative	Accusative	Genitive	Dative
each	*each*	*of each*	*each* or *to each*
either (*neither*)	*either* (*neither*)	*either's* (before)	*either* or *to either*
		of either (after)	
both	*both*	*of both*	*both* or *to both*
many	*many*	*of many*	*many* or *to many*
few	*few*	*of few*	*few* or *to few*
all	*all*	*of all*	*all* or *to all*
none	*none*	*of none*	*none* or *to none*

VII. Indefinite Pronouns:

Nominative	Accusative	Genitive	Dative
any	*any*	*of any*	*any* or *to any*
anyone	*anyone*	*anyone's* or *of anyone*	*anyone* or *to anyone*
anybody	*anybody*	*anybody's* or *of anybody*	*anybody* or *to anybody*
anything	*anything*	*anything's* (rare), or *of anything*	*anything* or *to anything*
some	*some*	*of some*	*some* or *to some*
someone	*someone*	*someone's* or *of someone*	*someone* or *to someone*
somebody	*somebody*	*somebody's* or *of somebody*	*somebody* or *to somebody*
something	*something*	*something's* (rare), or *of something*	*something* or *to something*
one	*one*	*one's* or *of one*	*one* or *to one*
they	*them*	*theirs*	*them* or *to them*
another	*another*	*another's* or *of another*	*another* or *to another*
others	*others*	*others'* or *of others*	*others* or *to others*

If you examine these lists carefully and then at intervals re-read them, you will see *how* case works; thus, instead of learning the lists parrot-fashion, you will assimilate the many varieties. You will notice that some of the words are used now in this, now in that way. You may arrive at the conclusion that you will understand case, and remember the cases, very much better if you attend to what the words *do* than if you concentrate on the shapes or forms of the words. *Function* is a much safer guide than *form*; it is also a much more sensible criterion or test.

EXERCISES

Set A[1]

1. What is the origin, and what the definition, of the word *case*?
2. What are the five 'Latin' names of the English grammatical cases?
3. What are the four 'English' names of those cases, exclusive of the vocative?
4. Do you prefer *Objective* to *Accusative*, *Subjective* to *Nominative*? And why?
5. Quite frankly, what do you think of those people who say that whereas '*father's* house' is possessive, 'the house *of my father*' is accusative?
6. Does the sort of thing implied in questions 5 rouse you to speak your mind about those who set pedantry above good sense—or, more simply, about those who push common sense out of the way and then force on you what seems to be a silly rule?
7. If you know Latin, you probably prefer to retain the Latin names of the cases; but if you happen to prefer 'Subjective', 'Objective', and so on, please say, as precisely as you can, why you prefer them.
8. If you don't know Latin, yet prefer 'Nominative', 'Accusative', and so on, set forth your reasons as clearly as possible.
9. What is the etymology (i.e., word-history) of *vocative* and of *dative*?
10. Define *function*—or, if you cannot define it, say what you think it is and give three examples.
11. Distinguish between form and function in the matter of case.
12. How many cases of nouns are there if we take function as our criterion (means of judging or testing something)?
13. Now, how many if we take form as the criterion?
14. But what have you noticed about the forms, as compared with the functions, of pronouns?
15. How many grammatical cases do *you* think there are—and how many do you think there should be?
16. Many grammars deal with the cases of only three kinds of pronoun—Personal, Relative, Interrogative. But the author of this book had several reasons (he thinks them good reasons) for setting forth the tables for all seven classes of pronoun. He asks you to state, fully and frankly,
    (*a*) what you believe those reasons to be, and
    (*b*) whether you judge them to be good or bad, and
    (*c*) why you judge them to be good or bad or perhaps merely indifferent.

Set B

1. In the following sentences, say what is the case of each of the *italicized* words:
    (*a*) I, *John Smith*, declare that I am in good *health* and my right mind,

[1] I recommend that *Set A* questions be taken, not at the time of the first lessons on Case, but in revision, preferably during the last year in Lower School or just before the student passes from Book I to Book II.

and I hereby bequeath my property, goods and *moneys* to my *son, John*, who has always helped *me* to the best of his *ability*.

(*b*) O King, I beseech *thee* to grant *me mercy*.

(*c*) The *Queen*, whose *daughter* married a *commoner*, sailed recently for *South Africa*, the climate of *which* has always agreed with *her*.

(*d*) *Whoever* is of good *report, whomsoever* the nation loves, *whosesoever* heart is high, *they* are our heroes and our *heroines*, for *we* admire *them*.

(*e*) To *me, who* was without *hope, fortune* has granted not merely *riches* but *hope*.

(*f*) The *king's* palace is new and richly furnished, that of the *prince* is old and shabby; yet *both* of *them* are happy.

2. Now what are the cases of the *italicized* pronouns in:

(*a*) '*Whom* the gods love die young,' say some; '*Whom* the gods grant *mercy* die young,' say *others*; '*Whom* the gods love die young, no matter how long they live,' say *I*.

(*b*) *One* loves *one, another* loves *another*, and a third shows *love* to yet *another*.

3. What words are in the nominative (or subjective) in:

(*a*) Go away!

(*b*) O Jove, assist me!

(*c*) Farewell!

(*d*) 'Tis agreed.

(*e*) Enough is as good as a feast.

(*f*) Long live the King!

4. And what words in the accusative (or objective) in:

(*a*) Kind regards and God bless!

(*b*) He respects only himself.

(*c*) Go to Jericho!

(*d*) Well-fed and slow departed the honoured guest.

5. Correct the mistakes affecting certain pronouns in:

Between you and I, I think there's something wrong here. I don't know whom it is, but someone is doing his best to hurt you and I. Who would you point the finger at? It is the task of you to find out, of me to punish the culprit when we have found her.

6. What is:

(*a*) the genitive (or possessive) of *mother, which, what, who*?

(*b*) the dative of *man, who, that, this, thou, ye, whoever, who else*?

(*c*) the accusative of *child, that, who, which, thou, ye, ourselves*?

(*d*) the nominative of *horse, another, whose, hers, ours, either's, each other's, thine, somebody's, to them, for us, O heaven*?

How the Genitive is Formed. One rule accounts for ninety-nine per cent. of the possibilities: in the singular, add *'s*; in the plural, add the apostrophe ('), whether the words end in *s*, as *fathers—fathers'*, or in *x*, as *plateaux—plateaux'*.

If a noun ends in *-nce*, as do *conscience* and *patience*: in the singular add the apostrophe only, as in ' for conscience' sake '. The plural *consciences*, if used at all, has genitive *consciences'* in the usual way.

If a noun ends in *-cis* or *-ces* (or *-cess*); or *-sis* or *-ses* (or *-sess*); or *-sas* or *-sos* or *-sus*, many people add only an apostrophe, as in ' a *process'* utility ',

for the sake of euphony; but you would not be wrong to say ' a *process's* utility ', as I do.

Formerly, all words ending in *-ess* merely added the apostrophe, but nowadays we prefer to say ' A *hostess's* duty is to make her guest comfortable '.

All that is simple enough. Equally simple is the one remaining rule: If a plural noun ends in any letter other than *s* (or *x*), it forms its plural genitive by adding *'s*. Whereas ' one *dog's* tail ' becomes ' two *dogs'* tails ', ' one *man's* hat ' becomes ' two *men's* hats '; ' a *woman's* dresses ' becomes *women's* dresses '; so also ' all *mice's* tails '.

The same rule would apply to such rare plurals as *stimuli* (singular *stimulus*): ' One *stimulus's* origin—' two *stimuli's* origin '. In practice, it is customary to speak of ' the origin *of a stimulus*'—' the origins *of stimuli* '; ' the edge of a chair ' is more usual than ' a chair's edge '; but that is a matter of usage and style, not of accidence and syntax.

EXERCISES

1. Put into your own words the rules for forming the genitive.
2. What is the genitive singular of *cat, sheep, tolerance, man, louse, plateau*?
3. What is the genitive plural of the same words?
4. Now what is the genitive plural of *horse, race, cow, goose, patience, woman*?
5. Try it the other way about: what is the genitive singular of the italicized words in:

   The *horsemen's steeds*' saddles were heavy, yet lighter than the *cattle's* yokes and the *convicts*' chains; lighter also than the *soldiers*' equipment.
6. Where necessary, correct or, in several instances, improve the genitives in the following passages:
   (*a*) Mens' and womens' hearts make fewer mistakes than childrens' heads. Once a great mans' advice was, ' Look into your hearts and write '. Yet all human being's opinion is also that mankinds' heads were given them to use, not to neglect. Tolerance's verdict is that it is best to keep our minds as open as our hearts.
   (*b*) On the plateauxs' edge could be seen a soldiers' figure, erect and proud. He did not need courage's stimulus nor the thrust of stimulis' goad: dutys' call was enough, dutie's needs sufficed. Princes' ambition and princess' sacrifice were for princes and princesses; that soldier was a plain man, who would have laughed at a crowds' cheers.

§4. *Adjectives*

Since so many adjectives are formed from nouns, as *beautiful* from *beauty* or as *piggish* from *pig*; and since adjectives go with—grammarians say ' qualify '—nouns and pronouns; it is natural that we should next consider adjectives.

If we look carefully at several examples and then find out the literal meaning of the word *adjective* itself, we shall be able to make up a definition for ourselves.

The adjectives are italicized in the following passage:

> The *blue* Mediterranean is often *grey*, but whether *blue* or *grey*, *smooth* or *rough*, it serves as a *broad* highway for *many* ships, *large* and *small*. *Thirteen* ships or *thirty* or *three hundred*, they all have room. *The* Mediterranean is sometimes regarded as *an island* lake, but *that* sea is *no* lake. *Its* moods are *many*, *some* moods being *dangerous*, others *radiant* and *safe*. *What* poet, of *no* matter *which* country, could fail to appreciate this *bewildering* variety? *Your* poet, *my* poet, the *wide* world's poet, be they *one* poet or *few* poets or *numerous* poets, *every single* poet, if he gives the Mediterranean a *fair* chance, falls under *her potent* spell.

The word *adjective* comes into English, by way of French, from Latin *adjectivus*, strictly *adiectivus*, ' (a word) thrown at or to ' (a noun): from *adicere*, ' to throw at or to ' (*ad*, ' to' + *iacere*, ' to throw or cast '), via *adiectus*, ' thrown to, cast at '. An adjective is a word thrown so hard that it sticks to the noun.

From that point, it is a very short step to defining an adjective as ' a describing word ', as in ' the *tall* man ' or ' He is *tall* '. An adjective tells you what sort, how many or how large, whose, and so forth.

Since adjectives go with pronouns as well as with nouns, you will hardly be surprised to learn that most kinds of adjective have the same names as pronouns: Demonstrative, Possessive, Interrogative, Distributive, Indefinite, the exceptions being Adjectives of Quality and Adjectives of Quantity.

As the Demonstrative Pronouns are *this*, *that*, *such*, so the Demonstrative Adjectives are *this* and *that* and *such*, as in ' *This* man saw *that* man hit the third member of the party ' and ' *Such* things may happen to *these* friends and *those* enemies alike '. Note, however, that in ' The bully dealt him *such* a blow ', where ' such a blow ' means ' so hard a blow ', *such* is not a Demonstrative Adjective but an Adjective of Quality.

You doubtless spot the difference between these two sentences:

> *This* fate is only what he deserved
> *This* is the fate he deserved:

in the former, *this* is an adjective pointing to ' fate '; in the latter, it is a pronoun, because it stands for ' this fate '. Indeed, if we wish to be emphatic, we may write either ' This fate is the fate he deserved ' or ' This, *this* is the fate he deserved '.

The Possessive Pronouns, you remember, are *mine*, *thine*, *his*, *ours*, *yours*, *theirs*, etc. The corresponding Possessive Adjectives are *my*, *thy*, *his*, *her*, *its*, *our*, *your*, *their*, as in ' *My* cap is blue, *your* coat is blue, and

his hat is blue—blue seems to be *our* colour! ' or ' *Its* only effect was to harden *her* heart '.

There is one catch. *Mine* and *thine* are, in the usual way, Possessive Pronouns, as in ' That is his coat, this is *mine* ' and, in Biblical language, ' This is my coat, that is *thine* '. But in Biblical and poetic language, the Possessive Adjectives *my* and *thy*, if they immediately precede a noun (or another adjective) beginning with a vowel, become *mine* and *thine*; for the sake of euphony, that is, to obtain a more agreeable sound. Thus, ' My father is well and *mine* enemy is grievously ill ' and ' *Thine* ancient wrong hath soured thee and *thine* uncle and *thine* aunt '.

As Interrogative Pronouns ask a question (' *Who* is there? '—' *What* is that? '—' *Which* do you want? '), so do Interrogative Adjectives, as in ' *Which* book do you want? '—' *Which* man was injured? '—' *What* good can possibly come of it? ' But you can hardly confuse ' *Which* do you want? ' and ' *Which* book do you want? ': in the former, *which* stands for a noun and in the latter it qualifies ' book '.

There are, as you know, Distributive Pronouns. There are corresponding Distributive Adjectives, as in ' He did not see *any* wild animals ' (or ' He saw *no* wild animals ')—' *Every* time she goes to town she buys a new hat '—' *Each* man received five dollars '—' *Neither* horse is fast '.

And as there are Indefinite Pronouns, so there are Indefinite Adjectives, as in ' A *certain* person we know has come into a fortune ' and ' *Some* people never know when they are well off '.

But the most indefinite of Indefinite Adjectives is *a*, as in ' *A* child and *a* dog are usually good friends ' and ' That's *a* pity! ' Many grammarians still call *a* by its old name, Indefinite Article. As it is on a par with *some* (' *Some* man has come to see you '), it is obviously an adjective; you may, therefore, prefer to classify *a* as an Indefinite Adjective, as I do.

Whereas *a* used always to be called the Indefinite Article, *the* used to be called the Definite Article. There is no need to have a separate part of speech named ' Article'; there is every reason to treat *the* as an adjective. But clearly it is not indefinite. It is as definite as it can possibly be. We could therefore call it a Definite Adjective; yet to create a class of adjective for a single word would be silly. Now, *the* is of the same order or kind as *this* and *that*, which are, as you know, Demonstrative Adjectives. *The* is a Demonstrative Adjective: less demonstrative than *this* and *that*: yet essentially a pointing or demonstrative word.[1]

Now for those two classes of adjective which do not correspond to pronouns. *Adjectives of Quantity* or *Quantitative Adjectives*, sometimes called *Adjectives of Quantity and Number*; and *Adjectives of Quality* or *Qualitative Adjectives*.

Adjectives of Quantity are exemplified in ' *Much* good that will do you! ' and ' The *Four* Just Men ' and ' *Many* (or, *Numerous*) discharged

[1] If your teacher, to meet the demands of the examiners, prefers to speak of Articles, then no great harm is done.

soldiers never forget that they have once been soldiers—and, after all, why should they?'

Adjectives of Quality, the most *describing* of all adjectives, the descriptive adjectives *par excellence*, tell you what So-and-So or thingummy looks like—of what sort or kind or class it is or they are, as in 'There's a *tall* man for you!' and 'That *tall* man is *rich*' and 'The *Blue* Mediterranean is often *grey*, precisely as the *Blue* Danube is sometimes *green*, sometimes *grey*', and 'She's a *good* woman'. It is clear that most adjectives are Adjectives of Quality.

But there is yet another class of adjectives—a class ignored by most grammarians. As there are Proper Nouns (consisting of Proper Names: *Asia*, *London*, *Caesar*, *The Duke of Wellington*, '*David Copperfield*'), so there are the corresponding adjectives (*Asiatic*, *Caesarean*, etc.), which should be called Proper Adjectives. It is true that they could be included in the Adjectives of Quality; but that, I feel, would be carrying a joke a shade too far. Grammar, after all, is a very, very serious subject, although there is no occasion to be dull and solemn about it.

Degree[1] *or Comparison.* If you examine the following sentence,

> Of the three sisters, Mary is tall, Ruth is still taller, but Joan is the tallest of them all,

you will see that three degrees of tallness are mentioned.

In the first degree, the *Positive* Degree, you have Mary, who is *tall*; in the second degree, the *Comparative* Degree, you have Ruth, who is *taller* than Mary; and in the third, the highest or *Superlative* Degree, you have Joan, who is the *tallest*. The tallness[2] is compared, one degree with another: merely *tall*; in comparison, *taller*; and, superlatively—though still in comparison, *tallest*. To compare adjectives in this way is known as the Comparison of Adjectives.

Much the commonest way in which the comparison of adjectives is made is to add *-er* to the Positive, in order to form the Comparative Degree, and *-est* to form the Superlative: *great*; *great-er*, i.e. *greater*; *great-est*, i.e. *greatest*.

If the adjective ends in *-y*, as in *lonely*, you change the *y* to *i* before adding *-er* (*lonelier*) and *-est* (*loneliest*).

Where the addition of *-er* or *-est* would lead to clumsiness, the comparison is made by putting *more* before the Positive adjective to form the Comparative, and *most* before it to form the Superlative, as in

beautiful	*more beautiful*	*most beautiful*
ingenious	*more ingenious*	*most ingenious*

[1] From French *degré*, Latin *de*, down + *gradus*, a step (of, e.g., a ladder) or tread (of, e.g., a staircase).

[2] This example is modified from one given by L. A. G. Strong in *An Informal English Grammar*.

Ingeniouser and *beautifuller*, *ingeniousest* and *beautifullest*, would be not only clumsy but unwieldy—too much of a mouthful altogether!

Then there are a few adjectives that have Irregular Comparison. They are:

bad	*worse*	*worst*
good	*better*	*best*
much or *many*	*more*	*most*
little	*less*	*least*
far	*farther*, *further*	*farthest*, *furthest*
fore	*former*	*foremost*[1], *first*[1]
old	*elder*	*eldest*
late	*latter*	*last*
nigh	*near*	*next*

But *elder* and *eldest* refer to brothers—or sisters—or brothers and sisters; occasionally to other members of a family group or a clan, as in 'My *elder* daughter's name is Dorothy, after my *eldest* sister'; the relationship is emphasized. Elsewhere, the comparison is *old—older—oldest*, as in 'Tom is old, but his sister is *older* still' or 'I visited the elder sister, Rose, who was years *older* than Ellen' or 'The *oldest* of these castles was built in the Eleventh Century'.

Likewise, *late* is the first, but now never expressed, member of the series in which *latter* refers to the second, *last* to the third. *Latter* is often used in opposition to *former*, as in 'The latter question arises out of the former (question)'. If *late* refers to time, the comparison is *late—later—latest*, as in 'The *late* edition appears at 3 p.m; there's a *later* one at 5 o'clock; the *latest* edition comes out at 7 p.m.'

The comparison *nigh—near—next* is a survival of the old forms; nowadays we have *near—nearer—nearest*, although *near* is occasionally displaced by *nigh* in poetic language.

Note the idiom in 'He was more kind than intelligent'—'She felt more hungry than thirsty'—'The flowers were more hardy than beautiful'.

EXERCISES

1. What is the literal meaning of *adjective*?
2. What is the function of an adjective—that is, what does it do? what role does it play?
3. Define an adjective in your own words.
4. Name the classes or kinds of adjective, with one example of each.

[1] Consult your teacher or your dictionary.

5. (*a*) What is the simplest and most important rule for comparing adjectives?
   (*b*) Name two examples of the irregular comparison of adjectives.
6. Compare *lovely—horrible—tremendous—far—evil—hoarse—big—large—small—bad.*
7. Classify the italicized adjectives in the following:
   It was a *warm, clear African* night, the sky being lit with *innumerable* stars; there was *no* moon. *Any* person walking across *the* plain on *that glorious* evening felt that he was walking in *an earthly* heaven. He *whose* mind was at peace could drink-in the *mysterious* beauty, and he who was *anxious* had his anxiety stilled. *What* power *other* than Nature or religion can do this?
8. Would you differentiate the examples of 'the' in:
   'The man of the hour was the Prime Minister'?
9. Of 'certain' in:
   'A certain general was certain of victory'?
10. Correct or improve the faulty adjectives in:
   'This', said the humorist, 'is the curiousest thing I've ever seen. It is more good than a circus, though badder than a film. My older brother, Frank, who is three years elder than me, would have laughed his head off. He is littler than me and sillyer. Soon he will go a farrer journey than ever before, but I shall go a more far journey still.'
11. (*a*) Do you prefer to call *a* and *the* Articles or Adjectives? If so, why?
   (*b*) What about *the* in 'The more, the merrier' or 'The sooner, the better'?
12. Correct all the errors in:
   Magnificent he and beautiful she had the magnificentest and beautifullest wedding, impressiver than that of their elder parents. Of the two marriages, however, the earliest was the happiest.

§5. *Adverbs*

As adjectives go with, or qualify, nouns and pronouns, so adverbs go with, or modify,[1] verbs. (Verbs are those words which denote action and condition: *to do, to be,* and so on.) The very word *adverb* means '(a word added) to the verb': Latin *ad,* to+*verbum.* Literally, *verbum* means 'a word'; a verb is, by many, held to be '*the* word' in a statement.

Adverbs also modify adjectives, as in 'You are *too* kind' and '*severely* correct'; and other adverbs, as in 'He came *too* soon'.

Adverbs are of various kinds, the most important being Adverbs of Manner, for these show *how* a thing is done or how a person acts, as in 'He spoke *hastily*' or 'It turned out *badly*'. Adverbs of manner correspond to Adjectives of Quality.

Important, too, are Adverbs of Degree, which tell us *how much* or

[1] It is the convention to speak of adjectives *qualifying* and adverbs *modifying,* but it would be equally correct and sensible to apply *qualify* to either or both.

how far, as in ' He was *very* ill ', ' It is *too* soon for us to be able to tell ', ' It pleased him *very much* ', ' That is *most* kind of you! ' or ' That is *so* kind of you! ' *Not* also is an Adverb of Degree, for it equals ' to no degree, to no extent ', as in ' We shall *not* fail '.

Comparable to *not* is *no* in a reply, as ' Will you be there?—No ', for this could equally well be written ' Will you be there?—I shall *not* be there'. It will not, therefore, surprise you to learn that the other adverb used in reply (*yes*) is also an Adverb of Degree, as in ' Will you be there? —Yes ', which could have been written ' . . . Certainly! ' From this you will see that it is unnecessary to add, as some grammarians add, a class of adverbs to be called Adverbs of Affirmation (*yes, certainly*) and Negation (*no, not*).

Equally important are Adverbs of Time, which tell us *when*, as in ' He'll come *today*, I think ', ' It is too *soon* for us to be able to tell ', ' Mr Smith will see you *immediately* ', ' She has *long* been ill ', ' Will Christmas *never* come? ' Use your eyes and your brains on these sentences:

Yesterday←————I was in London; *today* [.] I am in Manchester; I shall be in Bristol————→*tomorrow.*

←————*Before* (or *Very recently*), I was in London; *now* [.] I am in Manchester; *afterwards*—probably tomorrow—I shall go————→to Bristol.

Resembling Adverbs of Time are Adverbs of Place, which tell *where* something is done, as in ' I saw him *there* ', ' Come *here*! ' The following sentences may help you:

' *Where* are you two girls? '

' I am *here* [.] and Mary is————→*there.*'

The lift is standing *at ground level*————; it goes up ↑ and then it comes down ↓.

Before (or *In front of*) the gate, a messenger stood; *behind* it a nervous old woman, expecting bad news.

M gate OW or OW
gate
M

Adverbs of Reason indicate *why* something is done, as in ' He acted disgracefully and is *therefore* to be dismissed '; *for that reason*[1] could be used instead of *therefore*.

But an adverb need not consist of only one word. All Adverbs of Manner could be written thus:

[1] An adverbial phrase: see below.

badly—in a bad way (or *manner*); *cleverly—in a clever way* (or *manner*); *furious—in a furious way* (or *manner*). That is, phrases could be substituted for words. Many adverbs, in fact, do consist of phrases; thus 'He fell into the water' contains the adverbial phrase *into the water*, which indicates place: an adverbial phrase of place. Compare 'He acted with amazing speed', where *with amazing speed* is an adverbial phrase of manner. Such phrases are sometimes called Extensions (or Enlargements of the Verb). They are; but why not use the simpler term Adverbial Phrase?

Formation of Adverbs. Many adverbs (e.g., *so, too, not, soon, here, therefore*) exist independently. But most adverbs have been formed from adjectives.

They are formed in very simple ways. Most adverbs deriving from adjectives simply add *-ly*, as in *bad—badly, sober—soberly, great—greatly, pleasant—pleasantly.*

If, however, the adjective ends in *-ue*, the *e* is omitted before *-ly* is added: *due—duly*; *true—truly*. A very small class.

If an adjective ends in *y*, the *y* changes to *i* before *-ly* is added, as in *merry—merrily*; *funny—funnily*; *ready—readily*; *dry—drily*.

Now suppose the adjective ends in *-ll*, as in *full* or *shrill*. To write *fullly* or *shrillly* would look very odd, so we write *fully* and *shrilly*, pronounced *full-ly* and *shrill-ly*; what really happens is that the second *l* of *full* and *shrill* is omitted before the *-ly* is added.

Adjectives ending in *-ic* take adverbs in *-ally*: *drastic—drastically*; *ironic—ironically*.

Several adjectives of place add *s*, not *-ly*: *upward—upwards*; *downward—downwards*; *toward—towards*.

If an adjective has no single adverb, you have to use an adverbial phrase, as in *difficult—with difficulty, ungainly—in an ungainly manner* (or *fashion*), *lunatic—like a lunatic*. The *-ly* adjectives, such as *comely, lovely, kindly*, can, if you wish, be turned into adverbs by the *y* rule set forth above: *comely—comelily, lovely—lovelily*. But some of them would be very awkward: to form *sprightlily* from *sprightly* is to create an ugly word. It is better to say *in a sprightly way* (or *manner*). The adjective *kindly* ('a kindly person') is a synonym of *kind* ('a kind person'); and the adverb *kindly* derives, not from *kindly* but from *kind*; the adverb corresponding to the adjective *kindly* is *kindlily* or *in a kindly way* (or *manner*).

Some adverbs, you will have noticed, are the same as their adjectives: *long*, as in 'a *long* time'—'He *long* remained'; *fast*, as in 'a *fast* horse'—'He ran *fast*'; *close*,[1] 'That bomb was *close*'—'That bomb fell *close*'.

Comparison of Adverbs. As adjectives can be compared in degrees Positive, Comparative, Superlative, so can adverbs.

[1] If, however, *close* means intent, it takes *-ly*, as in 'He looked very *closely* at the map'.

Here, the general rule is to add *more* in the Comparative, *most* in the Superlative. Thus:

' He spoke *severely* to everyone '
' He spoke *more severely* to his brother '
' He spoke *most severely* to himself '

A few adverbs have a true comparison of their own:

very or *much*	—	*more*	—	*most*
well	—	*better*	—	*best*
ill or *badly*	—	*worse*	—	*worst*
soon	—	*sooner*	—	*soonest*
long	—	*longer*	—	*longest*
hard	—	*harder*	—	*hardest*
little	—	*less*	—	*least*

Examples that lead us to notice that if an adverb is the same as an adjective (*much, well, ill, long, hard, far, close*), the adverb is compared in the same way as the adjective. If not, then the adverb is compared by means of *more* and *most.*

EXERCISES

1. There are points common to adjectives and adverbs. Can you say what they are?
2. What is the most important class of adverbs—with six examples?
3. Name the various classes or kinds of adverbs.
4. What difference—and what similarity—are there between *soon* and *in a short while*; *swiftly* and *at considerable speed*; *easily* and *with ease*; *very easily* and *with the utmost of ease*; *there* and *in that place*; *precisely there* and *in that very place*; *excessively* and *to an excessive extent* (or *degree*); *not* and *by no means*?
5. Classify the following adverbs: *too, very, not, similarly, coldly, anywhere, at all, thereabouts, conclusively, finally, at last, yesterday.*
6. State briefly the various ways (with one example of each) in which adverbs may be formed from adjectives.
7. Give a list of those adverbs which, so far as you can see, are not derived from adjectives.
8. What are the single-word adverbs corresponding to *in this place, at that time, at a later period, as a result, with that end* (purpose) *in view*?
9. To each of the following adjectives, attach the adverb derived from it: *true, false, immediate, silly, jolly, wary, hideous, poor, tremendous, steady, blue, eccentric, sarcastic, shapely.*
10. What are the rules for the comparison of adverbs?
11. Name four adverbs that are the same as their adjectives.
12. What are the comparatives of *directly, immediately, soon, stupendous, lonely, small, little, lunatic*?

13. The superlatives of *tiny, badly, difficult, pleasant, agreeable, nice, charming, sweet, delightful*?

14. The positives of *least, most, cheapest, supreme, worst*?

15. Supply adverbs (adverbial phrases are permissible only where they are necessary) in the place of the italicized word-groups in:

On every occasion I lunch *in this place.* I *am sure to* see some friend or other. Do I like the place? *I like it.* Could I find a place better suited to me? *I could not. It follows that* I come *to this place, I repeat* to this place, *upon as many occasions* as possible. *It would seem likely that* I shall *continue to* do so. Good food, good company are, *I assure you,* things to prize *to the utmost. That being so,* nobody—*I hope nobody*—could, *in any possible way,* object to praise of a restaurant *to that extent* desirable. *At no time in my life* have I encountered such politeness, such service, such dishes. *In other words,* I enjoy being *in this place, at this time. In any other place,* I feel lost.

§6. *Conjunctions*

Conjunction. Union; a union. Combination; a combination. Hence, in grammar, a connecting word—often called a connective. An unchangeable word that joins either one idea (expressed, of course, by a word or a group of words) to another idea or one statement (expressed in a sentence) to another statement. Its etymology or origin is Latin *conjunctio,* strictly *coniunctio,* a joining together, a joining of one thing to another: *con,* with + *junctio* (strictly *iunctio*), a joining, from *jungere* (*iungere*), to join or unite.

'Conjunctions are commonly classified as co-ordinating and subordinating', the former joining two equal sentences, as in 'I came *and* (I) saw *and* (I) conquered' and 'I called *but* he did not come'; the latter a subordinate, or less important, clause to a sentence as in 'He came *when* I called'. (Based upon *Webster's New International Dictionary.*)

Either your teacher or your dictionary will explain the hard words in the preceding pair of paragraphs. Of the co-ordinating conjunctions, which put two words or phrases or sentences, i.e. two ideas, into an equal order or rank, only two things need be said. One is that the two most important are *and* and *but,* others being *however* and *yet* and its equal, *nevertheless*; *however* and *yet* resemble, though they are weaker than, *but.* The other, that whereas *and* and *moreover* (=what is more) unite one word, phrase or sentence to another, *but, yet, nevertheless* oppose one to another.

The subordinating conjunctions do not, like *and,* unite equal words, phrases, sentences, but only join subordinate, i.e. dependent and less important, clauses to a principal sentence or to another subordinate clause. Thus, we can say 'You *and* I like fruit', where *and* unites two words, but the subordinating conjunctions can be employed only in such ways as these: '*When* he came to Town, he visited the dentist'

or ' He did it *because* he was forced ' or ' You are at school now, *whereas* I was at school *while* your parents were still young '; in the third example, *while* introduces a clause dependent on the already dependent, i.e. subordinate, clause ' Whereas I was at school '.

Subordinating conjunctions are usually classified further into Conjunctions of Time (*when, while, since*), Place (*where*), Reason (*for, because, since*), Statement (*that*), and Balance (*whereas, although, yet*).

Examples:

Since you went away, the house has been neglected	*Time*
I shall go *where* (or *wherever*) you go	*Place*
Since you feel like that about it, let's forget it	*Reason*
He collects stamps *because* it interests him to do so	*Reason*
I study English with especial care, *for* I think it important	*Reason*
She told her mother *that* she wanted a new hat	*Statement*
Whereas you read history, I read philosophy	*Balance*
Although he felt ill, yet he travelled all that way	*Balance*

But most examining boards are nowadays satisfied if you can distinguish between a co-ordinating and a subordinating conjunction.

The brighter among you have probably noticed the similarities between conjunctions and adverbs, as you will probably notice similarities between adverbs and prepositions.

§7. *Prepositions*

In Greek and Latin, in the Romance languages and in German, prepositions cause much trouble, because they may govern any one of as many as four cases. In English, however, all prepositions take the accusative or objective case. So says one school of grammarians. The opposed school of thought (I am a member) insists upon one modification: *of*, where it indicates possession (' the house *of* my father '), takes or governs the genitive or possessive case; and *to*, after a verb of giving (or granting) or telling (or ordering), takes the dative or indirect objective case.

You have seen prepositions at work in the section on Case. Prepositions are such words as have been italicized in:

In the big house built *with* tremendous energy, *by* Jonas Smith *for* my father, lived all the members *of* our numerous family *except* William, who had already gone *to* the South Seas. William was *at* home only *during* his rare furloughs. *Before* his last furlough, he had been away *from* home *for* nearly three years. *On* furlough, however, he was always gay; indeed, *off* or *on* duty, he smiled *upon* everybody and

everything; yet he was *without* folly or thoughtlessness or stupidity. *Because of* (or *For*) that he was liked and admired.

Read that passage again. Re-examine every italicized word—that is, every preposition. Now you can see for yourselves that a preposition shows a relationship, in time or in place or in reason or in advantage (or disadvantage). Most prepositions of time are also prepositions of place, and vice versa; as ' *at* home ' and ' *at* this minute '. The relationship is either between noun (or pronoun) and noun (or pronoun), as in ' The dog *on* the mat growled *at* the cat *on* the table ' and ' The boy pursued the dog *up* the slope *of* the hill ', or between verb (or adjective or adverb) and noun (or pronoun), as in ' He went *into* the room ' and ' early *in* the morning '.

Before we leave the preposition, I suggest that, with the aid of teacher or dictionary, you work out for yourselves the full meaning of this definition from *Webster's*:

> A word generally having a fundamental meaning of position, direction, time, or other abstract relation, and employed to connect a noun or a pronoun, in an adjective or adverbial phrase, with some other word . . .;—so called because usually placed before the word with which it is phrased; as, a bridge *of* iron; he comes *from* town; it is good *for* food.

Preposition comes from Latin *praepositio*, a being placed before: *prae*, before + *ponĕre*, to set or place.

§8. *Interjections*

Interjection: Latin *interjectio* (strictly *interiectio*), ' a being thrown among (other words), hence a word thrown among the other words in a sentence ', although it may and often does come at the beginning or at the end of a sentence.

An ejaculatory word or form of speech, usually thrown in without grammatical connection, as *O! Alas! Ha ha! Heavens!* etc. Compare *exclamation.*

' An interjection . . . may be regarded as the rudiment of . . . a sentence. But it is a confusion of thought to rank it among the parts of speech.'—Earle. (*Webster's.*)

The Interjection is also known as an Exclamation (literally, a crying out) and the sign '!' is usually known as an Exclamation Mark. Its function may appear yet more clearly in such sentences as ' *Ah!* There you are '—' *Oh!* Don't do that '—' *Poor Tom!* He died, *alas!* just a year ago '—' And then I saw—*Heavens!* it was horrible—I saw the ship go down with all hands '.

Although an interjection stands outside the central thought of a sentence,

yet it governs—or appears to govern—a pronoun in the accusative in such contexts as '*Ah* me! That I should have lived to see this day!' In this peculiarity, English has retained the practice of the Classical Latin authors.

An entire phrase or clause may play the part of an interjection, as in '*Woe is me!* I have lost my all, even hope.' Such a phrase or clause is to be described as an interjectional (or exclamatory) phrase or clause. Strictly, an interjectional clause belongs to syntax, not to accidence. But you have probably seen for yourselves that without syntax there is no accidence; further, that words are not to be thought of as existing by or for themselves; words have a meaning, 'make sense', only in a context.[1]

EXERCISES

Conjunctions, Prepositions, Interjections

1. Define a Co-ordinating and a Subordinating Conjunction, with two examples of each—not alone but in sentences.
2. Why is a preposition called a *preposition*?
3. Give one example (in a sentence) of prepositions showing relationships in
   time
   place
   reason or cause
   advantage or disadvantage.
4. What is the literal meaning of *interjection*?
5. Give two examples of
   (*a*) simple, i.e. single-word, interjections
   (*b*) interjectional phrases
   (*c*) interjectional clauses.
6. Although you have not yet learnt formal parsing (the statement of what part of speech this or that is), you can at least name the parts of speech italicized in the following:

   Good *people* all, *of* every sort,
   Give ear *unto* my *song*;
   And if you find it wondrous short,
   It cannot hold *you* long.

   In Islington there was *a* man,
   Of *whom* the world might say,
   That *still* a *godly* race he ran,
   Whene'er he went *to* pray.

7. Do the same for the italicized words in:

   O!
   I hear *the* watchman *and* he cries
   Arise!
   Up! I *see* the *day* announced
   By dawning skies.

8. And in:

   I took *my* hat *off* my *head*; *but* the *gusty* wind *caught* it *up* (I mean *the* hat) and *off* it flew, *dash it*!

[1] Set with other words in a word-group that 'makes sense'—i.e., is intelligible.

§9. *Verbs*

I have already mentioned that some grammarians agree with those ancients who called the *verb* by that name because it was '*the* word': Latin *verbum*, 'a word', becomes *verbum*, 'the word *par excellence*', i.e. a verb.[1] Other grammarians think the noun[1] to be the most important part of speech. Both parties are right. Whereas the talkers hold the noun to be the most important, so fond are they of putting a name to everything, the doers—the men of action—hold the verb to be supreme. All sensible children, and all men and women worthy of the name, regard the verb as the greatest part of speech. After all, it is the only one that *must* appear in any and every sentence or clause.

Action is the chief feature of a verb. That action may be positive, as in 'He *does* something', or negative, as in 'He *is* ill'; the latter is more usually regarded as state or condition. Hence a verb is a word that tells either the action done by someone or the state or condition he is in; to that definition we must add process, as in 'He *becomes* angry if he has to wait long' or 'The weather *has turned* cold' or 'The water *freezes*' or 'She *has grown* so much taller in the past year'.

You can now enjoy the good sense of the following definition by Mr Guy Pocock in *Grammar in a New Setting*: 'A Verb is a word that makes a statement. It expresses "being" and "doing", and you cannot say anything about anything or anybody without using a Verb'.

You can also, with the assistance of your teacher or of a dictionary, grasp and perhaps even enjoy so formal a definition as this in *Webster's New International Dictionary*: 'A word which affirms or predicates something; the part of speech expressing some kind of action or mode of being'.

Excellent as those two definitions are, they omit process. A more accurate definition would be this: 'A verb, which may be either one word (e.g., *does*) or two or more words used for one (e.g., *puts by* for *reserves*; *turns aside* for *diverts*), states something. That statement denotes an action, or a state (or condition), or a process or transition.'

But that definition, although reasonably accurate, is far too wordy! Let us try again. The following attempt comes nearer to what we need: 'A verb states an action or a condition or a process', but so do *action*, *condition*, *process*—and they are nouns. Try again! 'A verb tells what some person or thing *does* or *what state* he or it *is in* or what *is becoming* of some person or thing'.

That definition may seem a trifle clumsy, but it does at least define accurately[2]: and I suggest that you retain it.

[1] Compare Latin *vocabulum*, 'a name', hence 'the name', hence a noun.

[2] After writing the preceding paragraphs, I notice that Otto Jespersen, *Essentials of English Grammar*, divides verbs into those denoting activity (*go*, *eat*, *speak*, *fight*, etc.)—state (*live*, *suffer*, etc.)—process (*become*, *grow*, *dry*, etc.).

A verb has many aspects or facets. Some of the names for those aspects may sound difficult, but the facts they deal with are easy.

A verb may be Transitive or Intransitive. In transitive verbs, the action passes to another person or thing (the Object), as in 'Jack *threw* the ball', where the action passes from 'Jack' (the Subject) to 'the ball'.

In intransitive verbs, no action passes from *A* to *B*, as in 'I *hop* and *skip* and *jump*' or 'He *is* ill'. *Transitive* comes from Latin *trans*, across + *ire*, to go: there is a transfer. *Intransitive*[1] is the opposite: Latin *in-*, not.

Transitive verbs may be Active, as in 'Jack *threw* the ball', or Passive, as in 'The ball *was thrown* by Jack'. Active Verbs denote an *act*ing, a *do*ing; Passive Verbs denote a being acted upon, a being done—they are merely *passive*, the opposite of active; they indicate that something is being suffered or endured.

In addition to ordinary verbs there are those which we call Impersonal: 'It *snows*'—'It *was raining*'—'It *thunders* and *lightens*': where *it* is entirely impersonal and indefinite.

Verbs fall into one or another of certain Moods. Here, *mood*=*mode*=Latin *modus*, hence a way or manner of doing, saying, being something; but the word has been influenced by *mood*, temper, a state of mind, from Old English *mod*, mind, heart. The moods of verbs express states of mind. They express 'the manner in which the action or state it denotes is conceived, whether as fact, or as a matter of supposition, desire, intention, possibility, etc.' (*Webster's*).

In English there are three Moods: the Indicative, the Subjunctive, the Imperative. And two so-called Moods: the Infinitive and the Conditional.

Likewise there are true verbs, self-contained, complete; as in 'He *departed*'; and imperfect, incomplete verbs—especially Auxiliary Verbs, as in 'I *am* going away' or 'He *shall* be punished'. Auxiliaries merely help to form certain moods and tenses.

Tenses are the *time*-measures of speech; *I do*, *I am*, *I am doing*, in the present; *I did*, *I was*, *I was doing*, *I had done*, in the past; *I shall do*, *I shall be*, *I shall be doing*, in the future. 'Tense' comes, via Old French *tens* (=Modern French *temps*), from the Latin *tempus*, time.

A verb in the infinitive (*to do*, *to be*) is infinite, because it is bounded (Latin *fines*, boundaries) by neither person nor number; but *finite* verbs, verbs that are hemmed in or enclosed, have both person and number. Person as in '*I* do' or '*he* is'. Number, whether singular, as in 'He *does*' or 'She *is*', or plural as in 'We *do*' or 'They *are*'.

Rather like the infinitive, which indicates neither person nor number, is the participle: present participle, *doing* or *being*, as in '*Doing* that myself, I cannot blame you'; past, *having done* or *having been*, as in '*Having been* a prisoner of war, he knows what hardship is'. By itself, *done* is a past participle too; but passive, not active; as in '*Wounded* severely in the legs, he could not walk' or 'The *done* thing' (the thing

[1] Verbs always intransitive (*be*, *become*, etc.) are sometimes called *neuter*: i.e., neither active nor passive.

usually done). In the latter example (' the done thing '), *done* has virtually become an adjective: the phrase is the equivalent of ' the customary thing, i.e. custom '.

But a word ending in *-ing* may be not a participle but a gerund or, as many grammarians sensibly prefer to call it, a verbal noun. The deciding factor, as always, is function. In ' *Doing* that myself, I cannot blame you ', *doing* is clearly a participle; in ' *Doing* that myself gives me pleasure ' or, a simpler example, ' *Walking* is good for my health ', the *-ing* words are clearly nouns, which, because they partake of the nature of a verb, are aptly called verbal nouns.

Mood. The tenses of verbs are, for practical purposes, more important than the moods of verbs. Tenses or time-indicators existed long before moods or emotion-indicators. Yet for the sake of didactic convenience—that is, for the sake of learners—it is preferable to deal with mood before we deal with tense.

Let us clear away the so-called Infinitive and Conditional moods before we attack the true moods (Indicative, Subjunctive, Imperative). You already know nearly all you need to know about the Infinitive Mood. Examples: *to be, to go, to do, to have been, to have gone, to have done, to have been going, to have been doing*; all active. Passive are: *to be done, to have been done.*

In *I shall be, I shall do, he will be* or *do*; *I should be, he would do*; *he must be* or *do*: in all these, *be* or *do* is as much an infinitive as it is in *I intend to be*, or *I intend to do*, or *it ought to be*. But that leads us into deep waters; for the present, just take my word for it.

As *-ing* may belong to a verbal noun, e.g. in ' *Walking* is good for my health ', so *to be, to do, to have walked,* may be a noun, thus

To be or not to be, that is the question
To do is better than to dream
To have succeeded helped him to regain his confidence.

There, *to be, not to be, to do, to dream, to have succeeded* are infinitives used as nouns, whereas *to regain* is an ordinary infinitive.

Those sentences could have been written

Being or not-being, that is the question
Doing is better than dreaming
Succeeding helped him to regain confidence;

they could equally well have been written

Life or death, that is the question
Action is better than dream
Acts (*or* deeds) are better than dreams
Success helped him to regain confidence.

To distinguish the nouns in ' *To be* or *not to be*, that is the question ' from the Verbal Nouns in ' *Being* or *not-being*, that is the question ', we may call the former Infinitive Nouns.

Conditional Mood. This mood is exemplified in ' I *should* certainly *go* if I could spare the time ' and ' He *would have gone*, had his mother not fallen ill just then ' and ' Nothing *would deter* that brave man '. The third example is especially interesting, for you must supply the omitted thought, ' if he made up his mind ' or ' if he wished or decided to do it '. The actions are *conditional* upon something else (' if . . . '): that is, they depend upon that something else.

Indicative. Of the three true Moods, the Indicative is by far the most important. Many people never use the Subjunctive and only very shakily use the Conditional; they do use the Imperative, in its primary—its simplified—form (' Go away! '), but only by assimilation—because everybody else does; and the Infinitive for the same reason.

The Indicative is the natural mood, the mood we all use for the commonest acts of speech: to make a plain statement (' It is raining '—' I'm going to town tomorrow '); to describe something (' My dog is a terrier '); to narrate something (' Nelson got killed at the battle of Trafalgar '); and so forth. The primary sense of *Indicative* is ' that which makes something known ': from Latin *indicativus*, ' making known, proclaiming ', itself from *indicatus*, ' made known; proclaimed '.

Almost as natural is the Imperative. *Imperative* comes from Latin *imperare*, ' to command '. But it covers entreaty (' Go, please! ') and exhortation or urging (' Hurry, or you'll be too late! ') as well as command, order, instruction.

Perhaps the least natural of all the Moods is the Subjunctive. The name derives from the Latin verb *subjungere* (strictly *subiungere*), ' to subjoin '; *subjunctive* in grammar means ' subordinate, less important '—i.e., less important than the Indicative.

Whereas the Indicative conveys a statement and deals in facts, the Subjunctive deals in suppositions, in possibilities, in attitudes of mind, in emotions. In the words of *Webster's New International Dictionary*—words I suggest you study with the aid of your dictionary or with the aid of your teacher acting as a dictionary—the Subjunctive is that Mood ' which represents an attitude toward, or concern with, the denoted action or state not as a fact but as something either simply entertained in thought[1], contingent[2], possible (" Give sorrow tears lest the heart *break* ") or emotionally viewed as a matter of doubt, desire, will, etc. (" Mine *be* a cot beside the hill "[3])'.

[1] ' If I were king, I should . . . '
[2] If one thing were to happen, another might happen.
[3] I wish my home to be a cottage beside the hill.

Tense. If the preceding paragraphs have not been quite clear, it is because you find it difficult to understand Mood apart from Tense. Everyone does!

More. Talk about Tense, i.e. about time, in general—to talk about the tenses without examples—is to talk in the air. The present is the *now*, the past is what happened at any time (one minute, one hour, one day, one week, one year, a thousand or more years) *before the now*, and the future is simply what has *not yet* happened but will, in fact, take place.

Let us therefore look at the actual tenses of a Regular Verb—of an Irregular (or Strong) Verb—and of the verb *to be*; we are, indeed, obliged to study the tenses of *to be*, for we use them in forming certain compound tenses of all other verbs.

A Weak Verb is one that forms its past tense and past participle regularly, thus: *like, liked, liked*; it is a Regular Verb. A Strong Verb is one that forms its past, not by adding *-ed* (or *-d*) but by a change in the stem[1]: *break, broke, broken*; *ring, rang, rung*; or with only one change, *make, made, made*. An Irregular Verb is one that forms its tenses from more than one stem, as in *go—went—gone*. The most irregular of all verbs is *to be*. Whereas *like* has only four forms (*like, likes, liked, liking*) and *break* only five (*break, breaks, broke, broken, breaking*), *to be* has *be, being, been*; *am, are, is*; *was, were*, i.e. eight forms, which come from, certainly three, probably four stems; it may comfort you to know that in Greek and Latin, and in the languages derived from Latin (e.g. Italian, French, Spanish, Portuguese), the verbs for ' to be ' are even more irregular than *to be* is in English.

You already know the forms of the Infinitive[2] and the Imperative.[3] We shall, therefore, proceed in the natural order: Indicative, Conditional, Subjunctive.

Indicative. Let our verbs be *to like, to break, to be*;[4] let 1, 2, 3 refer to the first person, the second, the third; the singular comes before the plural. You may think it a bore to learn the tenses: but you already know most of them, for you have been using them all your lives—and will be using them (with the addition of the new ones, if any) for the rest of your lives; they will be extremely helpful to you, in your speaking, your writing, your reading; they are so very easy; and, once learnt, they won't run away from you.

[1] A *stem* is also called a *root* or a *radical* (Latin *radix*, root of a plant) or a *base* or an *etymon* (Greek *etumon*, literally ' a true thing '). The stem or base of *likes, liked, liking* is *like*; the base of *broke, broken, breaking* is *break*; the base of *made, making*, is *make*; and so forth.

[2] To remind you: *to go* is the present; *to have gone* is the past; and that is all there is to it.

[3] *Go away* and *Do not go away*: and that is all. Jussive will come in Book II.

[4] Admittedly *to have* is also used in forming the tenses, but there seems to be little point in detailing its conjugation separately: all its simple tenses appear in the compound tenses shown in the ensuing tables.

PRESENT (or SIMPLE PRESENT)

	to be	*to like*	*to break*
1.	I *am*	I *like*	I *break*
2.	thou *art**: you *are*	thou *likest**: / you *like*	thou *breakest**: / you *break*
3.	he, she, it *is*	he (etc.) *liketh** / he *likes*	he (etc.) *breaketh**: / he *breaks*
1.	we *are*	we *like*	we *break*
2.	ye *are*: you *are*	you *like*	you *break*
3.	they *are*	they *like*	they *break*

PRESENT PROGRESSIVE[1] (or PRESENT CONTINUOUS)

I *am being*	I *am liking*	I *am breaking*
thou *art** *being:* / you *are being*	you *are liking*	you *are breaking*
he *is being*	he *is liking*	he *is breaking*
we *are being*	we *are liking*	we *are breaking*
you *are being*	you *are liking*	you *are breaking*
they *are being*	they *are liking*	they *are breaking*

PRESENT PERFECT[2] (or simply PERFECT)

I *have been*	I *have liked*	I *have broken*
thou *hast** *been:* / you *have been*	you *have liked*	you *have broken*
he *hath** *been:* / he *has been*	he *has liked*	he *has broken*
we *have been*	we *have liked*	we *have broken*
you *have been*	you *have liked*	you *have broken*
they *have been*	they *have liked*	they *have broken*

PRESENT PERFECT PROGRESSIVE (or P. P. CONTINUOUS)

I *have been being*	I *have been liking*	I *have been breaking*
thou *hast**, you *have*, *been being*	you *have been liking*	you *have been breaking*
he *hath**, *has*, *been being*	he *has been liking*	he *has been breaking*

* Archaic form.

[1] The Progressive tenses indicate something in progress—something that is, or was, or will be still going on, as in ' I was gardening when he arrived ' or ' We are enjoying ourselves immensely, thank you '.

[2] The Perfect tenses refer either to something that has very recently happened (' I have learnt the Present Progressive ') or to something that, true of the past, is still true (' I have been lucky and have had good health '). The Future Perfect brings the future into the past or regards the future as past, as in ' By that time, I shall have succeeded '.

we *have been being*	we *have been liking*	we *have been breaking*
you *have been being*	you *have been liking*	you *have been breaking*
they *have been being*	they *have been liking*	they *have been breaking*

PAST (or SIMPLE PAST; or PAST DEFINITE; or PRETERITE[1])

I *was*	I *liked*	I *broke*
thou *wast**: you *were*	thou *likedst**: you *liked*	thou *brokest**: you *broke*
he *was*	he *liked*	he *broke*
we *were*	we *liked*	we *broke*
you *were*	you *liked*	you *broke*
they *were*	they *liked*	they *broke*

PAST PROGRESSIVE

I *was being*	I *was liking*	I *was breaking*
thou *wast**, you *were*, *being*	you *were liking*	you *were breaking*
he *was being*	he *was liking*	he *was breaking*
we *were being*	we *were liking*	we *were breaking*
you *were being*	you *were liking*	you *were breaking*
they *were being*	they *were liking*	they *were breaking*

PLUPERFECT[2]

I *had been*	I *had liked*	I *had broken*
thou *hadst**, you *had*, *been*	you *had liked*	you *had broken*
he *had been*	he *had liked*	he *had broken*
we *had been*	we *had liked*	we *had broken*
you *had been*	you *had liked*	you *had broken*
they *had been*	they *had liked*	they *had broken*

PLUPERFECT PROGRESSIVE (or PLUPERFECT CONTINUOUS)

I *had been being*,[3] etc. I *had been liking*, etc. I *had been breaking*, etc.

FUTURE (or SIMPLE FUTURE)

I *shall*[4] *be*	I *shall like*	I *shall break*
thou *wilt** *be*: you *will be*	you *will like*	you *will break*
he *will*[4] *be*	he *will like*	he *will break*

* Archaic form.

[1] Literally, 'bygone; past'; from Latin *praeterire*, 'to pass by'.

[2] Literally 'more than perfect or complete': Latin *plus* (more) + *quam* (than) + *perfectum* (completed).

[3] Rare for the verb *to be*. 'I had been being foolish, I knew, but that has all passed now, I swear.'

[4, 4] See the sub-section *Some Special Verbs*, p. 80.

we *shall be*	we *shall like*	we *shall break*
you *will be*	you *will like*	you *will break*
they *will be*	they *will like*	they *will break*

Future Progressive (or Future Continuous)

I *shall be being*[1]	I *shall be liking*	I *shall be breaking*
you *will be being*	you *will be liking*	you *will be breaking*
he *will be being*	he *will be liking*	he *will be breaking*
we *shall be being*	we *shall be liking*	we *shall be breaking*
you *will be being*	you *will be liking*	you *will be breaking*
they *will be being*	they *will be liking*	they *shall be breaking*

Future Perfect

I *shall have been*[2]	I *shall have liked*	I *shall have broken*
thou *wilt**, *you will, have been*	you *will have liked*	you *will have broken*
he *will have been*	he *will have liked*	he *will have broken*
we *shall have been*	we *shall have liked*	we *shall have broken*
you *will have been*	you *will have liked*	you *will have broken*
they *will have been*	they *will have liked*	they *will have broken*

Future Perfect Progressive

I *shall have been being*[3]	I *shall have been liking*	I *shall have been breaking*
you *will have been being*	you *will have been liking*	you *will have been breaking*
he *will have been being*	he *will have been liking*	he *will have been breaking*
we *shall have been being*	we *shall have been liking*	we *shall have been breaking*
you *will have been being*	you *will have been liking*	you *will have been breaking*
they *will have been being*	they *will have been liking*	they *will have been breaking*

Conditional. This Mood has no separate forms of its own: it makes use of *should* and *would*.[4] There are only the following tenses.

* Archaic form.

[1] Compare [2]. 'I shall still be liking to swim when you have given up swimming.'

[2] 'By 1960 I shall have been here for some years.'

[3] Rare for *to be*. 'If this is ever taken from me, I shall at least have been enjoying life up to that time.'

[4] For these two verbs—or forms of a verb—see the sub-section *Some Special Verbs*, pp. 80–81.

Simple Conditional

I *should be*	I *should like*	I *should break*
thou *wouldst be**: / you *would be*	You *would like*	you *would break*
he *would be*	he *would like*	he *would break*
we *should be*	we *should like*	we *should break*
you *would be*	you *would like*	you *would break*
they *would be*	they *would like*	they *would break*

Simple Progressive Conditional

I *should be being*[1]	I *should be liking*	I *should be breaking*
you *would be being*	you *would be liking*	you *would be breaking*
we *would be being*	he *would be liking*	he *would be breaking*
we *should be being*	we *should be liking*	we *should be breaking*
you *would be being*	you *would be liking*	you *would be breaking*
they *would be being*	they *would be liking*	they *would be breaking*

Perfect Conditional

I *should have been*[2]	I *should have liked*	I *should have broken*
you *would have been*	you *would have liked*	you *would have broken*
he *would have been*	he *would have liked*	he *would have broken*
we *should have been*	we *should have liked*	we *should have broken*
you *would have been*	you *would have liked*	you *would have broken*
they *would have been*	they *would have liked*	they *would have broken*

Perfect Progressive Conditional

I *should have been being*[2]	I *should have been liking*	I *should have been breaking*
you *would have been being*	you *would have been liking*	you *would have been breaking*
he *would have been being*	he *would have been liking*	he *would have been breaking*
we *should have been being*	we *should have been liking*	we *should have been breaking*
you *would have been being*	you *would have been liking*	you *would have been breaking*
they *would have been being*	they *would have been liking*	they *would have been breaking*

* Archaic form.

[1] Compare [2]. 'I should be liking it less if you were not here.'

[2] Rare for *to be*. 'I should have been liking it better if that spy had not been here.'

Subjunctive. You already know a little about this Mood; more—a very necessary more—is to come in the chapter on Syntax. But here are the tenses.

PRESENT SUBJUNCTIVE

I *be*[1]	I *like*	I *break*
thou *be*: you *be*	you *like*	you *break*
he *be*	he *like*	he *break*
we *be*	we *like*	we *break*
you *be*	you *like*	you *break*
they *be*	they *like*	they *break*

PRESENT PROGRESSIVE SUBJUNCTIVE

I *be being*; I *be liking*; I *be breaking*; etc.: very little used, except by subtle stylists.

PRESENT PERFECT SUBJUNCTIVE

I *have been*[2]	I *have liked*	I *have broken*
you *have been*	you *have liked*	you *have broken*
he *have been*	he *have liked*	he *have broken*
we *have been*	we *have liked*	we *have broken*
you *have been*	you *have liked*	you *have broken*
they *have been*	they *have liked*	they *have broken*

PRESENT PERFECT PROGRESSIVE SUBJUNCTIVE

I *have been being*, etc.: very rarely used except by cultured American stylists.

IMPERFECT (or PAST or SIMPLE PAST) SUBJUNCTIVE

I *were*	I *liked*: I *were to like*[3]	I *broke*: I *were to break*
thou *wert**: you *were*	you *liked*: you *were to like*	you *broke*: you *were to break*
he *were*	he *liked*: he *were to like*	he *broke*: he *were to break*
we *were*	we *liked*: we *were to like*	we *broke*: we *were to break*
you *were*	you *liked*: you *were to like*	you *broke*: you *were to break*
they *were*	they *liked*: they *were to like*	they *broke*: they *were to break*

* Archaic form.

[1] I *may be* is not, in form, a true subjunctive; see, later, *Some Special Verbs.*

[2] 'If I have been cruel, may God forgive me!' The third person singular ('If he have been cruel, may God forgive him!') is rarely used except by cultured Americans.

[3] The longer form is often used to avoid ambiguity.

IMPERFECT PROGRESSIVE SUBJUNCTIVE

I *were being*	I *were liking*	I *were breaking*
you *were being*	you *were liking*	you *were breaking*
he *were being*	he *were liking*	he *were breaking*
etc.	etc.	etc.

PERFECT SUBJUNCTIVE

I *were to have been*	I *were to have liked*	I *were to have broken*
etc.	etc.	etc.
	[Not much used.]	

Still less used is the Perfect Progressive Subjunctive: I *were to have been being*, I *were to have been liking*, etc.

PLUPERFECT SUBJUNCTIVE

I *had been*[1]	I *had liked*	I *had broken*
you *had been*	you *had liked*	you *had broken*
he *had been*	he *had liked*	he *had broken*
etc.	etc.	etc.

PLUPERFECT PROGRESSIVE SUBJECTIVE

I *had been being*[2]	I *had been liking*	I *had been breaking*
etc.	etc.	etc.

The nice (i.e. discriminating, very careful) use of the subjunctive, especially in the compound tenses, comes only with long observation and long practice. But you will meet it in your reading, so you do at least have to know about it.

Passive Tenses. I shall not detail these tenses, their formation being immediately understandable from this hint:—*I am, he is, dismissed; I am being dismissed; I have been dismissed; I shall be—shall have been—dismissed; I was dismissed; I had been dismissed; if I be dismissed; if I were dismissed; if I had been dismissed; should I be dismissed.*

Strong and Irregular Verbs. The strong, like the irregular verbs, are—or until quite recently were—the commonest in the language: the very basis of practical, everyday expression. Think upon the irregular *be* and *go* and the strong *begin, break, bring, catch, come, do, eat, feel, get, have,*

[1] 'If I had happened to be sick, you would, even then, have stayed away.' Here you see the Subjunctive merging with the Conditional. Usage takes precedence over form.

[2] Very rare for *to be.* 'If I *had* been breaking a bat, you would have broken my head.'

make, and the rest of them! Two of the few exceptions are *live* and *work*. All irregular and all strong verbs come down to us from Anglo-Saxon times; all formed a part of Old English. It is because, with rare exceptions (e.g. *chide* and *rive*), these verbs are in such day-to-day, constant use that it is not merely advisable but abundantly necessary to know them and, unless you be content with illiteracy, to learn them.

It is usual to indicate only the first person singular of the present and preterite of the indicative, and the past participle; but to help you fix the irregularities in your mind I have added the present participle. The imperfect or rudimentary verbs will be found at *Some Special Verbs*.

Present Indicative	*Present Participle*	*Preterite*	*Past Participle*
awake	awaking	awoke, awaked	awaked
be	being	was	been
bear	bearing	bore	borne—*but* 'he was born in 1937'
beat	beating	beat	beaten
become[1]	becoming	became	become
begin	beginning	began	begun
bend[2]	bending	bent	bent
bereave	bereaving	bereft	bereft
beseech	beseeching	besought	besought
bet	betting	bet, betted	bet, betted
bid	bidding	bid[3]	bidden, bid
bind[4]	binding	bound	bound
bite	biting	bit	bitten
bleed[5]	bleeding	bled	bled
blow[6]	blowing	blew	blown
break	breaking	broke	broken
bring	bringing	brought	brought
broadcast	broadcasting	broadcasted	broadcast, broadcasted
build[7]	building	built	built
burn[8]	burning	burned, burnt	burnt
burst[9]	bursting	burst	burst
buy	buying	bought	bought

[1] from *come*, q.v. (The abbreviation *q.v.*=Latin *quod videte*, which see.)
[2] So the entire group: *lend, rend, send, spend* and archaic *wend*.
[3] Archaic: *bad* or *bade*. *Forbid* follows the same pattern.
[4] So too *find, grind, wind*.
[5] So too *breed, feed, speed*.
[6] Compare *grow, know, throw*.
[7] So *gird*: but it also takes the preterite *girded*.
[8] So *learn*.
[9] So too the entire group; *cast, cost, cut, hit, hurt, let, put, set, shut, slit, split, sweat* (but preterite and past participle also *sweated*), *thrust*; compare *rid* below.

Present Indicative	*Present Participle*	*Preterite*	*Past Participle*
catch	catching	caught	caught
choose	choosing	chose	chosen
cleave (=to split)	cleaving	cleft, clove	cleft, cloven
cleave (=to stick fast)	cleaving	clave, cleaved	cleaved
cling[1]	clinging	clung	clung
come	coming	came	come
creep[2]	creeping	crept	crept
deal	dealing	dealt	dealt
dig	digging	dug	dug
do	doing	did	done
draw	drawing	drew	drawn
dream	dreaming	dreamed	dreamt
drink[3]	drinking	drank	drunk
drive	driving	drove	driven
dwell	dwelling	dwelt	dwelt
eat	eating	eat (*pronounced* ett), ate	eaten
fall	falling	fell	fallen
feel	feeling	felt	felt
fight	fighting	fought	fought
flee	fleeing	fled	fled
fly	flying	flew	flown
forecast[4]	forecasting	forecast, forecasted	forecast, forecasted
forget	forgetting	forgot	forgotten
forsake: *as* take			
freeze[5]	freezing	froze	frozen
get	getting	got	got (*American*: gotten)
give[6]	giving	gave	given
go	going	went[7]	gone
grow	growing	grew	grown
hang	hanging	hanged (*persons*); hung (*things*; *also when intransitive*)	hanged

[1] The following can all be conjugated in the same way: *fling, ring, sing, sling, spring, sting, string, swing, wring*; but *ring, sing, spring*, usually take preterites *rang, sang, sprang*.
[2] So too *keep, sleep, weep*.
[3] So too *shrink, sink, stink*.
[4] Compare *broadcast*.
[5] Compare *choose*.
[6] So also *forgive*.
[7] Borrowed from the old-fashion verb *wend* (to go).

Present Indicative	*Present Participle*	*Preterite*	*Past Participle*
have	having	had	had
hear	hearing	heard	heard
hew	hewing	hewed	hewed, hewn
hide[1]	hiding	hid	hidden
hold	holding	held	held
kneel[2]	kneeling	knelt	knelt
know	knowing	knew	known
lay	laying	laid	laid
lead[3]	leading	led	led
lean	leaning	leaned	leant (*pronounced* lent)
leap	leaping	leaped, leapt	leapt
learn	learning	learned	learnt
leave	leaving	left	left
lie	lying[4]	lay	lain
light	lighting	lit, lighted	lit, lighted
lose	losing	lost	lost
make	making	made	made
mean	meaning	meant (*pronounced* ment)	meant (*pronounced* ment)
meet	meeting	met	met
mow	mowing	mowed	mown
pen (=to enclose)	penning	penned	pent
quit	quitting	quitted (*American*: quit)	quitted (*American*: quit)
read	reading	read (*pronounced* red)	read (*pronounced* red)
rid[5]	ridding	rid	rid
ride[6]	riding	rode	ridden
ring: *see* cling			
rise[7]	rising	rose	risen
rive	riving	rived	riven
run	running	ran	run
saw	sawing	sawed	sawn (*better than* sawed)
say	saying	said (*pronounced* sed)	said (*pronounced* sed)

[1] So also *chide*.
[2] Compare *feel*.
[3] Contrast *read*.
[4] Compare *die—dying* and *tie—tying*. (But *lie*, to tell falsehoods, is regular in the preterite and past participle: *lied*.)
[5] So also *shed* and *spread*.
[6] So *stride*.
[7] So *arise*.

Present Indicative	*Present Participle*	*Preterite*	*Past Participle*
see	seeing	saw	seen
seek	seeking	sought	sought
sell	selling	sold	sold
sew	sewing	sewed	sewn
shake[1]	shaking	shook	shaken
shear	shearing	sheared (*archaic*: shore)	shorn
shine (*intransitive*)	shining	shone	shone
shoot	shooting	shot	shot
show[2]	showing	showed	shown
sing: *see* cling			
sit	sitting	sat	sat[3]
slay	slaying	slew	slain
sleep: *see* creep			
slink	slinking	slank, slunk	slunk
smell[4]	smelling	smelled, smelt	smelt
smite[5]	smiting	smote	smitten
sow	sowing	sowed	sown
speak	speaking	spoke (*archaic*: spake)	spoken
spell	spelling	spelled, spelt	spelt
spill	spilling	spilled, spilt	spilt
spin	spinning	span, spun	spun
spit (= to expectorate)	spitting	spat	spit[6]
spoilt	spoiling	spoiled, spoilt	spoilt
stand	standing	stood	stood
steal	stealing	stole	stolen
stick	sticking	stuck	stuck
strike	striking	struck	struck[7]
strive[8]	striving	strove	striven
swim	swimming	swam, swum	swum
take	taking	took	taken
teach	teaching	taught	taught
tear[9]	tearing	tore	torn

[1] Compare *take.*
[2] *Shew—shewing—shewed—shewn:* now rather archaic spelling.
[3] In the transitive, usually the borrowed *seated* is used.
[4] Compare *kneel* and contrast *sell, tell.*
[5] So also *write.*
[6] But *spitten image.*
[7] As adjective, *stricken.*
[8] So *thrive.*
[9] So *swear* and *wear.*

Present Indicative	*Present Participle*	*Preterite*	*Past Participle*
tell	telling	told	told
think	thinking	thought	thought
throw	throwing	threw	thrown
tread	treading	trod	trodden
wake	waking	woke, waked	woken, woke
weave	weaving	wove	woven
win	winning	won	won

That may seem to be a formidable list. It remains formidable unless the teacher or the private student uses his head.

I have indicated many of the groups. But anyone examining the list will soon detect other groups.

A teacher can treat all these irregularities on the lines of a spelling-bee between one half of the class and the other; between one row of pupils and the next behind it; or, instead of attacking laterally, he can attack in depth.

A competition can be either oral (spelling-bee system or a variation thereof) or written.

Written? Yes! On the blackboard, let the teacher write say ten[1] verbs thus:

bear
catch
fling
strike
weep
etc.

Taking each word in turn, the teacher sets one team against its opponents: the five best *v.* the five next best pupils; the five worst *v.* the five next worst; two mixed teams, picked not by the teacher but by a captain.

The captains toss for innings, exactly as in cricket or any similar game. Present participles being excluded, Team ' A ' leads off: the first member of that team, whether captain or another member, writes the preterite on the board: if he does it correctly, he scores 1 for his team; if incorrectly, the first member of Team ' B ' has a shot at it. Preterite disposed of, the past participle is tackled, by whichever team is ' batting ' or ' has the strike '. And so it goes on until the ten verbs have been ' solved ' in full.

Noise? If the teacher stipulates that the team at fault loses one point and that, if both teams are at fault, they lose one point apiece at the first offence and are ordered off the field at the second, there will be no trouble. It isn't my place to instruct in discipline. The sensible disciplinarian knows what to do.

[1] Five or six verbs are rather soon exhausted.

A private student can play the game by himself; as at patience (or solitaire), cheating is debarred. Or if he is lucky, he may find another student to play against him.

Some Special Verbs. Like *to be* in ' I *am* liking it here ' and like *have* in ' I *have* gone there every day ' and like the two together in ' I *have been* going home at Christmas time ever since I started to earn my living ', most of these special (or defective) verbs are auxiliaries or virtual auxiliaries —they help to form a complete verb; the word auxiliary comes from the Latin adjective *auxiliarius*, ' helpful; subordinate ', from *auxilium*, ' help, aid, assistance '. *Webster's New International Dictionary* defines an auxiliary as ' a verb which helps to form the voices, moods, tenses, etc., of other verbs . . . ; as, *have*, *be*, *may*, *do*, *shall* and *will*, *can*, *must*, in English; *sein*, *haben*, *werden*, in German; *être* and *avoir*, in French '.

Many grammarians call these special verbs, these imperfect verbs: Anomalous Verbs: from the Greek *anōmalos*, ' uneven ': they possess only two moods, two tenses, no distinct persons and no distinct plurals.

Shall and *Will.* When used as auxiliaries to make the future tenses— English has no separate single *form* for the future (contrast French '*je serai* ', '*j'aurai* ')—*shall* is used in the first person, *will* in the other two persons. The corresponding past tenses are *should* and *would*, as in ' I feared that if it rained, the trip *would* be cancelled '.

But these uses represent a weakening of *shall* (past *should*) and *will* (past *would*). Basically, *shall* means ' to be under a necessity; to be obliged (to do something) ' and *will* means ' to resolve, to decide; to be resolved or determined (to do something) '.

Dr C. T. Onions, in his masterly book on English syntax, has further noted that *will* often denotes willingness or a wish, and that *shall* often denotes permission. He gives the following examples:

I *will* (=am resolved to) live a bachelor
Will you (=do you intend or wish to) take it with you, or *shall* I (=am I to) send it?
We *will* send sometime to fetch you
He *would* go, say what I might
Thou *shalt* not steal
You (he, they) *shall* go this instant
Walking along the High Street, whom *should* I (he, we, they) meet but my cousin Tom!

Moreover, *should* is, in all persons, used virtually as a present indicative with the meaning ' I ought '—' you ought '—' he ought ', etc., as in ' You shouldn't do that ' and ' I feel that I should go to hospital, but I'm so fearfully busy '.

And, as *will* sometimes expresses habit in the present (' You know that I *will* overwork, but you must insist that I take greater care of myself '), so

would, likewise for all persons, occasionally expresses habit in the past, as in 'He had a nervous breakdown: you see, he *would* overwork' or 'I fell into the trap: I *would* be so sure that I knew best!'[1]

May and *Might*. As *should* is the past tense of *shall*, and *would* of *will*, so *might* is the past tense of *may*. As an auxiliary, *may* is used to form an alternative present subjunctive; '*I may be*' is equal to 'I *be*'; 'I ask that I may be relieved of this duty' is merely another way of saying 'I ask that I be relieved. . . .' And as an auxiliary, *might* is used to form an alternative imperfect subjunctive: 'If I might be allowed to go now, I should be grateful'='If I were allowed to go now . . .'.

But these uses represent weakenings of the fundamental sense of *may* and *might*, which denote either possibility, as in 'I *may* come—but I *may* not', or permission, as in 'You *may* get down from table now, John' or '*May* I leave the room, please?' Compare 'John asked whether he *might* get down from table', 'Tom asked *might* he leave the room' (permission) and 'I feared that you *might* fail the examination' (possibility).[2]

Can and *Could*. As *may* has past *might*, so *can* has past *could*. *Can* and *could* express ability. In Old English, *may* and *might* used to express ability: but *can* and *could*, which in Old English meant 'know, knew', have ousted *may* and *might*, the transition happening in this way: if you *know how* to do a thing, usually you *have the ability* to do it: you *can*, in the modern sense, do it.[3] (Compare the French *pouvoir* and *savoir*.)

Must. Originally, *must* was the preterite of Old English *motan*, 'to be able'. *Must* expresses either physical or mental necessity or obligation (i.e., moral necessity), as in 'If the flood comes, the house *must* be washed away' and 'If $2 + 2 = 4$, then $2 + 2 + 2 + 2$ must $= 4 \times 2 = 8$' and 'Poor fellow! You *must* help him.' In general, 'he or it must' = 'he or it is bound to (be or do something)'.

For its uses as a past subjunctive in Conditional Sentences and in Indirect Speech, see the next chapter.

Ought. In origin, *ought* resembles *must*: for *ought* was originally the preterite of *owe* and therefore used to mean 'had to; was obliged to'. Now, its predominant sense is one of present duty, as in 'Whatever he may feel about it, he ought to help his brother'. ('He ought to help' is stronger than 'He should help'.) But in Indirect Speech, it can also be past tense, as in 'He felt that he ought to help', as, indeed, *must* is past tense in 'He said that he must help his brother'.

Do. In addition to being a complete verb ('I *did* that, because I like to *do* that sort of thing'), *do* is an auxiliary, used

[1] For further distinctions, see the next chapter (Syntax).
[2] For further distinctions, see the next chapter (Syntax).
[3] For further distinctions, see the next chapter (Syntax).

(1) for emphasis, as in ' I *do* like that sort of thing ' or ' Little *did* I think, when I saw him, that he would become a rival ';

(2) in questions, as ' *Do* you like this? ', ' *Did* he see what had happened? ';

(3) to take the place of a complete verb, *do* being here partly a complete, partly an auxiliary verb; as in ' He likes fishing almost as I *do* '—' In the old days he appeared to enjoy swimming even more than I *did* '.

Need and *Dare*. When transitive, these verbs cause no trouble: ' I dared it, him, etc.'—' I needed it '; ' He dares it, him, etc.'—' He needs it '. But when they are intransitive, or at least when they are followed by the infinitive, they are often used, in the present, as if they resembled *can*, *may*, etc., in being unchangeable, thus

He need not do it if he doesn't wish to.
He dare not do it, for he's too much of a coward;

but

He needs to do it quickly if it's to be done at all.
He dares to do it.

The *to* of the infinitive is omitted or retained at the speaker's wish:

' Does he dare do it? '
' Does he dare to do it ? '
' Does he need to do it? '

At all costs, avoid using *need* and *dare* as though they were past tenses: *needed* and *dared* are the pasts.

' But ', I hear a pedant mutter, ' why is the author dragging in, not for the first time, examples of syntax? We haven't even *reached* syntax yet! ' Merely in order to imply, rather than to assert, that there cannot be any accidence without syntax—that we cannot speak of the mood, tense, person, number, etc., of a verb without introducing syntax, for they form part of syntax; in much the same way as syntax, in its turn, is the vehicle of expression, and as expression is nothing but the outward form of thought.

EXERCISES[1]

1. Make up such a definition of the verb as will cover the italicized words in ' She *dances* well '—' Denis Compton *is* as great a cricketer as Babe Ruth *was* a baseball player '—' He *hit* me '—' The world *becomes* a more fascinatingly difficult place every day '.

[1] A myriad exercises could easily be devised; indeed, questions are so numerous that they almost beg to be asked. The following set is to be regarded merely as a selection of patterns.

2. Which do you think the more important part of speech—the noun or the verb? Why?
3. In what ways does the etymology (the origin, the word-history) of *verb* throw light on the function and the importance of the verb?
4. What, with examples, is the difference between a transitive and an intransitive verb?
5. What is the Passive shape or form of 'He hit me'—'The weather struck me as being seasonable'—'She likes dancing'.
6. Make up three sentences containing impersonal verbs—preferably other than those I have mentioned.
7. What is Mood?
8. Name the moods of verbs.
9. Indicate the moods of the verbs in
   (*a*) If I were you, I should act differently.
   (*b*) Be it never so humble, there is no place like home.
   (*c*) Speak, man, speak!
   (*d*) To act a lie may be worse than to utter a lie.
10. Conjugate
   (*a*) the present indicative of *have*.
   (*b*) „ „ subjunctive of *be*.
   (*c*) the imperfect (or past) subjunctive of *have*.
   (*d*) „ „ „ „ „ „ *be*.
   (*e*) the present perfect indicative of *go*.
   (*f*) „ „ conditional of *seem*.
   (*g*) the infinitive (in full) of *run*.
   (*h*) the imperative of *say*.
   (*i*) the pluperfect subjunctive of *eat*.
   (*j*) the future perfect of *march*.
   (*k*) the past passive indicative of *eat*.
   (*l*) the future perfect passive of *hurt*.
11. What is the present participle of *go, have, die, dye*?
12. What the gerund—i.e., the verbal noun—of *possess, lie, lay, sigh, labour*?
13. The preterite of *seize, catch, learn, teach, burn, help*?
14. The past participle of *lie, lay, have, be, see, flee, fly, shy*?
15. State the third person singular of the present indicative; the third person singular of the preterite; and the past participle—of *have, become, work, read, lead, can, must, lean, shoot*.
16. What is (*a*) the stem of a noun and (*b*) the base of a verb?
17. What is an irregular verb? Two examples, please.
18. Now, what is a strong verb? Six examples.
19. Which is the most natural Mood, and why?
20. What is the difference (with examples) between a preterite and a past definite?
21. Conjugate (set out in full the verb-parts of)
   (*a*) *must*
   (*b*) *can*
   (*c*) *ought*
   (*d*) the progressive present—progressive past—progressive future (in the indicative) of *shoot*.

22. What is the conditional mood? A conditional tense?
23. What is
    (*a*) the meaning of *subjunctive*?
    (*b*) the etymology of *subjunctive*?
24. Why are strong verbs so important?
25. What is the peculiarity formed by the differences or the similarities between the present indicative, the preterite, the past participle of these groups?
    (*a*) *hit, hurt, cut, cast*
    (*b*) *bind, find, grind*
    (*c*) *drink, shrink, slink*
    (*d*) *hide, chide*
    (*e*) *set, let, bet*
    (*f*) *wake* and *awake.*
26. What are the past tenses of *shall, will, can, may*?
27. Which verbs have only one form in all moods, tenses, persons and numbers?
28. State the differences between
    (*a*) *can* and *may* and *know how* (*to*)
    (*b*) *should, ought* (*to*), *be obliged* (*to*), *must*
    (*c*) *shall* and *will*
    (*d*) *should* and *would.*

GRAMMAR AT WORK: II. SYNTAX[1]

§1. *Introductory*

SYNTAX, says the admirable *Webster's*, is 'sentence structure'—the building of sentences; that is, the building of thought upon thought. As *sentence* comes from the Latin *sententia*, which signifies 'meaning', so *syntax* comes from the Greek *suntaxis*, 'a putting together in order, i.e. an orderly arrangement'; *sun*, 'with, together' + *tassein*, 'to arrange'.

A fuller definition of syntax is: 'The due arrangement of words in sentences'; or, more formally, 'that part of grammar which treats of concord (or agreement), government, and the construction of sentences'—a grammarian's definition; don't let it scare you!

After all, you have been employing syntax ever since you could say 'Wan' go tatas' ('I want to go "tatas"'—for a walk) or 'I won'!' (I won't!) To come to more recent times, you have learnt a fair amount of syntax while you were passing through the horrors of accidence. You had to do so: without syntax there could be no accidence: equally, without accidence there could be no syntax. To learn syntax is a simple matter; you require only two things. A passable memory—every boy and girl has a good memory; and common sense—most boys and girls possess it. Give your heads a chance. The more you think, the easier syntax becomes, and the easier syntax becomes, the easier will thinking become. While I'm about it, I'll tell you something that some of you have already guessed for yourselves. Thinking is an entirely natural activity; to improve one's thinking (which means to improve one's brain) is an entirely pleasant activity. If anyone tells you that you won't need to have any more brains than a vegetable, you will know that he is either a fool or a rogue; probably a rogue, for such a statement almost certainly comes from someone who knows that the un-thinking boys and girls and grown-ups are the world's human sheep, easily led and easily fooled.

The simplest word-group that makes complete sense is the sentence, however short, as in 'Halt!' or 'I want a drink'. There can be no sentence, however short, without syntax—however little. Simple syntax is understood by children of two or three years. You yourselves are rather older than that.

[1] This chapter owes something to those two excellent books: *English Syntax*, by Dr C. T. Onions, and *Essentials of English Grammar*, by Dr Otto Jespersen.

§2. *The Order of Words*

Apart from a few common terms, the first thing you learn is the natural order of words. This is something you have long ago assimilated—learnt without being conscious that you were learning. But it is advisable to become conscious of that natural order, for then you will be able to introduce variety and emphasis into your conversation and your writing; also, you will be able to discern when, and why, someone else is doing this.

The easiest way for you to become conscious of this is to read, re-read, even study the following sentences:

He walks
He walks fast
He walked up the hill
He walked up the hill to see better
He walked up the hill in order to look out over the country beyond

She likes dancing
Miss Smith, aged thirteen, likes dancing
Miss Smith goes dancing whenever she can

He stole a sheep
Being very hungry, he stole a fat sheep
Hungry and desperate, he stole a fat sheep from a farmer
He stole a fat sheep from a rich farmer that lives at Midbury

He is ill
He is very ill indeed
He is so ill that the doctor comes every day
He is so ill that the doctor, whose name is Robinson, comes every day to see him

Jack goes swimming
Jack goes swimming every day in the summer
Jack, who is aged only nine, goes swimming every day in the summer

He gets very angry
He gets very angry when someone cheats him
When someone cheats him he gets very angry

I spoke to him
I spoke to him and then went away
I spoke to him and told him that this must stop

I gave him an apple
He looked hungry, so I gave him an apple
Because he looked hungry I gave him an apple
When I asked him whether he was hungry, he said Yes
When I asked him whether he was hungry and he said Yes, I gave him an apple from the store cupboard

I shall call the police
If you don't go away, I shall call the police
I told him that I should call the police if he didn't go away

I should like to do that
I should like to do that—if I could

If I had not happened to see him I should have been killed
If I had not happened to see the murderer, who was lurking in the hedge, I should have been killed

Unless you give me the money I shall take action
Unless you give me the money that you owe me, I shall take action and prosecute you

The first point you will have noticed is probably this: the order of words is natural. The second: the order of words, being natural, is so easy to understand that you can hardly be said to learn it at all; you merely pick it up without realizing that you are, in fact, doing so.

It is therefore unnecessary for me to set forth a list of rules. You could do that for yourselves if you wished. There is no need.

But because certain examining boards ask questions about the parts of sentences and, more sensibly, ask you to form certain types of sentence or to complete sentences, you will be wise to learn such terms as Subject, Predicate, Object, Complement. It may console you to know that really they are very simple. So simple that you could almost learn them ' standing on your head ' or ' before breakfast '.

§3. *Subject and Predicate*

In every sentence, i.e. in every complete thought, there are two parts: (1) the word or words for the person or thing that is the *subject* of the thought, i.e. the person or thing thought about, the person or thing that does something or is something; (2) the word or words saying something about him or it—what he does, what he is, what he becomes. About the subject, something is *predicated* or stated; that something is the *predicate*: Latin *praedicatum*, ' the fact proclaimed or asserted '.

The shortest sentence consists of one word, as in ' Speak! ' But if you look at it and think about it, you will see that ' Speak! ' is short for ' You speak! ' or ' Speak, you! '; indeed, we sometimes use the longer form; we do it for emphasis, as in ' Come here, you! ' The person that, in ' Speak! ', is the subject of the thought is ' you '; the predicate—here, what he does—is ' speak '. In the Imperative, *you* is always understood, even when it is not expressed.

The next shortest sentence consists of two words:

He speaks
Dogs bark;

obviously, ' he ' and ' dogs ' are subjects; ' speaks ' and ' bark ', predicates.

We might have written

He is speaking
Dogs are barking;

no difficulty there!

The next step is

He hit me
She is ill;

clearly the subjects are ' He ' and ' She ', for they are the subjects of our thought; no less clearly, the predicates are ' hit me ' and ' is ill ', for that is what ' he ' does, that is what ' she ' is.

Now let us expand those last two sentences:

Jack Smith | hit me very hard
Mary Smith's mother | is very ill indeed;

or even further:

Jack Smith, tall and strong, | hit me, small and weak, very hard
Mary Smith's mother, who is aged seventy, | is so ill that the doctor calls every day

Now look at the following:

That fair tall girl with the auburn hair and the green jumper	arrived in town only yesterday with her aunt and uncle
What has puzzled me so much	is that he seems to do no work and yet has plenty of money.

As you know, the subject usually comes before the predicate: the subject of your thought naturally precedes what you say about him (her, it, and so on). But if you wish for variety—or for emphasis—you may exclaim

Long live the king!
Pop goes the weasel
There, but for the grace of God, goes John Smith;

where, obviously, the subjects are ' the king '—' the weasel '—and ' John Smith '.

EXERCISES

1. Which is the subject of each of these sentences?—
   (*a*) I saw him die.
   (*b*) I, said the fly, I saw him die. (Two words forming one subject in ' I, I saw him die ' and one in ' said the fly '. Make two sentences of it.)
   (*c*) The king was in his counting house, counting out his money.
   (*d*) He fell.
   (*e*) Down came the rain.
   (*f*) It was snowing hard.
2. Divide the following sentences into subject and predicate:
   (*a*) He jumped.
   (*b*) It was snowing.
   (*c*) The cow jumped over the moon.
   (*d*) Run!
   (*e*) He discovered a gold-mine.
   (*f*) In the park he heard a band playing.
   (*g*) The new schoolmistress, Janet Spencer, took the English classes.
   (*h*) The huge mastiff barked fiercely at the postman cycling past.
   (*i*) ' Ha! ' he exclaimed.
   (*j*) The boy caught sight of the tramp, who was walking slowly.
   (*k*) Into the blue distance flew the passenger 'plane.
   (*l*) John was one of those unfortunates who never know what other people are thinking.
   (*m*) The man (evidently a thief) slipped into a house he knew to be empty.
   (*n*) ' If I can, I shall,' he said mildly.
3. Add a sensible predicate to the following subjects; in other words, complete the sentences:
   (*a*) Jack and Jill
   (*b*) I, Henry Wilkins
   (*c*) The woman in the black hat
   (*d*) An excellent rendering of Handel's *Largo*
   (*e*) ' Honesty is the best policy '
4. The following word-groups require a subject:
   (*a*) climbed the apple-tree
   (*b*) leaps
   (*c*) came into the shop
   (*d*) shouted 'Stop! '
5. Supply what is missing (indicated by blanks: ——) in the following and, after the word or words you supply, put (S) if it is Subject, (P) if Predicate:—

   —— fell on his head. A doctor —— and ——. The injured man ——; the doctor ——. A crowd ——, but —— soon went away. ' What a fuss about nothing! ' said ——. ' You wouldn't think it

nothing if it had happened to you!' —— a woman standing nearby. '——', she ——, 'you would have expected an ambulance to come for you.' There was almost ——, but her neighbour, Mrs Jones, ——; and all ——. 'Least said, soonest mended', I ——. —— is your opinion?

6. Define *predicate.*

§4. *Sentences and Clauses*

A sentence is a thought expressed in words—as, if a thought at all, it must be.

The thought may be simple; that is, single; as in

He came
I saw him die
The bishop was very ill
The lie of the land puzzled him at first;

it may be compound, i.e. composed of two or more equal parts, as in

He came and made himself comfortable
I came, I saw, I conquered
I came and I saw, but I did not conquer;

or it may be complex, i.e. composed of unequal parts, as in

When he came, *I made him comfortable.*
Although I came and saw, *I did not conquer.*
To Jack Sprat, who ate no fat, *his wife,* who ate no lean, *gave all the lean bacon.*
I, who had come, *surveyed the land, but,* although I acted energetically, *I did not conquer.*

Every one of those statements, from the simplicity of the first to the complexity of the last, is a complete sentence, a sensible sentence.

In the four simple sentences, there is only one verb; in the compound sentences, there are two verbs, as in the first, or three, as in the second and third, and those two, or those three, are roughly equal in importance, one to another—all are principals, none is a subordinate; but in the complex sentences, one verb in the first three examples is clearly more important than the other verb or verbs, and in the fourth example, *surveyed* and *did* (not) *conquer* are clearly more important than *had come* and *acted—surveyed* and *did* (not) *conquer* being principal verbs, *had come* and *acted* being subordinate verbs.

A sentence is the expression of a thought, whether simple or compound or complex. Each verb has a statement *enclosing* it; each verb stands in a little world of its own; that little world, *closed* off, is a clause. *Clause*

comes from the Latin *claudere*, 'to shut, to close'; to *close* itself comes from the same Latin word, but through French instead of direct.

In a simple sentence, such as 'He fell ill' or 'I saw him on the hill-top', there is obviously one principal verb, one clause; then we speak of 'a principal sentence', or better, of 'a simple sentence'.

In a compound sentence, e.g. 'I came but I did not conquer', there are two principal verbs; or, as you have seen, there may be three principal verbs—or even more. Then we speak of two or three or . . . principal clauses.

In a complex sentence, there may be one principal, one subordinate verb; the clause containing the principal verb, as *made* in 'When he came, I made him comfortable', is the principal clause, the other being a subordinate clause.

In 'To Jack Sprat, who ate no fat, his wife, who ate no lean, gave all the lean bacon', the principal verb is *gave*, for it occurs in the most important, the principal, clause 'To Jack Sprat his wife gave all the lean bacon', the other two clauses, 'who ate no fat' and 'who ate no lean', being obviously much less important—subordinate clauses.

You will, I think, have noted that whereas a principal clause, like a simple sentence, makes good sense by itself, a subordinate clause (e.g. 'who ate no fat' or 'when he came') fails to make good, i.e. complete, sense.

The kinds of subordinate clause are three:

(1) adjective (or adjectival) clause; so named because it plays the same role as an adjective, which is a *describing* word. In 'To Jack Sprat, who ate no fat, his wife, who ate no lean, gave all the lean bacon', *who ate no fat* describes Jack Sprat and *who ate no lean* describes his wife.

(2) adverb (or adverbial) clause, which plays the role of adverb (*when*, *why*, *how*, etc.); in 'When he came, I made him comfortable', *when he came* is adverbial, for it says when. If I wrote 'Yesterday I made him comfortable', *yesterday* would play the same role as '*When he came*'.

(3) noun clause, because it plays the role of a noun. In 'What puzzled me was his accent', *what puzzled me* = 'the puzzle'; 'The puzzle was, his accent'. In 'What puzzled me was, why he was there at all', there are two noun clauses, *what puzzled me* and *why he was there at all*; the sentence could have been written 'His presence puzzled me'.

EXERCISES

1. What is the etymology of *sentence*? And of *clause*?
2. Which goes the deeper—to say that 'a sentence is a set of words so arranged in due order as to make sense' or to say that 'a sentence is a complete thought expressed in words'? State your reasons.

3. A phrase is a group of words without a finite verb, i.e. a verb with a subject attached.
   What then is the difference between a phrase and a clause?
4. What, further, is the difference between a subordinate clause and a principal clause?
5. Now, what is the difference between a principal clause and a principal sentence?
6. Point out which of the italicized word-groups are phrases, which are subordinate clauses, and which are either simple sentences or principal clauses in the following passage:

   At the break of day, I rose and *saddled my horse.* The morning, *which followed a stormy night,* was clear and fresh, *much to my surprise. Why to my surprise?* Because I had dreamt of a day even worse *than the night had been.* Ah well! I felt that *it was good to be alive.* After all, *when I went to bed,* I had felt weary and discouraged and now *I was refreshed and full of courage.* 'Who knows,' *said I, with a smile,* 'what the day may bring forth?'

7. Supply sensible principal clauses to:
   (*a*) When I arrived . . .
   (*b*) Because I was hungry . . .
   (*c*) 'Tomorrow is another day' . . .
   (*d*) I grew a beard . . .
   (*e*) . . . for I knew, now, where I was.
   (*f*) . . . which wounded me in the leg.
   (*g*) . . . because that was the way of it.
   (*h*) . . . if only I could.
8. Complete the following:
   (*a*) . . . hit him and . . .
   (*b*) She . . . but also she . . .
   (*c*) When . . ., he . . .
   (*d*) If . . ., I . . . and . . .
   (*e*) . . ., who was brave, fought well and, although . . .

§5. *Temporal Clauses*

Of Noun Clauses[1] and Adjective Clauses, nothing more needs to be said: they present no difficulty.

Adverb Clauses need care. They fall into the classes Temporal, Causal, Final, Conditional, Concessive, and so forth.

First, Temporal Clauses, so named from Latin *clausa temporalis*, 'a time clause'. Most such clauses are very easy to manage.

I always walk to business *when it is fine.*
When he arrived, it was midnight.
After I came, his manner, they tell me, changed completely.
After he has gone, I shall return to the country.

[1] For Noun Clauses as used in Reported Speech, it would be advisable to wait until stage II: Book II contains a chapter entitled 'Reported Speech'.

A week passed *before we met again.*
They waited *until the train departed.*
They waited *until after the train had departed.*

Since is used with a Preterite after a Present or a Present Perfect, as in

The patient has been much better since the surgeon operated.
It's years since I saw you in Egypt that time.

Compare

Things had improved since the new manager began work.

Similar to Clauses of Time are Clauses of Place—or Local Clauses, as they are sometimes called:

Stay *where you are.*
He went to the hotel, *where he succeeded in obtaining a room.*

§6. *Clauses of Reason and Clauses of Result*

Clauses of Reason (Causal Clauses) and Clauses of Result (Consecutive Clauses) are so easy that they hardly merit attention.

Reason: *Because I like you* I forgive you.
As you weren't ready and I was in a hurry, I didn't wait.
Since[1] *you have refused,* I shall not insist.

Result: He spoke so plausibly *that even the sceptical police inspector believed him.*
It's so difficult to arrange (*that*) *I sometimes doubt whether I can.*
He worked hard, *so that the job was soon finished.*

§7. *Clauses of Comparison and Clauses of Restriction*

These, again, are easy. I give examples only in order that you may recognize them if you meet them, as you do almost every quarter of an hour, and that, if someone asks you to do so (it's extraordinary what some people will ask), you may devise examples of your own.

[1] The *since* of Reason is a synonym of 'because' and has no special syntax.

Comparison : It's as easy *as it looks.*
It's much harder *than it looks.*
That is more *than I should care to say.*
I feel much the same *as you do about it.*
You needn't shout *as though I were deaf.*
The braver a man is, the less he speaks about bravery.
A man does not always succeed *in proportion as he deserves to succeed.*

Dr Otto Jespersen, the great grammarian, calls such subordinate clauses *Parallel Clauses*; interesting, but needless.

Restriction : *So far as I'm aware,* nothing untoward has happened.
He has never won yet, *that* (or *so far as*) *I know.*

§8. *Clauses of Purpose*

Clause of Purpose, as a name, is superior to *Final Clause*; it is not ambiguous.

If the subject of the Clause of Purpose is the same as the subject of the Principal clause, as in

I eat *that I may live*
He ran fast *that he might arrive in time,*

modern usage often simplifies the syntax thus:

I eat in order to live; *or simply* I eat to live
He ran fast in order to arrive in time; *or simply*
He ran fast to arrive in time.

And if the literary *lest* or the cumbrous *in order that . . . not* or the now general *for fear* (*that*) is concerned, as in

Lest we forget, we shall now drink a toast to the victors
In order that we should not forget, we then drank a toast to the victors
For fear (*that*) *he should forget the appointment,* he wrote it in his diary,

modern usage—providing the subject of principal and subordinate clause be the same—likewise uses the Infinitive of Purpose, either the wordy:

In order not to forget, we shall drink a toast
In order not to forget the appointment, he wrote it down;

or the neat:

To avoid forgetting (*or* Not to forget), we shall drink.
Not to forget the appointment, he wrote it down.

When the subject of principal and subordinate are different, you will follow the patterns in the non-infinitival sentences quoted above.

The true subjunctive (without *may* or *might*) is now very literary when used in Clauses of Purpose.

Examples:

Speak carefully, *lest I be offended.*
To act *that each tomorrow*
Find us further than today (Longfellow).

§9. *Concessive Clauses*

If, willingly or unwillingly, you grant something, you make a *concession*; in speech or writing, you do it in a *Concessive Clause* or a *Clause of Concession.*

In the present and in the past, the verb of the Concessive Clause is in the indicative, thus:

Although (or *though*) *the football ground was crowded,* he managed to get in.
Even if it's raining, we must go today.
Even had we waited, we should have been disappointed.
Although you're a wealthy man, you are certainly not a happy one.
We cannot dismiss him, *however much we dislike him.*

If the Concessive Clause refers to the future, the subjunctive is often employed, this being the more literary usage, as in:

Murder, *though it have no tongue,* will out.
Even though he might (or *should*) *fail once,* he could try again;

in the latter, the principal clause refers to the past, but the subordinate clause, though referring to the past, refers to a later past—that is, to what was then a future.

Such sentences as

Whether he likes me or not, I like him
Whatever he may do, I shall still admire him
Try as I would, I could not remember her name

contain subordinate clauses that Dr Otto Jespersen calls Clauses of Indifference; but you will be safe if you include them in the group of Concessive Clauses.

The same applies to the subordinate clauses in:

Whereas you are clever, I'm a fool
While (=whereas) *I'm a fool*, you are clever;

Dr Jespersen names these subordinate clauses *Clauses of Contrast*. It is, however, a mistake to multiply names and groups.

§10. *Clauses of Manner*

Two examples will suffice to explain the Clause of Manner:

I don't care *how he does it*. (Or: Noun Clause object.)
Just come *as you are*: we don't stand upon ceremony here.

§11. *Clauses of Condition*

Clauses of Condition are often called '*If*' *Clauses*.

They are of three kinds:

(1) Those in which the Principal Clause deals with what *would be* or *would have been, if* . . . In these, both the principal clause and the subordinate clause are in the subjunctive.

Present: *If my son were at home*, I should be happy.
If you did this, you would be making a mistake.
If wishes were horses, beggars would ride.

Despite the appearance of *were* and *did* the time is not past, nor is the mood indicative. That is one of the oddities of the subjunctive. Not so odd, if you examine 'If wishes were horses, beggars would ride': wishes are not horses: there is no reference to the past, there decidedly is a reference to the present, the present fact being precisely 'Wishes are not horses, therefore beggars do not ride'.

Past: *If I had done this*, I should have been sorry
Had he thought of it, he would have let us know
Had I but served my God with half the zeal I served my King,

He would not in mine age have left me naked to mine enemies (Shakespeare).

Future: *If I were to do this*, I should be sorry.

The times need not be the same: in ' I should be a better man *if I had listened to my father's advice* ', the ' if '-clause is past, the principal clause is present.

(2) Those Clauses of Condition in which an ' if '-clause of Open Condition says nothing about either fact or fulfilment and the principal clause does not speak of what *would be* or *would have been*. Both the principal and the subordinate clause are in the indicative.

Present : If you are John, that is Tom.
If the sky falls, we shall catch larks.
Past : If I did that, I was wrong.
Future : If he says that, he will be in error.

Here, again, the times need not be the same.

If he has any sense, he won't do that.
If I did that, I'm a fool.

In both (1) and (2), the condition may be introduced, not by ' *if* ' but by *unless* (= if not), as in ' Don't come *unless I send a note* '; or by *provided* or *provided that*, as in ' He doesn't care, *provided (that) the weather keeps fine* '; or by *suppose* or *supposing*, as in ' *Suppose she refuses*, what shall we do? ' or ' *Supposing it had rained*, the party would have been spoilt '; or by *in case*, as in ' *In case you didn't know*, this is the famous Mr Smith '.

(3) ' If '-clauses in which, as in (2), the principal clause does not deal in *would be* or *would have been*, but the subordinate clause suggests that the speaker is making some mental reservation (some stipulation in his own mind) about an action that is only prospective or contemplated or imagined. Thus

' If this be true, we have all been wrong '—but the speaker neither says nor even knows that it is true;
' Should you do anything so stupid, I shall never speak to you again ' —but the possibility is merely thought of, not feared nor expected; or, at least, not taken for granted.

But the verb of the ' if '-clause may be merely understood, not stated; as in ' If necessary, the school will close '; i.e. ' If it proves to be necessary . . . '; or in ' Whether pleasant or unpleasant, the visit must be paid '.
' Clause of Condition ' may be the true classification of clauses that do not, at first sight, appear to be subordinate at all, as in:

Give me a start, I'll make a fortune. (If you give me a start. . . .)
Live thou, I live (Shakespeare). (If you live, why! then so do I.)

§12. *Absolute Clauses*

Absolute Clauses are those which, lacking a finite verb, are apparently not clauses; as in

Weather permitting, the plane takes off at noon (If the weather permits, the . . .)
I shall be good to her, *God willing* (. . . if God so wills)
The alarm having sounded, everyone rushed to a shelter (When the alarm had been sounded . . .)
It being a Sunday, the shop was closed.

But there need not even be a present or a past participle; as in:

And, *thou away*, the birds are mute (Shakespeare);=because the person mentioned is away, the birds seem to the speaker to be mute;
My duty over, I departed;=because my duty had been done, I departed.

Whereas in Latin these clauses are known as Ablative Absolutes, in English they are called Nominative Absolutes; that the clause is in the nominative appears from:

She having died, my life was empty
I failing, you too will fail.

. . . . .

Such elementary features of syntax as do not appear in this chapter will be found at ' Composition '; certain more advanced features of syntax will naturally figure in Book II.

EXERCISES

Subordinate Clauses

1. Define, with two examples of each:
   (*a*) a noun clause
   (*b*) an adjective clause
   (*c*) a clause of reason
   (*d*) a clause of concession
   (*e*) a clause of condition
2. Name the italicized clauses in
   After I saw him off at the station, I went to Yoxbury, *which is only ten miles away*. *If I had known*, I shouldn't have gone: my Aunt Sally was shopping at Yoxbury! *This being so*, I had to escort her,

as if I hadn't enough to do, to a café, *where we met several of her cronies. How I survived the day*, I simply don't know.

3. Supply an adverbial clause to each of the following incomplete sentences:
   (*a*) Conditional: ' I must be shrewder than that '
   (*b*) Of reason: ' I quite forgot all about the cinema '
   (*c*) Of manner: ' She could not remember '
   (*d*) Restriction: ' Oh! that's quite all right, old man'
   (*e*) Result: ' The murderer had worn gloves '
   (*f*) Purpose: ' Sit yourself down on that chair by the window '
   (*g*) Comparison: ' The enemy felt exactly '
   (*h*) Contrast: ' His wife guessed that there would be trouble '
   (*i*) Time: ' The shop had been burnt to the ground '
   (*j*) Place: ' The queer old man hid '.

4. Supply principal clauses to:
   (*a*) If I catch you stealing again
   (*b*) The more I see of men
   (*c*) So far as he had any education
   (*d*) Because you know all about it
   (*e*) What I can't make out
   (*f*) Which was caught by a fielder on the boundary
   (*g*) Lest we offend the governor
   (*h*) Provided you come too
   (*i*) That having been settled
   (*j*) Once I had seen how the land lay
   (*k*) That was once his favourite
   (*l*) In order that he should get the harvest in as soon as possible.

5. Correct those subordinate clauses which are wrong in:
   (*a*) After he has come here, I went away
   (*b*) If it rains, the ground must have been wet
   (*c*) Since you have gone away, business has deteriorated
   (*d*) He spoke so clearly that everyone can hear
   (*e*) They climbed to the top of the hill in order that they may obtain a better view
   (*f*) If that be false, this is true
   (*g*) If he does this, he did wrong
   (*h*) If he does this, he would do wrong
   (*i*) Although you be rich, you are unhappy
   (*j*) It was a period when no man's life is safe
   (*k*) He commanded that no one smokes before breakfast.

GRAMMAR AT PLAY: PARSING AND ANALYSIS

PARSING consists in an indication of the parts of speech in a sentence and of the relationship between those parts: the separation of one part (Latin *pars*) from another, a separation that can be made only if you can see the relationship of one *pars* to another (*pars*-ing: *parsing*), a relationship that can be decided only if you know your accidence.

Analysis is ' the process of breaking up a sentence into its parts '—its syntactical parts; a process that can be correctly done only if you know your syntax. It is a Greek word: *analusis*, from *analuein*, ' to resolve something into its elements or constituent parts '—originally, ' to unloosen ': *ana*, ' up ' + *luein*, ' to loose '.

What, then, is the difference between parsing and analysis? Between parsing and the detailed analysis of a simple sentence (or of a single clause whether principal or subordinate), there is very little difference.

In analysis, we speak—as you already know—of subject and predicate. The subject may have an attribute,[1] as in ' A *good* man does no evil ', or one or more words in apposition,[2] as in ' *Thomas Hood, a poet*, wrote several famous pieces '. The predicate must contain a verb; that verb may have an adjunct[3]—an adverb or an adverbial phrase, as in ' He ran *fast and far* '. The verb may have an object, as in ' Tom hit *Jack* ', or a complement,[4] as in ' He fell (or, was) *ill* '. There may, as you know, be two objects, one direct (D), the other indirect (I), as ' He gave *him* (I) *an apple* (D) '. The object or the complement may, like the subject, have an attribute, as in ' He hit *the big* man ' or ' He was *an efficient* policeman '. In such sentences as ' Stupidity renders me *irritable* ' or ' He thought himself *a happy man* ', we see a predicate adjective (*irritable*) or a predicate noun (*man*); the word covering both the adjective and the noun is ' a predicative '.

[1] *attribute:* via French from Latin *attributum*, ' a thing, especially a word, attributed ', from *attribuere*: *ad*, ' to ' + *tribuere*, ' to pay ' (especially ' to pay tribute '). From the idea of ' a thing attributed ' comes that of ' a quality considered as belonging to a person or a thing '; hence the grammatical sense. The adjective is *attributive*.

[2] *in apposition:* literally, ' at the side (of) ': Latin *appositum*, ' a thing, especially a word, *put against* another ': *ad*, ' to, at ' + *ponere*, ' to put or set '.

[3] *adjunct:* Latin *adjunctum* (strictly *adiunctum*), ' a thing, especially a word, joined to another ': *ad*, ' to ' + *iunctus*, ' joined ', itself from *jungere* (*iungere*), ' to join or unite ': compare *conjunction*.

[4] *complement:* Latin *complementum*, ' a completing ', literally ' a filling up ': from *cum*, ' with ' (combining form: *con*, *com*) + *plere*, ' to fill '. A filling-up, i.e. a completion, of the sense: without the complement, the sense is incomplete—or even nonsense.

Let us consider five sentences:

(1) Although young, I certainly know two languages
(2) He was found guilty by the jury
(3) Bill, a tall, thin man, there and then gave Tom, a short, fat man, a big apple
(4) The Greek Consul was hardly ever ill
(5) Medieval scholars appreciatively named Duns Scotus, a Scottish philosopher, 'The Subtle Doctor'.

The detailed analysis is:

SUBJECT	PREDICATE
1. Although young, I	certainly know two languages
2. He	was found guilty by the jury
3. Bill, a tall thin man	there and then gave Tom, a short fat man, a big apple
4. The Greek Consul	was hardly ever ill
5. Medieval scholars	appreciatively named Duns Scotus, a Scottish philosopher, 'The Subtle Doctor'

Noun or Pronoun	*Attribute*	*Verb*	*Adjunct*	*Object* (D)	*Attribute*	*Object* (I)	*Attribute*	*Complement or Predicative*
1. I	although young	know	certainly	languages	two			
2. He		was found	by the jury					guilty (C)
3. Bill	a tall, thin man	gave	there and then	apple	a big	Tom	a short, fat man	
4. Consul	the Greek	was	hardly ever					ill (P)
5. Scholars	medieval	named	appreciatively	Duns Scotus	a Scottish philosopher			'The Subtle Doctor' (C)

Well, there you have Detailed Analysis. I myself have no time for it. General Analysis, yes; and Parsing. But Parsing and Detailed Analysis resemble each other too closely for both of them to be necessary. Necessary for what? As a training of the mind—of the ability to think. Both Parsing and General Analysis form an excellent training of the powers of thought —hence of the ability to speak sensibly and clearly; hence to write satisfactorily.

Yet, if I had the power, I should abolish Parsing and Detailed Analysis, for enough of this sort of mental exercise can be obtained from General Analysis alone.

General Analysis is more valuable intellectually and more useful commercially than Parsing could ever be: it deals entirely with syntax, i.e. with the way in which sentences are formed, hence with the way in which *we* form sentences, i.e. express our thoughts, whether in speech or in writing: more, it deals with thoughts, not with the verbal ingredients of a thought; it is broad and general, not narrow and pernickety.

But since a few examining boards still insist upon parsing, here are a few specimens. You will learn far more quickly from examples and remember the lessons far longer than you would learn from, and remember, rules.

Turn your minds to these specimen sentences:

(1) Although young, I certainly know two languages.
(2) Bill, a tall, thin man, there and then gave Tom, a short, fat man, a big apple.
(3) He was found guilty by the jury.
(4) 'Ah!' she exclaimed in a loud, angry voice: 'I thought so!'—and hurried off.

Here they are, parsed:[1]

(1) *although*: subordinating conjunction, linking '(I am) young' to 'I certainly know two languages'
young: adjective of quality, qualifying 'I'[2]
I: personal pronoun, common gender, first person singular, nominative; subject, agreeing with 'know'
certainly: adverb of degree, modifying 'know'
know: verb transitive active, indicative present, first singular, governing 'two languages' and agreeing with 'I'
two: adjective of number, qualifying 'languages'
languages: noun common—or, common noun—neuter plural, governed by—or, object after—'know'.

(2) *Bill*: noun proper—or proper noun—masculine singular, subject before 'gave'
a: indefinite adjective, qualifying 'man': or, indefinite article before 'man'
tall, thin: adjectives of quality, qualifying[3] 'man'.

[1] For the first three, compare the parsing with the detailed analyses already made.
[2] Certain educational bodies like you to add 'positive (degree)'.
[3] To avoid the repetition of 'of quality'—'qualifying', I recommend 'with' (short for 'going with').

man: noun common, masculine, singular, in apposition to ' Bill '
there:[1] adverb of place, modifying ' gave '
and: conjunction, uniting ' there ' and ' then '
then: adverb of time, modifying ' gave '
gave: verb transitive active, preterite third singular, governing ' apple ' (D) and ' Tom ' (I)
Tom: Proper Noun, masculine, singular, indirect object after ' gave '
a: indefinite adjective, qualifying ' man '
short, fat: adjectives of quality, qualifying ' man '
man: noun common, masculine, singular, in apposition to ' Tom '
a: indefinite adjective, qualifying ' man '
big: adjective of quality, qualifying ' apple '
apple: noun common, neuter singular, direct object after ' gave '.

(3) *He*: personal pronoun, masculine third singular, subject to ' was found '
was: verb, auxiliary (past singular third) to ' found '
found: past participle passive
(*was found*: agreeing with ' He ')
guilty: adjective of quality, predicative after ' was found ' and agreeing with ' He '
by: preposition, governed by ' was found ' and governing ' jury '; or, linking ' was found ' and ' the jury '
the: demonstrative adjective (or, definite article) with ' jury '
jury: noun collective, common gender, governed by—or, object after—' by '.

Note: ' by the jury ' is an *adjunct* of the verb; it can be, and often is, described as ' an *extension* of the verb '.

(4) *Ah*: interjection or exclamation: part of ' Ah! I thought so ! '
she: pronoun personal, feminine third singular, subject of ' exclaimed '
exclaimed: verb transitive active, indicative preterite third singular, agreeing with ' she ' and governing ' Ah! I thought so! '
in: preposition linking ' exclaimed ' and ' voice '—or, governing ' voice '
a: indefinite adjective with ' voice '
loud, angry: adjectives of quality with ' voice '
voice: noun common, neuter singular, object after ' in '
I: pronoun personal, common gender, first singular, subject of ' thought '
thought: verb transitive active, indicative, preterite first singular, agreeing with ' I ' and governing ' so '

[1] Or ' there and then ' may be taken as an adverbial phrase, either of time (= immediately) or of manner (= without delay).

so: pronoun personal (= it), neuter third singular, object after ' thought '.

' *Ah! I thought so!* ' is a noun-equivalent (a phrase equal to, or having the same function as, a noun), object after ' exclaimed '. Compare ' She said *nothing* ' with ' She said, *Ha! I thought so!* '

But let us pass from the needless, or at best the excessive, to what:
affords a much better training of the mind;
is much more useful to anyone desirous of improving the clearness and effectiveness of his speech and his writing;
and
is or can be quite good fun:—

General Analysis. Here is something you certainly *can* get your teeth into! And then find, not a dry bone but a juicy chop.

Rules are unnecessary. Half a dozen examples will whisper all you need to know. Grasp the principles implied in these few sentences, and the world of General Analysis is yours.

(1) When he arrived, I did not know what to do with him.
(2) Although he smiled, I felt angry with him because he spoke curtly.
(3) He, who had neither Latin nor Greek, asked me, who had both, ' What do you know about Swahili? ' and I replied, ' What do you know about anything? '
(4) Read history and geography, you will gain thereby a better understanding of language and literature, which, although they are, in a sense, universal, belong to and happen in time and place.
(5) If you don't like it, I cried, you can lump it!
(6) However hard he tried, because he lacked skill he failed, but, say what you like, he was a grand trier.

(1) *I did not know*: principal clause
when he arrived: adverbial clause (of time), modifying ' did not know '
what (*I was*) *to do with him*: noun clause, objective after ' know '.

(2) *I felt angry with him*: principal clause
although he smiled: adverb clause (of concession) modifying ' felt angry '
because he spoke curtly: adverb clause (of reason), modifying ' felt angry '.

(3) *He asked me*: principal clause
who had neither Latin nor Greek: adjective clause, qualifying ' He '
who had both: adjective clause, qualifying ' me '

'*What do you know about Swahili?*': noun clause, object after 'asked'

(*and*) *I replied*: second principal clause, linked by 'and' to first

'*What do you know about anything?*': noun clause, object after 'replied'.

(4) *You will gain thereby a better understanding of language and literature*: principal clause

read history and geography (= *if you read . . .*): adverb clause (of condition), modifying 'will gain'

[1] *which, although . . . belong to . . . place*: adjective clauses, qualifying 'language and literature'.

[1](a) *which belong to and happen in time and place*: adjective clauses, qualifying 'language and literature', thus:

(a[1]) *which belong to time and place*: adjective clause, qualifying 'language and literature'

(a[2]) (*and*) *which happen in time and place*: adjective clause qualifying 'language and literature' linked to (a[1]) by conjunction 'and'

(b) *although they are, in a sense, universal*: secondary adverb clause, modifying 'belong to, happen in'.

(5) *I cried*: principal clause

If you don't like it, you can lump it: noun clause, object after 'cried'

You can lump it: secondary principal clause, within the noun sentence.

if you don't like it: (secondary) adverbial clause of condition, modifying '(can) lump (it)'.

(6) *He failed*: principal clause

however hard he tried: adverb clause (of concession), modifying 'failed'

because he lacked skill: adverb clause (of reason), modifying 'failed'

(*but*) *he was a grand trier*, second principal clause, linked by 'but' to the first

say what you like: adverb clause (concession) modifying rather the entire second principal clause than merely 'was'.

For the ordinary purposes of analysis, the principles involved in those six examples will suffice. But sometimes examiners set a Shakespearean or a Miltonic sentence that does not analyse properly, and expect you to do your best with it. If they do that, don't worry: such an exercise is intended to make you think. If, in order to make sense of the passage, you have to 'understand' words, i.e. supply words, that is all right: supply them! As Dr C. T. Onions[2] has justly remarked, 'There are

[1] These two steps may be omitted, if you wish.

[2] *An Advanced English Syntax.*

sentences . . . which it is very difficult, or impossible, to analyse grammatically. But analysis may be applied to the majority of sentences; and without it we should be unable to recognize the peculiarities even of those sentences which cannot be analysed.' Don't *you* go writing sentences incapable of analysis! Such sentences are extremely difficult, if not impossible, to understand: and what, may I ask, is the sense of saying or writing something that cannot be understood?

Dr Onions quotes a passage that, although capable of analysis, is, to say the least, tricky:

> When France in wrath her giant limbs upreared,
> And with that oath which smote air, earth, and sea,
> Stamped her strong foot, and said she would be free,
> Bear witness for me how I hoped and feared.

Here is his analysis, with several additions and comments by myself:

(1) *Bear witness for me*: principal clause
[1](2) *How I hoped and feared*: Noun clause, object after ' bear witness ' (= witness)
(3) *When France in wrath her giant limbs upreared*: adverb clause (of time), modifying ' hoped and feared '
(4) (*and*) *stamped her strong foot with that oath*: adverb clause (of time) modifying ' hoped and feared ' and equal with (3)
(5) *which smote air, earth, and sea*: adjective clause, qualifying ' oath '
(6) (*and*) (*when she*) *said*: adverb clause (of time), modifying ' hoped and feared ': therefore equal with—parallel to—(3) and (4)
(7) *she would be free*: noun clause, object after ' said '.

That example, though rather difficult, soon yields its secrets to a patient, cool-headed analysis.

Now here is another passage adduced by Dr Onions, who takes it from a most lucid writer, Dean Swift.

> I had a strong hope, which never left me, that I should one day recover my liberty; and, as to the ignominy of being carried about for a monster, I considered myself to be a perfect stranger in the country, and that such a misfortune could never be charged upon me as a reproach if ever I should return to England; since the King of Great Britain himself, in my condition, must have undergone the same distress.

Dr Onions breaks up the sentences into clauses, but purposely omits to name them.

> [2]*I had a strong hope*: principal clause
> *which never left me*: adjective clause, qualifying ' hope '

[1] You would not be wrong if you divided it into *How I hoped* and *how I feared: how I hoped and feared* = that I firmly hoped and greatly feared.
[2] *I had a strong hope* = I strongly (i.e., firmly) hoped.

that I should one day recover my liberty: noun clause, dependent upon ' hope '

(*and*) *as to the ignominy . . . monster, I considered*: second principal clause

[1]*myself to be a perfect stranger in the country*: noun clause after ' considered '

(*and that*) *such a misfortune should never be charged upon me as a reproach*: noun clause after ' considered '

if ever I should return to England: adverb clause (condition), modifying 'could never be charged as a reproach '

since the King of Great Britain himself, in my condition, must have undergone the same distress: adverb clause (reason), modifying ' could never be charged as a reproach '.

Dr Onions speaks of a sentence-picture and draws one. Adapting his picture, I draw from:

> When France in wrath her giant limbs upreared,
> And with that oath which smote air, earth, and sea,
> Stamped her strong foot, and said she would be free,
> Bear witness for me how I hoped and feared

this picture:

1. BEAR WITNESS FOR ME: principal clause
2. *how I hoped*: noun clause, dependent on ' bear witness '
3. and *how I feared*: noun clause, dependent on ' bear witness '
4. *When France . . . upreared*: adverb clause of time, modifying ' hoped and feared '
5. and *stamped her strong foot with that oath*: adverb clause, modifying ' hoped and feared '; parallel to (4)
6. *which smote air, earth, and sea*: adjective clause, qualifying ' oath '
7. and *said*: adverb clause of time, modifying ' hoped and feared '; parallel to (4) and (5)
8. *she would be free*: noun clause, dependent on ' said '.

To devise such a sentence-picture will help you to analyse a complex sentence: One step in from the left indicates the first degree of dependence, as in clauses (2) and (3); one more, the second degree of dependence, as are clauses 4, 5, 7; three steps inwards, therefore, indicate the third degree of dependence, as in clauses 6 and 8.

[1] This = ' that I was a perfect stranger in the country '.

A Note on Method

For parsing, for detailed analysis, for general analysis, competitions[1] among the members of a form, class or standard can be introduced in order to enliven what may be, too often is, a dull subject.

The sentence to be operated upon should be laid out on the operating-table: towards the top of the blackboard, so that the young surgeons may see what has to be done.

If the sentence is to be parsed, I suggest that the teacher set it out thus:

No man shall ever call me a liar

No
man
shall
ever
call
me
a
liar

Teams of three, four or five having been picked and two captains having been selected, the captains toss for innings. Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 of the second team respectively follow Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 of the team that goes in first. Each word is persisted with until—to mix the metaphor—someone states correctly each item of the programme: part of speech, class, etc., thus:

no: adjective
distributive
qualifying 'man':

each item representing one turn—and one point towards the score. The team that, at the end, has the higher score wins the game.

For detailed analysis, I suggest that, having written the sentence well up on the blackboard, the teacher draws this diagram—with sufficient space to enable him to deal with three or four sentences at least:

Subject	Predicate
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

[1] Cf. the suggestions made on pp. 110–111.

Noun	*Attri-bute*	*Verb*	*Ad-junct*	*Object* D.	*Object* I.	*Att. of O.* (*D. & I.*)	*Comple-ment*	*Predica-tive*
1.								
2.								
3.								
4.								
5.								

First, the complete subject is stated (guessed until success has been achieved), then the complete predicate; but only that pupil who receives the ' all clear ' from the teacher as having, whether he is the first or the second or . . . to try, given the correct answer, has the honour of coming out and writing on the blackboard.

In detail, each heading is taken in turn. ' The noun or pronoun forming the subject? . . . Good! The attribute? No attribute, Tommy—quite correct: one point. Verb? Yes! Oh! there are three adjuncts: very well, one adjunct at a time. . . .'

Or the entire sentence for detailed analysis can be treated in the same way as the parsing was treated, with the headings written out ready for the competitors to complete:

SUBJECT:
PREDICATE:
SUBJECT
  Noun or pronoun:
  attribute:
PREDICATE
  verb:
  adjunct:
  etc.

In this latter treatment, the teacher may find it more convenient to write the answers himself; that, however, rests with him.

With General Analysis, either of two methods will serve the competing teams. One is a schema (I, *a*):

PRINCIPAL CLAUSE
  adjective clause
(1)
(2)
  adverb clause
(1)
(2)

noun clause
(1)
(2)
SECOND PRINCIPAL CLAUSE
etc.

But that variation presents obvious difficulties. I much prefer that (I, *b*), the analysable sentence having been displayed high on the board, the teams score one point for correctly naming the principal clause, and then one point (i) for determining and one point (ii) for classifying each subordinate clause in turn; clause on left, classification on right, with the principal clause written in SMALL CAPITALS. The teacher would be wise to do his own writing.

The other is a diagram (II, *a*), thus:

PRINCIPAL CLAUSE	Subordinate Clause
A.	1. .....(e.g.) noun
	2. .....(e.g.) adverb
	3. .....(e.g.) adjective[1]
B.	1.
	2.
	3.

The system of marking to be the same as in the non-diagrammatic method.

A variation (II, *b*):

PRINCIPAL	Adjective Clause[2]	Adverb Clause	Noun Clause
A.	1.	1.	1.
	2.	2.	2.
B.	1.	1.	1.
	2.	2.	2.

Either of those diagrams can, where the flooring is suitable, be drawn on the floor; the second can be varied to (II, *c*):

[1] The order will naturally vary according to the succession of subordinate clauses.
[2] Or begin with noun clause and follow with adjective and adverb clauses.

PRINCIPAL or P.	Adjective[1] or Adj.
Adverb or Adv.	Noun or N.

P.		Adj.
Adv.		N.

If the diagram be chalked on the floor, a different notation is required: nothing is *written* in the squares: each square will, in turn, be occupied by that pupil or those pupils who have correctly determined the principal clause and the pupil or those pupils who, someone else having determined,[2] classify the subordinate clause(s).

TEAM A:	TEAM B:
I I I I I I I I I	I I I I I I I
9	7

Suppose the sentence to be:

If Fred, who hates you, sees you here, he will be furious and say, Get out, you unmentionable so-and-so!

and that we have, for spatial convenience, adopted the last of the suggested diagrams.

The competition between the two teams of between three and six members will proceed on the same lines as those other competitions. Each of the successful pupils, Jack, Jim, Tom, Dick, Harry—for there are five clauses—will take his appropriate place immediately the teacher has signalled him on. The result, except that there is nothing written, will look rather like this if the following order of subordinates be adopted:

P.	*Jack:* (1) he will be furious *Dick:* (2) and (he will) say	*Jim:* who hates you	Adj.
Adv.	*Tom:* If Fred sees you here (Condition)	*Harry:* Get out, you unmentionable so-and-so.	N.

[1] Order of subordinates is variable, as in the other diagrams of method II.
[2] The teacher will put the score (mark by mark: 1 by 1) on the blackboard.

Whether it be parsing or analysis, what the parser or the analyser has to remember is this: it is function which counts: what, in parsing or in detailed analysis, a word (or, like *Mr Smith*, a word-group) does; what, in general analysis, a clause does—if it plays the part of a noun, it is a noun clause; if that of an adjective, an adjective clause; if that of an adverb, an adverb clause.

In parsing, the following type of exercise is useless:

'Parse *man, goes, go, form, forms, so, only*':

for *man* may be either noun singular (*a man, the man*) or noun collective (=mankind); *goes* may be verb singular or the plural of *go*, noun, and *go* itself either verb or noun; *form* is either noun or verb; *forms* either noun plural or verb singular; *so*, adverb ('*so* wise') or conjunction ('I like him, *so* what?') or pronoun ('Yes, I think *so*'); *only*, adjective ('the *only* woman present') or adverb ('He *only* said that he wouldn't') or conjunction ('I'd do it with pleasure, *only* [=but] I haven't the time').

EXERCISES

1. What light is thrown by the etymology upon the definition of the following two terms:
   analysis and *parsing*?
2. Which would you choose as a mind-trainer, or thought-former, or expression-improver, among: parsing; detailed analysis; general analysis? Say why.
3. Parse the italicized words in:
   (*a*) *If* I were *you*, I *should not* do *that*.
   (*b*) *The* old *so-and-so* would *never* think *of doing* anything so generous *as* that.
   (*c*) Now *that* you are *here, what do* you *propose*?
   (*d*) *Ah!* So *I've* caught you *at last*, have I?
   (*e*) *In* all that *library, not a single* book is *worth reading*.
   (*f*) *Herds* of *cattle* were *grazing* on the *spacious* prairie.
   (*g*) *Why* do you make *such* a *horrible* noise *when* you know *that* I absolutely *hate* a din?
   (*h*) If this be *any* guide, *which* I doubt, *then* you are *hardly* the man I want *for* the job, *which, as* you know, is difficult *because there* is *so much* to consider.
4. Make a detailed analysis of:
   (*a*) Wherefore art thou Romeo?
   (*b*) In those circumstances, avoid him like the plague.
   (*c*) I see him (ha!) there in the far distance.
   (*d*) And so he has brilliantly succeeded, after all.
5. And a general analysis of:
   (*a*) At first, historians say, Albert the Good, Prince Consort, had a difficult time in England, for although Victoria never threatened him with the block, she often reminded him that she was Queen of England.

(*b*) At times Mr Gladstone's oratory was very obscure, and nobody else knew what he was talking about.

(*c*) Historians sometimes forget that although Mr Gladstone was undoubtedly a great statesman, he was also, in a sense, a very successful inventor.

(*d*) Looking back now at the passage through which we had thus far proceeded, we clearly saw, from the appearance of the sides of the ravine, that it was of late formation, and we concluded that the concussion, whatever it was, which had so unexpectedly overwhelmed us, had also at the same moment laid open this path for escape.

(*e*) I don't know why I'm sad, yet, strange though it seem, most sad I am.

(*f*) Nearly all slept soundly, as do men who are exhausted and have no reproach.

(*g*) Like other men, they see that which penchant inclines them to see; but they see it in pictures that are blurred.

(*h*) Those who remember their ancient Greek tragedies will not be surprised if the conversation at Staniátes meandered.

(*i*)[1] Lest some too learned person point it out and hold me up to the derision of the erudite, I confess that in this anthology which you are about to read, certain sixteenth-eighteenth century poems come from the excellent works of Mr A., Professor B., Dr C. and Sir William D., for to these gentlemen I owe, in all, nine pieces that I had not known before I met with their collections.

(*j*)[1] Though she were true when you met her,
And last till you write your letter,
Yet she
will be
False, ere I come, to two or three.

(*k*)[1] As inward love breeds outward talk,
The hounds some praise, and some the hawk,
Some, better pleased with private sport,
Use tennis, some a mistress court:
But these delights I neither wish,
Nor envy, while I freely fish.

(*l*)[1] But soon a wonder came to light,
That show'd the rogues they lied:
The man recover'd of the bite,
The dog it was that died.

(*m*)[1] Indeed, Sir Peter, I could wish, I own,
That parsons would let politics alone!
Plead, if they will, the customary plea
For suchlike talk, when o'er a dish of tea;
But when they tease us with it from the Pulpit,
I own, Sir Peter, that I cannot gulp it.

(*n*) All travellers at first incline
Where'er they see the fairest sign;
And if they find the chambers neat,
And like the liquor and the meat,
Will call again, and recommend
The Angel Inn to every friend.

[1] To be attempted only at the end of this stage of the Course, for these passages are rather tricky.

WORD-BUILDING

Elementary[1]

WORD-building is as easy as it is necessary. *Word-building*, as a term, is merely a built-up form of *building of words*; compare its synonyms *word-making* and *word-formation*.

Young children start with a limited vocabulary—a meagre store of words known and used. Soon they begin to enlarge that store: and they do so in many ways. At this stage we need consider only two[2]—the two most important.

COMPOUNDS. The easiest way of all is to add one word to another: such pairs are known as *compounds*, e.g. *horse-race*, *white-haired*, *overtake*. Note that all compounds begin as two or more separate words, as *over take*; then they take a hyphen (-), thus *over-take*; and many end by becoming one word, as in *overtake*. Where three or more words are involved, the hyphenated form is—and remains—usual, as in *mother-in-law*.

1. *Nouns*. The commonest practice is to add one noun to another: *sheep-dog* (or *sheepdog*), *man-power*, *screw-driver* (or *screwdriver*), *bookshop*, *boatman*.

Then comes the combination of a verb put before the noun, as in *breakwater*; less often, verb following noun, as in *bookmaking*—contrast *makeweight*.

Adjective before noun: *bluebird*, *red-head*, *tenderfoot*, *whitecap* (of waves)—contrast *a white cap*.

A preposition before a noun: *by-pass*, *in-law*, *outlaw*.

Verbal noun before a noun: *walking-stick*, *walking-pace*, *landing-field*.

Verbal adjective before a noun: *humming-bird*, *rocking-horse*.

Adverb after noun: *turn-up*, *turnover*, *flash-back*, *throwback*.

2. *Adjectives* may be formed by placing:

an adjective before a noun, as in *true-blue*;

an adjective before another adjective; *blue-black*, *red-white-and-blue*, *white-crested*;

an adverb before an adjective (or a verbal adjective): *outright*, *downright*, *forthright*, *well-spoken*, *ill-dressed*, *overdone*, *outcast* (also a noun);

a preposition before a noun: *underhand*, *above-board*, *overland*;

a noun before a verbal adjective (or a verbal noun), this being very

[1] For a full treatment of prefixes and suffixes, see Book II at 'Word-Building: Affixes'.

[2] In this, I follow George Sampson's *Cambridge Lessons in English*—an admirably arranged book.

common, as in *money-making* and *globe-trotting*, which are also nouns; *hand-made* and *hand-sewn*; *heart-rending*.

3. *Verbs.* Compound verbs can be formed by:
a noun + verb, as in *stock-take*;
an adverb + verb, probably the commonest way: *oversee*, *overturn*, *overtake*, *outlaw*, *outbid*, *welcome*;
adjective (perhaps adjective become adverb) + verb: *rough-hew*.

4. *Other formations*, combined in other ways:
upside down, adverb, and *upside-down*, adjective; *cheek by jowl*, adverb, and *cheek-by-jowl*, adjective; *heart-to-heart*, adjective; *brother-in-law*; *higgledy-piggledy*; *catch-as-catch-can*.

CHANGES IN FORM. 'The second great way of making new words is to make changes in form—usually additions at beginning or end' (George Sampson).

1. *Adjectives from nouns.* By adding *-ous*:
joy—joyous, *danger—dangerous*;
By adding *-ious*: *labo(u)r—laborious*;
" " *-ish*: *boy—boyish*, *book—bookish*;
" " *-y*: *thirst—thirsty*; *good—goody*; after a change in the noun:
" " *-y*: *hunger—hungry*;
" " *-ly*: *man—manly*, *woman—womanly*;
" " *-like*: *child—childlike*;
" " *-some*: *hand—handsome*, *win—winsome*; often after a change:
" " *-ful*: *beauty—beautiful*, *bounty—bountiful*; obviously *-ful* =*full* (full of beauty, etc.).

2. *Nouns from nouns.* The most numerous class is that of diminutives, which indicate 'the little one of', 'something in little', 'a lesser——'. These are formed in various ways, the commonest being by the addition of *y* or *-ie*, as in *bird—birdie*, *lass—lassie*, *John—Johnny*. Linked with the idea of smallness is that of affection; many diminutives are pet-names, like *Johnny*. Of things, a common diminutive is *-let*, as in *booklet* and *leaflet*.

Less frequent is *-kin*, as in *lambkin* from *lamb* and in *mannikin* from *man*. Compare *-ling*, as in *princeling*, a petty prince.

Another important group of nouns from nouns is that of agents: *lawyer* from *law*.

3. *Verbs from nouns.* Many nouns become verbs without change, as in *form—to form*. Others do so by some addition, as *imprison* from *prison* and as *beautify* from *beauty*: to put in prison; to make beautiful.

4. *Nouns from verbs.* A very numerous class, especially for 'one who does; an agent; a maker': *conductor* from *conduct*, *driver* from *drive*, *actor* from *act*.

5. *Adverbs from adjectives.* This operation we have already seen in the chapter 'Grammar at Work: I. Accidence', at the section on adverbs.

For prefixes or additions at the beginning of a word and for suffixes or additions at the end, see Book II.

Use your dictionary whenever—but not before—you are ' beaten ' in the following:—

EXERCISES

1. Put the correct word or the complete word for the italicized words in
   (*a*) The *work*— were idle, they worked *bad*—
   (*b*) At the *race*— we saw some wonderful *race*—
   (*c*) In the —*shop* we bought three interesting works on birds and *butter*—
   (*d*) The —*bird* sang *wonderful*—
   (*e*) He was very —*right* in his speech, not to say —*spoken*
   (*f*) To be an *out*— is less *danger*— than to be an —*law*
   (*g*) To be —*hand* is the opposite of being *above*—
   (*h*) Maisie was as *girl*— as Tom was *boy*—
   (*i*) Most of us prefer *man*— men and *woman*— women
   (*j*) The weather was *spring*—, almost *summer*—:
   a pleasant changer after the *autumn*— gales and the *winter* cold
   (*k*) He had a *child*— faith in the *good*— of mankind
   (*l*) In this *book*— of sixteen pages, we read a story of *petty princes* and *little men*
   (*m*) That's a *love*— view! Almost *spectacle*
   (*n*) The *stoke*— on a train is also called a *fire*—
2. What are the pet-forms of
   (*a*) *Albert, Charles, Henry, Thomas, Robert, William, Christopher*?
   (*b*) *Mary, Rose, Rosemary, Gertrude, Diana, Julia, Joan, Christine*?
3. What are the verbs that correspond to—go with:—
   (*a*) *grief, joy, pleasure, song, meal, labour, sight, peril, boldness*?
   (*b*) *beautiful, bright, dark, hidden, popular, cleanly, ready*?
   (*c*) *well, quickly, slowly, harmoniously*?
4. Name the adverb that corresponds to each of
   (*a*) *goodness, evil, strength, hunger, thirst, speed*
   (*b*) *weaken, glorify, enable, talk, cheapen*
   (*c*) *high, low, big, small, dear, courageous, hasty.*
5. Certain nouns correspond to each of the following words. What are those nouns?
   (*a*) *long, broad, narrow, kind, generous, jealous, alert*
   (*b*) *scarcely, bravely, keenly, very, least, disobediently*
   (*c*) *dishearten, punish, reward, belittle, notify, justify.*
6. The following nouns have adjectives derived from them, or, at the least, connected with them. What are those adjectives?
   honour, blame, loveliness, splendour, magnificence, width, evil, goodness, toleration, fairness, study, work, sloth, laziness, industry, Jove, Mercury.
7. What adjectives correspond to:
   (*a*) *idiotically, soon, at all times, never, nowhere, not, yes, too, insufficiently, very, mannishly*?
   (*b*) *go, come, depart, see, eat, drink, read, live, talk, sleep, write, fight, bite, capture, run away, include, surpass, excel, oppose, prosper, raise, lower.*

HOW TO USE A DICTIONARY

BUT, first of all, why you will find it useful and pleasant to use one.

A dictionary tells you what a word or phrase means; what part of speech it is; the plural (*feet*) if different from the singular (*foot*), or the parts of a verb (*sing-sang-sung*); how to pronounce it. A good dictionary will, wherever necessary, show you how the word is used; some dictionaries even give the origin and later history—the etymology, as it is called—of the word. Thus:

> QUISLING (*quiźling*). A traitor; one who, within his own country, aids the enemy. From Vidkun *Quisling*, a Norwegian, who helped the Germans to invade his country in 1940.

Whenever you do not know the meaning of a word, look it up. Indeed, whenever you are not absolutely sure that you know, fully and exactly, what a word means, look it up. I have read books since I was six or seven, been a student for more years than I care to remember, written on literature and language for a quarter of a century: and I still consult the dictionary whenever I feel the slightest doubt whether I know either the exact sense or the origin of a word.

Get into the habit of using the dictionary. A dictionary can provide—a good dictionary does provide—excellent reading. The stories tend to be rather short, perhaps, but when you've read one, you at least know it's true, you've learnt something, you understand the word the next time you see it in print or hear it spoken—and you can use it yourself without that horrible suspicion, 'Have I dropped a brick?' and without your companions glancing at one another in that odd way which is so much more disconcerting than outright laughter.

Using a dictionary is an art. But a very simple art.

Suppose the word is *football*. You turn to the letter F. Now, a dictionary is alphabetical throughout; that is, words follow the same order as that of the letters of the alphabet. The maker of the dictionary does not throw all words beginning with *F* into one jumbled heap, without reason, without order. In *football*, the next letter after *f* is *o*, so you turn to *fo*; but *football* isn't the same as *foal*, its first three letters are not *foa* but *foo*. Therefore, having found *fo*, you go on to *foo*; having found *foo*, you pass beyond (say) *fool*, because the *t* of *football* comes later than the *l* of *fool*; having found FOOT, you still have to find FOOTBALL. Clearly it comes after FOOT-AND-MOUTH DISEASE, because the first five letters of the latter are 'foot*a*' and the first five of *football* are 'foot*b*'.

Here you must be careful. In some dictionaries you will find the words set out in this way:

FOOT, noun with definition, etc.
FOOT, verb, with definition, etc.
FOOT-AND-MOUTH DISEASE, with definition, etc.
FOOTBALL, with definition, etc.
FOOTBALLER, with.....
FOOT-BATH.....
FOOTER.....
FOOTING.....

In others, the order will be:

FOOT, noun, with definition; and in the same entry, all the words deriving —that is, coming—from it, such as *football, footballer, foot bath,* and, in a separate list, but still within the same entry, the phrases, such as *captain of foot, swift of foot.* Both of these lists will be in alphabetical order.

FOOT, verb. Within the entry, such a phrase as *foot it,* to dance.
FOOTER.
FOOTING.

If you find yourself in a difficulty of this kind, look carefully at three or four successive entries and you'll soon spot the method or system followed. *The Concise Oxford Dictionary*[1] follows the latter of these two systems; so does *Chambers's Dictionary,* although less whole-heartedly—indeed it is 'half and half'; *Webster's Dictionary* tends to follow the former. But only tends to do so, for a dictionary of the words and phrases in a language would take up a huge space if every single word and phrase had an entry to itself.

Suppose you are looking for FOOTBALL and you do not find it as a separate entry between FOOT and FOOTER, nor between FOOT and FOOT-BATH (the latter may not have a separate entry), then you will consult the entry at FOOT, where you certainly will find it. If you know the difference between a noun and a verb, you'll consult *foot,* noun, without the need to work by trial and error. If, when you consult the dictionary and have found the word, you also find that, owing to the presence of the abbreviations (shortenings) like *n.* and *v.*, you don't know what these abbreviations are, then you will decide to do what is always sensible to do first of all. You will decide to acquaint yourself with the abbreviations employed in your particular dictionary; in point of fact, much the same abbreviations, with one main exception, are used in all reputable dictionaries. Some dictionaries use *n.*, noun, others use *sb.*, substantive; but all will have *v.*, verb—*v.i.*, verb intransitive—*v.t.*, verb transitive. There are also such abbreviations as *E.*, English; *M.E.*, Middle English; *O.E.*,[2] Old English (before about 1100 A.D.); *F.* or *Fr.*, French; *Ger.*, German;

[1] The best very small dictionary, by the way, is *The Little Oxford Dictionary* Messrs Wm Collins also publish a good one.
[2] Preferable to *A.S.*, Anglo-Saxon.

I. or *It.*, Italian; *Gr.*, Greek; *L.*, Latin. And *f.*, from; *fem.*, feminine; *p.p.*, past participle. And so on and so forth. It will take you only a little time to get to know these convenient shortenings. Once you do know them, you know something that will spare you an immense amount of trouble; more, you can use a dictionary quickly and intelligently.

More still: when you know how to use a dictionary, you know how to use an encyclopaedia—a book that gives information either on all branches of knowledge or on all aspects of one important subject (for instance, *An Encyclopaedia of Gardening*); the information is arranged alphabetically. Often, of course, you are referred to another entry. Thus, ' BRITON. V. (or See) *Britain* '; or ' BRITON. Cf. (or Compare) *Celt*.'

Suppose you look in a dictionary for the word *ballet*, which you've seen in a newspaper headline, BALLET STAR FEARED LOST, but you don't know what *ballet* is. You look up *ballet* in a dictionary and find that it is a form of dancing. Your curiosity is aroused by the dictionary entry, which, however, does not tell you nearly so much as you'd like to know. The obvious thing to do is to consult an encyclopaedia. A good small one is *Routledge's Universal Encyclopaedia*; perhaps the best very small one is *Pears' Cyclopaedia*. If a small encyclopaedia fails to satisfy, you must consult a big one. The most famous is the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*; it will tell you most of what you need and will refer you to such books as will complete your knowledge. The same can be said of *Chambers's Encyclopaedia*. A large dictionary will often convey as much information as a very small encyclopaedia. A short cut to ready and reliable information is this: learn to use a dictionary *and* an encyclopaedia. But in some instances a general encyclopaedia may not contain as much information as you require, yet you do not wish, perhaps you have not the time, to read a whole book. ' What does A. do now? ' He consults a subject encyclopaedia. If it is *ballet*, you will consult an encyclopaedia of the arts; if the musical aspect of ballet, you may go to such a publication as *The Oxford Companion to Music*. If a character of Classical mythology (Greece and Rome), you will turn to a dictionary or encyclopaedia—it may be called the one or the other—of Classical mythology: for instance, the one in ' Everyman's Library ', or perhaps *The Oxford Companion to Classical Literature*.

An encyclopaedia is much easier to read than the usual dictionary, for an encyclopaedia is written in consecutive English. So let us take an example from a dictionary.

> ENGINE, n. (*en̄ jin*). A mechanical contrivance consisting of several parts; a machine; short for *steam-e.*, *fire-e.*; fig., means, instrument; *e-driver* (of *steam-e.*, esp. locomotive); *e.-lathe* (worked by machinery). V.t., to fit (*ship*) with *steam-ee.* or other *ee.*, e.g. Diesel. [(V.f.n.) f. OF *engin*, f. L. *ingenium*, cf. L. *ingenuitas*, cleverness—see INGENUITY.]

On reading, or rather on trying to read this, you may exclaim, ' What *is* this all about? Why can't the fellow write the thing in plain English? '

I don't blame you for feeling like that. But remember that, written in full, the entry would need twice the space: and space is important in a dictionary containing 100,000 or 50,000 or even 10,000 entries.

Now, take it in easy stages and follow carefully:—

ENGINE, noun. (Pronounced *en-jin*, with the stress on *en*.)
A mechanical contrivance consisting of several parts; a machine; short for *steam-engine*, or for *fire-engine*; figuratively, means, instrument; *engine-driver*, a driver of a steam-engine, especially a locomotive; *engine-lathe*, a lathe worked by machinery;
Verb transitive, to fit (a ship) with steam-engines[1] or other engines, for example Diesel engines.
The verb comes from the noun.
The noun comes from Old French *engin*, which is from Latin *ingenium*, with which compare Latin *ingenuitas*, cleverness—see *ingenuity* in this dictionary.

Take another example:

REAL (*ré al*), a. Actually existing or happening, genuine; rightly so-called; *r. man*, worthy of the name; *r. property*, land, houses. Hence n., something actually existing. (f. LL. *realis*, real, f. *res*., thing.)

'Translated', it reads thus:

REAL (pronounced *ré al*), adjective. Actually existing or happening; genuine; rightly so-called; *a real man*, a man worthy of the name; *real property*, land, houses. Hence as a noun, which means something actually existing. From late Latin *realis*, real, from *res*, a thing.

With a little practice you can quite easily translate dictionary English into unshortened or consecutive or ordinary English.

That kind of shorthand which dictionary makers seem to delight in using (let us be fair: usually it is forced upon them)—that 'shorthand' does not consist of traps for the unwary. No trickery is involved. Without getting a headache you can learn the method, the system, the way it is done. You will be astonished at the ease with which you learn what the abbreviations mean and what other devices the dictionary maker uses to save space and to avoid repetition.

Try your hand at casting the following into 'dictionary English'.

FOOT (pronounced—), noun; plural[2] *feet*. The termination—that is,[3] end—of the leg, extending from the ankle to the tips of the toes; hence, the measure (12 inches); compare *hand* as a measure. In Old English *fōt*[4]; compare German *Fuss*.

[1] *e.*: engine; *ee.*: engines. These are devices very convenient to a dictionary maker.
[2] Abbreviation: *pl.*
[3] Abbreviation: *i.e.*
[4] The sign - over a vowel indicates that it is long; ⌣, that it is short.

And write definitions, both in ordinary and in ' dictionary ' English, of the following words: *dictionary*; *go*, verb and noun (separate entries); *dog*, noun; *great*; *have*; *make*, noun and verb (separately); *rhinoceros*; *safe*, noun and adjective (separately); *tear*, noun (in its two different meanings and pronunciations); *we*.

ADDITIONAL EXERCISES

1. Write a short account of what you expect to find in a dictionary.
2. What do you hope to find in an encyclopaedia or, as it is sometimes called, a cyclopaedia?
3. An atlas and a gazetteer are not the same thing. Explain to a young friend what the differences are.
4. If you heard someone use the word *mercury* (*Mercury*), had not seen it written and didn't know whether it was a place, a person, a thing or a flight of imagination, how would you set about learning what it means and exactly what or who it is?
5. To someone who knows less than you do, how would you define *spiv*, *atomic bomb*, *jovial*, a *definition*, *French*, *scarcely*, ' to *knit* ' and ' to *crochet* ', ' to *alter* ' and ' an *altar* ', *practice* and *practise* and *practical*?
6. Supposing you heard your mother say, ' I prefer English cooking to French cuisine ', would you know what she meant? If you did have a pretty good idea, would you rest content with what you knew or would you turn to a dictionary in order to make sure that you were right? And what would you do if you discovered that a dictionary did not give you all the information you needed?
7. What is the difference between *teach* and *instruct*? And between *an order* and *an instruction*?
8. A group of pupils under one teacher may be called a *class*, a *form*, a *standard*. It might be instructive, even entertaining, to find out the differences (if any) in the meanings. What are these differences?
9. Turn up an etymological dictionary—a dictionary that tells you the histories of words—and see how *class*, *form*, *standard*, began and what has happened to them. Could you then tell your parents the stories of those words and, if so, what would your stories be?
10. Write a short essay on the two words *quinine* and *ipecacuanha*. To do this, you will use a dictionary; or your teacher will tell you two short stories, write two or three important facts upon the blackboard, and leave you to it.
11. Use the following words in a sentence apiece:
    able, *capable*, *airman*, *submarine*, *flame-thrower*, *penicillin*, *Teutonic*, *quisling*, *chemistry*, *physics*, *botanical*, *comprehend*, *arrest*, *convict* (v.), *proceed*, *obscure*, *cross words*, *cross-words*, *detect*, *novel* and *a novel*, *vacation*, *public holiday*.
12. What is the difference between *practical* and *practicable*, *sea* and *see*, *to start* and *to startle*, a *train* and *to train*, *go* in ' It's no go ' and *go* in ' Go he must! '?
13. (*a*) What are the nouns corresponding to ' to *see* ', ' to *believe* ', ' to *think* ', ' to *say* ', ' to *fear* '?

(*b*) What verbs correspond to *arrival, departure, hatted, joy, writer, labourer, haste*?
(*c*) What are the adjectives corresponding to the nouns *act* (two adjectives), *play, fear, pleasure, pig, horse, work*?
(*d*) What are the adverbs that answer to *bad, good, clever, black, busy, hard*?

14. What is the difference between a box of dates and a dictionary of dates? What information would you expect to find in the latter about the contents of the former? And wouldn't it be a good idea to find out whether there is any connection between the origins of the two kinds of dates?

15. Talking of boxes, I suggest that you may not feel very sure about the definitions of *musical box, mouth-organ, street-organ, hurdy-gurdy, accordion* and *concertina*. Would you expect an ordinary dictionary to tell you all you'd like to know about them, or would you go to a *Companion to Music*?

16. There are dictionaries of art, literature, chemistry, physics, geology, botany, biology. In which would you look for an account (not a mere definition) of:
1. arsenic; 2. atom; 3. easel; 4. frogs and tadpoles; 5. landscape; 6. lotus; 7. quantum theory; 8. sonnet; 9. strata; 10. temperature?

17. ' I think *I* know what he's talking about.' But *do* you?—
(*a*) '— is a thinking animal.'
(*b*) A book of Definitions.
(*c*) The art of writing.
(*d*) A domestic animal that yields the most widely drunk kind of milk.
(*e*) ' The —— is the friend of man.'
(*f*) Thoughtful of others' feelings and always ready to help.
(*g*) To bring things together.
(*h*) The kinds of sum in which you add up figures—take them away —share them out.
(*i*) The history of a person's life.
(*j*) A means of travelling above the surface of the earth.
(*k*) Neither a solid nor a liquid, nor yet abstract.
(*l*) The faculty of seeing things that are not there.
(*m*) To a great extent or to a high degree.
(*n*) In a way that contradicts. (Not *contradictorily*.)

18. Using a dictionary only when you must, say what is the difference between—
(*a*) A negro and a nigger.
(*b*) A girl and a young woman.
(*c*) A tree and a shrub.
(*d*) A child and a baby.
(*e*) A dog and a hound.
(*f*) A trot and a gallop.
(*g*) A walk and a stroll.
(*h*) Pretty and beautiful.
(*i*) Beautiful and lovely.
(*j*) A motor car and a motor bicycle.
(*k*) A transport aeroplane and a passenger aeroplane.
(*l*) A helicopter and heliotrope.
(*m*) Clear and evident.
(*n*) Obvious and manifest.

(*o*) More often and more frequently.
(*p*) Simply and merely.
(*q*) A fish and a reptile.
(*r*) A metal and a mineral.
(*s*) Physiology and psychology.
(*t*) A cousin and a near relative.
(*u*) A step-mother and a mother-in-law.
(*v*) A stateless person and a dispossessed person.
(*w*) Mauve and purple.
(*x*) A lama and a llama.
(*y*) A border and a boarder.
(*z*) An axis and an axle.

19. Put a better word or phrase in place of each *italicized* word or phrase in—

'I must *mend* these socks for Bill and *purl* a jumper for *my very self*,' Mary *stated*. 'And I,' *related* Bill, 'must *discover* some tennis balls, because Mary and I are playing a *contest* with Bob and his *mother's daughter* at three o'clock *the day after today*.' The match was very *fortunate:* they *gained* it by 6–1, 6–3. Afterwards they had a *beverage*.

When they opened the *wooden entry* of their *domicile*, Mary and Bill went into the *withdrawing room* and looked out of the *glass section* of that very *pleasurable* and airy *apartment*. 'The weather will keep *handsome, I opine*,' said Bill.

PUNCTUATION

Capitals; Quotation Marks; Italics; Punctuation Marks

I suggest that you should look at punctuation . . . as a matter of ordinary good manners. . . . It is only considerate, it is only polite, to make the business of reading your work, your letter, your story, your essay, your poem, whatever it is, as easy and as pleasant as you possibly can. . . . There are people who think that we make too much fuss about punctuation, and that we use more stops than we need. But everyone is agreed that we must have *some* rules or habits in the way we arrange the words upon the page. . . . These things are not just rules invented by schoolmasters so as to make writing difficult. They are habits and manners used by writers so as to make clear what they want to say, and to make reading easy.—L. A. G. Strong, *English for Pleasure.*

the earl of surrey his christian name was edmund said angrily i am not a fool nor do i suffer fools gladly im sure youre not replied the king henry the eighth why should you suffer them i shouldnt.

The Earl of Surrey—his Christian name was Edmund—said angrily, 'I am not a fool, nor do I suffer fools gladly'. 'I'm sure you're not!' replied the King, Henry the Eighth; 'why should you suffer them? *I* shouldn't.'

In the former passage, the lack of capital letters, quotation marks, italics, punctuation marks renders it very hard to read. Yet that is an easy example!

Capital Letters—or, for short, capitals—are so called because they stand at the head[1] of a page or the head of a word.

They are used for the initial letter of the names of persons, as in *John, John Smith, Caesar, Napoleon*;

for a person's initials, as in *J. T. Smith* and *John T. Smith*;

for the names of places, thus: *London, New York, England, South Africa, the United States of America*;

for the pronoun *I*;

for *the Deity*, whether *Father* (*God, the Almighty, Jehovah*) or *Son* (*Jesus, Christ, Jesus Christ, the Saviour*) or *Holy Ghost* (*the Spirit, the Holy Spirit*);

[1] Latin *caput* (genitive *capitis*): compare *capital punishment*, the death penalty, because the victim loses his head.

for the titles of persons: *the King of England, the President of the United States, the Governor-General of Australia, the Earl of Salisbury, Sir John Johns, M. le Vicomte Tardois, Dr James Jameson, the Rev. Mr Smith*;

for the titles of musical compositions, pieces of statuary, paintings, plays, films, books, contributions to—or features of—newspapers and magazines, as in Beethoven's 'Moonlight Sonata', Rodin's 'The Thinker', Frans Hals's 'The Laughing Cavalier', 'The Seventh Veil', 'Great Expectations', 'The Theatre' (as a regular feature of a weekly magazine).

In short, all Proper Names require an initial capital. But they are not the only words that need one.

The initial letter of the first word in every sentence or of any word immediately following a full stop requires a capital, thus 'The noise came from the quarry. Odd! Nobody ever went there.'

Formerly, the beginning of every verse[1] in a poem was marked with a capital. Some modern poets, however, use the capital only as it would be used in prose. Old style:

> Breathes there the man, with soul so dead,
> Who never to himself hath said,
> This is my own, my native land!

New style:

> Breathes there a man, with eye so dead,
> who never to himself has said,
> 'This is my own, my skilful hand'.

In the parody, the third verse requires a capital because it begins a quotation—the actual words of a speaker or a writer.

One use of capitals has always puzzled beginners.

'To that man, Fame has been kind; in this man, Hope has never died.'

There 'Fame' and 'Hope' are personifications: personification occurs when we treat abstracts (emotions, states of mind, etc.) as if they were persons. Once very common, personification is now employed sparingly; it appears in rhetorical prose[2] and in poetry. It is best left to poets and to orators.

Most of the set of rules (not separate rules but mere branches of one all-embracing rule) mentioned above are exemplified[3] in the following passage:

> William Shakespeare, author of *Hamlet, The Tempest, Julius Caesar* and many other famous plays, is sometimes[4] called 'The Swan of Avon'

[1] *Verse* is the technical, the learnèd, the correct word for a line of poetry. What many of you call a verse is less confusingly called a *stanza*.

[2] Rhetorical prose is elegant, especially if over-elegant, and forcible, especially if over-forcible, prose.

[3] Or 'illustrated'.

[4] Not by you, I hope. This kind of literary genteelism has, fortunately, gone out of fashion.

or ' The Immortal Bard '. He is the greatest writer the world has known. Almost beyond comparison. In his work, Shakespeare seldom mentions God, rarely Jesus Christ, never the Holy Ghost, yet the power of the Supreme Being is felt to pervade all the Tragedies. He avoids giving his public the impression, ' It is *I* who wrote this '; yet Mr William Shakespeare, of Stratford-on-Avon, was a quite important man. He has influenced not only literature but also music and art, many of his songs (e.g., ' Where the Bee Sucks ') having been set to music, many a painting having been suggested by his themes. To William Shakespeare has Fame been kind.

In the examples of the use of the capital letter, we have also seen examples of the use of italics and quotation marks.

Quotation Marks serve to enclose the words spoken by someone or the words taken from another writer.

' I *say*, what are you doing here? ' exclaimed Jim.
' Oh,' replied Harry, ' I live here, you know.'

A certain well-known writer is addicted to frequent quotation. But usually he quotes inaccurately. For instance, he writes ' Breathes there a man with soul so dead ' instead of ' Breathes there the man, with soul so dead ', and ' To fresh fields and pastures new ' instead of ' To fresh woods, and pastures new '.

Another well-known writer is fond of long words and rare words, such as ' multitudinous ', ' incarnadine ', ' empery '.

Note that the words quoted must be the actual words, as in ' He said, " I'll come tomorrow " '; not ' He said that " he would come the next day " '. This example of quotation marks illustrates a point that requires care. Where there is only one quotation, either single quotation marks, as in ' Breathes there the man, with soul so dead ', or double quotation marks (" Breathes there the man, with soul so dead ") may be used. I happen to prefer ' single quotes ',[1] many others prefer " double quotes ".[1] If within the quotation there is another, the second is double within a single, or single within a double, thus:

' He said, " I'll come tomorrow ".'
" He said, ' I'll come tomorrow '."

[1] Book-world terms. The use of ' quotes ' in ' single quotes ' and ' double quotes ' exemplifies the fact that for slangy words and phrases, for foreign words too, quotation marks are employed to show that the word or the phrase is not Standard English—nor Standard American. Thus, ' He is fond of slang: instead of saying " Breathes there the man ", he would say " Breathes there the chap *or* the guy ". He is equally fond of Classical tags and foreign words and phrases, such as " *Experto crede* ", " on the *tapis* ", " bête noire ", " Cherchez la femme " and so forth.'

Single and double, or double and single quotation marks, occur alternately. You may need to go a step further, thus:

> 'In a book I've just read, I came upon the following passage. "Thomas Topham Clarke once remarked, 'Fame is a cheat'." I said to myself, "How true that is: 'Fame is a cheat'." And I thought of all the times it had cheated me.'

In double quotation marks, that passage—follow it closely!—would be written:

> "In a book I've just read, I came upon the following passage. 'Thomas Topham Clarke once remarked, "Fame is a cheat".' I said to myself, 'How true that is: "Fame is a cheat".' And I thought of all the times it had cheated me."

The easiest way in which to get that apparently complicated, really simple rule into your head is to set out the two passages facing each other in lines of equal length. If you visualize the two passages, you will assimilate the rule, rather than be obliged to memorize it.

There is a variation worth noting. A quotation may be introduced without a quotation mark and terminated either with '.—', i.e. with a dash (—) after the full stop, or simply with a full stop, provided that what follows is put into a fresh paragraph. But 'example is always more efficacious than precept', as Dr Johnson once remarked. An example:

> An old man was walking down the Strand. Meeting a friend, he said, Why, John, fancy meeting you here. I thought you were in France.—No, replied his friend; as you see, I'm here.—That was all they said. Satisfied with the profundity of their words, they smiled and went their separate ways.

But if, within a quotation unsignalled by quotation marks, there occurs a second quotation, then the second must be indicated by quotation marks before and after. Thus:

> An old man was walking down the Strand, or was it Broadway? Meeting a friend, he said, Why, John, 'Fancy meeting you here'—as the saying goes.—Well, as the saying goes, replied his friend, 'The world is a small place'.—That was all they said. Satisfied with the extreme wittiness of their encounter, they smiled and went their separate ways.

'Oh, yes,' you exclaim; 'but if there's a third quotation, a quotation within the second, we'll need the other kind of quotation marks. In fact, we'll get into an awful mess if we aren't very careful.'

True; I, a learner like yourselves, think that, when there is a second, above all when there's a third or even a fourth quotation, you had better avoid the capital-letter mode of introducing a quotation and use quotation marks throughout.

If you read alertly, you may have noticed that sometimes quotation marks are employed where italics could be used in their place.

Italics.

(1) 'Upon my soul, Dick, I didn't know that you were the author of "Where There's a Way There's a Will"!'; or:

'Upon my soul, Dick, I didn't know that you were the author of *Where There's a Way There's a Will*!'

(2) 'She doesn't know,' remarked Mary, 'that it is not always safe to use long words like "terminate" for "to end"; rare words for common ones, like "empery" for "empire"'; or

'She doesn't know,' remarked Mary, 'that it is not always safe to use long words like *terminate* for *to end*; rare words for common ones, like *empery* for *empire*.'

There you have the two chief uses of *italics* or, more fully expressed, *italicized words*. In handwriting, one does not write the *italicized words* in *italics*—that is, in *italic characters*; one merely underlines them. But in printed matter, underlining would look heavy and clumsy. In printed matter, *italic characters* or *italic letters*, shown by the *italic type* (lighter and more delicate than the roman[1] characters), are employed for titles of plays, books, pictures, musical compositions, and for words selected for special consideration.[2]

Linked with book-titles and 'words for special consideration' are such Greek and Latin words and such words from modern languages, especially French, German, Italian, as are used when a good English or American word is available. Some persons like to sprinkle their conversation, their letters, even their serious writing, with tags from Latin, thus: 'And then, *horribile dictu*,[3] the ex-convict stole a cake from the pantry: *hinc illae lacrimae*'.[3] Or with words and phrases from French, German and Italian: 'His soul was filled with *Weltschmerz*;[4] the *Sturm und Drang*[4] of life was too much for him; the gay *aria*[4] of existence became a *chanson triste*,[4] a *nocturne*.[4] He felt oppressed by a *je ne sais quoi*,[4] an *accidia*.'[4] To use italic for these words and phrases is correct; to use the words and phrases is cheap and pretentious.

[1] Either ask your teacher to tell you the story of *italic* and *roman*: how and why they began as *Italic* (Italian) and *Roman*; why they 'lost their heads', or if your teacher is not at hand, consult an etymological dictionary.

[2] In this paragraph, roman type has been used for every word except *italics*, *italicized words*, *italic characters*, *italic letters*, and *italic type*.

[3] horrible to relate; hence those tears.

[4] world-grief; storm and stress; air, tune; sad song; night music or poem; something indefinable; spineless lassitude.

But italics may be employed in several other ways. Italic may, for instance, be employed instead of quotation marks for particularly important quotations, as in ' God said, *Let there be Light* '.[1]

Certain modern novelists use italics to indicate what a man says to himself, whether in reflection while he is alone or as unspoken commentary upon another's words or actions; all the *heard* conversation being in quotation marks. Here is an instance:

> Two men unexpectedly meet. ' Why, Joe,' says the richer, ' you do look poor!'
>
> ' Not so poor as all that, I hope, Sir Thomas,' replies the poorer but prouder man. *You self-satisfied old money-bags!*

Some of you will have noticed that, a few lines back, I wrote ' all the *heard* conversation '. That was to indicate that, employed as a describing word, *heard* is rare. But also to single out the word. Italics are often used for emphasis, as in ' I *do* like that hat ', where they are unnecessary. ' I like that hat ' is sufficiently emphasized by the change to ' I do like that hat '. A better example:

> ' Do you dislike my hat, Florence?'
> ' Dislike it? I *like* it.'

Italics are to be used in this way only when emphasis can be obtained in no other. Take that last example. Reshaped, it would read:

> ' Do you dislike my hat, Florence?'
> ' Dislike it? On the contrary, I like it.'

You have probably heard, some of you may recall with distaste, the proverb, ' Little pitchers have long ears '. Yet ears, like eyes, can be used to good effect. Most of you will have either overheard or been obliged to listen to a conversation in which someone emphasizes one or two words in every sentence. In print, a conscientious novelist, writing a lively dialogue or a deadly monologue, has to show in italic the word emphasized by the speaker. You have, no doubt, laughed at or been wearied by all this emphasis, whether in conversation or in reading.

The Authorized Version of the English Bible avoids italics. It never uses them for emphasis. For only one purpose does it use them at all. To intimate some doubt, either concerning the genuineness of the original text, or concerning the correctness of the translation; or to tell the reader that the italicized words are an interpolation—that they have been inserted in order to make the sense clear.

[1] The Bible has ' And God said, Let there be light ', without italics. By the way, the English Bible (Authorized Version) does not use quotation marks but initial capitals to introduce the exact words used.

There, again, is a minor yet far from negligible purpose of italics: interpolation; the insertion of matter not in the original. Take this passage:—

> The palooka shouted, 'Out of my way, you stir-crazy bozo!' 'Aw, you're bug-house, you phoney gay-cat!'

Anyone editing that passage for use by English readers may well feel that he must explain certain terms either in footnotes or, if he wishes to avoid footnotes, by interpolation. If he decides upon the latter course, this is how he does it:—

> 'The palooka (*simple fellow*)[1] shouted, "Out of the way, you stir-crazy bozo" (*prison-crazed man*).
> "Aw [*oh* or *ah*], you're bug-house [*mad*], you phoney [*imitation* or *make-believe*] gay-cat!" [Advance look-out man for a gang of bank-robbers.]'

Having learnt and thought about italics, quotation marks, and capitals, you can now deal with punctuation marks and with the various ways in which you may punctuate.

Punctuation. The word *punctuation* means 'a system, a method, a manner of indicating the pauses in speech and in writing': both the pauses necessary to an understanding of the passage concerned and the degree or length of pause. Literally, *punctuation* means *pointing*, the points being marks or signs. The term *points* is still applied in certain Oriental languages to those dots which indicate either a vowel or a stress; and in English the term still serves to name the colon in punctuation and the diaeresis in pronunciation, a diaeresis over a vowel indicating that the vowel is to be pronounced, as in the Middle English *Aprilë*, April. In Braille, points are the raised dots that serve to form the letters of the alphabet. Literally, a *point* is a mark or hole made by a pointed instrument, such as a needle.

The two most useful points or stops are the full stop, known occasionally as the point (or the full point) and frequently as the period; and the comma, which runs it fairly close. The full stop indicates the end of a sentence; the point at which the statement ends or 'comes to a full stop'; the point at which, in speaking, we let the voice fall. Here is a passage in which only full stops occur:

> Nimrod lived in ancient times. He was 'the mighty hunter before the Lord'. We read of him in the Bible. But he was more than a hunter. He was something of an inventive genius.

[1] For interpolations, 'square' parentheses are often used, as in the second paragraph; for this purpose, indeed, 'square' parentheses are preferable. But you will not mix ordinary and 'square' parentheses, as I have done.

Now a passage employing commas too:

> Nimrod, who lived in ancient times, was in fact 'the mighty hunter before the Lord' of the Bible. But he was more than a hunter, for he was something of an inventive genius.

Comma derives from a Greek word that means 'a piece cut off'; hence, in Greek, 'a clause'—a piece cut off from a sentence; hence, in English, the mark indicating that a part of a sentence (perhaps a phrase, perhaps a clause) is to be separated from the rest by a short stop. Here is a sentence illustrating most of the purposes of a comma:

> John Strange, gentleman farmer, met a girl, Ruth, at a dance and, after he had seen her a dozen times or so, he proposed marriage, which proposal she accepted, the neighbours forthwith declaring that he had, as it were, let the grass grow under his feet, he had waited so long.

If you examine that passage as it is printed, or if you read it aloud, you will see that not only does every comma fall exactly where a short pause occurs but that every comma helps to make the sense much clearer. Where the voice falls at the end of a sentence, you have the sense completed—and a full stop, 'a period[1] at the end of a period'.

Now cast a critical eye over this:—

(1) The soldier glanced around, he did not know what to do. To go forward was dangerous. To go back was equally dangerous. Should he hide or should he risk a signal-flare? The night was dark, the enemy could not be far away, an attack was imminent.

(2) The soldier glanced around; he did not know what to do. To go forward was dangerous, to go back was equally dangerous. Should he hide or should he risk a signal-flare? The night was dark; the enemy could not be far away; an attack was imminent.

What difference do you notice between the two passages? Manifestly the words are the same and in the same order. With (1) as your basis, you will see that the first comma (,) becomes a ';': the name given to ';' is *semi-colon.* In (2) the second full stop of (1) has become a comma: that was done for the sake of variety. In the final sentence, three commas of (1) have become semi-colons in (2), for the very good reason that these commas were too weak to carry the weight of the heavy pauses after 'around' and 'dark' and 'away'; yet the pauses are hardly important enough to merit full stops.

Next in importance to the full stop and the comma stands the semi-colon. Wherever you feel that a full stop is excessive, a comma inadequate, you may use a semi-colon. The term *semi-colon* means 'half a colon'. Learning this, you may say, 'All very nice! But what is a *colon?*'

[1] Consult a dictionary, preferably an etymological one.

A colon is a stop lighter than a full stop but much heavier than a comma; a colon, however, is only a little heavier than a semi-colon. In the parallel passages set forth above, the first sentence, instead of being rewritten 'The soldier glanced around; he did not know what to do', might, if you thought the semi-colon a trifle too brief, too weak, have been written thus:

'The soldier glanced round: he did not know what to do'. Whenever you wish to avoid 'because', 'for', 'since', you may do so by substituting a colon for 'because', etc. The sentence just quoted might have been written:

'The soldier glanced round because he did not know what to do.' In short, a colon[1] serves to introduce an explanation.

Often, however, a colon is employed to introduce a speech or a quotation, thus:

The man called out: 'Have you seen a stranger around here?'

That speech might have been introduced, for speeches and quotations often are thus introduced, with a comma, thus:

The man called out, 'Have you seen a stranger around here?'

In the twentieth century there has been an increasing but not yet predominant tendency to omit a stop, whether colon or comma, before the quotation or the speech, thus:

The man called out 'Have you . . .?'

If the speech or the quotation is a long one, it usually begins a fresh line, thus:

William Shakespeare wrote the famous verses
Who steals my purse steals trash
etc., etc., etc.

There remain only two stops. The dash and parentheses.

Parentheses (as the name implies) form a pair, neither member of which is of any use without the other. One does not write 'Parentheses (as the name implies form a pair', nor 'Parentheses as the name implies) form a pair'. A statement, or a single word or a phrase, *in parenthesis* must fall between *parentheses*. You may have heard someone say, 'In parenthesis, he wasn't ill at all': by that he means, 'By the way, he *wasn't* ill, you know; it's not important, but it just happens that he wasn't'. There you

[1] Literally, *colon* (Greek *kōlon*) means a limb; hence, among Greek grammarians, a limb or part of a sentence; hence, among English grammarians and the general public, that sign or mark which cuts one part of a sentence off from another. Compare *comma*.

have the essence of parentheses—of statements 'in parenthesis'. The Greek word *parenthesis* means, literally, 'a putting in beside (something else)', 'a giving besides, i.e. in addition'; hence, an additional statement, as it were a footnote inserted into the text. In composition,[1] a word or a phrase or a sentence within parentheses should not interrupt the flow of speech, the smooth course[2] of the discourse.[2] In other words, parentheses enclose something that does not affect the even tenor of the statement wherein it occurs. As you see from such examples as the following:—[3]

Jim Smith (*alias* Tom Tompkins) was a thief;

Lexicography (a word of Greek origin) is the art of dictionary making;

When the courier (a Swiss, by the way) arrived at Bologna, he found that no arrangements had been made.

In the preceding paragraphs, I have on several occasions availed myself of the dash, written — . Within a word, a dash merely indicates that the intervening letters have been omitted, as in 'd — d' for 'damned'. But in punctuation, either it serves much the same purpose as an emphatic comma, when something is added, as in 'I'll see you later—if I can', or, as a pair, it has much the same effect as a pair of parentheses, except that a pair of dashes is more emphatic: it comes, not as a quiet addition, not something that doesn't affect the sense, but as an interruption, as a far from negligible addition; not as a 'by the way' but as a 'but you must note this' or a 'you must, however, take this into consideration'.

Examples? Well, this is the sort of thing I intend to convey:

William the Conqueror—he was a Norman, not an Englishman—thought more of the Normans than of his English subjects.

William of Normandy promoted the interests of his Norman followers—he neglected his English subjects.

William the Conqueror (William I of England) defeated Harold at the Battle of Hastings—or the Battle of Senlac, as it is sometimes called.

The full stop (or period); the comma; the colon and the semi-colon; the dash and a pair of parentheses: those are the points, the marks, the stops that constitute English punctuation. That, too, is their descending order of frequency and, approximately, their descending order of usefulness. If you were so fanciful as to go all statistical[4] and schematic,[4] you might draw up a table of frequencies. That would be too statistical for me; but on the other hand, I might draw up a table of importances, with '10 for a full stop' as the basis and with the caution that 'importance'

[1] See the chapter on composition.

[2] Consult your teacher—or a dictionary.

[3] The sign ' :— ' is merely a colon *plus* a dash; a strengthened colon. Usually it precedes a list.

[4] A dictionary or 'a walking dictionary' to be consulted, please.

includes the length or the impressiveness of the pause accompanying the point or punctuation mark. Something like this:

full stop, *the* point, period:	10
colon	8-9
semi-colon	7-8
dash	6-7
comma	5
parentheses	1-2-3

In the table, obviously, I am not being dogmatic: it is approximate, rough, provisional—and variable. The commas in ' John Law, the policeman, is a good fellow ' are briefer than the comma in ' John Law is a policeman, but he is a good fellow '. The semi-colons in ' There we saw Tom; his mother; his father; his father-in-law; and his lawyer ' are briefer than the semi-colon in ' The soldier glanced round; he did not know what to do '. And so on and so forth.

That disposes of the points or stops properly so called: the punctuation marks that, indicating division and separation, warn us that a pause must be observed. But there are two other signs or marks usually included in punctuation, even though they don't punctuate. They are rhetorical; that is, they indicate stress or emphasis, not pause nor division.

These are the *question mark* or *mark of interrogation* (?), and the *exclamation mark* (!). The former—one hardly needs to mention it—serves to show that a question has been asked; the latter, that the speaker or the writer intends his audience or his public to understand that the matter he has mentioned is one that causes surprise or elicits wonder or merits indignation.

The very sign ' ? ' is a simplification of the letter *q* or *Q*, short for the Latin *quaere*, ' Question this! ' or ' Is this true? ' The alternative term *mark of interrogation* means ' mark of questioning '—' an *asking* mark or sign '. And the sign ' ! ' is symbolic: it is, as it were, a dagger stuck into a statement and ' nailing ' it down. In medieval times, a dagger was often used to affix a proclamation or a notice to a wooden wall or post: it *shouts* at you: Latin *exclamare*, ' to call out, to shout loudly, to exclaim vigorously '.

Equipped with all that knowledge, you will easily deal with the following exercises.

EXERCISES

1. Furnish the following passage with capital letters:

   the sailor belonged to the royal navy, not to the merchant navy. he was thirty years old; his name, tom bowling. when in a reminiscent mood, he used to say, ' i am the descendant of the man in the song *tom bowling* '. nobody believed him, yet it was true.

2. And this with quotation marks:

Tom Bowling exclaimed, I am the great great grandson of the man the poet wrote about. Everybody laughed. Tell that to the Marines, said one. But don't tell it to us, added another. You are nicknamed The Poet's Pet, but nobody believes that the old man was ever put into a poem.

3. Do this again, but starting with ' Tom Bowling . . .

4. And again, starting with " Tom Bowling . . .

5. Italicize—mark with italics—where necessary:

John Milton wrote Paradise Lost and Paradise Regained; Beethoven composed The Moonlight Sonata; Frans Hals painted The Laughing Cavalier. Did you know that paradise comes from the Persian, cavalier from Latin? A famous general, who was uninterested in word-history, but deeply interested in poetry, once said very emphatically, ' If I, yes I, had written that poem, I shouldn't feel so anxious about the coming battle. That poet had something.'

6. Supply capitals, italics, quotation marks to render the following passage intelligible:

in middle age, william shakespeare retired to stratford-on-avon, where, some say, he wrote the tempest. the tempest is inferior as a play to macbeth or hamlet, but it is so good that a rival might have been pardoned for saying: if I had written the tempest i could pass the rest of my life in peace and calm. what a man! most of us would agree with that statement, but there has been only one shakespeare. yet there may be another some day, an optimist suggests. there may!

7. Punctuate the following:

' I am acquainted with the difficulties of beginners was I not once a beginner myself with those of parents being one of that despised class and with those of teachers having formerly been one of that selfless band so seldom praised so seldom even thanked

' My debt for in such work there is always debt is in the main to those three learned entertaining vitally interesting scholars who have always avoided pedantry the late Professor Otto Jespersen especially Professor Ernest Weekley and Professor G H McKnight

' There have on words been several books written for beginners that they are good books I do not doubt but they do not cover the same ground as this book of mine nor is their treatment the same as mine though not perhaps to others these are adequate reasons '

8. And this, putting capitals where necessary:

' the ability to state clearly shortly and exactly what we mean is very rare and to teach that ability is a prime duty of those responsible for composition lessons to go further is dangerous we can teach children to write clearly we cannot teach them[1] to write beautifully though we can make them aware of beauty ' george sampson

9. The following passage requires punctuation, capitals, italics:

' in general the growing boy must learn how to get the marrow from a simple treatise he must learn how to read a history book for its historical information a geography book for its geographical information and so on he must be able to use an ordinary dictionary and . . .[2] smith's smaller classical dictionary . . . the encyclopaedia britannica and . . .' george sampson english for the english

[1] Young children; not children of thirteen upwards.

[2] Such dots indicate that something has been omitted. Three dots imply an omission within a sentence; six, that one or more sentences have been omitted. Further: two dots indicate the omission of a single word.

10. But this needs everything: punctuation, capitals, italics, quotation marks:

aha said the wolf to the lamb so you would soil the water from which i wish to drink would you oh no replied the polite timid surprised lamb i am drinking lower down than you are mr wolf dont talk to me shouted the wolf i won't i won't be talked to for i am the hero of a film called the big bad wolf haven't you ever seen it

11. Show that the following passage is a quotation and punctuate it; italicize where necessary. As it is not an easy passage, you are receiving enough help to enable you to deal with it very satisfactorily: there are no quotations within the passage.

Gaius Julius Caesar the arch-destroyer of Celtic civilization on the Continent of Europe, is nevertheless the writer of antiquity who has preserved for us more valuable details about that civilization than the rest put together every study of Celtic Religion begins with a passage from De Bello Gallico wherein the chief gods worshipped by the Gauls are enumerated an important passage though requiring some care in the use of it every study of Celtic Literature begins with another passage from the same history Book VI chapters xiii xiv wherein the author speaks of the druids and from this rule our present investigation is not exempt R. A. Stewart Macalister The Secret Languages of Ireland 1937

12. John Selwyn Cheke has a strong imagination, but it seems to have run away with him when he came to punctuate the following passage in his own composition. The use of capitals is eccentric; that of italics, haphazard; that of quotation marks, almost nightmarish. Without going so far as to contract brain-fever or to have a horrible nightmare, you might care to do for John Selwyn Cheke what he should have been able to do for himself.

'When Jules Verne the French novelist wrote *Round the world in eighty Days* and *Twenty Thousand Leagues under the sea, the* best stories he ever wrote he was being a prophet, as great a prophet as H. G. Wells was many years later when he wrote "The first Men in the moon. Wells was nicknamed the " English " Jules Verne but he I mean Wells was a better novelist though a worse prophet. When my friend Bill asked me; Will you be a story-teller when you grow up Jack: I said I am a story-teller now. No, I don't mean that sort of story-teller I mean a novelist. So I said don't be daft, Bill, I'm going to be an engineer you know. But wouldn't you like to be able to make up stories all about science and things, Jack he asked. I told him straight I get all the science I shall ever want at school, thank you all the same. We nearly quarrelled but it's daft to quarrel when you want to be an engineer, it only throws a spanner into the works or as Bill says: he's gone all American: it gums up the works. I think a good title for the story of anyone so stupid as to quarrel about engineering would be *A spanner in the Gum*, but that is feeble, isn't it. Bill says it is very feeble, so we parted friends. We are friends so we always part friends even if I am a *half*-wit, but better be a *half*-wit than a *no*-wit at all I always say.

13. The following passage is not very badly punctuated. Could you improve the punctuation? For, when you examine it closely, it does seem to be rather monotonous and perhaps a shade inadequate.

This lion hunter, a man named Selous, is a very fine shot and that is because, in addition to being a wonderful marksman he keeps a cool head. This Selous is not a descendant of the famous big-game

hunter of that name: but you might almost think he was. Our Selous then excels in shooting lions and tigers or as he himself would say, ' lion and tiger '. He stands six feet tall, his weight is 170 pounds, he uses a Mannlicher rifle. When he shoots he shoots to kill. When he misses he lets the animal go free, unless he is ' shooting tiger '. For then you cannot afford to miss.

COMPOSITION, I

The person who cannot make a concise, lucid and intelligible statement in writing is an uneducated person. . . . One general impression is that everybody can write without taking special pains; but that is quite untrue. . . . Many people are obliged to write letters, or to make written statements, and very few can do either.—George Sampson, *English for the English*, 1921.

COMPOSITION. The combination of words . . . to form sentences, paragraphs, verses, or other parts of any literary work or discourse; the art or practice of writing.—*Webster's New International Dictionary.*

Composition derives from Latin *compositio*, literally 'a putting together; hence, arrangement, disposition', from *cum*, 'with', and *ponĕre*, 'to put, set, place'.

§1. *Introductory*

IN composition, much art is necessary. It can be acquired. Nowadays, schoolchildren have plenty of time in which to acquire it. By their teachers they are helped and encouraged to acquire it; by themselves they are helped even more, for they assimilate at least as fast as they consciously learn.

In composition, the first thing a child should learn is to have complete confidence: to avoid undermining that self-confidence is the first thing a teacher should learn. Not merely learn but also practise incessantly and scrupulously. Most children are confident until their freshness, their impulsiveness and their naturalness are dimmed, damned and dulled by dryasdusts; in the others, the idea of confidence should be implanted and, in the best sense, indoctrinated. A page of artless outpouring, fresh and natural, is preferable to a paragraph of stilted, horribly unreal correctitude. A child's own unprompted story of a day at the seaside or on a farm, of a picnic in a wood or an excursion to a factory, may be rambling and, to a pedantic eye, formless, yet it has a form that results, as in a mirror, from the child's imagination; in any event it surpasses that essay which he (or, of course, she) thinks is likely to please the teacher.

I have been speaking of the child of (say) from nine to twelve years of age. But much the same holds good of the boy or girl of thirteen or fourteen. This older pupil has learnt and assimilated a number of simple and (I hope) sensible rules of composition: but still needs more confidence in self, less awe of the rules. Deeply impressed on my memory is the following incident.

A very charming young woman of my acquaintance (she must have been thirteen at the time) was looking worried. 'What's the trouble?'

'Oh, I have to write an essay on castles, and I know nothing about them. I've never seen a castle.'

'Very thoughtless of the teacher to set such a subject without making sure that her pupils had at least seen a castle. But as most of your classmates are, I should say, in the same boat, why not have a shot at it? You *can* write that essay, you know.'

'I'll have to imagine it.'

'Well, why not? It's the only thing you can do, anyway. Or is it?'

'What do you mean?'

'You've never seen a castle. You haven't read about castles?'

'No.'

'Um! But you do possess a History of England in the Middle Ages. Look in the index—you'll find some mention of castles. And you have an encyclopaedia. Read what the encyclopaedia has to say about castles; it'll have an illustration, and that will help you to picture a castle.'

'Yes, but——'

'There's no *but*. Read slowly, look closely. Then think. Then write, in your own words, what you've learnt. What a castle *is*; what it's *for*; *who* lived in castles, and *when*? Are there any now? And finally, ruins of castles. Jot those points down. Got a pencil? Good! What a castle *is* . . .'

The upshot was that the perplexed young person obtained eight marks out of ten.

At first, fluency is to be encouraged. Pruning and correction should come later. Nor will correction, sensibly and agreeably applied, cause loss of fluency. The pupil learns that certain ways of expressing himself (not that he can express anything else!) are correct and economical, whereas others are incorrect and wasteful. He will take to these lessons with all the ease and readiness of the proverbial duck to water. If the teacher goes the right way about it, the pupil will even enjoy acquiring the knack, and learning the reason, of this or that turn of phrase or construction of sentence, or the building of paragraphs and the formation—the creation—the invention—of a story, a letter, an essay.

The instinct to build is part of the impulse to create. Everyone, young or old, enjoys the making of things, whether the things be useful or artistic—or both. To build a composition, to make a story: these should not be regarded, much less should they be taught, as tasks or duties, but as expressions of oneself, as communications to others, as pleasures and as joys and, habit becoming second nature, as happiness; not as ingredients or factors in happiness but as happiness itself.

The three stages of an essay or story or other composition should be always in the teacher's mind and sometimes in the pupil's: they are (1) Invention, or the assembling of possible matter; (2) Arrangement,

> or the selecting from the assembled matter; (3) Expression, or the embodiment of the selected matter. . . . No one will imagine that these are three dissociated processes; but they must take place and can be considered separately.[1]

In all composition, whatever the kind (story, essay, and the like) and whatever the length, the best—indeed, the only sensible—way to go about it is this. Make sure exactly what has to be done; plan clearly how to do it; draw up a formal plan, however brief; then set yourself unhurriedly to carry out that plan.

In examinations, candidates are rightly allowed a (usually wide) choice of subjects. Not everyone can write about castles, nor everyone about the cinema; not everyone about aeoplanes, nor everyone about the Alps; not everyone about the seaside, nor about the town, nor yet the country. But almost everyone can write about one of these themes.

In class, the same practice should be established, although the choice need not be quite so wide. Obviously a composition, whether essay or story or letter, must deal with a subject. Far too often those subjects are too exclusively impractical. Impractical subjects should occasionally be set; more often, practical subjects. By practical I do not mean only or merely utilitarian. To write about a motor-car is ostensibly practical; it may be equally practical to write on 'How I Should Set about Getting a Job' or 'The Value of Books' or 'The Uses of Travel'.

> Composition, says George Sampson,[2] is too rarely applied to the matter of lessons, and . . . too rarely to matter of fact. . . . Explicit answers to clear questions are much the more valuable form of composition in school, if only because they have a meaning . . . that a set theme has not.

If the teacher of English would only find out what the teacher of history or geography or French or physics or . . . is taking, or has recently been taking, with his class, he could set such compositions as these:

> What I should write about if *I* were an historian.
>
> My adventures while I was helping Drake to singe the Spanish beard.
>
> An Englishman's escape from Paris during the French Revolution.
>
> How my friend Tobias became a pirate under the flag of Captain Kidd *or* Henry Morgan *or* any other famous buccaneer.
>
> A day in the life of a lady-in-waiting to (*a*) Queen Elizabeth; (*b*) Queen Anne; (*c*) Queen Victoria ('We are not amused').
>
> A short biography of Maid Marian.
>
> The part played by the steam-engine in history.

[1] George Sampson, *English for the English*, 'A Programme, iv', an enlightening and invaluable chapter on composition in the schools.
[2] Ibid.

Describe a noble's house in the Middle Ages, *or* a peasant's cottage in the eighteenth century, *or* a rich merchant's house in (say) 1850.

Do you agree that 'the bravest Englishwoman of the nineteenth century was Florence Nightingale'?

A short history of flying.

How the British Navy has progressed from Norse galley to Nelson's 'wooden walls'.

If you were a Chinese in the nineteenth century, why would you call the Americans and the British 'foreign devils'?

As an eighteenth century American, tell 'How I fought against the British in the War of Independence'.

'A volcano resembles a hot-tempered man.'

When Columbus reached America, where did he think he was—and why did he think so?

Suez Canal *v.* Panama Canal.

What part has tea played in human life, whence did it come, and how did it reach Europe?

Link the stories of any two of these plants or products: coca, coco, cacao.

If you were wrecked upon a tropical Pacific isle and it were uninhabited, how would you go about keeping starvation at bay?

A trip to the North Pole by air.

A French boy (*or* girl) looks at England.

A German youth studies at Oxford.

A South American Spaniard goes to Spain.

A Roman of Caesar's time wakes up in post-war Italy.

What I find strange and amusing (*funny*, 'odd', and—correctly—*funny*, ha! ha!) in the French—Spanish—German languages.

What would a French—Spanish—German person find funny and 'funny' in the study of English, i.e. in English as a language?

Re-tell the story of any of Jules Verne's Romances. (Remembering that, a Frenchman, he lived 1828–1905.)

Write a short, not too solemn biography of the man you think is the greatest of all Frenchmen—Germans—Spaniards—Romans—Greeks—Americans.

What is the difference between a laboratory chemist and a pharmaceutical chemist?

If you were asked by a young friend whether he should take chemistry or physics, which would you recommend? And your reasons?

'A botanist sees more in fields and woods and hills than a poet can ever see.' Not everybody would agree with this. On whose side are *you*?

It has been said that, of all the sciences, biology is the most fascinating. It's a point of view, don't you think?

In what ways was Faraday *or* Pasteur *or* Curie *or* Edison a great man?

What has science contributed to our comfort?

The discovery of (*a*) gunpowder or (*b*) electricity has changed the course of history.

What, in your opinion, are the chief differences between a scientist and an historian—or, if you prefer, between science and history? (Ignore the fact that history is itself, in part, a science.)

Between a scientist and a painter (of pictures, not houses)?

Between a scientist and a musician?

But why not occasionally allow the pupil to choose a subject for himself, be it for an essay, for a story, for a poem, for a letter? We wish to encourage expression: then why not *encourage* it? Not only in the treatment of fact, whether of the world outside or of the world within the pupil; but also in exercise of the imagination. The teacher's experience, feelings, imagination are not the same as those of the pupils he is supposed to help. To cause the child to wrestle with something difficult is occasionally valuable; to cause him to grapple with something he believes he can do easily or comparatively easily, is certainly not harmful, especially in composition—a subject more difficult than reading, writing, arithmetic, sewing, carpentry. Moreover, encouragement in the expression of the easy, the agreeable, the natural, leads to improvement in the expression of the less easy, the much less agreeable, the—to some extent—unnatural.

If you kill the pupil's confidence in himself by insisting that he write only on obligatory subjects, many of them dull or distasteful, you will destroy or, at the least, impair, the pupil's ability to write upon interesting and agreeable subjects. As George Sampson has so cogently remarked,

> We [teachers] cannot . . . reasonably give a boy a piece of paper and order him to go and create something; but we can reasonably order him to go and record something. Creation is his affair, not ours; but statement, record, reproduction—the mechanical art or craft of writing, that is our affair. Few of our pupils will be called upon to become literary artists; but most of them will have to make statements in writing.

Mr Frank Jones, author of several excellent books on the teaching and learning of English, published in the *Sunday Times* of June 8, 1947, an article on 'The Importance of English', where he made these arresting remarks:

> The teaching of English composition falls at the first fence. It is permeated with a sense of unreality. In ordinary life the writer is a teacher hoping to impart his views to a reader with less knowledge of the subject than himself. In school the reverse is the case. Generally speaking the pupil has not anything to express and, even if he had, his audience (the teacher) would know more about the topic than he. And so too often the teacher falls back on subjects that he fondly hopes will give scope to the child's imagination, and insistence on accuracy is frowned upon as likely to hamper it.
>
> Inconsequent meanderings on 'a chicken's first thoughts on coming out of an egg' may keep a child amused, but they lay a treacherous

foundation for future accuracy in writing. What is wanted at even the earliest stages is a lucid statement of fact. The ability to achieve this may seem too modest an objective, but till it is achieved the rest is nothing but pretentious ornament. The composition should be short enough to allow the meticulous care bestowed upon a Latin prose.

Composition is the art of writing. In schools, however, it tends to mean 'the writing of essays'. Now, George Sampson has justly stated that 'it is toward the story and the play, and not towards the essay or the "composition" that the creative activity of children can be most profitably directed'.

§2. *Story-Writing*

Children delight in the telling of stories, whether in the listening or in the narrating. Once they have acquired enough words and a quite elementary ease in forming sentences from these words, they can—or most of them can—tell a story with a fresh charm and a graphic directness too often lacking in the stories told by their elders.

General rules are few. At least, the practical, useful rules are few. The would-be teller or writer of stories has to remember only these very simple hints:

A story has a beginning, a middle and an end: begin at the beginning, not before it; the middle is the meat of the story; the end comes at the end, not in the middle, for it rounds off the story and concludes it.

Set the scene; come to the point and stick to it; the point made, leave it quickly and cleanly.

Stick to the point: keep on the highway and don't go wandering into odd corners and pretty lanes, however attractive they are. By losing yourself, you lose your audience (listener or reader).

Tell the story as clearly, simply and sincerely as you can.

That delightful writer of fiction, L. A. G. Strong, has in *English for Pleasure*, related his early difficulties in the telling of tales. Having told a certain story, he asks, 'How was the incident . . . built up into a story?' and immediately answers, 'By letting it spread in my mind, as ripples spread over a pond when you drop a stone in. The incident was the stone, and my mind was the pond.'

Continuing, he says, 'The incident was neither the beginning nor the end of the story. . . . In a story you can't have things that just happen, plop, for no reason. What happens must mean something, must belong to the rest of the story, must grow out of the beginnings of the story and lead towards the end.'

'A story reveals to us the sense[1] and the meaning[1] of a part of life. . . .

[1] A teacher will explain the difference between the two terms and why the writer has used both of them. The pupil should also consult a dictionary: but it must be a good one.

We see how a motive grew in someone's heart and led to a deed and its result.'

The famous novelist, short-story writer and broadcaster then tells us something that concerns all story-writers. 'When I began to write short stories, I found it terribly hard to get ideas. I did not realize that I was getting plenty of ideas, but that I could not recognize them as ideas. . . . I saw the stone fall into my mind, but I did not know how to let the ripples spread and [how to] make sense of it.'

He relates an incident he observed as a boy.

> I was on the Sea Wall at Kingstown, as it was then called. It runs along the shore, and, at the place where I was, it was about four feet above the rocks. Two very poor and ragged boys were squabbling a few yards away from me. They were brothers, one three or four years older than the other. The squabble turned into a fight, and the older boy began to beat the younger and make him yell.
>
> Close by were two or three men, smoking and talking. One of them turned round, and saw what was happening. He took his pipe out of his mouth, walked across to the boys, and coolly kicked the bigger boy *off* the edge of the wall, just as you or I might kick a tin or a piece of wood. He then put his pipe in again, and walked back to the others, and went on talking as if nothing had happened.
>
> The next thing was that the small boy ran to him and started screaming and beating with his fists at the back of the man's legs—the highest point he could reach. The three men turned and laughed, and then the bigger boy climbed up. He was crying, and limping, but he was not badly hurt. He cursed the man. The man threatened him, and both boys slowly went away, turning every now and then to yell abuse.

He now shows how his mind worked: how to set about making a story out of what he had seen. As he points out, the incident as he saw it makes almost no sense.

> I had to supply a setting, a background, a series of events of which the incident would be the centre, and which would give it sense and meaning. Had I any other facts to help me? What did small boys do down on the Sea Wall? They fished for little fish, they hunted for crabs and shrimps and prawns. Prawns—like big shrimps: my fisherman friend called them Prongs. Wouldn't that be a good title? The little boy, calling them Prongs, not able to pronounce the proper word, or getting it wrong.
>
> What sort of boys were they? Ragged, poor—they would come from the tumble-down cottages not far from my grandfather's garden. Their father—he might well be one of the drunken, bawling brutes I could sometimes hear kicking up a row there on a Saturday evening.

There, the potentialities! There, too, the beginning. The writer attacks his theme. Thus:—

The two boys were down on the Sea Wall. Dan, the elder, was in charge of little Johnny, with strict orders to bring him home in time for dinner. The very first words of the story are Dan telling Johnny to come on home out of that. But Johnny is busy catching prawns, which he calls prongs. He is squatting over a pool. He has caught five or six, and is stalking the last and biggest in the pool. So he does not want to come.

Danny looks at him angrily. Johnny has no idea of time, is always late, and gets him into trouble. Only the other day Dan got a beating from his father on Johnny's account. So he refuses to wait. He hustles the protesting Johnny off—Johnny hugging his prawns to his bosom.

When they have to climb up on the Wall, Dan catches Johnny's arm to help him up, and makes him drop the prawns in the seaweed. Johnny utters a wail, and goes down to pick them up, but Dan, terrified of being late, yanks him off. Johnny yells blue murder, and throws himself down on the ground. Dan smacks him. Johnny bites Dan. Dan hits him very hard indeed.

Then the incident happens which I saw. The man, one of a group standing close by, kicks Dan off the wall, and is attacked by Johnny.

When Dan climbs back, he threatens the man that he will tell his father.

'Wait till yer get a puck of Jem Foster's fist in yer gob!' he cries. 'Then we'll see what ye'll do!'

Jem Foster! The men look at each other uneasily. Jem Foster is a big tough man, and has a bad reputation, as a bully and a bruiser. A bad man to quarrel with. So they try to conciliate the boys, to make up the quarrel. But the boys, seeing their advantage, follow it up, dancing and yelling their father's name as if it were a battle-cry.

The men have a whip round and offer the boys a sixpence and some coppers. At once the boys' manner changes. But Dan has the pride of the very poor. His father would never let him take a gift of money. So there's a deadlock—until Johnny suddenly startles them by shouting, 'Me prongs! Me prongs!' He jumps off the wall and grovels in the weed to pick them up.

He finds them, and offers to sell them to the men. This will make it all right. They can take the money, if they give something in exchange.

So the man takes the prawns which he doesn't want, and the boys take the money, and promise to say nothing to their father.

It is terribly late when they get home, and their father, without a word, starts to undo his belt. But Johnny forestalls him, giving the money into his hand, and explaining that they stayed to catch the prawns for a man who wanted them. Jem Foster is in two minds—but money is money, and he would like a drink. So, to the tremendous relief of poor Mrs. Foster, who has been terrified that the boys will be beaten again he growls, pockets the money, and goes off to the pub.

Well—that made sense of the incident on the Sea Wall, and yet it did not seem quite complete. It wanted something to finish it off—a quiet end; something to show the real affection between the brothers: so I added this:

After they had eaten, they climbed a little way up the hill, past the tethered goat, to a grassy place between grey rocks, from which they had a wide view of the harbour and the sea—climbing slowly, for Dan's hurts were stiffening, and he hobbled painfully on the slope. They sat

down together, facing the sea, in silence. It was a dead calm, and very clear. The horizon was a dark line drawn between sea and sky, and a ship which had sunk below it left a dark blue smudge of smoke, faint, motionless, incredibly distant.

Presently Johnny moved closer to his brother.

'I'm sorry, Danny,' he whispered. 'Is your hurts painin' ye? I'm sorry.'

Dan did not seem to have heard; he still looked out to sea; but after a few moments his arm moved around Johnny's neck, and he began absentmindedly to stroke his hair. With a sigh of happiness, the little boy snuggled closer, and shut his eyes.

L. A. G. Strong concludes his chapter on story-writing with these instructive words: 'The whole art of writing short stories is to observe and recognize an incident; to remember it; and then to let the ripples spread'.[1]

There is another sort of short story—the imaginative treatment of an imaginary situation or incident. Two very capable exponents of this class of story are H. G. Wells and Neil Bell; as in the former's *In the Days of the Comet* and *The Time Machine and Other Stories*, or in the latter's *Alpha and Omega*.

§3. *Plays*

From the nature of the case, the only sort of play that can be handled by pupils at this stage—or indeed at the next—is the one-act play, which may be defined as a short story cast into dialogue, with effective stage-directions instead of descriptive sentences or paragraphs. Both short story and one-act play 'must keep to one main subject, and go straight on with the business of that subject, never turning aside to talk about something else'.

> The short story and the one-act play are each one movement. A problem of some kind is stated. The characters want, or have, to do something. . . . Once the problem has been explained to reader or audience, the story or play has to get straight on with the business of solving it. There is neither time nor space to turn round and talk about something else as there is in the novel or the full-length play.[2]

My own opinion is that even the one-act play is too difficult a literary form to be handled at all successfully by pupils[3] under the age of sixteen

[1] The earlier of Strong's incidents, together with what he makes of it, is equally revealing and helpful. But it is rather more subtle and mature.

[2] L. A. G. Strong, *English for Pleasure*, ch. xvii. I quote Mr Strong again because he is a dramatist as well as a novelist and short-story writer, whereas I've written no plays and only one novel and one collection of short stories, all of them much inferior to his.

[3] With very few exceptions.

or seventeen and that the short story and the essay, if the teaching be liberal and sympathetic, are much more suitable for pupils under seventeen-or-so. A brilliant teacher, however, may, with an exceptionally good class, be able to render play-writing both entertaining and instructive. To such a teacher and such a class I recommend a close study of ' Stories and Plays ' in Mr Strong's *English for Pleasure*—and frequent practice. There are many books about play-writing, as there are many books about story-writing: but practice is far more valuable than theory, once the pupil has assimilated a few simple rules.

§4. *Essay-Writing*

Something has already[1] been said about the writing of essays. But several special and several general points remain.

Many pupils are vague on the most important matter of all: what an essay *is*. Mr L. A. G. Strong has defined it as ' a go-as-you-please, so arranged as to please other people '. All writing is—or should be—' to please other people '; the point is that in an essay, the aim is pleasure, not instruction. So also in fiction. An essay, however, does not tell a story: it sets forth the essayist's point of view upon one self-contained subject.

As so often, *Webster's New International Dictionary* supplies us with a very sound definition: ' A literary composition, analytical or interpretative in nature, dealing with its subject from a more or less limited or personal standpoint and permitting a considerable freedom of style and method . . . Commonly essays are brief, suitable for reading at one sitting.' Then, to paraphrase Webster: An essay does not have to be systematic; its theme may be developed without formal argument; and it treats, not the entirety but a single aspect of the subject.

In any and every kind of writing, whether it is a letter or a story, a poem or an essay, one's first aim—for one's own sake, and others'—is to be clear, not only in every single sentence but also in the way one puts together the whole letter, story, poem or essay. Only thus can we be understood—hence enjoyed.

As in every other kind of writing, a mere series of statements is insufficient. The statements must come in a natural, sensible order: you have a theme; you develop it; you develop it in its logical, i.e. in its natural and sensible order. Every topic within the main subject will be treated decently and respectfully (but not solemnly); it will receive a paragraph[2] to itself. From what has been said, it is evident that if paragraphs come in their

[1] Section I of this chapter.

[2] A paragraph is indicated by beginning the first word a little further in from the margin than the rest of the words beginning the written or printed lines. The word comes from Greek *paragraphos*, which literally means ' (a letter or a word) written to the side '.

natural order, you will easily make them follow one another smoothly. Your handling of the subject will show you how to smooth the transition from one paragraph to the next.

You can either plunge straight into your subject (*in medias res*, ' into the midst of things ', as Horace phrased it) or lead up to it. If you choose the latter way, do it briefly: and don't lead the unsuspecting reader up the garden path. Don't open with some generality that has little or no bearing upon your particular subject, especially with some generality so wide that it embraces so much that there is no point in mentioning it at all. Unless you find a striking link, as in:

> All men are human. Dickens was very human. That is why he inspires affection rather than respect.

Dickens succeeded partly because his manner, like Lamb's, was intimate. That is what you should aim to be in your essays. It is *you* who are writing: and you are expected to be personal: you are expected to express, not what your parents think, nor what your teacher thinks, nor what I think, nor what some other writer thinks, but what you yourself think; what you think, hope, feel. More briefly: be sincere.

But being a ' decent chap ' or ' swell guy ' or good fellow, or an equally nice girl, you will make things easy and pleasant for your readers. Your handwriting, your spelling, your grammar will be as good as you can make them. You won't stand your subject on its head; you won't get the stages of your progress into the wrong order—for instance, you won't put into the second paragraph what should be in the third; you begin at the beginning, proceed through the middle (the theme proper), and allow the essay to have an ending. You leave the house of your mind and open the gate: the opening paragraph. You then walk along the road and go, not too dilatorily, to wherever it is you wish to go, but perhaps with an occasional glance at the sky, the view, the people you encounter; and you conclude your walk, not somewhere right off the map, but either at your friend's house or back at home.

Essays are not the easiest things in the world to write, nor are they so difficult that you cannot write a good one. You may not succeed at first. But as part of the fun—the pleasure and the happiness—of life derives from the overcoming of difficulties, so too with essays. *Be* yourself: write *yourself*: but write yourself *tidily*.

Perhaps it will help if you remember that an essay may be very serious or even argumentative; it may be fanciful or even imaginative; it may be sad or happy; it may be funny—even fanciful; it may blend grave with gay. Also it may be relentlessly literal or amusingly ironical, or it may mix irony with literalness. It may be as short as you like or as long as your reader will stand. Always it will be *you*, for the essay is the most personal of all literary compositions—except perhaps autobiography.

If you ask, Who are the best English essayists, it is easy to answer. But

not all of them would be suitable to you at this stage. I shall therefore name two that you can read with pleasure and re-read with profit. Leigh Hunt and Robert Lynd. Some of the latter's essays, appearing in books published especially for schools, are easily accessible. I shall quote a very famous essay by Leigh Hunt (1784–1859).

On Getting Up On Cold Mornings

An Italian author—Giulio Cordara, a Jesuit—has written a poem upon insects, which he begins by insisting, that those troublesome and abominable little animals were created for our annoyance, and that they were certainly not inhabitants of Paradise. We of the north may dispute this piece of theology; but on the other hand, it is as clear as the snow on the house-tops, that Adam was not under the necessity of shaving; and that when Eve walked out of her delicious bower, she did not step upon ice three inches thick.

Some people say it is a very easy thing to get up of a cold morning. You have only, they tell you, to take the resolution; and the thing is done. This may be very true; just as a boy at school has only to take a flogging, and the thing is over. But we have not at all made up our minds upon it; and we find it a very pleasant exercise to discuss the matter, candidly, before we get up. This, at least, is not idling, though it may be lying. It affords an excellent answer to those who ask how lying in bed can be indulged in by a reasoning being,—a rational creature. How? Why, with the argument calmly at work in one's head, and the clothes over one's shoulder. Oh—it is a fine way of spending a sensible, impartial half-hour.

If these people would be more charitable they would get on with their argument better. But they are apt to reason so ill, and to assert so dogmatically, that one could wish to have them stand round one's bed, of a bitter morning, and *lie* before their faces. They ought to hear both sides of the bed, the inside and out. If they cannot entertain themselves with their own thoughts for half-an-hour or so, it is not the fault of those who can.

Candid inquiries into one's decumbency, besides the greater or less privileges to be allowed a man in proportion to his ability of keeping early hours, the work given his faculties, etc., will at least concede their due merits to such representations as the following. In the first place, says the injured but calm appealer, I have been warm all night, and find my system in a state perfectly suitable to a warm-blooded animal. To get out of this state into the cold, besides the inharmonious and uncritical abruptness of the transition, is so unnatural to such a creature, that the poets, refining upon the tortures of the damned, make one of their greatest agonies consist in being suddenly transported from heat to cold,—from fire to ice. They are ' haled ' out of their ' beds,' says Milton, by ' harpy-footed furies,'—fellows who come to call them. On my first movement towards the anticipation of getting up I find that such parts of the sheets and

bolster as are exposed to the air of the room are stone-cold. On opening my eyes, the first thing that meets them is my own breath rolling forth, as if in the open air, like smoke out of a chimney. Think of this symptom. Then I turn my eyes sideways and see the window all frozen over. Think of that. Then the servant comes in. 'It is very cold this morning, is it not?'—'Very cold, sir.'—'Very cold indeed, isn't it?'—'Very cold indeed, sir.'—'More than usually so, isn't it, even for this weather?' (Here the servant's wit and good-nature are put to a considerable test, and the inquirer lies on thorns for the answer.) 'Why, sir . . . I think it *is*.' (Good creature! There is not a better or more truth-telling servant going.) 'I must rise, however—get me some warm water.'—Here comes a fine interval between the departure of the servant and the arrival of the hot water; during which, of course, it is of 'no use' to get up. The hot water comes. 'Is it quite hot?'—'Yes, sir.'—'Perhaps too hot for shaving; I must wait a little?'—'No, sir; it will just do.' (There is an over-nice propriety sometimes, an officious zeal of virtue, a little troublesome.) 'Oh—the shirt—you must air my clean shirt;—linen gets very damp this weather.'—'Yes, sir.' Here another delicious five minutes. A knock at the door. 'Oh, the shirt—very well. My stockings—I think the stockings had better be aired too.'—'Very well, sir.' Here another interval. At length everything is ready, except myself. I now, continues our incumbent (a happy word, by-the-by, for a country vicar)—I now cannot help thinking a good deal—who can?—upon the unnecessary and villainous custom of shaving: it is a thing so unmanly (here I nestle closer) —so effeminate (here I recoil from an unlucky step into the colder part of the bed).—No wonder that the Queen of France took part with the rebels against that degenerate king, her husband, who first affronted her smooth visage with a face like her own. The Emperor Julian never showed the luxuriancy of his genius to better advantage than in reviving the flowing beard. Look at Cardinal Bembo's picture—at Michael Angelo's—at Titian's—at Shakespeare's—at Fletcher's—at Spenser's—at Chaucer's—at Alfred's—at Plato's—I could name a great man for every tick of my watch.—Look at the Turks, a grave and otiose people.—Think of Haroun Al Raschid and bed-ridden Hassan.—Think of Wortley Montague, the worthy son of his mother, above the prejudice of his time.—Look at the Persian gentlemen, whom one is ashamed of meeting about the suburbs, their dress and appearance are so much finer than our own.—Lastly, think of the razor itself—how totally opposed to every sensation of bed—how cold, how edgy, how hard! how utterly different from anything like the warm and circling amplitude, which

Sweetly recommends itself
Unto our gentle senses.

Add to this, benumbed fingers, which may help you to cut yourself, a quivering body, a frozen towel, and a ewer full of ice; and he that says

there is nothing to oppose in all this, only shows that he has no merit in opposing it.

Thomson the poet, who exclaims in his *Seasons*—

Falsely luxurious! Will not man awake?

used to lie in bed till noon, because he said he had no motive in getting up. He could imagine the good of rising; but then he could also imagine the good of lying still; and his exclamation, it must be allowed, was made upon summer-time, not winter. We must proportion the argument to the individual character. A money-getter may be drawn out of his bed by three or four pence; but this will not suffice for a student. A proud man may say, 'What shall I think of myself, if I don't get up?' but the more humble one will be content to waive this prodigious notion of himself, out of respect to his kindly bed. The mechanical man shall get up without any ado at all; and so shall the barometer. An ingenious lier in bed will find hard matter of discussion even on the score of health and longevity. He will ask us for our proofs and precedents of the ill effects of lying later in cold weather; and sophisticate much on the advantages of an even temperature of body; of the natural propensity (pretty universal) to have one's way; and of the animals that roll themselves up and sleep all the winter. As to longevity, he will ask whether the longest is of necessity the best; and whether Holborn is the handsomest street in London.

. . . . .

You will have noticed the very personal note in that essay. The note recurs in such an essay as this by Wilson Benington, who died in 1942.

The 'Jupiter' Symphony

The elderly Englishman sitting next to me in that crowded place had just given his order, and, producing a huge cigar-case, most unexpectedly thrust it at me, muttering in a rich, hoarse voice: 'Have a cigar. Have one. Belgian, of course. Cost nothing, nothing at all. Not bad. Couldn't smoke 'em at home though. H'm, that's funny too.' Then, having taken time to light his own, he waved the silver case, with a gesture which included the low-vaulted ceiling and walls grotesquely painted with imps and gnomes, red-capped, white-bearded little fellows astride of beer-casks and quaffing from mugs as big as themselves. 'What do you come here for? *I* come for the best beer in Brussels. Another reason; no music. No music but *that*,' and he clicked the metal lid on the stone mug.

There seemed to be no cause for me to interrupt this monologue, and I liked his voice.

'No music,' he went on musingly. 'Yet I like music, none better. Right time, right place, right music. H'm. I had an experience once with music; curious, very curious; must have been unique.' He turned his puckered face full on me. 'Unique, sir, *yoo-neek*.'

He dipped to the flagon and wiped his mouth after the draught. 'Tell me,' I said.

'Listen,' said he. 'It was at Spa, oh, many years ago, many, many. You know Spa? I stayed at the Chaîne d'Or; eight francs a day in those days, and *that* wasn't cheap. Every morning I had to toddle along those woodland walks; just suited me, I was never strong on my pins. Could take a seat when I liked, shelter when it rained; it often rained. Yes, it often rained, and that brings me to the music. There was music every afternoon. They played under glass, a sort of greenhouse in a garden. Too showery for outdoor music. Under glass. Every afternoon there was I. Same seat every day, middle of the third row. Sometimes there was a good audience, sometimes precious few, just according to how visitors came and went, how the weather looked, and so on. Queer thing; I didn't notice it at first, but after a week or so it struck me that they never played German music. Long before the war, you know; years. All French and Belgian composers; their names were strange to me, most of 'em, but I've heard of some of them since, Debussy, César Franck. Not that I know anything about music!—And now and then they threw in a bit of Italian operatic stuff, but German—only once or twice. The conductor was a solemn young fellow, took it all mighty seriously. He got to know me quite well by sight. It would have been a shock to him not to see me in my place. He used to give me a grave kind of smile all to myself, and a little bow like this.—Garçon, deux demies. Another cigar? No?—Best beer in Brussels and, thank God, no music.

'One day, a fine day, it was, I remember, and perhaps that had something to do with it, I went down as usual to the greenhouse and took my seat. Often there was hardly any one there at the beginning, but they dribbled in. That day, as I presently discovered, there wasn't a soul but myself. Then I recollected hearing something about a local festivity of some sort at the other end of the town; meant nothing to me. Concert announced as usual; music for me. I sat still and waited. The players—it was an orchestra of about twenty—came in, and some of them tuned their strings in a half-hearted sort of way, talking to each other in whispers. Two-thirty. Time to begin. Where's the conductor? I rapped on the floor with my stick. Always carry a stout stick; not very strong on my pins, you know. There he was, peering in with a face so solemn it nearly made me laugh. When he heard the rapping he disappeared. Next thing, the woman from the ticket-desk came bustling up and said, "We think the concert will have to be postponed today, Monsieur." "Postponed!" says I; "no fear!" or words to that effect. At that I picked up my programme, hadn't looked at it before; and what do you think was the first item? A *Mozart Symphony*: the Jupiter. Ever heard it? Yes?—The woman was saying, "The people have all gone to the fair. It's a counter attraction." "Counter attraction be damned!" says I; "I've paid to hear the concert." "But we will refund Monsieur the money," says she. "I don't want the money, I want the music." I shouted at the woman; I

believe she was deaf. But she trotted off and shut the greenhouse door. Three or four of the players had their heads together in a consultation, and then the first fiddle stood up and beckoned to the other door where I had seen the conductor. Then all of a sudden he marched in with his head in the air, looking more solemn than ever I saw a man before, even at a funeral. The men got to their places, he got to his, turned round once and gave me a bow, tapped his desk—and they played. Ever heard the Third Symphony? Yes, you said you had. I thought of my first sight of the sea. I thought of my first glimpse of the snow alps. I thought of Johnny Keats dipping into Chapman's *Homer*. Silent upon a peak in Darien; eh, what? Good beer, good beer! Glad there's no music. Where's my stick? Never very strong on my pins. Good night.'

'So that was that,' I said to myself, or words to that effect.

. . . . .

Not all essays are so personal as Leigh Hunt's and Wilson Benington's. Francis Bacon's short, pithy essays are didactic—that is, they aim to warn or advise or teach. Certain subjects call for a less personal treatment than others, it is true; yet the 'degree of personalness' depends, in the main, upon the writer.

EXERCISES

WRITE AN ESSAY ON:—

1. How do you wish to earn your living? Why this choice?
2. Supposing you say what you yourself think of early rising on cold winter mornings? You may be lucky enough to have to imagine the situation
3. How would you—or how do you—like living in a hot climate?
4. Which do you find the harder to write: an essay or a short story?
5. A day in the life of
   - (*a*) a lumberman in Canada
   - (*b*) a station hand on a sheep run in Australia
   - (*c*) the manager of an ostrich farm in South Africa
   - (*d*) a dance-band leader in the U.S.A.
   - (*e*) a docker at Halifax, Nova Scotia
   - (*f*) a Newfoundland fisherman
   - (*g*) a film-star (male) at Hollywood
   - (*h*) a „ „ (female)„ „
   - (*i*) a motor-mechanic anywhere
   - (*j*) a schoolteacher
   - (*k*) a farmer in New Zealand
   - (*l*) a farm-labourer in England or Wales
   - (*m*) a gillie during the shooting season in Scotland
   - (*n*) a policeman in Northern Ireland
   - (*o*) a politician in Eire
   - (*p*) a dustman in London (England, or Canada, or South Africa)
   - (*q*) a newspaper reporter in New York
   - (*r*) a newspaper editor anywhere

(*s*) a pilot on a civil air-line
(*t*) an aircraft navigator on a bomber in war time
(*u*) an Able Seaman on a destroyer doing convoy duty any time in 1939–1945
(*v*) a convict at San Quentin or Sing Sing—or at Dartmoor
(*w*) the head librarian in your town or city public library
(*x*) a motor-bus driver in Great Britain
(*y*) a cinema attendant (usherette) anywhere in the wide world
(*z*) an agricultural worker in India or Pakistan
(a^1) a clerk at Aden
(b^1) a merchant in Bombay or Calcutta
(c^1) a tea-planter in Ceylon
(d^1) a Civil Servant in Fiji
(e^1) a mountain climber on the Alps or the Himalayas
(f^1) a professional cricketer
footballer (Association)
baseballer
lawn-tennis player
(g^1) an A.R.P. (air-raid precautions) warden at any time during 1939–1945: 24 hours
(h^1) an ack-ack (anti-aircraft) gunner on Malta in 1941 or 1942
(i^1) an infantryman at Alamein
(j^1) an English cavalryman at Waterloo
(k^1) a ship's captain at Trafalgar
(l^1) a fruit-grower in California during the picking
(m^1) a cattleman in Texas
(n^1) a gold-digger in California or Australia in the 1850's
(o^1) an oil man—one of the hands—in the U.S.A.
(p^1) a nurse in a hospital
(q^1) a bull-fighter in Madrid
(r^1) an ice-cream man in Naples
(s^1) a taxi-driver in Paris
(t^1) a schoolgirl or schoolboy anywhere
(u^1) a cook in a (boys' or girls') boarding school

6. Two days adrift in an open ship's-boat in the Atlantic in mid-winter
7. The adventures of a half-crown piece
8. A dog's life at a dog-show
9. A horse's life on a station in South Africa *or* New Zealand *or* Australia
10. Wheat harvesting in Canada
11. The career of a private detective in the United States
12. The story of coffee
13. My ideal day during the summer school-holidays
14. My favourite subject at school—and *why*
15. How I should *like* to be taught
    (*a*) arithmetic
    (*b*) chemistry
    (*c*) geography
    (*d*) history
    (*e*) English
    (*f*) French (or German)
16. My favourite (cinematographic) film: its story and its merits
17. The school-story I like the best

18. How *I* should write
    (*a*) a school-story
    (*b*) an animal story
    (*c*) an adventure story
    (*d*) a funny story
19. I get lost in London—or, as it might be, Manchester or Glasgow or Belfast or San Francisco or Chicago or Toronto or Sydney or Madras
20. The life of a big-game hunter
21. I fly to the South Pole
22. How does one make (*not* write) a book?
23. The charm of woods or the forest
24. Sea bathing *or* river bathing *or* lake bathing
25. If I were President of the United States, *or* the King of England, what should I do to benefit my country?
26. I go shopping on a busy day
27. Stamp-collecting
28. The fun of cooking a meal
29. A visit to the moon
30. A voyage up the Amazon
31. Which country do I wish to live in?
32. The historical character I admire the most is ——, because (s)he was . . .
33. My favourite character *either* in Shakespeare *or* in fiction
34. If I were granted three wishes, what would they be?
35. ' Character is destiny ' (fate). That may, at first, seem too difficult a subject. I doubt it
36. ' Life is what we make it '
37. The most enjoyable match you have ever played at rounders *or* baseball *or* hockey *or* lawn tennis *or* Rugby football *or* Association football *or* American football *or* Australian football *or* cricket
38. An explorer's adventures in Central Africa in the mid-nineteenth century *or* in Australia in the late eighteenth *or* in India in the Middle Ages *or* in the United States in the early nineteenth century
39. Columbus goes West
40. A sea-captain voyages from Phoenicia to Cornwall for tin
41. Your favourite composer of music
42. What you most like listening-in to on the B.B.C. (or any other) radio programme
43. What do you hope to find in a boys', or in a girls', magazine?
44. Is it better to be as silly as one looks or to look as silly as one is?
45. What do you think of terminal examinations?
46. ' Scientific research is exciting '
47. Why I should (*or* should not) enjoy being a ticket collector on a train
48. Cats—dogs. Which do you prefer, and why do you prefer them?
49. Why I collect
    (*a*) picture postcards, *or*

(*b*) match-box labels, *or*
(*c*) sea-shells, *or*
(*d*) autographs

50. —— is the poem I like best, because . . .
51. If you had to travel to India or South Africa or Australia or some other distant country, would you go by air or by sea?
52. Describe *either* a circus *or* a Punch and Judy show
53. ' The happiest day of my life '
54. The joys and advantages of being a nephew—or a niece
55. What is your opinion of Leigh Hunt's essay on getting up on cold mornings?
56. ' I dislike essays . . . or *do* I? '—with reference to either reading or writing them
57. Relate a fight between a band of Red Indians and a caravan going West as if you were one of the party of land-seekers
58. Nursery rhymes
59. Fairy tales
60. *Robinson Crusoe* or *The Swiss Family Robinson*
61. *King Solomon's Mines* or *Treasure Island*
62. *Alice in Wonderland* or *Alice through the Looking-Glass*
63. *The Thirty-Nine Steps* or *Greenmantle*
64. A visit to a pantomime *or* a circus
65. A narrow escape from a shark *or* an octopus
66. ' Once upon a time I was on a runaway train. It happened like this . . .'
67. ' The first time I tried to prepare and cook a meal, everything went wrong '
68. ' The first film I saw was ——. I liked (*or* disliked) it, because . .
69. ' My first sea-voyage '
70. How to be happy though a school-boy (-girl)
71. An afternoon at the fair
72. ' This is how *I* learned to ride a horse *or* a bicycle. At first . . .'
73. Play-acting
74. ' Now, *my* idea of the way to spend a mid-term holiday is this . . .'
75. ' I am very fond of looking at paintings and statues (*or* listening to music), because . . .'
76. Which would you rather, or go fishing?

HOW TO WRITE A LETTER

AT school we have to write essays; at the office we have to write business communications, which, as we are polite, we call letters; socially we have to write invitations, acceptances, refusals, condolences, and so forth, some of them so formal that to speak of them as letters seems to be almost to commit a misnomer. All of us have to write letters of some kind or other at least half a dozen times in the course of our lives, and some of us rather more often.

First, letters of social politeness. If to friends, they will hardly differ from an ordinary letter. Let us, however, confine ourselves to formal letters. If you receive an invitation, or sympathy, in the third person, acknowledge it in the third person. Having received:

Mr and Mrs X. Z. Smith
invite[1] Mr and Mrs Y. Z. Jones
to an evening at their residence[2]
on Thursday, September 26, 1950.

R.S.V.P. to — 9–11 p.m.
'The Minories'
Jackman's Road,
Ealing

You will reply:

Mr and Mrs Y. Z. Jones
have pleasure in accepting the kind invitation of
Mr and Mrs X. Z. Smith
to an evening at their residence
on Thursday, September 26, 1950

17 Billyn Avenue, — [*with or without date*]
Ealing

Remember: the note has to be kept in the third person throughout. Don't start with 'they', 'theirs', etc., and then go on to 'you,' 'yours'.

Luckily business letters do not require the use of the third person, for most of them are bad enough as it is. Avoid *favour* for 'letter', *be in receipt of* for 'have received' (as in 'I am in receipt of your favour'), *your good selves* for 'you'; *of even date*[3] for 'today' or 'of today' (for

[1] Or 'request the pleasure of the company of'; usual, but wordy and clumsy.
[2] Or 'flat' or 'apartments'.
[3] *ult.* 'last month'; *inst.* 'this month'; *prox.* 'next month' are less objectionable.

instance, ' your favour of even date '—your letter of today); for *I beg*—or, *hereby beg—to remind you that . . .*, write ' I remind you that . . .' or, more politely, ' may I remind you that . . .'; avoid *per* for ' by ', as in ' per messenger '; and have nothing to do with *same*, for ' it ' or ' that ', as in ' Thank you for the specimen copy. We received same on the 31st ult.' Such examples of what *not* to do are called ' jargon ' or ' commercial English ' or ' commercialese '.

You begin a business letter with ' Dear Sir ' or ' Dear Madam '. If the plural is required, note that the masculine is ' Dear Sirs ' (employable also when you are in doubt) but the feminine is ' Mesdames '; ' Gentlemen ' is an occasional variant of ' Dear Sirs '. You end a business letter with ' Yours faithfully ', which—if you know the firm slightly—you may, if you wish, vary to ' Yours truly '.

A letter to a newspaper usually begins rather with ' Sir ' than with ' Dear Sir ' and it ends usually with ' Your, etc.', the more polite of us preferring ' Yours faithfully '.

In a business letter (or in any other), you put your own address in the top right-hand corner and the date immediately under it. Nowadays, the address of the person or firm to whom or which you are writing is usually put at the end of the letter, to the left-hand side and lower than one's name. If, for convenience, you prefer to place the recipient's address at the beginning of the letter, it comes under your own and on the left-hand side; to avoid confusion, preface the addressee's name, etc., with 'To: ' or ' *To* ', preferably in the line next above that address.

A business letter should be to the point: never wander from that point, and make it as brief as possible without falling into the sort of language you'd employ in a telegram. Be polite, but never obsequious. If it is a long letter, paragraph it adequately—a paragraph for each ' head ' or topic. Try to avoid bad grammar and illegible handwriting or typing. Above all, be as clear as you can. An ungrammatical, rambling, ambiguous, badly written or badly typed letter can hardly be construed as a compliment to the recipient.

A few words about the date. There is no need for ' the 1st of January 1949 '. Better: 1st January 1949. Permissibly: 1st Jan. 1949. A comma may be inserted after the name of the month, but it is not necessary. By putting the day before the month and by using the name of the month (abbreviations, *Feb.*, *Mar.*, *Ap(r).*, *Aug.*, *Sept.*, *Oct.*, *Nov.*, *Dec.*), you separate one set of figures from the other, as in ' 11th Feb. 1950 '. If you place the month first, you have to introduce a comma: Feb. 11th, 1950. You may, if you wish, write 11 Feb. 1950, but this is not usual. By the way, ' Feb. 11, 1950 ' is to be discouraged: written thus, the date is less legible. Do not write ' '50 ' for ' 1950 ' in ' 11th (or 11) Feb. (or February) '50 ' or ' Feb. 11th, '50 ': it not only looks odd but is, especially in the latter, confusing. It is not a sin to write ' 11—ii—'50 ', although ' 11—ii—1950 ' is clearer. Use Roman, not Arabic numerals for the month; ' 21-i-1949 ', not ' 21-1-1949 ', the reason being that whereas Britons,

indicating (say) the 10th February 1952 by numerals, might write '10–2–1952', Americans would write '2–10–1952' (or '2/10/1952'): '10–2–1952' (or '10/2/1952') could be ambiguous, '10–ii–1952' is clear.

Here is a specimen business letter.

999 Chancery Lane
London, W.C.2.
10th Feb. 1952.

Dear Sir,

Thank you for your letter of yesterday. The order[1] for a set of *The Encyclopaedia Domestica* will be fulfilled[2] immediately copies arrive from the binders. We expect them either late this month or early in March.

The cost is £4 10*s* 0*d*; postage is 5*s*. extra.

Yours faithfully[3]
The X. Y. Z. Publishing Company.

A.B.C., Esq.
4000 Winding Lane,
High Hoping.

If you are replying to a letter from a business firm, a bank, solicitors, and so forth, it is advisable to repeat the reference number and, if one has been used, the subject heading, Thus:

Dear Sirs,

Will of the late Alured Yegg

In reply to your GW/AY d/d[4] 21. xii. 1948, I confirm, etc., etc. etc. . . .

If you are applying for a position, say what you have to say, AND NO MORE. Say it politely, clearly, concisely. Put your cards on the table, by all means. But don't strew them about the room. If there is something else you would particularly like to say, reserve it for the interview—and then say it only if an opportunity occurs.

Whether the letter be commercial, social, or ordinary, remember that it is better to be a foot too formal than an inch too familiar.

[1] Avoid 'esteemed order': you have thanked the man for his order. No need to send him a bouquet as well as thanks.

[2] Often 'attended to', even though it is rather vague.

[3] More formally: We are, Sir, Yours faithfully *or:* We are, Sir, Yours faithfully

[4] Abbreviation for 'dated'.

Most letters between individuals are private letters, where *private* does not mean ' intimate ' but merely ' not public '. Here, letter-writing can become a pleasure instead of being only a duty or a courtesy. (Not that duty and courtesy cannot be a pleasure!)

Letter-writing can also be, as before the arrival of the typewriter and the telegram it usually was, an art. Too often it is a disgrace. But if you cannot achieve artistry—so few of us do—you can at least be natural. Indeed, naturalness is, here, more important than art. But to be natural is not the same thing as being uncouth. You don't go to church in clothes a tramp would spurn: to a friend, a relative, you write with some regard for his eyesight, his feelings, his intelligence. So, too, if you are writing to a friendly acquaintance.

To an acquaintance, you will write ' Dear Mr Jones ' or ' Dear Miss Smith ' and ' Yours truly ' or ' Yours very truly ' or—if a friendly acquaintance—' Yours sincerely '; to an intimate friend, ' Dear Bill ' or ' My dear Bill ' and ' Yours sincerely ' or ' Yours very sincerely ' or some such variation as ' Yours ever ' or ' Ever yours ' or ' As ever ' or whatever your fancy suggests; to a relative ' Dear ' or ' My dear So-and-So ' and ' Yours affectionately ' or, if you love the relative, ' Yours very affectionately ' or ' Yours lovingly '.

Oh! about addresses. To a business firm, the style is ' Messrs '—for instance, ' Messrs J. & E. Jones, Ltd '; to a newspaper, ' The Editor, *The Daily Sun* '.

With an individual you have to be more careful: to a minister of religion a letter is addressed ' The Rev. James Smith '; to a physician,[1] ' Dr James Smith ' or ' Doctor Edith Smith '; to a member of Parliament, ' James Smith, Esq.,[2] M.P.'; to the ordinary man of some standing in the world, ' James Smith, Esq.';[2] to a tradesman, labourer, mechanic, ' Mr James Smith ';[3] a married woman is ' Mrs James Smith ' or, if a widow, ' Mrs Edith Smith ' or ' Mrs James Smith ' as she prefers; a young girl, a girl, an unmarried woman—all are ' Miss Jane Smith '; but a boy (1–15 years inclusive) is ' Master George Smith ', a youth (16–20 years) is ' Mr George Smith '. Titles are not a subject for a Course in English, yet they are something you should know: therefore ask those patient, well-informed persons who teach you. But it is worth noting that most men and women, if they are entitled to ' letters after their names ', like you—in business communications—to add them to the address, thus ' James Smith, Esq., M.A.'

But to return to private letters.

Even to friends and relatives you are paying a poor compliment if you fail to divide your letter into as many paragraphs as there are topics or subjects—or if you fail to write legibly and, in style, clearly—or if you

[1] Surgeons prefer ' Mr ' in address and ' Esq.' in an address.

[2] ' Esqre.' is, by many, held to be a shade more polite.

[3] For the niceties of ' Esq.' and ' Mr ', you must ask your teacher: that's what teachers are for!

show you think he or, worse, she is an idiot by ending, ' This is all for now ' or ' No more at present. Must catch the post ' or some equally fatuous tag. All letters have to come to an end some time: that is understood. Say what you have to say and don't be a hypocrite.

Postscripts (*P.S.*) are all very well in private letters, but avoid them in business letters, for they tend to suggest that you haven't thought out what you had to say—a failure that is the reverse of complimentary to the recipient.

Don't overdo that underlining of words which serves to emphasize what you have to say. In a business letter avoid it altogether. Usually it's a lazy person's way of emphasizing things; and when you do it because you think the recipient will not otherwise understand what you're saying, you might just as well add, ' I know you're a stupid ass and need to have everything made clear '—that is, when you're not confessing ' I don't know how I can otherwise explain myself, I write so badly, and I write ambiguously because I think hazily '. Either alternative is rather unsatisfactory, don't you feel?

Now let us take a letter as it should not be written and then the corresponding letter in one of the ways in which it might fittingly be written.

From a boy of twelve to a man he has recently met at the seaside—a gentleman who has been very kind and friendly and has expressed the wish that they should not lose touch.

26th August 1952.
' The Willows '
Willow Road,
Willowville,
Wilt.

Mr Jack Robinson.

My dear Mr Robinson, It is three weeks since I have returned to my domicile and at first I was sorry to be back home but I soon settled down again for I have had many amusing things to do because I am still on holiday of course. I have often thought of the fortnight I had at the seaside and the many kind things you did for me. Do you remember the day we went gathering shells and seaweeds and how badly they smelled the next day but of course you don't because you were not there to smell them as I took them to my boarding house and your boarding house was half a mile away. Well I am glad to be back and I hope that you are too though I suppose you are busy at your office. Well I hope that I shall see you again next year at the seaside and you will buy me ice-creams again. They were so good weren't they. Hoping you are well believe me your old friend,

Yours faithfully.
Jim Smith.

The letter would read better in some such form as this:

'The Willows'
Willow Road
Willowville
Wilts.
26th August 1952

Dear Mr Robinson,

It is nearly three weeks since I returned home.

At first I was sorry to be back; but I soon settled down, for I have had many amusing things to do. I am, of course, still on vacation from school.

I have often thought of the fortnight I had at the seaside and of your many kindnesses to me there. Do you remember the day we went gathering shells and seaweed and how badly the latter smelled[1] the next day? But how silly of me! You cannot remember, because you were not there to smell it, your boarding-house being half a mile distant from mine.

Yes, after all, I am glad to be back at home. I hope that you are glad too, even though you must be busy at your office. I feel sorry that you should be working while I'm playing.

I hope to see you next year at the seaside and to be able to enjoy your company again. But you must let me buy you an ice-cream next time. Those we had were very good, weren't they? Thank you, Mr Robinson.

Hoping that you are well,

Yours sincerely,

Jim Smith.

Compare those two letters very carefully. The second is not a model letter, but at least it avoids the mistakes of the other. You yourselves could write a much better one than the former and probably a livelier one —certainly a fresher, more natural one—than the latter.

In case you have failed to spot all the mistakes and misfortunes of the uncorrected letter, here they are—in the order of their appearance.

Date in wrong position.

'Wilts' not 'Wilt' is the short form of 'Wiltshire'.

The heading 'Mr Jack Robinson' is not needed in an informal letter. Presumably his given name is 'John', so it should have been 'John'; and as he is a Gentleman, 'John Robinson, Esq.' would have been more fitting if that sort of heading had been necessary.

Not 'My dear Mr Robinson' but 'Dear Mr Robinson', the former coming oddly from a boy of twelve.

The beginning of a letter, the salutation or greeting, should occupy a line by itself.

[1] Or 'smelt'.

' It is three weeks since I have returned ' should be ' It is three weeks since I returned '. You will see why when, in a year or two, you reach a stage at which you can profitably learn about the sequence of tenses.

' Domicile ' is journalese, or legal; ' home ' is the right, the simple word.

The first sentence lacks punctuation. Also it rambles.

' On holiday ' is ambiguous. At the seaside Jim Smith was on holiday; at home he was *on vacation.*

' Seaweed ' is more usual than ' seaweeds ' when you are speaking collectively and generally. In ' they smelled ', ' they ' is ambiguous. Presumably there was nothing offensive about the shells; if the writer had just ' seaweed ', the pronoun would be *it* and all ambiguity removed, but, because *it* is weak, you had better put ' the latter '.

Do not repeat ' of course ', which is, at the best, to be used with caution.

There was no occasion for Jim to repeat the statement about being glad to be back at home.

The third sentence, like the second, is as deficient in punctuation as the first had been.

' Well I am glad ' . . . ' Well, I hope ': after ' well ' a comma is required, commonsense insists upon it; and the ' well, I this ', ' well, I that ' and ' well, I the other ' form can very easily be overdone. If you were listening to it, you would want to drown him in it.

No well-brought-up boy or girl would dream of suggesting that, ice-creams having once been generously bestowed they should be bestowed next year too.

The ending is both clumsy and wrong: towards a friend, ' Yours faithfully ' is absurd; the two are not old but new friends; ' Hoping you are well, believe me ' is a hopeless confusion of the thoughts in ' Hoping you are well, I am, believe me, yours sincerely . . .'. But ' Hoping you are well, I am, believe me, yours sincerely ' is ludicrously formal for a young man of twelve. It would be much bettter to rewrite it either as I have done in the amended letter or as, in the more elaborate and rather too formal alternative,

Hoping that you are well,
I am
Yours sincerely,
Jim Smith—

of which the form I preferred is merely a shortening.

Jim wouldn't have gone to Mr Robinson's boarding-house with his laces undone, yet here he has neglected to lace his sentences. Like the brook, Jim babbles, though not for long. He could—he should—have added a paragraph:

My parents have asked me to send you their kind regards and to thank you, on their behalf, for all your kindness.

To a friend or a relative, you should write as you talk—when you are talking well; or as you think—when your thoughts are not just muddling along. You may be familiar to a friend, or to a relative of your own age; but not cheeky. To all others, be polite but not stiff. If you are much younger than your correspondent, be deferential—but don't crawl.

Remember that you are writing to a friend, your parents, a brother or sister, uncle or aunt, or maybe a cousin, not in order to please yourself or to show off, but to please them. Write about the sort of thing that they themselves—not you, not Tom, Dick and Harry—would like to hear. So long as you are not too full of 'I—*I*—the great *I-am*', they will enjoy almost everything you can find to say. But don't go writing about cricket to an aunt familiar only with the sort that lurks in or near the fireplace, nor about the hem of your new dress to an uncle that doesn't know the difference between a skirt, a dress, a frock, a gown, a suit, a tailor-made, and a 'creation'.

Above all, remember a maxim that is very easy to remember. Be natural. Be your natural self—that is, your pleasant, decent self, not the noisy, boisterous, thoughtless self that all of us sometimes are when we are young. You clean your shoes—unless you're lucky enough to have them cleaned for you—before you go to the cinema or the circus with your parents or your uncle or aunt or with friends: so wash out your mouth before you sit down to write a letter. You wash your hands before you pay a visit: so polish your style just a little before you write to someone you respect or like (and you probably won't be writing to anyone else), even if it's only so far as to reduce the number of times you say that this is 'super' or 'smashing', that a 'swiz', the other 'putrid', and something else 'O.K.'

Don't try to write as your father or mother speaks; don't imitate your favourite novelist or film star; don't copy the manner of the newspaper you habitually read. As you do not live at the top of your voice, so you will not write with the end of your pen. A despairing young would-be writer was once advised, 'Look into your heart, and write', where 'heart' includes 'mind'. Write about what you've done, are doing, intend to do or hope to do; about persons, things, events or incidents that have impressed or interested or amused you; the circus or the cinema, the theatre or the playing-field; the games you play, your friends play, others play; the books you read; and so on and so on and so on. . . .

If you let your fancy ride free, your imagination take wings, your memory work unfettered, you will find, not that you haven't enough to say but that you will be able to select those pieces of news which you think will be the most likely to interest or to please your correspondent.

If you cannot write a letter, you range yourself with the illiterate; if you go on being unable to write a 'decent' letter, it'll be because you cannot think properly. If that inability persists, you'll find yourselves at a very grave disadvantage in the world where, some day, you will be earning, or trying to earn, a living. But I'll tell you a secret. Everyone

who can form a sentence (only idiots can't do this) and spell tolerably (990 out of 1000 succeed in this) can also write a letter—a quite good letter. You have only to try.

However great the virtues of correctness, much greater are the merits of creativeness: and when you write a good letter, you create something good. Whenever you write any sort of letter you create at least something.

Remember the rules and the hints as best you can, apply them if you can. But whatever else you may do, refuse to let the rules and the hints prevent you from writing that letter you know you ought to write—that letter which, if the truth were told, you would rather like to write—that letter you could write very agreeably if you tried—that letter your friend Harry or Helen, your parents, your Uncle Bob or your Aunt Joan, Cousin Tom or Cousin Mary, Mr X. or Mrs Y. would be so glad to receive.

Perhaps you, in your turn, like to receive letters?

EXERCISES

1. To what sort of person would it be fitting to begin a letter in each of these ways: *Sir; My dear Sir; Gentlemen; Mesdames; Dear Mrs Jones; Dear Smith; Dear Bill; My dear John; Hey, there!*
2. And for whom would it be suitable to end a letter thus: *I am, etc.; I am, Sir, Yours faithfully; I have the honour to be, Madam; Yours faithfully; Yours truly; Yours very truly; Yours sincerely; Yours affectionately; Yours lovingly; Yours ever; Yours.*
3. Is there anything wrong with this beginning? If so, what?

   James Smith
   Bournemouth
   17 X Road.

   January 31, 1951
   18 Y Avenue
   Eastbourne

   Dear Old Boy,
   Where have you been this long while?
4. Write a letter to your father or guardian and point out that owing to the increased cost of living you find it impossible, on the pocket money you receive, to live in the manner to which you are accustomed, to keep up appearances and therefore avoid letting down the good old name or having the better new one dragged in the mud. But not in a mercenary spirit; nor arrogantly, as though you were entitled to more pocket money; nor in a grovelling manner, as though you were a beggar.
5. You, Mary or Joan or Ann, are twelve years old and you wish to enter for a newspaper competition for which you are not sure that you are eligible and of which you have mislaid the rules. It would be foolish to ring up, for you could not remember all those rules. Write a letter to the Competitions Editor and ask for the information you need.
6. A relative has died and you rightly suppose that, as she (or he) was always very kind to you, that relative's family would appreciate a short letter of sympathy. You will feel much better when you've written it.

7. Write a letter to the Headmaster or Headmistress of your old school to thank him for his (her) letter of recommendation: you believe that, because of it, you got the job.
8. Imagine that you are rather older than in fact you are and that you wish to write a letter to
   (1) The *Daily Express*, to draw attention to the alarming number of American films that imply California to be typical of the entire U.S.A.
   (2) The *Daily Mail*, praising it for its adherence to the old Northcliffe ideals. (Your teacher or an encyclopaedia will tell you enough about him for you to be able to invent the rest.)
   (3) *The Times*, (*a*) to deplore the decline of the middle-class; or (*b*) to deplore the decline of public courtesy.
   (4) *The Manchester Guardian*, asking that a leading article be written upon the excellence of Lancashire cricket and Lancashire music.
   (5) The *News Chronicle* upon the insufficient imports of Spanish oranges.
   (6) The *Woman's Journal*, to ask for a definition of womanliness and to explain why you would be grateful to have that definition.
   (7) *The Sydney Morning Herald*, to know why English immigrants to Australia should be called 'Pommies'; or (*b*) *The Montreal Standard*, to suggest that it might be better to leave *Limeys* (for 'Englishmen') to the Americans; or (*c*) *The Cape Times*, to ascertain what proportion of Afrikanders speak better English than the English.
9. Your favourite aunt has sent you a hamper containing your favourite cake, sweets, fruit—and half a crown. Being well brought up, you wish to write a letter of thanks.
10. Your very generous uncle has sent you a ten-shilling note, his blessing, and an invitation to accompany him, during the next school holidays, to a circus. You think he's a queer old stick, yet rather like him, but you will be away with your parents during the holidays. For a wonder, you do not forget to acknowledge the blessing. Well?
11. Your father is away, on business, for some months—including the entire winter—in Florida; or your mother has had to go to Hong-Kong or perhaps Singapore to visit her dearest sister, who is ailing. A letter from you will give much pleasure to either parent. You've delayed: but at last you are writing. It would only be right to begin with an apology for the delay. How do you go on? (Yes; we should like to see how very nicely you apologize.)
12. Your friend Bill, who hates to be addressed as William, or it may be Margaret, who dislikes being called Maggie, has invited you to spend a week at her parents' home—in the country if you live in a town, but in a town if you live in the country. Your mother has written to thank Bill's or Margaret's mother, and now you are writing to Bill—or Margaret.
13. You have received a stiff and formal invitation to attend a children's party. It is for you—certainly you are old enough—to reply. Go to it!
14. At school you have (perish the thought!) disgraced yourself, though not so badly as to deserve to be expelled. How, do you suppose, does the Headmaster, or the Headmistress, write to your father or, if you are a girl, your mother and urge him (or her) to take more interest in his erring boy or her precious girl?

15. A year later, you have so amended your ways (there had, you remember, been an unseemly crack in your behaviour) that you have come top of the class in woodwork or sewing, in physics or in cookery, in arithmetic or even, for this is not impossible, in English. How, would you suppose, does the appreciative Headmaster or Headmistress, having been primed by your surprised Form Master or Form Mistress, write to congratulate your father or your mother upon this miraculous performance?

16. The neighbour's dog has uprooted some valuable bulbs in your garden and both of your parents happen to be away, for parents do go away sometimes. You think that something ought to be done about it. There is only you to do it. Why not write a firm but very polite note, suggesting that the animal should be kept on a chain while there is nobody to watch the hound? (But don't say *hound* unless it is, by breed, precisely that.)

HOW TO READ

THERE is an old Roman saying, *littera scripta manet*, which we may paraphrase thus: The spoken word soon dies, the written word lives on. That, after all, is but in the nature of things. The written word records the written word; it also records the spoken word, if the latter be memorable.[1]

Books have been written about the art of reading—for it is an art, not a science. *The Pleasures of Reading* or *The Pleasures of Literature* has formed the title of more than one essay, more than one book. Essays and books have set forth the profits, as well as the pleasures, of reading.[2] Profits of many sorts, the monetary profit being the least of them.

First, a warning. If you do not wish to enjoy a very important part of life, its intellectual and spiritual rewards and comforts and values, refrain from reading the ensuing pages: they might make you feel just a little uncomfortable. If you think that only newspapers are worth reading, do not waste your time on this chapter; if you desire to be unable to understand anything more than the simplest news (no news is as simple as it sounds) and the most childish jokes in even a newspaper, run from this chapter as you would flee from the plague. If you think you would hate to be able to understand a play at the theatre or a film at the cinema, do not read 'How to Read'. If you have not the slightest wish to share equally in any conversation that deals with anything more brain-exercising or more exciting than games, the weather, and the price of beer or knitting-wool, do not be so rash as to read past this point, for what I have to say might cause you to think. If you are quite, quite sure that the great figures of history—Moses, Alexander, Julius Caesar, Napoleon, Disraeli, Lincoln and the rest of them; that the great figures of literature—Homer, Dante, Shakespeare, Goethe and the others; the great figures in art—Michelangelo, Rembrandt, Rodin, and their like; the great inventors, scientists, mathematicians—Galileo, Newton, Pasteur, Edison, to name but four; the great thinkers—Socrates, Plato, Aquinas, Descartes, Hume, Kant, and their peers: if you are utterly certain that these men have nothing to teach you, that indeed you would be better off without them, then make sure that you run no risk of infection by exposing yourselves to the perils lurking in almost every paragraph of their works. If you want to be, and to remain, dead above the neck, pure ivory above the

[1] In this chapter, the pupils may find a few words new to them. They have only to ask their teacher or consult a dictionary.

[2] Some very good essays on this subject appear (pp. 8–31) in L. A. G. Strong's *English for Pleasure*, which every teacher should study.

chin, never open a book, it might cause you to think; never open so much as a newspaper, it might make you wonder whether all were well.

But you must take the utmost care. It won't suffice to avoid books. A play or a film might set you thinking—and you wouldn't get very far in your thinking without the aid of books. You might so far forget yourself as to enter an art gallery, or someone might persuade you to accompany him (or her) into one: and once there, heaven knows what might not happen! Rembrandt or Rubens, Titian or Tiepolo, Correggio or Constable, Watteau or Whistler, Sickert or Sargent, might catch you in a weak moment and slip into your mind the treacherous thought, ' I should like to know more about the artist, or why he painted this lovely picture '. You might, forgetting that you are a practical boy or a sensible girl, become interested in music. Bach or Beethoven or Brahms, Handel or Mozart, Debussy or Falla might move you as you had not known you could be moved: perturbed, you might ask yourself why, or who is this composer, what his secret, what his merits: answers to such questions can be found only in books—or from people unashamed to read books. It might shock you to learn that some of the most brilliant scientists and inventors were admirable writers or notable thinkers. It might be a trifle disconcerting to discover that, apart from the chief religious figures, the three greatest men in history—Julius Caesar, Leonardo da Vinci, Napoleon —were so impractical as to have been remarkable writers or orators or artists as well as unquestionably practical, brilliantly and remarkably practical; that, in short, they were preëminently great only because they possessed genius and the wonderful gift of creative imagination. All very unfortunate, but there it is!

You can at least begin well by refusing to believe a word I write here. What risks you take after this solemn ' You have been warned ' are your concern. If you decide that you are foolhardily going to read the remainder of this chapter, I cannot stop you. You may, at any rate, be sure of this: I have not overstated the pleasures and profits, the joys and uses, the value of books. I have, in fact, rather understated them, for I said to myself, ' I don't wish to lead any of these boys and girls up the garden path, even if it's a very pleasant path. I do not promise them that reading will make them free of Paradise; merely that reading will fit them to glimpse it from afar. I do not guarantee that the knowledge of science and technology will make them scientists or technologists, merely that this knowledge will help them to become the one or the other—or perhaps both. I do not pretend that an appreciation of art and music, form and beauty, will automatically ensure success in art or music, merely that it constitutes an indispensable part of an artist's or musician's equipment. I do not say that success in the Trade Union movement or in the mines or on the farms or in the factories will inevitably follow upon an adequate knowledge of these things; I only say that this knowledge will do something towards preventing its possessors from making fools of themselves and from being mere animals or mere automatons.'

Yes; it's a hard life. You will constantly be exposed to the onset of beauty, the dignity of truth, the glory of integrity—things that might create men and women out of you, instead of robots or cogs in the industrial machine. Was it not Browning who, in 'Bishop Blougram's Apology' (*Men and Women*, 1855), spoke of those things which may come to shake the earthiest of us out of our earthiness?—

> Just when we are safest, there's a sunset-touch,
> A fancy from a flower-bell, someone's death,
> A chorus-ending from Euripides,—
> And that's enough for fifty hopes and fears
> As old and new at once as Nature's self,
> To rap and knock and enter in our soul,
> Take hands and dance there, a fantastic ring,
> Round . . .
> The grand Perhaps!

That was one elderly man addressing another. But, to adapt what a famous scholar once remarked, 'None of us knows everything, not even the youngest of us': words calculated to make you pause when you exclaim, 'It's soppy—or, sissy—to like poetry'; to make you wonder for a moment when you hear someone smugly say, 'History can't teach *me* anything!' or 'What! Read a novel? Why, what could I learn from a story, however good—what use is a story to *me*?' True; it won't make you a better carpenter or bricklayer, engineer or mechanic, clerk or secretary, accountant or estate agent, lawyer or doctor—except in so far as it makes you a better man or woman, more alert, more perceptive, more sympathetic, more human, more educated, more cultured; in short, a better citizen and a better individual.

But if you wish to remain a roughneck or a pain in the neck, a chattering parrot or a very dull owl, then imitate the Nazis and burn every book contaminated with beauty or imagination or understanding: like the Nazis you will destroy your opportunities, and stunt all that in you which is superior to what you would find in an intelligent monkey.

* * * * *

We may read in order to learn, or for our pleasure: and in our pleasure we may find profit; in our learning, pleasure. The most imaginative story, the most beautiful poem, may, without our noticing it at the moment, convey instruction and, even while affording a pleasure so deep and lasting that we must speak rather of lasting happiness and abiding joy, it may enrich our minds and our spirits too. From a plain narrative of things attempted, things achieved, there may come, not only the information and instruction we sought but an encouragement or an inspiration on the one hand, on the other hand a comfort or a consolation. Even from what might seem to be a dull collection of facts there may emerge something quite incalculable.

All those things—and much else.

Bacon has said that reading makes a full man, by which he meant a man with a well-stored mind. He could have said far more, yet still have understated the benefits to be received from reading.

But from reading. Not from dipping, nor yet from skimming.

First of all, then, get into the habit of reading carefully and, whenever you can, slowly. Take your time. The purpose of a journey is to arrive, but the pleasures of travel lie in the journey itself. The purpose of reading is not to finish the short story, the poem, the essay, the play, the novel, but to enjoy it and in all other ways to profit by it as one reads and when one has read it. Read at leisure, savouring as you go; and savour it again when you have finished. Don't lock the door on it, don't put it away in a cupboard and forget all about it: store it in your memory, so that you may think of it again, enjoy it again. And you'll do so the more easily, indeed you'll do it inevitably, if you read without haste, without strain. Never read feverishly, never read as though you were racing against time —unless you wish to derive neither pleasure nor profit from your reading. Expressed thus, the statement sounds so obvious as to be silly. Yet there are many, young and old, who read as though reading were either a form of athletics or a sort of penance. I should not care to say that, on such people, reading is wasted, but I do say that when people read a book, a magazine, a newspaper in that way, they are wasting their time and paying a mighty poor compliment both to what they are reading—and to themselves.

You all know, perhaps you're sick and tired of hearing, the old tag, 'What is worth doing at all is worth doing well'. That it is old, no one will deny; that it is a tag, I admit. But it is none the less true for being old, no less true for being a tag. Either leave a thing entirely alone or attack it with a good will. To dabble, to dip, to skim: these are a waste of time, for you may very easily gain a false impression; such knowledge as you obtain is incomplete, such information as you obtain is inevitably misleading; and as for the beauty, the artistic merit, the basic meaning and the true value of whatever you may be pecking at—well, you are worse off than if you had not looked at the book or story or poem at all.

To reading, that warning applies with a peculiar force; and with a peculiar significance it applies to readers. I have already hinted some part of that significance and of that force. But I should like to be able to drive it home so convincingly that you yourselves will not merely admit but proclaim the significance.

Take this poem, short, not very well known, not outstandingly good, yet certainly not bad, and see what it has to offer. You need not be familiar with metric[1] or, as it is often named, prosody,[2] to appreciate its swing or lilt or music.

[1] Or: metrics.

[2] Your teacher will explain such terms. If you have no teacher, use a dictionary —use a dictionary whether you have a teacher or not.

NAPLES

All that Nature has is thine!
  Earth's delight, and Ocean's wealth,
Bread, and oil, and fruit, and wine,
  Land of pleasure, air of health.

From thee Misfortune hides her frown;
Life's sunny bark floats gaily down:
  While Pleasure rests the useless oar,
The winds are calm, the skies are clear,
Thou hast not much to wish or fear,
  And nothing to deplore.

Pass in bliss the hours away,
  Gather from the rose and vine,
Every dewdrop yields a ray,
  And the dew of love is wine.

That poem formed part of a poetic drama, *The Count Arezzi*, published in 1824 and written by Robert Eyres Landor, brother of the much better known Walter Savage Landor. Robert Eyres Landor had, as a young man, travelled in Europe, especially in Italy; the gaiety, the colour, the care-free and lucid air of Naples impressed him deeply. He became a country parson, fond of his horse and fond of a glass of wine, but he was temperate. A confirmed bachelor, he lived a truly Christian life, yet—as a Christian may—a very full life. *Naples* was written as a song, a fact accounting for the, at first sight, excessive punctuation: the commas and the semicolons help to indicate the lilt and the swing and the music. You will notice that the second stanza differs in length from the first and third. That difference causes a corresponding difference in the rhyme-scheme. The different length of stanza and the different arrangement of rhymes make for variety. Ask someone who has a musical voice and a sense of rhythm to read it to you. Read with or without his help, read it aloud to yourself, several times.

Naples, lying on the seaboard (' Ocean's wealth '), has a rich hinterland: ' Earth's delight ', with ' bread and oil and fruit and wine '. The capital letters show that ' Ocean ', ' Misfortune ' and ' Pleasure ' are personified, regarded as persons: they take part in the action of the poem; they are agents, not mere instruments. When you have read this poem, you realize why the Italians have a proverb ' See Naples and die '. It is easy to make jokes on the subject. But Naples at its best, before it was damaged in the war of 1939–45, was something to experience: ' Naples, the paradise of Italy, As this is of the earth,' was how one of our early seventeenth-century English dramatists phrased it. Perhaps that Naples will never return; if it does not, Landor's song may serve as an epitaph. In any event, *Naples* pictures a happiness and a joyousness that bring us a quiet happiness.

Now take something that, on the face of it, lacks beauty and strength and charm and excitement, but does at least convey a certain amount of information.

> The human ear, the organ of hearing in man, is a complex mechanism of three general parts, relative to sound waves: a wave-collecting part; a wave-observing part, and a wave-interpreting part.
>
> The outer ear collects and reflects the waves inwardly to beat upon the tympanum, or ear drum, a membrane diaphragm. The uses of the rolls or convolutions of the outer ear are not conclusively known, but it is observed that when they are filled up evenly with wax or its equivalent, the sense of direction of sound is impaired, and usually of loudness also.
>
> The diaphragm of the ear vibrates when struck by sound waves, as does any other diaphragm. By means of tone and nerve mechanism, the vibration of the diaphragm finally is made known to the brain and interpretable therein.

That was written in 1910 by an anonymous American. The information is correct, so far as it goes; at that time, it could go no further. Some of the words are scientific, others needlessly long; but all are worth looking up in a dictionary. Having done that, you will know more than you did of physiology and of telephony.

But the passage has a much greater value than that of scientific information and new words. It can be made to serve as an exercise in observation, for from it we can deduce much about the author.

He is not very sensitive, nor yet very perceptive. Although he is writing for an adult public and in a work that professes to be an encyclopaedia of telephony and telegraphy, he speaks of ' the human ear, the organ of hearing in man ': a child of six knows that. And why not ' the ear, the organ of hearing '? The ear is not confined to human beings.

In ' a complex mechanism of three general parts ', can you think of any satisfactory reason for ' general '? I can't.

Ponder and roll on your tongue and enjoy the wordiness of ' the tympanum, or ear drum, a membrane diaphragm '. The tympanum is the ear-drum, and the ear-drum is described as being a ' membrane diaphragm '; that is, ' a diaphragm consisting of a membrane '.

In ' the rolls or convolutions of the outer ear ', there would have been some sense, despite its needless wordiness, in ' the convolutions or rolls of the outer ear ', but one does not explain a very easy word by a word known only to scientists and other learnèd persons.

' Not conclusively known ': does the writer not mean ' not precisely known '? ' Conclusively ' strikes me as being very odd.

Examine the clumsiness of ' the sense of direction of sound is impaired, and usually[1] of loudness also '. Any one of you could do better than that —if you tried.

[1] Doesn't he mean ' always '?

Can you think of a reason why 'sound-waves' might be preferable to 'sound waves'.

'Finally is made known': why not 'is finally made known'?

There are other objections one could make, but those will suffice to show that the style is wordy and clumsy; that the writer has completely failed to write for adult scientists on the one hand or for schoolchildren on the other and therefore has failed to satisfy the requirements of either; has, moreover, irritated both of his potential publics. Even more damning things could be said, but we'll leave the writer there.

You may feel that such an exercise is a waste of time. Yet you have learnt a little science and a few useful words. It is true that, elsewhere, you might have obtained them much more agreeably; but you could hardly have learnt more agreeably the invaluable art of detecting a very common type of bad writing, a far too frequent class of dull or pretentious book.

Now let us consider another piece of writing.

An Adventure in the South Seas

It was on the first of February that we went on shore for the purpose of visiting the village. Although, as said before, we entertained not the slightest suspicion, still no proper precaution was neglected. Six men were left in the schooner, with instructions to permit none of the savages to approach the vessel during our absence, under any pretence whatever, and to remain constantly on deck. The boarding-nettings were up, the guns double-shotted with grape and canister, and the swivels loaded with canisters of musket-balls. She lay, with her anchor apeak, about a mile from the shore, and no canoe could approach her in any direction without being distinctly seen and exposed to the full fire of our swivels immediately.

The six men being left on board, our shore-party consisted of thirty-two persons in all. We were armed to the teeth, having with us muskets, pistols, and cutlasses, besides each a long kind of seaman's knife, somewhat resembling the Bowie-knife now so much used throughout our western and southern country. A hundred of the black-skin warriors met us at the landing for the purpose of accompanying us on our way. We noticed, however, with some surprise, that they were now entirely without arms; and upon questioning Too-wit in relation to this circumstance, he merely answered that *Mattee non we pa pa si*—meaning that there was no need of arms where all were brothers. We took this in good part, and proceeded.

We had passed the spring and rivulet of which I before spoke, and were now entering upon a narrow gorge leading through the chain of soapstone hills among which the village was situated. This gorge was very rocky and uneven, so much so that it was with no little difficulty we scrambled through it on our first visit to Klock-Klock. The whole length of the ravine might have been a mile and a half, or probably two miles. It

wound in every possible direction through the hills (having apparently formed, at some remote period, the bed of a torrent), in no instance proceeding more than twenty yards without an abrupt turn. The sides of this dell would have averaged, I am sure, seventy or eighty feet in perpendicular altitude throughout the whole of their extent, and in some portions they arose to an astonishing height, overshadowing the pass so completely that but little of the light of day could penetrate. The general width was about forty feet, and occasionally it diminished so as not to allow the passage of more than five or six persons abreast. In short, there could be no place in the world better adapted for the consummation of an ambuscade, and it was no more than natural that we should look carefully to our arms as we entered upon it. When I now think of our egregious folly, the chief subject of astonishment seems to be that we should ever have ventured, under any circumstances, so completely into the power of unknown savages as to permit them to march both before and behind us in our progress through this ravine. Yet such was the order we blindly took up, trusting foolishly to the force of our party, the unarmed condition of Too-wit and his men, the certain efficacy of our firearms (whose effect was yet a secret to the natives), and more than all to the long-sustained pretension of friendship kept up by these infamous wretches. Five or six of them went on before, as if to lead the way, ostentatiously busying themselves in removing the larger stones and rubbish from the path. Next came our own party. We walked closely together, taking care only to prevent separation. Behind followed the main body of the savages, observing unusual order and decorum.

Dirk Peters, a man named Wilson Allen, and myself, were on the right of our companions, examining, as we went along, the singular stratification of the precipice which overhung us. A fissure in the soft rock attracted our attention. It was about wide enough for one person to enter without squeezing, and extended back into the hill some eighteen or twenty feet in a straight course, sloping afterwards to the left. The height of the opening, as far as we could see into it from the main gorge, was perhaps sixty or seventy feet. There were one or two stunted shrubs growing from the crevices, bearing a species of filbert, which I felt some curiosity to examine, and pushed in briskly for that purpose, gathering five or six of the nuts at a grasp, and then hastily retreating. As I turned I found that Peters and Allen had followed me. I desired them to go back, as there was not room for two persons to pass, saying they should have some of my nuts. They accordingly turned, and were scrambling back, Allen being close to the mouth of the fissure, when I was suddenly aware of a concussion resembling nothing I had ever before experienced, and which impressed me with a vague conception, if indeed I then thought of anything, that the whole foundations of the solid globe were suddenly rent asunder, and that the day of universal dissolution was at hand.

* * * * *

As soon as I could collect my scattered senses, I found myself nearly suffocated, and grovelling in utter darkness among a quantity of loose earth, which was also falling upon me heavily in every direction, threatening to bury me entirely. Horribly alarmed at this idea, I struggled to gain my feet, and at length succeeded. I then remained motionless for some moments, endeavouring to conceive what had happened to me, and where I was. Presently I heard a deep groan just at my ear, and afterwards the smothered voice of Peters calling to me for aid in the name of God. I scrambled one or two paces forward when I fell directly over the head and shoulders of my companion who, I soon discovered, was buried in a loose mass of earth as far as his middle, and struggling desperately to free himself from the pressure. I tore the dirt from around him with all the energy I could command, and at length succeeded in getting him out.

As soon as we sufficiently recovered from our fright and surprise to be capable of conversing rationally, we both came to the conclusion that the walls of the fissure in which we had ventured had, by some convulsion of nature, or probably from their own weight, caved in overhead, and that we were consequently lost for ever, being thus entombed alive. For a long time we gave up supinely to the most intense agony and despair, such as cannot be adequately imagined by those who have never been in a similar situation. I firmly believed that no incident ever occurring in the course of human events is more adapted to inspire the supremeness of mental and bodily distress than a case like our own, of living inhumation. The blackness or darkness which envelops the victim, the terrific oppression of lungs, the stifling fumes from the damp earth, unite with the ghastly considerations that we are beyond the remotest confines of hope, and that such is the allotted portion of *the dead*, to carry into the human heart a degree of appalling awe and horror not to be tolerated—never to be conceived.

At length Peters proposed that we should endeavour to ascertain precisely the extent of our calamity and grope about our prison; it being barely possible, he observed, that some opening might be yet left us for escape. I caught eagerly at this hope, and arousing myself to exertion, attempted to force my way through the loose earth. Hardly had I advanced a single step before a glimmer of light became perceptible, enough to convince me, at all events, we should not immediately perish for want of air. We now took some degree of heart, and encouraged each other to hope for the best. Having scrambled over a bank of rubbish which impeded our farther progress in the direction of the light, we found less difficulty in advancing, and also experienced some relief from the excessive oppression of lungs which had tormented us. Presently we were enabled to obtain a glimpse of the objects around, and discovered that we were near the extremity of the straight portion of the fissure, where it made a turn to the left. A few struggles more, and we reached the bend, when, to our inexpressible joy, there appeared a long seam or crack extending upward a vast distance, generally at an angle of about forty five degrees,

although sometimes much more precipitous. We could not see through the whole extent of this opening; but as a good deal of light came down it, we had little doubt of finding at the top of it (if we could by any means reach the top) a clear passage into the open air.

I now called to mind that three of us had entered the fissure from the main gorge, and that our companion, Allen, was still missing; we determined at once to retrace our steps and look for him. After a long search, and much danger from the farther caving in of the earth above us, Peters at length cried out to me that he had hold of our companion's foot, and that his whole body was deeply buried beneath the rubbish, beyond a possibility of extricating him. I soon found that what he had said was too true, and that, of course, life had been long extinct. With sorrowful hearts, therefore, we left the corpse to its fate, and again made our way to the bend.

The breadth of the seam was barely sufficient to admit us, and after one or two ineffectual efforts at getting up, we began once more to despair. I have before said that the chain of hills through which ran the main gorge was composed of a species of soft rock resembling soapstone. The sides of the cleft we were now attempting to ascend were of the same material, and so excessively slippery, being wet, that we could get but little foothold upon them, even in their least precipitous parts; in some places, where the ascent was nearly perpendicular, the difficulty was of course much aggravated; and indeed for some time we thought it insurmountable. We took courage, however, from despair; and so, by dint of cutting steps in the soft stone with our Bowie-knives, and swinging, at the risk of our lives, to small projecting points of a harder species of slaty rock which now and then protruded from the general mass, we at length reached a natural platform, from which was perceptible a patch of blue sky, at the extremity of a thickly-wooded ravine. Looking back now, with somewhat more leisure, at the passage through which we had thus far proceeded, we clearly saw, from the appearance of its sides, that it was of late formation, and we concluded that the concussion, whatever it was, which had so unexpectedly overwhelmed us, had also at the same moment laid open this path for escape. Being quite exhausted with exertion, and indeed so weak that we were scarcely able to stand or articulate, Peters now proposed that we should endeavour to bring our companions to the rescue by firing the pistols which still remained in our girdles—the muskets as well as cutlasses had been lost among the loose earth at the bottom of the chasm. Subsequent events proved that, had we fired, we should have sorely repented it; but luckily a half suspicion of foul play had by this time arisen in my mind, and we forbore to let the savages know of our whereabouts.

After having reposed for about an hour we pushed on slowly up the ravine, and had gone no great way before we heard a succession of tremendous yells. At length we reached what might be called the surface of the ground, for our path hitherto, since leaving the platform, had lain beneath

an archway of high rock and foliage, at a vast distance overhead. With great caution we stole to a narrow opening through which we had a clear sight of the surrounding country, when the whole dreadful secret of the concussion broke upon us in one moment and at one view.

The spot from which we looked was not far from the summit of the highest peak in the range of the soapstone hills. The gorge in which our party of thirty-two had entered ran within fifty feet to the left of us. But for at least one hundred yards the channel or bed of this gorge was entirely filled up with the chaotic ruins of more than a million tons of earth and stone that had been artificially tumbled within it. The means by which the vast mass had been precipitated were not more simple than evident, for sure traces of the murderous work were yet remaining. In several spots along the top of the eastern side of the gorge (we were now on the western) might be seen stakes of wood driven into the earth. In these spots the earth had not given way, but throughout the whole extent of the face of the precipice from which the mass *had* fallen, it was clear, from marks left in the soil resembling those made by the drill of the rock-blaster, that stakes similar to those we saw standing had been inserted at not more than a yard apart, for the length of perhaps three hundred feet, and ranging at about ten feet back from the edge of the gulf. Strong cords of grape-vine were attached to the stakes still remaining on the hill, and it was evident that such cords had also been attached to each other of the other stakes. I have already spoken of the singular stratification of these soapstone hills, and the description just given of the narrow and deep fissure through which we effected our escape from inhumation will afford a further conception of its nature. This was such that almost every natural convulsion would be sure to split the soil into perpendicular layers or ridges running parallel with one another, and a very moderate exertion of art would be sufficient for effecting the same purpose. Of this stratification the savages had availed themselves to accomplish their treacherous ends. There can be no doubt that by the continuous line of stakes a partial rupture of the soil had been brought about, probably to the depth of one or two feet, when by means of a savage pulling at the end of each of the cords (these cords being attached to the tops of the stakes and extending back from the edge of the cliff) a vast leverage power was obtained, capable of hurling the whole face of the hill upon a given signal into the bosom of the abyss below. The fate of our poor companions was no longer a matter of uncertainty. We alone had escaped from the tempest of that overwhelming destruction. We were the only living white men upon the island.

That is an extract from *The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym*, one of the less-known works of Edgar Allan Poe, an American so famous as to have become a classic, an American that wrote so much like an Englishman that it is difficult to believe he was not one, that American who composed a phrase often supposed to have been from one of Byron's

poems, 'The glory that was Greece/And the grandeur that was Rome'. Poet, critic, short-novel and, above all, short-story writer, Edgar Allan Poe (1809–49) saw his imaginative tale of the South Seas and the Antarctic published in 1838. It was a grim story; in many ways, astonishingly modern, its adventurous element reading like a foretaste of Jules Verne; in fact, Jules Verne probably owed much to Poe. If not the greatest, Poe is certainly the most famous of American men of letters.

The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym forms a particularly good example of precisely that art: narrative, or story-telling. Narrative is a difficult art, far more difficult than is supposed or admitted by those who sneer at 'mere story-tellers'. It is much more difficult than description or dialogue or exposition or essay-writing.

If you allow for the difference in the vocabulary and general style of a prose-writer of the 1830's, you will find that Poe has, quietly and modestly, conveyed an atmosphere of impending doom, of disaster realized, of escape, with a marked degree of sureness: he is precise without being dully matter-of-fact, he is extremely lucid, and, for a man of extraordinary imaginative powers, he makes the whole story appear to be truly the story told by Pym and, as it were, published in *The New York Times*. You will notice, for instance, how he achieves an air of fact, not of mere probability but also of actuality, by exact indications of height and length. You have already noticed the adroit ending of the incident printed above: 'We alone had escaped from the tempest of that overwhelming destruction. We were the only living white men upon the island.' You have felt, even if you did not picture to yourselves, the undaunted courage, the ingenuity, the lack of hysteria, the freedom from melodrama, exhibited by Pym and Peters; qualities that enabled them finally to escape from the island.

Turning to the less difficult art of essay-writing, we examine:

Sir Walter Raleigh

Raleigh was a Devonshire lad, brought up on cider and clotted cream. Historians say he came of a 'decayed' family, though this seems strange, for if people can't avoid decay on a diet like that, what *do* they expect?

When he was a boy he used to hang around the quays of Westward-Ho, Clovelly, Combe Martin, and other quaint little Devonshire seaports listening to the yarns of Old Salts who were never tired of romancing about the Spanish Main, Eldorado, and the gold mines of Peru. You may have seen Sir John Millais's picture, 'The Boyhood of Raleigh', which shows him listening with both ears, and dreaming of what he will do when he's grown up.

As soon as he reached the years of indiscretion, he went up to Oxford where he did pretty well, and then on to London to try his fortune at Court. He was tall, handsome, and clever, with a fine assortment of those queer ideas poets have buzzing about their heads.

There was no need for Walter to take a correspondence course in Flattery—the favourite pastime of fashionable society at that time. He was never at a loss for a pretty speech or a smart saying, and his manners were decidedly superior to those of his decayed family.

The day he arrived at Court it was, as usual, terribly wet. An anti-cyclone was waiting off the Azores, to move steadily eastwards, and the visibility was opaque at Greenwich. The Queen was coming out of her palace, headed by a company of her Gentlemen Pensioners all wearing the old school tie, and followed by a bevy of her ladies. Noticing a puddle she would have to pass, Raleigh moved gracefully forward, slipped off his velvet cloak, and spread it over the puddle. The Queen blushed, smiled, nodded, and passed on dryshod. She at once sent for the handsome young man with the blue eyes and nice manners.

First impressions are important. The Queen never forgot her first meeting with Raleigh. She offered him a new cloak, but he begged to keep the one on which the feet of the loveliest, greatest, wisest, and wittiest Princess in the world had walked. At this speech the Queen beamed. She always lapped up flattery as eagerly as a cat laps milk.

Her courtiers and ministers all received nicknames bestowed by the royal lips. Burghley was her *Spirit*, Leicester her *Chameleon*, who ' changed into all colours save innocency '; Bacon was her *Watch-candle*; Archbishop Whitgift her *Little Black Priest*; and Christopher Hatton her *dear Mutton*.

' What shall we call *you*, Raleigh,' she said. ' There's something very strange and mysterious about you. We will call you our *Wizard*.' (She pronounced his name as the best people pronounce it today—Rawley.)

Being an Elizabethan, Raleigh naturally wanted to see a bit of fighting, and coming from Devon he felt it would be more in character if he fought on the water. He went off with his half-brother, Sir Humphrey Gilbert, to have a look at the West Indies. Life in the Indies he found tame, so he went to Ireland and paid a visit to Edmund Spenser at Kilcolman Castle. Spenser wanted to read him three books of the *Faerie Queene*, but Raleigh began reading his own poems directly he arrived, and when he had finished there was no time for the *Faerie Queene*. Then, in 1584, with the Queen's assistance, he fitted out a fleet and sailed to North America. He took a map with him, marked the place he thought they'd got to, and wrote across it *Virginia*. ' I'll show that to Gloriana when we get home,' he said. She was so delighted with this daring exploit that she called for a sword and knighted him on the back.

The Queen always had a number of ladies-in-waiting about her. What precisely they waited for has never been divulged. It was certainly not to get married, for if any of them attempted anything of that sort Elizabeth was furious, sometimes even boxing their ears and slapping their faces.

One of the prettiest of these ladies was Bessie Throckmorton. Bessie was frequently waiting, and Raleigh also waited a good deal, for there was really not much else to do at Court. Sometimes, while they waited, he, to pass the time, would invite her to sit upon the ground while he told

her sad stories of the death of kings. One day, the Queen bouncing in unexpectedly, discovered what was going on. She was furious.

'Bessie,' she said, 'go!' Just those two words, and Bessie went, while Raleigh followed, his sword between his legs.

Raleigh's fortunes now changed for the worse. But, of course, Raleigh wasn't the sort of man to stand that nonsense, even from the Queen. He did the right thing; married Bessie, and they settled down on a nice estate at Sherborne which the Queen had given him. But Gloriana continued to fume and fuss, and for a time Raleigh had to go to the Tower. He passed his time very pleasantly there, writing poetry, and one of his best-known poems, 'The Lie', was written in the Tower. In it he said terrible things about the Court and the Church and the Nobility. But when he got out again and was in a better mood, he wrote poetry that could be shown to any one without fear of giving offence, those beautiful lines about the Pilgrim, for instance:

> And by the happy blissful way
> More peaceful Pilgrims I shall see,
> That have shook off their gowns of clay,
> And go apparel'd fresh like me.
>
> I'll bring them first
> To slake their thirst,
> And then to taste those Nectar suckets
> At the clear wells
> Where sweetness dwells,
> Drawn up by Saints in crystal buckets.

That picture of Raleigh in heaven, showing the Saints the way to the well, is very delightful, and not without its humorous side. The Queen was delighted with the poem. She showed it to Edward de Vere, Earl of Oxford, who was another of her poets, and he turned green with envy, rushed out, and insulted Philip Sidney on the tennis court. Possibly in a blind rage he mistook him for Raleigh. But that is another story. . . .

When the Queen died in 1603, Raleigh's career may be said to have ended. People were jealous of his success, for the Queen had made him so wealthy that his family was no longer decayed.

King James I never seemed able to like Raleigh. He smoked horrible tobacco for one thing, and James had written a book called *A Counterblast against Tobacco*, in which smoking was sternly discouraged. He was afraid, too, that Raleigh would stir up trouble with Spain, and James wanted peace. When, therefore, Raleigh was accused of complicity in a plot against the Throne, there was not much chance for him. He was tried before that terrible man, Sir Edward Coke, one of England's best legal bullies. But Raleigh gave Coke as good as he got:

'I want words,' thundered Coke, 'to express this viperous treason.'

'I think,' retorted Raleigh, 'you want words indeed, for you have said the same thing half a dozen times.' (Applause.)

He was sent to the Tower, from which he never rallied. While there he wrote his *History of the World*—a brave fragment. He also engaged in scientific experiments, assisted by another prisoner, Lord Henry Percy, 'the Wizard Earl'.

James sent him to America to find some gold mines, but the Americans refused to show them to him, so he returned in debt and was sent to the block in 1618 on the old charge. It was a great shame, for he was not guilty. Perhaps if James had been a smoker . . .? But, anyway, when once you get entangled in the skirts of the law you never know what will happen.

That is an essay[1] in the lighter mode, written by Richard Ince, author of a very lively historical novel, *When Joan was Pope* (1931). 'Sir Walter Raleigh' forms part of his series of light-hearted, playfully satirical essays upon historical subjects, 'Spot Light on England', in my *For These Few Minutes: Almost an Anthology* (1938). Richard Ince's satire reached its heights in *Talking Beast: A Candid Inquiry into the Nature of Homo Vulgaris*, 1944, but nowhere has he, for sheer ease and clarity, excelled 'Spot Light on England'. In the essay on Raleigh, we see, admirably exemplified, the art of the narrative essay.

Finally, we shall consider the article, which differs from the essay in being less artistic and often, more typical, in emphasizing the matter rather than the manner, in dealing with the real as opposed to the imagined, and especially in treating one subject independently, and within the limitations of length, logically and comprehensively. The articles in a magazine tend to be longer than those in a newspaper. Here is an example of a longish article, written by Henry T. F. Rhodes and published in 1938.

Where *Have* I Seen That Face?

We have all had the experience at one time or another; we think we recognize that back. The owner is perhaps gazing intently into a shop window. If reckless, we strike him smartly between the shoulder blades, if less bold seize him by the arm. In either case it will probably be too late to tender to a startled and exasperated stranger an apology which may not be accepted. Such things have been known to end in the police court.

Nor is it only the reckless (or the short-sighted) who are liable to get involved in awkward predicaments of this kind. It is not even merely a question of backs. How often in a lifetime have most of us asked the question, 'Now where have I seen that face before?'

If only we realized it, it is a vital matter to most of us. A millionaire proprietor of a chain of stores in America once remarked that his success was due to the fact that he never forgot a face—or a name. People like to be remembered. There are, of course, exceptions. But the American was thinking of customers, not criminals.

[1] Reprinted with the author's very kind permission.

If this problem of recognizing people is significant, equally so is the question of how we are to solve it. A world in which we could recognize no one with certainty would be very complicated to live in.

It is quite complicated enough as it is, largely for the reason that often—much too often—we are not sure of that face or that back.

The results of that uncertainty may be momentous for the person concerned. There is at the present moment a child in an excellent private school in England whose whole life has been embittered because her mother cannot recognize her. She is supposed to be a changeling, and the alleged mother declares that at the maternity nursing-home where the baby was born the children were mixed up. The woman is rich, and in material things the child lacks nothing; but she has had no parental affection, and her emotional life has been gravely affected, perhaps permanently.

I have been told, and have no doubt that it is true, that in well-run hospitals such mistakes are impossible. At Queen Charlotte's Maternity Hospital, for instance, babies wear a batiste wristlet which is never removed while they are in the hospital. On it is written the mother's full name. But to avoid even the possibility of a dispute, perhaps something more ought to be done. Young babies look so very much alike. Sometimes even their own mothers cannot recognize them.

But their finger-prints differ, each of unchanging pattern in child and adult from the sixth month of pre-natal life until death. It would not be a difficult matter to record the baby's finger-prints in hospitals as an infallible check in case of dispute.

This brings us to the question of the difference between exact identity and merely approximate recognition. If we can discover something unique about our acquaintance, and can recognize it when we see it, then we have identified as well as recognized him.

But the problem cannot be solved like this if we are to rely only upon finger-prints. A suggestion that we should finger-print a remote acquaintance and make the necessary comparison on the next occasion of meeting might be misunderstood! We have to rely upon the cruder method of inspection of the human countenance.

At this point we are justified in asking a question which, at the beginning, might have sounded absurd. Can we be sure, in all circumstances, of recognizing *any one*? The answer, strange though it may sound, is ' No '.

In 1936 a woman in Lyons identified as her husband a man who had been run over and killed. Overcome with grief, she was taken home by a kindly police matron. There she found her husband calmly smoking his pipe and reading a newspaper.

There might have been a commonplace explanation: namely, that the two men were alike. But on investigation it turned out that in life they did not resemble each other in the least. In death, however, the face of the victim came to resemble that of the survivor.

Everyone knows that in death muscular control ceases. This produces

apparent changes in the structure of the face. In this particular instance it happened that the facial change was one which caused the countenance of the dead to approximate to that of the living.

All the same, it is possible to eliminate a good many of our errors and doubts in the matter of recognition. The difficulty is, however, to avoid too obvious a curiosity about an acquaintance's appearance. From motives of politeness or lack of interest, men and women do not really observe each other. Ordinarily we get no more than a general impression even of a face we think we know well. When an effort is made to recall it in imagination, we are vague about the details. Being uncertain of these, we reconstruct a face which may be an inaccurate picture in every essential particular.

A genius among policemen, Alphonse Bertillon was the first to suggest a really scientific method to ensure recognition. He took photographs of individuals in profile and full face, and then cut these photographs up into sections which included the nose, the forehead with its wrinkles, the mouth, the chin, and the ears. He claimed that if the face were scrutinized piecemeal in this fashion, and that *afterwards* the complete photograph were examined, a true image of the individual was impressed on the memory. Experiment has proved him to be right. Policemen and others recognize living persons whom they have never seen from photographs of this kind. But to try and do this from an ordinary inspection of a photograph is to ask for trouble.

Bertillon reversed the ordinary process. He insisted that to understand a face it must be *observed* part by part. The vague and polite stare we generally accord to our acquaintances was no use to him.

Here is the whole contrast as between recognition and identity. Bertillon, who always thought of faces in terms of noses, ears, mouths, and foreheads, did not subscribe to that myth about the uniformity of the human countenance. It is only those who see without observing who are dismayed by the depressingly monotonous aspect of humanity in the mass.

With all this refinement of technique for recognizing friends and enemies it may be asked whether it is possible for an individual to rid himself of his identity altogether. As far as disguise is concerned, it may be said at once that the beard, more or less obviously false, and the dark spectacles, are now definitely *démodé*. The man who really knows how to disguise himself makes small but significant alterations. He cuts his moustache differently, and does things to his eyebrows. Slight alterations make recognition surprisingly difficult. The reason is that even the trained observer, on looking for certain characteristics and failing to find them, becomes confused. He can no longer swear to what he has seen.

It is for this reason that those wishing to retire from public life have sometimes escaped recognition for long periods of time; but to elude recognition is not the same thing as to blot out identity.

There are some people who can elude recognition without disguising themselves at all. There are identical twins who even when adult are

so alike that they are an embarrassing exception to the principles of recognition laid down by Monsieur Bertillon. They can be, and are frequently, confused with each other. Even individuals not related in any way have been known to be startlingly alike.

In 1932, a Peruvian of quite blameless life was seized in Pernambuco by a policeman and unceremoniously imprisoned for three days. Until his finger-prints were taken it was not discovered that a mistake had been made. He bore an extraordinary resemblance to an habitual criminal badly wanted by the police.

It was his finger-prints which proved him innocent. Even identical twins are not really identical. Their finger-prints are always different. Exact measurements of the face and body and other anatomical observations always make it possible to distinguish them. But leaving finger-prints out of account, there are often greater resemblances between other bodily characteristics of twin brothers and twin sisters than between unrelated individuals. The palm-prints, for example, of the related sometimes show marked resemblance. This is particularly true of identical twins.

These characteristics which are an indestructible part of our being, make each of us a distinct entity. Sturdy individualists will note this with satisfaction.

Bus whether proud of it or not, there are some who find these unique possessions rather embarrassing.

In the United States there are now fresh opportunities for the beauty specialist and the plastic surgeon. Those who are in the racket are employed to remove marks of identity from criminals wanted by the police. Dillinger was operated upon for the removal of two moles and a scar from his face. He nearly died under the anaesthetic. Several of his associates were similarly treated. Surgeons have attempted by means of skin-grafting operations to alter finger-prints. But so irradicable a mark of identity is the pattern on the finger-ends that in spite of such drastic treatment the original design ultimately reappears. Dillinger's finger-prints were altered by a surgeon, but with very little success.

Tattoo marks are testimony sometimes as to the extremes of human rashness. In 1935 a girl visited the Laboratory of Technical Police at Lyons and asked to see the Director. She made a most unusual request. On the inside of her arm the name of a man was tattooed. She was now engaged to another man. Dr Locard, she understood, was an authority on tattooing. Could he do anything for her?

Dr Locard could, and did. A skin-grafting operation was performed, and perhaps a triangular tragedy averted!

Such a symbol as this was less important as evidence of present identity than of past indiscretion. But the principle is the same. In France, as probably in England, a brisk trade is done by quacks who undertake to remove tattoo marks. The operation is dangerous if not performed by a surgeon. But its value to those worried about their identity is obvious.

The plain fact is that we carry upon our bodies too many marks of identity recordable by scientific methods to make it possible for an individual A. ever completely to destroy evidence of his identity, or for it to be confused with that of B. or C.

Because of the cunning architecture of our bodies even in death and decay, our identity as individuals is not entirely lost. The artist with his knowledge of anatomy understands this quite as well as the scientific man.

The musician, Bach, was buried at Leipzig in 1750. In 1779 it was desired to translate his remains, but his skull could not at first be identified. The cast of a skull supposed to be that of the musician was submitted to a sculptor. The features were reconstructed in accordance with the relative measurements and shape of the cast. A recognizable image of Bach's face emerged.

This method of identification has been much developed since. Mr Grant Williams, late of New York City, examined in 1922 the skull of an unknown person found in a lonely place near Haverstraw in the State of New York. He declared it was the skull of a Polish-Irish girl mentally defective and violent. Mr Williams reconstructed the features with plasticine. The bust was immediately recognized by a doctor of an institution for mentally defective women as that of one, Lilian White, who had escaped from the institution, and disappeared ten months previously.

We cannot lose our identity. It is the physically indestructible part of us.

But if we are to recognize this quality in others, we must be prepared to take the risk, and accord them something more than the conventionally polite stare.

That article,[1] which possesses most of the qualities necessary to a good essay, would command your attention even if you knew nothing about the author. But when I mention that he is a leading criminologist, a well-known writer, and a first-class chemist (laboratory, not pharmaceutical), you will see that behind the disarming ease of style and presentation and behind the almost casually given information, some of it off-the-beaten-track information, a true authority has explained something with which he is so familiar that he writes a serious article with much the same readiness as he would speak to a group of intelligent friends.

If you approach the reading of books as you would an adventure; if you tackle a small, simple piece of research as you would a game of 'Clues' or cricket; if you can see—as, of course, you can—that work done for oneself and, especially, by oneself is pleasure as well as profit; if you do these things, which are within your abilities, then you are training yourselves to be able to have even more fun—and to create the fun for yourselves.

[1] Reproduced here with the author's generous permission.

'The person who cannot make practical use of books as sources of information is an uneducated person,' as Mr George Sampson, excellent scholar and brilliant educationist, once remarked. 'The growing boy'—and the growing girl, too—'must,' he goes on to say, 'be able to use an ordinary dictionary, and such books as Smith's *Smaller Classical Dictionary*'—the one in Everyman's Library. 'He must learn how to use a simple encyclopaedia,[1] a biographical dictionary, a gazetteer, an atlas, the index of a book, and a library catalogue.'

In *The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table* (1858), Oliver Wendell Holmes, almost the greatest American essayist, went so far as to declare, 'Above all things, as a child, a man should have tumbled about in a library. All men are afraid of books, who have not handled them from infancy.'

Well, you needn't actually tumble about in the library. I suggest that you merely browse in it, whether school library or municipal library or parents' library: you'll find browsing to be less exhausting and, and in the long run, much more enjoyable.

But we have forgotten the newspaper. All that most people read is the newspaper; the cynic remarks, All that most people *can* read is the newspaper, whereas the truthful man says, All that most people *wish* to read is the newspaper. It is extremely doubtful whether a feverish rush through the most important news, a hasty glance at the sports page, a tendency to look at no more than the headlines of everything else, can properly be called reading at all.

I assume that your method is more sensible, more leisurely, more thorough.

The adult does not need to be told, but perhaps some of you younger people have yet to learn that caution must be exercised. So many otherwise quite intelligent persons seem to think that if anything appears in newspapers, it must be true. Well, a great deal that appears in such print is far from being true. Usually, news is distorted—or, at the least, modified. A plain lie can usually be nailed down; a modification is much more dangerous, either because the innocent reader may not suspect or because, even if he does suspect, he may not know where or how the alteration has been made.

Except in restrained and scrupulous newspapers, all news is exaggerated: the 'penny plain' becomes the 'tuppence coloured'. So, to everything that can conceivably be emphasized, add not a grain but ten grains of salt. In the sensational Press, and most of the Press is sensational, 'impossibly' becomes 'possibly', 'perhaps' becomes 'probably', 'probably' becomes 'certainly', and 'certainly' becomes an accomplished and at the same time extraordinary fact. Suppose a Government spokesman says, 'There may be no mid-week "soccer" allowed for the next few years'; some unscrupulous or merely careless journalist turns this into 'No mid-week

[1] For hints on dictionaries and encyclopaedias, you have only to turn to the chapter 'How to Use a Dictionary'.

sport to be allowed '. A possibility becomes a certainty (often an intervening degree is jumped) and Association Football, one game among many, becomes all games, all sports.

All newspapers, whether sober or sensational, tend, especially during a war, to heighten anything favourable, however trifling, and wholly to omit or, at the least, to depreciate anything unfavourable, with the result that, although no factual lies are told, a grievously false, a dangerously misleading, impression is conveyed.

If the newspaper or the magazine or the review is ' a Party organ '—that is, if it supports a political party and, at all times and in everything, tries to promote its cause—all general articles or particular items are twisted to that end. It doesn't matter about the individual, the nation, mankind as a whole, so long as Party is served. It has been remarked that if you were to read (say) *The Times* and (say) the *Daily Herald* on a given day, you would not—unless you noticed the date at the head of the papers—realize that you were reading the same news. It would hardly be an exaggeration to state that, on some days, you would, except for the sports page, hardly know that you were reading about the same country.

Even with the sports page you have to be careful. In the reports of (say) a cricket match, especially of a test match, the last thing you will find is an account of the cricket. If an umpire refuses to hold a player's cap, the incident becomes more important than the exhaustion of an American loan.

Sometimes the attitude of the sensational Press is still worse than that; a newspaper's attitude results from that newspaper's general policy. Some years ago, a wit coined a biting epigram concerning three very widely ' read ' newspapers: ' *The*—caters for a public that does not think; *The*—for a public that does not read, and *The*—for a public that can neither think nor read '. Such publics get their opinions, if they can be called ' opinions ', from such newspapers, and they swallow them whole. Such people can be numbered by millions. You, the young, are under no obligation to join their ranks; yet, unless you read critically, many of you will. And won't be conscious of the fact.

But you can safeguard yourselves against all this stupidity and folly and dishonesty by observing one simple rule: let your senses of proportion and humour work full time and full blast. Believe only one-quarter of what you hear, one-third of what you read, and one-half of what you see.

EXERCISES

1. What, in your own (not your parents', nor yet your teacher's) opinion, is the difference between dipping into a book and consulting a book and reading a book?

2. Your younger brother, maybe your younger sister, has suddenly become interested in the newspaper. But 'the kid' doesn't know how to begin: not unnaturally the mass of material, the formidable-looking notices, the dull-looking advertisements, the leaders (apparently containing no news), the extraordinary number of snippets, these and other features bewilder the child. Your help is asked. Could you give that help? ''Course I can!'

   Good! Then you have only to prove it. But 'the kid' is not at hand to listen to your excellent advice: you must therefore write and explain.

3. You have come upon a stirring poem that deals with the last fight of *The Revenge*, or the gallant exploit of young Lochinvar, or the ball before the battle of Waterloo, or Rupert Brooke's sonnet about dying in a foreign field. In all of these poems, much history is involved, as you can see for yourself. You have an idea that you might enjoy the particular poem still more if you knew the history—and, by the way, the geography—behind it and enriching it.

   How would you go about looking up that history and that geography? And about the poet himself? (It is always useful to know something about an author, whether poet or playwright, novelist or historian.)

4. *The Oxford Companion to English Literature* and *The Oxford Companion to American Literature* contain a wealth of information about those British and American men and women who are writers, what they have written, the form in which they write (novel, short story, history, philosophy, essay, sonnet, ode, lyric and so forth), the historical periods of literature, and the foreign poets and prose writers that have influenced English-speaking writers. Do you see how very useful these two books could be to you? even if you are only ten or eleven or twelve or thirteen years old and even though you may have the silly idea that such knowledge concerns only your older companions, especially those who have the School Certificate or Leaving Certificate or any other examination in mind.

5. Supposing that, as a piece of homework, you have been asked to read a poem by Robert Burns, in order to memorize a part or the whole of it or to write an essay about it or, more likely, to re-tell in your own words the story it tells. You have liked the poem: anyone with an ear for a rollicking song or the ability to enjoy a good story (that is, everyone without exception) would like it. But several words in dialect—a manner of speech, a set of words peculiar to a certain district or county or province—are giving trouble. Indeed, if you are not lucky enough to be a Scot, the poet seems different from the other poets you've read. He seems to have lived in easier times and circumstances, although, in point of fact, they were not easier. Unless you know something about the dialect, the poet, his country and period and circumstances, you will do less well than you would like when you come to memorize or to write. You have received many hints concerning the

ways in which you could quite easily learn all you need to know. How would you pick up that information?

6. You have recently begun to study biology or botany or chemistry or physics. Your text-book introduces the subject with some general talk of this and that. Some of it interests you; some of it probably would interest you if it were not a little over your head. The obvious thing to do is to ask your teacher to explain. But perhaps you have sprained your ankle and are at home. You know you are intelligent and you refuse to be beaten. What are you going to do about it?

7. The wireless set fascinates you, even to the point of causing you to wish to learn something about wireless in general—who invented it, and when and how; 'what makes the wheels go round'; the part it played in the war of 1939–45. Supposing there is no one who can tell you these things, how would you find out?

8. A paper on general knowledge has been set. You are to write the answers in class. Your teacher, being intelligent, permits you to use a book. One book only. What sort of book would it be? And what are your reasons for choosing that particular sort?

9. The examination is over. To your disgust, you have answered only six questions out of ten, whereas Jim, who you thought was slow, has answered seven and Harry, usually no better than you are, has answered ten. Jack, who is smart, has answered all ten, but Tom, who is perhaps smarter still, has answered only eight questions.

   How do you explain this very odd state of things?

10. In your history lessons you have been struck with the fact that if it hadn't rained so long and so heavily, the other side would have won that battle; that if the excessive heat had not sapped the energy of the Spaniards in Central America and the West Indies, they might (who knows?) have retained their American empire; that the Tartars would not have been such tartars if their own country had possessed a better climate (*at this point, your attention wandered*); that the Australians, South Africans and Californians might be such good cricketers and lawn-tennis players, especially in their own country, because of the climate. Where would you expect to find an explanation of such problems, or the answers to such questions, as these and similar facts have raised in your mind?

    Being a generous question-master, I hand to you, at the mere expense of my time, the following two hints. There is a subject called Historical Geography; and there is, easily understandable by all of you, a most readable book entitled *Time and Place*,[1] by the late Professor Lionel W. Lyde, an admirable geographer, and Alice Garnett.

    If you read that book, you may not find the answers to those specific questions: you will, however, find the material that will enable you to answer scores and scores of similar questions. It is only a small book, yet within that smallness you will discover wisdom and shrewdness and knowledge—all conveyed in a most agreeable manner.

11. You enjoy the books written by Arthur Ransome. (If you have read none, hasten to read some of them!) But has it occurred to you that you might enjoy them still more if you knew the author's life story?

    (*a*) How would you find out that life-story?

    (*b*) Say what increase in knowledge and appreciation you would expect to obtain by reading about the author of those delightful books.

[1] Published by Basil Blackwell, Oxford.

BOOK I

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INTRODUCTORY

INSTEAD of being children, you are now boys and girls. But you are still pupils. You still have much to learn before you can face with confidence a School or Leaving Certificate or some equivalent examination. More importantly, because much more fundamentally, you still have much to learn, much to practise, before you can pass from the Middle School stage of life, either for Higher School or for the larger, more exacting stage of Life with a capital *L*. Out in the difficult yet spacious world, whether within the confines of a city or in ' the wide open spaces ', you will find that what you have already learnt—reinforced and increased by what you will learn during the next two years or so—is not merely useful but vital, for on it depends, in part (probably a large part), your livelihood.

Excellence in education—above all, excellence in English—will make all the difference between mediocrity and distinction. A sound training in English will, if independence and imagination be added to your idea of the subject, enable you to step out of the rut and onto the high ground: and from that ' peak in Darien ' you will gaze, not ' with a wild surmise ', but with the heartening conviction that, even if you cannot ' command success ', you may at least strive confidently to deserve it. A good knowledge of English is essential to clear and courageous thinking. Life becomes very much easier with the aid of such thinking.

As your English has improved, so has your thinking. As your thinking has improved, so has your English. If your English is bad, it is because your thinking is feeble; if your thinking is feeble, unoriginal, it is because your learning of English has been that of a parrot committing to memory a few conventionalities. If you learn things as a parrot does—that is, merely memorizing instead of insisting that you understand them—you will inevitably speak like a parrot. The youth or the young girl that tries to parrot a way to success, whether mental or material, will receive just about as much respect as a parrot does and will go just about so far as, of itself, a parrot does. Schools have, or will soon be having, very little time for teachers that parrot their teaching; scientists need intelligence, the ability to use their minds effectually, and not only the parrot's memory of formulas; Civil Servants are more often required to think than the popular Press would pretend to believe; and so on, through all the professions and all the trades.

It is possible that by the exercise of a good memory, you have so far bluffed your way up to Middle School. Not that a good memory would have sufficed to pull you through Book One of this Course in English, nor through any well-conducted book upon any other subject you have to

study. During the first stage of your schooling, much of your thinking has perhaps been done for you. Now you must think for yourselves, willy-nilly. All of you *can*. Even you whose brains have, through laziness on your part or slackness upon that of your teachers, become less active than they would otherwise have done, can, with a little effort, learn to think alertly, easily, capably. The days of bluff are over for the few of you who have rashly trusted to bluff; all the others, the vast majority, have no need to bluff. In the world outside the school, bluff may sometimes help you: but it is a remarkably poor substitute for intelligence.

And intelligence can operate well only if it has a sound knowledge of English with which to work. That sound knowledge consists of a precise and various store of words and phrases, which, moreover, you must know how to use, both singly and in combination.

Especially in combination. Words and phrases employed correctly in combination mean correct speech—or correct writing. Fluent speech and fluent writing mean a saving of time, avoidance of trouble, and the oiling of the social machine. Fluent writing and fluent speech, however, are insufficient: speech and writing must also be exact and well-ordered, as you will soon perceive when you come to précis-writing and essay-writing. Neither speech nor writing can do justice to a subject unless the thinking behind the words be adequate. Nor, *vice versa*, can your thinking be adequate without a correspondingly sufficient vocabulary and an adaptable style.

Not only do you now have constantly to think about what you are doing in English (you will find this to be true of Reported Speech or essays or whatever branch of English it may be), but also you are rapidly widening and deepening both your knowledge and your appreciation of language and literature; hence, as a by-product, preparing yourselves to know precisely what value to place upon, just what faith to accord to the news and the comments on the news, alike in the newspapers and magazines and over the air.

You are pushing your horizon further and further back. At the same time you are strengthening your spiritual and intellectual vision: you are coming to view more distinctly and accurately those far more numerous things you can now discern. Their truth and their beauty. Their truth, their beauty, their good; or, as the Greeks used to say, 'The true, the good and the beautiful'.

You have reached the stage at which one can begin to develop one's spiritual and intellectual resources. Without these resources, you would lead a narrow, a materialistic and, before long, a very dull, unsatisfying life. The need to acquire these resources is simply the force that has driven mankind to rise from the sub-human to the human, and from the ignorant, uncultured human to the civilized and cultured. That need remains: we are but half way to our goal.

The one indispensable means (though not the only means) to satisfy that need to march forward, instead of sinking back into the primeval

slime, is an adequate knowledge of one's own language. And, obviously, those powers of thought which enable us to achieve that knowledge, powers themselves strengthened and enriched by the progress we make in language and in literature. Language, the vehicle of literature; literature, the expression of ourselves in language.

Not all of us can be creative. All of us can, without exception, be appreciative. By being appreciative, we gladden and widen our lives. Moreover, by being appreciative we not only enable the creators to continue their creative work in art, music, literature; by so doing, we increase the riches available to ourselves. This you will the better realize when you come to the chapter on Appreciation.

It is good to arrive: it is delightful to travel.

THOUGHT AND EXPRESSION

LEARNING is fun. Don't let anyone tell you differently. Even learning by yourself is fun. But it is better fun if you have a teacher to help you. It is good to have books as your instructors; it is better to have both books and a teacher.

A teacher cannot learn for you, any more than books can. Teacher and books can only help you to learn: they can, and do, help you very considerably. Yet they can help you only if you co-operate by doing your share of the work. Don't shudder at the idea of work, for, as you will some day realize for yourselves, it is the most constantly satisfying thing in life. We have, even the youngest of us, heard much, far too much, about 'Work—or want'. The truth is simpler: 'Work—or be unhappy'.

You probably have not read the chapter serving as a general introduction to the Course,[1] for it was addressed to teachers. But some teachers, certainly the majority of good teachers, will say, 'By all means read "General Introduction to the Course" if you wish to read it. Some of it may bore you and some of it will perhaps be over your heads. It cannot do you any harm, it might do you some good.' Yet I feel that most of you won't read it, at least at this early stage of your education. Hence the present chapter, written for you the learners, the taught.

It will not be a very easy chapter, but it won't be over your heads —provided you use them. They are meant to be used: or did you know? I say this, because far too many of us, whether young or not so young, seem to be content to let others, especially politicians and journalists, do our thinking for us. In other words, many of us are too lazy or too timid to think for ourselves, and, by thinking, learn how to direct our lives instead of, like a flock of sheep, blindly following those who may be no abler than we are and probably have their good, rather than ours, at heart.

Ask yourselves how far you would travel without teachers and without books. Supposing that, one week, you were asked to write an essay on 'How Should I Learn without Teachers?' and, the next week, 'How Much Could I Learn without Books?' Ponder these two questions for yourselves. If you find them too difficult, ask your teachers to explain them. Then ponder the further question, 'How would the teachers themselves manage without books?' If you cannot work that one out, ask your teachers.

I do not intend to short-circuit that experiment by answering the questions. All I shall say is that you the taught, they the teachers, and

[1] Book I.

the world in general would very soon be involved in grave difficulties if all printed matter were destroyed and no more became almost immediately available. The human mind can store only so much and remember only so much; it is useful to know where to find what one needs.

If we are British or American, we learn, by means of English, not only English itself but also every other subject. Our lessons and our reading are in English—not in French, nor in Latin. If we cannot read English properly and understand it clearly, we cannot learn anything properly, whether it be English or Latin or History or Geography or Mathematics or Chemistry or Physics or Technics. During the course of two wars I have often had to listen to attempts at explanation (whether of procedure or of mechanisms) by N.C.O.s unable to explain. They couldn't explain because they could not speak English properly. They couldn't speak English properly because they had not learnt to think in English.

And they couldn't think in English because they had not learnt to speak in English.

Yes; it works both ways. You cannot think without words and the ability to set them in their due order; yet you cannot set the words in a sensible, helpful order unless you know both the words themselves and how to think. The two things are inseparable: no thought without words; no sensible, logical, understandable, helpful words without thought.

No thinking without an adequate knowledge of English; no sensible, useful speaking or writing without thinking.

Phrased thus, it all sounds pretty obvious, doesn't it? Yet one is forced to suppose that precious few people have taken the trouble to work out the relationship between thinking and language—between our thinking and our English. Take a simple statement: $3 \times 6 \div 9 = 2$, or $\frac{3 \times 6}{9} = 2$. That is mathematical 'shorthand', an arrangement of mathematical symbols, a grouping of figures and signs, and it represents '3 multiplied by 6, the result (18) being divided by 9, yields or equals 2'. Before you can do that simple sum, you must understand what is meant by 'multiply', by 'divide' and by 'to equal'. Unless you think clearly, you cannot work the sum. You can think only with the materials provided —the figures 3, 6, 9 (spelt *three—six—nine*) and the signs x and ÷ and =. You can think with those materials only if you know exactly what each sign, each figure signifies. Try to think what '$3 \times 6 \div 9$' means without putting it into words: you can't. You just cannot think of $3 \times 6 \div 9$ (nor of its result: 2) without words.

Words are as much tools of the mind as an axe or spade or hammer is of the hands. Indeed, more: you might find a flint to take the place of an axe, a flattish piece of wood to take that of a spade, a small stone to take that of a hammer; there is nothing that can do duty for words.

The more tools we have, the easier it is for us to work; the more words we have, the more easily do we think and speak. The better each tool, the more efficient will be that particular part of our work; the better each word we have—that is, the better fitted it is to our purpose—the better we speak or write with it.

The fact that there are comparatively few tools but many words does not affect the argument, for we could probably learn the chief meanings of a hundred words and practise using those words (that is, in phrases and sentences) in the time it would take us to become skilful with even one tool.

As it is insufficient to know what a tool is for without handling it, so it is necessary to use words in speaking and writing—not merely to know their meanings. The increase in manual skill as applied to tools, a skill that can be expressed only in our using those tools, corresponds to the increase in mental skill as applied to words, a skill that can be expressed only in our using those words. We can increase our verbal skill in two ways—by enlarging our store of words (and thereby exercising our memory) and by speaking and writing them: but the activities are rendered possible only by the exercise of our minds. On the other hand, we can adequately exercise our minds only by increasing our store of words and by showing our skill with them. Language and thought go hand in hand: each implies the other: neither can exist without the other. In brief, language and thought are merely two aspects of one thing, that thing being intelligence. More precisely, language (whether in speech or in writing) and thought are products of intelligence; products inseparably linked, the one with the other. In other words, these two products are one product; one product viewed from two different angles. Intelligence produces thought: but thought can be formed, imagined and expressed only by or in language; and language is the expression of thought—thought not merely as something in the mind but as having issued from the mind and become available to others.

Even to ourselves, however, thought can be grasped, 'nailed down', expressed, only in language. Even to and for ourselves, our language—whether actually spoken or written; or silently uttered; or written only in or by the imagination—can result from only one thing. That thing is: thought. Language is thought's outward form; thought is the essence of language. Nothing can be a thought until it is clothed in language. Until it achieves form—that is, until it reaches the stage of being realized in words—thought is not thought at all; it is mere feeling, perhaps intense, perhaps vague.

Let us put it in another way. Until thought is expressed, it is a mere ghost—and not even a visible or audible ghost. But when thought is expressed in words (the only important way in which, don't forget, it can be expressed at all) it immediately becomes a living creature, as it were; a creature recognizable by all and visible or audible to everyone whose path it crosses.

By language I mean 'spoken or written language', not the language of signs or gestures. Language conveys meaning; it forms the most important method and instrument of communication. Now, you can convey meaning by movement. A finger placed on the lips signifies 'Be quiet, don't talk'. A finger pointing straight from an outstretched arm signifies direction, but unless we know the circumstances, we do not know whether the pointing finger means 'It (or he) is over there' or 'It (or he) was there, or will be there' or 'Go there' or 'Go there with me' or perhaps something quite different. Hands thrust against another person's chest convey to him that you are barring the way, but neither why nor for how long.

Go one step further. A young child may exclaim 'Dog!' Apart from the tone of the voice, you will not know whether he is afraid of a dog or is delighted to see one or desires one or needs one or is merely making conversation. If a man staggers to your door and gasps 'food', you assume that he means, 'I badly need food'. But he may be meaning, 'I need food for my companion'; perhaps 'The food was poisoned, and so am I! Please help me.' Such language is hardly more expressive than the use of signs: like signs, this telegraphic language leaves so much unexpressed as to be unsatisfactory or irritating or ambiguous or even dangerous. If signs and telegraphic language are combined, the purpose —the meaning—is sometimes clear. If, for instance, you are teaching a child to talk and, pointing, you say 'Dog', the meaning is 'That thing to which I am pointing—that thing to which you see me pointing—is a dog' or, more briefly, '*That* is a *dog*'. If a child points to a dog, says 'Dog', and then points to itself and says 'Me', its meaning and its intention are ambiguous. Does the child mean, 'That is a dog and this is me'[1] or 'That is my dog' or 'I want that dog' or 'I like that dog' or 'I'm afraid of that dog' or one or other of several further possibilities? (When its language has become more precise and its vocabulary larger, the child will be able to tell you exactly what it does mean.) It has a feeling—separateness or difference; pride of possession; desire or greed; pleasure; fear; and so forth. If the thought is more precise than the sole word *dog* can bear or convey, the child will probably obtain the additional precision by a more precise action or movement. If it wishes to make you understand that it owns—or believes it owns—the dog, it may put its arm around the animal's neck or lay its hand upon the animal's back and pat it. At a slightly later stage, a child that is able to express one or two of those thoughts but not the others will, until it has learnt the words to convey those other thoughts, tend to confine itself to expressing such thoughts as it can easily express—and to harp on them. As the child's vocabulary gradually catches up with its feelings, so will its mental tools, i.e. its words, be used, eagerly used, to turn these feelings into thoughts. To omit several intermediate steps, we finally reach the stage at which a person has more words than he has

[1] Evidently so young a child would hardly say, 'This is I'.

feelings, aims, ideas: that, as you will learn when you grow older, is the stage at which you can and probably will embroider on what you feel and believe and think—imagine things about them—invent tales about them—write poems or essays or stories or diaries about them.

We all begin by needing words for things, persons, feelings, actions: whereas some of us end by trying to find or to imagine such experiences as will fit or do justice to the words, most of us end by being able to enrich our minds and characters by what we hear or read. We enrich our lives by our language. We enrich our thoughts by our words; a process that, as we have already seen, began immediately we could use words sensibly. The journey is a long one, but it is fascinating.

Here, more than elsewhere, is it true to say that 'to travel is better than to arrive', for we never do arrive: no one is a perfect speaker or writer, no one is a faultless thinker. But the nearer we approach to those two goals, in reality that one goal, the deeper and keener is our enjoyment of what others say and write; likewise, the better our own speaking and writing. These are causes for satisfaction. It is a wholly justifiable satisfaction, for the pleasure we derive from doing things well, so long as it does not make us conceited, is as pure and deep as that which we derive from watching others do things well.

It is, however, necessary to formulate a warning. It does not follow that because a man can speak or write well, he thinks equally well; but it does follow that if a man speaks or writes well, he can, if he takes the trouble, speak or write, either equally well or almost as well; therefore he should take the trouble. On the other hand, it does not follow that if a man is a great thinker he is an equally great writer, but at least he will not be a mediocre writer, much less a bad one; he may take rather less trouble with his style than with his thinking. Locke, for instance, is a great thinker, yet he is not a great writer. Swinburne is a great poet, yet he is not a great thinker. But, with a little trouble, Locke could have been an excellent writer; with more mental energy, Swinburne could have been a notable thinker.

Which brings us to a further warning or caution or modification. Certain subjects require more thinking than others do; certain subjects are approached from the angle of thought, not from that of beauty. Other subjects are approached from the angle of beauty or of emotion (or of both): a writer dealing thus with such a subject conveys an impression of beauty or wonder or intensity; yet, although he has thought about the subject, he perhaps does not thrust that aspect of the subject upon the reader; and so he may gain the reputation of being a good writer but a shallow thinker, when, in fact, he is not the latter at all.

By and large, thinking keeps pace with writing, writing with thinking. The exceptions are much less exceptional than, at first, they seem. If you think powerfully or subtly, your style may lack certain graces but it will, at the least, be powerful or subtle. If you write well, you must have a corresponding mental ability. If you write clearly, it is because

you think clearly. If you think clearly, you will—unless you're hopelessly lazy—write clearly. But you must have plenty of practice in writing before your writing is as clear or strong or charming or subtle as your thinking, for in writing as compared with thinking there are additional factors. In thinking you have to satisfy only yourselves: in writing you have to make things as clear to others as to yourselves. You cannot take it for granted that because something is entirely clear to you it is therefore entirely clear to others. For instance, when you are working out a problem or an argument, you may be able to miss a stage or a step because it is so familiar to you, so well understood by you, that it is at the back of your mind. But when you wish to explain it to someone else, you cannot omit that step. You have no right to expect that he knows what is at the back of your mind—how on earth could he?

Listen to your school friends and acquaintances trying to tell you about some simple thing they did: what it was, where it took place, how it was done and why. How many of them can do it, I won't say well, but even adequately? Frankly, very few. (It's almost as bad amongst grown-ups.) Some boys and girls are good at talking. But most boys and girls, like most men and women, talk far too much and say far too little.

Why is it that most boys and girls, men and women, are so incoherent, long-winded, rambling? Because they have not thought out what they wish to say, much less the order in which to say it, still less the way in which to say it. When they come to write about it, in a letter to a friend or in an essay at school, they have the time, both to plan their letter or their essay before they start and to work out the details as they go along. Even then the results are often rather dreadful, not because they could not do any better but because they have prevented themselves from doing better. They will not go to the trouble of thinking. Perhaps they have the idea that thinking is bad for their brains or might wear them out. The truth is that one cannot be said to have a brain at all unless one uses it, and that a brain improves with use. The human brain will stand far more than the human body can.

As one can improve one's thinking powers by speaking and writing, and by pondering what one reads instead of taking it all on trust, so one can improve one's speaking and writing by various kinds of thinking.

Why should you wish to improve your thinking, your writing, your speaking? Well, if you cannot see that for yourselves, I do not intend to prove it to you, step by step, fact by fact. All that I ask is that you ask yourselves these questions:

Are you convinced that you are so well-informed, so well-educated, so intelligent, so good, so useful, so helpful to others that you cannot improve? Are you convinced that you can learn nothing from others? Are you convinced that the world is so prosperous, so happy, so beautiful, so fair towards everyone that nothing can be done to make it better?

* * * * *

So much for generalities.

Let us consider English as a subject. The first point we notice is that, apart from the fact that it is necessary to know how to do simple sums in addition and subtraction, multiplication and division, and apart from the further fact that it is advisable though not absolutely necessary to know how to read and write, the only subject everyone has to know is his own language, in which, if we are logical, we must include the already mentioned reading and writing. For us, that means English, whether the British or the American variety—or, preferably, both.

As air and food are necessary to life, so language is necessary to civilization. Without air and food, there could be no life; without language, no civilization. Language is not merely the surest index to civilization, it is its surest means of moral, mental and even, to some extent, mechanical well-being. For *us*, language means English.

Those points could be profitably developed, but they have already occupied enough of our time. It must now be clear that without a good knowledge of English, you cannot go very far in the study, the reading, of history; nor in that of geography, physics, chemistry; nor in that of other languages, whether the Ancient Classics or the Modern European (or Asiatic or African or Polynesian or what-have-you). It would be truer to say that, without a fair knowledge of English, you cannot safely begin any other subject—unless, of course, it's digging or road-sweeping or something of that sort. It must also be clear that nothing constructive, nothing intelligent, can be done without thinking; and no thinking can be done without words. For *us*, that means English words.

English words: what they are; what they mean; how to use them. How to use them; not as a professional writer or a politician does, but as we, all of us without exception, must do, every day, every way.

It has, I think, become almost painfully clear that it is not only our pleasure but also our profit, not only our profit (spiritual as well as financial) but also our general welfare and our very safety that depend upon our being able to use English clearly, whether in speech or in writing, and to understand it thoroughly when others use it.

Think back, for a moment, to the seaman, the soldier, the airman in the war of 1939–45. Orders had to be given, instructions issued, messages passed. Very often a faultily expressed order or message produced at least a delay; and delays could be dangerous, if not disastrous. Occasionally they resulted in loss of life. Our fighting forces had to think carefully, write clearly: sheer urgency resulted, ninety-nine times out of a hundred, in clear thinking, hence in clear orders and messages. If you say ' That's an extreme case ', I reply, ' An extreme case that existed for six years and involved the whole of civilization can hardly be an extreme case'. The same statement held good for the war of 1914–18. Moreover, if anyone you know were to examine his life and admit how very often things might, almost certainly would, have gone better if only he had spoken or written more clearly, or had fully understood what someone

else wrote or said, you would see that the failure to think clearly and then express oneself clearly affects all of us.

Are we ourselves taking the necessary steps to ensure that we understand English and use it to the best advantage? Are you, as a learner, doing your share? Why fail when you can succeed? Why come many a cropper by waiting until you are middle-aged or perhaps old, instead of grasping your opportunity while you are young? While you are young you can at least memorize things so much more quickly and easily than you will later. While you are young, you have teachers ready and eager to help you to:

(1) gather a sufficient supply of words;
(2) learn how those words (and phrases) are used in sentences—that is, in questions, remarks, statements, letters, reports, etc.;

and

(3) at the same time, make yours, for life, the ability to think clearly and thus become a pleasure, instead of a pain and a grief, to yourselves—and a help and joy, instead of a nuisance, to others.

If you regard that as preaching or what some of you so elegantly call a 'pi-jaw', you are mistaken. I am merely supposing that you have an average share of common sense—in other words, that you are not idiots; I have every right to suppose it. I am merely taking it for granted that you can see for yourselves the truth of something almost ridiculously obvious. I am merely hoping that you have sufficient character to wish to be useful, active members of society, not spivs and drones. I am merely paying you the compliment of assuming that you do not suffer from that fatal disease which weakened the world between the two great wars: spinelessness, or the inability to bridge the gap between 'I *wish*' and 'I *will*'. The future rests with you: but you'll make 'a ghastly mess' of it if you do not think clearly. And you certainly won't be able to think thus without a sufficient store of words that you understand fully and use frequently.

That store of words is well within the reach of all of you; and so is the ability to use them.

This you can do the more easily by ceasing to regard, as I fear some of you regard, words either as counters—as things you shuffle here and there in some game or other; or as ready-made clothes you can take off the peg.

Words would be almost meaningless, mere collections of letters, if they stood alone on their own feet, as it were. They do not. They do not because they cannot. If you think of a word, you tend to think of it in some connection or other: not as a single word, but as part of a phrase. If you think of a phrase, you tend to think of it in a sentence. Expressed differently, that thought might be put in some such way as this:

If you think of *three*, you will, as likely as not, think also of *two* and

four. If you think of *two*, you think not only of *one* and *three*, but also of your parents or of you and someone rather special. If you think of *green*, you will probably think of *grass*. More, what would *green* convey to you if you didn't think of grass or a green dress or a green cushion or a green lamp-shade? Suppose you think of ' to *live* '. Do you not connect it with your own life, you yourself, and with other persons and with animals? Think of *dog*. You do not think merely of the word: a picture of the animal—your dog, somebody's dog, dogs in general—comes into your mind. Think of *kettle* and you think of the object the word stands for; perhaps of the water that goes into it, the bubbling as it boils, a cup of tea.

Words are not mere things consisting of letters of the alphabet, letters arranged in a certain order and pronounced in a certain way. Spoken, words take, in speech, that place which persons, animals and things occupy in the world about us—in life—in reality. Written words represent on paper the persons, animals and things we know or have heard about or read about. Words represent (that is, stand for) persons, animals, things, including such abstract or invisible, untouchable things as happiness and pain, joy and fear and hope. Words are the shortest way of mentioning or recalling persons, things, states of mind and the rest of it: they are more convenient than drawings and more exact than signs and gestures.

The more persons, animals, birds, fishes, minerals, metals, manufactured articles, actions, states of mind, qualities and so forth we know by name, the better. It would be very awkward if we knew *copper* and *silver* but not the word for gold: every time we wished to refer to gold we should have to say ' that metal which is coloured yellow and is more valuable than silver '. It would be more than very awkward if we knew the word *father* but not the word for mother. It would be absurd if we knew the word *go* but not the word for the action of approaching or arriving. Extend that reasoning to less familiar things. For instance, you know the words describing warmth and coldness; but suppose you do not know the word for the temperature midway between the two. Would you remain satisfied with saying ' not warm, not cold, but halfway between '?

Along with the knowledge of words must go the knowledge of how to speak coherently, clearly, briefly, and how to write briefly and clearly. Not merely to be able to make a brief statement but how to build a brief narrative or description or explanation: how to write a letter, an essay, a formal report; how to make a short speech, how to debate, how to explain the way or the why something is done; how to describe a machine, a process, a procedure, and so forth.

Now, the only way to become a good talker, a ready speaker, is to practise speaking by entering sensibly into conversation. And the only way to become a good, i.e. a clear, brief and interesting, letter-writer or writer of reports or explanations or descriptions, is to practise writing. You cannot become a good talker or speaker by remaining silent, nor a

good letter-writer, report-maker or whatever it may be, by reading about the theory of the matter and omitting to write. Theory improves practice; but far better is practice without theory than theory without practice.

Before you become a good talker, speaker, writer (I do not mean author), you will make many mistakes, do some odd things, come many a spill. Isn't that a part of the fun?

Yet evidently there are difficulties.

One of those difficulties consists in the technicalities of language in general. You will find them explained and simplified, and perhaps rendered quite interesting, as you encounter them in the ensuing pages, precisely as you have already had many terms of grammar explained in Book I. They won't eat you: they're not ogres: some of them, indeed, are entertaining little fellows. To show you what I mean, I shall recall three words with which you have already become acquainted, and leave rhetorical and metrical terms until we reach the relevant chapters. Let us take *accidence*, *parsing*, *adjective*, and remind ourselves that such terms are not really so terrible, so difficult, so dull as they sound.

Accidence is that part of grammar which deals with the forms of words—their shapes and changes. For instance, the formation of plural from singular, *horse* becoming *horses*, *man* becoming *men*, *crisis* becoming *crises*, *I* becoming *we*; the cases in a declension—that is, the changes that take place according to the function of a noun or a pronoun in a sentence, as ' *I* hit *him* '—' *He* hit *me* ', ' That book does not belong to *her* ', ' A *horse* eats grass, hay or hats '—' A *horse's* food may be grass or hay or, when it has the opportunity, a straw hat '; the persons in a conjugation, as ' I *go* to town '—' He *goes* to town '— I *went* to town '—' I *was going* to town that day, so *I couldn't have been* here '. *Accidence*, in short, is concerned with the *accidents* that befall a word: the events or *happenings* in its gay young life or its sedate old one.

An *adjective* is sometimes called ' a describing word ', for either it tells you of what sort or size or number a noun or pronoun is or it limits the noun, as in ' *some* men ', or it tells you that it is ' *these* men ', not ' *those* men '; it may be a Proper Adjective, as in ' He took *French* mustard and, soon after, *French* leave ', because it describes a Proper Noun, the name of a person or a place. Literally, an adjective is ' that which is thrown at ' something else; a word thrown at another word; a word stuck to it, much as a label is stuck to one's luggage. In ' French mustard ', *French* is the label attached to mustard. Often an adjective is called an *epithet*, which is literally ' a word *placed upon* another word ', added to it much as a label is added to a bottle to describe its contents.

Parsing, as you know, is the art of looking fiercely at a sentence—we'll suppose it is ' The black dog viciously bit him '—and rending it limb from limb—seeing what part of speech each word is and what its relationship is to that word which it most nearly concerns. The word *parsing* derives from the verb ' to *parse* ' and its history explains its function (what it does): to *parse* means to divide a phrase or a sentence into its parts; it

comes, however, not straight from *parts* but from the Latin '*pars orationis*', a part of speech.

As a man wishing to multiply 17 by 119 or to divide 17965383 by 191½ must know the rules of multiplication and division, so must we know the simple rules of accidence and syntax. For most of us it is more useful to be able to build a clearly, briefly expressed sentence than to divide 17965383 by 191½. A basis of knowledge is presupposed in every art, every science, every activity, every process. Without that basis you would be lost; indeed, you could not be sure of being able to begin correctly, let alone continue correctly, much less finish correctly.

That basis is exciting to learn. Having learnt it, you will, unless you're dead above the ears, want to go on. Going on, you will become good at it, whatever 'it' may be.

There is nothing to equal the pleasure of being able to do something well—and then *doing* it.

EXERCISES

1. Language began as speech; much later, it became writing. How did it begin? Do you think it was the result of fancy or imagination? Or do you think that it resulted from men's need to communicate their wishes and fears and other thoughts and emotions? To tell one another about something that needed to be done or something else that should be avoided or who, what, why, this or that was or happened?
2. In what ways other than by words, whether spoken or written, can human beings communicate?
3. There must have been stories, and there were probably songs and perhaps even poems, before men could write—or, at the least, before many others could understand writing when they saw it. Some of those stories and songs seemed so good that the listeners said, 'We must not forget these stories and songs.[1] *You* must not forget them.'

   How were these stories preserved?

   (You may not have read, may not have been told, how it happened. That does not matter. Put yourself in the place of a story-teller, a reputed singer, a professional reciter: how would you yourself solve the problem?)
4. Can you explain the difference between (*a*) thinking and believing? (*b*) between believing and knowing?

   To help you, I suggest that you murmur to yourself, 'I think I'm going to be very ill, but I believe I shall get well—of course, I cannot say that I *know* I shall recover; in fact, I don't really know that I'm going to be very ill'. And then ask yourself what you mean by using 'think' in one place, 'believe' in another, and 'know' in the third.
5. Alfred is very good at his manuscripts, but not much of a hand at cookery. The old peasant woman hardly knows what a manuscript is; but, every evening before 'the old man' comes in from the fields, she bakes a small batch of griddle cakes. Asked to keep his eye on the cakes, Alfred glances at them now and then but soon becomes absorbed in a manuscript. The cakes burn, the old woman scolds, Alfred's ears burn.

[1] Often the stories were told in song, or in chant, or at least in recitative.

But suppose that the old crone were told to make a very different sort of cake, a sort that required a knowledge of herbs. She knows nothing about herbs, except for one or two growing nearby. Alfred's knowledge of cookery is not impressive. He does, however, know about the herbs: his mother has told him, he has watched her crushing them and putting them by, he has read about them. Turning to him, the old dame says, 'I don't suppose you, with all your new-fangled book-learning, would know anything about herbs? No, hardly! I'm a fool to ask.'

'Why, old woman? Do you need to know this for your cooking?' She tells him; he tells her; the cakes are a huge success. 'Well, my, my! So there's some good to be got out of your old manuscripts after all.'

Munching industriously, Alfred replies, 'And out of your cakes too, Mistress Denewulf'.—

I may be wrong, but I suspect that there's a moral somewhere—a lesson—a hint—a piece of knowledge that might be uncommonly useful to you when you grow up. Can you tell me what it is?

6. Do you understand the following passages without putting the figures into words?
   (*a*) '*Anyone* knows how many beans make 5!'
   'Oh, I shouldn't say that. Many people, when they add 2 and 2, make 5.'
   (*b*) If 2 and 2 make 4, and 2 by 2 makes 4; and if 3 and 3 makes 6, why doesn't 3 by 3 make 6 too?
   (*c*) He had 101 things to do; and he forgot No. 101.
   (*d*) '10 little nigger boys'—well, you know the rest.

7. Which is the worse? Knowing too many words, or knowing too few? Having decided which, you might tell your teacher why you think so.

8. Do you honestly think you know these words—*autograph, automatic, axis, advanced*—if the only thing you can do with them is:
   (*a*) to pronounce them?
   (*b*) to pronounce and spell them?
   (*c*) to pronounce, spell and write them?

9. In the dusk you see a huge shape in the road. You feel afraid, you cannot put a name to it. 'Oh, it's only a van, the rear light has gone out!' You continue on your way, laughing or, at any rate, smiling.

But then you see another huge shape. You are afraid. 'I wonder what that awful shape is,' you say aloud. You are so afraid, that a voice coming from nearby does not frighten you; and as soon as the voice (belonging to a neighbour of yours) says, 'Why, Willie! It's only a mound of earth dug up by the workmen; the lamp has gone out, and so you didn't see, straight away, what it was', your mind is again at rest.

If the neighbour, being a stupid fellow, said, 'It's a tiger, Willie', you would perhaps laugh, because your feeling would be, 'Well, it may be something awful, but it certainly isn't a tiger. Nothing so bad as a tiger. Oh! probably nothing at all.'

If the neighbour said, 'It's a haystack', you would certainly laugh. Yet it might be a load of hay that had fallen out of a waggon.

Read that again. Think awhile.

(*a*) Were those words—*mound of earth, tiger, haystack*—mere words? Would mere words, i.e. sounds without sense, have restored your confidence or made you laugh?

(*b*) If you were the boy and had understood the neighbour to say *mound of turnips* instead of *mound of earth*, *tailor* instead of *tiger*, and *chimney stack* instead of *haystack*, what would you have felt and thought on each occasion?

(*c*) Supposing the boy is told that what he sees is an elephant, he will not feel afraid; if he is told that it is a rogue elephant and knows what a rogue elephant is, he'll run for his life. What links do you notice between words and thought? words and knowledge? knowledge and emotion?

And can you draw any general conclusions?

10. You hear the word *fere* and, not being a scholar, you think *fear* is meant; if you see it written, you still do not know what it means, but you do at least know that it does not mean fear. You see the word '*a tear*' by itself; but without its context (the phrase or the sentence in which it occurs) you cannot be sure whether it is a tear in the eye or a tear in a coat; if you heard the word, you would not be in doubt, the one being pronounced differently from the other.

(*a*) Can you think of other words pronounced alike but written differently? And others, pronounced differently but written alike?

(*b*) Clearly, there is some important connection between speech and writing; can you say what it is?

GRAMMAR: SOME FINER POINTS

As you know, grammar falls into two groups: Accidence and Syntax. As you also know, accidence would be senseless—more, it could not exist—without syntax; and syntax would be clumsy and imperfect without accidence. Yet, for the purpose of convenience, I have divided these additional points or aspects of grammar into two parts.

I. Accidence.

§1. *Nouns*

Number. Difficulty is presented by words adopted direct from Greek, Latin, Hebrew. The pedantic plurals of Hebrew *cherub* and *seraph* are *cherubim* and *seraphim*; the English plurals, *cherubs* and *seraphs*, have virtually displaced them. *Stamina* is a Latin plural used as an English singular, but this English word has no plural; yet the English plural of a flower *stamen* is *stamens*. *Addenda* (additions to a book) and *errata* (printer's errors) are Latin plurals, and they may be used as plurals in English; yet it has become permissible—i.e., usage—to employ *errata* as a singular in the sense ' a list of printer's errors ' and *addenda* as a collective with a singular verb. We speak of the *indexes* of books, *indices* in mathematics; the singular common to both is *index*. *Appendix* takes plural *appendices* (medical) and *appendixes* (of a book). Likewise *genius* takes plural *genii* only in the sense ' spirits ', but *geniuses* for ' men and women of genius '. *Medium* has learnèd plural *media* and ordinary plural *mediums*.

For the sake of euphony, we have adopted the Latin plurals of *analysis, axis, basis, hypothesis, oasis, synthesis: analyses, axes, bases, hypotheses, oases, syntheses: analysises, synthesises*, etc., would be intolerable.

Here is a tabulated short list of erudite words not hitherto mentioned:

Singular	Scientific or Pedantic Plural	Ordinary or English Plural	Incorrect Plural
agendum	*agenda*	*agenda*	*agendums, agendas*
alluvium	*alluvia*	*alluviums*	
alumnus	*alumni*	*alumni*	
animalculum	*animalcula*	–	*animalculae, animalculums*
animalcule	–	*animalcules*	
antenna	*antennae*	*antennae*	

Singular	Scientific or Pedantic Plural	Ordinary or English Plural	Incorrect Plural
apparatus	*apparatus*	*apparatuses*	*apparati*
automaton	*automata*	*automatons*	
chrysalis	*chrysalides*	*chrysalises*	
crisis	*crises*	*crises*	*crisises*
criterion	*criteria*	*criterions*	
datum	*data*	*data*	
desideratum	*desiderata*	*desiderata*	
dictum	*dicta*	*dictums*	*dictas*
effluvium	*effluvia*	*effluvia, effluviums*	
focus	*foci*	*focuses*	
formula	*formulae*	*formulas*	
fungus	*fungi*	*funguses*	*fungus*
genus	*genera*	*genera, genuses*	
hippopotamus	*hippopotami*	*hippopotamuses*	
ignoramus[1]	–	*ignoramuses*	*ignorami*
larva	*larvae*	*larvas*	
memorandum	*memoranda*	*memorandums*	*memorandas*
millennium	*millennia*	*millenniums*	
nebula	*nebulae*	*nebulas*	
nucleus	*nuclei*	*nucleuses*	
octopus	*octopodes, -pods; octopi*	*octopuses*	
phenomenon	*phenomena*	*phenomenons*	*phenomenas*
radius	*radii*	*radiuses*	
rhinoceros	*rhinocerotes*	*rhinoceroses*	*rhinoceri*
series	*series*	*series*	*serieses*
simulacrum	*simulacra*	*simulacrums*	
species	*species*	*species*	
stigma	*stigmata*	*stigmas*[2]	
stimulus	*stimuli*	*stimuluses* (rare)	
stratum	*strata*	*strata, stratums*	*stratas*
terminus	*termini*	*terminuses*	

The same applies to words from Modern European languages or Asiatic or African or . . . For instance, *grotto—grottos, stiletto—stilettos*; not *grotti, stiletti,* as they would be in Italian. Musicians, however, prefer *tempi* to *tempos* as the plural of *tempo.*

But the following French words take French plurals: *beau—beaux*; *bureau—bureaux,* but now usually *bureaus*; *madame—mesdames*; *monsieur—messieurs*; *plateau—plateaux,* but increasingly *plateaus.*

[1] Latin *ignoramus,* 'We do not know'.
[2] Not merely 'English' but usual for 'marks of infamy; moral stains'—'marks made with branding iron'—and in Botany.

Let us return for a moment to nouns ending in *-o*, a frequent source of trouble to the beginner. If, as in *curio*, the *o* is preceded by a vowel, you add *s*, thus: *bamboo–s, cameo–s, cuckoo–s, curio–s, embryo–s, Hindoo–s, igloo–s, intaglio–s, portfolio–s, seraglio–s*. That is simple. Unfortunately, you have to remember that certain nouns ending in a consonant+*o* take this *-os* plural, the chief ones being:

canto–s, chromo–s, dynamo–s, electro–s, grotto–s, halo–s, memento–s, photo–s, piano–s, proviso–s, solo–s, tiro (*tyro*)*–s.*

Most nouns ending in consonant+*o*, however, take plural in *-oes*, thus:

archipelago–es, buffalo–es, cargo–es, echo–es, hero–es, mango–es, motto–es, Negro–es, potato–es, tomato–es, tornado–es, torpedo–es, volcano–es.

This predominance is so marked that it has set up a growing tendency for even the exceptions to cease to be exceptions: thus, *dynamo* may become *dynamoes*; *halo, haloes*; and *memento, mementoes.*

Note that *measles, mumps* and *glanders*, like *species*,[1] *innings*[2] and *corps*, can be either singular or plural; but *corps*, pronounced *kor* in the singular, is pronounced *kors* in the plural.

Foot, in indications of a person's height, remains *foot*, as in ' He is six foot two (inches) '—but ' Mt Everest is 29,002 feet '; sailors affect ' ten *fathom* ', others now say ' ten *fathoms* '; ' thirty *mile* ' has become antiquated. ' He weighs eleven *stone* ten *pounds* ': *pound* is antiquated. Usage, however, has given us ' a five-pound note ' or ' a ten-pound note '.

Several other unchanged plurals worth noting are exemplified in ' His army consisted of 30,000 *foot* and 7,000 *horse*, with 70 *cannon* ' (foot soldiers, or infantrymen—horse soldiers, or cavalrymen—cannon and their gun-crews); ' The fleet contained few warships but many small *craft* '; ' Drake's force numbered only five *sail* '; ' The station carried 6,000 *head* of sheep and 60 *head* of cattle '.

In compound nouns, the general rule is that only the most important word takes the plural form: *box-offices, lookers-on, goings-on, fountain-pens, girl-guides, breakwaters, postmen, good-for-nothings, brothers-in-law, sons-in-law, courts-martial*; but either *knights-errant* or *knight-errants, post-masters-general* or *postmaster-generals*. Where *man* or *woman* forms the first element, both elements change: *man-servant, men-servants*; *woman writer, women writers*. But *maid-servants, boy* (or *girl*) *friends.*

Gender. Little remains to be said. A relic of Latin appears in *testator—testatrix, prosecutor—prosecutrix*. Foreign formations cannot be regimented. You will easily assimilate, as you go along, such pairs as *czar—czarina, rajah—ranee* (therefore *maharajah—maharanee*).

[1] All Latin-derived nouns in *-ies* are the same in singular and plural; e.g. *caries, rabies, scabies.*

[2] American has singular *inning.*

§2. *Pronouns*

One kind of Case has yet to be mentioned: the Dative of Interest, as in 'Make *him* up a hamper'—'I'd like you to cash *me* this cheque'—'Won't he write *you* a summary of the book?'

> Villain, I say, knock *me* at this gate
> And rap *me* well, or I'll knock your knave's pate
> (Shakespeare, *Macbeth*).

But this dative can be used also with intransitive verbs, and it may apply to a noun, as in 'That handbag, sir, is so strong that it'll last its *owner* a lifetime' (it will last *you* . . .)

This dative is sometimes called the Ethic (or Ethical) Dative, a term that some grammarians needlessly reserve for such vague, almost meaningless datives as appear in 'He plucked *me* his doublet and offered them his throat to cut' (Shakespeare) and 'A terrible demon of a woman . . . claps *you* an iron cap on her head, and takes the field when need is' (Carlyle).

Closely related is the Reflexive Dative, used with certain *in*transitive verbs; this old-fashioned usage affects only pronouns.

> Stand *thee* close there.—Shakespeare.
> There lies *him* down the lubber fiend.—Milton.[1]

Several pronouns require further attention. Take *such* in the following examples:

His affection, if *such* it may be termed, was fickle	(= this, or that)
That would be easy for *such* as you	(= such a person, such persons)
Such as saw it, admired	(= those who)
Such is life!	(= that).

If you had to parse *such*, you would do it, not by rule of thumb, but by common sense, i.e. according to what it represents.

Aught, as in 'for *aught* I know', is an archaic equivalent of *anything*; so *naught*, nothing.

All may = all persons, everybody, as in '*All* know him'; or it may = everything, 'He had *all*, not merely something, to do with that affair'.

For the distinctions between *who* and *that*, *which* and *that*, see 'Restrictive and Non-Restrictive Relatives', page 35.

[1] I owe to Dr C. T. Onions the nomenclature and most of the examples in these four paragraphs.

§3. *Group Genitives*

Group Genitives affect both nouns and pronouns. The rule of the genitive (a *boy's* hat, the two *boys'* hats; a *woman's* dress, these *women's* dresses) is extended to any such group of words as may be regarded as a unit—providing the group be not of inordinate length. The *s* is attached to the last word in a word-group without regard to logic, yet in strict accordance with usage: the group genitive is one of many sense-constructions; perhaps the most illuminating example of sense-construction, where *sense* = common sense.

Someone else's hat
The King of England's power is discretionary
The King and Queen of England's duties are numerous
The President of the United States' home
The Presidents of the United States' rank
A Bachelor of Science's gown
A Man about town's clubs
We went for *an hour or two's* ride
He acted thus in *thousands of people's* presence
Mr and Mrs Tom Smith's children. (But *Mr Smith's* and *Mr Jones's* children ', because the children belong to different homes.)

Ambiguity rarely occurs: if it does, rewrite the sentence. In riddles, the ambiguity is deliberate, as in that old conundrum, ' The son of Pharaoh's daughter was the daughter of Pharaoh's son '.

Common sense will prevent such absurdities as

This is *the woman we spoke about yesterday's* daughter.
That was *the man who was killed yesterday's* house.

Common sense equally determines

I bought it at Heffer's, the Cambridge bookseller in Petty Cury
This same skull, sir, was Yorick's skull, the king's jester (Shakespeare),

although we should now write

This same skull, sir, was Yorick the King's jester's skull.

Pronouns and possessive adjectives can make things awkward. ' The following constructions, found in good English writers, may not be acceptable to everybody ' (Jespersen):

1. It went to all our hearts
2. You youngsters' pleasure is your own business

3. It is none of our faults
4. Without meaning to hurt either of your feelings
5. To cut your and each other's throat
6. Trifle with your own and others' hearts
7. Both our fathers are very good to us
8. Both their books are at the bindery.

Because they are quite common, such colloquial oddities may become usage; but as they have not yet done so, I recommend that you rewrite those examples in some such ways as these:

1. It went to the hearts of all of us;
   or, better: it grieved (*or*, touched) all of us.
2. (*Leave as it is!*)
3. It is the fault of none of us; *or, better*, None of us is at fault.
4. Without meaning to hurt the feelings of either of you: *better*, Without wishing to offend either of you.
5. To cut your throat and each other's.
6. (*Either leave as it is or rewrite:*)
   Trifle with your own heart(s) and with the hearts of others.
7. Our fathers are very good to us.
8. Both men's books are at the bindery.
   (*The original was very ambiguous: for instance, had they only one book apiece at the bindery?*)

On one point you may be sure: in (7) *Both our father* would be impossible, even if the term were used by either of two brothers. Such a puzzle is entirely needless.

§4. *Adjectives*

In the matter of degree, several interesting points arise.

Worse and *less* being the only two comparatives that do not end in *r* (*more* is a merely apparent exception), usage has turned its ubiquitous attention to them and added (*e*)*r*. Once common, e.g. in Shakespeare, *worser* has become illiterate, but *lesser* has produced a distinction. In current usage, *less* refers to quantity and is therefore opposed to *more*, whereas *lesser* refers to size, value, importance, and is therefore opposed to *larger*, *cheaper*, *major*, etc., as in the following examples adduced by Jespersen:

The later you come, the *less* time there will be for discussion.
More glory will be won, or *less* be lost. (Milton.)
The Lesser Bear. The Lesser (*or*, Minor) Prophets.
Cowley was one of the lesser English poets of the mid-seventeenth century.

Note that *lesser* is never an adverb and that it never precedes *than*:

In *less* than a day
A *less* kindly man would have forgotten.

Whereas *farther, farthest* and *further, furthest* are indifferently applicable to either distance or duration, the derivative senses 'additional, supplementary' and 'besides', 'to a greater extent', and 'what is more', seem to take *further* (*furthest*):

You may go *farther* (or *further*) and fare worse
The *farthest* star [idiom precludes *furthest*] is . . .

A *further* meaning of *further* is 'moreover', as in
I don't like it. *Further*, I refuse to have anything to do with it.

The *furthest* he would go was to say, 'I'll help—if I'm still here'.

The *-er, -est* comparison is avoided in long words, especially if, as in *difficult*, they end in a hard group of consonants.

ludicrous	*more ludicrous*	*most ludicrous*
elementary	*more elementary*	*most elementary*
particular	*more particular*	*most particular*

Several quite short words prefer *more, most*:

right	*more right*	*most right*
wrong	*more wrong*	*most wrong*
real	*more real*	*most real*

although *realler* and *reallest* are fast gaining ground.

Adjectives of nationality (Proper Adjectives) always take *more, most*: *more English—most English*; *more Greek, Roman—most Greek, Roman* . . .

Most compounds, unless the second element is long, are compared in the first element, thus:

well-known	*better-known*	*best-known*
little-known	*less-known*	*least-known*
hard-working	*harder-working*	*hardest-working*
dull-witted	*duller-witted*	*dullest-witted*
good-(or *kind-*)*hearted*	*better-*(or *kinder-*)*hearted*	*best-*(or *kindest-*)*hearted*
ill-favoured	*worse-favoured*	*worst-favoured*

But:

old-fashioned	*more old-fashioned*	*most old-fashioned*
far-fetched (*-seeing*)	*more far-fetched* (*-seeing*)	*most far-fetched* (*-seeing*)
short-sighted	*more short-sighted*	*most short-sighted*

If two qualities (except dimensions) of the same thing or of the same person are compared, *more* is always used:

He is more intelligent than courageous;
The windows are much more wide than high

yet current idiom demands—

The windows are much wider than they are high.

Adverbs[1] follow suit: *more beautifully, most dull-wittedly.* In short, use your common sense and your sense of hearing.

II. Syntax

§5. *False Agreement*

A. Number. The verb *to be* agrees with its subject, not with its complement: thus, ' A man *is*, in his lifetime, many persons '.

When two or more subjects are separated by *or*, the verb agrees in number with the nearer (or nearest) noun or pronoun: thus, ' He or I *am* wrong ' (= Either he is wrong or I am wrong), ' He or they *are* wrong '.

One often leads to false agreement between subject and verb, as in ' Sorel's is one of the few works upon Socialism that can be, or *deserves* to be, read by the non-professional student ', where *deserves* should be *deserve* in agreement with *works*, as you will see from this specimen ' table ':

Sorel's book is / readable.
Sorel's is / one of the few readable books.
Sorel's is / one of the few books that are readable.

B. Position. (i) *Misrelated or Disconnected or Suspended Participles.* The participial phrase may refer to the wrong word, as in ' *Born* in 1815, a part of his education was received at Eton ': grammatically, ' born ' refers to ' a part '; logically it doesn't. Compare:

Looking for a subject, several occurred to him
Completely *surrounded* by a deep wide moat, access to it was only possible by a brick bridge

[1] One adverb requires care; and that is *only*. The same applies to *only* used as an adjective. Always place it where good sense would place it—immediately before the word(s) it modifies. Observe the changes possible in ' Bill saw the man yesterday '.

Only Bill [and nobody else] saw the man yesterday
Bill *only* saw [not spoke to] the man yesterday
Bill saw *only* the man [not his wife too] yesterday
Bill saw the man *only* yesterday [not the day before].

Examiners delight to ask questions on the position of *only*.

Though *doing* his utmost, his failure was certain
Being lost, the boys returned the dog in the hope of a reward.

Rewrite thus:

Born in 1815, he received a part of his education at Eton
While he was looking for a subject, several occurred . . .
Completely surrounded . . ., it could be reached only by . . .
Though doing his utmost, he yet was certain to fail.
The boys returned the lost dog . . ., *or* In the hope of a reward, the boys . . .

(ii) *Relative Clauses out of Position.* It is important that the relative clause come immediately after the antecedent; as you will, I think, agree when you have pondered the following ' horrible examples ':

He stripped off the drunkard's covering (who never stirred)
Concepts emerge from these operations which are definite and verifiable
Many factors affect judicial decisions, of which the rules of law constitute but one
The girl goes to her father's office to complain, who, at first, thinks that he is having his leg pulled.

(iii) *Lack of Agreement between Words Other than Antecedent and Relative.* Any clear-minded boy or girl will immediately realize that there is something, and very quickly see what is, wrong in the following sentences from reputable sources.

(1) *Unlike North*, it was not necessary for him to surrender his own judgement to that of George III.
(2) When they were gone, *still carrying me*, she sat down on a great smooth stone that was beside the well.
(3) They sat at ease in the boat, which lay moored in a tiny creek of the island, *canopied* by an overhanging willow.
(4) He arranges a meeting of the suspects to find out whether anyone reacts in any way *peculiar* to the sight of the body.

Those sentences might be rewritten:

(1) He, unlike North, did not have to surrender . . .
(2) *If ' they ' were ' carrying me '*: When, still carrying me, they were gone, she . . .; *if ' she ' was ' carrying me '*: When they were gone, still carrying me she sat . . .
(3) *Very obscure, for ' canopied ', which grammatically agrees with ' island ', certainly refers to ' creek ' or ' boat ' or ' they '—but which? I suggest*: In the island's tiny creek, which was canopied by an overhanging willow, they sat at ease in the boat.

(4) He arranges a meeting of the suspects in order to find out whether, at the sight of the body, anyone reacts in any way peculiar (*or*, in any peculiar way).

This last example might easily have been included under:

§6. *Order of Words*

Concerning the order of clauses within a sentence, it is useless to lay down any general rules—i.e., to theorize. As paragraphs within an essay (or story or business letter), as sentences within a paragraph, so clauses within a sentence will—or should—follow that order which best achieves the writer's or the speaker's purpose, the ' best order ' being the order best suited to the circumstances, i.e. the most natural or the most effective order. Usually the most effective order is the same thing as the most natural. The minor is duly subordinated to the major; clarity is preserved.

Let us briefly examine the order of words within a Single Sentence or within a Principal, or a Subordinate, Clause. The need for logical order, normally the same as the usage-natural order, could be guessed from:

(1) All persons, events and places on the journey as far as Trieste, are entirely fictitious.
(2) She made room for him on a settee beside her.

Clearly, (2) should read: ' She made room for him beside her on the settee '; probably, (1) should read: ' All persons, events and, so far as Trieste, places on the journey are . . .'

The verb, more than any other part of speech, influences the order of words in a clause. ' In English,' says Dr George O. Curme, the great American grammarian, ' there are three word-orders: the verb in the second, the third, or the first place.'

The normal order is: the verb in the second place, as in ' The little girl *loved* her doll '. Even when, for emphasis or in questions, inversion occurs, the verb remains in the second place, as in ' Never *had* I imagined such a thing to be possible ! ' or ' When *did* you meet him? ' When, for emphasis, the subject comes at the end, usually the verb is still in the second place, as in ' To the list *may be added* yet another person's name '.

It is usually on account of inversion that a verb goes into third place, as in ' Very grateful George *was* for my help ', ' Lucky it *is* that I've seen you before! ' In exclamations, too, does the verb usually fall into the third place, as in ' What cheek you *have*! '

The normal word-order, i.e. subject before verb, verb before adverb or complement or object, ' has become the form of expression suited to the mind in its normal condition of steady activity and easy movement, from

which it departs only under the stress of emotion, or for logical reasons (George O. Curme).

The verb in the first place: this happens, very naturally, in

(1) Imperatives: ' *Pass* me that book! '
(2) Subjunctive of Wish: ' *Were* he only here! '
(3) In such formulas as: ' *Come* what may . . .'
(4) Questions requiring a *Yes* or *No* answer:
' *Has* she arrived? '—' *Did* she arrive? '

Position of Adverb[1]: (i) *The Split Infinitive.* Never split the infinitive, unless, to avoid ambiguity or a foolish awkwardness, you feel that you should; but whenever, for those reasons, you feel you should, do so! Until the twentieth century, the prohibition against splitting the infinitive ranked as the Eleventh Commandment.

Clearly, ' He used to *continually* refer to the subject ' is preferable to ' He used *continually* to refer to the subject ' (ambiguous) and even to ' He used to refer to the subject continually ' (loose and slipshod); ' Our object is to *further* improve trade relations ' is clearly preferable to ' Our object is to improve *further* trade relations ' (ambiguous) or to ' Our object further is to . . .' or ' Our object is to improve trade relations further '.

In a compound infinitive, the adverb comes between the auxiliary and the main verb, thus:

He is said to have *continually* referred to the subject
He was reported to have been *mortally* wounded.

(ii) *Elsewhere.* In compound tenses, the same rule governs such word-groups as

He had *soon* changed his mind
When I shall have *assiduously* cultivated the poets for a decade, I may *perhaps* have learnt something about the technique of poetry
He was *mortally* wounded at the Battle of Alamein
I have *always* been intending to write a book upon the teaching and learning of English.

Emphasis of the adverb is normally obtained thus:

Never has he done such a thing.

Failure to obtain the necessary emphasis in the natural, the normal manner, leads to such ineptitudes as

No one has *probably* seen you—so you can go home in peace

instead of

[1] For *only*, see footnote, page 24.

Probably no one has seen you . . . ;

or

Cambridge must heartily be congratulated on their victory

for

Cambridge must be heartily congratulated . . .

In simple tenses, the 'rule' is this. Normally, an intransitive verb is followed immediately by its adverb or adverbs, thus:

He ran fast
He ran far and fast
He did, I think you'll admit, quite well.

If there are three adverbs, one of them usually precedes the verb or, for emphasis, both the subject and the verb:

He always acted promptly and kindly
He has always acted promptly and kindly
Yesterday he acted both promptly and kindly
He certainly smiles often and broadly
Of course he smiled sincerely yesterday.

A transitive verb with an object normally forces—i.e., usage here forces —the adverb into the position immediately following the object, thus:

Love me little, love me long!
He hit the ball hard
He hit the ball often and hard
He hit the ball often, everywhere and hard.

Time; place; manner: that is the normal order of the adverbs. But for emphasis, or to dispose of an awkwardly long adverbial phrase, one of the adverbial units may come first in the sentence:

Always he hit the ball hard to every part of the field
No matter where, he treats people kindly
No matter where, he always treats them kindly.

Now look at such a sentence as this:

The Freudian theories have influenced the novelists certainly greatly during the post-1918 period.

Obviously that sentence is clumsy and would be improved in the form:

The Freudian theories have certainly influenced the novelists greatly during the post-1918 period

or better:

Certainly the Freudian theories have greatly influenced the novelists . . .

But the emphasis is less on ' certainly ' than on the period; therefore:

During the post-1918 period the Freudian theories have certainly influenced the novelists greatly.

Now:

He thought so evidently yesterday

is ambiguous and awkward, as also would be

He thought evidently so yesterday.

The natural order is:

He evidently thought so yesterday.

If, however, the emphasis lies on ' evidently ', the order will be:

Evidently he thought so yesterday.

If on ' yesterday ', the order becomes:

Yesterday he evidently thought so.

Position of Adjective. ' As every schoolboy knows ', the adjective normally precedes the noun:

That *black* toque suits her *peculiar* style of beauty
The *tall old* man is astonishingly active
The *ancient and romantic* cathedral was the pride of the *still more ancient and romantic* city.

But when emphasis is needed or a top-heavy accumulation of adjectives or adjectival phrases requires to be broken up or lightened, we can obtain emphasis or avoid top-heaviness by employing such variations as these:

That *black* toque, *so odd at first sight,* undoubtedly suits her peculiar style of beauty
The night, *dark and stormy and disquieting,* seemed to be inimical to his plan.

With pronouns, the adjective must either follow the pronoun or, preceding, be separated by a comma from the pronoun:

She, *lovely to the eye*, was the toast of the town
Lovely to the eye, she naturally became the toast of the town
Lovely, debonair and witty, she soon became the toast of the town
He, *grave and methodical*, felt out of place in that giddy throng
Grave and methodical, he was obviously out of his element in that giddy throng.

§7. *Sequence of Tenses*

If you have the luck to move among those who speak good English, you will already have assimilated this principle whereby the tense in a subordinate clause 'follows'—i.e., is adjusted to—the tense of the principal clause. But to put the matter on a formal basis and to help those who, whether native or foreign, do not know or have failed to grasp the principle, here it is!

	Principal Clause	*Subordinate Clause*
Present:	I speak only	when I am spoken to
Present Perfect:	I have always spoken only	
Future:	I shall speak only	
Preterite:	I spoke only	when I was spoken to
Imperfect:	I was in the habit of speaking only	
Pluperfect:	I had spoken only	
Present:	I tell you	that it is impossible
Present Perfect:	I have told you	
Future:	I shall still tell you	
Preterite:	I told you	that it would be impossible
Imperfect:	I was telling you	
Pluperfect:	I had told you	
Present:	I show it to you	that you may understand
Present Perfect:	I have shown it to you	
Future:	I shall show it to you	
Preterite:	I showed it to you	that you might understand
Imperfect:	I was showing it to you	
Pluperfect:	I had shown it to you	

If the speaker or writer wishes to indicate that something is or was universally true at the time of speaking or writing, it is permissible, even after a past-tense verb in the Principal Clause, to retain the present tense in the Subordinate Clause, thus:

Everyone knows that twice two *is* four
Everyone knew „ „ „ „ „
Columbus believes that the world *is* round
Columbus believed „ „ „ „ „
I shall ask what time the train usually *starts*
I asked him „ „ „ „ „ „

§8. *Wishes*[1]

Subordinate clauses after a verb expressing a wish are sometimes called Optative, or are said to be in the Optative Mood, whether the fulfilment depends or does not depend upon the will of the wisher:

How I wish you *would* stop doing that!
I wish you *wouldn't* repeat everything I say.
If only it *would* stop raining!
I wish I *had* a cause to seek him there. (Shakespeare.)
If one *had* but two heads and neither required sleep. (T. H. Huxley).
(*Had* is past subjunctive.)
Would that I *were* there!

Wishes concerning the future take the present subjunctive:

Long *may* he *reign*!
May I never again *be* poor!
God *bless* you (=May God bless you!)

Wishes concerning the past—wishes that something had been different (had or had not happened)—take the past perfect subjunctive in the subordinate, and *would* (or *would that*) or *that* or *oh that* or merely *oh* in the introductory part of the sentence (the principal or virtually principal clause):

Would / Would that / Oh that / That } I had never been so foolish!

O had I never been so foolish!

(Note that *would=I would=I should like*, subjunctive.)

Occasionally you will find wish expressed in a single clause, thus:

If only I could have helped him!

Expressed in full, the sentence would read:

If only I could have helped him, how happy I should have been:

[1] Based upon Onions and Jespersen.

where obviously the Conditional Mood is being employed.

Compare the idiomatic form, applicable only to 'I' or 'we':

Oh to have been there at the ball!
Oh to succeed!

i.e., How much I, we, wish that I, we, had been there, or, may succeed!

§9. *Jussive and Prohibitive*[1]

Command, in the Second Person, is normally conveyed by the imperative:

Speak! Go away! Be quiet!

More politely by *shall*+the infinitive:

You shall do it!

In familiar speech, the imperative is emphasized by the addition of *do*, as in 'Do have another cup of tea!'

In the First and Third Persons, command is expressed by what is called the Jussive:

Let us go now, or we shall be late!
We should certainly go now, or . . .
We ought to go now, or . . .
Let him see to it at once!

In the Jussive, *let* is used idiomatically: and you must be careful to make the meaning unmistakably clear. Obviously 'Let us go now', unless it is followed by a clause indicating why, can mean either:

We ought to go now

or:

Allow us to go now!

The Third Person can also, like the Second Person, take *shall*+the infinitive:

He shall do it!

Negative command, i.e. prohibition, is expressed in what the formal grammarians call the Prohibitive.

First and Third Persons: as for the Jussive, thus:

[1] Not that there is the slightest need to remember either of these terms! I use them merely for convenience; students of Latin know them.

Let me not die, I am too young and beautiful
(=May I not die . . .)
Let *them* not lie, for *we* are lovers of truth.

Second Person: in prose *do not*+infinitive:

Do not go so soon
Don't speak in that abrupt manner

in verse:

Go not so soon!
Speak not in that abrupt manner!
Tell me not that he has failed!

When *never* is involved, even prose employs the verse form:

Never speak to me again!

§10. *Conditional*

Little remains to be added to what has been said in Book I. In Open Condition (e.g. 'If I'm right, you obviously are wrong'), the present indicative sometimes refers to the future, as in 'If, two years from now, he is ill, he won't be well, will he?' or 'If I can, I *will*' (—If, at the time implied, I find myself able to do so, I certainly shall).

A variation of Open Condition occurs where the Conditional formula expresses a fact:

If you are a brave man, I am at least an honest one:

where the person addressed is undeniably brave; compare:

If, in 1939, Britain desired peace, Germany desired war.

Then consider such sentences as:

Do it if you *can*!
If that's true, I'll eat my hat:

where the 'if'-clauses themselves say nothing about the true state of affairs.

In Conditional sentences that deal with what *would be* or *would have been*, it is worth noting that the verb of the 'if' clause undergoes a double adjustment: its mood changes from Indicative to Subjunctive; and its tense is '*thrown back* in time'[1] thus:

[1] Dr C. T. Onions, to whom I owe much in this section.

Present: If he were
Future: If he were to be
Past: If he had been.

'If'- clauses are normally introduced by 'if' or 'unless' (i.e., if . . . not). In Shakespeare's time *an* was often used where now we use 'if':

No more of that, Hal, an thou lovest me.

Archaic language occasionally employs 'but' or 'except' for our 'unless':

I will not let thee go, except thou bless me.

Modern Conjunctions of Condition are

on condition (that):	I'll let you go on condition that you never return
suppose or *supposing (that):*	Suppose it happens, what then?
provided (that):	Provided he live (*or*, lives), all will be well.
in case:	I'll take an umbrella in case it rains.
so long as (colloquial):	You'll be quite safe—so long as you keep your mouth shut!

In Conditions expressing either *would be* or *would have been*, or a merely contemplated or prospective action, *if I* (etc.) *were* or *if he* (etc.) *had* is sometimes conveyed by its equivalent *were I* or *had he*:

Were I as guilty as that, I should be ripe for jail.
Had he known, he would not have come.

Postscript. There are a few other niceties in the use of the Subjunctive, but since only stylists employ these subtle distinctions, they would needlessly overload *English: A Course for Human Beings*. Those who are insatiably—and most commendably—curious should betake themselves to any of these three authorities:[1]

Otto Jespersen, *Essentials of English Grammar*
C. T. Onions, *An Advanced English Syntax*
Eric Partridge, *Usage and Abusage*;
but I especially recommend Dr Onions's book.

[1] For teachers and advanced private students, an excellent—indeed, a masterly—book is George O. Curme's *A Grammar of the English Language* (Heath & Company; in Britain, Harrap & Co.).

§11. *Restrictive and Non-Restrictive Relatives*

Relative Clauses are introduced by the Relative Pronouns *who*, persons only; *which*, things only; *that*, either persons or things.

With the provisos—

(1) that a preposition governs *whom* or *which* (never *that*), as in ' He's a person of whom I know little ' or ' That person, of whom I know little, is, I believe, famous ' or ' *Middlemarch*, of which the author was George Eliot, is a sociological novel ' or ' The novels of which George Eliot was the author are all serious ';

(2) that *they . . . who* and *those . . . who* or *those . . . which* are formulas, therefore—except at your own risk—unchangeable; and

(3) *that* is used differently from *who* or *which*.[1]

Before I pose the rules in a formal manner, suppose you ponder the following sentences:

You, *who* are a baseball-player, should know about cricket too
All soldiers *that* are brave behave modestly
Soldiers, *who* are usually brave, usually behave modestly
Soldiers, of *whom* most are brave, usually behave modestly
The house *that* Jack built is famous in folklore
This house, *which*, by the way, I have only rented, is flimsily built.

Evidently two quite different classes of relative clause occur in those sentences: the classes exemplified by

(*a*) The house *that* Jack built is famous in folklore
(*b*) This house, *which* I have only rented, is flimsily built.

It is true that certain otherwise intelligent persons are inexpressibly shocked if, for human beings, you employ any other pronoun than *who* and, where you (probably) and I (certainly) say

People that live in glass houses shouldn't throw stones,

insist on saying:

People who live in glass houses . . .

Usage is gradually forcing the *that* form upon even the die-hards.

Relative clauses are used for one of two purposes:

A. Restrictive or *Defining* or *Limitative* or *Necessary Relative Clauses.*

Here, the relative clause more sharply defines or more narrowly limits the antecedent. Compare these pairs of sentences

[1] Relative genitives are: *whose* or *of whom* or *of which*: not *of that*. This usage links with proviso (1).

(*a*) A hat is a formal head-covering
A hat that is red does not suit everybody.
(*b*) A book is distressing
A book that has a tragic ending is distressing.

In (*a*) ' a hat ' is general; ' a hat that is red ' restricts the subject to red hats and limits the class. In (*b*) the statement ' A book is distressing ' is nonsense or almost nonsense; such a statement has to be modified: the relative clause is necessary to the sense.

There is the actor of whom I was speaking yesterday

exemplifies, as do the other sentences, another feature of this class of relative clauses: the relative has no comma in front of it.

Yet another feature of these restrictive or necessary relative clauses is that the relative pronoun may be omitted, as in

The house Jack built is famous in folklore.

But you cannot omit the comma before, nor the relative pronoun introducing:

B. Non-Restrictive[1] or *Non-Defining* or *Expansive* or *Explicative* or *Parenthetical* or *Unnecessary Relative Clauses.*

Here, the relative clause neither restricts nor defines; it is unnecessary to the sense, for the sense is already clear; it does expand, or at the least increase, for it adds an explanation; it could easily go within parentheses and, if parentheses are not used, then a comma must be used before it.

You, who are a baseball-player, should know about cricket too

merely expands or explains

You should know about cricket too.

In

Soldiers usually behave modestly

soldiers are not further defined, nor are they restricted, if we write:

Soldiers, of whom most are brave, usually behave modestly.

Whereas a *Restrictive* Relative Clause forms an irremovable part of the sentence in which it occurs and is, in short, integral, a *Non-Restrictive* Relative Clause can, without damage to the sense, be removed bodily from the sentence and is, in short, a mere ornament.

The distinction is not a fad of the grammarians; it is important. To observe it is advisable, for its non-observance will cause a confusion that at best is ludicrous and at worst is dangerous. Dr Onions adduces this helpful example:

[1] *Restrictive, Non-Restrictive:* these are the most frequently used names and probably the best.

(*a*) In two of the instances that have come under my notice, the system has worked well
(*b*) In two of the instances, which have come under my notice, the system has worked well.

Clearly (*a*) means:

Instances have come under my notice; in two of them the system has worked well;

(*b*) no less clearly means:

Two instances have come under my notice; in both of them, the system has worked well.

You must be careful with sentences introduced by *it is* (*it was*). The following sentences conform to usage and are therefore correct:

It is a poor heart that never rejoices
(*The heart that never rejoices is a poor heart*)
It was the battle of Trafalgar that destroyed the French navy
(*The battle that destroyed the French navy was the battle of Trafalgar*)
It is I, not you, that have to do the work
(*The person that has to do the work is I, not you*).

Even greater care is necessary for double restriction, i.e. where there are two relative clauses of which the second restricts a first that has already restricted or defined or limited the antecedent. Watch!

Do you want anything?
Do you want anything that you don't possess?
Do you want anything that you don't possess that is literally necessary? (More elegantly expressed thus: Do you want anything that you don't possess and is literally necessary?)

Wilde once remarked, ' The only artists I have ever known who are personally delightful are bad artists '. He has, you see, omitted *that* after ' artists '; permissibly. Yet ' who ' should have been ' that ', because ' artists ' is limited, defined, restricted twice: first into ' that I have ever known ': secondly or further into ' that are personally delightful '.

The sentence could alternatively have been written ' The only artists that are personally delightful and that *I* have ever known are bad artists '.

EXERCISES

Set A.

Correct the italicized singulars or plurals in:

(*a*) She thinks her children to be *cherubim* and *genii* and more beautiful than the *stamina* of flowers.

(*b*) The *erratums* and *addendas* of his books are almost books in themselves.
(*c*) A scientific *analyses* often precedes a *syntheses*, on the *hypotheses* that it is safer to argue from the *basises* of known facts.
(*d*) The *alumnuses* of the University hold a committee meeting to deal with a number of *agendums*. The Chairman, opening with a witty *dicta*, became the *foci* of attention. After the *agendas* had been disposed of, he turned to the various *memorandas*. 'Gentlemen, we are not *ignorami*, and so, from the *datas* before us, we can arrive at perfection—a commercial *millennia*.'
(*e*) The *nuclea* of the problem can be solved with a mathematical *formulae* based on *indexes*.
(*f*) The lowest *strata* of society consists of the outcasts, whom too many regard as having no more soul than the *rhinoceri*, the *hippopotamis* and the *octopae*.
(*g*) In the *grotti* on the *plateaux* of Italy we found 100 *stiletti*, which we sent to the *bureaux* of the *Monsieurs* of the two largest *musea* in Paris.
(*h*) The *photoes* of the *pianoes* repose in two *portfolioes*; those of *Negros* and *buffalos*—such interesting *mementoes*—in two others.
(*i*) The *corpses* of the Army have a long and proud tradition.
(*j*) *Woman writers* have *boys friends*, *man writers* have *woman friends*.

Set B.

1. Comment upon the italicized words in
(*a*) He opened *me* the door.
(*b*) He lay *him* down to die.
(*c*) The *King of Sweden's* skill was remarkable.
(*d*) It pained all *our* consciences.
(*e*) *Both* their donkey enjoyed racing on the sands.

2. Correct and comment upon:
(*a*) The sooner you start, the lesser trouble you will have.
(*b*) A farther meaning of 'cheap' is 'inferior'.
(*c*) He looks even ludicrouser than I do.
(*d*) There's a righter way of doing that.
(*e*) Is a photograph realler than a portrait?
(*f*) He's the dull-wittedest man I know.
(*g*) The windows are three times higher than wide.

Set C.

Correct the following sentences:
(*a*) A crowd are many persons.
(*b*) He is one of those authors who always re-tells his own story.
(*c*) Finding no clue, the case baffled the detective.
(*d*) The latest important conflict has been over Darwin, which still exists among the ignorant.
(*e*) Many elements enter into these problems, of which the least is accuracy.
(*f*) Left without a father at the age of two, his mother was his only guide.
(*g*) An only daughter, her mother died when she was thirteen.
(*h*) A sensation would be something that just was *so*, on its own, a datum; as such we have none.
(*i*) Neither she nor I understands art.
(*j*) Everyone likes pleasure and they do their best to get it.

Set D.

1. Comment upon the word-order and correct it where necessary:
   (*a*) An inquest is held only when a corpse exists, not merely when one is suspected.
   (*b*) I saw a man in the room, who looked very ill.
   (*c*) Only when a painter understands these principles can he work effectually.
   (*d*) 'Harry,' said the old man, 'you have been a good son.'
   (*e*) 'George,' she exclaimed, 'what has happened?'
   (*f*) The importance that quite rightly you gave to this affair has not been overlooked.
   (*g*) I can set most of the shocks that flesh is heir to at defiance.
   (*h*) I met yesterday your brother.
   (*i*) The black and disquieting and wildly tempestuous night ended.
2. Name the simple rules of the position of the adverb.

Set E.

Correct the tense-sequences in
   (*a*) Since I have left school, I have continued my studies.
   (*b*) I'm telling you this in order that you might understand.
   (*c*) He showed the boy how to play the game so that he won't make a fool of himself.
   (*d*) She told you it will be impossible.
   (*e*) Columbus believed that the world is round.
   (*f*) Would I have taken the trouble to look!

Set F.

Comment upon the verbs in
   (*a*) You *will* do it, I say.
   (*b*) You *shall* do it!
   (*c*) *Speak not* to me again!
   (*d*) If 2 + 2 *equal* 4, then 2 + 2 + 2 *equal* 6.
   (*e*) *Let* him—if he *can.*
   (*f*) *Seeing* it's bed-time, *I'm going* to bed.

Set G.

1. What is the difference between:
   (*a*) The man I saw is very ill, *and*
   The man, whom I happened to see, is very ill.
   (*b*) People that live in glass houses shouldn't throw stones, *and*
   People who live in glass houses shouldn't throw stones.
   (*c*) This picture that Rubens painted is magnificent, *and*
   This picture, which Rubens painted, is magnificent.
2. Comment upon and, if necessary, correct:
   (*a*) Can you think of anyone else we know who is so talented as Mary?
   (*b*) They cheered everyone they saw that they thought to be a soldier.
   (*c*) How seldom do we find a man that has stirred up some vast commotion, who does not himself perish, swept away in it?

WORD-BUILDING: AFFIXES[1]

AFFIXES are those elements of speech which are affixed or joined to the basic word—the root or stem. They fall into two groups: those which are affixed before a word (prefixes); those after (suffixes). You have seen them at work in such words as '*im*prison' and beaut*ify*'.

root:	*sleep*
with prefix:	*asleep*
with suffix:	*sleepy*
root:	*take*
with prefix:	*intake, mistake*
with suffix:	*taker* (*take*+*er*, signifying the 'doer' or agent)
with prefix and suffix:	*unmistakable.*

Affixes change the meaning of the basic word: compare *oversee* with *see*, or *kingdom* with *king*.

A. PREFIXES. I: *Old English*; II: *Latin*; III: *Greek*

I. *Old English Prefixes*, which come from the Common Teutonic stock—Old German, Old Dutch, Old Danish, Old Norse, etc.

afore and *fore*: in front; before: *aforementioned; foregoing, foretell.*

after: afterthought, afterwards.

be emphasizes, strengthens, the meaning of the root word: *fall—befall, grudge—begrudge.* By strengthening, it helps to form verbs, as in *befriend*; by strengthening, it turns an intransitive into a transitive verb, as in *lie—belie* and *moan—bemoan.*

by: by-path, by-way.

for: another strengthener or fortifier, as in *lorn—forlorn, bear—forbear*; but also it may be a privative, i.e. a depriver or remover or denier, as in *bid—forbid, get—forget, go—forgo* (go without).

fore: see *afore.* Strictly, *afore* is a strengthening of *fore*: *afore=in the fore.* Contrast *foregoing* (preceding) with *forgoing* (going without, self-sacrificing), as in *for.*

[1] At this stage, pupils and private students will not attempt to learn and memorize the very numerous affixes: much the most important thing for them to do is to form an idea of how words are *built.*

But those who pass on to Book III should, at *that* stage, memorize these affixes, or at least, the more important of them; all Stage III students intending to 'major' in language should try to memorize all—yes, I mean all—these affixes.

forth: coming from, issuing from, resulting, as in *forthcoming, forthwith.*
in: insight, inbred, inlet, intake. (A Teutonic affix derived from Latin.)
mis: wrongly, as in *mistake* (to take wrongly), *misbehave, mishap*; and even with roots of Latin origin, as in *misinformed.*
n: not. Short for Old English *ne*: compare Latin *ne, nec*; *nay*= not *ay*=not *yes*=*no*; *neither*=not *either*; *nor*=not *or*; and so forth.
off: from. As in *offshoot, offspring.*
on: oncoming, onset, onto.
out: outlaw, outset (the setting *out* or forth), *outside.* Hence the idea of going out and further than, i.e. of surpassing, as in *outlive, outbid, outlast, outshine, outrun.*
over: overcoat, oversee, overtake, overflow. Hence the idea of excess, as in *oversleep, over-eat, over-eager.*
through, thorough: thoroughfare, through-ticket, throughout.
to: until; until and in (or during): *today, tonight, tomorrow.*
twi: two, double, as in *twice* (compare *once*), *twilight.*
un: not; in reverse. Thus, *untrue*=not *true*; *unusual*=not *usual*; *untie, undo, unlock, unlearn.*
under: underbred, undergrowth, underling. Hence the idea of something lacking or incomplete, as in *underfed, underpaid.*
up: upshot, uphold, upstart.
wel: well, as in *welcome, welfare, well-bred.*
with: against, as in *withstand,* to stand against, i.e. to resist; back, as in *withdraw,* to draw back, i.e. to take away.

Note how several very English-looking nouns are used as prefixes: *buck, bull, cow, horse, tom,* which suggest bigness or strength: *buck-nigger; bulldog; bullfinch; cow-parsley, horse-radish, horse-chestnut; tomfool, tomboy.*

II. *Latin Prefixes.* Some of the following Latin prefixes, like some of the Greek suffixes, have come to us via French.

a, ab, from: *avert,* to turn (away) from; *abnormal,* away from the normal.
ad, to: *advert,* to turn (one's mind) to. In combination, *ad* + a consonant usually becomes that consonant doubled: *adb* yields *abb*; *abc, acc; adf, aff;* etc. Thus *abbreviate, accent, aggressor, allude, annex, appear, arrears, assert, attain.* But—*admit, admonish, advert, aspect* (Latin *adspicere, aspicere*).
ambi on both sides, in two or both ways (sometimes combines as *amb* or even *am*): *ambiguous, ambition, amputate.*
ante, before: *antedate, anteroom.* Sometimes becomes *anti*: *anticipate.*
bene, well: *benefit, benevolence, benediction.*
bi, bis, two; twice: *bisect, biscuit.*
circum, around; often combining as *circu*: *circumstance, circumference, circuit, circulate.*

con, with; often combining as *col* or *com* or even *cor*: *contend, collect, command, correct.*

contra, against: *contradict, contradistinction, controversy.*

de, down; away from: *descend, decrease, despair, deduce, decamp, defend;* hence, reversal: *demerit, deplete, decipher;* also, an intensive, i.e. a strengthener: *declare, defraud.*

demi, half: *demigod.* (Compare Greek *hemi*, Latin *semi.*)

dis, aside, asunder; combining forms, *di* and, before *f*, *dif*: *distract, dismiss, dismember, dissever;* hence, not: *displease, disuse, difficulty;* hence also reversal: *disillusion, disenchanted.*

duo, two; occasionally combines as *du*: *duodecimal, duet.*

e, ex, out, out of: *eject, exhaustion;* combining with *f*: *effect.* Hence, '*out of* office': *ex-king, ex-champion.*

extra, outside; in combination, sometimes *exter*: *extravagant, exterior.*

in, (1) within, into; before *l*—*il*; before *m* and *p*—*im*; before *r*—*ir*: *inspect, inject, illustrate, immediate, impede, irrigate.* If via French, *en* or *em*: *entice, employ.*

in, (2) not; same changes as in (1): *infirm, illogical, impious, irregular, ignorance.* (Latin *in* (2) and English *un* being equal, there is an occasional choice: *instable—unstable; improfitable—unprofitable*; *inept—unapt.*)

infra, lower down; within; hence, less; combining sometimes as *infer*: *inferior, infra-red.*

inter, between, among: *interest, international.* If via French, *enter*: *enterprise, entertain.*

intra, intro, within: *introspection, intrinsic, introduce, intratropical.*

juxta, close by, next to: *juxtaposition.*

male, badly, evilly; combining, occasionally *mali*; via French, *mal*: *malefactor, malevolent, malignant, malady.*

mis, badly: *misadventure, mischance, mischief.*

multi, many: *multi-engined, multifarious, multiple, multicoloured.*

ne, not; in combination, sometimes *neg*: *nefarious, neuter, neglect.*

non, not, lacking: *nonsense, nondescript, noncombatant.* (*Non* is weaker than *in-* or *un-*; *non-religious*, lacking religion; *irreligious*, opposed to religion.)

ob, against; *obc* becomes *occ*; *obf, off*; and so on: *object, occur, offer, oppress, oppose, ostensible, omit.*

pene (Latin *paene*), almost: *peneplain, peninsula, penultimate.*

per, through; hence the idea of thoroughness: *perspective, perspex; perform, pellucid;* hence, too thoroughly or in wrong direction: *perfidy, perish, perdition, persist.*

post, after: *postscript, postpone, postdate.*

pre (Latin *prae*), before: *predict, prepare, precaution, prelate.*

preter (Latin *praeter*), beyond: *preterite, pretermit, preternatural.*

pro, before (via French: *por, pur*): *profession, portrait, purvey.* See the note at *pro* in the subsequent list of Greek prefixes.

quad, quadr (Latin *quattuor*), four: *quadrangle, quadrant, quadruplets.*
quasi, as if: *quasi-general* (a pretender or sham general).
quinqu (Latin *quinque*), five; *quint* (Latin *quintus*), fifth: *quinquennial* (five-yearly), *quintessence.*
re, back, again; sometimes *red* before vowels: *respect, react, re-agent, recourse; redeem, redundant.*
Note: *recover*, to get back; *re-cover*, to cover again: *redress*, to set right; *re-dress*, to dress again.
retro, backwa[r]ds: *retrospect* (*-ion*), *retrograde.*
se, apart from; before vowels, *sed*: *separate, seclude, secure, sedition.*
semi, half: *semicircle, semicolon.*
sine, without: *sine qua non, sinecure.*
sub, under: *subc* becomes *succ; subf, suff; subg, sugg; subp, supp; subs, su(s)*, etc.[1]
(1) literally, in *suspect, subject, submarine, subterranean, suburb*;
(2) before nouns, it usually implies subordination: *subdivision;*
(3) before adjectives, where not literally 'under', it = rather, a little, slightly: *subacid, subtropical.*
super, above, over (via French, *sur*): *surcharge, surface, survive;* hence, 'very' (superfine, the school slang *super*, 'excellent') or 'excessively' (*superfluous*).
trans, across; in combination, often *tra*:
(1) prepositional: *trans-Atlantic, trans-continental;*
(2) in verbs and nouns: *transmit; tradition, traffic, traitor.*
tri, three, thrice: *triangle, tricolor, trivial;* through French, *tre: treble, trefoil.*
ultra, beyond: *ultramarine, ultra-violet;* excessively: *ultra-radical.*
vice, instead of: *viceroy;* (through French) *viscount.*

Sometimes the Latin prefix, especially if it comes through French, is disguised, as in *viscount*; also in such words as *affair* and *alert* (*ad*); *dessert* (*dis*); *puny* (*post*); *sojourn* (*sub*); *trespass* (*trans*); *outrage* (*ultra*). The via-French derivatives are the trickiest, *escape, escort, esplanade, essay*, being comparatively easy; consult an etymological dictionary for *amend, afraid, astonish, issue, sample, scarce, scorch, scourge, sombre, scamp, sluice, sewer, sprain, squadron, square.*

III. *Greek prefixes.*

a, an, without: *amoral, apathetic, atheist; anarchy, anonymous.*
allo (from *allos*), other, different: *allopathy, allotropy, allegory.*
amphi, on both sides, all about: *amphibious* (living both on land and in water), *amphitheatre.*

[1] But where 'minor' (adj.) or 'assistant' (noun) is implied, and also in modern scientific, medical, philosophical and psychological terms, *sub* tends to remain *sub*; thus, *sub-committee, subcutaneous, subsume.*

ana, up (to), upon, back, again: *anachronism, analogy, analysis.*

anti, against; in combination, sometimes *ant* before a vowel: *antipodes, antithesis, antarctic.*

apo, away from; in combination, sometimes *ap*, sometimes *aph*: *apocalypse, apology; apathy, aphorism.*

arch, arche, archi, chief, principal: *archbishop, archangel, archetype.*

auto (from *autos*, self), done by oneself, moved by itself: *automobile, autograph, automaton, authentic.*

cata, cat, cath: from *kata*, down: *cataract, catechism, cathedral.*

di, dis, in two: *dilemma, diphthong.*

dia, through: *diadem, diagonal, dialogue, diameter.* Disguised in *deacon* and *devil.*

dys, badly, ill: *dysentery, dyspepsia.*

ec[1] (Greek *ek*), out of; sometimes *ex*: *ecclesiastic, ecstasy; exodus.*

en, in; hence *em* and *el*: *endemic, energy, emporium, ellipsis.*

epi, on, upon; hence, besides. Before a vowel, *ep*; also *eph*: *epidemic* (contrast *endemic*), *epidermis, epigram, epoch, ephemeral.*

eso, within: *esoteric, esoderm.*

eu, well (adv.): *eulogy, eugenics, eupeptic* (contrast *dyspeptic*), *evangelist.*

exo, without (contrast *eso*): *exoteric, exotic.*

hemi, half (compare the Latin *demi* and *semi*): *hemisphere.*

hepta, seven: *heptagon.*

hetero, other, different: *heterodox, heterogeneous.* Contrast:—

homo,[2] same; *hom* before a vowel: *homogeneous, homonym.*

hyper, over, beyond: *hyperbole* (a throwing beyond—beyond the truth), *hyperborean*; hence, excessively: *hypercritical.*

hypo, under: *hypocrite, hypodermic, hypotenuse, hypothesis.*

meso, in the middle; *mes* before a vowel, especially in science and anatomy: *mesentery; Mesopotamia*, the land between the Tigris and the Euphrates.

meta, beyond, after, next to; before vowel, *met*; occasionally *meth*: *metamorphosis, metabolism, metaphor, meteor, method.*

miso, mis, hating, averse from: *misanthrope, misogynist.* Contrast *phil.*

mono, single, alone; before a vowel *mon*: *monoplane, monastery, monotone.*

palin, again, back: *palinode.*

pan, panto, all: *panorama, pantheism, panoply, pantomime.*

para,[3] beside: *paraphrase, paradox, parable, paralysis, parody.*

penta, five: *pentagon, pentameter.*

peri, around: *perimeter, periphrasis, period.* ('Many compounds correspond in sense with those of Latin *circum*': Ernest Weekley.)

[1] The origin of the Latin *e, ex.*

[2] Compare the *homoeo* of *homoeopathy*: *homo* comes from *homos*, the same; *homoeo* from *homoios*, similar.

[3] The *para* of *parasol, parachute, parapet, parados*, comes from the 'Italian *para*, imperative of *parare*, to ward off, parry, [itself from] Latin *parare*, to make ready' Ernest Weekley).

phil, philo, fond of, dear; (as suffix, *phil* or *phile*): *philosophy, philanthropy, Francophile.*

poly, many: *polytechnic, polygon, polysyllabic, polyglot.*

pro, before: *problem, program(me), prologue, prophet.* The Latin *pro* 'before', comes from the Greek synonym. But in *pro-German*, etc., the *pro* is rather Latin than Greek: 'for'; compare *pro and con* (=*contra*), for and against.

pros, towards: *proselyte, prosody* ('towards the *way*' of poetry).

pseudo, pseud, false; hence, assumed: *pseudo-Christian, pseudo-historian, pseudonym.*

syn, with; in compounds sometimes *syl, sym*, or even *sy: synagogue, synthesis; syllable; sympathy; system.*

tele, (from) afar: *telegram, telephone, telepathy.*

tetra, four: *tetragon, tetrahedron.*

tri, three, thrice: *trigonometry, tripod, trisyllabic.*

u (properly *ou*), not: *Utopia*, the Land of Nowhere, a perfect country.

B. Suffixes. I: *Old English*; II: *Latin*; III: *Greek.*

I. *Old English.*

(1) Forming nouns:

craft, skill, skilled activity: *handicraft, speechcraft, witchcraft.*

dom, jurisdiction or territory, sphere: hence, condition: *dukedom, kingdom, Christendom; martyrdom, bumbledom.*

er, agent; variants in *or, ier, yer: employer, Londoner, rider, tailor, courtier, lawyer.*

fare, journey: hence, way, passage: *thoroughfare, welfare.*

head: see *hood.*

herd, keeper (of stock): *cowherd, shepherd, swineherd.*

hood, head, state, condition, degree: *Godhead, manhood, priesthood.*

ing and *ling*, in diminutives: *duckling, gosling, nestling, firstling; farthing, wilding.*

kin, diminutive: *mannikin, pannikin, bumpkin.*

lock, ledge, activity: *wedlock, knowledge* (compare *acknowledge*).

lock, lic, a plant: *charlock, hemlock, garlic, house-leek.*

man, a person, a man: *boatman, fisherman, alderman.*

monger, a dealer, peddler, trader, shopkeeper: *costermonger* (originally, a vendor of apples), *cheesemonger, ironmonger.* Hence, uncomplimentary:[1] *scandalmonger.*

nd, end, and, agent: *friend, husband, errand, tidings.*

ness, state, condition, quality: *badness, goodness, darkness, liveliness, sharpness.*

red, quality, condition: *hatred, kindred.*

ock, a diminutive: *hillock, hummock, mattock.*

[1] In language, we usually say 'unfavourable' or 'depreciative' or—very learnedly—'pejorative'.

ric, rule, dominion, place of work: *bishopric.*
ship, mode, quality, condition: *friendship, kingship, hardship, worship.*
stead, a place: *homestead, instead (of), Hampstead.*
ster, worker, trader: *huckster, spinster, rhymester.*
ter, agent, action, also *ther* and *der*: *brother, rudder, murder.*
th, t, quality, condition: *birth, growth, stealth, strength, length, breadth, width; height, light, might.*
ward, keeper, guardian: *bearward, steward.*
wife, woman: *fishwife, midwife.*
wright, workman: *cartwright, shipwright, wheelwright.*
y, ey, ie, diminutive: *puppy, monkey, laddie.*

(2) Forming adjectives:

en, n, made of, consisting of: *beechen, earthen*(ware), *golden, leathern, wooden.*
er, est: in comparative and in superlative degree.
ern, denoting a direction: *northern, southern, eastern, western.*
fast, firm; hence, sure: *handfast, steadfast, shamefaced* (see an etymological dictionary).
fold, originally in reference to strands or folds of cloth: used in numbers —*twofold, threefold, manifold.*
ful, full: hopeful, playful.
ing, from the present participle: *charming, pleasing, astonishing, middling.*
ish, sh, diminutive and sometimes depreciative: *mannish, womanish, palish, reddish.*
less, loose—hence free from; lacking: *fearless, hopeless, luckless; fadeless.*
like: lifelike, warlike, saint-like.
ly (of same Old English origin as *like*): *godly, manly.*
most: foremost, hindmost, inmost, outermost, uttermost.
ow, w, of vaguely diminutive sense: *callow, fallow; few, raw, slow.*
right, direction: *downright, outright, forthright.*
some, causing or characterized by: *burdensome, gladsome, troublesome, irksome.*
teen: ty: ten by addition; ten by multiplication: *thirteen* (3 + 10), *fourteen; thirty* (3 x 10), *forty.*
ther, various shades of meaning in: *other, further, nether.*
ward, inclined, tending: *froward* and *forward; toward, wayward.*
wise, knowing, knowledgeable: *weather-wise, prison-wise, righteous*—originally *rightwise.*
y, possessing, possessed by: *crafty, mighty, chary, naughty.*

(3) Forming verbs:

en, n, causal (to render, to cause): *harden, soften, sharpen; drown, learn.*
k, intensive or frequentative:[1] *hark* (compare *hear, hearken*), *lurk, skulk, smirk.*

[1] Verbs of repetition, verbs indicating that something is done repeatedly.

le, el, l: (i) imitative: *babble, cackle, chuckle, giggle, jingle, mumble, tattle;*

(ii) frequentative or continuative: *drizzle, waggle* (compare *wag*), *wrestle;*

(iii) causal: *jostle, startle, stifle.*

A variation of (i) is *er, r,* as in *clatter, jabber, patter, simmer, glimmer, whimper.*

se, s, causal: *cleanse* (to make clean), *rinse, clasp* and *grasp* (originally *claps* and *graps*).

y, from the old infinitive-ending, 'ian' or 'ien': *ferry, tally.*

(4) Forming adverbs.

This subject has been treated in the chapter on Accidence (Book I). In addition to *-ly,* however, note the suffixes in *sidelong, forwards, endways, lengthways* or *lengthwise, contrariwise.*

II. *Latin.*

(1) Forming nouns:

ace, from Latin nouns in *-atio, -atium, -acia: menace, palace, populace.*

acy: see *cy.*

ade, from Latin *-ata,* often via Italian, French, Spanish: *balustrade, brigade;* compare *sonata* (Italian), *armada* (Spanish).

ado, ultimately Latin (*-atus*), immediately Spanish *-ado* or *-ada*: *bravado, desperado, tornado.*

age, from Latin *-aticum,* often via French: *foliage, plumage; courage; village; carriage, postage; savage, hostage.*

al, als, from Latin *-alia: victuals; canal, capital, hospital, trial.*

an, ain, from Latin *-anus, -aneus: captain, dean, sacristan.*

ance, ence, from Latin *-antia, -entia: arrogance, brilliance, tolerance; obedience, violence.* Modern variations: *ancy, ency,* as in *brilliancy, emergency.*

and, end (Latin gerundial *-andum, -endum*): *viands; dividend, legend.*

ard, art (Low Latin *-ardus,* from Teutonic *-hart*), usually depreciative: *coward, drunkard, laggard; braggart.*

ary, air or *aire, ar, eer, er, ier, or* (Latin *-arius,* many via French *-aire, -ier, -er*), agent or doer or, hence, merely person: *lapidary, doctrinaire, vicar, auctioneer, butler, soldier, chancellor.* Compare:—

ary, ar, er, ier (from Latin *-arius, aria, -arium*): container or receptacle: *library, cellar, ewer, chandelier.*

arian, denoting agent: *librarian, vegetarian.*

aster, depreciative: *oleaster* (wild olive), *poetaster* (a bad poet).

ate (Latin *-atus, -ata, -atum,* etc.), indicating an agent: *advocate, curate, magistrate, magnate, primate; fate, postulate.*

cule or *cle,* diminutive (Latin *-culus,* etc.): *molecule, reticule, uncle.*

cy, sy, acy (Latin *-tia*), abstract: *diplomacy, magistracy, minstrelsy.*

ee, ey, y (Latin *-atus* or *-ata*, via French *-é, -ée*): indicating character or action: *bailee, attorney; deputy; clergy, county, duchy; army, jelly, journey.*

el, elle, l, le, diminutive (Latin *-ellus*, etc.): *libel, bagatelle, pail, mantle.*

ence: see *ance.*

eny, iny (Latin *-inium, -inia*), an act of: *larceny, ignominy.*

ern (Latin *-erna*), container: *cavern, cistern, lantern.*

ery: see *ry.*

ess, feminine (Late Latin *-issa*): *countess, duchess, poetess, actress.*

et, ette, ot, let, diminutive: *bullet, pellet; statuette; chariot; corslet.*

ic, ch, ge, k (Latin *-icus, -ica, -icum*, themselves from Greek): *fanatic, rustic; porch; forge, serge; silk.*

ice, ise, ess (Latin *-itius*, etc.; *-ities*), abstract: *justice, novice, service; exercise; prowess.*

il, ile, le, diminutive: *pencil, pupil; imbecile, quadrille; aisle.*

in: (i) *in* or *ine* (from Latin *-inus, -ina, -inum*): *bulletin, cousin; quinine;* disguised in *pilgrim*;
(ii) from Latin *-inem*: *margin, origin.*

ion, on, abstract (Latin nouns ending in *-io* in nominative, *-ionem* in accusative): *fusion, opinion, oration, submission; comparison, lesson, reason; attention; suspicion.*

ive (Latin *-ivus*), hence *-iff* (via French), activity: *fugitive, native; plaintiff.*

me, m (Latin *-men*): *crime; charm, realm;* disguised in *custom* and *costume.*

ment (Latin *-mentum*): *concealment, judgement,*[1] *payment.*

mony (Latin *-monium, -monia*), abstract: *acrimony, matrimony, testimony.*

on (i) see *ion*;
(ii) *on, en*, vaguely indicating a noun: *felon, simpleton; burden, kitten.*

oon, one, on, indicating 'large', ultimately from Latin, immediately from Italian or French: *balloon, flagon, trombone.*

or (i) variants through French, *our, eur, er, eer*: from Latin *-or*, agent: *actor, emperor; troubadour; amateur; lever; engineer.*
(ii) variants *our, eur*: Latin *-or*, abstract: *error; hono(u)r, favo(u)r, labo(u)r; grandeur.*
(iii) see:

ory: variants *or, our, er*: from Latin *-orius, -a, -um*: *dormitory, signatory; mirror; parlo(u)r; counter.*

ry, -ery (via French): *machinery, poetry, slavery, stationery.*

sion: see *ion.*

t (from the Latin passive participle ending in *-tus, -ta, -tum*): *fact, fruit, joint* (cf. *ate* above).

ter, tre (Latin *-trum*): *cloister, filter, lustre, theatre.*

tion. See *ion.*

trix, feminine agent: *executrix, testatrix, victrix.*

[1] Spell it thus: the stupidity of *judgment* is at last becoming recognized.

tude, abstract: *aptitude, fortitude, multitude, quietude.*
ty, abstract, from Latin *-tas*, French *té*: *cruelty, dignity, frailty.*
ule, le, diminutive (Latin *-ulus, -ula, -ulum*): *pillule; circle.*
ure, ury, abstract: *capture, culture, figure, furniture; usury.*
y, implying 'place of or for' or 'group of': *abbey, company, family, remedy, study.*

(2) Forming adjectives:

able: see *ble.*
aceous, consisting of: *farinaceous, saponaceous.*
acious, ocious, quality: *capacious, loquacious, tenacious; atrocious.*
al; often added to *-ic: vital; historical.*
an; variants, *ain, ane, en* (Latin *-anus, -ana, -anum*): *Roman, pagan; certain; humane; mizzen.*
aneous (Latin *-aneus*): *instantaneous.*—Hence, the *-eign* of *foreign* and *sovereign.*
ant, ent (from Latin present participle): *arrogant, brilliant; absent.*
ar (Latin *-aris*): *familiar, lunar, regular.*
arian, agential: *antiquarian, humanitarian, utilitarian.*
ary, arious (Latin *-arius, -aria, -arium*): *contrary, necessary, ordinary; precarious.*
ate, atic: affectionate, ornate; aquatic, fanatic, lunatic. See also *t.*
ble: in *able, ible, uble* (Latin *-bilis, -bile*), capacity, ability: *capable, laudable; edible; soluble.* So widely used is *able*, that it has become an independent suffix, addable to words from almost any language.
ean, an extension of *an*: *European, herculean, subterranean.*
escent, inceptive (=beginning); from the present-participle ending, *-escens*, of Latin verbs in *-escere: convalescent, effervescent, incandescent.*
esque (Late Latin *-iscus*, via French *-esque*): originally diminutive, now connoting 'tending to be': *burlesque, grotesque, picturesque.*
et (ultimately from Latin but via Italian and French), diminutive: *dulcet, russet.*
ic, belonging to, characteristic of (Latin *-icus, -ica, -icum*): *domestic, public, rustic.*
id (L. *-idus*): *acid, pallid, placid, vivid.*
ile, of or like; variants, *il, eel, el, le*: L. *-ilis: fragile, Gentile, subtile; frail; genteel, cruel, gentle, subtle.* Depreciatory in *febrile, infantile, servile.*
ine, of or like the parent noun (L. *-inus*): *divine, infantine* (not depreciatory).
ior (L. comparative suffix): *inferior, superior; junior, senior; prior.*
ique, belonging to, characteristic of (Latin *-iquus, -iqua, -iquum*): *antique, oblique, unique.*
ive (compare its noun use): *naïve* (from *native*), *restive.*
lent: corpulent, opulent, violent.
me (L. superlative suffix *-mus*): *extreme, prime.*

monious, characterized by: *ceremonious, sanctimonious.*
orious, ory (L. *-orius*): *censorious; compulsory, dilatory.*
ose, ous: adipose; arduous, glorious, tremendous. But *ous*, from Latin, has become so general that, like *able*, it has long been frequently added to non-Latin stems.
ple (L. *-plex*: cf. *fold* in Old English list): *triple, supple.* The Latin form is preserved, without change, in *complex, duplex*, etc.
t, also *ate, ete, ite, ute:* from the Latin passive participles in *-tus* (*-atus, -etus, -itus, -utus*): *exact, ornate, complete, definite, absolute.*
und (L. *-undus*): whence, via French, *ond*: *jocund, rotund; second, vagabond.*
urn (L. *-urnus*), slightly: *auburn, taciturn.*
y (L. *-ious*; Anglo-French *-if*): *hasty, jolly, testy.*

(3) Forming verbs:

ate, from *-atus*, passive participle of the very populous first Latin conjugation (*-are*): *agitate, captivate, moderate, vaccinate.*
er, from L. infinitive in *-ĕre*: *render, tender.*
esce (see *-escent* in preceding list): *acquiesce, coalesce, effervesce.*
fy (L. *-ficere*), to make: *liquefy, magnify, simplify, terrify.*
ish (via French *-iss* from the Latin inceptive *-esc*): *establish, garnish, publish, vanish.*
y (not directly from Latin: from the *i* in the French infinitive-endings *-ier and -ir*): *carry, marry, sally.*

III. *Greek.*

(1) Forming nouns:

ac, noun and adj., from Greek adj. *-akos*: *demoniac, maniac.*
ad, id (from genitives *-ados* and *-idos*): *dryad, decade, myriad, Iliad, nereid, Aeneid.*
ant, implying very marked concreteness: *adamant, elephant, giant.*
asm, abstract: *enthusiasm, pleonasm.* (Compare *ism.*)
ast, agent (compare *ist*): *enthusiast, gymnast, iconoclast.*
e (pronounced): *acme, apostrophe, catastrophe, epitome.*
ia (often via Latin), indicative of illness: *dyspepsia, hydrophobia.* Compare *itis.*
ic (Gr. *-ikos, -ika*); *ics* (Gr. *-ika*, plural): *cleric, cynic; logic, music; ethics, physics.*
id: see *ad.*
isk, diminutive: *asterisk, basilisk, obelisk.*
ism (Gr. *-ismos*), abstract: *baptism, cynicism, Platonism.* Like *ology, ism* is now used colloquially for a science or an esoteric art.
ist (Gr. *-istēs*), agent: *artist,*[1] *dramatist, pathologist.* (Compare *ast.*)

[1] A hybrid or mongrel, because it has a Latin root and a Greek suffix; *witticism* is likewise a hybrid, its stem being Old English, its suffix Greek.

ite, it (Gr. *itēs*), one who is, does, or practises: *eremite*, now *hermit; sybarite; anchorite* or *anchoret.*

itis, Greek feminine adj.-ending, going with *nosos*, 'disease' (fem.), signifying 'disease of the': *bronchitis;* often jocularly, as in *jazzitis, promotionitis.*

m, mme, me (Gr. *-ma*): *program(me), telegram, clime, theme.*

oid (Gr. *ŏeidēs: o* + *eidos*, form, shape; kind)—English *-like*: *anthropoid, negroid, tabloid.*

ology (Greek *logia*, a vague abstract noun, connoting 'knowledge, science', from *logos*, 'thought; a word; speech', preceded, in combination, by *o*): *physiology, psychology.*[1]

on, 1. (Adopted direct from Greek nouns ending in *-ŏn*): *automaton, colon, criterion, phenomenon.*

2. (From Gr. *-ōn*): *canon, horizon, surgeon.*

ot, agent: *idiot, zealot, patriot.*

se, sy: base, eclipse; dropsy. From Greek *-sis*, which appears in such technical terms as *analysis, synthesis; sis*, however, is a Greek ending but not a root that has become a mere ending.

t, te, agent: *poet, prophet; apostate.*

ter, tre, implying a point in, or a definite measure of, space: *meter; metre, centre, sceptre, theatre.*

y (Gr. *-ia* or *eia*), implying abstractness: *academy, agony, energy, monarchy.* (Compare *ia.*)

ysm (Gr. *-usmos*): *cataclysm, paroxysm.*

(2) Forming adjectives:

ac: see the noun list; add *Syriac.*

ic (Gr. *-ikos*): *authentic, climatic, ironic, sporadic.* Compare the Latin list; *al* is often added: *historic—historical; politic—political.*

astic (Gr. *-astikos*: compare *ast* in noun list): *enthusiastic, fantastic, pleonastic, sarcastic.*

istic (Gr. *-istikos*: compare *ist* in noun list): *eulogistic, patristic.*

(3) Forming verbs:

ize, ise. The *-ize* spelling represents Greek *-izein*; *-ise* shows the influence of French *-iser*, so many of the Greek verbs having passed through French.

Important verbs that never take *-ize* are: *advertise, apprise, chastise, comprise, compromise, demise, despise, devise, disfranchise, disguise, enfranchise, enterprise, excise, exercise, improvise, incise, premise, revise, supervise, surmise, surprise* (H. W. Fowler, *A Dictionary of Modern English Usage*): they do not come from Greek.

The basic senses of *-izein*, hence of *-ize*, are 'to subject a person or

[1] Compare the remark at *ism.* 'Don't pin your faith too much on ologies and isms,' *John Bull*, April 28, 1917 (cited by Ernest Weekley).

thing to the influence of the root word; to render—as in *gorgonize* and *Christianize*'; intransitively, 'to suffer the action or process of; to practise', as in *botanize*.

EXERCISES

1. Add prefixes to *able, general, help, get, go, come, new, pass,* to form verbs.
2. Add prefixes to *come, pass, life, shot, shoot,* to form nouns.
3. Form fresh adjectives by adding a prefix to *helpful, visible, healthy, curved, English, American, ethical, physical.*
4. Add suffixes to the following words in order to form verbs: *weak, civil, vital, sharp, quick, strong, visual.*
5. Now add suffixes to turn the following into nouns: *sad, helpful, simple, difficult, cruel.*
6. What are the adjectives corresponding to *bounty, infant, baby, boy, girl, father, pater, haste, censor, compulsion, violence, length, breadth, history?*
7. What adjectives are formed by prefixing *in* to *logical, redeemable, tense, patient, pious, profitable, replaceable?*
8. And what verbs by prefixing *in* to the root or stem of *capacious, employment, lustre, valid, toxic, grateful?* (It may be necessary to add a suffix too.)
9. Form new words by adding, first a prefix, then a suffix, then both, to each of *eat, drink, move, die, profit.*
10. Name two nouns, two verbs, two adjectives formed with
    (*a*) the prefix *inter*
    (*b*) ,, ,, *be*
    (*c*) ,, ,, *meta*
    (*d*) ,, ,, *for*
    (*e*) ,, ,, *mis*
11. Name two nouns formed with each of these suffixes: *dom, head, herd, ock, ess, ette, or, ology.*
12. Name as many adjectives as you can ending in *ern, fold, acious, ile, escent, astic.*
13. What is a hybrid? Give three examples.
14. Write a short account of
    (*a*) *-ism*
    (*b*) *-able*
    (*c*) *-ize.*
15. Substitute the correct for the italicized words in:

    Men have not *eternity* thought as *cities* of a *mechanism* age. In an *agriculture* society, effects *ripe*, do not *process*, from *causations*. With such men *reflect* is not *mere* near, but *audible* near to emotion. They are *imperfection acquaintance* with the geometry of *direction* ideas; with the light-*foot* dance of ratiocination; with thought hauled up as the last link of a *continuity chained*. They are *mood*. They set this with that, not only by a process of dim *reminiscent* and collateral *associate*, but by a slow and *measure* process. More *perceptible* than

with other men *well* floods, surging *tidal*, *affectionate* and *disposed*, the *biassed* of propensity, and the *turbulent* of *attract* and *disturb*, toss *think light* for the cork it is. In the Levant *repetition* inquiry *precedence* action. It is an ample, *liberally* mode of *comprehensive*; it may be traced in the *personify* of Dickens. But *populace* and *ratio* instruction has broken its *dominate* and rendered it now *common* in the *un-Latin* countries.[1]

[1] Adapted from a passage in Sidney Hopper's *Greek Earth*. This is a difficult exercise. It should be left until the revision stage.

ADVANCED PUNCTUATION

If the stops be omitted, or misplaced, it does . . . often-times quite spoil the sense.—Robert Boyle, *Style of Script*, 1661.

The expectation of a settled punctuation is in vain, since no rules of prevailing authority have yet been established.—Philip Luckombe, *The History of Printing*, 1771.

Punctuation is a modern art. The ancients were entirely unacquainted with the use of our commas, colons, &c.—Lindley Murray, *English Grammar*, fifth edition, 1824.[1]

IN Book I,[2] the elements of punctuation have been treated in sufficient detail to enable the ordinary person, 'the man in the street' and 'the woman in the home', to get through life without a blot upon the grammatical escutcheon.

But there are a few additional points. Finer points. Such points as only scholars and writers require to know; such points as need to be known by every schoolboy or schoolgirl reading books for (say) the School Certificate, the Leaving Certificate, or any other examination of the standard he or she is expected to have reached and mastered by the age of sixteen or so; such points as should be familiar to everyone who, no matter what age he is, desires to understand The Bible and the classics of British and American literature. You may not have to employ these refinements of punctuation, but you would be foolish to deprive yourselves of pleasure and information by neglecting to assimilate a few peculiarities that, if you think them out, are almost absurdly easy to understand—and to remember.

These finer points of punctuation become a minor aspect of composition, a precision tool of style. They interact with the tempo: the rapidity or the leisureliness of movement. The theory may sound vague; the practice is clear.

Take, for instance, this passage:

The time was six o'clock. It was an evening in December 1940. Tom, aged thirteen, was walking hurriedly down Oxford-street, London. The sirens had just sounded the alert. He wished to reach the air-raid

[1] These quotations come from that great storehouse and arbiter of language, *The Oxford English Dictionary*.

[2] Learners might do very much worse than to re-read that chapter very carefully before they tackle this rather less easy one. Having read this present chapter, the pupils should, if they require further information and more numerous examples, go to the standard work upon the subject: *Mind the Stop*, by G. V. Carey.

shelter under Selfridge's before the German planes started to drop their bombs.

Many other people were hurrying, some in the one direction, some in the other. It was a very dark night. Tom had all he could do to make his own way without the additional obstacles of gun-flashes momentarily blinding him and without large men knocking into him. He found himself cannoning, like a billiard ball, from human cushion to human cushion. Some of the cushions were not very cushiony.

He thought that he would never reach the shelter. A bomb fell only a quarter of a mile away. He felt afraid. Even a brave boy might well feel afraid at such a time. Somebody knocked him down. Or perhaps he had been struck by falling debris. At last he reached the entrance to the shelter.

Once there, he sighed with relief. Having sighed, he ran as briskly down the stairs as he could in the dim light. He saw that Bill, his special friend, had kept a bunk for him. Happy, he sighed again.

The only points employed in that passage are the period (or full stop) and the comma, the two most useful of all the punctuation marks. No use has been made of the semi-colon and the colon; none of parentheses and the dash. Nor does the passage contain an instance of either of the two rhetorical ingredients that are usually thrown into the punctuation pie—the question mark and the exclamation mark.

Not even a pedant would dare to say that the punctuation is incorrect; nor even a fool pretend that, although free from error, the punctuation is adequate. The full stops and the commas have been asked to do too much: they are feeling the strain: they show signs of distress. Boys have had to perform men's work; they have performed manfully, yet the result is boyish.

It is true that most of the sentences are short and that so many short sentences produce an effect of machine-gun fire. But the writer has made no mention of machine guns. There are too many full stops, almost as much obstacles in the course of smooth narrative as those jostling bodies were to Tom as he struggled towards the shelter. And, at the end, the atmosphere is not, as it should be, one of relief but one of jerky restlessness and continuing action, whereas, in fact, Tom has sunk wearily onto his bunk and stretched himself luxuriously. Danger is remote, effort no longer necessary.

'But can we change the tempo merely by diversifying the punctuation?'

No; for punctuation depends upon the words it upholds and directs and clarifies. A conjunction added here, a verb deleted there; a comma converted into a semi-colon, a period into a colon. Sentences lengthened; phrases shortened. The result: something slightly yet importantly different, or perhaps 'a distinction without a difference'—but how very distinctive is the distinction!

The original is not a masterpiece of prose. Nor will the converted passage be a masterpiece; but at least it will not administer a shock to the

fastidious, nor jar upon the sensitivities of the normal person of average intellect and sound taste. The amended passage has, like the original, been broken into too many paragraphs. That has been done to help you to compare the two; and, to help you still more, the original and the amendment have been set side by side.

The time was six o'clock. It was an evening in December 1940. Tom, aged thirteen, was walking hurriedly down Oxford-street, London. The sirens had just sounded the alert. He wished to reach the air-raid shelter under Selfridge's before the German 'planes started to drop their bombs.

Many people were hurrying, some in the one direction, some in the other. It was a very dark night. Tom had all he could do to make his own way without the additional obstacles of gun-flashes momentarily blinding him and without large men jostling him. He found himself cannoning, like a billiard ball, from human cushion to human cushion. Some of the cushions were not very cushiony.

He thought that he would never reach the shelter. A bomb fell only a quarter of a mile away. He felt afraid. Even a brave boy might well feel afraid at such a time. Somebody knocked him down. Or perhaps he had been struck by falling debris. At last he arrived at the entrance of the shelter.

There, he sighed with relief. Having sighed, he ran as briskly down the steps as he could in the dim light. He saw that Bill, his special friend, had kept a bunk for him. Happy, he sighed again.

It was six o'clock on an evening in December 1940. Tom, aged thirteen, was walking hurriedly down Oxford-street in London. The sirens had just sounded the alert: he wished to reach the air-raid shelter under Selfridge's before the German 'planes began to drop their bombs.

Many people were hurrying, some in the one direction and some in the other. Tom had all he could do (it was a very dark night) to make his own way; gun-flashes momentarily blinding him and large men jostling him increased his difficulties. He found himself cannoning like a billiard ball from one human cushion to another: and some of the cushions were not very cushiony.

He thought that he would never reach the shelter. A bomb fell only a quarter of a mile away. He felt afraid—even a brave boy might well feel afraid at such a time. Somebody knocked him down. Or had he been struck by falling debris? At last he arrived at the entrance of the shelter.

There, he sighed with relief and—as briskly as he could in the dim light!—he ran down the steps. He saw that Bill, who was his special friend, had kept a bunk for him. He sighed again with relief. And happiness.

To the dim eye, the changes seem trifling; to that pupil who thinks of milk as something that comes out of tins and of sheep as animals that

supply him with meat and provide him with woollen vests, the changes may seem to be for the worse. The original might have appeared in any newspaper, whereas the amended passage would be allowed only in a good newspaper.

At the end of the second paragraph in the right-hand version, you will have noticed that a colon is employed much as you will find it employed in The Bible. 'Thy vows,' intones the Psalmist, 'are upon me, O God: I will render praises unto thee' (lvi, 12). That Biblical use of the colon has sometimes been described as 'a parallelism', the two statements being parallel. But note that, even more than a parallelism, it is an elaboration by addition.

Then there is the cumulative colon, two or more colons mounting to a peak of excitement or intensity or force or conviction. Thus,

> I came: I saw: I conquered.
>
> He ran madly: fell blindly: died where he fell.
>
> The bear reared upon its hind legs: the hunter fired hastily: the bear bellowed in agony and rushed: again the hunter fired, this time with a true aim: the bear fell dead and in falling brushed the hunter's shoulder with limp paw.

Now, the semi-colon can be—and often is—employed in the same cumulative manner.

> I came; I saw; I conquered.
>
> This coherent and . . . cumulative questioning could not but gratify me. Its drift was plain. Its drift was right. Such conversation offers its excitements and its rewards; dangles its hazards and its prizes; comports its proper spirit; and obeys its enforceable rules (Sidney Hopper, *Greek Earth*, 1939).

Another service rendered by the semi-colon is that of either modification or sharper definition appended to a statement.

> The hermit shut the door of his humble dwelling and looked at his possessions; his few simple possessions.
>
> The girl raptly gazed at the fancy dress of some rich stuff; brocade, to be precise.

Yet another use of the semi-colon is this. Certain twentieth century writers have revived a stylistic device beloved of the eighteenth century. Here are three examples:

> He glanced timidly around him; he feared some harm; to see whether anyone were within call.

In the gamble of life; to him life was ever a gamble; he risked much —and risked it often.

And now we were coming to a clearing in the woods; a little glade, bright green with the soft moss-grass; in the centre of which glade a stream ran between deep banks (Michael Harrison, *When All the Trees Were Green*, 1936). There the semi-colons play the same part as a pair of dashes. (Obviously parentheses would be too weak.) Semi-colons, however, are not only more dignified; they are stronger, more impressive; they demand a considerable pause.

Finally we should consider two ' combined stops '; that is, stops consisting of two simple—two ordinary—stops:

(1) The stop-dash, used either singly (.—) or doubly, i.e. as an enclosure (.—a group of words.—).
(2) the comma-dash, used either singly (,—) or doubly, i.e. as an enclosure (,—a group of words,—).

The single stop-dash is employed when a sentence that does not quite merit a paragraph to itself is rather abruptly added, as in ' The horse is a noble animal ' (*coming at the end of a series of remarks about the horse*) *and then* '.—But so is the elephant.'

The double stop-dash occurs within a paragraph, as in ' There are several means of interpolation, the chief being a pair of dashes or a pair of parentheses.— There is also, of course, the stop-dash.— But interpolations require to be handled very carefully.'

The comma-dash, whether single or double, is gradually being discarded. A justifiable example: ' Once you begin using long sentences, you need either the semi-colon or the colon, especially for an addition to the sense of the statement as a whole,—such an addition as you have already considered in the course of this chapter,—or for a very important modification.'

Although I myself sometimes find it necessary to employ the comma-dash and the stop-dash in my adventures in the land of lexicography, I advise that these dash combinations be avoided—or used very sparingly indeed.

You now possess a sufficient knowledge of the various stops. But before you attempt the Exercises, you should ask yourselves whether you can distinguish the difference between the following ' Variations upon a Theme in Grammar ', as a musical composer might phrase it:

(1) The man rose to his feet, his opponent rushed at him, and both fell heavily to the ground.
(2) The man rose to his feet; his opponent rushed at him; and both fell heavily to the ground.
(3) The man rose to his feet: his opponent rushed at him: and both fell heavily to the ground.

(4) The man rose to his feet; his opponent rushed at him, and both—*or* both of them—fell heavily to the ground.
(5) The man rose to his feet. His opponent rushed at him, and both fell heavily to the ground.

If we omit ' and ' :

(6) The man rose to his feet; his opponent rushed at him; both fell heavily to the ground.
(7) The man rose to his feet. His opponent rushed at him; both fell heavily to the ground.
(8) The man rose to his feet; his opponent rushed at him. Both fell heavily to the ground.

And so forth.

In (1) the comma after ' feet ' is a little too weak to support the ensuing pause; (3) is too literary—too serious for the context; (2) is preferable to either (1) or (3); (4) and (5) are good, your choice being determined by the degree of importance you wish to attribute to the statement ' The man rose to his feet '. Of (6), (7), (8), the first is the most vivid, but the third is probably the best.

Lest you should think that I am over-emphasizing the importance of punctuation, allow your irritation to subside and your eyes to read slowly, your minds to digest, the following pronouncements.

> Great care ought to be had in writing, for the due observing of points: for,[1] the neglect thereof will pervert the sense.—Richard Hodges, *The English Primrose*, 1644.
>
> Stops matter a great deal. If you are getting your commas, semi-colons, and full stops wrong, it means that you are not getting your thoughts right, and your mind is muddled.—The late Archbishop William Temple in a letter to *The Observer*, October 23, 1938.
>
> We ought to deplore the growing tendency to use only full stops and commas. Punctuation is an invaluable aid to clear writing, and . . . far too little importance is attached to it by many journalists.—Frank Whitaker in *The Journal of the Institute of Journalists*, January, 1939.
>
> Mr Partridge's account of punctuation shows by its wealth of possible effects that punctuation can be made a part of the art of writing—instead of the simple, almost mechanical routine that American schools recommend.—Professor W. Cabell Greet in, and concerning, the article on punctuation in my *Usage and Abusage*: *A Guide to Good English.*

[1] This comma affords an instance of Dramatic (or Rhetorical) punctuation marks (usually commas) inserted to warn the actor or the orator that, there, he should pause in order to emphasize the words immediately following the point. One finds it in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century dramatists; it is the concern of textual critics.

Note. For a comprehensive guide to punctuation and its accessories, see the author's *You Have a Point There.* (Hamish Hamilton, Ltd.; 2nd edition.)

EXERCISES

1. ' Only pedants trouble their heads about punctuation. Life is too short to waste time upon anything so unimportant.' Thus a wealthy manufacturer.

   In fairness to you, I should mention that he afterwards went bankrupt because he had failed to express himself clearly in a memorandum: a misplaced comma lost him a powerful business ally; a vast order, on which he had counted, went to his most powerful business rival. A sad story: I leave it to you to point the moral. But only the grammatical moral.

2. Richard Hodges, in 1644, cited this instance of bad punctuation: ' My Son, if sinners intise thee consent thou, not refraining thy foot from their way ': correct it, with modern spelling.

3. What would you say is wrong with:
   ' He was, God forgive him!, a scoundrel '?

4. Is there anything amiss with:
   ' He was (God forgive him!) a scoundrel '?

5. What difference is there between
   ' Robin Hood (date uncertain) was an incurable romantic '
   and
   ' Robin Hood—date uncertain—was an incurable romantic '?

6. One might criticize ' Robin Hood; as every schoolgirl knows; was a figure destined to captivate the moguls of Hollywood '.

   Do you? If so, why? And what would your amended version be?

7. A publisher's list of a distinguished writer's works ran thus:

   ' ANARCHY OR HIERARCHY
   by S. de Madariaga

   Author of *Englishmen, Frenchmen, Spaniards, Disarmament, The Genius of Spain,* etc.'

   Unless you knew the titles you would be puzzled to make out how many books Senor de Madariaga had written at this date (1939). I give you a clue: only four books are named. What, then, are the titles? Set them forth with an unambiguous punctuation.

8. How would you re-write ' The only student I have ever met who ever believed his ears was blind '?

   The style is unhappy. Amend it if you can. The punctuation could be improved—so why not improve it?

9. The following sentence, written by an excellent stylist and a subtle scholar, is less subtly punctuated than the sense requires. Can you do what he neglected to do?

   ' It is not enough to lead a student by the still waters, one must lose him at last in the stormy ones.'

10. The following sentence, written by a fine Classical scholar whose attitude towards punctuation was that all one needs is a full stop, remains an odd sentence even when it has been punctuated. First, re-punctuate; then re-write, with appropriate points.

    ' The latest editor of the text Baehrens believes it like me to be one poem.'

11. ' The crowd was thinning, many of the girls, among them Joan and

Valerie, finding it chilly standing about in their scanty costumes, had gone to dress ' (W. H. Lane Crauford, *Murder to Music*, 1936.)

Any girl would feel chilled to the bone if she found herself wind-swept in such a sentence as that.

Is chivalry dead? And punctuation a mockery?

12. Correct the ' pointing ' of the following sentences:

' There was no villa to be seen. . . . As they drew near it became evident that the narrow road ended by the villa itself.'—Louis Bromfield, *The Strange Case of Miss Annie Spragg*, 1928.

' The night it all began torrential rain fell.'—Dale Collins, *Lost*, 1933.

' For all the Loyalist Party know the girl may turn up at any second.'—Laurence Meynell, *The House in the Hills*, 1937.

' If there was any previous connection between Bennett and the Oultons that, and not Mrs O'Brien's name and address on their back, might account for Bennett's interest in Miss Molly's sketches.'—E. R. Punshon, *The Dusky Hour*, 1937.

' Can he, he had admittedly made money in American, be the confidence trickster.'—*Ibid.*[1]

' And once I had discovered that there was no longer any doubt as to whether a spark of life still lingered in him.'—Stephen Maddock, *Doorway to Danger*, 1938.

' A bank studied on the basis of what is going on inside without recourse to abstractions like " credit ", " liquidity ", " soundness ", is a pretty whimsical thing.'—Stuart Chase, *The Tyranny of Words*, 1938.

' I knew the old boy was in one of his bad moods and as I didn't feel very sweet-tempered myself I didn't start anything.'—Nigel Balchin, *The Small Back Room*, 1943.

13. In the preceding exercise, the fifth quotation exemplifies yet another way of punctuating a pause. The mode is permissible; in that quotation, however, its use is not very fortunate. How many ways are there of indicating an interruption, an afterthought, *within* a sentence? Give one example of each.

14. In the following passage, which may have suffered from faulty proof-reading, the punctuation is vague, perhaps incomplete, certainly ambiguous. Show how the punctuation could be improved.

' The opposite arrangement—that is to say, an abundance of short and unaccented syllables, and the more abrupt consonants alternated with the vowels, by making the pronunciation rapid, light and easy, corresponds to quickness of motion in the subject.'—Alexander Bain, *English Composition and Rhetoric*, 2 vols, 1887–8.

15. The following message was telegraphed to Dr Starr Jameson at the time of his raid, late in 1895, into the Transvaal.

' It is under these circumstances that we feel constrained to call upon you to come to our aid should a disturbance arise here the circumstances are so extreme that we cannot but believe that you and the men under you will not fail to come to the rescue of the people who are so situated.'

The authors of the message, it seems, intended it to be conditional (full stop after ' here '); in the form in which it was published in *The Times*, a full stop was inserted after ' aid ', thus making the message

[1] *Ibid.*, or *ib.*, is short for *ibidem*, ' in the same place'—for instance, in the same book, play, poem.

tantamount to an unconditional invitation. The authors had not thought out the implications of their words.

Punctuate the passage in both of these ways.

16. To what extent does the etymology of *point, full point, full stop, period, comma, colon, parentheses,* explain the use of the punctuation-marks themselves?

17. What is

(*a*) a cumulative colon?

(*b*) Dramatic or Rhetorical Punctuation?

Give two examples of each—your own examples.

18. ' To regard punctuation as a rule-of-thumb process may save you from error; it probably will. But to practise it as an art will bring variety to your style, clarity to your thought, and pleasure to your readers, even when only a private letter or a school essay is concerned.'

Do you agree? If not, then why not?

19. Faulty punctuation has caused much trouble. Devise three sentences or short passages illustrating this melancholy truth.

20. Punctuate the following passage and supply it with apostrophes, quotation marks, italics, capitals where necessary.

> You cant eat all the fruit in your huge orchard its impossible so what do you do we eat what we can and what we cant we can but have you a cannery no we havent but we have the art of canning and in that book we find how to can for ourselves and how to send the rest away for canning so we can manage to can and dont have to worry ourselves too much about what we cant.

PARAPHRASE

PARAPHRASE. Via French *paraphrase*, from Latin *paraphrasis*, a direct adoption of the same word in Greek, that word deriving from *paraphrazein*, 'to say the same thing, but in other words', literally 'to speak' (*phrazein*) 'beside' or 'beyond' (*para*).

PARAPHRASE. 'A restatement of a text, passage, or work, giving the meaning in another form, usually for clearer and [occasionally for] fuller exposition; a free rendering; . . . hence, the use or process of paraphrasing as a literary or educational method. "His sermons a living *paraphrase* upon his practice."—Southey' (*Webster's New International Dictionary*).

MANY schools, usually because their particular Examining Board is at fault, teach paraphrase to pupils that are too young to profit by it. But the majority of boys and girls, say fourteen to fifteen years old, can deal with it, because they possess a sufficient vocabulary to render the exercise possible, sufficient practice in syntax and composition to render it profitable, sufficient mental development, i.e. powers of thought, to obviate puzzlement and to preclude strain.

Paraphrase varies, in length and difficulty, from the brief simplicities of re-telling, preferably in one simple sentence, such a proverb as 'Honesty is the best policy', through the middling difficulty of re-expressing such an epigram as 'A cynic is a man who knows the price of everything, and the value of nothing' or the mere conversion into modern English of a passage in Elizabethan, Jacobean or Caroline English, to the considerable difficulties of re-casting a passage of ornate or philosophic prose or of obscure or complex verse. Teachers can add to those types of paraphrase the quotation of some woolly or muddle-headed or un-thought-out piece of officialese, written by men and women that, not knowing what they themselves are doing, take it upon themselves to tell *us* what to do; if only they could tell us, it wouldn't be so bad.

This last kind of paraphrase is unfortunately a necessity. Much paraphrase is unnecessary. Teachers and examiners are constantly setting difficult passages in Shakespeare or learnèd passages in Milton or ethereal passages in Shelley: quite apart from the fact that many of us think it a gratuitous insult to Shakespeare, Milton and Shelley to manhandle them in this way, would it not be very much more sensible of examiners to expect, and of teachers to teach, a full and appreciative understanding and enjoyment of the great originals than to demand these redundant exercises from children? Children's minds can be trained and enriched

by better—more practical and, at the same time, more liberal—means than that of paraphrase.

But until we abandon the dulling of brightness, the marring of beauty, the harshening of music, the effacement of eloquence; until we cease from converting the great into the mediocre and the lovely into the drab; until paraphrase has been reduced to the clarifying of obscurity and muddle-headedness; until that happy consummation be achieved, I must, with a few examples and exercises, help the young unfortunates upon whom the practice has been imposed.

Paraphrase is simply a re-telling. Putting the meaning of the original into your own words. To do this, you obviously must understand all the words of the original; without understanding those words, you can hardly understand the thought expressed by the original.

I once saw the following proverb set for paraphrase: 'The exception proves the rule.' Not very many boys and girls of your age happen to know that, in this proverb, *proves* means 'tries, tests'; hence 'Every exception tests the rule'—'Every exception tests whether the rule holds good' or 'Every exception tests whether the rule is always applicable'. That kind of paraphrase should not be asked of you. All particularly difficult, like all rare, words should, unless the passage be taken from a 'set book', be defined by the teacher or the examining board.

Suppose that the following short poem, written early in the seventeenth century by an anonymous poet, is set for paraphrase;

Faustina hath the fairer face,
And Phyllida the feater grace;
Both have mine eyes enriched:
This sings full sweetly with her voice;
Her fingers make as sweet a noise:
Both have mine ears bewitched.
Ah me! sith Fates have so provided
My heart, alas, must be divided.[1]

First, the verse must be turned into prose. The long-obsolete *sith* becomes 'since'; and the teacher or the examiner should, beforehand, tell the class or the candidates this. The old-fashioned *hath* becomes 'has'; and the poetical *mine*, 'my'. A generous examiner would define *feater* as 'more apt or suitable' or 'neater', for the term is archaic. Here is one of the many possible conversions:

Faustina is the prettier, Phyllida the more neatly graceful, but both are a pleasure to the eye. The one sings most sweetly, the other plays as sweetly: both are a pleasure to the ear. Well, well! Since Fate has so arranged the matter, I must love them both and love them equally.

[1] This poem anticipates, by two generations, the famous Restoration piece on the same subject.

Now take a piece of eighteenth-century prose, from an essay written by Henry Mackenzie and published on September 30, 1786:

> That there is Nobody in Town, is the observation of every person one has met for several weeks past; and though the word Nobody, like its fellow-vocable *Everybody*, has a great latitude of signification, and in this instance means upwards of three score thousand people, yet undoubtedly, in a certain rank of life, one finds, at this season, a very great blank in one's accustomed society.

It might be paraphrased thus:

> During the past few weeks, everybody remarks, there has been nobody in London. Although *nobody* and *everybody* are here, as so often elsewhere, very loosely used, and although *nobody* here means some 60,000 persons, yet it is true that, among the upper classes, one does, in late summer and early autumn, miss many of one's friends and acquaintances.

And here is an example of the obscurity and verbosity beloved of bureaucrats:

> The following provisions of this Act shall extend only to shops that is to say those provisions of section six and section eight which relate to the approval by occupiers of shops of orders made under those sections the provisions of paragraph (c) of sub-section (1) of section seven and the provisions of paragraph (a) of section twelve.

Paraphrased, it may run thus—or does it?

> The rulings of section 12, para. *a*, and section 7, sub-sec. 1, para. *c*, will apply only to such shops as come under sections 7 and 8; these latter sections concern shopkeepers' approval of certain orders.

But we cannot decide which orders were meant, nor even whether the interpretation of the main part of the Act is correct. If I were asked to paraphrase the original, I should not refuse, but I should point out that the passage can be interpreted in three or four different ways.

The following example of officialese is merely verbose:

> The Department is not in a position to supply the book which you have requested. You are, however, hereby authorized to acquire the work in question by purchase through the ordinary trade channels.

Paraphrased—here, ' turned into self-respecting English '—the passage reads:

> The Department cannot supply the book for which you ask. You may, however, buy a copy from a bookseller.

EXERCISES

1. Define *paraphrase* in your own words; that is, paraphrase the definition given at the head of this chapter—or your teacher's or your own dictionary's definition.
2. What is the etymology (word-history) of *paraphrase*?
3. State, honestly and fearlessly, your private opinion of an examiner's demand that you paraphrase Milton—or Shakespeare—or Shelley—or Whitman—or Tennyson—or T. S. Eliot.
4. What sort of originals, if any, do you think ought to be paraphrased?
5. Do you prefer to paraphrase verse or to paraphrase prose? Say why.
6. What relationship do you detect between paraphrase and précis? (Obviously you can answer this question only when, later in this Course, you have studied précis.)
7. Paraphrase the following passage from a newspaper of February 11, 1938:

   The Central News reports that unrest prevailed among 'certain military and political elements'. The elements, it was added, were being 'energetically suppressed'.

   For your guidance: this happened in a totalitarian country.
8. The following passage needs to be briefer and clearer. Paraphrase it in simple language.

   If a man with a small business cares to place his goods (without restriction as to quality or variety) on a barrow or in a cart and perambulate the streets on Sunday, he is outside the scope of the Act, for in the words of Lord Hewart he is using 'a movable and peripatetic[1] apparatus by means of which sales are enabled to be made at every sort of point in streets and roads over a large area—no fixed locality, no identifiable place'.
9. The ensuing piece of journalese, committed by a Manchester journalist in 1850, could be rewritten with advantage to all concerned:

   Notwithstanding the genuine literary productions that have sprung out of the haunts of cotton-mills and weaving sheds, they have only here and there penetrated far beyond the immediate neighbourhood that called them into existence.
10. In *What a Word!*, Sir Alan Herbert quoted the following example of so-called 'business English'. Paraphrase it into ordinary English and see how much better it looks!

    We are in receipt of your favour of the 9th inst. with regard to the estimate required for the removal of your furniture and effects from the above address to Burbleton, and will arrange for a representative to call to make an inspection on Tuesday next, the 14th inst., before 12 noon, which we trust will be convenient, after which our quotation will at once issue.
11. Paraphrase the following passage from Gibbon's *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (1776–1781).

    It is a very honourable circumstance for the morals of primitive Christians, that even their faults, or rather errors, were derived from an excess of virtue. The bishops and doctors of the church, whose evidence attests, and whose authority might influence, the professions,

[1] *Peripatetic:* moving—strictly, journeying; especially, walking—hither and thither, or from place to place.

the principles, and even the practice, of their contemporaries, had studied the scriptures with less skill than devotion, and they often received, in the most literal sense, those rigid precepts of Christ and the apostles to which the prudence of succeeding commentators has applied a looser and more figurative mode of interpretation. Ambitious to exalt the perfection of the gospel above the wisdom of philosophy, the zealous fathers have carried the duties of self-mortification, of purity, and of patience, to a height which it is scarcely possible to attain, and much less to preserve, in our present state of weakness and corruption. A doctrine so extraordinary and so sublime must inevitably command the veneration of the people; but it was ill calculated to obtain the suffrage of those worldly philosophers who, in the conduct of this transitory life, consult only the feelings of nature and the interest of society. . . . It was not in *this* world that the primitive Christians were desirous of making themselves either agreeable or useful.

12. Turn into ordinary, sensible prose, with title, etc.:

EPITAPH ON JOHN GAY

(In Westminster Abbey. 1732)

Of manners gentle, of affections mild;
In wit, a man; simplicity, a child:
With native humour temp'ring virtuous rage,
Form'd to delight at once and lash the age:
Above temptation, in a low estate,
And uncorrupted, ev'n among the great:
A safe companion, and an easy friend,
Unblam'd through life, lamented in thy end.
These are thy honours! not that here thy bust
Is mix'd with heroes, or with kings thy dust;
But that the worthy and the good shall say,
Striking their pensive bosoms,—*Here* lies Gay.

Alexander Pope.

13. A prose rendering of Wordsworth's finest sonnet reads quite effectively Try your hand at it.

UPON WESTMINSTER BRIDGE

(September 3, 1802)

Earth has not anything to show more fair;
Dull would he be of soul who could pass by
A sight so touching in its majesty:
This City now doth like a garment wear

The beauty of the morning: silent, bare,
Ships, towers, domes, theatres, and temples lie
Open unto the fields, and to the sky,
All bright and glittering in the smokeless air.

Never did sun more beautifully steep
In his first splendour valley, rock, or hill;
Ne'er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep!

The river glideth at his own sweet will:
Dear God! the very houses seem asleep;
And all that mighty heart is lying still!

14. Set forth as a duologue—i.e., a dialogue between two persons—the following exchange of amiabilities,[1] with two speeches to each character, and with each stanza represented by one speech; begin with the poet.

A Poet's Song Against Music

Music's a Crotchet, the Sober think vain,
The *Fiddle's* a Wooden Projection;
Tunes are but flirts of a Whimsical Brain,
Which the Bottle brings best to Perfection.

Musicians are half-witted, Merry and Mad,
The same are all those that admire 'em;
They're Fools if they Play, unless they're well Paid,
And the others are Blockheads to hire 'em.

A Musician's Song Against Poetry

Poetry's Fabulous, Loose, and Prophaine,
For Truth you must never depend on't;
It's juvenal[2] broth of a Frenzical Brain,
Hung with Jingling Tags at the end on't.

Poets are Poor, full of Whimsie and Flight,
For Amorous Fops to delight in;
They're Fools if they Write, lest they get Mony by't,
And they're Blockheads that pay 'em for Writing.

15. Convert into Modern English, with ordinary punctuation and in three paragraphs, this foreword, written by a publisher in 1634.

The Stationer to The Buyer,
wisheth all Happiness,

Declaring

That having purchased this Copie of the Author, during his imprisonment, and making quicke sale of the two first impressions, was importun'd to forbeare a third, that the memory of the Authors fault (as hee alledged) might grow cold, left it stucke, as a fresh and lasting Blemish on his future actions: To this nicitie[3] of his, against my profit, I hitherto most willingly condescended; But it seemes (during the pause of this Prevention) that old Rebellion on the way hath gathered new strength, and is become againe an eminent, and bold sinne: For which cause and some others (being still daily importuned to set forth a third impression) I condescended at the last thereunto, having first treated with many of the Authors friends, and wel-wishers, who all conclude, there cannot be an apter foyle, to his stayder actions, than the memory of that his youthfull folly; Besides, the late and generall false report of his Relapse, and untoward death, made me most willing againe to publish this work of his, to let you know, hee not onely lives, but hath also made good all these his Promises, and strict Resolutions, in so much that it is become very disputable amongst Wise men, whether they should more admire[4] his former ill wayes, or his now most singular Reformation, whereat no man outjoyes his friend, and

Yours
Richard Meighen.

[1] From Edward Ward (' Ned Ward ', wit and coffee-house keeper), *The London Spy*, Part I, 1698.
[2] Juvenile or, better, youthful.
[3] Fastidiousness.
[4] Be astonished at.

16. An important London store, situated—as the saying goes—not over a hundred miles from Marble Arch, invited certain members of its staff to write its advertisements. This is what one of them, a Public School man, wrote—not over ten years before or after 1938. Whether you're a Public School man (or woman), or just a schoolboy or schoolgirl, you can do better than that. Paraphrase or, if you prefer to think of the activity thus, re-write this well-nigh perfect example of woolliness.

    If one thinks a little, retailing is a very real, alive and gripping ' profession ', and well it may be termed, perhaps never before a profession, it is highly specialized where one brings into play every faculty one has been given. To those men who have been fortunate to have a good education, there is nothing else I know where every subject he has been coached in has been brought into use at one time or another. With this being such he will always be an ever-awake and useful member of the community.

PRECIS WRITING

A PRÉCIS[1] is an *abridged statement* (or *abridgement*), a *summary*. The term *précis*, however, is rarely applied to the summary of a book. Nor is *abstract* an exact synonym of *précis*, *abstract* being usually confined to the summary of a philosophical argument or of a scientific or technical paper or memorandum. A large-scale summary of a book is an *abridgement*, whereas a *synopsis* is a small-scale summary of a book. A serial story is preceded, in the second and later instalments, by a synopsis, which, as the book progresses, becomes progressively more concise, terse, brief: you could do much worse than study how these synopses gradually become more compact.

The essence of a précis is that it should provide the reader with the most important facts or features—an outline—of the original. The précis should be written in language that, although as economical as possible, retains the tone and spirit and tempo of that original.

Practice is vastly superior to theory. To write six précis's and to have them intelligently criticized, one by one as you go along, will help you more than sixty pages of theory. There are very few general rules.[2] Here are the most useful.

Read the original slowly and thoughtfully. Re-read it, to make sure that you have grasped the main argument, the central thread, and that you see how the argument has been developed or the main trend kept clear and readily discernible.

Break a long unparagraphed or insufficiently paragraphed passage into as many paragraphs as there are topics within the subject. Do not tinker with an already satisfactory paragraphing.

You are presenting the author, not displaying yourself. Do not, therefore, alter the order of facts, nor the time-scheme, nor the stylistic arrangement, unless the order, the scheme and the arrangement are very unsatisfactory—that is, confusing—in the original.

Write coolly and deliberately. When you have finished your shortened version, read it over and neatly prune it of any unnecessary words. Remember: the précis is to be in consecutive, readable English—not in telegraphese.

[1] Write 'précis' with the accent, but without italics. The plural is written either as 'précis's' (my preference) or as 'précis' (the *Webster's* ruling), the pronunciation being the same: *pray'sees*. The present participle is 'précising'; the past participle and tense 'précised'; I admit to preferring 'précis'ing' and 'précis'd' as being more logical—and much less misleading.

[2] To teachers and independent students desirous of a fuller account and numerous excerpts (some divisible), I indicate my *Précis Writing*.

You may either cast the original into your own language or retain, so far as possible, the language of the original. Recasting provides the better literary exercise, but is no more than a précis form of paraphrase. More important than literary exercise is loyalty to the original: the cause of truth and the cause of honesty are better served by retaining the words of the writer or speaker. I warmly recommend the second method, for it avoids misrepresentation.

Each of those two methods has two forms. Either the original passage can remain in Direct Speech, or it can be cast into Indirect. (If the original is in Indirect Speech, there is no point in converting it into Direct.)

I strongly advise you to retain the Direct Speech of the original if it be, as it usually is, in Direct. Certain Examining Boards ask you to turn a Direct-Speech original into an Indirect-Speech précis: you must do as they ask. I myself, however, deprecate—rather, I vigorously condemn —this demand. Not only is précis difficult enough without this complication but, more importantly, this combination of précis and ' reporting ' causes an unpardonable distortion of the original. In the practical world, to turn a Direct original into an Indirect précis results in a senseless waste of time.[1]

Evidently I cannot adequately show you how to write a précis in your own words; I can only remark that you will endeavour to preserve the tone and, as far as possible, the tempo of the original. For instance, you will not treat a serious passage flippantly; nor heavily a witty or humorous one. You will not slow down a swift-moving original, nor transcribe a solemn or beautiful original into jive time and jazz variations. Perhaps these recommendations will suggest to you why, all in all, it is better *not* to recast, but to retain the original wording as far as your ingenuity can contrive. Nevertheless, I must convey some, though inevitably inadequate, idea of how a recasting may be performed.

The Pitt–Newcastle Coalition[2]

The two most powerful men in the country were the Duke of Newcastle and Pitt. Alternate victories and defeats had made them sensible that neither of them could stand alone. The interest of the State, and the interest of their own ambition, impelled them to coalesce. By their coalition was formed the ministry which was in power when George the Third ascended the throne.

The more carefully the structure of this celebrated ministry is examined, the more shall we see reason to marvel at the skill or the luck which had combined in one harmonious whole such various and, as it seemed, incompatible elements of force. The influence which is derived from stainless integrity, the influence which is derived from the vilest arts of

[1] For Reported Speech in general, see the chapter thereon.
[2] Set for précis in 1939. The précis itself is new.

corruption, the strength of aristocratical connection, the strength of democratical enthusiasm, all these things were for the first time found together.

Newcastle brought to the coalition a vast mass of power, which had descended to him from Walpole and Pelham. The public offices, the church, the courts of law, the army, the navy, the diplomatic service, swarmed with his creatures. The great Whig families, which, during several generations, had been trained in the discipline of party warfare, and were accustomed to stand together in a firm phalanx, acknowledged him as their captain. Pitt, on the other hand, had what Newcastle wanted, an eloquence which stirred the passions and charmed the imagination, a high reputation for purity, and the confidence and ardent love of millions.

The partition which the two ministers made of the powers of government was singularly happy. Each occupied a province for which he was well qualified; and neither had any inclination to intrude himself into the province of the other. Newcastle took the treasury, the civil and ecclesiastical patronage, and the disposal of that part of the secret-service money which was then employed in bribing members of Parliament. Pitt was Secretary of State, with the direction of the war and of foreign affairs. Thus the filth of all the noisome and pestilential sewers of government was poured into one channel. Through the other passed only what was bright and stainless. Mean and selfish politicians, pining for commissionerships, gold sticks, and ribands, flocked to the great house at the corner of Lincoln's Inn Fields. There, at every levee, appeared eighteen or twenty pair of lawn sleeves; for there was not, it was said, a single Prelate who had not owed either his first elevation or some subsequent translation to Newcastle. There appeared those members of the House of Commons in whose silent votes the main strength of the Government lay. One wanted a place in the excise for his butler. Another came about a prebend for his son. A third whispered that he had always stood by his Grace and the Protestant succession; that his last election had been very expensive; that he had been forced to take up money on mortgage; and that he hardly knew where to turn for five hundred pounds. The Duke pressed all their hands, passed his arm around all their shoulders, patted all their backs, and sent away some with wages, and some with promises. From this traffic Pitt stood haughtily aloof. Not only was he himself incorruptible, but he shrank from the loathsome drudgery of corrupting others. He had not, however, been twenty years in Parliament, and ten years in office, without discovering how the Government was carried on. He was perfectly aware that bribery was practised on a large scale by his colleagues. Hating the practice, yet despairing of putting it down, and doubting whether, in those times, any ministry could stand without it, he determined to be blind to it. He would see nothing, know nothing, believe nothing.

It may be doubted whether he did not owe as much of his popularity to his ostentatious purity as to his eloquence, or to his talents for the

administration of war. It was everywhere said with delight and admiration that the Great Commoner, without any advantages of birth or fortune, had, in spite of the dislike of the Court and of the aristocracy, made himself the first man in England, and made England the first country in the world; that his name was mentioned with awe in every palace from Lisbon to Moscow; that his trophies were in all the four quarters of the globe; yet that he was still plain William Pitt, without title or riband, without pension or sinecure place. Whenever he should retire, after saving the State, he must sell his coach horses and his silver candlesticks. Widely as the taint of corruption had spread, his hands were clean. They had never received, they had never given, the price of infamy. Thus the coalition gathered to itself support from all the high and all the low parts of human nature, and was strong with the whole united strength of virtue and of Mammon.—Macaulay.

Suppose that this passage has to be précis'd very briefly indeed;[1] in, say, 200 words. The following is a passable abridgement.

The Pitt-Newcastle Coalition

The most powerful men in the ministry holding power when George III became king were Pitt and the Duke of Newcastle, whom circumstances, personal, national and political, had perforce united.

In this famous ministry, skill and luck had harmoniously combined apparently incompatible forces and produced a wonderful instrument of government: Newcastle's followers in Church, Law, the Navy and the Army, the Civil and Diplomatic Services; and Pitt's millions of followers among the people: Newcastle's formidable worldliness subserving Pitt's integrity, eloquence and imagination.

Pitt directed war and foreign affairs, Newcastle the treasury, all patronage and all bribery. Newcastle handled the corruption and manipulation, Pitt the intellectual and spiritual genius and integrity of the nation. Pitt, knowing that venality continued, also knew that without it no ministry could stand; the country vitally needed stability.

Pitt owed hardly less to his reputation for purity and incorruptibility than to his eloquence or to his talented administration of war. The Great Commoner had made himself the first man in England: and England the first country in the world. He would retire poor, for he took no bribes.

The coalition possessed the united strength of virtue and corruption.

[1] An excellent example of extremely small-scale Précis in Re-cast is afforded by Milton's prose 'Argument', introducing *Paradise Lost*. Another example is Coleridge's running précis of *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*; likewise in prose, but in the form of a series of marginal glosses. (I owe the latter example to George Sampson's admirable *Cambridge Lessons in English*.)

But I can more easily show you how to retain, so far as may be, the original wording and spirit. This I shall do in two précis's,[1] both being examples of Précis by Reduction, with a slight recasting; for often a slight—normally it is a very slight—recasting is not merely advisable but necessary. In précis writing, be adaptable, not dogmatic. You are under no obligation to keep rigidly either to a reduction or to a recast. I do, however, advise you to recast in strictest moderation when you have to make a recast at all.

The Functions of a Cabinet

A German professor in a lecture on anatomy is reported to have said to his class, 'Gentlemen, we come now to the spleen. About the functions of the spleen, we know nothing. So much for the spleen.' It is with much the same feeling that one enters upon the task of writing a chapter upon the cabinet; although that body has become more and more, decade by decade, the motive power of all political action. The fact is that the cabinet from its very nature can hardly have fixed traditions. In the first place, it has no legal status as an organ of government, but is an informal body, unknown to the law, whose business is to bring about a co-operation among the different forces of the state without interfering with their legal independence. Its action must, therefore, be of an informal character. Then it meets in secret, and no records of its proceedings are kept, which would in itself make very difficult the establishment and preservation of a tradition. This could, indeed, happen only in case of a certain permanence among the members who could learn and transmit its practice. But a new cabinet contains under ordinary circumstances none of the members of its predecessor. A Conservative minister knows nothing of the procedure under Liberal administrations; and we find even a man of the experience of Sir Robert Peel asking Sir James Graham about the practice of a Liberal cabinet, of which that statesman—who at this time changed his party every decade—had formerly been a member. No doubt the mode of transacting business varies a good deal from one cabinet to another, depending to a great extent upon the personal qualities of the members. Still, the real nature of the work to be done, and hence the method of doing it, have changed during the last half century less in the case of the cabinet than of any of the other political organs of the state, and one can observe certain general characteristics that may be noted.

The conventions of the constitution have limited and regulated the exercise of all legal powers by the regular organs of the state in such a way as to vest the main authority of the central government—the driving and the steering force—in the hands of a body entirely unknown to the

[1] Set in 1937 and 1938, by a famous Examining Board, in the School Certificate examination; reprinted, with my précis's, from *Usage and Abusage: A Guide to Good English*, where the originals appeared with the Board's kind permission.

law. The members of the cabinet are now always the holders of public offices created by law; but their possession of those offices by no means determines their activity as members of the cabinet. They have, indeed, two functions. Individually, as officials, they do the executive work of the state and administer its departments; collectively, they direct the general policy of the government, and this they do irrespective of their individual authority as officials. Their several administrative duties, and their collective functions are quite distinct; and may, in the case of a particular person, have little or no connection. The Lord Privy Seal, for example, has no administrative duties whatever; and it is conceivable that the work of other members might not come before the cabinet during the whole life of the ministry.

The essential function of the cabinet is to co-ordinate and guide the political action of the different branches of the government and thus create a consistent policy. Bagehot called it a hyphen that joins, a buckle that fastens, the executive and legislative together; and in another place he speaks of it as a committee of Parliament chosen to rule the nation. More strictly it is a committee of the party that has a majority in the House of Commons. The minority are not represented upon it; and in this it differs from every other parliamentary committee. The distinction is so obvious to us today, we are so accustomed to government by party wherever popular institutions prevail, that we are apt to forget the importance of the fact. Party government as a system has developed comparatively recently; but it has now become almost universal.—Abbot Lawrence Lowell, *The Government of England.*

Here is a précis by reduction, with a few slight recastings that are demanded by the laws of composition, logic, good sense.

Functions of the Cabinet

The Cabinet has become, increasingly, the motor of all political action. The Cabinet[1] can hardly have fixed traditions. Firstly, it has no legal status as an organ of government, but is an informal body, unknown to the law; its business is to co-ordinate the different forces of the state without interfering with their legal independence. Its action, therefore, is informal. It meets secretly; no records of its proceedings being kept, the establishment and preservation of a tradition is difficult. This could, indeed, happen only with permanent members. But a new Cabinet normally contains none of the members of its predecessor. A Conservative minister knows nothing of the procedure under Liberal administrations; and vice versa. The transaction of business varies from one Cabinet to another, according to the members' personalities. Still, the nature of the work to be done, hence the

[1] Not *it*: *it* would be ambiguous.

method, have changed during the last half century less in the Cabinet than in any other political organ; one can observe certain general characteristics.

The conventions of the constitution have so limited and regulated the exercise of all legal powers by the regular organs of the state as to vest the main authority of the central government in a body unknown to the law. The members of the Cabinet are the holders of public offices created by law; but their possession of those offices by no means determines their activity as members of the Cabinet. They have two functions. Individually, they do the executive work of the state and administer its departments; collectively, they direct the general policy of the government, irrespectively of their individual authority as officials.

The Cabinet's essential function is to co-ordinate and guide the political action of the different branches of the government. It is a committee of the party that has a *majority* in the House of Commons; in this it significantly differs from every other parliamentary committee. It affords a remarkable illustration of party government, which, though developed comparatively recently, is now general.

The Capture and Defence of Arcot

(to be précis'd in 280–320 words)

Clive was now twenty-five years old. After hesitating for some time between a military and a commercial life, he had at length been placed in a post which partook of both characters, that of commissary to the troops, with the rank of Captain. The present emergency called forth all his powers. He represented to his superiors that, unless some vigorous efforts were made, Trichinopoly would fall, and the French would become the real masters of the whole peninsula of India. It was absolutely necessary to strike some daring blow. If an attack were made on Arcot, the capital of the Carnatic, and the favourite residence of the Nabobs, it was not impossible that the siege of Trichinopoly would be raised. The heads of the English settlement, now thoroughly alarmed by the success of Dupleix, and apprehensive that, in the event of a new war between France and Great Britain, Madras would be instantly taken and destroyed, approved of Clive's plan, and intrusted the execution of it to himself. The young captain was put at the head of two hundred English soldiers, and three hundred Sepoys armed and disciplined after the European fashion. Of the eight officers who commanded this little force under him, only two had ever been in action, and four of the eight were factors of the company, whom Clive's example had induced to offer their services. The weather was stormy; but Clive pushed on, through thunder, lightning and rain, to the gates of Arcot. The garrison, in a panic, evacuated the fort, and the English entered it without a blow.

The intelligence of these events was soon carried to Chunda Sahib,

who, with his French allies, was besieging Trichinopoly. He immediately detached an army of ten thousand men, under his son, Rajah Sahib, to invest the fort of Arcot, which seemed quite incapable of sustaining a siege. The walls were ruinous, the ditches dry, the ramparts too narrow to admit the guns, the battlements too low to protect the soldiers. The little garrison had been greatly reduced by casualties. It now consisted of a hundred and twenty Europeans and two hundred Sepoys. Only four officers were left; the stock of provisions was scanty.

During fifty days the siege went on. During fifty days the young captain maintained the defence, with a firmness, vigilance, and ability, which would have done honour to the oldest marshal in Europe. The breach, however, increased day by day. The garrison began to feel the pressure of hunger. Under such circumstances, any troops so scantily provided with officers might have been expected to show signs of insubordination. But the Sepoys came to Clive, not to complain of their scanty fare, but to propose that all the grain should be given to the Europeans, who required more nourishment than the natives of India. The thin gruel, they said, which was strained away from the rice, would suffice for themselves.

An attempt made by the government of Madras to relieve the place had failed, but Rajah Sahib learned that the Mahrattas were in motion; their chief, Morari Row, roused by the fame of the defence of Arcot declared that he had never before believed that Englishmen could fight, but that he would willingly help them since he saw that they had spirit to help themselves. It was necessary to be expeditious. Rajah Sahib offered large bribes to Clive; they were rejected with scorn, and he determined to storm the fort.

The enemy advanced, driving before them elephants whose foreheads were armed with iron plates. It was expected that the gates would yield to the shock of these living battering-rams. But the huge beasts no sooner felt the English musket-balls than they turned round and trampled on the multitude which had urged them forward. The rear ranks of the English kept the front ranks supplied with a constant succession of loaded muskets, and every shot told on the living mass below. After three desperate onsets, the besiegers retired.

The struggle lasted about an hour. Four hundred of the assailants fell. The garrison lost only five or six men. The besieged passed an anxious night, looking for a renewal of the attack. But when day broke, the enemy were no more to be seen. They had retired, leaving the English several guns and a large quantity of ammunition.—Macaulay.

My version (by reduction and slight recasting) is this:

The Capture and Defence of Arcot

Clive, promoted commissary captain at twenty-five, represented that, unless vigorous efforts were made, Trichinopoly would fall, the French

become masters of India. If an attack were made on Arcot, capital of the Carnatic and residence of the Nabobs, the siege might be raised. The heads of the English settlement approved of Clive's plan. He was put in command of 200 English soldiers and 300 Sepoys, with eight officers. Clive pushed on, through storms, to Arcot. The garrison, panicking, evacuated the fort; the English entered.

Intelligence was soon carried to Chunda Sahib, who, with French allies, was besieging Trichinopoly. He immediately detached 10,000 men, under his son, Rajah Sahib, to invest Arcot fort, which seemed incapable of sustaining a siege. The garrison now consisted of 120 Europeans and 200 Sepoys with four officers and scanty provisions.

During fifty days Clive maintained the defence like a veteran. The breach, however, increased. The garrison began to feel hunger. But the Sepoys proposed that the grain should be given to the Europeans, who required more nourishment: the thin gruel strained from the rice would suffice for themselves.

An attempt by the Madras government to relieve Arcot had failed, but Rajah Sahib learned that the Mahrattas were moving; expedition was necessary. Rajah offered bribes to Clive; they were rejected; he determined to storm the fort.

The enemy drove before them elephants forehead-armed with iron plates; battering-rams. But the huge beasts, feeling the English bullets, trampled on the multitude behind; every shot told on the living mass below. After three desperate onsets, the besiegers retired.

There fell 400 assailants, only six defenders. The besieged passed an anxious night, but when day broke, the enemy had retired, leaving several guns and much ammunition.

REPORTED SPEECH[1]

VARIOUSLY named Reported Speech, Indirect Speech, Indirect Discourse, Oblique Speech (Latin *oratio obliqua*), Oblique Narration, this form of speech or narrative is the opposite of Direct Speech (Latin *oratio recta* or *oratio directa*), Direct Narrative, Direct Discourse. You may come upon any of those terms: grammarians differ. But the commonest are Direct Speech on the one hand; on the other, Indirect Speech or Reported Speech.

It is usually assumed, usually taught, that there are two kinds of speech: Direct and Indirect. There are three.

(1) ' I shall do my best,' said Tom, ' because you, John, hope so much that I shall succeed.'

This is Direct Speech.

(2) Tom said to John that he (Tom) would do his best because he (John) hoped so much that he (Tom) would succeed.

This is Indirect, the ordinary sort of Indirect Speech: speech that has been reported by a third person.

But supposing that Tom reported to a third person what he had said to John. He would say:

(3*a*) I told John that I should do my best because he hoped so much that I should succeed.

Now suppose that John reported what had happened. He would say:

(3*b*) Tom told me that he would do his best because I hoped so much that he would succeed.

[1] For teachers, the best accounts of Reported Speech are perhaps those in the Fowlers' *The King's English*; in C. T. Onions's *An Advanced English Syntax*; in Otto Jespersen's *Essentials of English Grammar* and, above all, his *A Modern English Grammar on Historical Principles*, Part iv. ch. xi, ' Indirect Speech '. This last, however, gains by being read along with a great American grammarian's account of the subject: George O. Curme's *A Grammar of the English Language*. But Curme and Jespersen (the larger book) are not particularly easy: I recommend them for study by teachers, but not as books the pupils should be taught from.

Self-students will find *The King's English*, the shorter ' Jespersen ' and, despite its title, the ' Onions ', any or two or all of them, to be excellent; that is, if they wish to further their study of the subject after what I have said about it. I hope they do: they will meet with much that reinforces my statements and recommendations.

Both (3*a*) and (3*b*) are in mixed speech: a mixture of Direct and Indirect. Either (3*a*) or (3*b*) is entirely natural. I therefore call (3*a*) and (3*b*) examples of Mixed Speech or Natural Indirect Speech, whereas I call (2) Unnatural Indirect Speech.

This is not an idiosyncrasy,[1] although few go so far as to say that *Oratio Obliqua* is, in English, unnatural. So long ago as 1904, in *An Advanced English Syntax*, Dr C. T. Onions remarked of (2) that 'This is the form of O.O. with which we are best acquainted, but it is obvious that various other forms are possible'. Dr Onions quotes a certain passage, first in Direct Speech, then in Mixed Speech (or Natural Reported Speech) from the angle of one of the two persons mainly concerned (the speaker, the spoken-to), thirdly, in the same convention, from the angle of the other person, and finally in the report made by a third person, using the Unnatural Indirect Method.

Examine the passages, singly and then comparatively, with these questions in mind: Is (2) entirely natural? Are (3*a*) and (3*b*) utterly clear? If not, could they be clearer? Which of these means, adopted to ensure clarity, is justifiable? Above all, is (2) necessary?

(1) Direct Speech.

Croesus, king of the Lydians, said to Solon, the Athenian, '*My* Athenian guest, *your* great fame *has reached* even to *us*, as well of[2] *your* wisdom as of[2] *your* travels, how that[3] as a philosopher *you have travelled* through various countries for the purpose of observation. *I am* therefore desirous of asking *you* a question. *Tell me*, who *is* the happiest man *you have seen*?

(2) Indirect Speech of the usual kind:

Croesus, king of the Lydians, said to Solon, the Athenian, that *his* great fame *had reached* even to *them*, as well of *his* wisdom as of *his* travels, how that as a philosopher *he had travelled* through various countries for the purpose of observation. That *he was* therefore desirous of asking him a question. *Would he tell him*, who *was* the happiest man *he had seen*.

(3*a*) If Croesus, the speaker, had reported the speech, he would have done so in this way:

I said to Solon that *his* great fame *had reached* even to *us*, as well of *his* wisdom as of *his* travels, how that as a philosopher *he had travelled*

[1] An idea, habit, practice peculiar to oneself: Greek *idios*, 'one's own, private, peculiar to oneself' + *sunkrasis*, 'a mixing together'. The adjective is *idiosyncratic*.

[2] *as well of . . . as of* is a literary, rather old-fashioned way of saying 'both of . . . and of'.

[3] *how that* may signify no more than *that* (dependent on *fame*), but probably it implies both the fact and the manner.

through various countries for the purpose of observation. I *was* therefore desirous of asking *him* a question. *I asked him to tell me* who *was* the happiest man *he had seen.*

(3*b*) But if Solon, the spoken-to, had told someone about this encounter, he would have said:

Croesus told me that *my* great fame *had reached* even to *them*, as well of *my* wisdom as of *my* travels, how that as a philosopher *I had travelled* through various countries for the purpose of observation. *He was* therefore desirous of asking *me* a question. *Would I tell him* (or *He asked me to tell him*) who *was* the happiest man *I had seen.*

It cannot have escaped your notice that whereas (1) and (3*a*) and (3*b*) are clear enough, although (1) is the clearest of all, (2) is anything but clear and has to be amplified thus:

Croesus, king of the Lydians, said to Solon, the Athenian, that *his* (Solon's) great fame *had reached* even to *them* (the Lydians), as well of *his* wisdom as of *his* travels, how that as a philosopher *he had travelled* through various countries for the purpose of observation. That *he* (Croesus) *was* therefore desirous of asking *him* (Solon) a question. *Would he tell him* (or *He asked that he should tell him*) who *was* the happiest man *he* (Solon) *had seen*?

Frankly, what is *your* opinion of that mode of expression? Of a mode that needs to be explained? Later, I shall tell you what *I* think.

You will also have noticed that in all those examples the leading verb (the verb conveying ' Croesus *said* to Solon ') is in the past tense. The ensuing verbs—the verbs within the statement itself—must follow the sequence of tenses.[1] After a verb in the past tense, that sequence, in Reported Speech, is:[2]

(A) Present Tense (*I am, you do*) becomes Past Tense, or Preterite (*he was, he did*)
(B) Present Perfect (*I have been, you have done*) becomes the Pluperfect (*he had been, he had done*)
(C) The Future (*I shall be, you will do*) becomes the Secondary Future (*he should* or *would be, he would do*)
(D) The Conditional (*I should be, you would do*) remains Conditional (*he should* or *would be, he would do*).

In Natural Indirect Speech, only the speaker remains in the First Person; the person addressed, like any person spoken about, goes into

[1] See the chapter on Grammar: Some Finer Points, § 7.
[2] In the reported or indirect parts.

the Third Person. (Look again at the Tom–John examples as well as at the Croesus–Solon examples.)

But in Unnatural Indirect Speech—see the examples numbered (2)—all pronouns, hence all possessive adjectives and possessive pronouns, go into the Third Person, thus:

I and *you* (nominative singular) become *he* or *she*;
we and *you* (nominative plural) become *they*;
me and *you* (accusative singular) become *him* or *her*;
us and *you* (accusative plural) become *them*.

Likewise:

my and *your* (singular) become *his* or *her*;
our and *your* (plural) become *their*.

And:

mine and *yours* (singular) become *his* or *hers*;
ours and *yours* (plural) become *theirs*.

In (2)—Unnatural Indirect Speech—there is another change necessary when Direct becomes Indirect:

this becomes *that*;
these becomes *those*.

And yet another. A change affecting adverbs. Thus:

now becomes *then*,
here becomes *there*;
hence, *henceforth*, become *thence*, *thenceforth*;

so too with such rarities as *heretofore*, *hereunto*.

Now supposing that the tense of the leading verb is in, not the Past but the Present Tense or the Future Tense. The ensuing—the dependent—tenses remain the same.

(1) Jack says to Tom, ' Where have you been? Nobody knows where you are lodging now '. He replies, ' Here; but no one will know exactly where '.

(2) A third person reporting this will phrase it thus: ' Jack asks Tom where he has been and remarks that nobody knows where he (Tom) is lodging now. He (Tom) replies that he has been there all the time, but that no one will know where he is lodging.'

(3*a*) If Jack reports this conversation, he will say: ' I ask Tom where he has been and remark that no one knows where he is lodging now. He replies that he has been there all the time, but that no one will know where he is lodging.'

(3*b*) Tom reports it in this way: ' Jack asks me where I have been and remarks that no one knows where I am lodging now. I reply that I have been here all the time, but that no one will know where I am lodging.'

It is now evident—perhaps boringly obvious—to you that, of the three modes of expression, Direct Speech is

the easiest
the most natural
and the clearest;

that Mixed Speech, or Natural Reported Speech, is

easy
fairly natural
fairly clear
and a convenience, although the longer the portion reported the less clear and less convenient it is;

but that Unnatural Indirect Speech is

far from easy, whether to write or to read
almost embarrassingly unnatural
the least clear (indeed, without explanations in parentheses, usually ambiguous)
and the sort of ' convenience ' one would rather do without.

One of the troubles with Indirect or Reported Speech in its most virulent form, is that all pronouns have to be cast into the Third Person, as they would be, of course, in Latin or French. Unfortunately, English pronouns of the Third Person are—if we exclude the neuter—confined to *he* or *she*, *him* or *her*, and *they* and *them*, whereas Latin can employ *is*, *iste*, *ille*, *ipse*, or *ea*, *ista*, *illa*, *ipsa*; in the accusative, *eum*, etc., or *eam*, etc.; in the nominative plural, *ei*, etc., in the masculine and *eae*, etc., in the feminine; in the accusative plural, *eos*, etc., in the masculine and *eas*, etc., in the feminine; and Latin possesses also the reflexive pronoun *se* (himself, herself, or themselves), which refers back always to the subject of the main clause of the sentence. So too with *his*, *her*, and *his*, *hers*, and *their*, *theirs*, few in number as compared with the various Latin forms. Even French can, for *he*, say *il* or *celui-ci* or *celui-là*, and so forth.

That defect is almost sufficient in itself to condemn the use of Unnatural Indirect Speech in English. But there are certain other objections to it. Much stronger ones.

It is cumbersome and awkward; it is wordy and uneconomical; and it is ambiguous. Any one of those defects present in Indirect as compared with Direct Speech is serious; any two of them are weighty; the three of them, in the mass, should be enough to effect the removal of this incubus. Unfortunately, that incubus survives. It is kept alive both by those who think language a dead letter, not a live organism, and by those whose conception of English, necessarily including those whose

teaching of English, is coloured—nay, determined!—by the tradition of Latin. These latter reactionaries forget that whereas Latin is dead, English is, in their despite, alive; they also forget that—unlike Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, French—English is a Teutonic, not a Latin language.

Unnatural Indirect Speech is far more difficult to write than Direct: and far too remote, wordy, shadowy, ambiguous when written. Even Natural Indirect Speech can become remote and rather ambiguous if the reported statement or narration be either long or complex: but there is no objection to Natural Indirect Speech as such, for it is a convenience; it is, moreover, idiomatic; it is a natural part of the English language or, if you prefer, of English composition and style. But Unnatural Indirect Speech is unidiomatic, alien to the character of English—and to the English character. It is not merely an unwanted luxury; it is an anachronistic superfluity.

The conversion of Direct into Unnatural Indirect Speech may, it is true, constitute an intellectual exercise. But that fact does not provide a sufficient reason for the retention of such unnaturalness: the study of English offers such a variety of intellectual exercises (more than one man or even one woman could perform thoroughly in 'the allotted span') that there is no need for another, especially for an exercise so unnecessary and so un-English.

In the practical world, in the world of 'English for the English', to convert Direct into Indirect Speech is a waste of time; to convert it into Unnatural Indirect Speech is not merely a waste of time, it is anti-English, hence anti-American; it is not only an un-English, un-American waste of time and effort, it is downright silly. *Oratio Obliqua* is a survival from Latin, a relic of rigid Classicism, a glaring example of the retention of a form that, even in Latin, is often unwieldy and less than meritoriously clear. Why should we be forced to imitate Livy and his fellows?

Now here is an English sentence in Unnatural Indirect Speech. As an inquiring youth I devised it in order to test whether it were appreciably clearer in Latin than in English. I have added in parentheses those explanations which are needed to render the English more readily comprehensible. (What *can* one think of a mode that requires explanations?! Direct Speech does not require such explanations; nor, except rarely, does Mixed Speech. The conclusions to be deduced from that confrontation of alternatives are so obvious that I should not dream of insulting your intelligence by formulating them; yet certain Educational Authorities and Examining Boards persist in demanding fluency of expression in Unnatural Indirect English.)

> The Belgae gave evidence that they themselves heard the enemy say that they (the enemy) stated that they (the enemy) possessed firm allies in the Suevi, who had promised to join them; but that (so the Belgae stated) it appeared as if the Suevi had seceded from them (the enemy) and come over to their own (that is, the Belgae's) party.

In the Latin version made by a much sounder Latinist than ever I became, the obscurity is lessened thus:

Belgae indicaverunt se quidem ab hostibus accepisse eos dixisse Suevos esse socios fidelissimos, qui promisissent se in societatem cum ipsis inituros; Suevos autem, ut appareret, ab hostibus seiunctos in fidem secum ipsis rediisse.

For the sake of those who have no Latin, I turn the Indirect English into Mixed:

In evidence, the Belgae said, ' We have heard the enemy admit[1] that they themselves stated that they possessed firm allies in the Suevi, who had promised to join them; but it appears as if the Suevi have seceded from the enemy and come over to us.'

That passage, which has much to commend it, almost nothing against it, contains an element of Reported Speech—' that they themselves stated . . . join them '. If we go further and convert the entire sentence into Direct Speech, we obtain this form, which is the most accurate and the most equitable:

In evidence, the Belgae said, ' We have heard the enemy make this statement:[2] " We have declared[3] that we possess firm allies in the Suevi, who have promised to join us "; but it appears as if the Suevi have seceded from them and come over to *us* '.

If the tradition were a gracious one, if it suited the character of English, nobody would object; probably nobody would so much as think of objecting.

When someone says something, thinks something, writes something, he is justified in expecting that his exact words should be quoted—not someone else's interpretation substituted for them. He has a right to be quoted unambiguously. Not merely in the words but in the tone and the personal context. If you alter Direct to Indirect Speech, you immediately lose much of the feeling, the atmosphere of the original, hence probably much of its intention and its conviction, not to mention its eloquence and beauty. Conversion into Unnatural Indirect Speech destroys the vividness, the individuality, the personality of the original; lessens its variety, its subtlety; in short, misinterprets it, vitiates it, devitalizes it. Impersonality is all very well in corpses and inanimate objects; it is not a virtue in persons. Impersonality is recommended by automatons and mediocrities, who dislike, who fear, personality and individuality.

[1] ' Admit ' fits the sense better than would a repetitive ' said '.
[2] Or ' admission '.
[3] To avoid a confusing repetition.

Unnatural Indirect Speech is admirably adapted to the purposes of a race of robots, soulless, mechanical, bleak, most damnably dull; but it is monstrously ill-adapted to the needs of human beings.

I propose that instead of being Latin, we be British or American; that instead of being unnatural, wasteful, clumsy and obscure, we be natural, economical, deft and clear; that instead of spending time upon a spiritually negative, intellectually fruitless and barbarous relic, long due for relegation to a museum or a mausoleum of philological curiosities, we spend this time in increasing our ability to speak and write, hence our ability to think, hence our ability to live rather than to exist.

A warm admirer of Latin literature and of the Latin language (the one in the other, the one by the other), I yet say, ' Away with this bauble to the limbo of lost things!' However much can be argued for it is heavily outweighed by what can be said against it. Out, damnèd spot!

EXERCISES

1. What are the differences between
   (*a*) Direct and Indirect Speech?
   (*b*) Direct and Mixed Speech?
   (*c*) Mixed and Indirect Speech?
2. Is there any difference between Mixed Speech and Natural Indirect Speech?
3. Which of these pairs of terms do you prefer? And *why*?
   Direct and Indirect Speech; Direct and Reported Speech; Direct and Oblique Speech.
4. If you think about it, you may find that you prefer *Direct and Indirect* (etc.) *Speech* to *Direct and Indirect Narration* or *Direct and Indirect Discourse*; or perhaps you prefer *Direct and Indirect Narration* to the others; but maybe . . . *Discourse* takes your fancy or charms your mind.
   Which—and why?
5. To speak of the most pronounced, the most thoroughgoing Indirect Speech as ' Unnatural Indirect Speech ' even before I exemplify it, is known by logicians as *petitio principii* or, as you and I should say, ' begging the question '.
   Why is it that I, knowing this, yet do it?
6. Give a short example of Direct Speech.
7. Now one of Mixed, or Natural Indirect, Speech.
8. And then one of Unnatural Indirect Speech.
   Not the sort of thing a half-wit could do. But then, you're full-wits. An easy example will serve.
9. Turn the following into Direct Speech:
   The messenger announced that King Xerxes had sent him to urge the Greeks to submit because he wished to avoid bloodshed and assured them that they stood no chance if they resisted.
10. Now into Mixed Speech from the point of view of the messenger.

11. If the proud Xerxes had deigned to speak on the subject to a party of Greeks he encountered by the roadside, how (do you suppose) might he have reported the matter to a friend?

12. Putting yourself into the place of one of the Greeks who heard the messenger, how would you relate the incident to a compatriot you met next day?

13. Convert the following into Direct Speech:

I promised Ethel that I should go to stay with her during the Christmas holidays, and she said that she was already looking forward to the visit.

14. Try it the other way. That is, change it into Unnatural Indirect Speech, with 'Anne' for 'I'.

15. 'This rose,' said Dr Heidegger, with a sigh, 'this same withered and crumbling flower, blossomed five-and-fifty years ago. . . . It has been treasured between the leaves of this old volume. Now, would you deem it possible that this rose of half a century could every bloom again?'

'Nonsense!' said the Widow Wycherly, with a peevish toss of her head. 'You might as well ask whether an old woman's wrinkled face could ever bloom again.'

'See!' answered Dr Heidegger.

He uncovered the vase and threw the faded rose into the water which it contained. . . . The crushed and dried petals stirred, and assumed a deepening tinge of crimson . . .; and there was the rose . . ., looking as fresh as when Sylvia Ward had first given it. . . .

'That is certainly a very pretty deception,' said the doctor's friends . . .; 'pray how was it effected?'

'Did you ever hear of the "Fountain of Youth"?' asked Dr Heidegger.

That is how Nathaniel Hawthorne (1804–64), the celebrated American romancer, wrote a section of his famous story, *Dr Heidegger's Experiment*.

Retell that story in Natural Indirect Speech from the angle of one of the Doctor's bored and sceptical friends.

16. Retell it, this time in Unnatural Indirect Speech, as if you were a Press reporter.

17. Show how the poverty of English pronouns of the Third Person affects such a narrative as that which you have just written.

18. Do you find Unnatural Indirect Speech to be cumbersome—heavy and awkward? Give an example of Reported heaviness as compared with Direct lightness.

19. What are the merits of:

The Honourable Member for Much Blethering-on-the-Side gave it as his considered opinion that young men in politics were a danger, for had not his valued friend, the Hon. Member for Less Action-on-the-Thames, once remarked that no matter how young a man was, he thought he knew exactly what was good for young men. He himself ventured to suggest that the older the man, the more sense he had, provided that he had any sense at all. The Speaker, himself an old man, interposed that although he endorsed the epigram, if it could be called an epigram, of the Hon. Member for Less Action, he felt that both old men and young men might resent the general tendency of the speech by the Hon. Member for Much Blethering-

on-the-Side and that the Press might ask him what *he* knew about it, seeing that he was middle-aged.

20. Turn that extract, from a speech unrecorded by Hansard, into Direct Speech throughout, precisely as, if you had been so fortunate as to hear it, you would relate it to your favourite sister or brother. In your mind's eye, you would again see the Member pompously mouthing the words and the Speaker gravely interrupting him: and you would naturally tend to use the actual words of all concerned, including those of the Hon. Member for Less Action-on-the-Thames, despite the fact that his friend reported, instead of quoting the epigram.

21. ' The first duty of a speaker is to be clear.' Would you call the following clear? Set it beside your reconstruction of the scene, told entirely in Direct Speech.

John said he had met his friend Bill at eight o'clock instead of seven-thirty, and he had suggested that he should accompany him, as his guest, to the cinema, where he would perhaps succeed in forgetting that he had been late. There, too, they might, in the lounge, encounter another friend. *He* had said he might be coming but he could not be sure that he would, in fact, be able to come.

COMPOSITION, II

§1. *General*

IF YOUR memory needs to be refreshed, you will spare yourselves much trouble by re-reading the chapter on Composition in Book I of this Course in English.

Composition, in general, is simply the art of writing—and the practice of writing. In particular, it is another name for an essay—or the writing of essays. Good composition, in the more general sense (the sense in which I use it), is inseparably connected with expression, whether in writing or in speaking; with communication.

All language and all languages have one primary aim: communication. The communication of news and all other kinds of information and instruction; the communication of pleasure, delight, happiness, intellectual enlightenment and spiritual enrichment. First, we must be clear; secondly we must be adequate.

The best means of ensuring clarity is to be plain. Concerning the teachers of English, George Sampson[1] has remarked:

> The definite practical aim of our class work is to teach children: (1) how to say a plain thing in a plain way, (2) how to hear a plain thing in a plain way, (3) how to read a plain thing in a plain way, and (4) how to write a plain thing in a plain way. . . . These four abilities take us beyond the world of school. They are the key to intellectual progress. They are valid for the pupil's own personal needs, and they meet the demands of those who insist that education must be ' practical ' or useful. . . . They are the foundation of professional and technical training, and more than that, they help to make articulate, intelligible human beings, able, if they wish, to live a liberal[2] life in any circumstances, calling or condition.

Not all the things we have to say or write are simple. Yet even what is not simple should be expressed as plainly, as clearly, as possible. This applies no less to paragraphs than to sentences: no less to a unified and self-contained set of paragraphs (i.e., an essay, a story, a letter) than to a single paragraph. There is clarity of expression in the sentence, but there is also clarity of arrangement. A story has a natural order; an essay

[1] *English for the English*, Preface to the new edition of 1925.

[2] Liberal has been defined as: ' Worthy of a man of free birth; especially, not narrowly restricted by pecuniary or utilitarian conditions ' (*Webster's New International Dictionary*).

or an article, a natural development. In most letters—certainly in all business letters—there is such an easy, orderly arrangement of points as will create a good or pleasing impression, whereas an unnatural or even a merely arbitrary order of topics will set up a feeling of discomfort or disapproval. This is where the finer aspects of paragraphing can play their part.

§2. *Paragraphing*

You already have some idea of paragraphing, whether directly from Book I or indirectly by assimilation. The indirect method is the more pleasant. As you read *The Boy's Own Paper* or *The Girl's Own Paper*, your history book or your geography book, or a 'set book' in prose, you probably pick up, unwittingly, the rules of paragraphing. In practice, you have met with no baffling problems. 'In recounting a story you naturally devote a separate paragraph to each of the stages or principal happenings;[1] in a piece of description you think of the main aspects of the subject you are describing and give a paragraph to each one.'[2] It is not always so easy when you have to explain something or to set forth your own opinions on a subject unfamiliar to you.

Judging by my own experience, of myself when young and of pupils I have taught and of examination scripts I have revised, I feel sure that boys and girls of your age and of your experience, whether in reading or in writing, require no, or very few, rules and only a few hints. You will learn far more and far better by example than by precept.

In 1759, Samuel Johnson published a partly didactic, partly fanciful novel, *The Prince of Abyssinia*, later known as *Rasselas*. In it there occurs a dissertation upon the art of flying. Air-minded, you may find it not uninstructive.

AMONG the artists that have been allured into the Happy Valley, to labour for the accommodation and pleasure of its inhabitants, was a man eminent for his knowledge of the mechanic powers, who had contrived many engines both of use and recreation. By a wheel which the stream turned, he forced the water into a tower, whence it was distributed to all the apartments of the palace. He erected a pavilion in the garden, around which he kept the air always cool by artificial showers. One of the groves, appropriated to the ladies, was ventilated by fans, to which the rivulets that ran through it gave a constant motion; and instruments of soft music were played at proper distances, of which some played by the impulse of the wind, and some by the power of the stream.

[1] Much the same method or procedure applies to a friendly letter, which is *your* story to a friend or parent or other relative. That the story is true, changes nothing.

[2] M. Alderton Pink, *An English Course for Schools*, Second Book. I wish that I had possessed so good a Course when I was young.

This artist was sometimes visited by Rasselas, who was pleased with every kind of knowledge, imagining that the time would come when all his acquisitions should be of use to him in the open world. He came one day to amuse himself in his usual manner, and found the master busy in building a sailing chariot. He saw that the design was practicable upon a level surface, and with expressions of great esteem solicited its completion.

The workman was pleased to find himself so much regarded by the Prince, and resolved to gain yet higher honours.

'Sir,' said he, 'you have seen but a small part of what the mechanic sciences can perform. I have been long of opinion that, instead of the tardy conveyance of ships and chariots, man might use the swifter migration of wings; that the fields of air are open to knowledge, and that only ignorance and idleness need crawl upon the ground.'

This hint rekindled the Prince's desire of passing the mountains. Having seen what the mechanist had already performed, he was willing to fancy that he could do more; yet resolved to inquire further before he suffered hope to afflict him by disappointment.

'I am afraid,' said he to the artist, 'that your imagination prevails over your skill, and that you now tell me rather what you wish than what you know. Every animal has his element assigned him; the birds have the air, and man and beasts the earth.'

'So,' replied the mechanist, 'fishes have the water, in which yet beasts can swim by nature and man by art. He that can swim needs not despair to fly; to swim is to fly in a grosser fluid, and to fly is to swim in a subtler. We are only to proportion our power of resistance to a different density of matter through which we are to pass. You will be necessarily upborne by the air if you can renew any impulse upon it faster than the air can recede from the pressure.'

'But the exercise of swimming,' said the Prince, 'is very laborious; the strongest limbs are soon wearied. I am afraid the act of flying will be yet more violent; and wings will be of no great use unless we can fly further than we can swim.'

'The labour of rising from the ground,' said the artist, 'will be great, as we see it in the heavier domestic fowls; but as we mount higher, the earth's attraction and the body's gravity will be gradually diminished, till we shall arrive at a region where the man shall float in the air without any tendency to fall; no care will then be necessary but to move forward, which the gentlest impulse will effect. You, sir, whose curiosity is so extensive, will easily conceive with what pleasure a philosopher, furnished with wings and hovering in the sky, would see the earth and all its inhabitants rolling beneath him, and presenting to him successively, by its diurnal motion, all the countries within the same parallel. How must it amuse the pendent spectator to see the moving scene of land and ocean, cities and deserts; to survey with equal security the marts of trade and the fields of battle; mountains infested by barbarians, and fruitful regions gladdened by plenty and lulled by peace. How easily

shall we then trace the Nile through all his passages, pass over to distant regions, and examine the face of Nature from one extremity of the earth to the other.'

'All this,' said the Prince, 'is much to be desired, but I am afraid that no man will be able to breathe in these regions of speculation and tranquillity. I have been told that respiration is difficult upon lofty mountains; yet from these precipices, though so high as to produce great tenuity of air, it is very easy to fall; therefore I suspect that from any height where life can be supported, there may be danger of too quick descent.'

'Nothing,' replied the artist, 'will ever be attempted if all possible objections must be first overcome. If you will favour my project, I will try the first flight at my own hazard. I have considered the structure of all volant animals, and find the folding continuity of the bat's wings most easily accommodated to the human form. Upon this model I shall begin my task tomorrow; and in a year expect to tower into the air beyond the malice and pursuit of man. But I will work only on this condition: that the art shall not be divulged, and that you shall not require me to make wings for any but ourselves.'

'Why,' said Rasselas, 'should you envy others so great an advantage? All skill ought to be exerted for universal good; every man has owed much to others, and ought to repay the kindness that he has received.'

'If men were all virtuous,' returned the artist, 'I should with great alacrity teach them to fly. But what would be the security of the good if the bad could at pleasure invade them from the sky? Against an army sailing through the clouds, neither walls, mountains, nor seas, could afford security. A flight of northern savages might hover in the wind, and light with irresistible violence upon the capital of a fruitful region. Even this valley, the retreat of princes, the abode of happiness, might be violated by the sudden descent of some of the naked nations that swarm on the coast of the southern sea!'

The Prince promised secrecy, and waited for the performance, not wholly hopeless of success.

He visited the work from time to time, observed its progress, and remarked many ingenious contrivances to facilitate motion, and unite levity with strength. The artist was every day more certain that he should leave vultures and eagles behind him, and the contagion of his confidence seized upon the Prince. In a year the wings were finished; and on a morning appointed the maker appeared, furnished for flight, on a little promontory: he waved his pinions a while to gather air, then leaped from his stand, and in an instant dropped into the lake. His wings, which were of no use in the air, sustained him in the water; and the Prince drew him to land half dead with terror and vexation.

There you have narrative, dialogue, exposition, opinion. Dr Johnson was a practised writer and a very human person: in addition to knowing

how to set forth, arrange, develop a subject—how to begin, continue, end a theme—he knew how to appeal both to the eye and to the head of his readers. Not a single paragraph is either startlingly or tediously long; nor are the paragraphs monotonously uniform in length, or in matter, or in manner.

Now read Dr Johnson's ' dissertation ' again.

Johnson's Icarus having been thoroughly appreciated by you, we can pass to a few hints.

In every paragraph, as indeed in every sentence and in every complete composition, you would profit by following the advice once given to a would-be orator: Get up, get on, get out. That advice includes the hint: Stick to the point.

One point, one paragraph. Make your point. Make your point clearly and briefly: and don't let it slip, don't let it become obscured in rambling irrelevancies. Lose the point and you lose your reader or your audience. The point done with, you go on to your next point—your next paragraph.

The paragraph you have just completed has, or should have, suggested the next; the point made will, or should, lead naturally to the next point or stage or aspect. Before you begin to speak to an audience (in, e.g., a debate), before you begin to write for your reader, you will have noted the stages you need to traverse, the aspects you wish to treat, the points you aim to make. Each of these topics forms the material of a separate paragraph, and as those topics can be arranged to cover, to develop and to do justice to the subject as a whole, the most natural, logical, attractive arrangement of topics inevitably determines the number and the order of your paragraphs. It follows that before you have got your topics, hence your paragraphs, into the right order, you must have got your ideas into order. To write straight, you must think straight —i.e., clearly.

As one paragraph is to lead naturally and agreeably to the next, so it must have led naturally from the preceding paragraph. The final paragraph ends with the completion of what you had to say or to write. The first paragraph starts with a sentence strikingly relevant to the title of your story or essay; thereafter, every sentence both glances back and looks forward.

In a paragraph, you keep to the point you there wish to make; you avoid irrelevant sentences and all other non-sequiturs. Likewise there will be no irrelevant paragraphs, for you must keep in mind, and see to it that your auditor or your reader keep in mind, the central theme of the entire story, essay, letter, what-you-will.

In each paragraph, there is usually a pilot sentence, sometimes called a topic sentence, wherein the paragraph-topic is either stated or very clearly implied. In description, it often comes at the beginning of the paragraph; in an explanation or an argument, it mostly comes at the end; it does not come in a postscript. In narrative it may come at the beginning or in the middle or at the end, this last being the commonest position.

Examples? Well, you'll find all you need in this section. Let us look again at this matter of the position of the pilot sentence or, indeed, of the pilot paragraph. If you wish to emphasize the sequence and development of a story, an explanation, an argument, you tend to place the pilot sentence (or the pilot paragraph) at the end. If you wish your auditor or reader to know what you're now going to talk or write about before you deal with it in detail, or to have a broad, general idea before you attempt a difficult topic, you tend, no less naturally and fittingly, to place it at the beginning. On the other hand, if you wish to lead up to a topic, and then state it and finally modify it or perhaps elaborate it, the pilot sentence stands in or near the middle.

If a paragraph consists of a single sentence, the question of a pilot sentence obviously does not arise; but even where there are only two sentences in a paragraph, the one position is probably more suitable than the other. But there may be no pilot sentence required: the paragraph may consist of an accumulation of facts or features or figures, every item being indispensable. It is advisable, certainly it is more artistic, to make such a paragraph brief and compact. If that seems to be impossible, it may be better to break up the paragraph into two, with the former leading up to—introducing—the latter or with the latter modifying or amplifying the former. It will do you far more good to find such a paragraph for yourselves and deal with its problems than for me to put a guiding-rein on you, baby-talk you on to the feast, and then spoon-feed you.

But you need not let the question of the pilot sentence trouble you. If you develop your theme easily and logically, the pilot sentence will, of itself, fall into its natural place.

Almost as easy is connection. Once you have learnt to divide your theme into paragraphs, the connection or link will usually present itself to your mind: the association of ideas in a subject leads you on: one thing suggests another. As, within a paragraph, sentence links with sentence, so a paragraph, embodying one and only one central idea, links with the one before and the one immediately after, for the ideas are linked in the natural order of development.

Nevertheless, an artifice is sometimes necessary, especially if you are dealing, not with a friendly letter nor with a clear, simple story, nor with description, but with the exposition of a theme requiring much thought and a number of apt examples. The links are there, both implicit in the subject itself and explicit, perhaps even obvious, in your mind, but they may be far from obvious to your auditor or your reader. You are under an obligation to ease the passage of the recipient from one idea to the next.

For instance, you may be able to do this with a conjunction. When you wish to add, you can use *moreover*, *what is more*, *in addition*, etc.; to contradict, *but*; to modify, *yet* or *nevertheless* or *on the other hand* or *however*—*yet* being weaker than *but* and stronger than *nevertheless*; to proceed to the next stage of a reasoned argument, *therefore*.

You can repeat something said at or very near the end of the preceding

paragraphs, either a word or a phrase or a reference. Thus: ' In short, he was a great man ' (end of paragraph)—(Beginning of next:) ' A great man, did I say? Nay, a very great man '; or, ' He was a great man because . . . *or* in spite of . . .' This artifice is known as ' taking up ' or ' catching up '. Being a sort of trick (to be used in moderation), it might also be less kindly dubbed ' passing the buck' .

More natural are such devices as ' That being so ', ' When this happens *or* that happened ', ' Thinking it over *or* remembering it *or* fearing it *or* expecting it ', ' Most of us have felt *or* thought *or* said *or* . . . much the same '. They are so natural that they can hardly be called *devices* at all. They exemplify, not rules but hints—hints derived from the practice and habit of myriads of speakers and writers.

If you cannot find a neat or easy or effective link, connection, transition, the reason is either that the paragraph you have just completed isn't complete or hasn't been sensibly and smoothly handled, in which event you will re-cast it, or that there simply is no such link or transition (this is rare, so watch it!) and you will wisely admit the fact, come into the open, and say something of this sort, my examples being mere suggestions, not hints, much less rules or devices:

> It is difficult to see the connection of *X* with *Y*, yet *Y* [the subject of the new paragraph] must be *or* is probably connected with *or* results from *X*;
>
> From *A* to *B* seems an abrupt transition. But it is not so very abrupt, for, after all, they . . .;
>
> You are perhaps as puzzled as I am to see what *A* has to do with *B*, *or* why *A* and *B* became associated, nor is the connection *or* association necessarily a coincidence. Even the most learned men know only a little, even the most intelligent understands comparatively little, except superficially; more remains to be known and far more remains to be understood than is yet known or has yet been discovered or is, thus far, understood. An act of faith is required. This being so, . . .

That, however, is enough of theory! I shall not, false-modestly, pretend that the few hints I have permitted myself to give are useless. If they were useless, I should not waste your time with them; nor mine. Nevertheless, as I have continually remarked, practice is much superior to theory. And as I have no less frequently remarked or implied: an ounce of thinking—cool, clear thinking—will spare you a ton of trouble.

If, to thinking, you add a constant observation (it soon becomes second nature, you'll do it without having to force yourselves), you will see and assimilate the way in which good modern writers paragraph their essays and articles, stories and letters, novels and plays, biographies and histories—and even their books written for pupils and students. But try to do some paragraphing for yourselves. Your teachers will provide you with experimental material; the few ensuing exercises are intended

merely to serve as the kind of thing I believe you may find both instructive and—despite your scepticism—entertaining.

EXERCISES

1. What bearing has the etymology of the word *paragraph* on the current sense of the term?
2. What is the relation of a topic to a paragraph?
3. Paragraph the following:

   'Talking of country inns——' The words came from the chimney corner, where an elderly man had been sitting silent and almost unnoticed, while we three disposed of our supper. At that moment the landlord bustled in with a great armful of wood, which he threw upon the sinking embers on the hearth. "Take care of your knees, sir," said he to the man in the corner, as a ready crackling showed that the fuel was dry. "Now, gentlemen, have you got all you want? You must make yourselves at home, a night like this. Hark to the rain and wind!" "We are very comfortable, thanks, landlord," said one of us; and another, "but a fresh jug of beer wouldn't be amiss; and this gentleman in the chimney is going to give us a story if I'm not mistaken." "Oh, you young folks don't want to listen to an old man's yarns!" And the stranger, who had been filling his pipe, now lit it with a burning twig. "Indeed we do. In such a place, on such a night." "Sure," cried the landlord. "I'll send Maudie to clear your table and bring the beer." The fire was now roaring up the chimney, and we laughed as our elderly friend withdrew from the danger of roasting, joined our little semicircle at a safe distance from the furnace, and accepted a tankard of the fresh drawn beer with such a head on it as Maudie's hand could put.'[1]

4. Correct the paragraphing of:

   Two men were sitting on a settle on one side of the fire, and a sheep-dog was lying under it behind the heels of their heavy boots.

   A smoky oil-lamp stood on the table, and the air was thick with smoke from the wind in the chimney. 'What have we here?' said one of the men, rising to his feet.

   'It's a lady, my sister, soaked through and tired out. Can I make her comfortable by the fire here?' The other man slowly took in the situation and got up; the landlady's rough voice was heard again in the room. 'Wheeriver do ye coom from? and wheer are ye bahn?' 'We are bahn no further to-night,' said Tom, 'are we Sally?'

5. How many paragraphs will the following short story need? Indicate the first sentence of each paragraph.

   Coming home late at night, a man hears the sound of wheels on the very lonely road along which he is travelling. He is amazed to see a stage-coach approach him. He thinks he must be dreaming—or 'seeing things'. The coach seems to be real. It is real. The driver of the coach calls, 'Can you tell me the way to the Guildhall?' 'You mean the Guildhall, London?' 'Is there any other?' 'Go straight on for forty miles. You'll arrive in North London.' 'Oh, from there I'll know my way. Well, good-night! I mustn't be late for the procession.' The lonely walker watched the coach drive away.

[1] From a story by Wilson Benington.

'But the procession was yesterday,' he muttered. When he arrived home he looked at a calendar. The coach-driver was right. The procession would, after all, take place on the morrow.

6. Turn the following poem into prose and paragraphs:

ON THE COMING OF AGE OF A RICH, EXTRAVAGANT YOUNG MAN

Long-expected one-and-twenty,
Ling'ring year, at length is flown;
Pride and pleasure, pomp and plenty,
Great Sir John, are now your own.
Loosen'd from the minor's tether,
Free to mortgage or to sell,
Wild as wind, and light as feather,
Bid the sons of thrift farewell.
Call the Betsies, Kates, and Jennies,
All the names that banish care;
Lavish of your grandsire's guineas,
Shew the spirit of an heir.
All that prey on vice or folly
Joy to see their quarry fly;
There the gamester, light and jolly,
There the lender, grave and sly.
Wealth, my lad, was made to wander,
Let it wander as it will;
Call the jockey, call the pander,
Bid them come and take their fill.
When the bonny blade carouses,
Pockets full, and spirits high—
What are acres? what are houses?
Only dirt, or wet or dry.
Should the guardian friend or mother
Tell the woes of wilful waste;
Scorn their counsel, scorn their pother,—
You can hang or drown at last.

Samuel Johnson

7. In the following passages, the paragraphing could be defended: and the very able writer[1] would, I think, ably defend it. Yet I feel that the number of paragraphs is excessive. Agree with me for once and re-paragraph each passage.

(*a*) Two or three of those who understand a map try to explain it simultaneously to one or two who do not.

The dispute about Thessaly is on the point of breaking out again.

Some of the children come up, but are kept at a respectful distance by their elders. They form a line.

One of the youngest, who is also one of the dirtiest, is put on its father's knee. The father politely asks leave to borrow my mug and dips it into the bucket. The mug is tilted against the infant's rounded lips, which gurgle steadily. The amount which it drinks is surprising.

Some exception is taken to the borrowing of my mug. Other mugs could have been taken.

The proprietor carries back my restored mug. He puts before me, refilled, one of the other mugs.

[1] Sidney Hopper, *Greek Earth*, 1939.

My books, maps, papers, and photographs were passed round and handled with tenderness. Chance-collected visiting-cards toppled out of my passport and underwent intent scrutiny. They were printed in Roman type, they were cryptic, but still they were admired.

(*b*) The Greek is not a numb man: fingers broadened by toil turned the pages of my books, but neither crumpled nor crushed them. I gazed several times to watch these digits flit, skim with a lithe intelligence of their own, hop with a sensibility more than feminine.

The hand of an alarm-clock pointed to two. Doors and windows were shut to keep out the blazing air.

That was the first part of my stay in Staniátes, a settling or warming in. I was even hot. Now I must cast for dinner.

I thought it safe, and time, to open the question of eggs.

Though a want of common country products is itself common in the countryside, the countryside can often discover, if it has a mind to discover, a hidden store of eggs.

The shop, to which I was recommended, though replete with sacks of charcoal and a fair stock of enamelled and galvanised ware, had nothing suitable for a dinner.

Several questions were put to me by persons present in the coffee-house. They were not, indeed, put: they sprang up. These questions sprouted insensibly, by some principle of natural growth, out of the situation, as though bulbs had been set in the situation several weeks before. The questions, or growths, were constructive.

8. Supply conjunctions to the following paragraph-beginnings (except the first):

Tom suggested that, as he was the older, he should receive the lion's share.

Jack objected. 'You may be the older,' he said, 'but I am ill and you should give way to me.'

'When *I* am ill, will you always give way to me?' His voice was wistful, for he was disgustingly healthy.

His brother looked at him in surprise. At last he replied, 'Of course I will'.

'There's no "of course" about it. *Will* you?'

'If you feel like that about it, I promise.'

The other smiled. 'Then,' he said, 'it's all right.'

Their father entered, thus putting an end to what promised to become a very pleasant conversation.

9. Why does the author of this Course in English prefer to call 'topic sentences' by the name of 'pilot sentences'?

No; he has not told you why, for he wishes your teacher to learn what *you* suppose to be the reason.

10. Here is a set of pilot sentences. Complete the paragraphs they 'guide', so that the result forms a connected discourse. They are taken from 'The Merry Monarch', one of the sections of Richard Ince's 'Spot Light on England', published in my *For These Few Minutes: Almost an Anthology*.

'There is no need to remember anything about King Charles II except that he was extremely merry.'

'They called Charles "The Merry Monarch."'

'Several important things happened during King Charles's reign.'

'1. . . . He helped to make England what she is—the nursery of the most valuable dogs in the world.'

'2. With the help of Parliament he produced the *Five Mile Act*.'

'3. Whigs and Tories came into being.'

'4. The *Habeas Corpus Act* was passed.'

'When Charles was growing old and even more merry, he said to his brother James, "Nobody will ever kill *me* to make *you* King!"'

'He left an exceptionally large family.'

11. How will you speak or write in order to ensure that, not having to trouble your heads about pilot sentences, you can devote your time and your brains to more important matters? The answer should take the form of a short essay.

12. Put the following into paragraphs and insert the transitions (conjunctions; words that cast back to the preceding paragraph; and so forth) wherever they would seem to be demanded or, at the least, desirable. You need only write the first sentence and last three words of each paragraph.

THE FINE ART OF WORD-MAKING

The average man's complete vocabulary did not exceed 2,000 words. It is still said, very sensibly, that the average man's—or even woman's—conversation is carried on with a mere handful of words: 300, 400 or, at the very most, 500.

Persons with a respectable command of language do tend, when they are talking, to employ very few words and to use the same term or phrase over and over again.

How many there are who fail to see the dead monotony of their constantly repeated '*O.K.*' (or, in moments of especial brilliance, '*It's O.K. by me*') or '*Says you*,' '*marvellous*' or '*definitely*': counters, not words; not language, but a feeble substitute for language.

Definitely is equally abused. This monstrosity was neatly satirized in 1925 in Sutton Vane's play *Outward Bound*; and in 1933, Maurice Lincoln entitled an amusing novel *Oh! Definitely*, and caused one character to remark of another (the 'heroine', by the way): 'If you forbade that girl to say "*marvellous*", then stopped her from saying "*definitely*" she couldn't speak at all.'

If we cannot put our tongues to an apt word, the right word, it is better to coin a word than to parrot with '*O.K.*'

Coining is frequent enough. A new invention has to be named; this is usually done from either Latin or Greek. And every new machine begets a small vocabulary of its own. Such terms are used mostly by scientists and mechanics.

But there is another group of coinings available to all of us. Those from slang.

13. Re-paragraph the following passage, from Richard Ince's

MAGNA CARTA

If you have never read the *Constitutions of Clarendon* nor dipped into that fascinating saga of the land called *Doomsday Book* (by W. Conqueror), it's hardly likely you've put *Magna Carta*, by John Rex, on your library list.

And yet what a fascinating work it is! So learned, so lucid, so practical, so classic, and so romantic. They say that a great lawyer, Sir Edward Coke, absolutely refused to answer the call of the dinner-bell while engrossed in the amusing pages of this great book. Dip

into it anywhere you please and you will at once dip somewhere else and continue dipping and skipping.

It was written by King John with the assistance of his barons in the year (this date is vastly important) 1215.

Magna Carta is the Foundation Stone of all our British Liberties. The fact that you can now usually walk down the street by day or night without getting your throat cut is due to Magna Carta. The fact that you can (if you have the money) build a house for yourself and live in it unmolested is due to Magna Carta. You can eat and sleep (with a few reasonable restrictions) wherever and whenever you please. All due to King John's great book. The time may come when it will be safe to cross the road at Piccadilly Circus without getting knocked out; nay, the time may even come when we shall be allowed to buy a bottle of beer or wine at any time we choose. If and when these things come to pass it will certainly be due to some great lawyer studying Magna Carta and finding a new depth of meaning in Bk. xi. Cap. 362, section 19.

John, alas, though he gave us this constitutional masterpiece and corner-stone of our inheritance was not a good man. Compared with him, Queen Elizabeth was an angel.

Copy only the first five and the last five words of each paragraph.

§3. *Management of Clause*

You know what a simple sentence is and what a complex sentence is. You also know what parts are played in a complex sentence by a principal clause and a subordinate clause.

A succession of short sentences, especially when they are all simple sentences, can become monotonous. So can a succession of very long sentences; or of medium-length sentences, especially if all of them contain a principal clause and one subordinate clause. Consider the following two passages, of which the former consists of machine-gun brevities, the latter of middle-length mediocrities. (There is no need to illustrate the monotony caused by a series of long, complex sentences, unbroken by 'shorts' and 'middles'.)

(*a*) She caught a bus into town. There she did her shopping. She took her time. She had so little to do. She finished her shopping. She had tea. After tea, she returned to the cottage. It looked depressingly the same. Nothing had happened there. Nothing would. There had never been many callers. There never would be many callers. She was a dull, middle-aged woman. She had no absorbing interests. She even had no hobbies.

That might be re-written in some such way as this:

She caught a bus into town to do her shopping, which did not take her long, for she had little to do. After she finished shopping, she had tea. When she returned, she found her cottage depressingly the same:

nothing had happened there and nothing would. There had never been many callers; nor would there ever be many, because she was a dull, middle-aged woman with few interests and no hobbies.

You will perhaps have noticed the odd fact that a succession of short, simple sentences may be uneconomical as well as being jerky and monotonous.

Now for:

(*b*) The simplest kind of echoic words is that in which there is direct and obvious imitation, as in *clink*, *clank*, *clang*, *tinkle*, employed to represent metallic sounds. Other examples are the *boom* of cannon and the *bang* of a gun, whereas *splash* represents the impact of an object on water. *Whistle* suggests the wind, whereas *rustle* suggests the movement of leaves. Almost as simple is that kind of echoic words in which the sound produced gives its name to the producer: the birds *peewit* and *cuckoo* and *whippoorwill* (often written *whip-poor-Will*) take their name from the cry they utter. Sound is produced by vibrations (rapid movement, especially to and fro): the impression made on your ears determines you to name the sound *clash* or *crack* or *smack*, *bubble* or *sizzle*.

That passage appears in my *The World of Words*: *An Introduction to Language in General* in this form—

The simplest kind of echoic words is that in which there is direct and obvious imitation, as in *clink*, *clank*, *clang*, *tinkle* employed to represent metallic sounds; the *boom* of cannon and the *bang* of a gun; the *rumble* of thunder and *thunder* itself; the *bubble* of gushing water, the *splash* made by the impact of an object on water; . . . the *whistle* of the wind; the *rustle* of leaves. Almost as simple is that kind of echoic words in which the sound produced gives its name to the producer: the birds *peewit* and *cuckoo* and *whippoorwill* (often written *whip-poor-Will*) take their name from the cry they utter. Sound is produced by vibrations (rapid movement, especially to and fro); you hear sounds because of the impression made on your ears by those vibrations; the kind of impression determines you to name the sound *clash* or *crack* or *smack*, *bubble* or *sizzle*.

The latter passage might have been more variedly, more excitingly written, yet it is at least superior to the former.

There are no hard-and-fast rules concerning the employment of clauses in composition. The best hint I can give you is that you should learn to observe the way in which good writers vary the length and the make-up of their sentences.

It is easy to see that ' The surgeon left the hospital immediately he had operated upon his famous patient ' is better than ' The surgeon operated

upon his famous patient. Immediately afterwards, he (the surgeon) left the hospital'—without the parenthetical addition, the second sentence would be both comic and ambiguous. It is equally easy to see that 'John was a farmer. He went to town. While there, he bought some flour' is inferior to 'John, who was a farmer, went to town and there he bought some flour'; it is inferior also to 'John, a farmer, went to town, where he bought some flour'; it is inferior even to 'Farmer John went to town to buy flour', although he may not have bought it; above all, it is much inferior to 'Farmer John bought flour in town'.

It is, however, less easy, perhaps, to distinguish the merits[1] of

> The white man, when he penetrated the African hinterland, found, much to his surprise, that there were native smiths who followed a technique very similar to that of the European smith;

or of

> In the Nandi smith's forge, not only was it dangerous to sit upon the anvil, but to so much as to step over the bellows or any other tool was fraught with grave risk; and to steal anything from the smithy was a crime even the bravest warrior feared to commit, because the smith, on discovering his loss, had but to mutter a suitable imprecation as he worked the bellows for the thief to experience all the torments that would be his, he sitting on the glaring 'eye' of the fire.

If we divided the latter sentence with a full-stop after 'risk' and deleted the ensuing 'and', we should be making a mistake: the ideas are more closely, more smoothly linked in the undivided original, which, moreover, obeys a calm yet cumulative tempo. But if the entire article had consisted of a succession of sentences as complex as 'In the Nandi smith's forge . . .', the reader might have fallen asleep over the smithy fire.

EXERCISES[2]

1. What is the difference between a *clause* and a *sentence*?
2. Do you remember how the etymology or word-history of the terms *clause* and *sentence* illuminates their meaning?
3. Can you suggest any reasons why a complex sentence is sometimes briefer and more compact than a string of simple (i.e., one-verb) sentences?
4. There are several differences in effect between
   'When, after the most strenuous efforts, I at last arrived, it was only to find that I had arrived too late'
   and
   'I arrived too late, even after I had made strenuous efforts'.
   Can you say what these differences are?

[1] Both of these sentences occur in Julian Franklyn's eloquent and informative article, 'The Smith in Culture-History', which appeared in *The Contemporary Review*, May 1937.

[2] These exercises are intended to serve as specimens to guide a teacher momentarily at a loss, or a private student desirous, to devise sets of questions.

5. Can you state your reasons why you prefer one or other of these three statements?

'When I came, I saw; having seen (*or* when I had seen), I conquered';

'I came; I saw; I conquered' (Caesar's *Veni, vidi, vici*); 'When I had come and seen for myself, I immediately conquered.'

6. Cast the following statement into four terse, one-verb sentences:

'Although I had not wished to hurt him, I no sooner saw this man I hated than I struck him down.'

7. Now the reverse—make one sentence of:

'It was a glorious night. The village lay asleep in the moonlight. No dogs barked, no birds twittered. The tramp felt oppressed rather than calmed by the silence and by the apparent absence of life.'

8. 'I labour to be brief and become obscure' (Horace). Develop this theme.

§4. *Expression*

Proper words in proper places.—*Swift.*

La clarté orne les pensées profondes (a clear style enhances profundity of thought).—*Vauvenargues.*

Tous les genres sont bons, hors le genre ennuyeux (all styles are good except the boring kind).—*Voltaire.*

Expression may be taken to mean the manner in which one positively behaves—expresses oneself—in speech, in writing, or in any other creative act, such as painting, sculpture, music, drama. It derives, via French, from the Latin *expressio*, the noun corresponding to *exprimere*,[1] 'to force out by means of pressure; to press something out of something else', hence 'to pronounce (a word), to represent' or, as we say, 'to express'.

All speech, like all writing, is the expression of oneself. The only thing or person one can express is oneself: there is no need to say, Writing is a form of self-expression: one needs but say, Writing is a form of expression. It happens to be the most important of all the non-vocal means of expression. What ensues is equally applicable to writing and to speech, provided we remember that in speech, unless it be ambitious oratory, we are less formal, less logical, less literary—and very often less clear.

Expression, therefore, is almost synonymous with *composition*, in that the latter is merely the former in an ordered, neatly combined and self-contained shape, with a definite end in view: the instruction or the persuasion or the pleasure of the reader or the auditor. Something has, in Book I, been said about this, and it would be idle to repeat the general remarks made there. Let us rather pass to certain specific means of obtaining variety or of increasing effectiveness.

[1] I.e., *ex*, 'out (of)' + *premĕre*, 'to apply literal—viz., physical—pressure to'. The literal sense appears in 'Wine is made by fermentation of the juice *expressed* from grapes'.

Far too many sentences containing more than one verb are loosely constructed. These loose sentences tend to set up either an ambiguity or, by their slipshoddery, an irritation of another kind. In general, a periodic sentence—a sentence possessing one or more principal, and one or more subordinate clauses—reads better, i.e. more clearly, more pleasingly, if the principal clause comes late rather than early in the full sentence. For instance,

When I arrived I found the house locked

is superior to

I found the house locked when I arrived;

and

When I arrived at the house, which stood lonely and desolate upon the moors, I found the doors locked

is superior to

I found the doors locked when I arrived at the house, which stood lonely and desolate upon the moors.

When I arrived at the house, which stood upon the moors, I found the doors locked and, after I had reconnoitred, I was obliged, because my need permitted no delay, to break a window

gives a more ordered, a clearer picture and a better sequence than

I found the doors locked when I arrived at the house, which stood upon the moors, and I was obliged to break a window after I had reconnoitred, for my need permitted no delay.

As you have noticed—it's one of those things you hardly require to be taught—the usual or normal order of words in a simple sentence or within a subordinate clause (it makes no difference whether it be simple sentence, principal clause, subordinate clause) is

subject, verb, object or complement; as in

The mad dog bit the helpless old woman
The mad dog was lying peacefully in the sun.

You may also have noticed that the most emphatic positions in a sentence are the beginning and the end; the beginning for the verb or the object, but the end for the subject, as in the following three examples:

Came the dawn
Him I knew, her I knew not
There, bedraggled in the slush and all pride gone, stood the unfortunate queen.

That form of sentence goes by the convenient name of *inversion*: a reversion or turning back, an interchanging of positions. But you will use it only when you wish to emphasize the subject, or the verb, or the object or complement. You may wish to emphasize even an adverb, as in ' Down came the rain ', or an adjective, as in ' Bold was the baron, and bad his henchman '.

Yet you must be careful. Evidently

Wellington defeated Napoleon at Waterloo by the combination of his men's steadfast courage and his own ability to turn mishap to advantage

is less emphatic than

By the combination of his men's steadfast courage and his own ability to turn mishap to advantage, Wellington defeated Napoleon at Waterloo;

still more emphatic is

By the combination of his men's steadfast courage . . . advantage did Wellington defeat Napoleon at Waterloo;

but artificiality mars

Napoleon at Waterloo did Wellington defeat by the combination of . . .

Your own good sense and a not wholly unmusical ear will supply you with a better guide than any recommendations; for such niceties as these, no rigid rules can be laid down.

Emphasis can be obtained in at least three other specific ways. By repetition; by contrast; by persuasive approach or formal indication. Do not, however, overlook the fact that by far the best way of all is the general way of clear and adequate speech in writing, for thus do you capture and hold attention.

Repetition, like inversion, is to be used cautiously and moderately. If it does not follow the natural rhythm of thought, and is illogical, it stands self-exposed for the trick it is, as in

I recalled with horror those bad old days, those bad old days.

Supposing, however, that you wish to drive home a persuasive point, you can do it in this way:

> We come into the world penniless. Penniless we go out from it
> Bravely he lived, bravely he died
> He nodded. He nodded because he did not know what to say.

Contrast is, by grammarians, known as *antithesis*; literally a setting of one thing against—in opposition to—another, *antithesis* comes to us, via learnèd Latin, from the Greek *anti*, ' against ' + *tithenai*, ' to set or put '. The opposition may be between the forms or shapes of words, as in ' Pleasures, not men, is what too many politicians concentrate upon '; or, more profoundly and less artificially, it may be between ideas, as in ' The prodigal robs his heir, the miser robs himself ';[1] although, as you've doubtless noticed, the differentiation is somewhat arbitrary, this being evident in the slightly modified sentences, ' Measures, not minds, is what . . .' and ' The prodigal son robs himself by robbing his parents; the miser robs mankind '.

Formal indication or persuasive approach[2] is much less formal or rhetorical or artificial than either repetition or antithesis: it follows naturally from, it is demanded by, either the importance of the statement itself or the emphasis with which the speaker or the writer desires to invest it for some moral or artistic or in tellectual purpose of his own.

> It is you, not we, who have to be careful;
> It is a remarkable fact that the less one knows, the more one thinks one knows;
> He is that particularly obnoxious sort of charlatan, one who really does know more about a subject than you do.

Compare the unapproached, informal shapes:

> You, not we, have to be careful;
> The less one knows, the more one thinks one knows;
> One who really does know more about a subject than you do is a particularly obnoxious type of charlatan.

Another basic need of the mind—and of the artistic conscience—is balance, whether formally stated or informally implied. A thought should be complete, not partial: evidently, therefore, the expression of that thought should be complete. If you begin with ' partly ' you must either state the rest or, at the least, imply what the rest is. If you begin with ' both ', you continue with ' and ' (' Both you and I ', ' He both disliked

[1] *Webster's New International Dictionary.*

[2] In *An English Highway*, Messrs Moon and MacKay, I see, call it *sign-posts*: very neat; I wish I had thought of it.

and feared the other man'); if with 'not only', you conclude with 'but also'; 'on the one hand' necessitates 'on the other hand'; 'whether', in a fully stated case, is senseless without a subsequent 'or' ('Whether he likes or dislikes his duty, he still has to perform it'); a 'secondly' or a 'thirdly' implies a 'first';[1] 'although' demands a 'yet', whether 'yet' be in fact expressed or not; 'as' calls for 'so' ('As the child is trained, so the adult behaves').

'As' appears in similes ('as white as a sheet'), which may also be conveyed by means of *like* ('he looked like a ghost'). Similes[2] and metaphors[2] are employed to effect picturesque comparisons and vivid words or turns of phrase. They help the speaker or the writer to visualize for himself what he wishes his auditor or reader to visualize too: if you can see a thing in your mind's eye, you thereby understand it better, and it becomes more real to you. But in the plain statement of a plain fact (incident, feature, thought, etc.) avoid overdoing similes and metaphors, which are the more effective for being used sparingly.

The plainer the statement, the fewer words you will use; but even if the statement be either ornate or complex, you will use as few words as possible. As plainness and simplicity are relative, so are ornament and complexity. To make yourself clear (your primary aim), you may have to employ a considerable number of words and a certain style. There is no harm in that, provided you still practise the utmost economy. That is, so far as the nature and exigencies of the situation permit you without impairing the sense and without diminishing the effect you desire to achieve. On the one hand, avoid wordiness—don't cause your subject to drown in a sea of words. On the other, don't understate unless you know that the recipient will supply the deficiency. 'I dislike him', instead of 'I hate and fear him', may be as inadequate, or even as disastrously misleading, as 'He breathed his last in circumstances of the direst indigence' compared with 'He died penniless'. Be economical, yes; but don't be miserly. Avoid prodigality, yes; but don't starve your subject of the words necessary to give it the strength it needs.

EXERCISES

1. Write four sentences to show how a simile and a metaphor can give life and colour to a description.
2. What are the two senses of *composition*?
3. What is the difference, what the resemblance, between expression and composition?
4. Does the history of the word *expression* throw any light on its meaning?
5. Give an example of a loose sentence, then re-write it compactly.
6. Define and exemplify *antithesis*.

[1] Better than 'firstly'. [2] See the chapter on Rhetorical Terms.

7. How many ways—apart from the slipshod italicizing of words—do you know of emphasizing a statement? With one example of each.
8. What is *signposting*?
9. Write a sentence, or two connected sentences, illustrating the use of *balance*.
10. Which of these two sentences is economical, which wordy?
    'In all the circumstances it is my considered opinion that old age is garrulous, whereas youth is more addicted to action than to speech.'
    'The two men, enemies ever, fought so fiercely that they fell exhausted.'
11. What can you express other than yourself?
12. How does insincerity affect what you write and how you write it?
13. What is a periodic sentence[1]—with an example?

§5. *Arrangement*[2]

On arrangement, although not specifically under that heading, much has already been said, both in Book I and earlier in this very chapter. A few general remarks and particular instances will therefore suffice. But the general remarks and hints are fundamental, essential, indispensable.

First, you cannot very well begin to arrange your material until you have selected[3] it, nor think of selecting it until you know precisely what you either wish or have to do. More logically, you determine your purpose—decide what it is you are to do; then choose the material; finally, arrange it.

You have to tell or write a story; or, this is what you have decided to do. You further decide the subject. You then select the material (the setting, the characters, the incidents, the conclusion). Having selected the material, you arrange it, you set it in its due order; and that arrangement may necessitate a further selection, in that you discard some, add other features; it may even necessitate a further arrangement. The arrangement of the material will depend upon the angle from which you tell it—the hero's or the heroine's, a participator's, an onlooker's, and so forth.

Maybe it is an essay. A choice has been granted. You decide which theme you will treat. You choose the material—the topics—the features—the aspect you think either advisable or, an essay being a personal form of composition, desirable. You then arrange the topics, the features, etc., in that order by which you will best attain the intellectual goal you seek and achieve the aesthetic impression you wish to make.

Or maybe it's an important letter. You get clear in your mind why you are writing it and whom you are addressing. What sort of person is (s)he? You jot down on a slip of paper the things you need or wish to say;

[1] Usually called a *period*.
[2] A putting of things in (French *à*) their proper row or rank (Fr. *rang*).
[3] *Select:* Latin *se*, a prefix that 'separates' + *legere*, 'to choose, pick out'—and so detach from the rest.

you will perhaps discard this topic as irrelevant, that as, though relevant, too trivial to be worthy of mention. And you arrange the topics in their right order.

Secondly. Implied in the first general remark and its applications, the arrangement (order of topics, hence of paragraphs; and order of sentences within each paragraph) may be either dictated by circumstances, as in the important letter, or chosen for artistic reasons, as in the story, or decided upon, perhaps rather arbitrarily, to suit one's personality, as in the essay. In other words, examine the task carefully and see what degree of liberty is permissible—or whether you have any liberty at all. If there is liberty, don't overstep the mark; equally, profit by such liberty as exists. Manifestly, you are always free to decide which words to use.

Thirdly. Except in the essay (or in autobiography), you subordinate personality to subject. Writing a story, a biography, a report, a paraphrase, a précis, a letter, you will prefer the needs of the subject to your own fancies, whims and fads. And even in the essay you will set artistry before egotism or, at the worst, combine the two as smoothly and pleasantly as you can. Which means that, in the arrangement of material, you will put subject before self. After all, the way in which you write does express you.

EXERCISES

1. What is the etymological meaning—the word-history—of *arrangement*?
2. What must you do before you arrange the material for an essay?
3. How would you tackle the writing of a short story about a fight between a lion and a tiger?
4. Write a letter to a prospective employer, the managing director of a publishing firm that issues your father's books.
5. There are several points to remember about *arrangement*. Re-state them in your own words.
6. In which two forms of writing does the expression of personality play the greatest part? Why is this?

§6. *Movement*

A composition may be either swift or slow or, better, of a speed and tempo so natural to the theme that you do not, while you read or listen, think of its pace at all.

> Soft is the strain when Zephyr gently blows,
> And the smooth stream in smoother numbers flows;
> But when loud surges lash the sounding shore,
> The hoarse rough verse should like the torrent roar.

True; Pope[1] was dealing with verse, and he had in mind the statement immediately preceding, 'The sound must seem an echo to the sense'. But it is impossible to dissociate sound from movement, movement from sound. In writing, the pace or tempo is inseparable from the sound of the words and phrases and sentences. What Pope said is as applicable to prose as to verse. Indeed, one can, in prose, move more freely, for one moves unhampered by metrical measures.

This freedom of movement is such as to enable you to write in whichever of the numerous tempos will best suit your theme and the manner in which you propose to treat it; or perhaps the pace at whi ch it insists on moving and the manner in which it proposes to treat *you*. You may have heard, or heard of, a writer saying, 'I began that short story with such and such an intention, but it turned out quite differently' or 'I had thought that the story would run to 2000 words, but it got itself finished in 1200' or 'I set the stage with a group of characters supposed to act in a certain way; they decided quite differently, and instead of the story being reflective and dignified, they forced me into something like melodrama'.

This freedom helps the writer—you—me—to avoid dullness, which in creative work or, more accurately, imaginative work, is the worst fault; and in historical and other factual wo rk, a defect. If you can be yourself, a self at its best, you will not be dull.

'How can I be myself when I am asked to write a letter that seems unreal? An essay upon a subject that bores me and of which I know next to nothing? Or a story on a theme quite beyond my experience or even beyond my reading, when I'm no good at story-writing anyway?'

Those are difficult questions. The last may seem to be unanswerable, yet there is this to be said: How do you know until you try? and, Do you try, or do you simply buzz like a bee in a bottle? If, however, you can write a story, you can also im agine the situation, or one resembling it, and work out what you would do in real life if you found yourself so placed.

If you can write an essay, you can master even a subject that bores you and grapple with a subject of which you know little, for everyone who is not a nitwit can write an essay. The writing of an essay consists of no more than this: setting down on paper what you would say to a friend concerning this matter. If you can talk about your opinion of (say) music, your response to music, you can write about it. It is easier to write well than to speak well, because you have more time to think and are not embarrassed by shyness, nor by fear of derision. An essay is the putting on paper of what you feel and think and know and hope about music or whatever the subject may be.

And that letter which seems to be so unreal? It can be unreal for only one reason: that you think you will never be obliged to write such a letter. How do you know? You don't know. Therefore you will suppose the situation to have arisen. Now imagine yourself in that situation and caught up by it.

[1] *Essay on Criticism*, ii, 162; published in 1711

Do these things and you will quite easily succeed in becoming interested in what you had so hastily and prematurely taken for granted was a dull subject, or impossible task. *Be* the person concerned; *feel* the atmosphere and *see* the setting and the other characters. Once you are your own man or your own woman, in no matter how unfamiliar or strange a setting, you will be able to put yourself on to paper with astonishing ease and with an attractive immediacy and convincingness. You will, moreover, transfer yourselves to paper in a way that causes the reader to think, ' He's moving at a pace suitable to the subject—and, to judge by his evident enjoyment, suitable to him too '.

Rid yourselves of the idea that composition is a bore! It will be a tedious exercise only if you allow it to be dull or, worse still, cause it to be dull. What would you think of that class-mate who, having survived a fire or a shipwreck or a train smash or witnessed a magnificent and moving pageant or travelled to some far country, had nothing to say but ' I didn't need to turn on the electric light ' or ' My feet got very wet ' or ' I couldn't think *what* had happened ' or ' I felt very tired afterwards ' or ' It was hotter than it is here '? Is such a boy or girl any better than the American[1] who, returning from church, was asked by his wife what the sermon had been about, and replied, ' Sin ', and, asked what the preacher had said on that subject, burst into eloquence: ' He was agin it '? Such people don't know they're alive. For them, there exists no such thing as interest, liveliness, colour, tempo. They could no more endow a description with colour, an adventure with movement, an essay with vitality and personality than they could fly, unaided, to the moon. Yet we can all fly to the moon: if we wish. At whatever speed we wish. Whensoever we wish.

Better than pages of theory, by me, about movement is the study, by you, of a few pages from good books. From this, you will notice that the writer's pace, be he poet or prosateur, fits the theme. Look at an essay by Addison or Steele, Washington Irving or Oliver Wendell Holmes, Lamb or Hazlitt, Chesterton or Lynd; a short story by Dickens or Meredith, Poe or Bierce, Galsworthy or Wells, Somerset Maugham or H. E. Bates; and you will see what I mean. Movement on a larger scale can be perceived in a novel, preferably in a novel of adventure, say A. E. W. Mason's *Clementina* or Geoffrey Household's *Rogue Male* or Booth Tarkington's *Monsieur Beaucaire*—three books that you would enjoy.

EXERCISES

1. State in 10–12 lines your idea of *movement* in writing.
2. What, in your own words, did the great eighteenth century poet, Alexander Pope, say on the subject of ' sound echoing sense ' and of ' pace suiting the theme '?
3. Which is the worst style of all, whether in prose or verse, fact or fiction? And why?

[1] The story is traditionally told of Calvin Coolidge.

4. What would be your reply to an ordinary bright classmate in despair at having been asked to write a story about a voyage, by sea, to the South Pole?
5. ' If you think of a thing as unreal or, at the best, remote, what you say or write about it will be false or, at the least, unconvincing.'
   Your opinion, please!

§7. *Conclusion : The Essay*

On composition in general and in particular, in reference to its teaching in schools, George Sampson, the author of that essential book, *English for the English*, has laid a further debt upon all teachers and all young students of English by writing his *Seven Essays* (1947), especially the one entitled ' On Playing the Sedulous Ape ', wherein occurs this extremely important pronouncement.

> The victims of our composition-essay system leave their schools and find themselves unable to write a letter, a report, a memorandum, unable to give definite instructions or clear explanations. How many of our vast army of officials know how to draw up a simple form requiring precise answers to precise questions? What pupils need to be taught is the use of English as an instrument of precision. . . . Those who teach history, geography, or science must teach, not some abstractions called history, geography, or science, but knowledge that can be clearly expressed in written or spoken answers to questions.

If only teachers, whether of Latin or Greek, French or German, history or geography, chemistry or physics, biology or botany, mathematics or Bible knowledge, or even of English, would teach their pupils to think out every problem, and insist that all questions be answered thoughtfully and clearly, this salutary and indeed indispensable discipline and exercise of the mind would immensely improve the pupils' speech and writing, not merely in the English class but also in every other, not merely in school but outside. Part of this discipline consists in acquiring a good working vocabulary of words fully understood.

The two aspects; thought and expression; go hand in hand. As the one improves, so inevitably does the other: wherever a pupil or a teacher or a writer, or anyone else, speaks or writes clearly and pertinently, he improves his thinking, and whenever he thinks clearly, he speaks or writes clearly—provided he has the vocabulary. The interaction is constant, unconscious, and most excitingly beneficial. It would be going not one inch too far to say that if pupils and students would get their thinking straight, they would do much towards clarifying and enriching their perceptions and emotions: more to the present point, they would find that, once they can think clearly about any subject whatsoever, any task whatsoever, that subject will become interesting and pleasant; that task, agreeable and much easier.

The lessons and hints contained in the preceding pages cannot, in one reading of each section, be learnt, assimilated, turned to profit by being converted into practice. The ground must be travelled and re-travelled. But before you make the second and third journeys, you will not be wasting your time if you read (or re-read) the following story. It happens to illustrate many of the points I have made or implied.

THE LIGHT IN THE VALLEY[1]

A Fragment of the Risin'[2] *That failed*

'Twas the night before the Battle of Ross, one of the bloodiest struggles of the year '98. Nearly four hundred men lay huddled in the grass fields, along the shelter of the hawthorn hedges. Men in rough coats—cotamores they called them—earth-stained and torn. Some had shoes, some lay with their bare feet cut and bleeding from the weary tramp over-night.

Nearly all slept soundly, as do men who are exhausted and have no reproach. A clump of ferns, or a bent arm made a pillow. Beside them, every one, lay a pike forged by some village smith, or a scythe wedged into a stout wooden haft. Here and there a man with a long shot-gun stood sentinel, for there was an attempt at organized watchfulness.

These men, with the clumsy muskets, were the Wexford wild-fowlers; men who earned a living by killing wild duck and teal on the edges of the Slaney River, and along the seashore. They were hardy men, sure of aim, and this night they kept guard on the crossroads that lead to Duncannon Fort, New Ross, and Fethard.

Their orders were explicit: 'Raise the alarm if the red-coats or the Hessians are coming; if any man attempts to cross the line, shoot him there and then.'

They had learned a bitter lesson from the treachery of young Cooney, who betrayed their plans for the surprise of Duncannon Fort—so no mercy would be shown to the traitor who would make widows and orphans in the country of the Rebellion. The password and the sign were arranged, and the office given for those who watched over the sleeping men. Four hundred lay there, in dark lines, some young—mere boys of Wexford—some old men. Mothers and wives, sisters and sweethearts, were praying for them inside many a mud-walled cabin that night. And many a sleeping rebel saw a pair of blue-grey eyes looking down at him, and he smiled as he dreamed; and many a one with lined forehead saw a sorrowful face crowned with winter hair, that, God pity him, he would never see again.

On the Ross road Barney Rossiter kept watch, but his head nodded at times, and his eyes were leaden with sleep. But over there by the knoll, where the ferns and the sloe bushes grew, on the road to Duncannon, a man stood erect, motionless, part of the darkness. In the intense silence

[1] The odd thing is that several scholars and publishers have unsuccessfully tried to discover who holds the copyright of this story by Michael Manning.

[2] The Irish Rising of 1798.

the swish of the harbour sea could be heard in the Arthurstown curve of the Waterford Harbour. Rising and falling inside the bar were the lights of the British frigate that came in on the full tide. Inland all was black, as if the Angels in warning had spread a pall over the land.

The man standing there never moved. Silent, motionless as the big granite mission cross that stands by the gates of his parish church over there in Ballycullane. ' Drunken Garry ' they called him. They little knew how the nickname ate into his heart and made him what he was—a dark, silent man. Straight as an ashplant, strong as a colt, he stood there in the night. No sign of drink about Garry that night.

It was at the hurling match at Fethard that he first met Norry Donnelly, the widow's only daughter. That was the day he swept all before him, and he fancied, poor Garry, that he saw the look of pride, and half-love, in her deep grey eyes.

After many days he was coming from the fair of Fethard, and the neighbours found him dead drunk outside the widow's cottage after nightfall. But he wasn't drunk.

He loved this girl Norry in his own strong, erratic way, and in shame at being found there loitering, as he really was, to get just one look at her, he played the part to keep her from being the talk of the parish. But she never knew or guessed, and she never forgave him for the ' disrespect he brought on her '.

Then Mike Furlong came along, and Garry grew sick at heart. A young fellow he was, with not a third of Garry's strength or daring. But Norry came to love him for his gentleness to his old mother at home in Ballyhack, and they arranged that when ' th' ould people could be brought to bear the trouble and the partin' ' that they would marry and settle down for themselves. And then Garry began to drink in real earnest.

By and by came murmurings and murmurings of the rebellion, and many a fine boy left his cabin with his pike upon his shoulder and never returned. On Oulart Hill, or at Arklow, or on Vinegar Hill, his poor white face looked up blankly at God's sky, a broken pike haft gripped in his dead hand. Garry crossed over the country from Bannow and had fought at Oulart. Death never came to him, and this night he kept guard on the road that led to Duncannon.

What's that! 'Tis the sound of some one springing to the roadway from the clay ditch. Why does this man not come on boldly? Between Garry and the lights of the frigate passes the figure of a man.

' Stand for yer life! Who are yeh? '

Silence, and then the reply: ' I'm a friend of the Cause. I've only left the boys an hour ago.'

Garry can hardly speak, for 'tis Furlong's voice, and his heart tells him there and then that this man has stolen away in the darkness and across the lines to see Norry before the morrow's battle. In the pause Garry thinks of her, who never can be anything to him now, of the pain and shame he has borne patiently, and in a flash calls up all that might have been, had

this man not come between. He recalls the look in her grey eyes on the day he won for Wexford County that great hurling match, and remembers that he is named with a name that will live after him, ' Drunken Garry ', and all for her. And the black blood rises in his heart and nearly chokes him.

There was a click as Garry drew back the hammer of his flintlock. ' Give me the password! '

' I don't know it; I never axed. I only slipped down into the valley——'

' Stop—stop—give me the password. How do I know what yeh were doin'? Didn't we lose Duncannon Fort and many a mother's son through the likes iv yeh? Didn't——'

' By God yeh lie,' broke in Furlong, ' yeh lie in yer heart, an' yeh know yeh lie—Drunken Garry. Yes, I did go down to see her—I went to say good-bye, for me heart is heavy, an' maybe 'tis God's willin' we may never meet again. But to do the dirty trick, to give the boys away, you don't believe it, Garry, an' yeh know yeh don't.'

' Give me the password,' and the voice was as cold as steel, ' an' stop rawmawshin'. I'm doin' me duty, doin' what I'm towld to do, an' I'll do it, man alive. Howld hard, if ye stir wan step I'll blow yer heart out.'

' Well, I haven't the password, that's all about it. But I'm going to march with the Blaneyforth men to-morrow, an' maybe 'tis to be I'll not come back—but sure God's will be done.'

' For the last time, give me the password! '

Garry raised the gun from the level of his hip, and as he did—right over the doomed man's shoulder, down in the valley beyond, shone out a light that burned and flickered, then went out, flickered, and then shone clear and steady. It was in her cabin, maybe; perhaps she was praying for him, kneeling on the earthen floor and praying—for him. The light shone like a star in that cabin window, just the one glimmer of light in all the darkness that stretched from the Wexford shore of the big harbour away to the sandy reaches of the shore by Shelmelier.

' Mike,' said Garry, and his voice was husky, and a wee bit softened. ' I must do me duty, 'tis hard, but I must do it. I must keep the oath I swore. But, Mike, avic, I wouldn't kill yer soul. Whisper a prayer before I draw the trigger.'

' I have nothing to fear, Garry,' answered Furlong, as he threw back his head. ' I've only done what is right be others, an' I wouldn't be behowlden to yeh—no, not even for me sowl.'

It came to Garry, standing there, holding this man's life in his hands, why Norry liked this man best. But he only said:

' Look down there, down in the valley. Do yeh see a light? Maybe 'tis in her windie. She is prayin' for yeh now—now this blessed minute. Do yeh mind the big black cross on the wall; 'tis often I crept to the windie, an' saw her on her knees, an' I knew well 'twasn't for me she was prayin', God help me! Down on yer knees, Furlong, like a man, an' say the few words for her, avic, as she's sayin' them now, for yeh! '

The first arrow shaft of dawn in the east. By and by the grim outlines of the Geneva Barracks on the County Waterford side of the harbour will show up black, grim, and square, a sepulchre outlined against God's sky, with corpses of the rebels swinging outside, the white seagulls whirling overhead, calling and keening.

By and by the guns will gleam in Duncannon Fort, and the bugles will call, and men move about, and the frigate at anchor will draw in to cover the land approaches to the fort with her heavy guns. But now, darkness and two men alone.

Furlong glanced over his shoulder. There was the light, sure enough. His heart softened for the girl there. He drew a pace away, knelt and crossed himself. ' Father in heaven——' he began.

' Stand up, man, stand up, an' go yer way,' cried poor Garry. ' Whist, not a word, Mike, yer not obligated to me wan wee bit—pass on, man, pass on, and may the Mother of God watch over yeh, an' bring yeh back safe to her. Whist, agrah, don't say nothin', for " Father in Heaven " was our watchword tonight, an' the sign was the sign of the Cross.'

Without a word a man walked slowly on towards where the rebels were sleeping. Another man kept sentinel with his eyes fixed on the light in the valley.

That is a peculiarly satisfying story: a quiet beginning, a quiet ending; the intervening matter, quietly yet movingly developed; the tempo, leisurely and smooth, yet surprisingly swift; no loose ends; scene and characters adequately described and sketched; description, narrative, dialogue, all written with a deft yet inevitable certainty and combined with unerring artistry; a temporal theme, an eternal effect.

The lessons it embodies and the practice it exemplifies are such as to be readily applicable not only to the stories you write, but also to your essays and your letters and to all other compositions whatsoever.

But perhaps you will get a clearer idea of the art of writing in general, narrative in particular, if you read and re-read, study and ponder both the matter and the manner of the following essay, written especially for this book by Neil Bell, the well-known novelist and short-story writer and, as ' Stephen Southwold ', the author of many of this century's best stories for children.

The Narrative Art

We can all describe something we have seen. How well, how accurately, we describe it depends upon how closely we observe it; the closer the observation the better the description. When we describe something we have seen, we are telling a story. The story of what actually happened.

Now let us go a step further and describe not what has actually happened but something we imagine to have happened: that description will be a story. Simply and briefly, that is the whole art of narration, of story-telling.

It is commonly said that short stories and novels are two different kinds of writing, different genres. This is not true. They are the same kind, the same genre: both are stories; one being short, the other long.

If you wish to write a story, either long (a novel) or short, you must see all the events happen in your imagination; and these events you will describe as an onlooker or, much better and more vividly, as if you were acting the part of each character in turn: you 'get into the skin' of your characters.

That is the way all writers of stories work; there is no other way. Dickens laughed, wept, groaned, or chuckled as he wrote. So do all story writers to some extent: all rejoice or lament; enjoy or suffer and endure with their characters; for they are, for the time being, and each in turn, the characters they are portraying. The more vivid is a story-writer's imagination, the more closely will he fit himself into the skins of his characters. This is one reason why some story writers find that they work best when using the first person, and many of the greatest stories have been so written: *David Copperfield; Great Expectations; Jane Eyre; Moll Flanders; Tono Bungay.*

Try this for yourself: in a story you want to write there is a duel between Count d'Artois and Sir Francis de Crespigny (the romantic names will help). First of all see the scene of the duel. See it vividly. Wait till you can see it with absolute clarity; a vague picture won't do or you will write about it vaguely; you don't want a foggy print, to speak photographically, but a sharp clear-cut one. Next see your two characters just as clearly. Now be Count d'Artois; be the very man himself with all his foibles, failings, virtues, and his memories; and for a while let your mind play with those memories. Now, as Count d'Artois, describe the duel. Then repeat the performance, but this time as Sir Francis de Crespigny. You will now have two first-person narratives of the same event. Finally, write an account of the duel in the third person, making the fullest use of the two first-person narratives as you describe what each man does and thinks and feels.

You have now written a story: the story of a duel. How vividly it reads, how true it rings, depends upon how clearly you have pictured the scene and how closely and intimately you have fitted yourself into the skins of d'Artois and de Crespigny.

You now know all that can be taught about this most enjoyable art. Practise it if you wish: it can bring you nothing but happiness unless you ask too much from it.

'It only remains for me to practise what I have been preaching. Here is a story that will, I think, suitably illustrate what I mean.'[1]

[1] Neil Bell to the author, in a letter of December 1947.

The Other Man Present[1]

As the door opened and the man entered, the woman sitting in a low chair beside a blazing log fire looked up quickly and half-rose. A boy of about eight and a girl somewhat younger jumped up from their toys on the hearthrug and ran over to their father with cries of welcome. He laughed and picking them up in his arms kissed them and then looked from them to the big time-piece in the corner and thence to his wife with an expression of pretended amazement.

'They begged to be allowed to stay up till you came,' she said. And then to the children, 'And now to bed; come, Tom; come, Bess.'

'Father promised us a story,' the girl said.

'Not tonight, sweetheart,' her father said, taking some of her long golden ringlets in his fingers and making to pull them.

'Please, Father,' she pleaded, and the boy added, 'just a little one.' And before their mother could protest he laughed and said, 'A very little one, Tom.' He went over to the fire and sitting down allowed the children to climb on to his knees. 'Which one do you want?' he asked.

'The Princess who married the Monster,' the girl said quickly; but the boy said with a grimace, 'You always have that.' He looked up into his father's bearded face. 'The Bear and the three Pots of Honey,' he said.

Their father smiled. 'We'll let Mother choose,' he said.

The mother nodded. 'Master Drake and Dame Goose,' she said.

The story was short, but before it was finished the girl's eyes had closed and the boy was keeping awake only by an effort. When it was over they went off sleepily with their mother and the man picked up a log from a heap at the side of the great hearth, regarded it thoughtfully for a long moment, and then carefully placed it and two others on the blazing pile and leaning back in his chair stretched out his long legs.

He might have been asleep, so still he was and so slow and deep was his breathing. Now and again his lips moved as if he were talking softly to himself, and once a few words were audible, but muttered too indistinctly to be intelligible. Then for a while he was silent; but now he stirred in his chair more than once as if he were no longer comfortable. And as the sound of movement over his head suddenly ceased he shrugged his shoulders and then squared them.

A few moments later his wife re-entered the room and coming over to him stood a little while by his side, her hand against his cheek. He took her hand and held it and then he looked up into her face. 'Presently,' he said, 'presently. I think I'll have a bite or two first.'

'There's the cold goose and the veal-cheese and there's some beef collops—you said you'd have supped.'

He nodded. 'I have. Only a mouthful. Couldn't eat. But I can now.

[1] First published in the *St Martin's Review*, August 1941, and generously offered by the author for inclusion in this book.

I feel quite sharp set. They'll do. And I'll have a jug of brown. Warm me up inside.'

'It must have been cold,' his wife said, as she moved quickly towards the larder.

'Bitter. Never been so cold in my life. I felt I'd never be warm again. But, there! I'll tell you all about it as soon as I've got my belly lined with something solid.'

'It wouldn't take long to heat you some soup.'

He seemed to consider and then he shook his head. 'No, I won't have soup.'

The meal being presently ready, he got up slowly and stretched himself, touching the beams of the ceiling with his finger-tips. He was a tremendous man with heavy shoulders and long arms.

He ate hungrily and quickly, biting and chewing the food with a powerful almost fierce champing of his jaws. Now and then he took a long pull at his tankard and each time he put it down he sat for a while holding its handle and staring into the shadows of the room before he resumed his meal.

His appetite satisfied, he refilled his tankard from the big pitcher and taking it over to his chair by the fire sat down slowly, drank, and then resting it on the arm of his chair he said, 'Thank God it's over'. His wife said nothing and he was silent for many minutes. She waited patiently, fearing to say the wrong thing.

'Bitter,' he said at last; 'the bitterest day I have ever known. There was no way of keeping warm and we had to wait for him three hours and more—out there in the open and the wind like knives. The Thames is frozen over. Ice a foot thick. Nobody's used the bridges these three days. And there we were stuck up there for over three hours in that wind. It bit to the bone. Bit to the marrow.'

'Were there many people?'

'Many? God above! all London was there. As far as you could see was black with them. Black. And all still most of the time and quiet. It was a stillness and quietness that was frightening. They might have been dead. Frozen to death. A hundred thousand corpses all keeping each other up.'

'Did you have anyone?'

He nodded. 'But don't ask me who. I don't know. Nor he me. That was the arrangement. No one knows. Nor will.'

'It's best,' she said.

'Yes. And then he came.'

She leaned forward.

'We waited for him at the top of the steps. We caught sight of him from a long way off. There was no mistaking him. He walked slowly. It must have been a full ten minutes from the time we first caught sight of him till we received him.'

'Yes?' she said, her voice a whisper.

'It was quickly over. He turned his head and looked at me and then away over the crowds. He said some words I did not catch and then he said loudly "Remember" and knelt down. It took but one blow. I stooped and grasped the long hair (it was as soft and silken as Bess's) and held the head up, and at this a great groan went sweeping over the crowd. A great groan of pity. Pity. How like a crowd.'

'And afterwards? Did they—was there——?'

'Nothing,' he said slowly. 'Just drifted away; sort of dumb-struck.'

'He was brave?'

'I'll say that for him.' He laughed grimly. 'He died like a King.'

'And is Cromwell going to take the crown?'

'God knows. Some say one thing and some another.'

There was a long silence and then he said, 'I'm tired. I'm tired. Can't keep awake. I think I'll go to bed.'

EXERCISES

1. Put into your own words what George Sampson has to say about essays in schools.
2. Can you answer a Geography examination paper satisfactorily if you cannot say clearly what you know?
3. Can you be said to know it at all if you cannot say what you know?
4. What is the importance of vocabulary in the writing of essays, stories, letters, etc.?
5. Set for thin 10-20 lines what you yourself—not your teacher, much less I—think about the relationship between speech and thought.
6. What is the importance of communication between human beings?
7. State briefly the differences between speaking and writing.
8. Briefly re-tell, in your own words, the story entitled *The Light in the Valley.*
9. What do you most like about that story?
10. 'A short story does not differ very much from an essay.' Agree? Disagree? Why?
11. Set forth the main points made by Neil Bell in his advice on 'The Narrative Art'.
12. Write, in the third person, the story about the duel.
13. Re-tell *The Other Man Present.*
14. Write a criticism—your opinions and impressions—of that story.

MALAPROPISMS AND OTHER CONFUSABLES

A MALAPROPISM (occasionally a *malaprop*) is a ludicrous misuse of a word, especially a mistake for a word rather like it in form, as in ' as headstrong as an allegory on the banks of the Nile '—as Mrs Malaprop says in Sheridan's comedy, *The Rivals*, produced in 1775; another of her laughable misapplications being ' a nice derangement of epitaphs ' (for ' arrangement of epithets '), which reminds us of what a witness said at the Old Bailey in 1851—' He called me all the epitaphs he could '. Mrs Malaprop excelled in this happy muddling. Her name, by the way, is short for *malapropos*, which represents the French *mal à propos*, applied to an inopportune or irrelevant remark. Yet malaproprian misadventures long antedated Sheridan: several of Shakespeare's characters were confirmed Malaprops; but the immediate suggestion came from Mrs Winifred Jenkins in Tobias Smollett's *Humphrey Clinker*, 1771, for there can be no reasonable doubt that Richard Sheridan had read this novel by a famous contemporary.

In the Oxford and Cambridge School Certificate Examination of 1938 the following passage was set for correction. In ' square ' parentheses you will find the correction.

> Mary entered the luxuriantly [*luxuriously*] furnished room and was welcomed by the baroness. She was indeed surprised by the warmth and pleasantry [*pleasantness*] of her reception considering all she had heard of her hostess's masterly [*masterful*] ways. It would not be difficult now, she thought, to explain her purport [*purpose*] in coming to the castle. Suddenly her eye was attracted by a small picture which hung between the tall French-windows, and the baroness interrupted [*intercepted*] her glance. ' My dear, you are perspicuous [*perceptive*]; I see you have already noticed my Orozzi. It is indeed quite unique and priceless, though some people find the colours crude and the drawing primary [*primitive*] and are worried because they find no allusion [*illusion*] of perspective in the background.' ' Ah yes,' said Mary, ' but these kind [better *that kind*] of people always looks for a literate [*literal*] meaning in a work of art, and nothing else.' ' I see that you are by no means ingenious [*ingenuous*] in these matters,' observed the baroness, and Mary smiled, well pleased with the complement [*compliment*].

A List of the Commoner Confusables[1]

accelerate, exhilarate
acceptance, acceptation
adapt, adopt
admittance, admission
advert, avert
affect, effect
affectation, affection
alias, alibi
allegiance, alliance
allegorical, allergic
allude, elude
allusion, delusion, illusion
allusive, elusive
alternate, alternative
amatory, amorous
amend, emend
amiable, amicable
amoral, immoral
annunciation, enunciation
antimony, antinomy
antiquated, antique
apiary, aviary
arrogate, abrogate
asseverate, prevaricate
assume, presume
autocracy, autonomy
award, reward

Bacchic, gastronomic
baleful, baneful
barbaric, barbarous
bathos, pathos
bellicose, belligerent
benefaction, benefit
beneficence, benevolence
beside, besides
betray, bewray
bibliography, biography
born, borne, bourne
brace, bracket
brassière, brazier
bravado, bravery
breach, breech
breath, breathe
business, busyness

cacao, coco, cocoa
calendar, calender
calix, calyx
cannon, cañon (or canyon), canon
canvas, canvass[2]
cast, caste[2]
caster, castor[2]
casualty, causality
cataclasm, cataclysm
censer, censor
cerebellum, cerebrum
ceremonial, ceremonious
cessation, cession
champagne, champaign
childish, childlike
Cilician, Sicilian
climactic, climatic
combat, contest
complacence (-nt), complaisance (-nt)
complement (-ary), compliment (-ary)
complex, complicated
comprehensible, comprehensive
confidant, confident
consequent, consequential
consistent, persistent
contemptible, contemptuous
contend, contest (v.)
continual, continuous
continuance, continuation
conventual, conventional

[1] Nearly all are exemplified and explained in my *Usage and Abusage*. Included are not only malapropisms (where confusion in speech arises from similarity of sound) but also written confusables (sounds identical, meaning different—e.g. *breach—breech*) and sense-confusables (terms whose meanings are confused without any necessary similarity between sounds (e.g. *sarcasm—irony*).

[2] Like *pronouncement—pronunciation*, this was suggested to me by Gladys Mitchell, *The Longer Bodies*, 1930.

converse, reverse
corporal, corporate
council, counsel
courtesy, curts(e)y
credible, credulous

decease, disease
deficient, efficient
definite, definitive
delude, illude
dementia, demeanour
depose, dispose
deprecate, depreciate
derangement, arrangement
detract, distract
dialectal, dialectical
dialogue, duologue
discreet, discrete
distinct, distinctive
doctrinaire, doctrinal
dramatic, drastic

earthly, earthy
economic, economical
e'er, ere
effective, effectual, efficient, efficacious
elemental, elementary
elicit, illicit
elusive, illusive, allusive
emerge, immerge
emigrant, immigrant
ensure, insure
enumerable, innumerable
epigraph, epitaph, epithet
eruption, irruption
euphemism, euphuism
evince, convince
exaltation, exhortation[1]
except, accept
exceptionable, exceptional
exceeding, excessive
executioner, executor
extant, extent

facility, faculty
fact, factor
factitious, fictitious
faker, fakir
flair, flare
flaunt, flout
for ever, forever
forego, forgo
formally, formerly
fugitive, furtive[2]

gamble, gambol
gargantuan, gigantic
generic, genetic
genius, genus
genteel, gentle
gorilla, guer(r)illa *or* guer(r)illero
gourmand, gourmet

hail, hale
hectic, dramatic
holocaust; conflagration *or* disaster
honorary, hono(u)rable
hyperbolic, parabolic
hypercritical, hypocritical
hypnotic, narcotic (*or* soporific)

illusion, allusion
imaginary, imaginative
impassable, impassible
imperative, imperious
imply, infer
impressible, impressive
impudent, impotent
incessant, everlasting
incinerate, insinuate[3]
incredible, incredulous
incumbent, incubus
indict, indite
indignant, indigent

[1] First perpetrated by Mrs Winifred Jenkins.
[2] Like *pronouncement—pronunciation*, this was suggested to me by Gladys Mitchell, *The Longer Bodies*, 1930.
[3] Often confused purposely.

induce, conduce, educe, produce
industrial, industrious
infantry, inventory
inflammable, inflammatory
ingenious, ingenuous
insensate, insensible, insensitive
intense(ly), intent(ly)
interccpt, interrupt
interpellate, interpolate
intolerable, intolerant
intrude, obtrude, protrude
irreparable, irreplaceable
item, affair (*or* subject *or* matter *or* fact)

jargon, jargoon
judicial, judicious
justify, rectify

lama, llama
last, latest
later, latter
leave, let
libel, slander
lightening, lightning
linage, lineage
lineament, liniment
literal, literary, literate
loose, lose
lustful, lusty
luxuriant(ly), luxurious(ly)

magisterial, magistral
maleficence(-nt), malevolence(-nt)
manly, mannish
marshal, martial
masterly, masterful
material, matter
mendacity, mendicity
metal, mettle
millenary, millinery
minotaur, monitor
moderate, modest
Mongol, mongrel
monotony, monopoly
moral, morale
multifarious, multiform, multiple

native, natural
necessary, necessitous
neglectful, negligent, negligible
neon, aeon
neurasthenic, neurotic
nominal, nominative
notable, noticeable, notorious
noxious, obnoxious

oblivious, unconscious
observance, observation
official, officious
omnipotent, omniscient
on suffrage, on sufferance
operative, operator
ophthalmologist, optician
oral, aural
ordinance, ordnance
outcast, outcaste
overlay, overlie
ozone, air

palate, palette, pallet
panacea, panegyric
parabola, parable
paragon, parergon
paramount, tantamount
partially, partly
passed, past
pastoral, pastorale, pastural
pedagogic, pedantic
penetrate, pervade
perceptible, perceptive
perceptive, perspicuous
perquisite, privilege
persecute, prosecute
personal, personnel
personality, personalty
perspective, prospective
perspicacity, perspicuity (*and the adjj.*)
perspiration, respiration
pistol, pistole
placable, placeable, placatory

pleasantness, pleasantry
policy, polity
populace, populous
possibility, potentiality
potent, potential
practicable, practical
precedence, precedent
precede, proceed
precession, procession
precipitate, precipitous
predicate, predict
predicament, predication, prediction
premise, presumption
prescience, presentiment
presumptive, presumptuous
primary, primeval, primitive
principal, principle
procure, secure
profuse, prolific
prone, supine
pronouncement, pronunciation
proportion, portion
prosaic, prosy
proscribe, prescribe
protagonist, antagonist
prototype, predecessor
protrude, intrude
psychical, physical
psychologist, physiologist
punctilious, punctual
purpose, porpoise, purport

quantity, number

radical, radicle
rational, rationale, rationed
receipt, recipe
receptacle, recipient
recourse, resource
re-creation, recreation
recumbent, incumbent
regulate, relegate
relevant, revelant
relic, relict
remediable, remedial
remembrance, reminder
repent, regret, resent
replete, complete
reported, reputed
reprehend, apprehend
reprehend, resent
requirement (*or* requisite), requisition
research, search
respectable, respectful, respective
reverend, reverent
reversal, reversion
reversion, aversion
review, revue
rhinoceros, hippopotamus
right, rite
rigid, rigorous
rota, rotation
rotary, rotatory
route, method (*or* procedure *or* process)

sadism, masochism (*and the adjj.*)
salon, saloon
sanatory, sanitary
sarcasm, irony
satire, satyr
sceptic, septic
scrip, script
seasonable, seasonal
secret, secretive
seminar, seminary
sensible, sensitive
sensory, sensual, sensuous
serrated, serried
session, cession
similar(ly), corresponding(ly)
simulate, dissimulate
simulate, pretend
sociable, social
sophisticated, cosmopolitan
source, cause
specie, species
staid, stayed
stalactite, stalagmite
stationary, stationery

stratosphere, troposphere
stricture, structure
studio, study
subconscious, unconscious
sublimate, sublime, subliminal
successfully, successively
suggested, suggestive
superscription, subscription
supersede, surpass
superstition, supposition
supplement, complement
suppositional, supposititious
supranormal, subnormal
suspect, surmise
sustain, maintain

talesman, talisman
technic, technique
tempestive, tempestuous
temporize, extemporize
testament, testimony
theorem, theory
thereafter, thenceforth
thrash, thresh
toper, topic
tortious, tortuous, torturous
totalitarian, teetotal
transcendent, transcendental
transfer, transpose
transpire, perspire, respire
travail, travel
troop, troupe
troubled, troublesome, troublous
turbid, turgid
typographic(al), topographic(al)

unavoidable, unchangeable
underlay, underlie
universal, general
urban, urbane

venal, venial
venerable, venereal (*and the adjj.*)
veracity, variety
vestigial, rudimentary
vigorous, rigorous
vigo(u)r, rig(o)ur
violation, violence
virgin, virginal
voile, vowel

waive, wave
wanting, wanton
ward, award (vv.)
warrior, wearier
wen, wend
womanish, womanly
wooden, woody
wrack, rack
wrapt, rapt

yore, your

zealous, jealous
Zoilus, Aristarchus

EXERCISES

1. What is the word-history of *malaproprian*?
2. Name any forerunners of Sheridan in the field of malapropisms.
3. Supply the corrections necessary in:

   The poor old man asked many tortious questions, his porpoise being veiled. But the perspicuous boy soon reduced him to profusion. That boy had made a careful study of the proceeding chapter and had a rigorous mind. The old man ceased to be urban and became more practicable. 'By poverty,' he said, 'I have been produced to mendacity. But I do not wish to protrude upon your company any longer, young sir. If the truth perspires, you will find that the bathos of what I've said is various.'

4. Make up a *malaproprian* sentence in which the following words are misused: *troublesome, surmise, moderate.*

5. Correct the following:

'We must arrive quickly. Let's exhilarate, or we'll get a baneful look from our host, who hates any lack of punctiliousness,' said Bill.

'Oh,' replied Jim, 'I swear—I even prevaricate—that we'll get there on time. It would be contemptuous of us to fail him. Also it's to our benefaction to show ourselves efficacious in our work. And I do hope he'll give us a gigantic meal, not that I'm a gourmet.'

'You're suffering from an allusion, Jim. You think there's no earthly chance of our being late. But it's elemental that even a slight delay would emerge us into hot water, so it's no good your flouting your bravery in this way.'

'Now, now! You're being hypocritical.'

6. Write a short passage showing a confusion of the following pairs: rack, wrack; rapt, wrapt; yore, your; thrash, thresh; talesman, talisman; cast, caste; born, borne; breach, breech.

7. Correct the following passage, in which an excellent farmer explains some of his difficulties to a townsman:

This is virginal soil, but poor soil. It needs prelates to make it ready for a crop. Then, so much depends upon metrical conditions. If we don't get rain at an importunate time, or if we get a superstition of it, the crop will be efficient. And market prices! If the crop be poor, prices are high—so we don't profit. If it be very good, prices are low and not much benevolence to us. They gov'ment boards be impudent to help us, for they don't understand our seasonable difficulties; they seem to supersede even the income-tax men, they be so septic about our needs. What be necessitous is that gov'ment officious should adopt their polity to the circumferences, but they do seem to think that the climatic obeys gov'ment orders. They be doctrinal, sir, that's what they be; everyone on 'em thinks he's a genus. They gamble at *our* risk and then they blame the weather. I gets indigent every time I thinks on they fakirs. They flout themselves in Whitehall as if they was parables of virtue and the antagonists of progress. They think they owns a monotony of presentiment. They suffer from a specie of demeanour and give themselves an atmosphere of power. Indeed, they be as teetotalitarian [*he draws a long breath*] as a bunch of sphinxes. They forgets they drew that power from the likes of us. We was perceived by their fair speeches and we have only ourselves to thank for the predicate we're in. Oh! the epitaphs I could imply to they allusive windbags. Excuse me, sir, I be carried away on the waves of me own elephants. Unless I be careful I shall suffer from an apologetic fit. If I was to die now, sir, my burial would be on the parish and I don't want to be deterred in a porker's grave. It's an incredulous position. . . . Oh, good day to *you*, sir!

RHETORICAL TERMS

§1. *Introductory*

THE TERMS in rhetoric are sometimes condemned as being pedantic and erudite: not, therefore, for schoolboys or schoolgirls, nor for anyone else except the professed students of literature and oratory.

The retort is that these rhetorical terms, like the technical terms in metric or, as it is often called, prosody, are a convenience; without them we should be reduced to giving the definition every time we wished to refer to the device or the process. Everyone would object to having to speak always, not of a *cat* but of ' a carnivorous quadruped that has long been kept by men . . . as a pet and for catching rats and mice '. Likewise, everyone has a right to speak, not of ' an inversion of the order of words or phrases, when repeated or subsequently referred to ' (not a very good definition) but of *chiasmus*.

Among the Classic Greeks, rhetoric consisted in a store of the principles of oratory and of its technical resources, both as to composition and as to delivery. In modern English, however, rhetoric is usually understood to be ' the art of clear, forcible, and elegant use of language, and distinguished from the special branches of versification and elocution '.[1]

The history of the word *rhetoric* is not merely interesting; it is helpful. It comes, via French *rhétorique*, from the Latin *rhetorica*, which represents the Greek *rhetoriké*, short for *rhetoriké tekhné* (or *techné*), ' oratorical art '; the Greek adjective *rhetorikos* derives from *rhetor*, ' an orator ', itself from *eirein*, ' to say, to speak ', a *rhetor* being ' a speaker *par excellence* '.

The easiest way to learn the principal terms in rhetoric, as I have come to think after examining my own memories of the fun I got from earning them at the age of 14–15 and after weighing the theories of the ' Rhetoric without tears ' school of thought,—the easiest, most sporting and at the same time most enduringly effectual way of learning the rhetorical terms is to study them in an alphabetical list, with examples and, where applicable, comparisons with related terms. Memories of my schooldays (those of pupil and those of schoolmaster) tell me that I learned them without tears and remembered them without agony because my teacher, a fine Classic, used to tell us the histories of the rhetorical terms themselves—in short, their etymologies.

[1] *Webster's New International Dictionary*, which notes the two derivative and subsidiary senses, ' skill in the effective use of speech ' and ' artificial elegance of language '; to the latter, we customarily allude as ' mere rhetoric '.

EXERCISES

1. What are the Greek—the predominant current—the current unfavourable—senses of the word *rhetoric*? (Three in all.)
2. Relate the word-history of *rhetoric*.
3. State—with reasons—what *you* think would be the easiest way of learning the terms of rhetoric.
4. Set out the objections to rhetorical terms and answer those objections.
   You are under no obligation to confine yourselves to the question-and-answer of the preceding section.

§2. *A Glossary of Rhetorical Terms*

allegory, literally ' saying things otherwise ', resembles a *parable* in that it is ' a narrative of which the true meaning is to be got by translating its persons and events into others that they are understood to symbolize ' (or represent). ' *The Faerie Queen* and *The Pilgrim's Progress* are allegories,' as H. W. Fowler states in his masterly book, *Modern English Usage*.[1] A parable is short; an allegory may be either short or long. ' Usage has decided that *parable* is . . . the illustrative story '—usually in prose—' designed to answer a single question or suggest a single principle, and offering a definite moral. . . . The object of a parable is to persuade or convince; that of an allegory is often rather to please ' (H. W. Fowler). The most famous parables are those moral stories told by Christ in the New Testament.

The word *allegory* comes to us, by way of the Latin *allegoria*, from Greek *allēgoria*, ' other-speaking in public '; *allos*, ' other: different ' and *agoreuein*, ' to speak in public ', the verb deriving from *agora*, ' place of assembly '.—And *parable* comes, via Old French *parabole*, from Latin *parabola*, itself from Greek *parabolé*, literally ' a putting of one thing beside another ', hence ' a comparison '; the Greek noun derives from the Greek verb *paraballein*, ' to throw or cast (one thing) beside (another) '. Compare SIMILE.

alliteration is the effective, or would-be effective, use, in phrase or sentence, of words beginning with the same letter, as in ' *a*pt *a*lliteration's *a*rtful *a*id '. Occasionally it is extended to repetition of the same letter within a word; or to a combination of initial and medial repetition, as in ' *a*fter li*f*e's *f*itful *f*ever '. The definition includes the repetition of the same sound, as in ' a *f*urious pro*ph*et of *f*inancial *ph*antasy '.

Literally, *alliteration* means the putting of ' letter to letter ': Latin *litera*, a letter of the alphabet.

[1] Under ' Technical Terms ', from which I often quote in this chapter.

anacoluthon is a failure in grammatical sequence, as in ' The man fell down, hitting the pavement with his head and so knocked himself unconscious ' instead of ' . . . hitting the pavement . . . and knocking himself unconscious '.

The word represents the neuter of the Greek adjective *anakolouthos*, ' inconsequent ': *an*, ' not '+*akolouthos*, ' accompanying; hence, consequent ': the basic idea in *akolouthos* is ' not following the *keleuthos* or path; not keeping to the track '.

analogy is ' very commonly used to denote similarity or essential resemblance ', as in philology; ' but its specific meaning is a similarity of relations ',[1] as in ' learning illuminates the mind, for learning is to the mind what light is to the eye ' or in ' the State resembles a human being in that it is born, grows, dies ', or ' the analogy between a State and an organism ' (or ' the analogy of a State *to* ' —or *with*—' an organism ') ' cannot be pressed very far '.

The word comes, via Latin and French, from Greek *analogia*, an abstract noun deriving from *analogos*, ' analogous ', a combination of *ana*, ' up to '+*logos*, ' ratio; thought, word ': ' in accordance with thought; proportional '.

anticlimax[2] is ' something opposed to (*anti*) a climax ', the spoiling of a climax, by allowing the last item to be much less dignified or impressive or effective than the items preceding it, as in ' He was a big man, an important man, a famous man, and an addict of tiddlywinks '.

But why the cart before the horse? What is a *climax*? A climax is an increasing of the effect throughout three or more members (i.e. words or phrases or sentences), each member or stage being more forcible or dignified or impressive than the preceding, as in ' He was a big man, an important man, a famous man ', or ' I came, I saw, I conquered '.

Anticlimax is also known as *bathos*, not to be confused with *pathos*.

Literally, *climax* means a ladder: Greek *klimax*. Placed in the working position, a ladder has a series of steps, each higher than the other.

antithesis. Contrast; words so arranged as to emphasize a contrast, as in ' You like plays, I like stories ' or ' The ignorant condemn learning, the learnèd condemn ignorance ' or ' He likes, she dislikes, fat bacon '.

A Greek word, it derives from *antitithenai*, ' to place opposite '.

aposiopesis is a deliberate failure to end a sentence or a significant phrase, as in ' Well, I'll be——! ', where the final word is omitted, or in ' If he dies, then—— '.

Literally, ' a falling into silence ', it comes from the Greek *aposiōpan*,

[1] *Webster's New International Dictionary*; ' relations ' includes processes and functions.

[2] If you encounter such rarer technicalities as *anaphora* and *anastrophe*, go either to *The Concise Oxford Dictionary* or to *Webster's Collegiate Dictionary* or H. W. Fowler's *A Dictionary of Modern English Usage* (Section on ' Technical Terms ').

'to fall silent', the silence being of the sort known as 'an eloquent silence'.

apostrophe. Such words addressed to a person or thing (whether present or absent) as interrupt the speech or statement, as in 'Jonathan fell sick (where was his father then?) and died untended' or 'He did his best. *Mary dear, is this what you wished?* And then he departed, to death perhaps, yet with life in his heart.'

The word is Greek for 'a turning away', the writer or the speaker turning from the theme of his narrative to address a third party.

asyndeton occurs when, for effect, somebody omits one or more such conjunctions as would normally link two single words or two phrases or two sentences: the Greek original means 'not linked, not bound together'. Examples:

'I came, [and] I saw, [and] I conquered':
Latin *Veni, vidi, vici.*

'Man shall find grace, [but] the Devil, none'
(Milton, adapted).

bathos. See ANTICLIMAX.

chiasmus. 'I dare not fight, flee I cannot' can be arranged thus:

'I dare not fight
flee I cannot'

The lines form a cross, the words having been arranged crosswise; that cross resembles the Greek letter *khi*, often represented in English as *chi*; the Greek word is *khiasmos* or *chiasmos*, literally 'making of the letter *khi*'.

circumlocution. See PERIPHRASIS.

cliché. A hackneyed phrase, as 'to explore every avenue' or 'to leave no stone unturned'. Literally, 'stereotyped'. (See a dictionary.)

climax. See at ANTICLIMAX.

euphemism is a toning-down of speech that is either rude—too, or very, frank—or blasphemous or cruel, as in 'He has met with an accident', 'Something happened to him', for 'He is dead', 'He died'.

Greek *euphēmismos*, from *euphēmizein*, 'to speak fair'—originally, 'to speak words of good omen'.

figure of speech. See TROPE.

hendiadys is rare in English, except in 'fine and dandy', 'good and hard' (adverb), 'nice and warm', and 'try and do better'—for 'very fine', 'severely', 'agreeably warm' and 'try to do better'. A single compound idea is expressed by its two parts as though they were independent, the severed parts being soldered with the conjunction 'and'.

The word is erudite Late Latin, formed from Greek *hen* (one)+*dia* (through)+*duoin* (two), as in *pocula et aurum*, 'goblets and gold', for *pocula aurea*, 'golden goblets'.

hypallage (pronounced *hip-ăl'-ă-jē* or *ghe*: or *hī-păl'-ă-jē* or *-ghe*) consists in the transference of an adjective from a noun it suits to one it fits less well; a change of position from the logical to the illogical; both, for picturesqueness or for emphasis. An example of the former—the more usual—kind: 'the merchant's dead counting-house' for 'the dead merchant's counting-house'. Of the latter: Virgil's *dare classibus austros*, 'to give the south wind to the ships' instead of *dare classes austris*, 'to give the ships to the south wind' (of a fleet being manœuvred *or* provided with an opportunity to take advantage of, to sail with, a favouring south wind).

The Greek original, *hupallagé*, means 'an exchange'.

hyperbole is the use of exaggeration in order to emphasize, not to deceive; or, as Macaulay has phrased it, 'Somebody has said of the boldest figure in rhetoric, the hyperbole, that it lies without deceiving'; as in 'Thanks a million!' or 'A thousand apologies!' or 'In that dreadful half-hour she died a hundred deaths'.

Greek *huperbolé*, an over-throwing; a shooting beyond the mark: compare the origin of *parable* (at ALLEGORY).

irony and **sarcasm.** Whereas *irony* is that rhetorical device whereby one says the opposite of what one means, *sarcasm* is that whereby one very bitingly[1] or cuttingly[1] says precisely what one emphatically means. Irony characterizes 'these charming people' when that phrase is applied to an extremely objectionable group or set of persons, who, in sarcasm, might be mentioned as 'that shameless set of back-biting hypocrites whom your cousin adores'.

Sarcasm, the easier to use, is directly and clearly explained by its etymology: Late Latin *sarcasmus*, representing Greek *sarkasmos*, literally 'a flesh-tearing', from *sarkazein*, 'to tear flesh (*sarx*); hence to speak bitterly'.

Irony literally means 'dissimulation', i.e. a concealment of that which one is; the earliest irony (Greek *eironeia*, whence Latin *ironia*, whence French *ironie*) being what we now call *Socratic irony*, the feigned ignorance of Socrates, who specialized in leading his disciples up the garden path, the victim thinking him ignorant, the auditors knowing him aware. Then came *dramatic irony*, wherein the characters of the play do not know that certain statements mean something very different, especially the opposite, to the audience, who have the truth. Then *the irony of Fate*,[2] the trick played by fate upon a person either too confident or blissfully thoughtless or merely care-free. In all three, there are two audiences implied; the one, aware of what is happening or what is meant;

[1] In literary criticism, this would read 'mordantly or trenchantly'.
[2] Not to be used of trifles.

the other not. The skilful writer or orator knows that, in a quick-witted public, these two audiences will be present simultaneously in one mind: your ear receives one set of words, the mind transmutes those words into the gold the orator or writer intends you to obtain.

litotes and **meiosis** is the sort of thing that is meant when we speak of 'the great English virtue of understatement', provided we understand that emphasis, not deception, is intended (compare HYPERBOLE): the employer impresses by the very moderation of his speech. It is of two kinds:

(1) with *no(t)*, as in 'no mean city', a great city; 'I praise him not', I blame him; 'How are you? Not bad.' Some grammarians restrict *litotes* to this kind.

(2) all other understatements. 'Poor old fellow! You must be in agony.—Well, not very comfortable, old man.' Grammarians either call this sort *meiosis* or apply *meiosis* to both sorts.

The sensible thing would be to call (1) *litotes*; (2) *meiosis*: and both of them, together or separately, *understatement*.

Litotes is Greek for 'frugality', a pleasant economy of word and emotion; *meiosis* is Greek for 'diminution, a lessening', a 'drawing it mild'.

meiosis. See preceding entry.

metaphor. See SIMILE.

metonymy is the substitution of an attribute, a property, a characteristic possession, for the person or thing having that attribute, property, or possession. If we say 'the Crown' when we mean the King (or the sovereign power) or 'We admire Homer' when 'We admire Homer's poems' is meant or 'He's a disgrace to the cloth' instead of 'That clergyman disgraces his calling', we are employing *metonymy*, which, literally 'change of name', comes, via Latin and French, from the Greek *metonumia*; *meta*, a prefix implying change+*onoma*, a name.

Compare PERSONIFICATION and SYNECDOCHE.

oxymoron. Perhaps the best-known example is Tennyson's

> His[1] honour rooted in dishonour stood,
> And faith unfaithful kept him falsely true

—where there are three instances: *honour—dishonour*, *faith—unfaithful*, *falsely—true*. In each, two contradictories are combined in order to emphasize an arresting coincidence. A good example, familiar to all, is *pet aversion*.

This Greek word, *oxymoron*, is the neuter of the adjective *oxumōros* 'wisely foolish; pointedly foolish' (you know the word *moron*): *oxus*, 'sharp'+*mōros*, 'foolish'.

parable. See ALLEGORY.

[1] Lancelot's in relation to King Arthur.

paronomasia is such a play on words as jocularly or pointedly avails itself of similarity either between two words or between two different senses of one word, as in 'not Angles but angels' (*non Angli sed angeli*) and 'He was a noted tanner of hides'.

This Greek noun derives from *paronomazein*, 'to form a word by a slight change': *para*, beside+*onoma*, a name.

pathetic fallacy is that practice whereby certain writers either cause Nature to appear to sympathize with mankind or, more widely, credit Nature with human emotions. It is a practice to be handled with caution, for most people very strongly feel that Nature is utterly indifferent to mankind; the few, who see life as it is and don't moan about the relation of Nature to man, realize that even to call Nature 'indifferent' or 'callous' is to fall into the pathetic fallacy, because however much we human beings are concerned with Nature, Nature certainly isn't concerned with us.

Literally, *pathetic fallacy* means 'an error involving emotion'; *pathetic* derives from a Greek noun—*pathos*, 'suffering; feeling'.

periphrasis and **circumlocution** indicate the one thing: roundabout speech, which is precisely the meaning of the Greek *periphrasis* and the Latin *circumlocutio*: 'In Europe today there obtains a bewildering lack of news in which any reliance can be placed' for 'In Europe there is no trustworthy news'.

personification, 'making (some object or animal or emotion) into a person', comes from a Latin verb derived from *persona*, an actor's mask, hence the actor himself, hence any person,+*facere*, to make. Perhaps the commonest kind of personification is *she* for 'a ship; the moon; one's country'. Another kind appears in: 'He was dogged by Fear: he regarded fear not merely as a person but, if that be possible, as more real than any person he knew'.

Compare PROSOPOPOEIA.

pleonasm is the use of more words than are necessary. The use may be deliberate, i.e. for emphasis, or careless, as in the excellent example cited by Professor Ernest Weekley: 'I've only fixed that up temp'r'y, pro tem, for the time being' (his gardener, in 1913).

Deriving from Greek *pleonasmos*, excess: from *pleon*, the neuter of the comparative of *polus*, 'much'+the abstract suffix *asmos*.

prolepsis is, in rhetoric, what intelligent anticipation is in life. Literally, 'a taking beforehand', this Greek word derives from *prolambanein*, 'to take before'. It occurs in 'They were carrying the captured weapons to a place where they might destroy them: and as they marched, their thoughts were upon those destroyed spears and swords'; compare the Latin *scuta latentia condunt*, 'They collect the hidden shields' (the shields they intend to hide).

As SYLLEPSIS has adjective *sylleptic*, so *prolepsis* yields *proleptic*.

prosopopoeia is usually taken to be merely the Greek, the erudite word for PERSONIFICATION; but certain grammarians define it as 'the introduction of a pretended speaker', as in 'Confucius says . . .'

rhetorical question. A question asked for effect only; a question demanding no answer. 'Who does not know that the earth is a sphere? Yet for thousands of years everyone thought it flat.'

sarcasm. See at IRONY.

simile and **metaphor.** A simile is that figure of speech which likens or clearly compares two different things in one or more of their properties or features; for instance, 'as cold as charity' or 'Errors, like straws, upon the surface flow'.

In a metaphor, a word or a phrase literally meaning one object or one idea is applied to another object or idea in order to suggest a likeness or a comparison between them, as in 'a *volley* of questions' or 'The ship *ploughed* its way across the Atlantic' or 'The aircraft *sailed* the empyrean'.

'A metaphor may be regarded as a compressed simile, the comparison implied in the former being explicit'—clearly stated—'in the latter. Thus compare "a marble brow" (metaphor) with "a brow white like marble" (or "as white as marble": simile)', as *Webster's* helpfully remarks.

Metaphor comes, via Latin and French, from Greek *metaphora*, a transference, from *metapherein*, to carry (*pherein*) over (*meta*).

Simile is literally 'a like thing', *simile* being the neuter of the adjective *similis*, like, similar.

syllepsis and **zeugma.** Literally, *syllepsis* is 'a taking together'; *zeugma*, 'a yoking together'. Like most of the technical terms in rhetoric, they derive from Greek. Popular usage applies *zeugma* to both of these figures of speech. Learnèd usage distinguishes *syllepsis*, as in Dickens's 'Mr Pickwick took his hat and his leave', and G. W. Steevens's 'You'll burst, my good Archilochus, with Chian wine and laughing', from *zeugma*, as in 'See Pan with flocks, with fruits Pomona crowned' (exemplifying also CHIASMUS): syllepsis is grammatically correct, zeugma is not. In the 'Pan—Pomona' quotation, *crowned* as applied to Pan is incorrect for 'surrounded'. In syllepsis the sylleptic or combining word is used in two different senses, both of them correct; it is, therefore, the more arresting figure of speech.

synecdoche (pronounced *si-nek'-do-kee*) makes a part serve for the entire thing or group, as in Virgil's *arma virumque cano*, 'I sing of arms and the man', where 'arms'=war, or in 'Nelson commanded some thirty sail' (ships); or the whole for a part, as in 'America won the Davis Cup' for 'The American lawn-tennis team won the Davis Cup'.

Literally, *synecdoche* means 'a receiving together': Greek *sunekdokhé*: *sun*, with+*ekdokhé*, reception.

Compare METONYMY.

trope, the learnèd word for a *figure of speech,* comes from Greek *tropos,* 'a turn', itself from *trepein,* 'to turn'. *Webster's* definition of a *trope* is: 'the use of a word or expression in a different sense from that which properly belongs to it, for giving life or emphasis to an idea. . . . Also, the word or expression so used. Tropes are chiefly of four kinds: SIMILE (and *metaphor*), METONYMY, SYNECDOCHE, and IRONY.'

understatement. See LITOTES.

zeugma. See SYLLEPSIS.

EXERCISES

1. In the following sentences, name the figure(s) of speech employed.
   (*a*) A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush.
   (*b*) McAdam piloted his great white bird to drop its eggs on Berlin.
   (*c*) He's a queer fish!
   (*d*) In the raid upon the enemy camp he commanded a hundred horse.
   (*e*) Irony is a rapier, sarcasm a bludgeon.
   (*f*) Ulysses loosed his anger and arrows at the suitors.
   (*g*) Milady departed in wrath and a sedan-chair.
   (*h*) When I see courage pass by, I raise my hat; when pettiness jostles me, I curse.
   (*i*) There saw I justice upheld; trampled justice see I here.
   (*j*) 'Do you love him?'—'I like him just enough to marry him.'
   (*k*) With weeping eyes and hearts the children watched their father leave them for ever or a month.
   (*l*) That's a fine-looking horse, what?
   (*m*) So the two brothers and their murder'd man
   Rode past fair Florence.
   (*n*) Free, gratis and for nothing.
   (*o*) When I allow Greed to dictate to me, I shall hope for a visit from Remorse.
   (*p*) *Only for those who know Greek:* Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church.
   For all: You are Faith. It is faith I expect from you.
   (*q*) That musical composer excels in pleasing dissonances and expected unexpectednesses.
   (*r*) Wealth has not always been charitable to poverty.
   (*s*) I'll see you further!
   (*t*) Not a few soldiers live to a ripe age.
   (*u*) Brutus is an honourable man: I need not attack him. Brutus is an honourable man: I need not question his motives. Brutus is an honourable man: and Brutus slew his friend, his patron, his leader.
   (*v*) The trumpets' Tuscan blare.
   (*w*) He passed away on the night of July 19, 1948.
   (*x*) He was a gay Lothario.
   (*y*) He staggered, fell, died.
   (*z*) Nature wept at his funeral, the very birds were silent and the beasts were still. Dark as his widow's future was the sky, and hard was the road she would travel.
2. Why, do you suppose, did Macaulay describe *hyperbole* as the strongest figure of speech? Give two examples of it.

3. Make up a sentence apiece to illustrate
   (*a*) irony and sarcasm;
   (*b*) metonymy and synecdoche;
   (*c*) metaphor and simile;
   (*d*) prolepsis and syllepsis;
   (*e*) syllepsis and zeugma.

4. What is your candid opinion of?—
   (*a*) hypallage ('the boxer's British pluck');
   (*b*) hendiadys ('Go and find it!');
   (*c*) apostrophe ('I continued to search—be still, my heart!—but I could not find the door').

§3. *The Use of Figures of Speech*

We use metaphors without thinking, for by far the larger part of language is metaphorical. We use similes naturally; especially when we wish someone to see what we mean—to visualize it. Sarcasm requires little of thought and nothing of knowledge; irony requires no knowledge, but rather more of thought. Anacoluthon, aposiopesis and zeugma are faults we commit; when they are not rather artless devices.

But most of the other figures of speech can be used only by those who intend to use them; they spring from conscious art. A few, such as prolepsis and syllepsis, hendiadys and hypallage, chiasmus and apostrophe, require so much conscious art that they are, except in the most skilful hands, in danger of becoming artificial, ostentatious, rhetorical; in danger of exalting the means above the end, the manner above the matter; of drowning significance, though not signification, in an Atlantic of verbiage.

What then to do? The rule is simple: Until you have reached the stage at which you feel sure of their probable effect upon your auditor or reader, use the figures of speech very sparingly. An excess of ornaments may dazzle the half-witted; the intelligent will laugh at the wearer.

But that is not to say that you shouldn't familiarize yourselves with the names and the odd habits of the various tropes. In your essays, your stories and dialogues, even in letters to your long-suffering relatives and friends, experiment with them. 'Practice makes perfect' is a very ancient chestnut. It remains edible. Perfect yourselves when young: youth is the season of apprenticeship. When you attain the status of adults, you'll be able to handle your metaphor with assurance, with picturesque ease your simile; metonomy with mastery, and synecdoche with skill; the rarer figures will, like those in your bank-book, be the delight of others and a proper source of pride in yourselves. *Trope* will be your middle name.

Yet remember the Greek adage: *mēden agan*, nothing in excess!

EXERCISES

1. Why is the metaphor an 'unconscious' figure of speech? And the simile a 'natural' one?
2. Which tropes do you hold to be artificial?
3. Yet, although artificial, they can, if used in moderation, be not merely effective but arresting. Devise an arresting example of chiasmus.
4. If you were respectfully approached by a junior member of your school and asked to explain the meaning of *figure of speech* and the usefulness (he might be thinking in terms of uselessness) of figures of speech, how would you—seriously, now!—answer him?
5. Would such technicalities as *allegory*, *anacoluthon*, *chiasmus*, *hendiadys*, *hypallage*, *zeugma*, stick long in your mind if you had not been told their word-histories or etymologies? Show how the etymology of the word *climax* assists you to understand the figure of speech.
6. To what extent do you
   (*a*) now employ tropes?
   (*b*) hope to use them *either* when you go to a university *or* when you achieve the age of 21?

METRIC OR PROSODY

§1. *Introductory*

PROSODY is the art of writing in *metres* or measures. Normally *prosody* or its synonym *metric*[1] is restricted to verse: thus shall we restrict it.

That is from the poet's point of view. From the student's, prosody tends to mean the art of scanning verse—that is, seeing how it is written and showing its arrangement of stress or beat or emphasis or accent.

Prosody might be defined as that part of grammar which deals with the laws of verse-making, or versification as it is called, with especial reference to the distribution of stress and to the number of syllables in a line. Rhyme may or may not be included: blank verse does not rhyme, nor does much free verse.

The Classic poets of Greece and Rome did not use rhyme, rhyme being a medieval invention. Much Classical poetry bases its measures, not on beat, stress, accent, but upon the length and strength of sounds —the sounds of syllables.

Free verse often employs assonance, which has been defined as ' rudimentary rhyme ': rhyme in which the last accented vowel and that or those which follow it in the last word of a verse line correspond in sound to those occupying the same positions in another end-word, but with the consonants of these two words differing in sound, as in *calamity* and *humanity*, *roam* and *bone*. Professor Ernest Weekley quotes

Up and down the City *Road* (*a*)
In and out the *Eagle* (*b*)
That's the way the money *goes*, (*a*)
Pop goes the *weasel*. (*b*)

The very word *assonance* derives from Latin *assonans*, ' corresponding in sound ', whereas *rhyme*, often spelt *rime*, derives from Medieval Latin *rithmus*, ' accentual verse '—accented verse normally being rhymed.

Style concerns poetry no less than it does prose. Yet style is ignored by us while we discuss metric.

Before we can intelligently discuss metric at all, we must, for convenience' sake, acquaint ourselves with the technical terms involved. Almost immediately follows a glossary of those terms which you can hardly ignore.

[1] *Metric* the noun derives from *metric*, the adjective corresponding to *metre*, in its basic sense ' measure ': Latin *metrum*, Greek *mĕtron*. *Prosody* comes from Latin *prosodia*, ' the tone or accent of a syllable ', itself from Greek; the Greek word was formed from *pros*, to, towards + *odé*, a song.

EXERCISES

1. Write your own definition of prosody.
2. What is the principal difference between Classic Greek (and Latin) verse and English verse?
3. Explain the difference between full rhyme (usually known simply as *rhyme*) and incomplete rhyme (i.e. assonance).
4. To what extent are the words *rhyme* and *assonance* explained by their etymologies or origins?

§2. *The Technical Terms of Prosody*[1]

acatalectic. See CATALECTIC.

alexandrine. A verse line of six iambic (⏑ –) feet. A royal majestic metre: *Alexander* the Great.

anacrusis (Greek for 'a recoil') is an additional syllable that comes at the beginning of a VERSE, i.e. before the normal *feet* begin. Supposing that a verse normally runs – ⏑ , – ⏑ , – ⏑ , – ⏑ (*trochees*) and that you precede it with ⏑ (for instance 'A'), you get an anacrustic trochaic verse.

antepenult, penult, ultima (adjectives: *antepenultimate, penultimate, ultimate*). The last syllable is the ultima; the last but one, the penult; the last but two, the antepenult. Thus in the word *acatalectic, -tic* is the ultima, *-lec-* the penult, *-ta-* the antepenult. (Latin *ultimus*, the last; *paene*, almost; *ante*, before.)

arsis and **thesis.** *Arsis* is the accented, *thesis* the unaccented, part of a foot. In 'Froggy would a-wooing go', each accented syllable is an example of arsis: *Frog'gy would' a-woo'ing go'*, the others exemplifying thesis. (Greek: *arsis*, a raising; *thesis*, a depositing.)

blank verse is, literally, any unrhymed verse but, practically, unrhymed five-foot IAMBIC verse: ten-syllabled unrhymed verse in ⏑ –, as in most of Shakespeare's plays and in Milton's *Paradise Lost*.

caesura is that point at which a verse line is divided into two parts. It is noticeable mostly in long metres, where only, in practice, does it operate. Thus in Tennyson's *Locksley Hall*:

Till the war-drum throbb'd no longer/and the battle-flags were furl'd
In the Parliament of man,/the federation of the world.

Latin *caesura*, 'a cutting or section': *caedere*, 'to cut'.

catalectic; acatalectic. *Catalectic* is applied to a METRE that stops short, i.e. has its last foot shortened; *acatalectic* to a metre that does not stop short. The two verses quoted in the preceding entry are normal or

[1] Excluding the names of metrical measures, which fall more naturally into § 3.

acatalectic, whereas in a metre consisting of trochees (– ⏑) a verse would be catalectic if the last foot consisted of only one syllable, thus:

For′ the | soul′ is | dead′ that | slum′bers (*normal*)
And′ things | are′ not | what′ they | seem′ (*catalectic*).

The terms are Greek: *a-*, not; *katalexis*, an ending, a final cadence.

couplet. A couplet consists in two rhymed verses that, in one metre, constitute a complete statement, usually expressed in a pithy manner.

Couplet is a French word, meaning STANZA; the diminutive[1] of *couple*.

dimeter. See MONOMETER.

elegiacs; elegy. Loosely, *elegiacs* means any metre suitable for an *elegy* or poem of mourning (for instance, Milton's *Lycidas* or Shelley's *Adonais*); strictly, *elegiacs*=poetry written in couplets consisting of a hexameter (six feet: five dactyls+a trochee) and a pentameter (five feet: predominantly dactylic), a Greek and Latin metre ill-suited to English or any other accentual verse.

Greek *ělěgos*, a poem of mourning.

enjambement occurs when a phrase—or a sentence (or clause)—does not end with the end of a verse (an end-stopped verse), but is carried on into the next verse, as in

That praise was his; what therefore did remain
For following chiefs, but boldly to maintain
That crown restor'd?

A French word, it means 'an in-treading; hence, an encroachment'. The anglicized form, *enjambment*, is gaining ground; another name for it is *overflow*.

envoy. The parting words of a poem; a couplet or other stanza containing fewer verses than the preceding stanzas and often headed 'Envoy'; especially in ballades.[2]

Envoy=French *envoi*, a sending or despatching, from *envoyer*, to send.

epic. See at HEROIC POETRY.

feminine ending. See at MASCULINE ENDING.

feminine rhyme. See at MASCULINE RHYME.

foot. 'A group of syllables marked off as constituting a metrical unit of verse, corresponding to a *measure*[3] in music. . . . In English and other modern verse, where the ordinary accent of words is primarily an ictus, or stress, . . . [we have] a pattern simply of accented and non-accented syllables. . . . "Without the regularity [of intervals] as a norm to which to refer it, we should not recognize it as verse. The normal accent interval we call a foot".' *Webster's New International Dictionary*.

[1] A *diminutive* is a word that indicates that the original (as here, *couple*) appears in a form (*couplet*) meaning 'something small, something young, of the same kind'.
[2] Ask your teacher or your dictionary. To be distinguished from a *ballad*.
[3] *Measure:* the American musical term for the English *bar*.

hendecasyllable. An 11-syllabled verse, especially one of those in a poem written in *hendecasyllabics*. H. W. Fowler quotes Tennyson's

> Look, I come to the test, a tiny poem
> All composed in a metre of Catullus,

where a particular kind of hendecasyllabics is employed, the kind usually, though not necessarily, understood by the term.

From Greek *hendeka*, eleven+*sullabé*, a syllable.

heptameter. See MONOMETER.

heroic poetry, epic; *heroics* (or *heroic metre* or *heroic verse*), the measure employed in epics (e.g., Homer's *Odyssey* or Milton's *Paradise Lost*): the 5-foot iambic, basically ⏑ – | ⏑ – | ⏑ – | ⏑ – | ⏑ –.

From Greek *hērōs* (Latin *herōes*), a hero, originally a demi-god.

hexameter. See at ELEGIACS, and also §3.

hypermetre (adjective *hypermetrical*). Hypermetrical verses are such as have a feminine ending, i.e. an unaccented syllable.

Literally, *hypermetre* means 'over-measure'.

ictus. The beat, stress or accent that characterizes or indicates an accented syllable, as in *syl'-la-ble*. Latin *ictus*, a blow, a literal or figurative stroke.

line. See VERSE.

lyric. A short poem, usually divided into stanzas and nearly always rhymed and always directly expressive of the poet's feelings and unofficial thoughts. Examples: Milton's *Il Penseroso*, Wordsworth's *The Daffodils*, Shelley's *To a Skylark*, Shakespeare's *It was a lover and his lass*.

A noun from the adjective *lyric* (often *lyrical*) which='of the lyre'; Greek *lurikos*, 'of the *lura* or lyre', i.e. capable of being sung.

masculine ending; feminine ending. An accented—an unaccented—syllable appearing at the end of a verse line. Hence:

masculine rhyme; feminine rhyme. A rhyme that has, as its final syllable, an accented syllable; one that has an unaccented final syllable. In *manner —banner*, the rhyme is feminine; in *his feet—not meet*, masculine.

From the myth that the male sex is the stronger.

measure or **metre.** If we say that a poem is in such or such a *measure*, or *metre*, we mean that the verse lines consist of a certain number of feet (usually three-six) of a special kind (iambus, trochee, dactyl, etc.) or that in verse lines of a certain number of syllables there are a certain number of accents distributed according to the kind of foot determining the general character of each verse, each stanza, the entire poem. If we say that a metre is irregular, we mean either that the type (iambic, trochaic, dactylic, etc.) is often abandoned or that two or three types, i.e. kinds of metre, are employed.

monometer is one of the names used as part of the full technical description of a verse line. Ignoring their Ancient Classical senses, we may

define this and its companion-terms as descriptions of verse lines of so-many feet, thus:

monometer:	a line of	one foot
dimeter:		two feet
trimeter:		three feet
tetrameter:		four feet
pentameter:		five feet
hexameter:		six feet
heptameter:		seven feet
octometer:		eight feet (rare).

All these names are combinations of a Greek numeral with Greek *metron*, a measure; thus:

monos, single	combining forms:	*mono*
duo, two		*di*
treis, three		*tri*
tetra (for *tettara*), four		*tetr(a)*
pente, five		*pent(a)*
hex, six		*hex(a)*
hepta, seven		*hept(a)*
octo, eight		*oct(o)*

To anticipate the next section (§3), these terms are applied thus:

A regular three-footed line in iambs is an *iambic trimeter acatalectic* (see CATALECTIC); if its last foot is a syllable short it is an *iambic trimeter catalectic* (see CATALECTIC); if, on the other hand, it has an additional syllable, it is an *iambic trimeter extra-metrical*, *extra-metrical* literally meaning 'characterized by being beyond the metre'.

In the same way,

> These are things, that being possessed
> Will make a life that's truly blest

is in verse lines that are tetrameters scanned thus

> These′ are | things′, that | be′ing | possessed′
> (*or* These′ are | things′ that | being′ pos | sessed′)
> Will make′ | a life′ | that 's tru′ | ly bles″t ;

there are eight syllables in each line, therefore the lines are regular (acatalectic)—but regular *what*? Regular trochees (– ⏑) or regular iambs (⏑ –)? The next two verses,

> Estate′ | bequeathed′, | not got′ | with toil′;
> A good′ | hot fire,′ | a grate′ | ful soil′

make it clear that, basically, the poem is in iambic meter. Therefore the metre of the poem as a whole is *iambic tetrameter acatalectic*, or, as I should prefer to say, regular iambic tetrameter.

> The thane of Cawdor began a dismal conflict

is scanned thus:

The thane' | of Caw'(dor) | began' | a dis' | mal con'(flict)

which, there being five feet, is a pentameter; the stresses fall ⏑ –, therefore it is an iambic pentameter; but there are two syllables (*-dor* and *-flict*) outside the metre, therefore the line is an *iambic pentameter extra-metrical.*

octometer. See MONOMETER.

octet. See SESTET. The octet is more usually called *octave.*

octosyllabics, loosely, means poetry written in verses of eight syllables each; strictly, poetry written in verses of eight syllables in iambic metre (⏑ –).

Octosyllabic=eight-syllabled=Latin *octosyllabus,* from Greek *octo,* eight+*sullabé,* syllable.

ode. A dignified or exalted or even majestic *lyric,* especially to commemorate an occasion or to honour a person living or dead; normally, it is rhymed.

A Greek word, it means literally a song in the most ambitious sense of that word—a sense long obsolete.

ottava rima (Italian for 'octave verse') is a stanza of eight verses (lines) of five iambics to the verse, rhyming *ab ab ab cc.*

overflow. See ENJAMBEMENT. Verses that overflow are *run-on* verses (lines).

pentameter. See at ELEGIACS and MONOMETER; also §3.

penult. See ANTEPENULT.

pindarics. 'The form of English verse in which a poem consists of several stanzas often of unusual length, with the rhymes within the stanzas irregularly disposed, and the number of feet in the lines arbitrarily varied' (H. W. Fowler). Gray and Swinburne are notable exponents of a poetic arrangement named after the Greek poet Pindar, famed for his magnificent odes.

quatorzain. A stanza of fourteen verses (lines).

quatrain. A stanza of four verses (lines)—normally, rhymed.

rhyme royal. Poetry written in stanzas of seven verses (lines) of five-foot iambics (⏑ –).

rhythm, whether in verse or in prose, characterizes a passage—or a sentence—when, spoken, that sentence or passage 'falls naturally into groups of words each [group] fitted by its length and intonation for its place in the whole and its relation to its neighbours. Rhythm is not a matter of counting syllables and measuring the distance between accents' (accented syllables) — as H. W. Fowler has well put it.

From Greek *rhuthmos,* measured motion or flow of words (as sounds), either deriving from or akin to *rhein,* to flow.

roundel is an English word, covering both the *rondeau* and the *rondel*, which are French names for poems of kinds never properly acclimatized in English verse. Swinburne, however, applies *roundel* to a verse-arrangement of his own devising. Consult your teacher—or H. W. Fowler's *Modern English Usage*, ' Technical Terms ' (rondeau, etc.).

These terms originate in the fact that all three kinds of poem are neatly rounded off.

satire. ' A literary composition, originally in verse and still generally so, holding up public or private abuses, errors, vice, or folly to reprobation or ridicule; as, the Satires of Juvenal ' (*Webster's*). The greatest English satirists in verse are perhaps Skelton, Ben Jonson, John Dryden, Alexander Pope, Samuel Johnson, Lord Byron.

An impressive metre, e.g. five-foot iambics (especially in heroic couplets or in blank verse), is normally employed.

Satire comes, via French, from Latin *satira*, a variation of *satura*, a noun formed from *satura lanx*, a dish filled with a medley of fruits; or with a hotch-potch of other food, often highly seasoned, therefore *sharp* on the palate. To that dish, Juvenal gave dignity: his satires, never surpassed, have frequently been imitated as, for example, in Dr Samuel Johnson's *London* and *The Vanity of Human Wishes*.

sestet. The last six verses (lines) of a SONNET (fourteen lines); usually a distinct ' half ', topping off the *octet* or first eight lines.

Italian *sestetto*, from *sesto*, sixth.

sestina. ' A poem of six six-line stanzas (with an envoy) in which the line-endings of the first stanza are repeated, but in different order, in the other five ' (*The Oxford English Dictionary*).

Italian: from *sesto*, sixth. Compare SESTET.

sonnet. In English there are three varieties: the Petrarchan, imitated from the famous sonnet-series written by the fourteenth-century Italian, Petrarch; the Shakespearian, as in Shakespeare's sonnets; and the Miltonic, as in Milton's.

All three have fourteen verses (lines) of five iambuses (or iambi) to the line; all are rhymed, the rhyme-scheme differing according to the kind of sonnet; all have an OCTAVE and a SESTET.

The word *sonnet*, adopted from French, comes from the Italian *sonetto*, a diminutive of *suono*, a sound, itself from Latin *sonus*.

stanza; loosely, in poetry, called a *verse*; *verse* being, however, the normal term in songs. A stanza is ' a succession of metrically similar line-groups each of which has the same number and length of lines and the same rhyme-scheme as the rest ' and is applied to all such pattern units of more than two lines. (H. W. Fowler.)

Stanza is an Italian word for ' a stopping place ': the end of each stanza allows the poet—and his reader—a breathing space. From the Latin *stare*, ' to stand ', via Latin *stantia*, ' things that stand *or* are standing'.

spenserians are stanzas of eight five-foot lines, crowned by one six-foot line, all in iambic metre (⏑ –); the verse lines rhyme *ababbcbcc*, as in *The Faerie Queen* by Edmund Spenser.

sprung rhythm. See §3, towards end.

strong ending. See WEAK ENDING.

tercet; terza rima. A *tercet* is such a group of three verses (lines) as occurs in *terza rima*, a metre in which iambic verses of five feet (with an additional foot in the Italian form—the original form) are so arranged that the tercets,[1] or stanzas of three verses, have the first and third verses in rhyme, the second verse having a different ending—which, however, rhymes with the first and third verse of the next tercet, and so on; the general effect of the poem, as a whole, being one of a continuity obtained by overlapping.

Dante used it in the *Divina Commedia*: Byron and Shelley and others have imitated it, Byron[2] thus:

Oh! more than then illustrious far shall be	*a*
The being—and even yet he may be born—	*b*
The mortal saviour who shall set thee free,	*a*
And see thy diadem, so changed and worn	*b*
By fresh barbarians, on thy brow replaced;	*c*
And the sweet sun replenishing the morn,	*b*
Thy moral morn, too long with clouds defaced,	*c*
And noxious vapours from Avernus risen,	*d*
Such as all they must breathe who are debased	*c*
By servitude, and have the mind in prison.	*d*

With *tercet* compare SESTET. Italian *terza rima*—third rhyme.

tetrameter. See MONOMETER.

thesis. See ARSIS.

trimeter. See MONOMETER.

triolet is a poem of eight verse-lines, the first line occurring thrice (in the 1st, 4th, 7th position), the second twice (2nd and last), with the remaining lines rhyming with the other two.

A French word, *triolet* comes from Italian *trio*, a set of three.

triplet. In rhyming couplets, or rather in heroic couplets (couplets forming part of a narrative or satiric poem written in verse lines of five iambic feet: ⏑ –), occasionally a succession of three lines are in rhyme.

From Latin *triplus*, three-fold: compare COUPLET.

ultima. See at ANTEPENULT.

vers libre, free verse. French, *vers libres*, the lines or verses composing the sort of poetry known as *free verse*. Rhyme may or may not be employed; if it is, then it is irregularly distributed. The lines or verses

[1] Sometimes in separate groups or tercets, sometimes in stanzas of ten verse lines.
[2] Quoted by H. W. Fowler in his *Modern English Usage*.

vary in length. Usually, more than one metre occurs, a new metre being introduced whenever it suits the poet. The effect is less felicitous in English than in French poetry.

villanelle. An importation from France, the term means 'a country piece'; the French borrowed it from the Italians, who call it *villanella*, the feminine of *villanello*, 'rustic'. This poem consists of *tercets* (usually five), ending with a quatrain; it possesses only two rhymes, which, except that the last two lines of the quatrain rhyme with each other, occur alternately; certain lines are repeated, thus:

When I saw you last, Rose,
You were only so high;—
How fast the time goes!

Like a bud ere it blows,
You just peeped at the sky,
When I saw you last, Rose![1]

verse or **line.** Strictly, a line of poetry is called a verse; a group of three or more verse lines forms a *stanza* (which see!).

Verse: from Latin *versus*, a metric line: literally, a *turning* to the next line of poetry: from *vertere*, to turn.

weak ending is a word that, at the end of a line of blank verse, is a preposition, an *a* or a *the*, an *if* beginning a clause, or a *has*, *have*, that is auxiliary (as in *has been*). All other endings are, therefore, *strong endings*.

Compare FEMININE ENDING (which see at MASCULINE ENDING).

EXERCISES

1. Of the terms *prosody* and *metric*, which do you prefer? Reasons please!
2. Do you think that, on the evidence of its literal meaning, *metric* is more accurate than *prosody* for 'system of verse-writing'?
3. What confusion exists between
   (*a*) *line* and *verse*;
   (*b*) *verse* and *stanza*?
4. What is the relation of a *stanza* to a *poem*?
5. Can you explain the differences between *sonnet*, *lyric*, *ode*?
6. Differentiate *blank verse* from *free verse*.
7. Define
   (*a*) *anacrusis*
   (*b*) *catalectic*
   (*c*) *ictus*
   (*d*) *caesura*.
8. Distinguish
   (*a*) *masculine* from *feminine rhyme*
   (*b*) *strong* from *weak ending*

[1] From Austin Dobson, quoted by H. W. Fowler.

(*c*) *couplet* from *triplet*
(*d*) *sestet* from *octet*
(*e*) *rhythm* from *rhyme*.

9. Give an example of *enjambement*.
10. What is the nature of satire? Name three verse satirists.

§3. *Measures or Metres*[1]

MEASURE. ' (1) The ordering of verse rhythm by combining its syllables into groups of long and short (as in Classic Greek and Latin poetry), or accented and unaccented (as in English poetry).
(2) Rhythm, as so ordered; meter [*anglicé* metre].
(3) A metrical unit, as a foot . . ., used to determine the length of a . . . line ' (*Webster's New International Dictionary*).
METRE. ' Rhythmical arrangement of syllables or words in verse; poetical measure, depending on number, quantity (as in Greek of Latin), and accent of syllables . . . Also, any specific rhythmical arrangement; as, . . . *dactylic meter* ' (ibid.).

It is preferable to speak of the use of metre in general as metric or prosody and to restrict *metre* or *measure* to this or that specific metre, as in ' The poem is written in iambic metre; it has eight stanzas of six verse lines of four feet '.

In the preceding section, at FEET, *Webster's Dictionary* quoted the eminent American scholar, Raymond Macdonald Alden, as saying that without regularity of intervals between accented syllables we should be unable to recognize verse as verse. That, in short, is the criterion of verse. Some regularity, indeed a predominant regularity, in the spacing of stressed or accented syllables is indispensable.

Note, therefore, that the determining factor of verse is the recurrence of stress at recognizable intervals. The division into verse lines is a very great convenience, not a sheer necessity; it is a convention, everywhere accepted. But the essential character of the line is the manner in which the stresses or accents are distributed; to that essential, the *number* of accents in the line is subsidiary.

The proportion of accented and unaccented syllables, the arrangement of both kinds of syllable, determines the verse foot. Accepting the signs – for an accented, ⏑ for an unaccented syllable, we find such arrangements of accented and unaccented syllables as ⏑ – or – ⏑ or – ⏑ ⏑ or ⏑ – ⏑, etc., recurring within a line twice, thrice, four, five times or more. It is therefore customary to speak of these feet (⏑ – or – ⏑ or – ⏑ ⏑, etc.) as the *units* of a verse line; and that is all very well, very proper, so long as we remember, first, that the nature of the foot itself is determined by the ordonnance of accented and unaccented syllables, and secondly, that

[1] A good treatise is that by Sir S. M. Leathes, *Rhythm in English Poetry* (Heinemann), 1935.

what gives its essential character to verse is the *recognizable* regularity of the frequency with which the stress or accent recurs. Like the verse line, the foot is a great convenience—a convention everywhere accepted.

These conventions are so strong that both poets themselves and scholars have tacitly agreed to name the various metres according, not to the number of accented syllables in a line but to the kind of foot (*the measure*) that predominates in the line—in all the lines of a stanza or of a poem. When we *scan* a verse line, we show where the accents fall (*Máry*) and where the feet end.

Regularity of metre, we have seen, is a necessity—the base—the principal criterion of verse if it is to be recognized as verse at all. Two points, however, must be noted.

> (I) Often there are many possible ways of scanning a particular line, and the one adopted must depend upon the individual taste of the reader. . . .
> (II) Irregularities are most common,
> (*a*) In passages of emotional excitement . . .
> (*b*) Before or after pauses. [That is, immediately before or immediately after pauses.]
> (*c*) Where proper names are introduced.

as Sir Edmund Chambers[1] has remarked.

But the irregularities must not be—in well-behaved verse they are not—so numerous as to destroy the recognizable metre. In a line of five iambics (the basic line of blank verse), one of them may be a trochee (– ⏑) or a spondee (– –) or some other foot; sometimes even two of the feet may be trochaic; but not three. Again, a line may have a syllable short or a syllable additional: either of these variations may be dictated by the emotional necessities of the poem or the drama: such variations, moreover, prevent the versification from becoming monotonous, especially in blank verse. Metre was made for poets, not poets for metre.

Those generalities having been stated and those precautions implied, we are ready to consider the chief metres, which are named according to whatever sort of foot predominates.

First, the foot known as *iambus*,[2] characterizing the iambic metre. ' The primary form of the Shakespearian line is—five feet, each of two syllables; each foot carrying one stress, on the second syllable ':

⏑ – | ⏑ – | ⏑ – | ⏑ – | ⏑ – |

as in

Though bla' | ded corn' | be lodged' | and trees' | blown down';

some persons, however, would scan the last foot as a trochee (– ⏑), whereas yet others might prefer to scan it as a spondee (– –).

A variation from the norm occurs in

[1] In his exemplary school-edition of *Macbeth* (in ' The Warwick Shakespeare ').
[2] From Greek *iambos*, which may signify ' aggression ': Archilochus, the satirist, was apparently the first to use it. The English foot is also known as an *iambic* or an *iamb*.

Dou'bly | redou' | bled strokes' | upon' | the foe'.

In the first foot a trochee (– ⌣) has been substituted for an iambus (⌣ –); the stress—i.e. the strong stress—as used in this first foot is sometimes called an *inverted stress*, because the natural order (⌣ –) of the stress has been inverted into – ⌣ .

An interruption:—The emphasis on a syllable is called the stress or accent or ictus; these terms refer both to the sound and to the sign (' in *bla'ded*; –in ' – ⌣ '). The emphasized syllable is a *strong syllable* (bla') as opposed to *a weak syllable* (ded). That emphatic syllable is also described as *stressed* (or *fully stressed*) *syllable* or *accented syllable*. A lightly stressed syllable is indicated by `, as on ' in ' and ' of ' in ' Put ran' | cours' in` | the ves' | sel' of` | my peace' '. But that is a fine distinction which you have only to remember; not to practise. If asked to scan that line, you would be justified in doing it thus:

Put ran' | cours in' | the ves' | sel of' | my peace';

or

Put ran' | cours' in | the ves' | sel' of | my peace'.

To continue with the kinds of metre. The iambus (⌣ –) is certainly the commonest metre, the *trochee*[1] (– ⌣) is probably the second commonest metre, in English poetry; trochaic words (*man'ner, mar'shal, ve'ry*) abound in the language.

Once' up | on' a | mid'night | drea'ry.

Then come the feet known as the *anapaest* and the *dactyl*: in *anapaestic* and *dactylic metres*.

The dactyl occurs in many English words: *mer'rily, pot'tery, Ju'lia*. The foot (– ⌣ ⌣) takes its name from the fact that the first of the three syllables is a Greek *daktulos* or finger pointing the way to the other two—or rather, showing the other two the way they are to go.

Mer'rily | mer'rily | shall' I live | now'
Un'der the | blos'som that | hangs' on the | bough';[2]

but the former of these two verses might alternately be scanned:

Mer'rily | mer'rily | shall' I | live' now

or even

Mer'rily | mer'rily | shall' I' | live' now

[1] The *trochaic* metre seems to mean ' running ' metre: ultimately from Greek *trekhein*, to run; compare *trokhos*, a wheel.

[2] Quoted by M. Alderton Pink in Book II of his *An English Course for Schools*. In the ' Merrily . . . ' verses, the alternative scansions are mine.

or

Mer'rily, | mer'rily | shall' I | live now'.

The *anapaest* is the dactyl (– ⏑ ⏑) in reverse (⏑ ⏑ –); indeed, it is sometimes defined as 'a dactyl reversed '(Greek *anapaistos*, struck back).

I am mon'/arch of all'/I surve'y;
My right'/ there is none'/ to dispute';[1]
From the cen' | tre all round' | to the sea'
I am lord' | of the fowl' | and the brute'.

Obviously, there is one other arrangement of two weak syllables and one strong: and that is ⏑ – ⏑ : a foot known as the *amphibrach*, because it is short (Greek *brakhus*) on both sides (*amphi*). An example is *signora* or *prophetic*. But the metre is little used in English.

Those five metres account for most English verse. Variations are effected either by a verse line being shortened or lengthened by one syllable (rarely by two or more) or by the introduction of one of the other four kinds of metrical foot or again by the introduction of certain feet that, in English, never form the basis of a verse line.

Among these 'variety turns', these 'occasional ornaments', are (1) the spondee, – –: introduced to strengthen the sense or the sound of a line or a phrase. Spondees appear in 'It's a *hot day*'—*gold cup*—'*My son* never flinches' ('My' not someone else's). The radical sense of the Greek *spondé* is 'out-pouring'; hence a 'gushing-forth of liquid; a libation' —from *spendein*, to pour out. At religious libations, religious poems were chanted, usually in spondaic metre. In

When I' | consid' | er how' | my light' | is spent'
Ere half' | my days' | in this' | dark world' | and wide'

the fourth foot of the second verse might be stressed, not 'dark world' ' but 'dark' world' '; as a spondee, not as an iamb.

(2) The *molossus*:[2] – – –: employed only in exceptional circumstances:

I', King' John' | do live' | and work' | and reign' | unlov'd'

is a typical blank-verse line (five iambic feet) with a molossus ('I', King' John') displacing the first iamb.

(3) The *tribrach* (⏑ ⏑ ⏑) is literally 'thrice short': Greek *tri*, the combining form that means 'three', 'triply', etc. + *brakhus*, 'short'. This measure is rare in English verse, in that a line containing a tribrach

[1] Note the iambus (⏑ –) at the beginning; 'And my right' would have yielded an anapaest.

[2] The origin is tricky: see my *Name into Word*. As a Molossian mastiff was a large and formidable animal, so a *molossus* is a large, impressive foot. Molossia was a region of ancient Greece.

can usually be scanned in an alternative manner equally acceptable. For instance

Travel you far on, or are you at the farthest?

can be scanned

Tra'vel you | far' on, | or are' | you at' | the far' | thest?

the last syllable being extra-metrical, i.e. beyond the metre, unemphatically additional; or with a final amphibrach:

Tra'vel you | far' on, | or are' | you at' | the far'thest?

or:

Travel you | far' on, | or are' | you at' | the far'thest?

the first foot being regarded as a tribrach (three unaccented syllables).

(4) Less disputable than the tribrach is the *amphimacer*, which, being – ⏑ –, is 'the opposite' of the amphibrach (⏑ – ⏑): the literal meaning of this Greek word being 'long' (*makros*) 'on both sides' (*amphi*).

There are few English words that are amphimacers, for in English a three-syllabled word rarely carries more than one stress. 'Amplified' would, if strongly emphasized, constitute an amphimacer in

Am'plified', | the roar' | arose' | and grew' | and fell'.

(5) In English verse, the other feet consisting of one short syllable with two longs are perhaps even rarer than the amphimacer. The other two combinations, obviously, are – – ⏑ and ⏑ – –, but you need not trouble yourselves with them, for you will find that a line apparently containing ⏑ – – or – ⏑ – or – – ⏑ usually resolves itself more satisfactorily by recourse to the spondee (– –) combined with either trochee (– ⏑) or iambus (⏑ –).

Amphimacers, molossi, tribrachs and the rest belong rather to Greek than to English verse. Certain post-1920 English and American poets appear to use these and other rhythms; in many, the Classical rhythms are more apparent than real; the 'other rhythms' are real enough, but not always very poetic—at least in the traditional sense of *poetic*.

Yet one modernism must be mentioned, even though this is no place for a detailed account. And that is the *sprung rhythm* revived by Gerard Manley Hopkins (1844–89) and popularized by his imitators. This rhythm is 'measured by feet of from one to four (or more) syllables, the stress falling . . . on the first. Thus one stress may immediately follow another, or be separated from the first by one, two, three or more "slack" syllables. Sprung rhythm is nothing more novel than the verse of *Piers*

Plowman or of later poets who have sought the effect of two adjacent stresses,' as George Sampson has noted in his *The Concise Cambridge History of English Literature.*

That was, by the traditionalists, called an irregularity; since about 1930, however, Hopkins's sprung rhythm has been widely accepted.

[1]Certain irregularities, strictly so called, have already been noticed: the addition and the subtraction of a foot, for instance. Semi-irregularities, such as the insertion of a trochee or a spondee or a dactyl into an iambic line, have been noted. Another semi-irregularity is exemplified in broken dialogue, thus:

Banquo: The air is delicate.
Duncan: See, see, our honoured hostess.

Here, the half-lines are combined and scanned thus:

The air′ | is del′ | icate′. | See, see′, | our hon′ | oured ho′stess

—where the final syllable may be part of an amphibrach (⏑ – ⏑) or an extra-metrical syllable tacked on, as it were, to the iambic '-oured host'': the third foot, by the way, could be scanned as a spondee (' See′, see′ '). Broken dialogue often occurs at the conclusion of a long speech, which ends abruptly in a half-line; there, the convention is that the next speaker begins with a half-line. This ' two lines as one ' device is occasionally seen in narrative blank verse.

A far more noticeable irregularity occurs when an entire foot (even with an extra-metrical or, at any rate, additional syllable added thereto) comes at the end of the normal line. Sir Edmund Chambers adduces two examples, one of each kind, from *Macbeth*:

Which he′ | deserves′ | to lose′. | Wheth′er | he was′ | combined′
But let′ | the frame′ | of things′ | disjoint′, | both′ the | worlds′ suff(er),

where the last three syllables may alternatively be scanned as a dactyl (– ⏑ ⏑) or as the rare – – ⏑.

In drama (where the verse line normally consists of five iambuses), especially in Shakespeare and in Beaumont and Fletcher, the attentive reader now and then comes upon a line of only four accents or stresses, thus:

To the self′ | same tone′ | and words′. | Who's here′?;

this might, however, be scanned

To the self′ | same tone′ | and words′. | Who's′ here′?:

[1] The succeeding paragraphs owe much to Sir Edmund Chambers's edition of *Macbeth.*

whence we not incorrectly gain the impression that the scanner would more accurately speak of a verse line containing five accents (the base of a blank-verse line) but only four feet.

Interjections and vocatives (whether single unimportant words or the 'O' sign-posting a vocative) are often, especially in the dramatic poets, ranked as extra-metrical: in scanning, one ignores them, as in these two examples from *Macbeth*:

(1) Was that′ | not no′ | bly done′? | (Ay) and wise′ | ly too′;
(2) *Banquo.* How′ goes | the night′, | (boy)?
Fleance. The moon′ | is down′; | I have′ | not heard′ | the clock′.
Banquo. And she′ | goes down′ | at twelve′ |
Fleance. I take 't′, | 'tis la′ter, | (sir).

In the four-speech example, the first line has to stand alone, dramatic in its brevity, forming as it does the opening of Act II; in the last line ('I take't, 'tis later, sir'), the second foot may be an amphibrach, or the '-er' is to be treated as extra-metrical—too much of a good thing, with 'sir' also non-metrical; but why not the last two speeches forming one verse line of six feet, with the final '-er, sir' an iamb?

EXERCISES

Set A.

1. Do you prefer *measure* or *metre*? How would you use these two terms?
2. What are the various names of
   (*a*) the accented syllable?
   (*b*) the accent itself?
3. Which of the names in 2(*a*) do you prefer? And why?
4. How, apart from rhyme (*not* an essential), do you distinguish verse from prose?
5. What would you say is the decisive factor, the prime essential, of verse?
6. What is a metrical foot?
7. What are the main causes of irregularity in metre—apart from a versifier's deficiencies?
8. What is an iambus, or to give it the English name, iamb? Quote or make up an iambic line of ten syllables.
9. What is an inverted stress? Give an example.
10. Quote, or make up, a verse line consisting of trochees.
11. Why is a *dactyl* so named? Give an example of a dactylic word.
12. What bearing has the literal meaning of *anapaest* on the metre it denotes?
13. Exemplify an amphibrach and an amphimacer.
14. What usefulness does a spondee possess?

15. Define
    (*a*) *tribrach*,
    (*b*) *molossus*; with an example of each.
16. What is *sprung rhythm*? Make up an example—or quote one.
17. What is broken dialogue—and is it confined to Shakespeare?
18. To what extent does pronunciation affect metre?
19. Are words or syllables ever omitted in scansion?

Set B

1. Which metrical feet are exemplified by *manly—manliness—arise—arisen*?
2. Scan
    (*a*) When I saw you last, Rose,
    You were only so high;—
    How fast the time goes!
    (*b*) Of manners gentle, of affections mild;
    In wit, a man; simplicity a child:
    With native humour temp'ring virtuous rage,
    Form'd to delight at once and lash the age.

    and what is the general name for such verse?
    (*c*) A tune and words I've lightly blended
    and fashioned with dexterity;
    a proper song will soon be made
    when with my file I've had a try.
    O love will make my poem please,
    and gild it smoothly to declare
    the lady who is virtue's bride:

    what is the rhyme-scheme of this stanza?
    and why the omission of capital letters at the beginnings of the lines?
    (*d*) Spring, the sweet Spring, is the year's pleasant king;
    Then blooms each thing, then maids dance in a ring.[1]
    (*e*) In this bitter season, I discern the reality
    In the bigness of the black leaves.
    (*f*) Aroint thee, witch! the rump-fed ronyon cries.
    (*g*) His silver skin laced with his golden blood.
    (*h*) Told of an idiot, full of sound and fury.
    (*i*) The multitudinous seas incarnadine.
    (*j*) That look not like the inhabitants o' the earth.
    (*k*) To plague the inventor, this even-handed justice.
    (*l*) { Which smoked with bloody execution
    { Is execution done on Cawdor? Are not

    (In one of these verses, Shakespeare pronounces *execution* with five, in the other with four syllables.)
    (*m*) The earth hath bubbles, as the water has,
    And these are of them. Whither are they vanish'd?
    (*n*) That like a wounded snake drags its slow length along.

    And what is the name for such a line of verse?
    (*o*) Chicken-skin, delicate, white,
    Painted by Carlo Vanloo,
    Loves in a riot of light,
    Roses and vaporous blue.

[1] These two verses exemplify what is known as *internal rhyme*.

(*p*) Chanced it my eye fell aside on a capless bonnetless maiden
Bending with three-pronged fork in a garden uprooting potatoes.

(*q*) Colour, thick as dust, lay
Spattered about the highway—
Colour so bright that one would think
White, blue, cherry-pink
Were made to clutch and drink.

And what is the general name for such verse?

(*r*) The organ's but humming,
Theorbo but thrumming,
The viol and voice
Is but jingle and noise.[1]

(*s*) There are lost words that die and will not die,
Like old, frail shells, worn by the usual sun,
Shape-dimmed with weedy thought, flung out to be
On the bleached verge of the mind's ocean.

3. After scanning, write an appreciation of:

Like marble
with every attribute and quality of marble,
cool, with the purity of stone,
a still
white pattern
as of a sleeping baroque arch
against the warm
living grass.

4. Scan, name the kind of verse exemplified in, and criticize:

And so for ever, o'er this parcel'd globe,
In every language, learned wisdom hath
A moral's close, a maxim's guarantee,
A child's example when he tutors pride,
A sage's proverb if he speak of death,
A preacher's text to warn how riches flee.

5. Name the metre and the stanza form of:

To be vex'd with a trifle or two that I've writ,
Your judgement, at once, and my passion you wrong:
You take that for fact, which will scarce be found wit:
Od's life! must one swear to the truth of a song?

6. Supply the rhymes to

The sun upon the lake is —,
The wild birds hush their —,
The hills have evening's deepest —,
Yet Leonard tarries —.
Now all whom varied toil and —
From home and love divide,
In the calm sunset may —
Each to the loved one's —:

Where every blank except the second from the end and the fourth from the end represents one syllable; the exceptions are words of two syllables.

[1] A good example of bad verse, usually called *doggerel*.

7. Now insert the first word in each verse line of:

— to their mates the wild swans row,
— day they swam apart;
— to the thicket wanders slow
— kind beside the hart.
— woodlark at his partner's side
— his closing song:
— meet whom day and care divide;
— Leonard tarries long!

where all blanks represent words of one syllable, except the third from the end, that being of two syllables.

8. Scan and name the poem-type (the genre) of:

Jenny kiss'd me when we met,
Jumping from the chair she sat in;
Time, you thief, who love to get
Sweets into your list, put that in!
Say I'm weary, say I'm sad,
Say that health and wealth have missed me,
Say I'm growing old, but add
Jenny kiss'd me.

Have you anything to remark of verse-lines 3–4?

9. Cast the following passages into the verse-lines you think they should have:

(*a*) By the pure edge of the sea, the purple anthers of the caper and even the yellow petals of the prickly pear twist in the midday sun. The fresh water dries white on the limestone rock.

(Name the type of poem in which this passage occurs.)

(*b*) They are not yet come back. But I have spoke with one that saw him die: who did report that very frankly he confess'd his treasons, implored your highness' pardon and set forth a deep repentance; nothing in his life became him like the leaving it: he died as one that had been studied in his death to throw away the dearest thing he owned as 'twere a careless trifle.

10. The following blank-verse passage is incorrectly aligned. Redress the errors of alignment.

Thy plenteous joys, wanton in fulness,
Seek to hide themselves in drops of sorrow.
Sons, kinsmen, thanes, and you whose places
Are the nearest, know we will establish
Our estate upon our eldest, Malcolm,
Whom we name hereafter the Prince
of Cumberland; which honour must not
Unaccompanied invest him only,
But signs of nobleness, like stars, shall
Shine on all deservers.

11. What is the full technical description of the metres in the following verse-lines:

(*a*) And yet your beards forbid me to interpret.
(*b*) On St Valentine's day will a good goose lay.
(*c*) All that Nature has is thine!
(*d*) Memory, hither come.
(*e*) Comrades, leave me here a little, while as yet 'tis early morn.

LITERARY APPRECIATION

And How to Read a Set Book

Read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest.—*The Book of Common Prayer.*

Read not to contradict and confute; nor to believe and take for granted; nor to find talk and discourse; but to weigh and consider.—Francis Bacon, ' Of Studies ' (in his *Essays*). (The remark does not apply to the literature of imagination: poetry, the drama, novels and short stories.)

What are the classics but the noblest recorded thoughts of man? They are the only oracles which are not decayed.—H. D. Thoreau, ' Reading ' (in *Walden*).

The use of books for pleasure is the most satisfactory recreation; without having acquired the power of reading for pleasure, none of us can be independent.—Viscount Grey, *The Fallodon Papers* (' Recreation ').

§1. *Appreciation*

As the very word *appreciation*[1] has two senses, the fundamental meaning ' a true estimate or valuation ' and the derivative meaning ' a sympathetic yet critical enjoyment ', so literary appreciation consists of two aspects: a right valuation of a poem, an essay, a story, etc., and a sympathetic understanding and enjoyment of the work or passage under consideration.

Literary appreciation, therefore, is neither merely an understanding (with especial reference to difficult passages) nor yet only an emotional and spiritual response: neither a diligent reading in order to answer ' context ' questions nor a sloppy effusiveness. It is two things in one, two inseparable, complementary estimates and responses: the ability to understand the full meaning and the ability to enjoy, at all points and in its entirety, the beauty of a poem or a drama, an essay or a story.

Much the more important aspect is: enjoyment. Enjoy first, understand afterwards.

Yet to full enjoyment, complete understanding is necessary. Equally true, however, is it to say that complete understanding depends upon full enjoyment.

[1] From Latin *appreciatus*, appraised, or justly though strictly estimated or priced: *ad*, intensive + *pretiare*, to prize (*pretium*, a price).

How, then, are we to compromise? George Sampson has partly supplied the answer:[1]

> The true teacher does not teach, but transmit. What the teacher has to do with lines like—
>
> Breaking the silence of the seas
> Among the farthest Hebrides,
>
> is not to describe the Hebrides or give an account of Wordsworth's visits to Scotland, but to transmit the magic of the utterance, or, at least, to remove anything that may impede the transmission.

I suggest that all teachers do their utmost to learn thoroughly the art[2] of reading aloud; the majority of them can deal satisfactorily with prose, only a small minority satisfactorily with verse. If a teacher simply cannot read, then the best reader in the class should be enlisted. When the class as a whole is seen to enjoy the poem or the essay as an entity, the teacher should heighten that enjoyment by explaining the difficulties and by placing the piece in its cultural setting; briefly and informally and as interestingly as possible. By this I do not exclude the occasional desirability of explanation, by the teacher, of a hard word immediately after, or even, provided the passage be not in verse, during the first reading; but only very occasionally.

> If literature in school is not a delight, if it is not in all senses, a 'recreation', an experience in creative reception, it is a failure. . . . What has to be presented to the children is not a piece of information, or a 'lesson', but a living creation, dateless, timeless, eternal. . . . That is not to say that the teacher is forbidden to talk about the play or the poem; he may do that with great advantage, if he can do it well; but it is altogether subsidiary to his real business, which is to pass on a living spark undimmed. (George Sampson.)

How to compromise? Suppose the class be asked to read Shakespeare's

> Philomel, with melody,
> Sing in our sweet lullaby;
> Lulla, lulla, lullaby; lulla, lulla, lullaby!
> Never harm
> Nor spell nor charm,
> Come our lovely lady nigh;
> So, good night, with lullaby.

Before the reading, perhaps on the day before the reading, the teacher could either write on the blackboard this simple word-list, or informally explain the terms orally:

[1] *English for the English*, 'A Programme, VI, The Induction to Literature'.
[2] It is a difficult art. I myself have failed to master it: regret for my own shortcomings probably explains why I urge its mastery by others.

Philomel: literally 'lover of song' = a nightingale.
lullaby: a song sung to send a baby to sleep; from *lull*, to quieten or soothe. Compare '*Hushaby* baby on the tree-top' from 'to *hush*'.
spell: A magician's enchantment by a mysterious set of spoken words.
charm: a magician's enchantment by song.
nigh: near; in poetry sometimes used after its object, as in 'Come our lovely lady nigh'.

When the class reads the poem, all merely verbal obstacles will have been removed: the gracious melody of the lullaby sings itself into ear and heart and mind. Then, but only then, will the teacher add, 'Those verses occur in Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and "our lovely lady" is Titania, the fairy queen'. He might even tell the story of that Philomel who figures in Greek mythology and, in simple words devoid of erudite technicality, explain the metrical variety and touch upon the melodious simplicity of the passage. The younger the class, the less of matter extraneous to the enjoyment and rudimentary understanding. A boy or girl of 14 or 15 could profit by the treatment I have proposed.

Shakespeare is difficult; but so are Chaucer and Milton; yet all three are frequently set for examination. More: nobody can claim to know much about English literature (much less about the English language) unless he knows something, however little, about those three writers—and at first hand.

To the private student, to the teacher and to the pupil luckily forced to do some private reading, I offer these suggestions, not as a pass-key to the complete understanding and enjoyment of Chaucer, Shakespeare, Milton, hence of other difficult writers, but as an approach that should never fail.

Before Chaucer's *Prologue* or one of the Tales, before a Shakespearean play, before a Book from *Paradise Lost* be read, the student should acquaint himself with a modicum of the general English history of the period and with a brief biography of the poet; and form a general idea of the subject treated, including the factual background of the poem or the play. Not in detail; merely in outline. A teacher will 'say his piece'—introductory, brief and effective—about the metric and the language; the private student will, from the text-book he happens to be using, obtain all he needs.

Then the class can, as a class, read the Prologue, the play,[1] the poem, straight through, simply for the story; so, too, the private student. A second reading, taken more leisurely and for the sake of appreciation, whether of the art or the plot or the character-drawing, will fix the outlines and general nature of the play or the poem. Finally, the teacher and the private student will, in a long-drawn-out third reading, deal with

[1] Members of the class can be cast for the various characters. Not always the same members.

allusions and with the niceties of style and metric; still, however, fanning the flame of enjoyment and refusing to allow the trees, however quaint or remarkable, to obscure the wood.

The nearer we approach to contemporary literature, the fewer the trees, the more rapid and easy the progress. But those teachers and students who imagine that Dickens and Meredith and T. S. Eliot require no preparation are depriving themselves of much intellectual pleasure.

Nevertheless, the primary thing for a teacher and student and pupil to remember is that a poem is to be read as a poem, a play as a play, an essay as an essay, a story (whether novel or short story, whether history or travel) as a story: not as a vehicle of information, but as a source of pleasure and of emotional experience. The subsidiaries, if they are unavoidable, should come later: and finally the spiritual path retrodden. One should leave a writer, not in a mood of 'Never again!' but in the eager hope, 'I must read more of[1] him'.

Most boys and girls find prose easier than poetry to understand and enjoy. Briefly, the situation is this: of those who dislike poetry (I don't include those who never read it) the majority dislike it because they give neither it nor themselves a chance.

Let me quote from L. A. G. Strong's *English for Pleasure* some wise and humorous words from the admirable chapter 'Do You Like Poetry?'

> We have, none of us, any *duty* to like poetry. . . . We can perfectly well go through our lives without even looking at a poem. . . . The man or woman who is completely ignorant of poetry misses one of the greatest sources of strength and happiness to be found in the world. It is like having no ear for music. You cannot blame a person for having no ear for music. You can only sympathize . . . It is the same with poetry. . . .
>
> Next point. Is there anything in the nature of poetry itself which people dislike?
>
> . . . If there is, it is certainly not the rhythm, and it certainly is not the rhyme. It is not the rhythm, because, from a very early age, children love jingles and rhythms which you can beat out easily with your hand. The very name, nursery rhymes, tells us that. . . .
>
> There is nothing, then, in rhyme or rhythm which makes people dislike poetry. Is there anything else?
>
> I think there is—particularly when one is still at school. Some people dislike poetry, not because they do not feel it, but because they do. They feel it deeply, and so they hate above all things having to talk about it in class, or worse of all, having to stand up and read it out, or say it. . . .
>
> It is my belief, after a good many years' experience, that nine out of ten people who say they dislike poetry do not really dislike poetry, but something which, by accident, has got mixed up with poetry in their thoughts.

And whatever else you may do, *don't*, if you're a boy, imagine that it is unmanly to like poetry! Those who tell you that poetry is unmanly

[1] *of* or *by*; not *about*.

are merely such fools or such ignorant rough-necks that they cannot understand or enjoy poetry; because *their* dislike of poetry springs, not from manliness but from inability; they are envious of those who can enjoy and understand. So, if anyone calls you a ' sissy ' because you like poetry, you will know that he is either ' pure ivory above the ears ' or ' mere stone about the heart '. You're unlikely to be a braver man, a more manly man than Sir Philip Sidney or Ben Jonson, Byron or Rupert Brooke, poets and soldiers; you're equally unlikely to prove yourself braver or more manly or more intelligent than General Wolfe or Field-Marshal the Earl Wavell,[1] great generals with a passion for poetry.

Whether it be poetry or prose, you—pupil or private student—possess one sure and easy means to become free of a brotherhood that exacts no fee, imposes no penalties and endows you with something inestimable and invaluable, enduring and indestructible: the ability to share the experiences of the world's greatest minds and noblest spirits. This you can do by the simple process of either putting yourself in the place of the characters concerned or, if there be no human being concerned, putting yourself at the centre of the scene. ' Go right in and pitch! ' Don't eat pea-nuts and ' hot dogs ' on the ' bleachers ', but go in and pitch; don't wear a rosette and whirl a rattle, but join your ' soccer ' team and play with them; don't broil in the sun and merely watch Compton or Morris, Wright or McCool, but bat or bowl with them; don't dream lawn-tennis, but play it; don't watch lazily from the stalls or ' the gods ', but get on the stage and act!

In short, don't fall into the stupidity of treating literature as a spectacle. It is an experience—a set of experiences—in which you are invited to share and in which, unless you're daft, you will be glad to share. By sharing an ancient, a medieval, a modern experience, you render it contemporary and your own. What was strange becomes familiar: what was remote stands at your side: what was impossible is now taken for granted: what was another's is yours, both now and lastingly.

No one is forcing you: it is for you to choose whether you remain ignorant or become human.[2]

§2. *How to Read a ' Set Book '*

Something but not enough has already been said upon this unpleasant subject.

If you go the right way about it, the study of a book set for examination will not be in the least unpleasant; it may turn out to be a considerable

[1] Earl Wavell is also the editor of a very personal and valuable anthology of verse, *Other Men's Flowers*, with delightful introductions and commentaries.

[2] A good habit to form is that of keeping a private note-nook for your favourite passages from prose and verse—for comparisons—for comments in general. (This practice is strongly recommended by the Very Rev. J. W. Dunne, former headmaster of Cotton College and a much experienced teacher of English.)

pleasure—or, at worst, rather like a vigorous game of football or baseball or hockey, with a few bruises, perhaps, but with your brains still your own and, with reasonable care, unaddled; a strenuously enjoyable game.

In most examinations of the standard expected of boys and girls aged 15½–16½, School Certificate, Junior, etc., there are a Shakespearean play; either some representative poem or poems of Chaucer or Milton or Tennyson or an anthology of English or American verse; and a prose writer—e.g., a novel by Scott or Dickens, or a volume of short stories (e.g., Poe, Hawthorne; a selection from various authors), or a volume of essays (many authors or one), or a travel book (Parkman's *The Oregon Trail* or Kinglake's *Eothen*), or part of an historical work by, for example, Macaulay or Prescott.

Let us assume that the teacher or the private student has ensured a brief knowledge of the writer's period (history and literature) and of the historical and social background of the particular work, with a few remarks upon the genre (drama; narrative or lyrical or other verse; the essay; history; etc.): that he has ' cleared the decks for action '.

Shakespeare.[1] No teacher has done his job, no pupil has learnt his, unless the latter emerges with love and admiration for so great a thinker about human destiny, so superb a verbal musician, so skilled a master of dramatic story, so penetrating a prober into the characters of men and women, so realistic a painter of life whether remarkable or ordinary, and so masterly a welder of all these aspects into a magnificently orchestrated whole. The irresistible movement of the action, the sweep and swing of the verse, the cogent immediacy of the prose, the all-embracing sympathy and the kindly understanding: meet these but half-way and you are a thrall for life: yet, by having become a thrall to Shakespeare, you simultaneously become a king in the realm of mind and spirit, yet fellow-citizen in a notable world of humour and striving.

You know how a play is to be approached. After the reading—better, the double reading—for pleasure's sake, you read it for its intellectual benefits. Allusions were made by Shakespeare, not in order to vex schoolboys and schoolgirls, but to invest his matter with point or beauty or richness: if he took all that trouble, can you not go to the less trouble of learning ' just what he meant by it '? The history, whether it forms the basis of the play or is merely mentioned here and there, is astonishingly simple and astonishingly interesting.

' But the language is so difficult, both in the words and in the syntax! ' You will find yourselves becoming gradually and easily accustomed to the syntax; there's nothing mysterious about it! The words[2] need not trouble you: they are explained either in the notes or in a glossary—or in both.

[1] For an introduction, read at least parts of E. A. Lamborn and G. B. Harrison, *Shakespeare: The Man and His Stage.*

[2] The teacher and the private student will doubtless have the sense to procure a copy of Dr C. T. Onions's excellent *A Shakespeare Glossary.*

poetry of a Shakespeare play is very important; still more important ama. The very word *drama*, a direct adoption from Greek, means ig, an action; hence, a developed set of actions involving a number sons and the use of dialogue'. Greek *drăma* comes from *drăn*, to do. rama is doing, action, set in a literary form: the action moves to a natural close. You see the seed—the budding—the full flower—the fading; or, from another angle, you watch a linked sequence of actions begin, take shape and gather speed, reach a climax and, the crisis over, resolve themselves into a new set of circumstances, the play ending with the end of the old set.

If into that chain of events you enter as a participant, you will move with the drama; as it runs its course, you run with it and share its pleasures and its pains, its triumphs and its despairs.

Chaucer or Milton or Tennyson (or Longfellow); or a verse anthology.

Since you are confronted, not with one short poem but with either a long poem or a considerable group of poems, you would be wise to make sure that, before you begin to read, you have understood the information conveyed in my chapter on prosody.

Having done that, you apply the hints given earlier in the present chapter. There is no essential difference between reading Shakespeare and reading Milton or Chaucer, although the latter's (to us) more archaic language may cause the unthinking to think otherwise. Chaucer and Milton are non-dramatic; for that very reason, some people find them easier than Shakespeare to read.

Acquaint yourself with a general idea of Chaucer's or Milton's or Tennyson's life and period.

Read straight through the poem either once or preferably twice: you will understand the story even though you don't understand all the words.

Detailed reading.

A final reading, leisurely and uninterrupted, to restore your sense of proportion and to appreciate the poem(s) as a whole.

If you remember that Chaucer was a man of the world, a successful envoy, the friend of statesmen, poets, artists, scholars; that Milton was a fine scholar, a publicist, and the conqueror of tremendous private difficulties; that Tennyson was far from being the strait-laced bore that certain lesser men have made him out to be; that Longfellow was not, in fact, a 'dope'; that Ben Jonson and Dryden, Pope and Blake, Byron and Shelley, Poe and Whitman, Browning and Swinburne were remarkable persons; that all of these and most other English and American poets were also men of note in other ways: you will then read their poetry with sympathy and hence with understanding.

Prose Authors:

Essayist(s). In the chapter on Composition, something has been said about the essay. The essay is a most agreeable form: there, the writer

is at his easiest, his most personal. To read Addison, Steele, Goldsmith, Lamb, Hazlitt, Leigh Hunt, Dr John Brown, Robert Louis Stevenson, E. V. Lucas, Robert Lynd, Ivor Brown, is not a hardship but a pleasure. You will increase your pleasure in any one essayist if you compare his work with that of another essayist—say Steele with Goldsmith, Lamb with Hazlitt, Leigh Hunt with Stevenson, John with Ivor Brown.

Fiction is what, young or old, we read for pleasure and relaxation. To read it in the course of study should not lessen the pleasure.

Read the story as a story.

Then read it for its revelation of character, its skill in narrative, its descriptive power, its style, its charm.

Lastly for its allusions.

But if, before you read the novel, you read what Walter Raleigh in *The English Novel*, or Harold Williams in *Two Centuries of the Novel*, or some corresponding American literary historian, has to say about the author, you will enjoy your 'set' novel all the more. If the 'set book' happens to be a collection of short stories, read either an account of the general literature of the period in a short history of English literature (e.g., Archibald Strong's or Emile Legouis's) or of American literature, or, if the collection covers a very long period, an account[1] of the short story.

Travel requires no particular comment, except this: acquaint yourself with the geography (especially a map) and the history of the country or countries described.

Biography and Autobiography. Check an autobiography by *Who's Who*, if the person is living; if he is dead, by a biographical dictionary or an encyclopædia or a biography: thus you will be able to control—i.e., understand and enjoy—the factual aspect.

If the biography is of a writer, an artist, a composer, familiarize yourself with at least one work of his, for by so doing you will enrich your appreciation of the subject and your judgement of the biographer.

History. In the same way, read a Life[2] of the historian and you will see why he has emphasized some and omitted other things; why he has taken this attitude or delivered that verdict. Gibbon and Carlyle and Macaulay, Parkman and Motley and Prescott, to mention but six among the many notable historians, are particularly responsive to this treatment.

Another valuable sidelight, which may indeed be a dazzling floods light, can be obtained by reading a brief, up-to-date outline of the particular subject that happens to have been treated by the author of your historical 'set book'. In, e.g. the *Encyclopædia Britannica*. The reading will probably result in an increased respect for 'your' historian as a writer.

[1] All the leading British and American educational publishers issue collections of short stories, many with informative and critical introductions.

[2] Or at least a biographical and critical notice in an encyclopædia or in some comprehensive history of English or American literature.

§3. *A Few General Hints*

1. Do not study up till the last minute. Take two days off before an examination and don't go ' looking something up ' on the morning of the examination.
2. Read the questions slowly and calmly. Decide which you'll answer.
3. Answer the easiest question first; the hardest one is best left to the last, for your brain will then be working at its most efficient and you will have fully adjusted yourself to the situation.
4. Don't ramble; write in a terse, close manner—i.e., close to the subject. Examiners, like all other readers, detest irrelevance.
5. Especially is that true of ' contexts '.
   (*a*) Specify the play or poem or essay, etc., where the passage occurs and name the character speaking or spoken about and the situation in which the remark arises or to which the description, etc., applies.
   (*b*) Briefly state the historical, geographical or literary allusion or reference.
   (*c*) Very briefly explain the obscure word(s) or phrase(s).

   There is always (*a*); sometimes either (*b*) or (*c*) is missing—hardly ever both.

   Usually six lines will suffice. Thus for example:

   > I saw old Autumn in the misty morn
   > Stand shadowless like Silence.

   These are the opening words of Thomas Hood's ode to *Autumn*. Autumn and Silence are personifications.

   On misty mornings, frequent in autumn, no sun-shadow is cast; mist tends to muffle sound.

   Not a long rhapsody upon the gauzy, ethereal beauty of a morning in autumn or in an Indian summer! Merely the salient features. A discriminating examiner would give you an additional ½ mark, or even 1 mark, if you referred to Keats's more famous ode to autumn.
6. Try to leave yourself enough time—say 8 minutes in one and a half hours, 10 in two, 10–15 in two and a half, 15–20 in three—at the end to run quickly over at least some, preferably all of the answers, in order to correct slips of pen and memory. It is a good idea, at the time of your decision which questions you will attempt, to jot down ' 10 ', ' 20 ', ' 30 ', etc., to indicate the merely approximate number of minutes you will devote to each question.

EXERCISES

1. Define *appreciation* both in general and in particular (the literary sense) and show how the etymology bears upon the meaning.

2. At what, primarily, does the reader of literature aim?
3. If you were convalescing at home, after a severe illness, but wished to continue your English studies, how would you tackle a Shakespeare play?
4. Re-tell as a short story any of these Shakespearean plays: *Macbeth*, *The Tempest*, *As You Like It*, *Twelfth Night*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.
5. (*a*) Re-write as an essay the subject-matter of Chaucer's *Prologue*.
   (*b*) As a story, that of any of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*.
6. Tell the story, either of any Book or of the whole of Milton's *Paradise Lost*.
7. What especially appeals to you in the essays of Oliver Goldsmith *or* Charles Lamb *or* William Hazlitt *or* Leigh Hunt?
8. Who is your favourite twentieth century essayist—and why?
9. Do you prefer a prose-and-verse selection of a writer's work to a prose-only or a verse-only selection? If not, which do you like best? And—of course!—why?
10. Set forth in some detail your general impressions of *either* a book of travel *or* a historical work.
11. Put into your own words the reasons why it is so very silly to think that a liking for poetry is either affected or effeminate.
12. Who is your best-liked soldier poet, and what in his work appeals most to you?
13. 'Go right in and pitch!' How does this American colloquialism apply to the reading of literature?
14. Which part of your preparation for the examination in English do you like the least? Explain why.
15. Are you bored by the poetry of Tennyson or Whitman or Longfellow? If so, what precisely is it that bores you in his work?
16. The verse of Rudyard Kipling, Bret Harte, Adam Lindsay Gordon, Robert Service, appeals to many 'he-men' that cannot read less 'hearty' poets. There is an excellent reason for this: can you state it? (If you know the work of only one of these poets, that will do very nicely.)
17. Tell a nervous friend, about to sit for his first public examination, what to do—and not do—before and during an examination, especially in English.
18. Set what you think to be a sensible examination paper on
    (*a*) a poem by Chaucer or Milton or Longfellow or Whittier;
    (*b*) a play by Shakespeare;
    (*c*) a novel by Scott or Dickens or Hawthorne;
    (*d*) essays by Lamb or Hazlitt or Oliver Wendell Holmes;
    (*e*) short stories by Edgar Allan Poe or Washington Irving or Ambrose Bierce or Robert Louis Stevenson or John Galsworthy or H. G. Wells or Henry Lawson.

IN THE MARGIN

Some Books Suggested for Further Reading

IF you have survived the ardours and the dangers of the journey, you should now be able, with a light heart and a high courage, to face the rigours of a School or Leaving Certificate Examination, or a University Junior Examination, or whatever the authorities are pleased to call it in your part of the world. That is, if you have taken the trouble to understand the information and the proposed modes of work I have set before you for consumption, mastication, digestion. You may, however, wish for further information.

English

You have perhaps studied little or no English Language. But you would find that the rest of your work, in history as well as in English, benefits tremendously if you read Ernest Weekley's little book on the English language in ' Benn's Sixpenny Library ' or Logan Pearsall Smith's rather fuller, yet still quite small, book thereon in ' The Home University Library '. An even better book, yet perhaps better left until you have to study English language as a subject, is Henry Bradley's *The Making of English*; if, however, you are leaving school immediately after sitting for School or Leaving Certificate or what-have-you, and are so eccentric as to wish to know something more about the English language, I warmly recommend Pearsall Smith, Henry Bradley, and Otto Jespersen's fuller, slightly more difficult *The Growth and Structure of the English Language*.[1]

Alongside English language and inseparable from it is English literature. At this stage, indeed, you know much more literature than you do language. You may, however, wish to relate your ' set books ' to the literature of the periods in which they occur. Two admirable short histories of English literature are those by Archibald Strong and Emile Legouis. If you desire to know of a more comprehensive history that you can use either for Higher School or Higher Leaving or University Senior or University Entrance or some other examination, or for your own pleasure on leaving school, you can hardly do better than acquire a copy of George Sampson's *The Concise Cambridge History of English Literature*. But, above all, read in literature itself: much less of books about books than of the books themselves. Any of the three histories I have mentioned will serve as a very sound guide to your further reading.

Should you, like myriads of others, wish to know more of English usage, the classic book is H. W. Fowler's *A Dictionary of Modern English Usage*, which could hardly be too highly praised. If you are so

[1] For a very brief, yet—except for the scholar—probably adequate historical sketch of the English language, with an even briefer account of American English, I might perhaps be permitted to mention my *The World of Words*: an introduction to language in general and to English and American in particular.

misguided as to require—in addition, but only in addition—a book that takes into account the influence of the war of 1939–1945, then I must, I fear, direct you to my *Usage and Abusage: A Guide to Good English.* If you have become, or have always been, interested in American usage, you will find all you require in H. W. Horwill's *A Dictionary of Modern American Usage*, in H. L. Mencken's *The American Language* (invaluable also for the history of American English)[1], and in P. G. Perrin's *An Index to English.*

In Book I of this Course you learned how to use a dictionary. The two best pocket dictionaries are *The Little Oxford Dictionary* and *The Merriam-Webster Pocket Dictionary.* For etymologies, however, you will have to go to something bigger, such as *The Concise Oxford Dictionary* or *Chambers's Dictionary* or *Webster's Collegiate Dictionary.*

History and Geography

Doubtless you have discovered for yourselves that you cannot go very far in, nor understand much of, English language and English literature without knowing a very fair amount of English history and at least something of world history. You may have noticed that you cannot profit by history unless you also know a very fair amount of geography. You may even have learnt or been told that there is a fascinating subject called Historical Geography.

Luckily there exists an excellent introduction to historical geography. A very readable, very useful little book entitled *Time and Place*, by Lionel W. Lyde and his able collaborator, Alice Garnett. The late Professor Lyde was a great geographer, an at least adequate historian, a good Classical scholar, a very well-read man. Every school library should possess a copy of *Time and Place*; every teacher of English should use it in class —or, at worst, prevail upon his history and geography colleagues to do so.

All study of modern history, whether British or American, whether European or world history, should be ushered-in by a study, however brief, of Ancient History. At this stage of your growth, you cannot go wrong if you read I. Tenen's *The Ancient World.* As for modern history—well! I shall not presume to tell you what your history teachers can do very much better than I. Yet I should warn you that if you think of reading histories of the modern world—a very sensible thing to do, and far more exciting (and useful) than you will fully realize—you must remember that H. G. Wells's *A Short History of the World*, though most entertaining, is not the last word—that is, the best word—on the subject; at least equally good and equally readable is Hendrik van Loon's *The Story of Mankind.*[2] A much more dependable though more formal and less up-to-date book than either is Oscar Browning's *A Short History of the World.*

[1] The fourth edition (1936) is the definitive one; it has been amplified and brought up to date in *Supplement One* (New York, 1945) and *Supplement Two* (New York, 1948).

[2] Both Wells's and van Loon's books deal with the ancient world too.

A general knowledge of geography is indispensable for the understanding of history. And very helpful in an appreciation of literature. You will understand Shakespeare's *The Tempest* or Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* or Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* or Coleridge's *Kubla Khan* or *The Ancient Mariner* far better if you know the geographical and, of course, the historical background than if you read them in, as it were, a hermetically sealed vacuum.

The story of travel and exploration, so richly worth-while in itself (in its intrinsic value, as we say), bears vitally upon literature; not only upon the classics of travel but upon the novel, upon poetry, upon essays and autobiographies, besides being woven into the very stuff of history; this latter 'bearing' (its extrinsic value) makes of the classics of American literature, no less than of English literature, something richer, something more easily realizable, more real than they would be without this knowledge. For instance, Elizabethan literature without Elizabethan travel and exploration would be a much poorer thing. I suggest that you read such books as James Truslow Adams's *The Epic of America* and Sir Percy Sykes's *A History of Exploration* or J. N. L. Baker's *A History of Geographical Discovery and Exploration*; for the sea, I recommend J. Holland Rose's *Man and the Sea* or V. T. Harlow's *Voyages of the Great Pioneers.*

Ask your geography teacher and your 'English' teacher about geographical and historical backgrounds; I myself aim only to put you upon the right track.

Other Languages

If you cannot travel—most of us can travel little or not at all—you can at least learn other languages and thus become less dogmatically British or less narrowly American. Travel in and exploration of Latin or French broaden the mind and enlarge the understanding. You have not yet reached the stage at which you can very profitably study the history of another language, but it will help you to understand your own or another if you learn something of how language in general, almost any language in particular, begins and grows and changes. In my *The World of Words* you will find sufficient upon these themes; sufficient both for this, the Middle School stage of education in English, and for the next stage, whether you will take it in Higher or Upper School or whether, about to leave school at the age of sixteen or so, you think that you would like to know more about these aspects of language and life.

You may further wish to know what other languages exist, their characters, their inter-relationships. Ask your teacher about this, or go to J. R. Firth's pellucid book, *The Tongues of Men.*

Science

Although Science has done much less for mankind than have the Humanities or, more widely, Religion, Philosophy, Literature and Art, yet nobody, old or young, can form an adequate view of art, history,

literature, and so forth without some knowledge of the nature, theory and history of science. Obviously, the history of Science belongs to the history of civilization. In such series of books as 'Everyman's Library' and 'The Home University Library' there are some of the classics of science and some very readable, short general books upon science as a whole and upon various aspects of science. Also, the lives of certain scientists (Archimedes, Bruno, Galileo, Pasteur, Curie and many others) have been as courageous as that of any soldier, as exciting as that of any explorer. They are soldiers in a cause, explorers of a world of their own.

There are many histories of science; the following are useful:

(1) M. Burr, *Quest and Conquest*
(2) A. P. Rossiter, *The Growth of Science*
(3) Bernard Jaffe, *Science in America*
(4) F. S. Taylor, *Science Past and Present*

—a list that excludes the, for your use, too difficult and too erudite.

EXERCISES

1. Can you understand a dramatist (e.g. Shakespeare) from one play? Can you fully appreciate even that one play without knowing something of the dramatist's life? Obviously not! Do you think that you could understand a dramatist—or a novelist—or a poet—without knowing something of the history in which he shared? State your reasons.
2. Give some account of the voyages of discovery and exploration made in the age of Queen Elizabeth and James I.
3. If you do not know, can you imagine what the influence of these discoveries and explorations must—or, at the least, could—have been upon the literature of the day?
4. 'Raleigh was so good a writer because he was a man of action.' Do you agree? Develop the theme—either for or against.
5. The French Revolution deeply influenced English literature: can you say why and how?
6. What differences have you noticed between the English language of Shakespeare's day (for instance, in Shakespeare) and today?
7. Can you indicate any of the ways in which the war of 1939–1945 has affected the English language *or* the American language? Do you know of any new words or phrases that arose during or were energized or popularized by that war? These are not two questions but one.
8. If you were to meet a friend that, because he had broken his leg and therefore could not play any games during the summer holidays, wished to further his knowledge of English literature and language, could you recommend any books for him to study? We others should like to hear about it too.
9. Not satisfied with that, he later writes to ask you for your advice upon English and American usage. Don't let him down!

10. What do you know about English and American dictionaries?
11. Set forth, in your own words, what you think about the relationship between history and geography.
12. How does a sound knowledge of geography help the reader of literature —or of any books whatsoever?
13. Who was Lionel W. Lyde and which of his books will you find especially useful?
14. If history is necessary to an adequate enjoyment of English, what is the place of Ancient History in that enjoyment?
15. What books of Ancient History have you read and what do you think of them?
16. Can you name any books upon the history of travel and exploration? If so, please do.
17. It has been said that the study and the knowledge of another language are beneficial. Is this true? If true, then in what way?
18. How does anything apparently so remote from English as Science yet concern it intimately?
19. Name three European scientists whose work has notably assisted mankind and mention the most valuable contribution of each of them to civilization.
20. Who, in your opinion, is the greatest
    (*a*) British scientist;
    (*b*) French scientist;
    (*c*) American scientist?
21. Suppose you were asked to name two histories of science, which would they be?
22. Who wrote *The Tongues of Men* and what is the subject?
23. Define either *philology* or *linguistics*. If you cannot do so, consult a dictionary and cast the definition into your own words.

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PROEM[1]

THE older one is—you students have, after all, attained to a quite monumental age—the shorter the preliminary canter one requires before galloping at full stretch down the track of life and this Course in English.

Memory has stepped into a modest position well to the rear of judgement and taste and sensibility,[2] for you are now budding thinkers and potential scholars, or incipient Civil Servants or prospective leaders of some sort or other. At no matter what branch of English you are now working, you must, all the time, employ memory only as a subordinate, not as a principal. It is undeniable that, if you think about and judge and appreciate[3] whatever you are studying, the more easily will you remember. Even those apparently formal subjects, Metric and Rhetorical Terms (with which you have already dealt), must, if you have discerned the psychology, the reasons behind them and in them, now seem astonishingly worth-while, largely because they assisted—or should have assisted—you in your appreciation of literature and in your assessments of men's minds and motives.

Clearly, the chapters on Composition and Appreciation are very important. The next most important chapter is perhaps that entitled ' Links ', for it will, I hope, equip you to do four things:

to pass with confidence from the school to the university;

to enrich, diversify and advance your studies in English—if you wish to do so, and quite independently of whether you are going to a university or not;

to relate your English studies and, more importantly, your pleasure in and profit by English to all the rest of your knowledge, thus making an all-round person of you by endowing you with a conspective as well as a perspective view and by enabling you to see things in their right places, in their due proportions and in their respective values;

and thereby to gain that most precious of all goals: the possession of a proportionate sense of spiritual and intellectual values.[4]

[1] *Proem* is a learnèd word, belonging to the vocabulary of literary erudition. Coming via French from the Greek *prooímion*, ' a prelude ' (an *oimé* or poem; *pro*, ' in advance '), it means a preamble; especially, preliminary observations. Compare *prolegomena*: (in Greek) ' things said beforehand ', hence ' a preamble ': an equally erudite term.

[2] Sensibility is an outmoded but very convenient word for what we nowadays call ' literary and aesthetic sensitiveness '.

[3] In both senses: consult a good etymological dictionary.

[4] Briefly, a scale of values.

Thus will you avoid cynicism—that cheapest form of sophistication. A cynic is 'a man who knows the price of everything, and the value of nothing', as the author of *Lady Windermere's Fan* so acutely remarked. If you have your values right, you will stand a very fair chance of getting everything else right: and you will achieve integrity, which follows naturally and without which one's character is as a cockleshell upon a turbulent sea.

Perhaps you had not visualized English as the primary means to a safe ship and the full life? Without English, you cannot think;[1] without the ability to think and the activity of thinking, you are rudderless—and you fall pitiably short of fullness.

And what a stand-by, this ability to read appreciatively, understandingly, sympathetically! It not only reveals other worlds than ours: it makes a new, much more enjoyable and much more significant world of this one.

[1] I suggest that, very carefully and very thoughtfully, despite your advanced years, you read, even if it involves re-reading, the introductory chapter of Book I and the introductory chapter of Book II in this Course. If you wish to supplement your reading in the thought-expression relationship, I recommend 'Language and Thought: The Mental Aspect of Language' in Louis H. Gray's advanced book, *Foundations of Language*, New York, 1939, a book that also contains two excellent chapters on 'Classification of Languages' (likewise somewhat advanced).

LANGUAGE: GENERAL AND HISTORICAL

§1. *Language Families*

It is impossible to classify the languages of the world in a manner both accurate and comprehensive: the utmost that can be achieved is an approximation. Certain language groups may have disappeared, as we surmise from the fact that, of the languages we know, several families are obviously incomplete.

The entire subject of the pre-history of language and languages is obscure. Whereas some scholars hold that, the continents and islands having once formed a single land-mass, there may once have been a single language, whence all our languages have sprung and increasingly diverged, others more plausibly suggest that originally there existed three or four language-groups, whence sprang the various languages, and that these languages became ever more different, one from another; and a third school thinks that originally there were numerous language-groups, which civilization has tended to reduce in number. The second theory seems to be the most probable.

The following schema could be arranged differently. 'Remnants in Europe', not truly a homogeneous group, might equally well follow Semitic or Hamitic, for Etruscan may be related to either Caucasian or Phoenician, and Basque to Berber. But no grouping satisfies all criteria. The one I propose has an at least considerable degree of probability to recommend it.

THE FAMILIES OF LANGUAGES

I

INDO-EUROPEAN (*or* ARYAN)

Ancient:
Sanskrit
Old Persian

Modern:
Some Indian languages
(Hindi, Bengali, etc.)
Modern Persian
Balto-Slavonic languages
(Russian, Czech, Polish, etc.)
Greek
Latin
(*and its derivatives, the Romance languages:* Italian, French, Spanish, Portuguese, Rumanian, etc.)
Celtic languages
(Gaelic, Welsh, Breton, etc.)
Teutonic languages
(German, Dutch, English, Danish, Norwegian, Swedish, Icelandic, etc.)

2

SEMITIC

Ancient :

Hebrew
(*the language of nearly all the Old Testament, and of the Talmud*)
Phoenician
Assyrian
(*these three were probably, at some time before* 1500 *B.C., members of a common stock; but the nature of the link between* Phoenician *and* Assyrian *is debatable*)
Aramaic
Syriac
Arabic

Modern :

Arabic
Hebrew

3

HAMITIC (*or* NORTH AFRICAN)

Ancient :

Egyptian

Modern :

Coptic
Berber
(*obscurely linked with* Arabic)
Amharic
(*the polite form of* Ethiopic*; spoken in Abyssinia*)
Haus(s)a
(*spoken in the Sudan and farther west, and forming a lingua franca even more important than* Swahili *: see Group* 11)

4

REMNANTS IN EUROPE

Etruscan
(*long since extinct*)
Basque

5

CAUCASIAN

Circassian
Georgian
(*non-inflectional languages, probably linked in pre-history with Group* 7)

6

DRAVIDIAN (*or* SOUTH INDIAN)

Tamil
(*and other survivals from the language spoken in India before the invasion, ca.* 1500 *B.C., by* Aryan-*speaking people*)

7

URAL-ALTAIC

Finnish
Samoyed
Magyar
Turkish
Manchu
Mongol
Japanese
(*this last being latterly influenced by* Chinese)

8

MONOSYLLABIC (*or* SOUTH-EASTERN ASIATIC)

(*called monosyllabic because of the primary characteristic of Chinese words*)

Burmese
Siamese
Tibetan
(*this probably the most ancient*)
Chinese
(*spoken by over four hundred million people;* Ancient Chinese *may have sprung in pre-history from the same source as did Group* 7)

9

MALAY-POLYNESIAN-MELANESIAN

Malay
(*spoken in Malaya, Sumatra, Java, Madagascar*)
Polynesian
(includes Maori)
Melanesian
(*intermediate between the other two; includes* Fijian)

10

AUSTRALIAN, *and* PAPUAN
(*or* NEGRITO)

Of a different stock from Group 9; indeed, Papuan *is probably itself independent of* Australian Aboriginal *and is allied to Group 12.*

11

BANTU (*or* SOUTH AFRICAN)

Swahili
(*the most important language of this group; it has become the lingua franca of all Africa southwards of several degrees north of the Equator*)

12

CENTRAL AFRICAN

A congeries of dialects rather than of languages, with interrelations obscure.

13

AMERINDIAN

The languages not only of the American Indians ('*Red Indians*') *but also of the Indians of Central America* (*especially* Mayan, *the most ancient of these languages*), *and even of South America* (*especially* Tupi, *in Brazil, and* Guarani, *in Paraguay*). *This group is ultimately of the same stock as one or more of the languages in Group 7.*

Much the most important family of languages is the Indo-European or Aryan group,[1] which springs and diverges from the presumed Aryan or Indo-Iranian primitive speech. It falls into two main divisions, the Satem and the Centum, from *satem*, Zend for '100', and Latin *centum* for the same, because the original guttural sounds (hard *c* [= *k*]; hard *g*; *kh*; *gh*) remain hard in the Centum but become sibilants (*s*, *sh*) in the Satem division.

The Satem falls into four sub-divisions:

1. *Aryan* or *Indo-Iranian*, itself consisting of the ancient Sanskrit and the modern languages of India[2] (Hindi, Bengali, etc.), i.e. the Indo-Aryan languages; and of the ancient Zend and Old Persian; Modern Persian descends direct from Old Persian but has a considerable admixture of Arabic words.
2. *Armenian.*
3. *Albanian.*
4. The *Balto-Slavonic* languages: the Baltic include Lettish (spoken in Latvia) and Old Prussian (extinct); the Slavonic include Polish and

[1] For a diagram, see Chapter I of my *The World of Words.*

[2] The *lingua franca* of India is Hindustani, largely based upon Hindi. Midway between Prakrit, the vernacular that corresponds to the literary Sanskrit, and the modern Indian languages stands the original Gypsy stock that has diverged into the various Gypsy dialects (Romany, etc.).

Czech in the west; Serbian—also called Serbo-Croat; and Russian in the east.

The Centum likewise falls into four sub-divisions:

1. *Classical*, whence Modern, *Greek*. It greatly influenced:
2. *Latin*, whence spring the Romance languages: Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, French, Walloon, Rumanian.
3. The *Celtic* languages, dividing into Q Celtic (Erse, Manx, Gaelic), wherein the primitive *kw* sound remains *kw* (= our *q*), whereas in P Celtic (Cymric, Cornish—extinct since the eighteenth century, and Armorican or Breton) this *kw* sound becomes *p*.
4. The *Teutonic* languages, known also as Germanic or Gothonic, which divide into the long-extinct Gothic; Old Norse, whence the modern Scandinavian languages (Norwegian, Swedish, Danish, Icelandic); and the very important West Germanic cluster—High German, Low German, Dutch, Flemish,[1] Frisian, and English, itself branching into British English and American English.

Speaking one or other of the Indo-European languages are all those races, nations, countries which have, throughout the Christian era, led Western civilization and linked it with those of Buddha and Mohammed. The influence upon it from the Semitic family has, in the realm of ethics and religion, been enormous: modern occidental civilization, hence predominantly of the world, represents a blend of Semitic religion, Greek thought, Roman law, French intellectuality, and 'Teutonic' (British, American, German) practicality.

§2. *The English Language: Prologue*

Some idea of the progress of English from Anglo-Saxon days to the sixteenth century may be afforded by a few specimens; for the later period, no specimens are necessary.

Hwaet, we Gar-Dena in geardagum
theodcyninga thrym gefrunon,
hu tha aethelingas ellen fremedon.
Oft Scyld Scefing sceathena threatum
monegum maegthum meodosetla ofteah;
egsode eorl, syththan aerest wearth
feasceaft funden.

(I have used *th*, not the Old English letter—'*th*orn'—representing it.)
Those are the opening lines of *Beowulf*, the one great English epic

[1] Dutch and Flemish are identical in their written form.

poem before *The Faery Queen*. In the alliterative verse rendering by Charles W. Kennedy (Murray Professor of English Literature in Princeton University), we see that beginning rendered into modern English:

> Lo! we have listened to many a lay
> Of the Spear-Danes'[1] fame, their splendor of old,
> Their mighty princes and martial deeds!
> Many a mead-hall[2] Scyld,[3] son of Sceaf,
> Snatched from the forces of savage foes,
> From a friendless foundling, feeble and wretched
> He grew to a terror as time brought change.

Written at about the same time (late tenth century) was *The Battle of Maldon*, which begins thus:

> ..... brocen wurde.
> Het tha hyssa hwaene hors forlaetan,
> feorr afysan, and forth gangan,
> hicgan to handum, and hige godum.
> Tha thaet Offan maeg aerest onfunde,
> thaet se eorl nolde yrhtho getholian:
> he let him tha of handon leofne fleogan
> hafoc with thaes holtes, and to thaere hilde stop.

The late and lamented Gavin Bone versified the passage thus:

> .....got broken.
> He made each warrior lash free his horse.
> He bade them rouse the old might of their hands.
> This the son of Offa took for a token
> of the courage-prick of that whole force.
> (Their cowards would be put in bands.)
> Therefore this chief let the hawk fly wild
> To the open wood—which he bore on his wrist.

Let us pass to two works written late in the fourteenth century: an anonymous narrative ballad, *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* and Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales*. The Fourth Fit (canto or division) of the former opens with these verses, as modernized by M. R. Ridley:

> Now nighs the New Year, and the night passes,
> The dawn drives at the dark, as the dear God bids;

[1] Danish warriors.
[2] Banqueting hall; the chief drink was *mead*, which, made from honey, was an ntoxicant.
[3] *Scyld* (pronounced *Shild*) was the 'mythical founder of the Danish royal ine' (Kennedy).

But wild weathers of the world wakened therefrom,
Clouds cast keenly the cold to the earth,
Bitter the North blew, the naked to bite;
The snow snitered full snart, and snaped the wild——

which, in his admirable prose rendering of the entire poem, reads thus:

And New Year's Day drew near, and the night passed, and day drove hard on the heels of the night. And all the wild weather of the world seemed to be about the castle. There were clouds above that sent their cold breath down to the ground, and there was bitter cold from the north, torturing all ill-clad men. And the snow shivered down bitingly, and pinched all the wild creatures.

Now the opening of the Prologue to *The Canterbury Tales*:

Whan that Aprillë with his shourës soote
The droghte of March hath percëd to the roote,
And bathëd every veyne in swich licour
Of which vertu engendred is the flour;
Whan Zephirus eek with his swetë breeth
Inspirëd hath in every holt and heeth
The tendrë croppës, ...
.....
Thanne longen folk to goon on pilgrimages.

An American scholar, Frank Ernest Hill, has rendered the passage thus:

When April with his showers hath pierced the drought
Of March with sweetness to the very root,
And flooded every vein with liquid power
That of its strength engendereth the flower;
When Zephyr also with his fragrant breath
Hath urged to life in every holt and heath
New tender shoots of green, ...
.....
Then people long on pilgrimage to go.

Finally we may, without need of a rendering, quote a passage from a late sixteenth-century writer, Thomas Lodge, *A Margarite of America*,[1] with the almost unnecessary comment that we are now in the opening period of Modern English:

In the meane while, the newes of these nouelties were spread throw the citie, so that many tooke armes to reuenge the old emperour, who were presently and incontinently slain by the soldiers: in briefe, as in

[1] Edition used: that by G. B. Harrison (1927).

all conflicts, the weake at last went to the wall, and necessitie inforced such as misdeemed of *Arsadachus* proceedings, to allow of them in shew.

§3. *An Historical Sketch of the English Language*[1]

English history in the period between the departure of the Roman legionaries in A.D. 407–410 and the coming of Christianity in 597 is tantalizingly obscure. But soon after 410 the main Teutonic invasions began and before 500 the Teutonic settlers on the British lowlands lost touch with their Continental relations; before 500 they had established their Anglo-Saxon speech as the speech of much of Britain and had driven the ancient Britons and their Celtic speech into Wales. Old English became established ca. 440–450.

The Celtic speech of the Ancient Britons has, except among Celts, made only a small though enduring impression upon English as we know it. ' The net result of modern investigation seems to be that (apart from numerous place-names) only about a dozen words did pass into English from the British aborigines ' (Jespersen), among them being *ass*(?), *bannock*, *binn*, *brock*. Such Celts as remained in England and did not go to Wales had to learn the language of the Teutonic invaders.

Those Teutonic or Germanic settlers spoke dialects belonging to the Gothonic or Teutonic branch of the Indo-European linguistic family. Old English would seem to stand, alongside Frisian, midway between German and Dutch, on the one hand, and the Scandinavian languages (especially Norwegian and Danish) on the other.

But before the Anglo-Saxons came to England, they had begun an adoption that the speakers of the old British language had contemporaneously commenced: the adoption of words from their Roman conquerors: words that, representing everyday activities and objects, were, in the main, ' easy to pronounce and to remember, being of the same general type as the indigenous words, and therefore . . . very soon . . . regarded as part . . . of the native language, indispensable as the things they symbolized ', as Dr Otto Jespersen remarks in that dependable book, *Growth and Structure of the English Language*.[2] Many of these words have disappeared; many remain, especially those for plants and their produce, and such terms as *cook* (L. *coquus*) and *kitchen* (L. *coquina*); *monger*, a merchant, a vendor (L. *mango*); cheap (L. *caupo*, a wine-merchant, via Old English *ceapian*, to barter); *wine* (L. *vinum*); *mill* (L. *molina*); *money* (L. *moneta*).

[1] I have intentionally omitted a portrait of the characteristics of (modern) English; there seems to be no satisfactory consensus of opinion. For an attempt, see my *The World of Words*, Chapter II.

[2] To which I owe so much in this section. Another admirable book is Henry Bradley's *The Making of English*. More advanced is G. H. McKnight & Bert Emsley's *Modern English in the Making*.

The Roman influence on the language, however, was not great. The four greatest influences operating upon English, once Old English had been established by the Anglo-Saxons, were:

the Scandinavian invasions (late eighth to the ninth century);
the Norman Conquest (' 1066 and all that ');
the Renaissance,[1] or the Revival of Learning and Art (Greek and Latin);
the interacting influence of American English and of the various types of ' Colonial ' English, since ca. 1840.

Lest we should seem to be premature, a little more should be said about the settlement of England and the English: an event that not only introduced the English language to Britain but also ' was, perhaps, fraught with greater consequences for the future of the world in general than anything else in history ' (Jespersen): thence sprang the British Empire, whence sprang the American: thence, also, sprang Chaucer and Shakespeare and Milton and Keats; Poe and Whitman.

We do not know precisely who the ' English ' invaders were; Bede's statement—Angles, Saxons, Jutes—may be as dependable as any other. But we do know that as a result of those invasions, Old English (or Anglo-Saxon, as it used to be called) consisted, by A.D. 600 at latest, of three dialects:

(1) The Anglian dialects, in the North; mainly Mercian and Northumbrian.
(2) The Kentish dialect, not unnaturally in what is now Kent.
(3) The Saxon dialects, in the remainder of southern England; especially the Wessex—i.e., West Saxon—dialect.

The Continental language most closely resembling Old English is Frisian. Therefore probably the Frisians were tribally related and contiguous to the English before the latter became the English.

The Christianization of England, from 597 onwards, considerably influenced the language. It must, however, be remembered that, long before conversion to Christianity, the Anglo-Saxons, both on the Continent and in England, knew at least the externals of the new religion. ' From 313 onwards, Christian churches with their sacred vessels and ornaments were well-known objects of pillage to the German invaders of the [Roman] Empire ', as *The Oxford English Dictionary* reminds us. Therefore among the very early adoptions from ecclesiastical Latin—Latin forms of Greek words, in the main—we find the Old English *cirice* or *cyrice*, a church, from Greek *kuriakon* doma,, ' house of the Lord ' (from Gr. *kurios*, a lord)—compare Scottish *kirk* and Dutch *kerk*; *minster*, from Latin *monasterium*; *devil* from *diabolus* (Greek *diabolos*, a slanderer);

[1] Europe as a whole: 1440 (invention of printing)–1610. England: anticipation by Chaucer ca. 1375–1400; general participation, only since the middle 1530's; contributory influence by the great voyagers (ca. 1490–1620).

and *angel* from *angelus* (Gr. *angelos*, a messenger—from heaven). Other loan-words were *apostle* and *disciple*; *priest*, *bishop*, *pope*; *monk*, *nun*, *abbot*; *cowl*, *pall*; *mass*, *shrine*. Mostly short words, easily inflected.

More notably, however, did the speakers of Old English employ the resources of that language, especially in these three ways:

(1) foreign words—*loans* is the short name for them—received an English shape, by the addition of native affixes, as in *preosthad* (modern *priesthood*);
(2) existing native words gained new senses—perhaps the most fertile source of enrichment in any civilized language—as in *tithe* and *sin*, *Easter* and *God* (the ultimate power and personification of *good*);
(3) from native roots or stems, new words were formed—as *heathen* from *haeth*, heathland, and, especially, many compounds, as *laececraeft*, 'leechcraft'—i.e., the practice of medicine.

Few people knew Latin: words from native roots were the obvious solution, the more so in that a language tends to draw upon its own forces before it enlists foreign mercenaries: Old English enlisted only such foreigners as would, by their character, suit the natives.

Admittedly, Old English prose conforms to the general rule that 'a good prose style is everywhere a late development' (Jespersen)—the index to an intellectually and spiritually civilized people.[1] Most of it is unwieldy and long-winded, although Wulfstan occasionally and King Alfred frequently wrote good prose.

But Old English verse, quantitatively small, is qualitatively rich and varied, adult and adroit. It ranges from stirring battle-piece (*The Battle of Maldon*) to equally stirring single combat (Beowulf's fight with Grendel); from terse gnomic verses to the rapt description of spiritual mood and vision; from idyllic utopia to such distilled experience as informs *The Seafarer* and *The Wanderer*: and all of it mature and in language differing from that of prose not merely in the simpler sentence-structure but also in the richer word-forms and the wider choice of words; synonyms abounding. Old English poetry drew upon the three dialects whenever and however it wished to do so. The alliterativeness of that poetry has remained a constant feature of English to this day; not only in its most earthy and racy prose, with its *as busy as a bee*, *rack and ruin*, *by might and main*, *from top to toe*, but also in aphorism (*manners makyth man*) and in such writings as G. K. Chesterton's.[2]

The Scandinavians. On the self-sufficing Old English, which would have won to cultured diversity and civilized power without external inter-

[1] Compare the early, enduring, individually frequent acquisition by the French of a good prose style with the late, fitful and individually rare acquisition by the Germans of such a style. In the whole of German literature there is not a single prose-writer of the stature of Rabelais, Montaigne, Voltaire, Chateaubriand, Michelet, Renan, Gide—nor of the stature of Malory, Sir Thomas Browne, Dryden, Gibbon, Landor, Newman.

[2] See my *Usage and Abusage*: *A Guide to Good English* at 'Alliteration'.

ventions, there pervasively impinged three forces, of which the second helped to change it into Middle English and the third continued throughout the Middle English period[1] and indeed after it:

Scandinavian;
Norman;
a Latin element richer and stronger than that which supervened with the arrival of Christianity.

For over three centuries the English suffered no invasion. About 790, the Danes began a long series of raids, mostly on the coastal towns and villages, and about 850 they began a thorough invasion. At the Peace of Wedmore (878), King Alfred reluctantly ceded to the Danes the region soon to be named the *Danelaw*: land under the jurisdiction, hence the control, of the Danes: some two-thirds of England. The earliest Danish loan-word is '(to) *call*'. Many personal names and many place-names, those ending in *beck*, *by*, *dale*, *thorpe*, *thwaite*, show the Scandinavian preponderance in various parts of England. Not being regarded by the English as complete strangers, the Scandinavians were soon absorbed into the English racial stock and into the English way of life.

Some of the Scandinavian settlers were Norsemen or Norwegians. To attempt to distinguish Norse from Danish loans is usually futile, for most 'Danish and Norwegian forms were at that time either completely or nearly identical' (Jespersen). More: Old English and Old Norse resembled each other so closely that they had very many words in common. As a result, there existed side by side and often for centuries, two slightly different forms of the same word—the one Old English, the other Scandinavian. Time has differentiated, or increased the differentiation of, their meanings, as in *no* (English) and *nay* (Norse), *from* (English) and *fro* (Norse), *-less* (English), as in *nameless*, and *loose* (Norse), *whole* (English) and *hale* (Norse).

Where only one form survives, it is more usually the English, notable exceptions being *hence*, *thence*, *whence*, and *they*, *them*, *their*. Occasionally an English word-form survives with the Norse meaning, as in *dream* and *earl*.

The Danes and Norsemen introduced some naval and military terms, which soon disappeared; many law terms, of which only four—*law*, *by-law*, *crave*, *thrall*—withstood the impact of Norman French; several domestic terms, *steak*, *knife* (probably), *window*;[2] many everyday nouns, adjectives and verbs, such as *fellow* and *husband*, *skin* and *skull*, *root* and *sky*, *skill* and *anger*—*seemly* and *ugly*, *happy* and *wrong*, *odd* and *rotten*—*cast* and *hit*, *die* and *thrive*, *want* and *take*, *scream* and *gape*; probably two pronouns (*same*, *both*) in addition to those already mentioned; the preposition *till* and the conjunction *though*.

[1] Old English: until ca. 1100; Middle English: ca. 1100–1450; then Modern English.

[2] Old Norse *vind-auga*, literally wind-eye; displacing O. E. *eagduru*, eye-door, and *eagthyrel*, eye-hole. Compare *daisy*, O. E. *daeges eage*, day's eye.

In short, most of the Scandinavian loans represent everyday things and everyday actions or processes. But there was another homely, 'practical' influence at work: English and Scandinavians understood most of the others' *words*, but their syntaxes differed: syntactical niceties disappeared, hence the declensions of nouns and the conjugations of verbs came to have fewer forms. Accidence and syntax became comparatively simple in the Danelaw 150–200 years before they did in southern England.

The Normans. The Frenchmen called *Nor*mans were *Norse*men that had overrun and settled in the *Norman*dy-to-be and had adopted (and adapted) French. In 1066 at the Battle of Senlac or Hastings, they defeated the Scandinavianized English and settled in England.

Despite the racial link between the racially admixed English and the racially admixed Normans, the English regarded the Normans as aliens, intruders, undesirables; and the Normans ('From the Normans, Lord deliver us' was a Dark Age prayer) regarded the English as uncouth barbarians, than whom they were, in fact, more cultured and better educated. The Normans changed the character of English social life, English politics, English law, the English language.

The linguistic changes have been acutely discerned and described by a Continentally famous scholar, G. Langenfelt, in *Colloquial English of the Late Middle Ages.*[1]

> 'With the Norman kingship there followed . . . Norman nobles and clerics, and feudalism was introduced . . . Foremost of all changes: the native language lost its social value. English came to be regarded as 'churlish'; the upper ruling classes spoke French. [Norman] French . . . became the language of the Court, of the estate owners, . . . and of the Church, where . . . Latin was also tolerated. . . . French had come like an avalanche, and settled on the population for at least two centuries. Under its ice there were certainly brooks of pure Old English, but they flowed in the lowest social strata. Gaining in power the brooks became rivers, and finally melted the French avalanche. But on that very day, what was left of English presented a most bewildering aspect. Everyone wrote according to his taste, or to his dialect. . . . The character of Middle English as it emerges out of the hubbub of linguistic confusion is essentially a language of the lower classes of society, although later ennobled and adapted,'—as in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* and *The Canterbury Tales,* written long after the hubbub had died—' to literary purposes. . . . The syntax,' at the time of the emergence, ' is generally not to be explained by literature . . .; but by a . . . language spoken originally'—i.e. during the Norman occupation—' only among socially unimportant people.'

The Normans retained the English *king* and *queen,* but enforced *sovereign, crown, reign, realm*; *country, people, nation*; *government* and *state*; *parliament* and *exchequer*; *chancellor* and *minister.*

[1] Published in 1933, at Lund, the most important Scandinavian city of the Middle Ages.

By the strength of its new framework and the efficiency of its machinery, feudalism introduced feudal terms: *feudal* itself and *fief*, *liege* and *vassal*; the ranks of the aristocracy, except *earl* and *lord* (with *lady*); *court* and *courteous*, *fine* and *noble*, *honour* and *glory*; *heraldry* and its vivid vocabulary.

The English armed forces being officered by Normans, and military affairs controlled by them, the army[1] and, less, the navy adopted—or rather, saw foisted upon them—a host of French terms, among them *arms* and *armour*; *war* and *peace*; *battle*, *assault*, *siege*, *march*; *force*, *company*, *guard*; *prison*, *escape*; *enemy*; *officer*, *captain*, *lieutenant*, *sergeant*, *corporal*, *soldier*; *hardy* (audacious) and *gallant* (brave); a *navy*, its *admiral* and his *vessels*.

Religion was, in its policy, its liturgy and services, its higher offices, likewise controlled by the Normans: *religion*, *Saviour*, *Trinity*; *clergy* (the clerics or learnèd men); *abbey*, *cloister*, *altar*, *parish*; *saint* and *friar*; *prayer* and its now merely literary synonym, *orison*; *feast* and *sacrifice*; to *preach* a *sermon*, or *deliver* a *homily*; *rule*, *lesson*, *order*. The clergy's inculcation of moral ideas and ethical principles have endowed English with *save* and *tempt*, *conscience* and *duty*, *virtue* and *vice*, *charity* and *mercy*.

Equally important was the accession of Norman terms into English law, administered—at least by its *judges* and *barristers* and *attorneys*—by Normans. For instance: *court* of *justice*, with its *jury*, *plaintiff* and *defendant*; a *cause*, a *suit*, a *plea* (and to *plead*); to *accuse*, *sue* or *summon*; *felony* and *crime*, *damage* and *injury*; *session* and *assize*; *demesne* and *real estate*, *property* and *tenure*. There are many other words that began their legal or illegal careers during the period when procedure was entirely in French, and even after English was in 1362 declared the official language of the law courts, Law French persisted until 1731, when Parliament tardily abolished it; and among these we notice *case*; *prove*, *oust*; *male* and *female*, *marriage* and *heir*; *petty* and both *puisne* and *puny* (French *puis né*, later born). Such terms as consist of a noun followed by an adjective (e.g., *attorney-general*, *letters patent*) come from Law French. But the English *steal* and *theft* have resisted the competition of the French *purloin* and *larceny*.

Almost as revealing is the master-mistress, landlord-tenant relationship indicated by the following group of Norman loans: *master*, *mistress*, *servant*, *tenant*; *sir* and *madam*; *command* and *obey*; *rich*(*es*) and *poor* (*poverty*); *capital*, *interest*, *rent*; *money* and *cash*.

Sir Walter Scott popularized the fact noticed by a seventeenth-century philologist, that whereas English animals alive remained English, English animals dead, especially when cooked, became uncompromisingly French, the reason being that French *cuisine* immeasurably surpassed English cooking. *Deer* becomes *venison*; *boar*, *swine*—*pork* or, in another form, *bacon*; *sheep*—*mutton*, although *lamb* remains *lamb*; *calf*—*veal*; *ox*, *bull*,

[1] *Army*, of French origin, appeared in general use only in the fifteenth century, the Old English *here*, lit. ' harrying force ', and *fyrd*, ' standing army ', having till then been retained.

cow, *steer*, *heifer*—*beef*. The French influence is further seen in meals, *feast*, *banquet* (fifteenth century), *repast*, *dinner*, *supper*, but there remained the humble English *breakfast*; and in terms used for methods of cooking and for dishes cooked, as *boil* and *fry*, *roast* and *toast*, *soup* and *sausage*, *pasty* and *jelly*, *sauce* and *savoury* and *dainty*.

> The Norman masters were adepts at getting what they wanted and at enjoying what they got: *flowers* and *fruits* were theirs; theirs too were *ease* and *comfort*, *pleasure* and *delight* and *joy*,[1] the English being condescendingly permitted to retain *hope*. In the world of *leisure* and *sport*, the number of French words is very large, for though *chase* never drove out *hunt(ing)*, yet *track* and *scent*, *warren* and *quarry*, *leash* and *falcon*, *brace* and *couple* are French. Of the indoor games, *cards* and *dice*, along with *partner*, *suit*, *trump*, *ace*, are likewise French.[2]

During the Middle Ages, the Normans led the fashion in clothes: *apparel*, *garment*, *dress*, *costume* are French, and so are most of the dress-terms in Chaucer's *Prologue*. So too in art (*art* itself, *beauty*, *ornament*, *colour*, *design*, *figure*) and in architecture (*palace*, *castle*, *chapel*, *manor*, *tower*, *column*, *aisle*, *choir*).

Among the craftsmen and tradesmen, those who had direct contact with the Norman upper classes received French names, as in *tailor*, *butcher*, *mason* (compare *table* and *furniture*), but those who worked more primarily retained their English names: *smith*, *weaver*, *saddler*, the various *-wrights* and *-makers*, *miller*, *baker*, *shepherd*, *fisherman*.

Many non-technical French words were adopted too. Largely because it was fashionable to sprinkle one's speech with French terms—a fashion among tradesmen, hence by infection among others. The few 'Anglo-Saxoners' were opposing the inevitable, for French 'made inroads upon the spoken everyday Early Middle English language, through those many skilled workmen, foreign (mostly French) mercenaries, and, above all, the monks and friars who mixed with the lower classes, thus exposed to pressures from two quarters' (Langenfelt).

This French influence on English speech did not manifest itself immediately after the Norman Conquest: of all the French words grafted on the English stock until the end of the nineteenth century, forty-three per cent. arrived during the period 1250–1400.—Another belief firmly refuted by statistics is that a vast number of French words were adopted during the Restoration.

As we saw while we were glancing at the Scandinavian influence, the conquered English often preserved a word alongside a conqueror's synonym. Where we have an English-French pair, it is noticeable that normally the French word is the more formal and cultured, the English word the more fundamental and democratic and nearer to the nation's heart. Compare

[1] The French skill in psychology balanced the account with *despair*, *pain*, *horror*.

[2] From my *The World of Words*. *Sport*, which is aphetic for *disport* or *desport*, has been reclaimed by the French—as an essentially English word.

the French *cordial* with the English *hearty—aid* with *help—amity* with *friendship—cottage* with *hut—manse* or *mansion* with *house—commence* with *begin*, and *terminate* with *end—nourish* with *feed*, *victuals* with *food*.

Yet English had its way with French, as it has had its way with every other language imposed upon it or enlisted by it. For instance, French words have obeyed the same processes as English words have obeyed; and they have received an English pronunciation, as in *price*, *advice*, *fine*, *grace*, *tower*; English suffixes were added to French stems, as in *faintness* or *companionship*, although French suffixes were, in turn, added to English stems, as in *shepherdess*.

In short, however, it would be true to say that whereas French influence has operated ever since the Conquest, Scandinavian influence ceased abruptly at precisely that point in history.

The Renaissance: the silent, the scholarly invasion by Greek and Latin. As we have seen, the Greek influence upon English began with the ecclesiastical terms that came in with Christianity; the Latin, even earlier, with the Roman occupation. That Latin influence was indirectly continued by the Norman occupation, for Norman, like all other French, is a Romance language, based upon Latin, though almost as much Low, i.e. popular, Latin as Classical Latin. Such a writer as Chaucer continued both the immediate and the remote—Italian as well as French—Latin influence.

But Greek terms in any large quantity, and a considerable direct Latin influence, reached England only in the middle 1530's with the Revival of Learning; more precisely, of Classical learning.

The Renaissance loans from the Classical languages consist mainly, on the one hand, of theological, metaphysical, ethical, logical, psychological, philological and aesthetic terms, and on the other of scientific terms; since the sixteenth century, the emphasis has been upon aesthetic and psychological and, above all, upon scientific and technological terms; nearly all by way of medieval manuscripts and modern books, and very few so generally serviceable, so popular, as the mostly Latin terms that had been introduced centuries earlier.

If we examined the whole of the enormous English vocabulary—by far the richest in the world—we should find almost as many words formed from Greek stems as from Latin. Yet ' the more important words ', i.e. the more popular, ' are Latin, and most of the Greek words have entered into English through Latin, or have, at any rate, been Latinized in spelling and endings before being used in English, so that we have no occasion here to deal separately with the two stocks ' (Jespersen).

The Renaissance re-introduced the English to the Greeks and Romans, whose tremendous linguistic influence upon English has been more powerful in the sixteenth, nineteenth and twentieth centuries than during the seventeenth and eighteenth.

The acceptance of Greek and Latin words had been so much facilitated

by the widespread influence of French that, in many instances, we cannot rigidly separate the Classical, especially the Latin, loans from the French loans: many English words would have taken the same shape whether they came from Latin or from French, as you will readily agree if you consider such words as *consolation*, *infidel*, the adjective *grave*: Latin *consolatio* (genitive-*onis*), *infidelis*, *gravis*; French *consolation*, *infidèle*, *grave*.

When, in the Revival of Learning, Greek and Latin literature arrived in England, they came as a revelation: not as a flash of lightning, but with the steady brilliance of noontide in high summer. These literatures brought old ideas so long forgotten as to be new; as the ideas were eagerly adopted, so were those fascinating words which clothed the ideas. And when those ideas were outgrown, and new, non-Classical ideas gained ground and became general, the educated classes in England as in the rest of Europe drew rather upon the Classical than upon their native vocabulary, simply because they had been so trained in, so nourished with, Greek and Latin that they had formed the habit, now unthinking, of utilizing Greek and Latin whenever they wished to form a new word, as we see most clearly in scientific nomenclature. Many words that look like derivatives from Classical words are modern words coined in the Classic mould—e.g. *eventual*, *annexation*, *fragmentary*, *realism*, *favouritism*, *dentist*, *scientist*, *tourist*. The fact that such words as *scientist*, *suicide*, *vegetarian* would have been deplorable solecisms in Greek or Latin does not render them shocking in English. Nor is there anything shocking in Classical affixes joined to English stems, as in *ex-king*, *intermingle*, *pro-Boers*, *Ruskinite*, *heathenism*, *Londonize*, *talkative*, *eatable*.[1]

The enchantment of the Classics has vastly enriched the English vocabulary, especially that of adjectives and hence of adverbs; Old English had possessed few adjectives. The enrichment can be very clearly seen in the Classical adjectives corresponding to English nouns:

eye	— *ocular*	*son, daughter*	— *filial*
ear	— *aural*	*house*	— *domestic*
nose	— *nasal*	*town*	— *urban*
mouth	— *oral*	*country*	— *rural*
hair	— *capillary, tonsorial*	*sun*	— *solar*
brain	— *intelligent, intellectual*	*moon*	— *lunar*
heart	— *sentimental, cordial*	*star*	— *stellar*
mind	— *mental*	*The Middle Ages*	— *medieval.*

We see it also in the Classical adjectives that have grown up alongside the native and have assumed a different nuance:

fatherly	— *paternal*	*youthful*	— *juvenile*
motherly	— *maternal*	*manly*	— *masculine, virile*

[1] Modified from my *The World of Words*.

earth(l)y	— *terrestrial*	*womanly*	— *feminine*
heavenly	— *celestial*	*kingly*	— *regal*
timely	— *temporal*	*well-born*	— *noble, aristocratic*
true	— *veracious*	*forgetful*	— *oblivious*
untrue	— *false*	*many*	— *numerous*

The influence of the Classical writers upon the vocabulary and syntax of the English writers of ca. 1540–1660 was often unfortunate. Better than from an analysis of those infelicities is the impression to be derived from your own reading—in, say, Quiller-Couch's *The Oxford Book of English Prose*—of a few short passages from, say, Lyly's *Euphues*, Lodge's *Menaphon*, Burton's *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, Clarendon's *History*. But the abuse of latinized words reached its giddiest heights in the more ponderous of Dr Johnson's essays and articles; which is astonishing, for Johnson could write with enviable ease and simplicity. Johnsonese has fallen into ridicule because it lacks the trenchancy and eloquence and point of Gibbon's equally latinized prose. The nineteenth century witnessed a powerful reaction against Johnsonese in particular and a too frequent use of polysyllabic latinisms in general. The reaction was led and strengthened by Scott, Wordsworth, Tennyson and Browning in verse and by Scott, Macaulay, Dickens, Hardy in prose. The movement away from ' Classical ' polysyllabism has continued. Yet the Classical influence upon the English vocabulary and upon English prose rhythms is too strong and indeed too thoroughly naturalized to vanish. Nor would the true lovers of English attempt its banishment; nor yet could the anti-Classics banish it, however hard they tried. Tennyson, Browning, Macaulay benefited immensely by their knowledge of Classical literature. The Classical vocabulary is in fact as ineradicable from the English language as its usefulness, its necessariness, to the expression of the English genius and character are indisputable. Landor and De Quincey, Meredith and Chesterton, Froude and Trevelyan, Samuel Alexander and R. G. Collingwood; Washington Irving and Hawthorne, Poe and Bierce and Cabell, Santayana and T. S. Eliot and the best American essayists: these could not have expressed the British and the American genius and character without that sonorous and eloquent Classical vocabulary and those exquisite Greek and majestic Latin rhythms.

§4. *A Standard Speech Emerges*

More important than the Scandinavian and the Classical invasions, more important in some ways than the Norman Conquest and its linguistic consequences, is the emergence of a standard speech from out the dialectal welter noted, in a quotation from Langenfelt, in the pages on the Norman influence.

Old English had, as we have seen, possessed a standard in its poetry, the poets using the three dialects as they saw fit and building a linguistic convention. But that partial and slightly artificial standard was swept away by the Norman onset and occupation. Three centuries later, there arose a very strong national feeling, a growing sense of social independence. The reigns of Edward I (1272–1307) and Edward III (1327–77)—powerful rulers, both of them—witnessed a steadily, irresistibly growing national consciousness, partly expressed in an ever-growing hostility to the use of French and a correspondingly favourable attitude towards English. ' In the second half of the fourteenth century,' as Professor G. H. McKnight has remarked, ' the English language came once more into its own, into use not only in Parliament and the law courts and in schools, but in the literary productions composed for English cultured society '—as in Langland and Chaucer; in the following century, Malory (†1471) showed English triumphant.

In this revival of English as the language best suited to the English and their governance and to their literature as well as their speech, the English adopted was the East Midland dialect as influenced by the Southern. Professor McKnight[1] has stated the emergence of this modified East Midland dialect thus clearly and neatly:

> The dialect of the East Midland district lay between the Northern and the Southern dialects and, as the Northern differed considerably from the Southern, the Midland served as a midway compromise understandable by all; it formed the speech of Oxford and Cambridge, the two great centres of higher education and of a culture more profound and mellow than that of London; it formed also the dialect of London itself, the centre of the political, official and commercial life of the country. And thus it was the speech of Chaucer, who, the greatest English writer until the sixteenth century . . ., passed most of his life in London; as the dialect spoken at Oxford, it was used by Wycliffe, who discarded his native Yorkshire for this smoother speech; as the dialect of London and hence of the Court, it was used by Gower, who might have been expected to employ his Kentish dialect.

During the next (the fifteenth) century, and thanks very largely to the radiating influence of all those who came into touch with the Court, the East Midland dialect firmly established itself as the right one for self-respecting speakers and for general literary purposes: from being a mode it became a national habit. Yet even during the sixteenth century, when the notable poets and the great dramatists used the East Midland dialect unquestioningly, the language was still far from regularized: grammar was tentative or, among the bolder spirits, experimental; the vocabulary a hotch-potch; the spelling idiosyncratic.

Regular spelling, an orderly syntax, an almost securely established vocabulary came during the approximate period 1660–1780; to this

[1] The following, like the preceding, quotation comes from his *English Words and Their Background.*

salutary work, much was contributed by John Dryden (†1700), Swift and Pope. Towards the end of the eighteenth century, both in Great Britain and in the United States of America, dictionaries and grammar books became a power, making for regularity and conformity; that power had by 1840 become almost a tyranny, exercised by the triumvirate of Samuel Johnson, Lindley Murray and Noah Webster.

§5. *A Note on Other Sources*

> Only Scandinavian, French (at first through the Normans), Latin and, later, Greek have changed the character of the English vocabulary; only French and Latin and, to a much smaller extent, Greek and Scandinavian have modified English syntax and style. Loans from Italian, Spanish, Dutch and German have, in the aggregate, been numerous: but in no important way have these words changed the structure of the English language, nor the syntaxes and styles of Italy, Spain, Holland and Germany[1] modified English style.[2]

Yet[3] an examination of loans from those four countries and from Portugal, Russia, Hungary, Turkey, Arabia, Persia, India, China, Japan, Oceania, South Africa, the Indies East and West, and Amerindia would illuminate the cultural, social, political, commercial relations that have arisen and endured between those countries and the English-speaking countries and peoples.

Italy, land of art and music, has yielded *opera* and *libretto*, *piano* and *tempo* and *adagio*, *alto* and *bass*, *soprano* and *contralto*; *profile*, *miniature*, *fresco*; *cornice*, *corridor*, *colonnade*; *grotto*. Land also of food and wine, Italy has supplied us with *macaroni* and *spaghetti*. To Spain we owe the best *sherry* and *curaçao*, and to Spain, America is indebted for *negro*; Portugal has sent us *port* wine and two birds—the *dodo* and the *emu*. Holland, in addition to a fleet of nautical terms, has through its great painters despatched a number of art terms, notably *sketch*, *landscape*, *maulstick*, *easel*, *stipple*, and certain drinks and dress-materials, such as *hollands*, *brandy*, and *holland*. Russia has introduced us to amenities of *steppe* and *verst*, *samovar* and *vodka*, *knout* and *ukase* and *soviet*. Hungary shares with outsiders her *tokay* and *paprika*. From Arabia has come a large number of terms, including *mufti*, *harem*, *hashish*, *sherbet*, *jerboa*, *mohair*, *azimuth* and *nadir*; from Persia, with its different linguistic family, *bazaar* and *divan* and *shawl*. India has transported *bandannas*, *cheroots*, *calico* and *chintz*, obviously not from her *jungles*. China has blessed the world with *tea* in general, *bohea* and *souchong* and other blends in particular, also with *china* and *silk*. Japan's[4] earliest gift to Europe was the art of

[1] Carlyle fell a victim to German, although he did sometimes break away. *Carlyle teutonicus* gave us that unwanted barbarism, Carlylese.

[2] Re-shaped from my *The World of Words*.

[3] Something more upon this theme will be said in the next chapter.

[4] See especially an essay in my *Words at War: Words at Peace*.

japanning. Australia, with her highly original fauna, has acquainted us with the charms of *kangaroos* and *wallabies*, *dingoes* and *wombats*; New Zealand with her *kiwi* and, as extinct as the dodo, her *moa*. Africa has acquainted us with animals (*chimpanzee*, *gorilla*, *lion*, *gnu*, *zebra*), birds (*ibis*), fruits (*banana* and *yam*), geographical features (*oasis*, *veld* and *karroo*), adornment and accessories (*fez*, *satchel*), commercial products (*morocco*, *paper*, *papyrus*, *gum*, *fustian*). Malaya has enriched the English vocabulary with many words, especially for trees and other plants, fruits and other foods, household implements and fittings: *bamboo*, *upas*, *durian*, *mango*, *paddy*, *rattan*, *sago*, *ketchup*; *caddy*, *gong*, *gutta-percha*, *sarong*. The North American Indian has romanticized philology with *tomahawk* and *totem*, *toboggan* and *wigwam*, *mocassin* and *tepee*, *hominy* and *pemmican*, *caucus* and *mugwump*, *skunk* and *terrapin*, *moose* and *raccoon*. Mexico has comforted us with *cacao*, *chocolate*, *jalap*, *tomato*. The West Indies have provided *hammocks* and *tobacco*, *maize* and *potatoes*, and frightened us with *cannibals* and *hurricanes*. From Peru have come *puma* and *llama*, *jerked* (beef) and *guano*; from Brazil, *jaguar* and *tapir*, *tapioca* and *ipecacuanha*.

English, whether British or American, is omnivorous: it takes its nourishment wherever it may be found, and tends to swallow the exotics whole.

§6. *Influence of the United States upon British English: A Note*

Although there were a few brief impacts before him, James Fenimore Cooper was the first American writer to exercise a considerable and durable influence upon the vocabulary of English. His three most famous novels, *The Last of the Mohicans* (1826), *The Pathfinder* (1840), and *The Deerslayer* (1841), hit very hard an England laid wide open to a breezy romanticism by the novels of Walter Scott; England welcomed also *The Prairie* (1827), *The Water Witch* (1831), *Miles Wallingford* (1844), of which only the first was in his leather-stocking series and tradition; a series that familiarized not only Great Britain but Europe with Indian braves in their *war-paint*, *going on the war-path*, *scalping*, and finally *burying the hatchet* and *smoking the pipe of peace* in a friendly *pow-wow*.

Then came the humourists of the 1860's, '70's, '80's: Artemus Ward; Bret Harte, also a fine writer of short stories and a sympathetic exploiter of the miners' camp; Mark Twain, above all. James Russell Lowell, especially in *The Biglow Papers* (mid-nineteenth century), and Joel Chandler Harris, with his Uncle Remus, Brer Rabbit, the Tar Baby, of the last decade of the nineteenth and the first of the twentieth century, conveyed their humour in dialects—respectively New England and the South—that delighted British readers.

Early in the twentieth century, O. Henry brought Americanisms right

home to Britons in his volumes of short stories, especially *Cabbages and Kings* (1904), *The Four Million* (1906), *The Trimmed Lamp* (1907), *The Voice of the City* (1908) and *Whirligigs* (1910). Since O. Henry's death in 1910, the American writers that have most influenced the English language have probably been Sinclair Lewis, with *Main Street* (1920), *Babbitt* (1922), *Dodsworth* (1929), *Cass Timberlane* (1945) and John Steinbeck—*Pastures of Heaven* (1932), *Of Mice and Men* (1937), *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939), *Cannery Row* (1944).

Since 1918, colloquial and slangy English have, by American, been much more influenced than has Standard English. The American comic stage, the American underworld and detective stories and novels (especially those by Ellery Queen, Damon Runyon, Charles Francis Coe, W. R. Burnett and Raymond Chandler), and American films have inundated Britain and her dominions with non-standard American words and phrases.

§7. *A Silhouette of American English*

Long ago, philologists used to speak of *the American dialect of English*; *American English* has been the preferred designation in the twentieth century; *American* seems likely to supersede it, despite the fact that English and American are far more like than unlike each other.

It is important to remember that the American vocabulary is, all in all, the same as the English vocabulary, the syntax is the same, the two languages are subject to almost the same linguistic changes. Between educated American speech and educated English speech there is, apart from accent, very little difference.

The history of American English is extremely hard to relate, for there are so many factors—so many parallel developments. Seen from the outside, American has four major, numerous minor, varieties: the Eastern, including that of New York and Brooklyn, although many scholars would, with much justification, contend that the speech of the New England states should be differentiated from that of Greater New York; that of the South (exclusive of California and Texas), considerably influenced by the speech of the Negroes; that of the Middle West; and that of the West. The chronological order is: Southern, (North) Eastern, Middle West, West.

Taking American as a whole, we may note a few important influences.

The earliest is that of the English speech of the seventeenth-century settlers. Lowell once pointed out that most of the distinctive features of the New England dialect are survivals of seventeenth-century English, not merely in pronunciation (*critter, figger, ketch, pizen, sartin, varmint*, etc.) but also, though not necessarily from so early as the seventeenth-century, in vocabulary—*bug*, insect; *chore; fall*, autumn; as well as *brag* and *hustle*, *burly* and *homely* (plain-looking), *clodhopper* and *ragamuffin*.

> In the formation of American English there were added to the seventeenth-century form of English many words derived from the languages of the different peoples with whom the English-speaking colonists were brought into contact. First in importance . . . come the words derived from the speech of various Indian tribes. From the Indians were borrowed not only the many geographical names . . ., but names for objects of the plant and animal world indigenous to the new country and names of implements and food preparations of a new kind. (G. H. McKnight, op. cit.)

In Section 5, we have already noted many of these Red Indian loans; to that list, add *hickory* and *canoe* (?), *pone* (bread from maize) and *papoose*, and, a translation, *pale-face*.

From the French, whether of Canada or of Louisiana, have come *chute*, *rapids*, *portage*, *voyageur*; *prairie* and *bayou*, the latter through French from Choctaw; *crevasse* and *levee*; *seep*; *caribou* (North American reindeer); *picayune*, a five-cent piece, hence a trifle, an insignificant person, whence perhaps *piker*, a petty gambler or a small speculator; *chowder*, fresh fish (or clams) most appetizingly stewed with onions, bacon, biscuit—an idea imported by Breton fishermen and a word developed from French *chaudière*, a cauldron.

Spain influenced North America at two widely separated periods: 'the old Colonial days' (ca. 1650–1775) and the Mexican War (1846–48). The earlier period, which includes a Spanish influence that operated via the West Indies, yielded *Creole* (a much misunderstood word), *mulatto*, *quadroon*, *octoroon*; *picaninny*, from *pequeño*, little or small; *calaboose*; *palmetto*; *barbecue* (Spanish *barbacoa*, itself from the native language of Haiti). Between the two influxes, but much closer to the latter, came *stampede*, recorded first as *stampedo* (1834–52) and *stampado* (1837–47) and representing a Mexican sense of Spanish *estampida*, a stamping or an uproar. Partly during but mostly after the Mexican War, American contact with Spanish-speaking inhabitants of Texas, California, Mexico, occasioned familiarity with *coyote* and *bronc(h)o* and *burro* (donkey), *canyon* and *chaparral* (dense, tangled brushwood), *corral* and *adobe*; *ranch*, *sombrero*, *lariat*, *cinch* (originally, the very safe Mexican saddle-girth); *chilli* and *loco* (a dangerous weed that sends horses mad; hence, in slang, 'mad'); *fandango*; *vamoose*, adopted independently in English slang. Much later—the 1880's—American began to accept *marijuana*, a folk-etymological Mexican Spanish re-shaping of Mexican Indian *maranguango* (any intoxicant) to indicate 'Indian hemp', a plant (*cannabis indica*) yielding a powerful and dangerous drug.

In 1626 the Dutch founded New Amsterdam, which in 1664 became New York; New York City and many other towns in New York State even now retain something of that powerful Dutch influence which dominated Society in the City and the State for some two-and-a-half centuries. To the American vocabulary and ethics, the Dutch contributed the political *boss* and the non-political *Santa Claus*; the *sleigh*, the *scows* and the *span*

of horses—compare South African *outspan* and *inspan*; the *stoop* of houses, the *pit* of cherries or peaches; *cole-slaw* (cabbage salad), *cookies* and *crullers* and *waffles*.

Almost two generations later did the German influence begin. Pennsylvania, with its multitudinous coal-mines and iron-smelting works, has been a home-from-home for myriads of Germans ever since about 1720; Germantown, now part of Philadelphia, was founded by thirteen families from Crefeld so long ago as 1683. There are at least thirteen *Germantowns*, five *Germanias*, at least one *Germanton* and one *Germansville*, not forgetting one *Germand* and a *German Mills*, in the United States. Apart from a large number of words for food and drink (*lager*, *rathskeller*; *pretzel*, *schnitzel*, *hamburger*, *leberwurst*, *delicatessen*, etc.), we should especially note *bum*, to beg, *loaf*, to idle, *mucker*, a fanatic (' a sulky person' in German), *fresh*, impudent, and *dumb*, stupid.

Nevertheless, the pioneers could be and often were creative. To enumerate the number of new words for geographical features different from those of Great Britain and Ireland, and of Europe; for different fauna and flora; for new conditions of life; this would be as tedious as here misplaced. Many of those new words and of the new words coined since North America became thoroughly colonized by as early, at least, as 1880, have been accepted by Britons. After a period of linguistic lawlessness, American speech has ceased to draw away from English. To pretend that an educated Englishman cannot pleasurably read Sinclair Lewis, John dos Passos, John Steinbeck, Paul Horgan, Hervey Allen, Kenneth Roberts, and the other leading American novelists is a foolish and puerile jest.

American independence, however, had expressed itself in speech long before it did in literature. All the great early American writers—Washington Irving, Edgar Allan Poe, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Oliver Wendell Holmes, Longfellow—were essentially and consistently English, both by imitation and by conviction. It was only in the middle of the nineteenth century that James Russell Lowell and Walt Whitman began to be independent, truly American, in their writings; but once that movement had commenced, it gathered momentum until ca. 1920.

§8. *Why Languages Change*

There are two main classes of change in language.

I. *As from one language or group of languages to another.*

(i) *The consonant shift*, which, although discovered by Rasmus Rask (†1832), a Danish philologist, is usually called Grimm's Law, from Jacob Grimm (1785–1863), who, one of two famous German philologist brothers, systematically developed it. The shift took place over a period of centuries: and is seen at its best in a comparison of Latin and English. Thus:

(Greek or) Latin { *p*, *t*, *k* } becomes { *f*: compare *pater* with *father*; *th*: compare *tres* with *three*, or *mater*—*mother*; *h*: compare *centum* with *hundred*, or *cornu* with *horn*.[1] }

(= hard *c*)

Moreover, since in the transition from either Greek or Latin, or from the older Sanskrit, to the Gothonic language-group (especially German and English), the following shifts can be, although in fact they are not always, made: *b* to *p* (L. *lubricus*—*slip*), *d* to *t* (L. *duo*—*two*), *f* to *b* (L. *frater*; —*brother*), *g* to *k* (L. *gĕnu*—*knee*), *p* to *b* (L. *pedem*—*foot*), the difference between most Sanskrit or Greek or Latin words, on the one hand, and the German or the English words, on the other, is so great that, unless you are second-naturedly conscious of this consonant-shift, the relationship will escape you. The L. *frater*—Eng. *brother* example is particularly interesting, for the Sanskrit word is *bhrata*: the Latin and English words are cognates.

(ii) *The stress shift*, known as Verner's Law, after the modest, publicity-hating Danish philologist, Karl Verner (1846–96), occurred rather later than the consonant shift. Where previously the stress or accent fell on this or that or the other syllable without apparent reason, a complete revolution placed the stress on the first syllable of the root (the base-element) of a word, as in *consid'erable*, *resist'*, *irresist'ible*, *faith'lessness*, *treach'ery*, *psy'cholog'ical*. The change probably took place for the psychological reason that the root syllable received the accent simply because the root syllable is the most important. In English, however, there has, since the late nineteenth century, been a powerful and increasing tendency, in words of four or more syllables, to stress the third syllable from the end. Thus, in accordance with Verner's Law, we have *abnorm'al* and *enorm'ity*, yet in accordance with English pronunciation we have *abnormal'ity*.

II. *Changes within a language.* In 1821, a Danish scholar, J. H. Bredsdorff, noted that, whether from one language to another or within any given language, there are seven forces that, arising from and implicit in human psychology and human activities, produce or tend to produce change:

1. mishearing a sound or misunderstanding a sense;
2. defective memory;
3. imperfect organs of speech;[2]
4. laziness (especially in enunciation);
5. tendency towards association of ideas and sounds; this links with the influence of analogy and of similarity, whether real or imagined;

[1] These four English words, like those in the ensuing examples, are not to be taken as originating in the respective Latin words, nor even in the corresponding Greek words; the English and the Latin words are cognates, with a common origin in Sanskrit (e.g. *pitr*, father). Cf. Ch. VIII in Edward Sapir, *Language* 1921.

[2] See the illuminating example afforded by *silk*—especially, perhaps, either in *Name into Word* or in *Words at War: Words at Peace*.

6. that desire to be distinct in utterance which causes a neutral sort of syllable or word to become positive or emphatic;
7. the need of expressing new ideas, a need that either modifies a root-word or foists upon it a very different sense.

If you browse in a good etymological dictionary, you will meet examples of all those forces at work. I, therefore, unapologetically pass to certain general considerations.

Should we find, as often we shall, a period rich in linguistic changes, we should inquire into the community's social condition, for, there, exist circumstances favourable to linguistic change, growth, enrichment. ' In the history of English ', as Jespersen once remarked, ' one of the periods most fertile in change is the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries: the wars with France, the Black Death . . . and similar pestilences, insurrections such as those of Wat Tyler and Jack Cade, civil wars like those of the Roses . . . made home-life difficult and unsettled ': a period that forced men to think as well as act, to think deeply, widely, variously: language, the expression of those acts and thoughts, had to be deep and wide and various.

A different yet no less potent fermentation resulted from the combined impacts of the Renaissance—the voyages and discoveries—the defeat of the Armada; that result manifested itself in, but was also heightened by, the magic exhalation and the continuous exhilaration arising from the rhythmic splendour, the verbal magnificence of Marlowe and Shakespeare and Ben Jonson.

Different again was the tremendous mental activity caused by the advance of science in the middle third (and later) of the nineteenth century, with the consequent probing into psychology and sociology. As the sparks flew, so did Tennyson, Browning, Dickens grow young again; so did Meredith and Hardy voice a new life: each and all of these factors and influences produced both a renewal and an enrichment of the language; they also produced certain changes.

But operating from far earlier, and perhaps even yet unfinished, is a vast process of change that has been going on in Britain from the days of King Alfred to the days of King Coal; that process affects the elaborate grammatical systems of Case in noun and pronoun, of Person in the verb, and of Gender, this last at one time including not only noun and pronoun but also the adjective. The explanation does not lie in some magic-wanded *Open, Sesame*'d phonetic law, for phonetic laws, which are nothing but statements of average, observations of predominance, ' formulas of correspondence ', themselves need to be explained. The cause of decay—or, if you prefer, of standardization—in the Old English cases, persons, genders, lies in the top-heavy machinery required to move the corpus of language. Language will not for ever allow itself to be hampered, instead of being facilitated, by a needlessly complicated accidence, especially when that accidence contains numerous irregularities and inconsistences and not a

few ambiguities. Look at the declension-ending *u*. It denoted the nominative singular of either a masculine noun (*sunu*, a son) or a feminine (*duru*, a door), or a masculine or feminine accusative singular or dative singular; of a neuter noun, *u* may indicate a nominative plural or an accusative plural, as in *hofu*. (And, by the way, *duru*, feminine, had a variant in *dor*, neuter, with plural *doru*!)

Old English accidence being an incongruous jumble, confusion ensued. Speakers naturally hesitated about which of two vowels to use at the end of a word: the formerly distinct vowels merged into that one neutral vowel (phonetically ə)which we find in ' *a*bout ' and ' col*our* ', a vowel that could even be omitted without obscuring the meaning of a sentence. The only endings that resisted this rout and confusion were *-es* for the genitive singular and *-as* for the plural (all cases); these have respectively become *'s* and *s* (or in the genitive plural, *s'*). This decay and ultimate disappearance of case-endings, and the corresponding simplification of the person-endings in the conjugation of verbs, illustrate the operation I have elsewhere named ' the principle of ease '.

This ' principle of ease ' has powerfully influenced almost every aspect of language-development. For instance, the related phenomena visible in *squire* for *esquire*, *good morning!* for *I wish* (or *bid*) *you good morning*, *at the grocer's* (shop), *rifle* (rifle gun), *landau* (Landau carriage).

But, for all changes, for the operation of every so-called law, we should remember that sound-changes—*phonetic changes*, as grammarians call them—should not be isolated from other sorts of change, for a living language shows a constant interaction and an inevitable relationship, both between sense and sound, and between sense and syntax.

> Sounds should never be isolated from the words in which they occur, nor words from sentences. No hard and fast boundary can be drawn between phonetic and non-phonetic change. The psychological motives for both kinds of change are the same in many cases, and the way in which both kinds are spread through imitation are absolutely identical.[1]

§9. *Why Words Acquire New Meanings*

The chief reason for the acquisition of new senses by words already existing is the same as that for the acquisition of new words by a living language: language has to keep itself fit for its job: it has to express, adequately, all the new ideas and aspirations, and all the new objects, processes, activities, of mankind. Grasp that, you have grasped a primary duty and a main activity of language. The passion for novelty introduces new words; the principle of conservation retains the old words—but is forced to graft new senses upon those old words.

Changes in sense are often so gradual, yet so far-reaching, that we

[1] Jespersen, *Language: Its Growth, Structure and Origin.*

cannot detect every step in the process. We know the original, we see the latest meaning, but the intermediate step or steps remain obscure. In Old English, *soon* meant 'immediately', it now means 'shortly' (in time); *presently* used to mean 'at present, now', it now means 'very soon'.

Formerly, *meat* denoted 'food' as distinct from 'drink', as in 'It was meat and drink to him', but now it denotes only one particular kind of flesh—the sort known commercially as 'butcher's meat'. More difficult is *glad*, originally 'bright', a sense surviving in the slangy phrase, *to give someone the glad eye*; but now 'momentarily happy'.

Meat exemplifies that phenomenon in language whereby a common noun of very general or rather vague meaning has, perhaps in self-defence, acquired a particular meaning. A better example is afforded by *corn*, originally any cereal or its grain, now maize in the United States, wheat in England, oats in Scotland; maize, too, in Canada and, though now known more usually as *maize*, in Australia and New Zealand. The reason for this divergent particularization of a generality is that *corn* (a cereal) has for centuries been applied to whichever cereal happened to constitute the principal grain crop of a region or of a country. The root-sense of *corn* is 'grain' (L. *granum*, with which, in fact, *corn* is cognate) and that sense survives in *peppercorn*—compare the collective sense of *grain*.

One of the noteworthy processes in the development of meaning, the increasing number and divergence of senses, is that of radiation,[1] of which *radiation* itself forms a simple example: *radiation* (L. *radiare*, to emit *radii* or rays), originally applied to the emission of rays of light, came to designate radial structure, form, arrangement, as though it issued from a sun regarded as a centre of illumination, and thence to any multiple divergence from a central point.

In some of its features, radiation is identical with transference of meaning, the main difference being that whereas radiation is usually multiple, transference may be either singular or several. Transference is often linked with the subject-object relationship, so noticeable in the scheme of things. Take such a word as *opinion*. In Latin, *opinio* meant both 'my opinion of somebody' and 'the opinion held by another of me': in English, *opinion* is 'my opinion of another person', *reputation* is 'the opinion held by another person of me'. Almost every idea, process, activity has two aspects: that of the person, the thing, possessing the idea or exercising the activity; and that of the person, the thing, affected by that idea or activity. Consider *hono(u)r*, which may be that sentiment and that code which keep a man true to his better self—or it may be the respect he inspires in others. Such duality occurs also in L. *amor Dei* and in the English *the love of God*: both the Latin and the English words mean either *our love of God* or *God's love for us*. English has a partial means of avoiding ambiguity: *God's love* means 'God's love for us', and the other sense is conveyed by *our love of God*, or, quite unmistakably, *our love for God*.

[1] Greenough and Kittredge, in *Words and Their Ways*, detail a much more ntricate example, *power*: which I have quoted in *The World of Words*.

Transference occurs also in adjectives: *pitiful* means either 'full of pity, compassionate' (the original sense) or 'contemptible' (better rendered by *pitiable*); *inexpressive* or *unexpressive* means either 'lacking expression, deficient in expression' or 'inexpressible'; *awful* means either 'awe-inspiring' or 'filled with terror' (obsolescent). *Awful*, however, has been so much debased that it now means little more than 'very objectionable', with the result that many careful writers, wishing to convey the idea 'awe-inspiring', spell it *aweful*.

Of those numerous sorts of changes in words which I have not yet mentioned, only two can be treated here; and only briefly. Degradation and elevation.

Degradation is exemplified in *degraded*, which, literally 'moved down a *gradus* or step', hence 'reduced in rank', has come to mean 'evil'; *vulgar*, literally 'belonging to the *vulgus*[1] or the crowd, throng, common herd', now 'debased, low'; likewise, *common*, from signifying 'shared by, open to, all', now tends to mean 'lacking social distinction and aesthetic fastidiousness'; *ordinary*, too, is on the downward slope; compare the English *plain* and the American *homely*, which, from being neutral, have become pejorative.

'A corresponding elevation of meaning has attracted less attention, but has played in the development of language a part hardly less important.'[2] Here are a few examples. *Marshal* originally meant 'an ostler' (*horse*-servant: Old High German *marahscalc*, via French *mareschal*); *chamberlain*, 'one in charge of rooms' (French *chambre*); steward, 'one who looked after pigsties' (*sty-ward*, an enclosure for pigs), rose to be a royal surname, *Stewart*—with variant *Stuart*; *the Court* has been elevated from 'poultry yard' or 'an enclosure' (Latin *cohors*), partly by royal influence and partly by the influence of the Latin *Curia* (the Senate, the Senate House), itself elevated from *curia*, a political and religious division of the Roman people; *splendid* was originally 'bright'—from *splendēre*, to shine; *fame* comes from Latin *fama*, which began by meaning 'gossip' (*fari*, to speak); *pluck*, an animal's entrails, has, like the synonymous *guts*, a person's entrails, been elevated to 'courage', via eighteenth-century pugilistic slang; *precious*, literally 'expensive', now means 'most valuable'—contrast the degradation of *vile*, literally 'cheap—costing but little', and the lesser degradation of *cheap* itself.[3]

EXERCISES

1. How many languages do *you* think there were originally?
2. Connected with 1—Do you think that all the originally existing languages arose simultaneously?

[1] Compare the *Vulgate*, that Latin version of the Bible—*editio vulgata*, publication made common, publication for the *vulgus*—which Jerome prepared in the fourth century A.D.

[2] G. H. McKnight, *English Words and Their Background*.

[3] Of the subjects treated so briefly in this chapter, a fuller treatment occurs in *The World of Words*. For §§ 8, 9, cf. E. H. Sturtevant, *Linguistic Change*, 1917.

In both 1 and 2, develop your replies. Your reasons are far more important than (say) ' three ' or ' Yes '.

3. Draw up a schema or a diagram for the languages of
   (*a*) Asia
   (*b*) North and South America
   (*c*) Malaya + Polynesia + Melanesia.
4. Why is Indo-European the most important language-group?
5. Name the linguistic family to which each of the following languages belongs: Sanskrit, Hebrew, Greek, Latin, English, French, Icelandic, Russian, Japanese, Basque, Choctaw, Tupi, Ancient Egyptian, Arabic.
6. What are the differences that immediately strike you in a comparison of *Beowulf* and *Paradise Lost* (or *The Idylls of the King* or *The Waste Land*)?
7. Why is the history of English so obscure in the fifth and sixth centuries?
8. Can you name any traces of
   (*a*) pre-Conquest Latin influence
   (*b*) Scandinavian influence
   in Modern English?
9. Write an essay upon the influence of the Norman Conquest upon the English language.
10. What terms in theology and philosophy would you attribute to the Revival of Learning?
11. Which do you think the best—*Revival of Learning*; *Renaissance*; *Renascence*; *Enlightenment*—and why?
12. Try to assess the mark left by the Elizabethan and Jacobean navigators and explorers upon English.
13. Now try to assess the influence of American films upon
   (*a*) written English
   (*b*) spoken English.
14. ' Those Puritans who went to America gave to American English an impress that has never been effaced ': discuss this, whether you wonderingly agree or indignantly deny.
15. Can you detect the influence of the eighteenth-century English, Scottish, Irish essayists (Addison, Steele, Johnson, Goldsmith, Mackenzie, and the rest), upon the language of Washington Irving, Edgar Allan Poe, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Oliver Wendell Holmes?
16. Set forth the connection between humour and language.
17. Show briefly the influence of science upon *either* nineteenth-century English *or* nineteenth-century American.
18. To what extent do you think English and American writers have been dazzled by the Greek and Latin Classics?
19. Account very briefly for the rise of
   (*a*) Standard English
   (*b*) Standard American.
20. What is the influence of the named language in the specified country—
   (*a*) Maori in New Zealand
   (*b*) Aboriginal in Australia
   (*c*) Zulu in South Africa
   (*d*) Arabic in Egypt
   (*e*) Red Indian in North America

(*f*) English in India
(*g*) American in France
(*h*) Malayan in England
(*i*) Mexican, West Indian, South American Indian in the United States
(*j*) American in Canada
(*k*) American in Australia
(*l*) Australian in the United States
(*m*) Canadian (whether Indian or French) in the U.S.A.
(*n*) Australian and New Zealand English in the British Isles
(*o*) Chinese and Japanese in (i) The U.S.A.
(*ii*) The (British) Commonwealth of Nations.

21. Trace the Yiddish element in American English.
22. Compare the Dutch with the German influence in American.
23. Contrast the French with the Spanish influence upon the American vocabulary.
24. Tabulate all the reasons of which you can think for changes from one language to another.
25. What is
(*a*) Grimm's,
(*b*) Verner's Law?
26. Write an account of some of the changes in the *forms* of words within any one language (preferably English or American).
27. How do stirring or important events in a nation's history affect its language?
28. How do you account for the fact that the present indicative in English has two forms, the preterite only one?
29. What remarks would you make about
daeges eage—day's eye—daisy;
an ewt—a newt;
. . . . . *goodbye!*
30. What is the principle of ease? With examples.
31. Exemplify (not from the text) degradation and elevation of words.
32. What do you know of the sense-changes in?—
fair; hard; pretty; smooth; slippery; harsh; cunning; boon; bead; shame; odium; doubtful; funny; odd; prove; curious; filthy.
33. Something odd has happened to the following words: can you say what has happened in each instance?
mad; insane; asylum; rum; specious; villain; peasant; boor; churl; magnificent; distinctive; virtue; rustic; pedant; pedestrian; knight; knave; slave.
34. The following words cry to you for pity. If you don't even hear them, their case is hopeless. Comment very briefly upon the misfortune that has overtaken each one of them individually.
terrible, ghastly, dreadful;
murder, holocaust, sacrifice;
Limey, Yank, Pommy.

WORD-HISTORIES OR ETYMOLOGY

§1. *Introductory*

ETYMOLOGY: 'The origin or derivation of a word as shown by its analysis into elements, by pointing out the root or primitive upon which it is formed, or by referring it to an earlier form in its parent language; also, an account setting forth such origin or derivation,[1] often with facts bearing upon the word's relationships; the formal history of a word . . . the branch of philology concerned with etymologies' (*Webster's New International Dictionary*).

Origin: Greek *etumologia*, hence Latin *etymologia*; elements: Greek *etumon* + *logos*, discourse (or description) or word or thought.

ETYMON. 'A primitive or root word' (*Webster's*); i.e. a *root*, a *radical*, a *stem*. From Greek *etumos*, 'true', itself from *eteos*, 'real'.

'Etymology takes no account of vowels and very little of consonants', to translate Voltaire's famous epigram.

VOLTAIRE went thus far in scepticism. But no farther than, in the opposite direction, those who agree with a famous German scholar's pronouncement in 1910, 'Nowadays etymology has got past the period of more or less "happy thoughts" and has developed into a science in which, exactly as in any other science, serious persevering work must lead to reliable results'.

Personal taste is still potent on the one hand; on the other, phonological pedantry should not be allowed to browbeat good sense. The great German etymologist, Kluge, once declared that the English *nut* and its cognate[2] the German *Nuss* are 'neither originally akin to[2] nor borrowed from Latin *nux*': thereon, the equally great Danish philologist, Otto Jespersen (†1943), comments, 'We have here in two related languages (English and Latin) two words resembling each other not only in sound, but in stem-formation and gender, and possessing exactly the same signification, which is as concrete and definite as possible. And yet we are bidden to keep them asunder!' Whenever you encounter that kind of pedantry, that sort of linguistic lunacy, shrug your shoulders and let

[1] *Derivation* tends to be increasingly confined to the '*horse* comes from Old English *hors*' or '*horsey* from *horse*' type of etymology; *origin* to the '*host*, an army, comes from Latin *hostis*' type. Yet both of these examples are of origin, and *horse* may have its ultimate source in the Sanskrit word that has yielded Latin *equus*, a horse.

[2] A *cognate* is a word that is akin to another, not derived from it; both of two cognates derive from a common stock; that common stock may, for instance, be Latin or Greek or Sanskrit.

good-sense, aided by sane scholarship, guide you, as it always guided Jespersen.

But in saying that, I am not inciting you to be philological anarchists. Far from it. To quote again from Jespersen's fascinating book, *Language: Its Nature, Development and Origin*, 'Facts weigh more than fancies, and whoever wants to establish the etymology of a word must first ascertain all the historical facts available with regard to the place and time of its rise, its earliest signification and syntactic constructions, its diffusion, the synonyms it has ousted, etc.' Nor is that all. In his *An Etymological Dictionary of the English Language*, Skeat laid down ten canons, or rules, for the would-be etymologist to observe.

You, however, are very much less concerned with the canons than with the uses of etymology. Before you can adequately state its uses, you must see how it works, for only thus can you determine what it is.

§2. *Echoism*

All words are divided into

(i) echo words (words that echo), which formerly were called onomatopoeic words (literally, name-making words);

(ii) non-echoic words, which, far more numerous, can be solved either by examination of the form or shape of the word or by recourse to semantics—or by the combination of both methods.

Semantics[1] or *semasiology*, the former now the usual term, is 'the science of the meanings, or of the sense-developments, of words; the explanation of the development and changes of the meanings of words'. *Semantics* comes from Greek *ta sēmantika*, 'the significant things', from *sēmainein*, 'to mean, to signify', itself from *sēma*, 'a sign'; *semasiology*, from *sēmasia*, 'significance, meaning'+*logos*, 'thought, discourse, word'. The adjective is *semantic*.

> Echoic words may have quite as long a history as the others, yet that history is far easier to trace; for echoic words show a close relation of sense to sound, whereas non-echoic words do not show any such relationship. In echoic words there is 'a natural correspondence between sound and sense' (Jespersen) and these words acquire their meaning by sound-symbolism; that is, their sound symbolizes—represents or recalls or suggests—the sense. That certain sounds are not symbolic of sense in all words is not to say that these sounds are not symbolic in *some* words (those words which *are* echoic).[2]

Of echoic words, the simplest class is that in which there is direct imitation, as in the *clink* of glass, the *jingle* of coins, the *clang* of chains or of metal against metal, the *tinkle* of a small bell, the *bang* of a gun,

[1] For treatment, see § 5: Semantics. [2] From my *The World of Words*.

the *boom* of cannon, the *rumble* of thunder (and *thunder* itself), the *bubble* of gushing water, the *splash* of water falling onto a hard surface or of a heavy object falling into water, the *seething* of water on the boil, the *sizzle* of frying bacon or sausages, the *whistle* of the wind, the *rustle* of leaves (compare the equally echoic *susurrus* of Latin), the *crunch* of feet upon snow, the *murmur* discernible in a shell—or of far, quiet voices, the *miaow* of a cat, the *yap* of a small, *bow-wow* of a middling, *woof-woof* of a very big dog, the *moo* of a cow, the *roar* of a lion, the *hiss* of a snake ; the *snore, snort, snigger, sneeze, grunt, grumble, moan* of human beings. Continuity rather than individuality of sound is echoed in such terms as *chatter* and *jabber, clatter* and *rattle.*

Almost as obviously echoic is that class of words in which the sound becomes the name of its producer. We see this phenomenon very clearly in the names of birds: the English *cuckoo* and *peewit*, the American *whippoorwill* (*Whip-poor-Will*) and the insect *katydid* (*Katy did! Katy did!*), the *morepork* (or *mopoke*)—in Australia and Tasmania, a nightjar, but in New Zealand a small owl.

As you very well know, sound is produced by vibrations, and you hear sounds precisely because of the impression made on your ears by those vibrations; the kind of impression causes you to name the sound *clash* or *crash, crack* or *smack, bubble* or *sizzle*, or *splash.* ' Human actions may therefore be denoted by such words as to *bang* a door, or (with slighter sounds) to *tap* or *rap* at a door ' (Jespersen). Sounds less loud and less distinct are connoted, rather than denoted, by *l*, whether by *fl*, as in *flicker, flit, flow, flutter, flurry*;[1] *gl*, as in *glide*; *pl*, as in *ripple*; *sl*, as in *slip, slide.*

Such symbolism may be applied, not only to actions and processes but also to physical states or phenomena. There is, for instance, an obvious association, both between light, on the one hand, and shrillness (produced by very rapid vibrations), and between darkness and low tones: compare *glitter* and *gleam* and *glisten* with *murky, obscure* and *gloom.*

Gloom reminds us that from such associations ' it is no far cry to words for corresponding states of mind ' (Jespersen). A *grumpy* person *grumbles.* There is, in fact, a large group of dull-*u* words expressive of discontent, dislike, distaste, disgust or outright contempt or scorn. You have only to think upon both the sound and the sense (that is, if you succeed in thinking of them separately) of *muddle, bungle, blunder, clumsy*; of *muck, mud* and *slush* (compare French *la boue*); of *juggins* and *muggins*, ' *dumb-bell* ' and *dunderhead*; *humbug*; *humdrum*; and you will see how close the association may be.

But no language employs sound-symbolism (i.e. echo words) to its full extent; far from it. Every language contains very numerous words devoid of this kind of symbolism—far more than possess it. Every language,

[1] In *flurry* you witness another ' echo ' at work: compare *flurry* with *hurry* and *scurry.*

moreover, contains many exceptions or even contradictions. In English, short *i* (as in *pip*; contrast *pop*!) tends to denote, or at the least to connote, smallness of some sort or other, as in *bit* and *whit*, *chip* and *tip*, *pin* and *thin* and *slim*, *imp* and *kid* and *piccaninny*, and *little* itself: yet a synonym of *little* is *small*, the opposite of *thin* is *thick*, and one of the synonyms of large is *big*.

Certain words that, in their original forms, exemplified the operation of sound-symbolism, certain words originally as echoic as they could be, have become less so—or have ceased to be so at all. Partial loss of echoism occurs in the bird-name *crow*, which, by a sound-change (learnedly: phonetic development), has degenerated from *crawe*; a sense-development has rendered the Latin *pipio*, ' any bird that cries *peep* ', to become restricted to a *pigeon*.

Since the sixteenth century, echo words have increased in number, partly because, as Jespersen has remarked, ' life moves at a more rapid rate, and people are less tied down to tradition . . ., consequently they are more apt to create and adopt new words of this particular type, which are felt . . . to be significant and expressive ', as, for instance, in to *biff* and *slosh*, to *skedaddle*, *slush* and *tosh* (nonsense) and *guff* (idle talk).

§3. *Etymology*

Echoism is a simple form of etymology. The more difficult but usual sense of *etymology* is applied to all the non-echoic words.

At the outset, let us remember Jespersen's declaration that ' Nowhere have I found any reason to accept the theory that sound-changes always take place according to rigorous . . . laws admitting no exceptions '. There are numerous instances of the etymological descent being clear, despite the rupture of the so-called phonetic laws: for example, Gothic *azgo* is quite clearly connected with Danish *aske*, German *Asche*, English *ash*; modern English *pebble* with old English *papol*; Latin *cor*, ' heart ' —compare French *coeur* and English *cordial*—with Greek *kardia* (whence *cardiac*). Indeed, philologists would do well to forget ' the sanctity of phonetic laws ' and speak of ' phonetic and philological generalizations ' or, if they wish, of ' phonetic and philological rules '—providing they remember that these rules admit of many exceptions.

Pursuance of these ' rules ' is insufficient. In etymology, hard work, even when allied to erudition, is insufficient: imagination and good sense and acumen also are required. If you, still learners (aren't we all?), apply vision and good sense to your delvings into etymology, you will gain much more than a mere increase of knowledge: you will widen your intellectual horizon, strengthen your powers of aesthetic appreciation, and vastly extend your interest both in your own subject, English, and in history, geography, science, art and many other subjects.

Occasionally you will find examples of a linguistic tendency midway between the simplicities of echoism and the complexities of such etymology as involves Ancient Greek, Hebrew, Sanskrit and the problematic, presupposed proto-Aryan.

The most famous examples of 'portmanteau-words' or 'portmanteaus' or, as Americans and now many others call them, 'blends' come in the works of Lewis Carroll, who, in *Alice through the Looking-Glass* (1872), wrote 'Well, "slithy" means "lithe and slimy". . . . You see it's like a portmanteau—there are two meanings packed up into one word', and '"Mimsy" is "flimsy and miserable" (there's another portmanteau for you)'. Lewis Carroll was not the first to use them, but he was the first to coin them deliberately, other examples being *galumph*, 'to gallop triumphantly', and *chortle*, 'to chuckle and snort', and *frabjous*, 'fair and joyous', or 'fair (=fine) and gorgeous', the original being 'O frabjous day'. Jespersen cites some less famous blends, such as *flush=flash+blush* and *twirl=twist+whirl*, not to mention such slangy 'portmanteaus' as *brunch=breakfast+lunch* and *tinner=tea+dinner*, for the names of meals whereat, in one sitting, two meal-hours are merged.

Etymology can invest even *telegraphs*, *telegrams* and *telephones* with romance; *microphone* and *megaphone* with a richer significance; and *comet* with a touch of poetry and a sidelight on folklore, *comet* being 'the long-haired one', a lovely visitant that, with hair (Latin *comes*, genitive *cometis*) streaming back over her shoulders, fleetly traverses the vast interstellar spaces. In brief, etymology 'illuminates history—the history of physical progress or mental improvement, spiritual values; the history of common things, the story of things uncommon';[1] it shows thought and expression, mind and artistry, marching hand-locked from Adam to the atom bomb—and beyond. From etymology, the dilettante extracts fun; from etymology, the student derives many a thrill; from etymology, both the word-lover and, so far as he can be differentiated, the respecter of language win to a vision of man's indefeasible mind and spirit grappling with and finally overcoming every obstacle and every peril.

§4. *Folk Etymology*

The term *folk etymology* applies in two ways:

(i) to those foreign words and phrases which receive a wholly English (or American) dress, as when the English soldier converted *Ploegstert* into *Plug Street*, the American into *Plow Street*, or when the English sailor renames the *Bellerophon* the *Billy Ruffian*, or the American renames the *Miantonomoh* the *My Aunt Won't Know You*, a process going also by the name of *Hobson-Jobson*, from the fact that British soldiers in India, hearing Mohammedans, in the religious procession

[1] From my *The World of Words*.

of the Moharram, cry *Ya Hasan! Ya Hosain!*, converted that rhythmic wail into the reassuring English names and sounds, *Hobson-Jobson*;

(ii) the general tendency, among the ignorant (not necessarily the illiterate), to give strange words a familiar, sometimes a humorous form—to explain the unknown by the known, as when *asparagus*, so oddly Latin in its appearance, becomes *sparrowgrass*, or when the Middle English *botery*, although it has nothing to do with butter, much with bottles, became *buttery*, or when the Old English *aecern*, by a foolish association with *corn*, became *acorn*, or when American pioneers, confronted with the Algonquin (Red Indian) *muskwessu*, ingeniously changed it to *musk-rat*, which, strictly, is not a rat at all.

A particularly good example of folk-etymology is afforded by *Welsh rabbit* (toasted cheese on—usually, toasted—bread), which first appears in literature in C. Johnston's lively novel, *Chrysal* (1768). The folk-etymological *Welsh rarebit* is a nineteenth-century corruption, and the twentieth-century *buck rarebit* a monstrosity, for *Welsh rabbit* is as much an indivisible term as the English *Bombay duck*, which happens to be a fish; as the American *Hudson seal*, which happens to be musk-rat fur; and as the Australian *Colonial goose* for a leg of mutton.

§5. *Semantics*

Whereas *phonetics* or *phonology* is the science of sound, *semantics* is the science—rather, the art—of meanings, meanings in themselves: and meanings in relation to the senses from which they derive and the senses to which, in their turn, they lead. It is psychological etymology, dependent upon a wide knowledge of life and of the world; upon a considerable erudition; and upon an alert and sympathetic mind capable of seeing the wood as well as the trees.

Until you are better equipped, you yourselves will not indulge in semantics, a most intoxicating beverage: once indulge, and you are lost! But you will rightly wish to know how the etymologists enlist its aid. Here are two examples, the one from Professor Ernest Weekley's *An Etymological Dictionary of Modern English*, the most readable etymological dictionary yet published, the other from my self-anthology, *A Covey of Partridge*.

'The pips on cards or dice have nothing to do with apple pips. The oldest spelling is peeps', which occurs in Shakespeare. 'In the Germanic languages they are called "eyes", and in the Romance languages "points"; and the Romance derivations of Latin *punctus*, point, also mean "*peep* of day". Hence the *peeps* are connected with the verb to *peep*.' The seventeenth- and eighteenth-century underworld used to call the human eyes *peepers* (as American slang still does).

Of the *Tarot* pack of 78 playing cards, only 26—the number in excess of the 52 cards of the ordinary pack—are essentially Tarot. Of these 26, 22 are trumps—the specific *tarots*; a few represent powers friendly to man; the rest of the 22, powers unfriendly or, worse, actively hostile and dangerous. *The Oxford English Dictionary* compares the Italian *tarocchi* (which has a presumed singular *tarrocco*, whence the German *Tarock*) and implies that the English *tarot* has been adopted from French *tarot*, of which the Old French shape is *tarau* or *tarault*. An older English form is *taroc* (or *tarock* or *tarok*), which probably comes from the Italian; Florio's Italian-English Dictionary (1611) has '*Tarocchi*, a kind of playing cards called Tarocks or Terrestrial *Triumphs*'. The best dictionaries (*The Oxford English Dictionary*, 'Webster', 'Skeat', 'Weekley') all dismiss *tarot* as being—apart from the earlier instances in French and Italian—as 'of unknown or obscure origin'. But that obscurity struck me as improbable: for these playing cards had been used in Italy since the fourteenth-century, and for centuries they have been used, originally and still mainly, by the Gypsies, in connection with fortune-telling. The *Gypsies* were at first known in England as *Egyptians*; the latter word became corrupted. These nomadic tribes had passed through, probably they had long sojourned in, Egypt on their centuried emigration from India, the land of their origin. (The Romany and the Hindustani words for 'water' are the same: *pani* in the former; *pahni* in the latter.) I therefore tried the Hindi, Hindustani and other Indian dictionaries for a clue to *tarot*. Without success. The next step therefore was to try a dictionary of Egyptian—not the Egyptian variety of Arabic, but the pure, the original Egyptian. In Wallis Budge's *An Egyptian Hieroglyphic Dictionary*, and with not the least trouble, I found *Tar*, Proper Name[1] of a certain mythological fiend, and *taru*, 'fiends, demons, devils, enemies'. If you recall Florio's Terrestrial Triumphs and compare the Powers and Principalities, the Thrones and Dominions, of the medieval hierarchy of angels and remember that the supranormal powers, so many of them maleficent, of the Tarot pack of cards are allusively mentioned in Charles Williams's 'supernatural' novel, *The Greater Trumps* (1932), you will readily, I think, grant that I was at the end of my search, thanks alike to the assistance rendered by semantics and to my refusal to rest content with the summary dismissal of the word by the professional philologists.

That solution of the *Tarot* mystery may serve to show you that a knowledge of geography and history can prove uncommonly useful. Indeed, Skeat's second canon[2] is precisely this: 'Observe history and geography; borrowings are due to actual contact'. The case might be put far more emphatically, for several thousand English and American words come from Proper Names—the names of persons (history) and places (geography). You might look up *serge* and *silk*, *calico* and *cambric*, *lawn* and *muslin*; *jovial*, *mercurial*, *saturnine*; *macadamize* and *listerize*;

[1] Probably '*the* fiend'—'fiend *par excellence*'. [2] Cf. § 1, near end.

shaddock, peach, quince; in any good etymological dictionary, e.g. *The Concise Oxford Dictionary*, or *Webster's Collegiate*: you will, I think, be amazed by the wealth and variety of interest they comport, the historical tales they tell, the geographical pictures they paint, the signposts to civilization they constitute. To be egotistic, I have, myself, been so deeply impressed with the commentary spoken by language upon the technical, intellectual and spiritual journeyings of mankind that I set myself to write, rather than compile, a dictionary of common words (nouns, adjectives, verbs) originated by the names of persons and places, whether those persons and those places be historical or mythological or imaginary; and whereas Professor Weekley entitled his essays upon this subject *Words and Names*, I have called my dictionary *Name into Word*.[1]

History has, in fact, been illuminated by a study of language. Without going into a detailed discussion of this vast field, I shall merely refer you to Owen Barfield's fascinating book, *History in English Words*, which deals mainly with European and British history. Many sidelights are thrown upon American history by H. L. Mencken in his monumental *The American Language*, where you will find entertainingly instructive sidelights upon such words as *caucus* and *mugwump, bunkum* and *Yankee, O.K.* and *stunt*. South African history is aided by the etymologies of such words as *veld* and *springbok*; Australian by, e.g., *warrigal* and *wowser*; New Zealand's by *Maori* and *pakeha*; India's and Pakistan's by *mogul* and *rajah, cashmere* and *trichinopoly*.

One could go on indefinitely, improving one's general knowledge and mental capacity by improving one's acquaintance with the histories of words. To this exiguous sketch of an endless subject I can merely add that, if you wish to continue your initiation into the attractions of etymology, you will obtain a sufficient introduction (no more) in 'The Fun of Word History' in *The World of Words*.

Note:—For semantics, see also E. H. Sturtevant, *Linguistic Change*.

EXERCISES

1. Write your own definition of Etymology and state the origin and later history of *etymology*.
2. Who were:
   (*a*) Voltaire
   (*b*) Jespersen
   (*c*) Skeat
   (*d*) Kluge?
3. Write a short account of any one of these:
   The Oxford English Dictionary,
   Webster's New International Dictionary,
   A Dictionary of American English.
4. Define *semantics* and detail an example of the semantic approach to etymology.

[1] It is a biggish book, published in 1949.

5. How far, would you say, are philological ' laws ' adequate to the solution of an etymology?
6. What are the two main classes of English and American words, in the light of their origins? Give three of your own examples of each class.
7. Which of the following words are echoic?

hippopotamus	*curlew*
spatter	*spectacles*
wallaby	*clanger* or *clangour*
philology	*horse*
tintinnabulation	*rook* (the bird)
raucous	*sonorous.*

8. What have you to say of the following groups of words?—
   (*a*) *gleam, glisten glitter;*
   (*b*) *tip, sip, rip;*
   (*c*) *rap, tap, clap;*
   (*d*) *clatter, jabber, chatter;*
   (*e*) *mumble, jumble, rumble, fumble;*
   (*f*) *rattle, prattle;*
   (*g*) *baa-baa, moo-cow, bow-wow, cock-a-doodle-doo;*
   (*h*) *whinny, neigh, bleat, cackle.*
9. Write a short linguistic criticism of the following lines of verse:
   (*a*) The moan of doves in immemorial elms
   (*b*) That like a wounded snake drags its slow length along
   (*c*) Cold was the night wind; drifting fast the snows fell
   (*d*) And ten low words oft creep in one dull line
   (*e*) Soft is the strain when Zephyr gently blows
10. Invent four ' portmanteaus ' or blends.
11. Show the connection of the etymologies with the senses of *telegram, telephone, teleprinter.*
12. How do the etymologies of the following words exemplify or illuminate the histories of the related countries?
    (*a*) *cambric, lawn, champagne, claret, pasteurize*: France.
    (*b*) *bravado, conquistador, galleon, sherry, malaga, sierra, fandango, toreador*: Spain.
    (*c*) *dodo, emu, port* (wine), *Portuguese man-of-war, sargasso*: Portugal.
    (*d*) *opera, sketch, ballerina, prima donna, piano, milliner*: Italy.
    (*e*) *knout, ukase, tundra, sable, samovar, vodka, balalaika, steppe*: Russia.
    (*f*) *Dutch uncle, hollands, knapsack, yacht, easel, wag(g)on*: the Netherlands.
    (*g*) *cobalt, sauerkraut, psychological moment, Kultur, panzer, plunder, chorale, German measles, waltz, blitz*: Germany.
    (*h*) *lumber, chinook, caribou, voyageur, trapper*: Canada.
    (*i*) *carpet-bagger, wild-cat, bucket-shop, proposition, ballyhoo, hobo, phoney, haywire, jazz, jive, Doughboy, jeep*: the U.S.A.
    (*j*) *outspan, sjambok, baas, Afrikaans, gnu, kopje, hottentot* (figurative): South Africa.
    (*k*) *whare, pah, tangi, haka, kiwi, kumara*: New Zealand.
    (*l*) *kookaburra, koala, digger* (and *Digger*), *crook* (ill), *the bush*: Australia.
    (*m*) *crease, amok, taro, malacca, paddy* (field), *ketchup, papaw, mango, mangrove, teak*: Malaya and East Indies.
    (*n*) *silk, china, tea, bohea, kaolin, nankeen, mandarin* (orange), *joss, fan-tan, mah-jongg*: China.

(*o*) *japan, hara-kiri, geisha, samurai, bushido, Shinto, soya*: Japan.
(*p*) *paprika, tokay, goulash, Tzigane, magyar*: Hungary.
(*q*) *olympian, Periclean, agoraphobia, pan pipes, macedoine*: Classical Greece.
(*r*) *dinghy, untouchable, pariah, yoga, fakir, juggernaut, Pathan, maidan, cashmere, tussore*: India.
(*s*) *clan, tweed, slogan, whiskey, tartan, Scotch collops, cairngorm, fey*: Scotland.
(*t*) *Welsh rabbit, eisteddfod, flannel, coracle*: Wales.
(*u*) *blarney, colleen, Irish bull, Celtic twilight, shanty* (hut), *shillelagh*: Ireland.
(*v*) *ranch, pampas, llano, gaucho, alpaca, jaguar, cayenne, potato*: South America.
(*w*) *cacao, chocolate, tomato, marihuana, coyote, hurricane, tango*: Central America.
(*x*) *havana, tobacco, banana, canoe, cannibal, hammock*: West Indies.
(*y*) *arsenal, harem, alcohol, sugar, turban, chess, algebra, alchemy*: Arabia.
(*z*) *Persian carpet, shawl, peach, orange, bazaar, ghoul, chess, Babylon* (figurative): Persia.
(*aa*) *bosh, Turkish delight, Turk* (figurative), *uhlan, turkey, parchment*: Turkey.
(*bb*) *floe*: Denmark.
fiord, lemming: Norway.
gauntlet, slag, tungsten: Sweden.

13. Tell the romantic—or, if you prefer, the historically picturesque—story of *chess, comet, grog, sherry, Tarot, turban.*

14. Name three words acquired by the United States during or because of:
(*a*) the movement of settlers westward.
(*b*) Red Indian warfare.
(*c*) the Mexican and the Spanish wars.
(*d*) the Californian gold rush.
(*e*) the growth of ' big business '.

15. Many words have been added to English by war. Name three acquired during or because of these:—
(*a*) The Crimean War.
(*b*) The Boer War.
(*c*) The War of 1914–1918.
(*d*) The War of 1939–1945.

16. What does South African English owe to Afrikaans?

17. What linguistic interchange has occurred between Australia and New Zealand? With examples.

18. To what extent has Australian English been Americanized?

19. ' Canadian English might be better described as American English.' Discuss.

20. Name all the words that have been adopted into English from India.

21. To deal satisfactorily with this set of questions, you will need to consult a very good dictionary, for you are being asked to state the etymological (including the historical and geographical) connection between
(*a*) a tiger and the River Tigris
(*b*) Celanese (trade name) and Ceylon
(*c*) nile-green and the Nile
(*d*) ' Alabama wool ' and cotton

(*e*) ' Alaskan sable ' and skunks
(*f*) slimness and ' slimness '
(*g*) tall timber and tall stories
(*h*) sponge cake and Spain
(*i*) woodchucks and Red Indians
(*j*) *roaming* and ' All roads lead to Rome '
(*k*) turquoises and Turkey
(*l*) fairies and metals
(*m*) fifth-columnists and quislings
(*n*) American soldiers and doughnuts
(*o*) airmen and wingless birds
(*p*) the British aristocracy and men's garments
(*q*) the American underworld and the American (and British) vocabularies
(*r*) travellers, including explorers, and flowers
(*s*) navigators and foodstuffs
(*t*) nonsense words and dignified English (or American)
(*u*) women's fashions and the vocabulary.

22. Can you name:
    (*a*) four chemical elements derived from classical mythology?
    (*b*) three personal qualities from the same source?
23. Discuss the Negro element in American speech.
24. What is ' Babu English '?
25. List three words derived from the names of great philosophers.
26. Why are there so many (name six) Dutch words in the vocabulary of sailors?
27. Write a brief essay on the Spanish words adopted in the U.S.A. during the Colonial period.

ASPECTS OF ENGLISH

§1. *Of This and That*

If I had written *Miscellanea*, you might have exclaimed, 'Is this a Course in English, or is it a junk-shop?'

True; the chapter consists of odds and ends, but they are important odds and ends. Without them, you could perhaps pass a Higher School Certificate, a Matriculation or University Entrance, or any similar examination in English; you certainly wouldn't pass it with distinction unless you could distinguish among the five elements of Hotch-Potch No. 1—Standard English, Standard American, Dialect, Colloquialism and Slang—and unless you avoided the five sorts of bad writing brought together in Hotch-Potch No. 2: Journalese, Officialese, Commercialese; Clichés and Battered Similes; Elegancies and Genteelisms; Woolliness; Ambiguity.

That apparently odd conglomerate falls, you see, into two main groups; and group II, beginning with Journalese, follows quite naturally on group I; indeed, Journalese, Officialese, Commercialese could equally well have gone at the end of Group I. The transition is very slight.

Whether of group I or of group II, these aspects of English are, from another point of view, facets of style and features of composition. But to make one enormous chapter of Style, Composition, Aspects, would result in involving both my publisher and myself in endless correspondence with infuriated Sixth Formers, with irate private students, and with exasperated schoolmasters (not to mention the exacerbated schoolmistresses): before that ineffable prospect, I flinched and my heart quailed. The division of one indivisible subject into Style, Composition, Aspects, is as convenient as it is illogical and as necessary as it is unforgivable. Illogical to a pedant and unforgivable by a dry-as-dust. English is as homogeneous as an atom, yet people will insist on dividing the former and splitting the latter. So long as you can still see the wood (English) for the trees (this, that and the other part or aspect), all is well.

§2. *Standard English*

The rise of Standard English—the emergence of a predominant dialect that came to be more and more widely accepted as the norm—has already been treated in the chapter on Language. Anything said here must be related to what has been said there.

To preclude snobbery, let it immediately be stated, for it cannot be too strongly asserted, that originally 'no form of language is, *in itself*, better than any other form. A dialect gains whatever place of superiority it enjoys solely from the estimation in which it is commonly held. It is natural that the language of the Court should come to be regarded as the most elegant and refined type of English, and that those who do not speak that dialect naturally should be at the pains of acquiring it,' as Professor H. C. K. Wyld justly remarked in that excellent book, *The Growth of English.*

But what, precisely, constitutes 'standard'? Not one thing, but three:

the vocabulary—the choice of words and phrases;

the syntax—the ordered arrangement of those words and phrases into sentences, to which may be added the large issue comprised by those conventions and conveniences of composition which have been adopted for easy communication at home and for clear understanding abroad;

pronunciation.

The actuating principle in the determination and conservation of Standard English—or, for that matter, of Standard American—is not snobbery but national convenience, both internal and external.

There are three kinds of Standard English: Received Standard, sometimes called Southern English or Public School English, which differs from the other two only in pronunciation—softer speech, rounder vowels, clearer enunciation; Modified Standard, which is simply the Standard, or correct, English spoken by all educated persons that do not speak Received Standard; and Literary Standard, which differs from the other two in style only (more dignified and logical and gracious, more musical and rhythmical) and occurs only in writing and in oratory.

It is necessary to add that whereas Received Standard is regular, and Literary Standard idiosycratic, Modified Standard differs from region to region (as between, say, Edinburgh and Manchester—Sydney and Cape Town—Toronto and Auckland) and from social stratum to social stratum. Moreover, the speakers of Modified Standard, at least many of them, oppose the claims made for Received Standard; they ask, Why should this artificial standard be imposed upon all?

The way in which I, who certainly do not speak Received Standard, look at the question is this. We, all of us, accept the necessity of a standard in writing: if we didn't, confusion would ensue, our power of communication would be at first impaired and finally destroyed. In pronunciation we must, by the same necessity, achieve at least *a* standard; that can best be done by aiming at the pronunciation accepted by the speakers of Received Standard. Although it is unnecessary to achieve perfection, as certain Received Standard fanatics regard it, yet we must not merely aim at but achieve a certain large and generous agreement of

educated pronunciation, for without it our facilities of spoken communication will become faulty.[1]

But what about the speech of the Commonwealth, the Dominions and Colonies? There, educated persons write pure, i.e. Standard English; they speak Modified Standard. To attempt a ' Colonial ' nationalism of speech is to attempt to achieve a dialect; an educated person's use of dialect would, always in writing and usually in speech, be a retrogression. An educated Glasgow man wouldn't be proud of speaking like a ' Glesca keelie '; nor would an educated Sydneysider or Melbourneite feel particularly pleased if he realized that certain Australian 'nationalists' were trying to bulldoze him into speaking like a Woolloomooloo tough or a Footscray rough.

§3. *Standard American*

The principles of standardry are the same for the U.S.A. and its dominions as for the British Commonwealth of Nations, but the people of the United States have a more difficult problem to resolve than have the English-speakers of the Commonwealth of Nations; a problem caused, in the main, by the vast population.

In writing, there is an American Literary Standard, which so closely resembles English Literary Standard as to establish no basic, no important difference. But is there, in American speech, a Received Standard? Or is there nothing but a number of Modified Standards? One might, on first thought, say that there are only Modified Standards, although one might add that some of these modifications are more pleasing to the British (or the American) ear or more widely used than others. But the fact remains that, although there is, in the United States, no speech that can be classified as Received Standard with the same feeling of certainty as Public School speech can be said to be Received Standard in England, yet the speech of the cultured elements of American society is as close to being a Received Standard as can be expected in so vast and many-peopled a land as the United States. That the criterion is neither so severe nor so rigid as that of English Received Standard does not make it any the less a genuine criterion. But in America even more than in Great Britain, the speakers of Modified Standard are more numerous than the speakers of Received Standard.

It must, however, be remembered that the differentiation between Standard and popular speech, between Standard and slang, between Standard and dialect, and between dialect and unconventional speech, is, on the whole, less marked in the United States than in the British Empire.[2]

[1] For the limits of pure or Standard English, see either *The World of Words* (Ch. vii: ' English: Good; Bad; and Worse ') or *Usage and Abusage* (at ' Standard English ').

[2] *Usage and Abusage.*

On the whole; for between the speech of a Boston ' brownstoner ', or a cultured Southern gentleman, and that of the ' hill billy ' of a remote district or of a Chicago racketeer or a Brooklyn newsboy, there is a difference no less marked than that between the speech of an Oxford don and that of a Cockney spiv or a ' Geordie '.

Before we pass to dialect, colloquialism, slang, we should clearly understand the meaning of idiom. Idiomatic English and idiomatic American are much the same as Familiar English: the Standard English we employ —without relapsing into dialect or falling into slang—upon all familiar occasions (ordinary conversation; writing a letter to a friend). Idiom means either ' the essential character, the genius, of a language; the manner of expression peculiar to it ', or, as usually, ' a form of expression, a phrase, a turn of syntax peculiar to a language '—' a pecularity of phraseology approved by the usage of a language ' (*The Oxford English Dictionary*). The word *idiom* literally signifies ' peculiarity '; not ' oddity ' but ' something characteristic of our language and of no other '. A good example of English idiom is, in the syntactical sphere, the Nominative Absolute.

§4. *Dialect*

A *dialect* (from Greek *dialegesthai*, to converse) is a language within a language—that variety or form of a language which prevails in a district or a region, in a county or a province or a state. It has local peculiarities of word and phrase, of pronunciation, and even of syntax. The dialect of Durham is as different from that of Devonshire as the dialect of the lowlands is different from that of the Highlands of Scotland; compare the difference between the dialects of Brooklyn and Berkeley, of Chicago and Charleston. From another angle, note that what was once the East Midland dialect of England has become Standard English. ' A dialect,' as G. L. Kittredge has neatly remarked, ' is not a degraded literary language; a literary language is an elevated dialect.'

Many Americans, Scots, Irishmen, Welshmen, Englishmen speak both a dialect and a Modified (or even the Received) Standard. Perhaps in America as in Great Britain and Ireland, dialects will, some day, die out: the influence of cinema, radio, the newspapers tends to kill the various dialects, hence dialect in general. If the criterion of civilization be efficiency, if the aim of life be money, then the death of dialect will be a good thing; but a bad if the criterion of civilization is humanity, and the norm of life is spiritual riches. Dialect is a form of linguistic independence and individualism.

The virtues of dialect are that it abounds both in pithy words, including apt monosyllables (*croon*) and delightful compounds (*will-led* for ' mentally deranged ', *star-glint* for ' starlight ') and in such felicitous phrases as *want all the water to run in one's own ditch*, ' to be wilful or covetous '.

It has a large number of picturesque words and phrases, some of which are survivals of what was once good English, such as *bairn*, *thole* (to suffer), *speer* (to inquire), *bide* (to wait), *fey* (fated), *kemp* (a fighter), *dree one's weird*; although most of us know *bairn*, *bide*, *fey* and *dree one's weird*, they remain dialect.[1]

§5. *Colloquialism*

Many scholars use *colloquial*[2] as equivalent to ' spoken '; I, as equivalent to ' characteristic of that grade of speech which lies between slang and Standard (i.e., pure) speech '. In writing to our friends, we use many colloquialisms: in writing formal history, *belles lettres*, and so forth, we avoid them: in ordinary friendly or domestic speech, we are colloquial, whereas in formal public speeches we are seldom colloquial. Colloquialisms have nothing in common with illiteracies on the one hand, nor with low language on the other. *I shan't do that again*, *I'm telling you* is colloquial for ' I shall never again do that, I assure you '; compare *See you tomorrow*, *Bill* for ' I shall see . . . ' In conversation, intonation and gesture help to point and clarify our meaning, hence, syntax in conversation tends to be, can safely be, rather sketchy, a defect we cannot, if we wish to be understood, permit ourselves in writing.

§6. *Slang*

One degree lower in the scale of propriety, one step lower on the linguistic ladder, is slang. Not the lowest of all, *that* being occupied by cant, as the language of the underworld is technically named.

Etymologically ' language that is *slung* about ' (compare *sling off at*, to jeer at; and *sling the bat*, English soldiers' slang for ' to speak the native language of a foreign country '), *slang* has by *The Oxford English Dictionary* been defined as ' language of a highly colloquial type, considered as below the level of standard educated speech, and consisting either of new words[1] or current words[3] employed in some special sense '.

There are two chief reasons for the invention of slangy words and phrases: ' the desire to secure increased vivacity and the desire to secure increased sense of intimacy in the use of language,' as Henry Bradley, perhaps the greatest of all British philologists, once remarked; almost as often the reason is high spirits, the slang expression being used ' just for the fun of it '.[4]

[1] Adapted from *The World of Words*.

[2] Derived from *colloquy*: Latin *colloquium*, from *colloqui*, to converse. A colloquialism, permitted in and suitable to conversation, is too informal and slapdash for oratory or for serious writing.

[3] And phrases.

[4] In *The World of Words* I enumerate thirteen main reasons why slang is used.

Racy of the national soil and reflecting the characteristics of a people, a city or a district, a profession or a trade, a social class or a school, slang tends, in the main (exceptions being as obvious as they are numerous), to be uncultured rather than cultured, 'Anglo-Saxon' rather than Latin or Greek, direct and simple rather than indirect and abstruse, abridged rather than elaborated, common-sensible rather than metaphysical, comic rather than serious, light rather than heavy; it tends to refer less to Nature than to human nature, to be tolerant, and to lash or, at the least, laugh at humbug, hypocrisy, pretentiousness.

Arising usually in speech, slang belongs rather to the spoken than to the written language.

Slang can best be differentiated from colloquialism and from Standard in some such way as this:

Standard English	Colloquialism	Slang
man	*chap*	*bloke, merchant; guy, stiff, bozo*
an old fellow	*an old chap*	*an old buffer* (or *geezer*)
physician	*doc*	*vet* or *croaker*
surgeon	*sawbones*	*butcher*
money	*shekels*	*tin* or *mazuma*
clergyman	*parson*	*amen wallah* or *fire escape*

Thus ends Hotch-Potch No. 1: Varieties of English or American or Australian or what-have-you.

§7. *Journalese, Officialese, Commercialese*

Hotch-Potch No. 2 consists in imperfections or degradations of English, and the first of the five kinds of imperfection we are to consider is made up of journalese, officialese (or 'Whitehall' or 'Washington'), commercialese or officese.

Journalese is that sort of language—vocabulary and syntax—which is supposed to characterize, and does characterize the 'cheaper' journals of, the national Press. *Webster* defines it as 'English of a style featured by use of colloquialisms, superficiality of thought or meaning, clever or sensational presentation of material, and evidences of haste in composition, considered characteristic of newspaper writing'; for 'clever' I should substitute 'slick', and to 'evidences of haste in composition' I should add 'especially in faulty syntax and the second-best word'. Prevalent, too, is a tendency to verbosity on the one hand; and, on the other, the preference for 'rubber-stamp words' (*bid, ban, coup, pact, thrill, trek*), especially in headlines.

Until the early 1920's, much journalese consisted of Johnsonese or polysyllabic writing; since, journalese has tended rather to an offensive slickness, to vulgarity, to vogue-words, and to gate-crashing the privacies and intimacies of life. In the best newspapers, you will find very little journalese.

Officialese: 'Whitehall' or 'Washington'; or 'Barnacular'—a blend of *barnacle*, 'a (Government official) limpet', and *the vernacular*, 'popular speech'; the language affected by those Civil Service and Local Government officials who have even less regard for the English language than, although this might seem unlikely, they have for the British people; correspondingly, the same goes for the U.S.A. This is the sort of thing I mean:

> Unrest prevailed among certain 'military and political elements' [= soldiers and politicians]. The elements were being energetically suppressed [i.e., either shot or thrown into a concentration camp].—A newspaper report—governmentally 'inspired' (to quote another example of political officialese)—published on February 11, 1938.

> You are authorized to acquire the work in question by acquisition through the ordinary trade channels [= you may buy this book].—From a letter on 'Plain English' quoted in *The Times* of August 8, 1939.

A later example is afforded by the official use of *brackets* for 'groups', as in 'the lower-income brackets', arising from the sign used to group several trades or professions.

When you become a Civil Servant or a Town Clerk or a Member of Parliament, do not speak, do not write, in this inhuman, doctrinaire, verbose and—to put it politely—moronic and offensively unnecessary manner.

Commercialese or, as Sir Alan Herbert in *What a Word!* calls it, officese has some of the faults of journalese but not its merits; and some of the faults of officialese but not its merits—for the sufficient reason that officialese has no merits.

The worst fault of commercialese is, however, that it is so very unbusinesslike: wordy in the extreme, it wastes valuable time and even more valuable paper; insincere, it permits itself such hypocrisies as *friends* for 'competitors' and *your good selves* for 'you so-and-so's, whom we propose to sue for this payment'; and artificial, not to say un-English, it wallows in *your favour of the 15th ult.* (Your letter of 15th July), *valued favour, esteemed order, of even date* (of today), *of recent date, a substantial percentage* (much), *We beg to remain, transportation* (a ticket), *We are in receipt of* (we have received), *under* (? over) *one's signature* (signed by . . .), *duly noted* (i.e., probably forgotten) and *filed for future reference* (entirely forgotten: these last two belong equally to officialese), *valuable asset, state* (say or write), *proceed* (go), *approximately* (about), *proximo* (next month),

same ('We have received same' = it), and *thanking you in advance* especially *for your esteemed favour* or *order* or . . .

For journalese, there is some excuse—that of urgency, which covereth many sins and weaknesses; for officialese, none—it is a parasitic growth; for commercialese, none—it can hardly be called English at all.

Journalese, Officialese, Commercialese: the Three Disgraces.

§8. *Clichés*,[1] *Battered Similes*,[2] *Vogue Words*[3]

A battered, worn, over-used simile is a species of the genus cliché. A vogue word is the same thing as a cliché but it consists of only one word or of an indivisible pair (e.g., *wishful thinking*).

A cliché is a phrase or virtual phrase so commonplace, so much used, that self-respecting speakers and writers hesitate to use it, partly because they feel that to do so would reflect upon their originality, freshness, individuality, and partly because they feel that it constitutes an insult to an intelligent reader or auditor. Examples of particularly offensive clichés: *to explore every avenue* and *to leave no stone unturned, far be it from me to . . .* and *unaccustomed as I am to public speaking, cups that cheer but not inebriate, the Iron Duke.* Idiom-clichés, (e.g. *lock, stock and barrel*) are inoffensive in ordinary conversation; but to be avoided elsewhere.

Overworked similes are numerous. Less offensive than the worst clichés, they are yet to be avoided in serious writing—in lectures—in public speeches. Among the most battered: *turn up like a bad penny, grin like a Cheshire cat, as dark as night* or *as black as pitch, drowned like a rat, as fit as a fiddle, as light as a feather, like water off a duck's back, as poor as a church mouse, as silent as the grave, as sober as a judge, as white as a sheet.*

Vogue words are words that are so much in the fashion or have so long been in the fashion that anyone with a mind of his own would blush to use them, the more so in that many of them are catachrestic. Here are a few: *bid* for 'attempt, endeavour, enterprise'; *blueprint*; *complex*, especially *inferiority complex*; *fantastic*; *glamour*; *ideology*; *to implement*; *intriguing*; *neurosis*; *operative* (*word*); *prelude*; *reaction* for 'answer, response', even for 'opinion' or 'sentiment'; *rewarding* (adjective); *robot*; *scientific attitude*; *significant*; *tragic*; *urge*.

To permit yourselves to continue the use of clichés, battered similes, vogue words, is to confess yourselves automatons, regimented by those who fear that you might think for yourselves and (how dangerously individualistic!) speak and act for yourselves.

[1] See especially my *A Dictionary of Clichés*, conceived in jest, written as a parergon and, by the public, regarded as a useful work of reference.

[2] See *Usage and Abusage* for a tolerably full list.

[3] See *Usage and Abusage* for a tolerably full list, and *Words at War: Words at Peace* for a critical study of the subject.

§9. *Elegancies and Genteelisms*

In elegancies, the users aim at elegance; in genteelisms, at the genteel. All genteelisms are elegancies, but not all elegancies are genteelisms: elegancies may also be euphemisms, and some are mere catachreses or misuses.

In H. W. Fowler's *A Dictionary of Modern English Usage* you will find an excellent list of genteelisms and in my *Usage and Abusage* a nearly complete list of elegancies. Common to both lists are *anent* for ' about ', *edifice* for ' building ', *ere* for ' before ', *expectorate* for ' spit ', *peruse* for ' read ', *save* for ' except '. Other notable genteelisms are *ale* for ' beer ', *couch* for ' sofa ', *distingué* for ' distinguished ' or ' striking ', *lady-dog* for ' bitch ', *lingerie* for ' underclothing ', *odour* for ' smell ', *paying guest* for ' boarder ', *perspire* for ' sweat ', *serviette* for ' (table) napkin ', *stomach* for ' belly ', *tipsy* for ' drunk ', and *woolly* for ' sweater '.

Here are a few elegancies not specifically genteel: *perform one's ablutions, abode, aroma, bereavement, collation, converse, crave, damsel, denizen, domicile, emanate, emolument, epistle, garb, goodly, imbibe, Jupiter Pluvius, magnum opus, missive, moot* (v. and adj.), *myrmidons, obsequies, ozone, panegyric, patronize* (visit, shop at), *posterior* (backside), *prevaricate, raiment, repast, reside at, sanctum, satellite, spirituelle, spouse, swain, tender one's apologies—condolences—congratulations, Terpsichorean, Thespian, transpire* (to happen), *tryst, umbrage, verily, viands, welkin, wend one's way, withal, wont* (habit, custom), *Yuletide.*

' You have been warned! ' One further warning: later, you may fancy yourselves as good essayists or critics or psychologists; you may, in fact, be good, yet you must still be careful, for there is a further pitfall. The pitfall of the too literary word or phrase. In *Usage and Abusage* you will, at ' Literarisms ',[1] find a tentative list of these snares that beset the literary.

§10. *Woolliness*

Much more dangerous than excessive gentility and unnecessary elegance, which merely cause you to be laughed at, are all those approximations and vaguenesses which fall under the head of woolliness, for these cause you to be misunderstood and distrusted, a general nuisance to yourselves and to others.

Woolly. Lacking in definiteness or incisiveness; ' muzzy '; (of the mind, etc.) confused and hazy.—*The Oxford English Dictionary.*

[1] If it were not that the word is much needed, *literarism* would itself be a literarism.

> Many people, either from ignorance or from carelessness, are far from being precise in thought and expression—they mean not, but blunder round about a meaning.—Otto Jespersen, *Language*.

Woolliness has several varieties: the writing, not on but around a subject; approximations for exactitudes; intention doing duty for performance; vague instead of precise thought, inevitably leading to vague, blurred writing; the forgetting that a haziness may be clear to its perpetrator but is merely confusing to the auditor or reader.

If you examine the following examples, you will get a much better idea of the sort of thing woolliness may be.

> Not a ship, nor a gun, nor a man, were on the ground to prevent their landing.—W. E. Gladstone, *Gleanings*, 1870. What does *ground* mean? Perhaps ' at this place ' or ' at this part, or point, of the coast '. Does *gun* mean ' cannon ' or ' gun-crew ' or ' a gun and its crew '?

> Probably he did, as we still may, find much to interest us in the work of the Lancashire poets.—Eric Partridge, *A Critical Medley*, 1926. For ' us ' read ' him '.

> His point is, I think, evidently mistaken.—I. A. Richards, *The Philosophy of Rhetoric*, 1935. If the error is evident, why ' I think '? If it isn't, why ' evidently '?

> Living in an age of transition, the outlines of the people round us grow insubstantial, are modified, mentally and physically, day by day.—Osbert Sitwell, *Those Were the Days*, 1938. Woolliness has been caused by a piece of false agreement (not outlines but people are living in an age of transition) and by the doubt whether the adverbs modify only ' are modified ' or also ' grow insubstantial '.

> It will be for him to decide if we proceed further.—Vernon Loder, *The Button in the Plate*, 1938. Clearly ' if ' should be ' whether ': as it stands, the sentence conveys something quite different. If condition were intended, the author should have written, ' If we proceed further, it will be for him to decide ': otherwise, ' It will be for him to decide whether we proceed further '.

> They say you can't kill a newspaper man or even one who wants to become one.—Russell Birdwell, *I Ring Doorbells*, 1939. Confusion has been caused by ' one ' (a person, a man) and ' one ' (a newspaper man).

§11. *Ambiguity*

Ambiguity is evidently linked very closely with woolliness; woolliness is ambiguity on a large scale.

Ambiguity results from woolly or muddled thinking; from that excessive haste in expressing one's thoughts which leads one to choose, not the sole right word or group of words but a mere approximate; from ignorance, either of the various senses or of the correct use, of a word; from words set in a wrong, i.e. an unnatural, order; from false agreement of adjective or participle with noun, or of relative pronoun with its antecedent; from insufficient or otherwise defective punctuation; from this, from that, from the other thing.

The ideal at which one should aim is this: to speak or write so clearly and so precisely that one's words bear only one meaning to all averagely intelligent persons possessing an averagely competent knowledge of the language employed. 'Without distinction of speech there is never much distinction of idea.'[1]

To avoid ambiguity, hence to preclude the likelihood of mistakes (all inconvenient, some ludicrous, others dangerous, occasionally one that is disastrous), is everyone's duty. It is difficult to avoid it: but we can at least try. As a writer of many years' experience and as a former lecturer, I can give you one very useful tip: never assume that because a thought, a statement, a sentence, is clear to *you* it must necessarily be clear to *others*. Whereas, in speaking, you cannot recast what you have said, although you can afterwards say it differently and more clearly, in writing you can, by pretending that you are a potential reader, look critically at your writing from the outside and ascertain whether your sentence does, in fact, mean what you have intended it to mean—that is, unequivocally express your thought; express *that* thought and no other. From the outset you know, or should know, the point you desire to make: your auditor or your reader can know it only when it has been fully made. Once you have formed the habit of self-criticism, you will rarely commit ambiguity. Here are a few dreadful examples to shock you into a resolve that never, never will you be obliged to hang your head in very shame and mutter, *Peccavi* or *Mea culpa* or some equally salutary confession of guilt.

Question on Earl de la Warr Speech.
[A newspaper headline. A speech by him, or about him?]
We are all born idiots.
He put his feet upon the stove as it was cold.
Although the estate was not then laid out for shooting, a century and a half has made it a very attractive one.
Jack and Jill meet Harry and Harriet at her place.
Smart man's suiting. Stylish gentlemen's suits.
I was speaking to Miss Worsley of Holly Tye.
You won't catch 'flu walking in the open air.
Removers of distinction.
[Slogan of a firm of carriers.]

[1] Frank Binder, *Dialectic*, 1932.

EXERCISES

Set A

1. What general conclusions about the art of writing have you drawn from reading this chapter?
2. State, with examples, the connection between
   (*a*) Standard English and Standard American.
   (*b*) Dialect and slang.
   (*c*) Colloquialism and journalism.
   (*d*) Clichés and vogue words.
   (*e*) Woolliness and ambiguity.
3. What constitutes either Standard English or Standard American or Standard any-other-variety-of-English?
4. State the case against the acceptance of Public School English as Received Standard.
5. Is the cultured speech of New York superior to that of Boston or Chicago or San Francisco? Mention your reasons for or against.
6. Is such Australian as can be mistaken for nothing else on earth necessarily the best Australian?
7. As a New Zealander or a South African or a Canadian, what ideal do you propose for Standard speech?
8. Bearing in mind the problems facing India and Pakistan, you will explain why you think English is the best *lingua franca* for the whole of India-*plus*-Pakistan and what sort of English you hold to be the best suited to that purpose.
9. What is a Modified Standard English *or* a Modified Standard American?
10. Why should there even be a standard of speech?
11. Define and, with examples, explain idiom.
12. Defend dialect against a B.B.C. or a C.B.S. announcer that ' has no time for it '.
13. What is, in my sense of the term, a colloquialism, and what is the difference between colloquialism and slang?
14. Why is slang so widely used?
15. Set forth the principal characteristics of slang.
16. Cite three examples of each of
   (*a*) school slang
   (*b*) general slang
   (*c*) political and Civil Service slang
   (*d*) Air Force *or* Army *or* Navy slang
   (*e*) theatrical *or* circus slang.
17. Define Johnsonese and journalese, with two examples of each.
18. Write a brief essay (150–250 words) upon officialese.
19. Attack commercialese ' for all you're worth '.
20. Who is Sir Alan Herbert and what are some of the good things he has done for English?
21. Give three examples of idiom-cliché and six of other clichés.

22. Name and define three vogue words not mentioned in the text.
23. Give six examples, not already named, of battered similes.
24. Define and distinguish genteelisms and elegancies.
25. Cite four examples of genteelisms, four of non-'genteel' elegancies—not from those mentioned in the text.
26. Define
    (*a*) woolliness
    (*b*) ambiguity;
    and name several kinds of each of these defects.
27. What is the relation between thought, on the one hand, and woolliness and other ambiguity on the other hand?

Set B

1. Set against the following expressions the classifications *SE* (Standard English), *d* (dialect), *coll* (colloquialism), *s* (slang):
   wise guy, limb of the law, lawyer's clerk, wallah, bairn, teeth-haler, nesh, he'd, cracked, crackers, bug-house, git, bloke, money, brass (money), *brass* (impudence), *pettifogger, mouthpiece* (barrister), *Wailing Winnie, you've had it, gen, erk, tee'd up* (prepared), *a'n't well* (I am not well), *quisling, fifth-columnist, G.I., jeep.*
2. Name four slang terms for money.
3. How would you classify *yen* (desire), *gesture* (n.), *crush stir* (break goal), *pi-jaw, winter-proud* (cold), *integration* (co-ordination), *crack a crib* (burgle a house)?
4. Criticize the following:
   (*a*) Rommel made a bid to capture Alexandria and Cairo.
   (*b*) Notwithstanding the general literary productions that have sprung out of the haunts of cotton-mills and weaving sheds, they have only here and there penetrated far beyond the immediate neighbourhood that called them into existence.
   (*c*) If he cares to place his goods (without restriction as to quality or variety) on a barrow or in a cart and perambulate the streets on Sunday, he is outside the scope of the act, for in the words of Lord Hewart he is using 'a movable and peripatetic apparatus by means of which sales are enabled to be made at every sort of point in streets and roads over a large area—no fixed locality, no identifiable place'.
   (*d*) We are in receipt of your favour of the 9th inst. with regard to the estimate required for the removal of your furniture and effects from the above address to X.
5. For the italicized words, substitute words you either know or feel to be more fitting:
   At my *abode* in *a rural district* I often, in the summer, have an *al fresco* meal, despite the fact that *anno domini* (I am eighty-three) renders it advisable for me to *exercise proper precautions*—that is, *with regard to* my health. There, in the garden, an *assemblage* of *accoutrements* ensures comfort and convenience; the *beauteous Hebe* that looks after my wants is a *boon* to an old man, whether the *viands* be hot or whether it is but a cold *collation.* The *countenance* of this *petite damsel* I *deem* to be worthy of a *panegyric.* When I *retire* to bed I feel no *umbrage* if she brings me a *modicum* of *victuals* of which I may *partake* if I waken

from my *slumbers* and my appetite is *dolorously* keen. Not being *impecunious* I can have all my *behests* carried out *instanter*.

6. Rewrite the following passages in clear English:
   (*a*) I began to get excited over my new photographic outfit. It was natural, since it was new.
   (*b*) The foreign elements played a large part in the formation of the Romantic drama of France and constituted a large proportion of its maturity in the 1840's.
   (*c*) It is the rest of the poem that makes the connection easy and obvious, which witnesses to a general truth.
   (*d*) No, there was nothing left for David in business. He was surfeited with success. David, too, though, had ideas. Vague, true, but ideas.
   (*e*) Dales went first next day to the Registrar of Births and Marriages.
   (*f*) Another way of occupying your leisure is that of books.
   (*g*) Usually he had some clearly defined purpose behind all his actions.
   (*h*) You shall not press down upon the brow of labour this crown of thorn. You shall not crucify mankind upon a cross of gold.
   (*i*) Italian Assassin Bomb Plot Disaster. (A newspaper headline.)
   (*j*) Such preparations may occupy six or seven stages. First of all it may be necessary to bleach the object, though it is by no means universal.
   (*k*) He succeeded in dominating large meetings of operatives and in them causing them to think.
   (*l*) When did you arrange to meet him on Saturday night?
   (*m*) Where were you wounded?
   (*n*) *Paradise Lost* is the name of Milton's great epic poem on the loss of Paradise divided into twelve parts.
   (*o*) I saw a funny thing the other day.
   (*p*) I do not play baseball for that reason.

STYLE

style. In writing, etc. Incorrect for earlier *stile*, via Old French, from Latin *stilus*, incorrectly *stylus*, 'an instrument to write in tables' — i.e. on wax tablets (T. Cooper's Latin-English dictionary, 1573); hence also figuratively, 'a style; a maner or form of wordes in speakyng; an elegant form or order in speakyng or writyng; the facion and maner of one's pennyng' (*ib.*)—Ernest Weekley, *An Etymological Dictionary of Modern English*, 1921. (Slightly amplified.)

style. A writer's mode of expression considered in regard to clearness, effectiveness, beauty, and the like. In generalized sense: Those features of literary composition which belong to form and expression rather than to the substance of the thought or matter expressed.—*The Oxford English Dictionary*, 1919.

style. Mode of expressing thought in language, oral or written; especially, such use of language as exhibits the spirit and faculty of an artist; characteristic mode of expression, as of a nation, period, person, or school. . . . The quality which gives distinctive excellence to artistic expression, consisting especially in the appropriateness and choiceness of relation between subject, medium, and form.—*Webster's New International Dictionary*, edition of 1934.

THE most famous quotation on the subject is 'Le style est l'homme même', 'Style is the man himself *or* the very man *or* the essential man': as Buffon said in the speech delivered on the occasion of his reception, in 1753, into the French Academy.

With that adequacy, contrast Chesterfield's 'Style is the dress of thoughts' (letter of November 24, 1749); Sidney Smith probably had that inadequacy in mind when, nearly a century later, he wrote, 'Dress covers the mortal body and adorns it, but style is the vehicle of the spirit'. It could not be too vehemently stated that style is not something to be assumed on special occasions, like a woman's evening dress or a man's evening clothes, but what one *is* while one speaks or writes. One's style, evidently, can be improved; fundamentally, however, style is not something one seeks—it cannot be avoided, for it is the expression of one's personality. The more honestly and clearly and richly that personality is expressed, the better the style. 'Style may be the man; but the greatest style is that which transcends the man,' as George Sampson has pertinently written in his *Seven Essays*, 1947.

An aesthetic examination of style is, I feel, out of place here, for the very bases are so personal that even the subtlest psychologists and aestheticians experience difficulty in establishing such factors as could fairly be adjudged common to all literary works, actual or potential. But those

of you who wish to decide whether you would like to investigate the theories and the potentialities will find both instruction and enjoyment in such works as the essay on style in Walter Pater's *Appreciations*; the later Sir Walter Raleigh's *Style*; Remy de Gourmont's *Le Problème du Style*; Fred Newton Scott's *Contributions to Rhetorical Theory*; Vernon Lee's *The Handling of Words*; and Duchiez and Jagot's *L'Education du Style*. Vernon Lee's book is also helpful in a directly practical way.

Considered practically, writing—hence style—aims at three ends. The first thing a writer has to do is to make himself understood: he must be as clear as it is possible for him to render himself.

The writer's second aim is to be thoroughly adequate and entirely suitable to whatever theme he is treating.

The third, in so far as it can be separated at all from the second, is to write well: vigorously of a vigorous subject; subtly of a subtle; concisely where concision is advisable; beautifully where beauty and loveliness are to be either described or implied; lightly where solemnity, or even seriousness of manner, would strike a false note.

In his remarkable book, *Dialectic*, 1932, Frank Binder[1] has, upon style, written a passage that should be copied out and firmly attached to the lid of your desk or to the wall of your study.

> Without distinction of speech there is never much distinction of idea, and therefore it need hardly be said that in no age have men so striven [as in the twentieth century] to be different and yet so frantically failed to be anything but the same. That the style is the man, we know, but this is one of those unfortunate truths which have the licence of all lips and the hospitality of few hearts, and whilst everyone is sighing for personality in others, he shuns the labour of attaining it for himself. He is pleased with such facility as he has, the facility that comes not of power but of habit, the averaging habit of familiar fluency and of the practised drumming of ordinary ideas. And the thinner the fluid the faster the flow.

One means, the predominant psychological means, of achieving these aims is to be unflinchingly, entirely and at all points sincere; to do *that* will go far towards achieving the moral or ethical aim of every 'man of good will': the bright, unflawed presentation, as in a spotless mirror, of one's integrity. Convince hearers and readers of your sincerity and integrity in language clear and adequate, and you will have succeeded in fulfilling the primary and all-embracing purpose of style: the unmistakable and more than merely suitable communication of fact or fancy, intellectual conviction, spiritual well-being and enrichment, and aesthetic satisfaction.

Before passing to a stylistic consideration of several passages from literature, I shall mention a few helpful books that deal with the practical aspects of style.

The link between style and composition, and between theory and fact, is perspicuously established and instructively developed by Sir Herbert

[1] Author of the very attractive and thoughtful *Diary of a Journey in England.*

Grierson in *Rhetoric and English Composition*; less advanced is D. Bateman's *Style in English Composition*. The American attitude is explained and exemplified by Joseph Warren Beach in *The Outlook for American Prose*. Robert Louis Stevenson's *Essays in the Art of Writing* is still useful; like Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch's *On the Art of Writing*, it is itself excellently written. Three books worthy of your close attention are John Brophy's *English Prose*, Herbert Read's rather more difficult *English Prose Style*, and Bonamy Dobrée's *Modern Prose Style*. At this stage of your development, I think that you will perhaps derive most benefit from Professor Dobrée's book, which is alert, sympathetic, sensitive and unacademic.

Without trenching upon literary appreciation, treated elsewhere in this volume, I propose to set before you a few examples of prose style.

'But why not of verse style too?'

The question is a fair one. The reason for my abstention from poetry is this: poetry is almost impossible to assess, its greatest qualities being insusceptible of intellectual analysis; poetry appeals chiefly to the spirit and to the senses. Nor do I think that one can teach style in poetry, for poetry is so much more personal, more idiosyncratic, more unpredictable than prose. You will, however, be unable to complain of the place accorded to—or rather, demanded or even exacted by—poetry in the chapter entitled 'Appreciation'.

Sir Richard Grenville (1541–91) became detached from Lord Howard's West Indian fleet. After a hand-to-hand fight of fifteen hours against fifteen Spanish vessels and a force of 5,000 men, his ship *The Revenge* was captured, Grenville dying of his wounds a few days later. You have probably read Tennyson's stirring ballad 'The Revenge', but here is part of what Sir Walter Raleigh, another great Elizabethan, says of that heroic combat. It constitutes a worthy example of sinewy, factual narrative; of plain prose at its best.

> All the powder of the *Revenge* to the last barrel was now spent, all her pikes broken, forty of her best men slain, and the most part of the rest hurt. In the beginning of the fight she had but one hundred free from sickness, and fourscore and ten sick, laid in hold upon the ballast. A small troop to man such a ship, and a weak garrison to resist so mighty an army. By those hundred all was sustained, the volleys, boardings, and enterings of fifteen ships of war, besides those which beat her at large. On the contrary, the Spanish were always supplied with soldiers brought from every squadron: all manner of arms and powder at will. Unto ours there remained no comfort at all, no hope, no supply either of ships, men or weapons; the masts all beaten overboard, all her tackle cut asunder, her upper work altogether razed, and in effect evened she was with the water, but the very foundation or bottom of a ship, nothing being left overhead either for flight or defence. Sir Richard, finding himself in this distress, and unable any longer to make resistance

. . .; and that himself and the ship must needs be possessed by the enemy . . .; commanded the master gunner, whom he knew to be a most resolute man, to split and sink the ship; that thereby nothing might remain of glory or victory to the Spaniards.—Sir Walter Raleigh, *The Last Fight of the Revenge*, from a Report, published in 1591. (Modernized.)

Something of that concision reappears in the slightly later essay by Francis Bacon, ' Of Studies ', where he speaks, with an engagingly terse dignity and forthright authority, of reading.

Read not to contradict and confute, nor to believe and take for granted, nor to find talk and discourse, but to weigh and consider. Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested; that is, some books are to be read only in parts; others to be read but not curiously, and some few to be read wholly and with diligence and attention. Some books also may be read by deputy, and extracts made of them by others; but that would be only in the less important arguments and the meaner sorts of books; else distilled books are like common distilled waters, flashy things. Reading maketh a full man; conference a ready man; and writing an exact man; and therefore, if a man write little he had need have a great memory; if he confer little he had need have a present wit; and if he read little he had need have much cunning, to seem to know what he doth not. Histories make men wise; Poets, witty; the Mathematics, subtle; Natural Philosophy, deep; Moral, grave; Logic and Rhetoric, able to contend: *Abeunt studia in mores.*

With that essentially prose treatment of a prose theme, contrast an example of poetic prose, not from the more famous exponents of that art, Sir Thomas Browne, De Quincey, Charles Doughty, but from Thomas Traherne's *Centuries of Meditations* (written ca. 1670, though not published until 1908).

You never enjoy the world aright, till the Sea itself floweth in your veins, till you are clothed with the heavens, and crowned with the stars: and perceive yourself to be the sole heir of the whole world, and more than so, because men are in it who are every one sole heirs as well as you. Till you can sing and rejoice and delight in God, as misers do in gold, and Kings in sceptres you never enjoy the world.—Till your spirit filleth the whole world, and the stars are your jewels; till you are as familiar with the ways of God in all ages as with your walk and table; till you are intimately acquainted with that shady nothing out of which the world was made: till you love men so as to desire their happiness, with a thirst equal to the zeal of your own: till you delight in God for being good to all: you never enjoy the world.

That was an eloquent passage. Equally eloquent is the following excerpt, although in a different manner—' the grand manner ', as it is usually called. It comes from Gibbon's *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (1776–81), and you will note that such a style is merited only by grave and weighty subjects. You would not describe a game of baseball, nor the art of filling up football coupons, in this way.

> It is a very honourable circumstance for the morals of the primitive Christians, that even their faults, or rather errors, were derived from an excess of virtue. The bishops and doctors of the church, whose evidence attests, and whose authority might influence, the professions, the principles, and even the practice, of their contemporaries, had studied the scriptures with less skill than devotion, and they often received, in the most literal sense, those rigid precepts of Christ and the apostles to which the prudence of succeeding commentators has applied a looser and more figurative mode of interpretation. Ambitious to exalt the perfection of the gospel above the wisdom of philosophy, the zealous fathers have carried the duties of self-mortification, of purity, and of patience, to a height which it is scarcely possible to attain, and much less to preserve, in our present state of weakness and corruption. A doctrine so extraordinary and so sublime must inevitably command the veneration of the people; but it was ill calculated to obtain the suffrage of those worldly philosophers who, in the conduct of this transitory life, consult only the feelings of nature and the interests of society. . . . It was not in *this* world that the primitive Christians were desirous of making themselves either agreeable or useful.

A more serviceable style, well suited to the lucid narrative of swift-moving events, is exemplified by Macaulay, who, ' as every schoolboy knows ', was a master of historical description and exposition.

> The river was passed; and at the close of a toilsome day's march, the army, long after sunset, took up its quarters in a grove of mango-trees near Plassey, within a mile of the enemy. Clive was unable to sleep; he heard, through the whole night, the sound of drums and cymbals from the vast camp of the Nabob. It is not strange that even his stout heart should now and then have sunk, when he reflected against what odds, and for what a prize, he was in a few hours to contend. . . . The day broke, the day which was to decide the fate of India. At sunrise the army of the Nabob, pouring through many openings from the camp, began to move towards the grove where the English lay. Forty thousand infantry, armed with firelocks, pikes, swords, bows and arrows, covered the plain. They were accompanied by fifty pieces of ordnance.
>
> . . . The cavalry were fifteen thousand. . . . The force which [Clive] had to oppose to this great multitude consisted of only three thousand men. But of these nearly a thousand were English; and all

were led by English officers, and trained in the English discipline. . . . The battle commenced with a cannonade in which the artillery of the Nabob did scarcely any execution, while the few field-pieces of the English produced great effect. Several of the most distinguished officers in Surajah Dowlah's service fell. Disorder began to spread through his ranks. His own terror increased every moment. . . . He ordered his army to fall back, and this order decided his fate. Clive snatched the moment, and ordered his troops to advance. The confused and dispirited multitude gave way before the onset of disciplined valour. No mob attacked by regular soldiers was ever more completely routed. The little band of Frenchmen, who alone ventured to confront the English, were swept down the stream of fugitives. In an hour the forces of Surajah Dowlah were dispersed, never to reassemble.

Contemporary with Macaulay lived Cardinal Newman, yet how differently they wrote! Here is part of Newman's definition of a gentleman, taken from *The Idea of a University* (1852): a passage that is supple yet strong; gentle yet persuasive; measured and urbane; full of good sense—that sense which is vastly superior to mere common sense.

He has his eyes on all his company; he is tender towards the bashful, gentle towards the distant, and merciful towards the absurd; he can recollect to whom he is speaking; he guards against unseasonable allusions, or topics which may irritate; he is seldom prominent in conversation and never wearisome. He makes light of favours while he does them, and seems to be receiving when he is conferring. He never speaks of himself except when compelled, never defends himself by a mere retort. He has no ears for slander or gossip, is scrupulous in imputing motives to those who interfere with him, and interprets everything for the best. He is never mean or little in his disputes. . . . He has too much good sense to be affronted at insults, he is too well employed to remember injuries, and too indolent to bear malice. He is patient, forbearing, and resigned, on philosophical principles; he submits to pain, because it is inevitable, to bereavement, because it is irreparable, and to death, because it is his destiny. If he engages in controversy of any kind, his disciplined intellect preserves him from the blundering discourtesy of better, though less educated minds. . . . He may be right or wrong in his opinion, but he is too clear-headed to be unjust; he is as simple as he is forcible, and as brief as he is decisive.

Finally, a philosophic passage from a book published in 1932. You will notice the smooth flow and the unerring use of the right word. But don't imitate the alliterativeness—unless, like G. K. Chesterton or Frank Binder, you are a master of alliteration. In *Dialectic*, Frank Binder writes thus:

Life has its alternative, the ironic one of being angled at the bank or netted at the weir. We may escape the philosophy of form with its interplay of fate and personality, of the world without and the will within, and flee to the philosophy of measures with its processes of evidence, fact and proof. Here at least we are safe, or think we are, from the flats and shifting sands of superstition, and may sail on our daylight ways, scientific, assured, and open-eyed, along the charted paths of the seas. The port is fixed, the track defined, the times determined, yet even these our modern ways, like all the wisdom of the world, are writ on water. For just as religion is fallibly poised on the floating mote of faith, so science is no less parlously embarked on the dubious bubble of a measure, on something that has no absolute standing, a something that, in want of niches in space and time, cannot be measured itself nor be assessed in ultimate units. Indeed, were the world in flux, pulsating to all sizes yet keeping the ratio in every part, or speeding and staying the flight of time with proportional pace and delay in ourselves, we should not know it, and still should deem our measures, which swelled and lapsed in concert, as fixed and final for the universe itself. And to this myth of immutable measures comes the illusion of simultaneity, since for all experiments, comparisons, and proofs, whereby a synchronism is assumed, there is a passage through space and time, the measure being brought to the object measured, the proof following by an interval of thought. Yet we are asked to believe that in transpositions from spot to spot, and in references from a moment to a moment succeeding, there is a constancy in the object thought of, that it keeps a congruence in all its motions, and *ceteris paribus* always is what it was before. But how are we to prove this when no two points in space or time may be placed together for comparison? and since by the latest theory matter determines the space whereby it is contained, so with equal truth may space determine matter. With an equal truth we may assume that change is a change in the medium which surrounds us, that we fall like a fluid into the mould of the world, into the play of its principles and lineament of its seasons, and take on by adaptation the idiosyncrasies of time. And though we scout the thought as dialectic, how without a synchronism is this to be proved?

In those examples, you have been privileged to see writers equal to their theme: writing in a manner not merely suitable but entirely adequate; competent craftsmen; all of them notable artists, and some of them great.

EXERCISES

1. It must be fairly evident that 'literary *style*' is used in two senses: that which is peculiar to one writer or to a coterie of writers, something personal, something idiosyncratic; and 'a certain quality of perfection independent of idiosyncrasy' (George Sampson, *Seven Essays*). If the

former is cultivated to the exclusion of the latter, we find eccentricity and mannerism predominant. If a writer aims at the latter, i.e. at perfection, he tends to become less mannered and less eccentric.

Name six writers that fall, three into the former, three into the latter group.

2. Often a great writer will, at different times, fall now into one, now into the other group. Can you detect how this tendency works in Shakespeare, Milton, Johnson, Dickens, Meredith? *Or* in Washington Irving, Edgar Allan Poe, Oliver Wendell Holmes, Walt Whitman?
3. Can you trace the development of the modern idea of *style* from the Latin *stilus*? Such a statement as the rather colloquial 'He wields a mean pen' may help you.
4. How did Buffon define style and what is George Sampson's implied comment on that definition?
5. What has Frank Binder to say about style? Answer in your own words, not in his.
6. Do you approve the aesthetic approach to style?
7. 'He writes the best style who, not thinking about it, merely does his best.' Comment on this.
8. Implied in every statement concerning style, in every hint or recommendation, are a good vocabulary and a sound knowledge of the right use of that vocabulary.

   Show how a meagre vocabulary would hinder anyone confronted with the need to write (say) an important letter or an urgent report.
9. On the other hand, what obstacles stand in the way of the person that knows thousands of words and their definitions but lacks practice in (*a*) speaking and (*b*) writing?
10. What should we aim at when we wish to communicate something
    (*a*) urgently in speech,
    (*b*) leisurely in writing?
11. How and to what extent does insincerity vitiate what one writes—or, of course, says?
12. Name three books on prose style and write a brief criticism of one of them.
13. Of the passages quoted from English literature, which one (or more) do you judge to be the best adapted to its end?
14. Who of living novelists, whether British or American, do you think has the best style—and why?
15. And of twentieth-century British or American essayists?
16. What would you say is wrong with the following quotation from a modern writer on travel?

    'And the place thereof was unknown. . . . It is an astonishing commentary on the way man had been born and then cut down so much like grass that weeds had been his only memorial—till some explorer came along.'
17. What is a *pretentious* style? Can you name an example? If possible, quote.

COMPOSITION, III [1]

§1. *Theory*

BEFORE we consider various kinds and aspects of composition, I should like to say a few carefully chosen words upon the place of theory in the study—and the practice—of the art of writing.

Towards that study and that practice, the following books will be found helpful:

H. W. and F. G. Fowler, *The King's English*;
H. W. Fowler, *A Dictionary of Modern English Usage*; and, supplementing and complementing Fowler, my own *Usage and Abusage: A Guide to Good English*;
H. S. Canby, *Better Writing* (American);
J. R. and V. P. Hulbert, *Effective English* (American);
P. G. Perrin, *An Index to English* (the American Fowler);
Bonamy Dobrée, *English Prose Style*, a notable introduction to advanced composition.

Theory not only serves as a check upon unreflective fluency but also supplies much that is constructive, for it offers many hints upon ways of achieving what you set out to do. Yet by far the best way in which to learn to write is—to write. And to continue to write, though not always the same sort of thing. With this caution: immediately you become mentally stale or spiritually bewildered or physically weary, cease from writing.

Revision should follow, not accompany, the act of composition. While you are interested or energetic or excited, while, in short, you are 'in the mood', go straight ahead with your writing; and stop for revision only when you have completed the story, essay, memorandum, letter. Never interrupt the flow of your thought in order to search, either obstinately or

[1] If a student has not read the chapters entitled 'Composition' in Books I and II, he should do so; if he has, then he should carefully re-read them, for the three chapters form an adequate treatment of the subject up to the standard of efficiency required either by anyone proceeding from school (or tutor or private study) to the university or going out to earn a living, even as a journalist. These three chapters do not constitute an exhaustive treatise—nor, indeed, a treatise at all. They leave something to the student's imagination; yet they have been designed to awaken, encourage and train, not strain it, and also to indicate what to look for and how to look. The writer has not aimed to build a *gradus ad Parnassum*. Merely to show the student, both how to scale that delectable mountain and how to recognize some of the things visible therefrom; perhaps, in addition, to enable him to essay a few Pegasus-flights of his own.

frantically, for the right word; it is notoriously easy, even in closely argued writing, to lose the fine silken thread of your discourse. If you are writing verse or fiction, let yourself be carried along on the flood or, as it might be, the wings of your inspiration. If you are writing dialogue and it goes briskly, never stop to find a better word: that interruption may change the tempo and destroy the freshness of a scene that is going with a swing. The story of Flaubert pacing up and down the room in an agonized search for *le mot juste* has done much harm. Conscientious search can be made during the period of revision. After all, revision serves three main reasons:

to ensure that the narrative proceeds smoothly, the argument logically, the essay or the letter in an orderly manner, the dialogue naturally;
to remove contradiction and inconsequence;
to improve the style (right connectives, right words, correct syntax; adequacy, etc.).

But what I have said about your determination that the letter wait upon the spirit must not be taken to mean that a writer, potential or actual, at school or out in the world, should imagine that everything he writes is inspired and therefore sacred and therefore to be neither criticized nor amended. It isn't inspired, unless he be a budding Shakespeare—which seems improbable; nor always even then—like Homer, Shakespeare occasionally nodded.

The student, like the incipient writer,[1] is wise to equip himself for composition and to examine the suggestions made or implied by Canby and Perrin, Fowler and Dobrée: yet he must be neither discouraged nor desiccated by their advice. He must constantly write. He will, however, unfailingly comply with at least one rule: to know his goal and how to reach it; the means and the ordonnance of those means; before he begins to write. But, once started, he must let nothing stop him. Then, having written and perhaps been adversely criticized for his composition, he should, during an enforced or, better, a voluntary rest from composition, re-study those theorists whom he believes to be the best or finds most congenial. From having tended to think them either pedantic or impractical, he will discover that they now help him tremendously.

§2. *Thought and Expression*

Clear writing presupposes—in fact, it cannot exist without—clear thinking.[2] All language is a vehicle of thought and the primary means of

[1] Not that I place them in contradistinction: either may be the other too.

[2] A slow, considered re-reading of the Introductory chapters of Books I and II would benefit every self-taught, school-taught or tutored student: thereon is based the entire structure, there is implied the chief reason for the very existence, of this Course as a whole.

communication between human beings. It therefore follows that any exercise in clear thinking is simultaneously and inseparably an exercise in the use of clear language, precisely as every exercise in stylistic clarity is simultaneously and inseparably an exercise in clear thinking. The connection is so very obvious that everybody must recognize it: everybody does, after he has thought about the matter or has been told; yet far from everybody acts upon this self-evident connection, far from everybody consciously profits by it.

No further general statements need to be made. It remains only for you to sharpen your minds and employ your vocabularies upon the following.

EXERCISES

1. Make up a proverb founded upon:
   (*a*) the significance of the atomic bomb
   (*b*) the popularity of Nylon stockings
   (*c*) *cacoëthes scribendi*
   (*d*) film stars
   (*e*) the recurrence of war
   (*f*) *Cherchez la femme!*
   (*g*) the relationship of theatre to life
   (*h*) the world of school
   (*i*) the world of books.
2. Explain and resolve the difficulties presented by these two proverbs:
   Every mickle makes a muckle
   Every exception proves the rule.
3. If you can, better the following definitions:
   (*a*) *Man* is an animal that can cook
   (*b*) An *accident* is something that happens in accordance with the immutable laws of the universe (Ambrose Bierce, adapted)
   (*c*) A *newspaper* is a periodical publication that fails to give the news
   (*d*) A *pen* is an instrument with which one writes
   (*e*) A *pessimist* is one who lives with an optimist
   (*f*) *Hebrew* is an ancient language
   (*g*) *Fear* is an unpleasant sensation evoked by danger
   (*h*) ' A baby is a loud noise at one end and no sense of responsibility at the other '
   (*i*) *Garrulous* is the adjective we apply to one who has nothing to say and keeps on saying it.
4. Discuss whether it is preferable to pay an extortionate income-tax or to have none to pay.
5. Name either a simile or a metaphor that comes from:
   cock-fighting, cricket, baseball, athletics;
   logic;
   the Spanish Inquisition;
   books.
6. Describe in not more than fifty words:
   (*a*) a radio programme

(*b*) a visit to a cinema, for the benefit of someone who has never been in one
(*c*) physics
(*d*) metaphysics
(*e*) penicillin
(*f*) a *succès d'estime*
(*g*) a cafeteria
(*h*) a helicopter.

7. Set out in the form of a telegram the following two statements:
   (*a*) I regret that I am very ill and so I cannot meet you on Friday as arranged. I shall be writing.
   (Preferably in five words; at most in seven.)
   (*b*) General X. Z. Yoghourt's death on the twenty-eighth of last month, which I have just heard about, renders it necessary that the remaining shareholders should meet on the fifth instant to discuss the winding-up of the company.
   (Preferably in ten, but at most in twelve words.)
8. Make up a list of the three best batting averages for a season, and then write such a paragraph about them as you would expect to see in an intelligent paper—not in one whose public can neither read nor think.
9. Describe a cricket or a Rugby football or a baseball or a lawn-tennis or a hockey match in not over 250 words and in such a way that one who has never seen a match can understand the essence of the game in general and enjoy your account of this game in particular.
10. Invent a population-table for each of six decades, beginning in 1888, for six imaginary cities and then write a paragraph suitable either to an article in a magazine or to an essay.
11. Explain why
   (*a*) a Conservative, a Socialist, a Liberal—or a Republican and a Democratic—newspaper will write startlingly different leaders upon a sweeping reform in the social services;
   (*b*) a staid and a sensationalist newspaper will handle a murder in different ways.
12. Explain very briefly the difference(s) between
   (*a*) an epigram, a witticism, a joke
   (*b*) a theorem and a theory
   (*c*) a psychologist and psychiatrist
   (*d*) a monoplane and a biplane
   (*e*) sermonizing and moralizing
   (*f*) atmosphere and stratosphere
   (*g*) geology and geography
   (*h*) history and annals
   (*i*) short story and literary sketch
   (*j*) building and architecture
   (*k*) joinery and carpentry
   (*l*) velleity, wish, will
   (*m*) biography and bibliography
   (*n*) a curate and a vicar
   (*o*) a gourmand and a gourmet.
13. What do you hold to be the essentials of a 'thriller' and a detective novel, and in what respects do they differ?
14. Define and distinguish politics and statesmanship.

15. Analyse the difference between red-headed and blue-headed matches. What does the problem presuppose before you can even begin the analysis?

16. Devise slogans for
    (*a*) the drinking of more water
    (*b*) the improvement of thinking
    (*c*) the growing of potatoes in garden or allotment
    (*d*) the popularization of travel by air
    (*e*) national savings
    (*f*) the suppression of feeble jokes
    (*g*) private-enterprise insurance
    (*h*) an increase in the reading of non-fiction
    (*i*) more varied cookery in the home
    (*j*) 'Woman's place is in the home'.

§3. *Narration: Narrative*

Narration is general, *narrative* particular. For example, 'The art of narration is more difficult than is usually supposed', 'narration as opposed to description'; 'A narrative implies movement'. In short, a narrative is a particular instance of narration. A mixed narrative is one that combines narrative with dialogue.

The etymology of *narrate* (whence *narration*, *narrator*, etc.) throws light upon the radical idea of the word, i.e. upon the principle of the action. Deriving from the Latin verb *narrare*, itself from *gnarus*, 'cognizant; hence, informed, instructed', it means 'to make known', hence 'to tell', hence 'to narrate' in our specific sense, 'to tell a story, to recount'.

To tell an artless story is easy, to tell an artistic story is difficult. Although story-telling is probably the earliest form of composition we practise, and although, as Molière's Monsieur Jourdain had for forty years been 'speaking prose without knowing it' (*Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme*), so children tell stories without knowing that they are doing something that later will be called composition, yet it is the latest form in which a writer, even a professional writer, attains to competence, let alone mastery. True narrative, whether pure or mixed, should be as swift as the theme allows, as economical in language as the novelist, the short-story writer, the journalist, the historian, the biographer can make it, with characterization implicit rather than explicit, the scene sketched rather than drawn, the temporal setting very tersely conveyed, dialogue never so long as to delay the narrative and always contributing to the development of the theme: no ornamentation; essentials only. An excellent example of lean, spare narrative is Geoffrey Household's *Rogue Male*; among short stories, O. Henry's, H. G. Wells's, and the more active of Kipling's tales show how the aim can be achieved. Dumas and R. L. Stevenson excel in the art and craft of narrative: study these two writers, at least to the extent of the former's *The Three Musketeers* and the latter's

Kidnapped. John Buchan's Sir Richard Hannay novels (beginning with *The Thirty-Nine Steps*), and Michael Innes's *The Secret Vanguard*, although they lack the great literary merit of Stevenson, afford an effective unspoken commentary upon the essentials of narrative.

In Books I and II, something has been said about the art of the story, and L. A. G. Strong's *English for Pleasure* has been recommended; also to be warmly recommended is S. P. B. Mais's *The Fun of Writing*, which contains a long and most readable chapter on ' Fiction—Telling a Story '. Both of these books offer something for you at your present stage of development, even though they are, as entities, for somewhat younger students: taken in conjunction with the long extract (Book I) from L. A. G. Strong and with the specially written article (Book II) by Neil Bell, they would, in fact, serve as a sound basis for any student.

Narrative, however, need not be pure nor yet mixed only with dialogue. Somerset Maugham's[1] masterly stories prove this. Many other short stories and novels admix other elements: leisurely characterization, continuous dialogue, long descriptions, philosophizing, for all of which, evidently, there is far less space in the short story than in the novel. Here is a short story that combines narrative, dialogue, philosophizing.

Train Journey[2]

One flaming day in June, 19—, a certain platform at King's Cross, London, presented a spectacle oddly significant. That significance, however, was secret to a few railway officials, to the driver and stoker, to the saloon attendants, and to the passengers numbering precisely one hundred.

The passengers, all travelling First Class (there was no other), belonged, rather too obviously, to the unhappy rich, the very rich, the disgustingly rich. Most of them, a discerning observer would have perceived, were nouveaux-riches, parvenus, upstarts, thrusters; loud-voiced in loud-checked suits; rather uneasy in their aggregate of vast wealth and infinitesimal culture and long-since, too-soon abrupted education; still believing that every man has his price and still ignorant of the value of all things whatsoever; men to whom *spiritual* meant *spirituous*, and *spirituel* meant either or both; men with an appraising gleam, now somewhat stilled, in their protuberant or porcine eyes, but unable to appraise that which they had set themselves to encounter.

They belonged to a club with membership limited to five hundred. Every year, one hundred new members were to be elected; the first such election would take place exactly one month after the train journey these passengers were about to begin. Every June a similar train would, on the first Saturday in the month, carry one hundred passengers to their

[1] W. S. Maugham's autobiographical works contain much invaluable advice on the art of fiction.

[2] Written shortly before I was demobilized from the R.A.F.

unknown destination, and they would be conveyed by a different driver and stoker, served by another batch of twenty attendants.

It was a *train de luxe*, the final word in earthly comfort, the acme of soft-footed service, the nonpareil of silent travelling, the height of a millionaire's dream, the depth of despair. Sad-eyed and weary-faced were the attendants—the cooks and waiters; grim-mocking, the driver and his mate. You would not have been censured for thinking that, amid the chromium and the cuspidors, the plush and the plutocracy, death journeyed with that trainful, an unseen reminder yet a privileged fellow-traveller with as much right as any of them to be there: unobtrusive, yet serviceable; courteous, yet firm; modest and retiring, yet having the whiphand of them all: ubiquitous, ineluctable, yet mentioned by none.

Not that the passengers were ill or maimed, although some of them might have been dyspeptic and a few were jaded! Each passenger had paid one thousand guineas for his ticket, which had been scrutinized more carefully than ever hand-bag of too beautiful blonde by suspicious Excise official: a thousand pounds for the fare itself and a thousand shillings for the meals and drinks and cigars or cigarettes consumed during that journey of two hundred and fifty miles on which there would be only one stop, the last, which was scheduled to take place six hours after the train's departure.

Perhaps these rich men had, in attaining riches, lost the tang and thrill, the satisfaction and security of wealth; perhaps, deprived of the incentive of money-making, they had lost their true—their one—vocation and, in its stead, found such emptiness as soon became an apathy, verging upon accidia; perhaps, having always neglected the spirit, they had forfeited those consolations and that fortitude which the spirit alone can bestow upon men lacking and no longer desiring an active preoccupation with finance or commerce; their luxurious existence having perhaps ceased to be exciting or even tepidly interesting, life itself had ceased to possess exterior meaning and interior significance.

An hour from King's Cross, luncheon was served. (To have called it a lunch would have been a gross solecism and a patent misnomer.) Before that, almost every traveller had drunk a very expensive apéritif. Luncheon was a leisurely meal of eight Lucullan courses; the napery, exquisite; the cutlery, superb; the dishes, too solid for so brief a use. Yet only towards the end of this imperial repast did the passengers rise to any semblance of enjoyment or liveliness; only then did their eyes cease to be as dull as those of the cod that had appeared some forty minutes earlier; only then did the wines and spirits loosen their tongues and part-dispel their obsessive gloom and absent-minded moroseness. Even so, their preoccupation would probably have retained its sway over them if they had not been drinking rather more freely than would have been thought 'quite the thing' in their club. Perhaps, however, they had, or believed they had, good reason to drink more than was seemly. Several of the waiters, contrary to orders, seemed also to have been partaking of strong

drink, although they remained efficient and obsequious: a thousand pounds willed to each waiter's (and each cook's) dependants may have influenced them towards civility and rectitude, and a like sum presented to the pair at the front of the train kept the train on the track and the pace uniform and velvet-smooth.

Said Morgenstein to Rubemoff, ' Perhaps we've made a mistake. Anyway, it might have been better to apply next year instead of this.'

' No,' replied the sententious Rubemoff, ' I'm glad to be on the train. At best, life is a fever, and, at its worst, it's a long-drawn-out hell that lacks the solace of any certain finality.'

' But perhaps we were wrong to take things into our own hands. Maybe,' timorously, ' we should have thought the matter over more carefully.'

Contemptuously: ' And spent two years instead of one in profitless meditation, to end-up precisely where we started?'

In another corner of the vast saloon-car, James Alexander Stewart, hard-bitten, well-read Scot, to John Carr, typical English financier, jolly-looking and innocent and innocuous: ' You Englishmen say that we Scots are glad, when we have our feet safely planted in Sassenach soil, to look back, romantically, upon our native land, whose dust we shake nostalgically from the feet that are almost dancing in their eagerness to reach London and Londoners' pockets. But I'm thinking that the view I'm so soon to gaze on may be a still finer.'

' If you're referring to the end of your journey, it's stars, not a star, we're likely to see.'

So illiterate that he could scarcely sign his own name and certainly could not have spelt the condign punishment he Croesus-merited, yet so cunning that he had signed many an able man's financial death-warrant, Joe Willsher remarked to a crony, ' Blimey, Bill, this is the first time I 'ave ever put me name to a doccyment, like, when it's nothin' better than takin' a leap in the dark.'

' " Leap in the dark " is right, pal! '

Joe Soap, who had begun his career by sanding sugar, by watering milk, and by ' milking ' match-boxes to turn an ordinary into a baker's dozen, and who had gone on to effecting mergers of small, profitable, grocery businesses and thence to gigantic reconstitutions and amalgamations, opined to Henry Haddem, the fabulously wealthy bookmaker-*cum*-pools' organizer, that he was glad to be ridding himself of the itching necessity to ' think up ' new combines and co-operatives; ' I've got so that I can't live without them,' he added. Haddem replied that the other seemed to be taking a step in the right direction and that he himself had composed this epitaph: ' Henry Haddem had 'em, but was himself had in the end,' whereat he chuckled in fruity self-approbation.

Near the servery, Albert Watkins was simultaneously confiding to his waiter friend, Cecil (' Sissy ') Billings, ' Well, Cec, I'm sorry for the missus, she is a rare good sort; but, with all this money, she'll be able to buy that nice little tobacconist's business she's had her eyes on for years

an' years: oh! not enviously, poor bitch, but as if it was—as if it was a kind of heaven.'

'I've no missus, as you know, Albert; but my boy—he's twenty-one today, bless him!—will be able to study for his engineering exams.'

They winked at each other as though they were enjoying a private joke.

Most of the passengers were now stertorously, unlovelily asleep: some pale, some purple of countenance; several faces were ferret-like, even under the softening touch of sleep, and some pig-like, and others, the majority, merely an *O* of nescience and nullity.

The train glided sedately along. At four o'clock a light tea was served. Scarcely a word issued from the mouths of those now tight-lipped men. At five, the waiters brought either brandy or whiskey, whether neat or soda'd or water-diluted. Perhaps something had been put into those drinks, for soon one hundred men were world-unconscious and heavy-breathing.

In the kitchen and servery, twenty attendants helped themselves to a stiff tot of spirits. A few miles before Journey's End, the driver and the stoker drank, long and thirstily, two pints apiece of 'half-and-half'. A mile before the terminus they ceased from their labours and even forgot their cynical interest in the passengers: on a safe stretch of the line, where there existed no possibility of collision or of other mishap. The driver and the stoker, like the attendants, had suddenly decided that they would 'bilk' their employers and jump the train at this convenient point; the driver slowed the train to enable them to leap without much fear of injury. To recompense themselves for that loss of legacy which their changed decision entailed, the attendants had conscientiously gone through the pockets of their wealthy charges, many of whom—such is the force of habit—were carrying large sums of money. So large that the attendants profited by their decision and, in a non-Utopian world, prospered exceedingly; even the driver and the stoker received their due share, the solemnity and exhilaration of the occasion having bluffed the others, this once, into a sense of solidarity.

The sound of the surf far below the cliff-top reached no ears, the majestic sea filled no appreciative eye.

To the sea it made no difference that, in June 19—, an entirely new train and a fresh set of passengers and ministrants would join the wreckage and the wave-stirred bones: trains the puppet-shows of human arrogance, men the victims of the majestic tides of fate.

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EXERCISES

1. What does 'to *narrate*' mean literally and how does that meaning bear upon the correct definition?

2. Define *narration* and *narrative* in your own words and name several distinct sorts of narrative.
3. Name two twentieth-century examples of pure narrative.
4. Do you prefer historical narrative to fictional narrative, or vice versa? Why?
5. Discuss any of these; Stevenson's *Kidnapped* or *Treasure Island*, Rider Haggard's *King Solomon's Mines* or *Allan Quatermain*; as a narrative.
6. What do you think the chief merits of the short stories of Nathaniel Hawthorne *or* Ambrose Bierce *or* O. Henry *or* Ernest Hemingway?
7. If you have read either L. A. G. Strong's *English for Pleasure* or S. P. B. Mais's *The Fun of Writing*, what is your opinion of their chapters on fiction, with especial reference to the short story?
8. Why do you like or, as it may be, dislike *either* John Buchan's *The Thirty-Nine Steps* (or *Greenmantle*) *or* Geoffrey Household's *Rogue Male*?
9. Write a brief criticism of the short stories, or any particular short story, of (*a*) W. Somerset Maugham *or* H. E. Bates *or* Rhys Davies *or* John Pudney; or (*b*) Henry James *or* William Saroyan *or* Eudora Welty.
10. Do you prefer H. E. Bates's *or* Rhys Davies's novels to their short stories ? State the grounds of your preference.
11. Say how Neil Bell's summary of the craft of fiction has helped you.
12. Given the central idea of *Train Journey*, how would you yourself have handled the theme?
13. Is the omission of an exact date a defect in that story? Reasons, please.
14. Which (and why) is your favourite historical novel?
15. Discuss the place of dialogue in the short story.
16. What advantages has the novel over the short story?
17. Rewrite *Train Journey* with one of the attendants as the narrator, casting it into the ' I ' form.
18. Tell the story of the most exciting film you have seen.
19. Re-tell the story of the most gripping novel you have read.
20. Paraphrase any short story you remember.
21. Relate the most exciting day or night, or other period less than a month, you experienced during the war of 1939–45.
22. Recount the happiest day of your life, not as a gushing series of ' lovely ', ' marvellous ', ' smashing ', ' super ', but as a stream of incidents (however trivial).
23. Put into short-story form one of the following Shakespeare plays: *Macbeth, The Tempest, As You Like It, Twelfth Night, A Midsummer Night's Dream, King Lear.*
24. Narrate in 300–500 words the story of your school life.
25. Now in 90–100 words.
26. ' What I shall (D.v.) be doing in forty years' time.' A typical day.

§4. *History*

This is hardly the place for a discussion of the question, ' Is History an Art or a Science? ' In its methods of research it is a science, but an art in its writing.

In the main, history concerns the student of English only in so far as it constitutes a literary *genre*, or form of composition. Some of the greatest writers have been historians: Herodotus, Thucydides, Livy, Tacitus, Froissart, Gibbon, Michelet, Macaulay, Kinglake, Prescott, Renan, for instance. Of twentieth-century historians we need cite only Belloc and Chesterton, Collingwood and Trevelyan, Croce and Madariaga, to see that history appears to evoke a man's best writing: the greatness of the theme inspires men to almost transcend themselves. A moving theme so moves a writer that he moves us; the historian has a theme not only moving but magnificent.

To say that history is not creative is to be, at best, almost epigrammatic and, at worst, merely stupid. History consists of more than annals. By a pervasive sympathy and the creative imagination, the best historians re-create the past, precisely as a great historical novelist re-creates it and as a great ' ordinary ' novelist renders the present as vivid and absorbing as the past. A mere researcher—' learning more and more about less and less '—is not an historian; nor is a man of letters dabbling in history a true historian, as, for instance, Carlyle in *The French Revolution*, of which a Frenchman might have said, though there is no record of his saying it, ' C'est magnifique, mais ce n'est pas l'histoire '. Scholarship and imagination; scholarship and sympathy; scholarship and philosophy. Those are the combinations requisite to good historiography.

But read history for yourselves ' and see the world ', past and present, near and remote.

EXERCISES

1. Who is your favourite American historian? State your reasons.
2. Compare Livy with Tacitus, *or* Michelet with Renan, *or* Gibbon with Macaulay, *or* Belloc with Trevelyan, not literally as historians but literally as writers.
3. What has history in common with biography?
4. Discuss any one historical work by Hilaire Belloc *or* G. K. Chesterton *or* H. G. Wells *or* Lytton Strachey.
5. Discuss the literary merits and—if you think there are any—the defects of G. M. Trevelyan's *A History of England* or of his *English Social History*; or of James Truslow Adams's *The Epic of America*; or of W. K. Hancock's *A Short History of Australia.*

6. Relate the historical sequence of Shakespeare's *Coriolanus* or *Julius Caesar* or *Henry V*.
7. Turn any famous novel into historical form in 500–750 words.
8. Write a history of the war of 1914–18, or of that of 1939–45, in 600–1,000 words.
9. Tell the story of Socrates *or* Alexander the Great *or* Galileo both truthfully and readably, less as individuals than as mirrors of an epoch.
10. Can you—can anyone—put flesh, muscle, blood to the bones of economic history?

§5. *Description*

DESCRIPTION. An enumeration of the essential qualities of a thing, a species, or a person. From the Latin *descriptio*, itself from the verb *describere*, originally ' to write down, transcribe ' but later, influenced by *de*, ' concerning ', used in the current English sense ' to write about ', especially as to externals or, at the least, characteristics.

Etymologically *description* is a general term; in practice, certain kinds of description have acquired specialized names, as in *characterization*, the description of character. The current sense of *description* is ' description of scenery, furniture, surroundings, environs, environment '—the physical and structural setting in which one finds oneself. This we see in such statements as ' Scott contains too many and too long descriptions to suit the modern taste '; ' Balzac excelled in the description of interiors '; ' Meredith's descriptive prose—especially in the rural scenes of *Richard Feverel*—occasionally rivals the delicacy and beauty of the rural scenes in his poem, *Love in the Valley* '.

Descriptions of Nature, cities, interiors have, as nineteenth-century has given way to twentieth-century ideals and conventions, become fewer and briefer. On the other hand we now describe a repression or an obsession at a length and with a tediousness equal to Scott's, Ainsworth's, Thackeray's, Charles Reade's pictures of castle or hall, ball or tourney, country house or town factory. Factories, indeed, are still described in detail; so are great stores, British and American alike.

Description is now written in a more lively manner, often in a drily or heartily humorous manner. The human factors in the scene are accorded their rightful place. Usually, too, description is linked more closely with the characters and with the plot. The style is more laconic or more colloquial; less solemn, less ponderous, less periodic. In the treatment of machinery, ships, trains, engines, engineering, Kipling showed the way towards a more vivid, realistic yet human treatment; nor have his achievements been surpassed, very rarely have they been equalled.

EXERCISES

1. Have the lessons of the preceding paragraphs been explicitly or implicitly inculcated?
2. What are those lessons?
3. How does the current sense of *description* differ from the original sense?
4. State in a couple of lines the etymology of *description.*
5. Name a nineteenth-century writer, not mentioned in the text, as notable for his or her excellent descriptions of
   (*a*) Nature
   (*b*) cities
   (*c*) factories
   (*d*) a battlefield.
   Add the title of a book, or other composition, in which he or she does this.
6. Who, think you, is the best twentieth-century descriptive writer in
   (*a*) Great Britain
   (*b*) The United States of America
   (*c*) Canada
   (*d*) South Africa
   (*e*) Australia
   (*f*) New Zealand
   (*g*) India and Pakistan?
7. A short account of the descriptive poetry in the works of Shakespeare —Milton—Thompson—Wordsworth—Tennyson—Longfellow—Chesterton.
8. Describe any great city as you have seen it lit by the moon.
9. Describe, for someone ignorant of machinery, one of these:
   a printing press; a turbine; a submarine.
10. For your country cousin, set forth the charms of the town or city in which you live, *or* for your town cousin, draw a picture of life on a farm or in a country village.
11. Describe the spectacle presented by
    a great procession
    a large factory working at full blast
    an immense library during its busy hours
    an operating theatre in a hospital
    an agricultural and pastoral show or exhibition
    a flooded farm
    a mountain snow-clad
    a baby-show or a dog-show
    an illuminated manuscript
    any famous painting
    the outside world as seen by a convict released after twenty years.
12. What is the place of the verb in description? Compare and contrast this place with that of the adjective.
13. Give a critical account of the role of scenery in one of the following poets: Homer, Virgil, Dante, Goethe, Hugo.

14. What is local colour and how is it employed in the novels of Cervantes *or* Fielding *or* Hugo *or* Nathaniel Hawthorne *or* Hardy?
15. Contrast Hardy's treatment of Nature with Meredith's; *or* Thackeray's with Dickens's; *or* Bennett's with Galsworthy's.
16. 'Dickens regards country life from the angle of a Cockney.' Discuss.
17. How would *you* recommend that corporate urban life be handled in a novel?

§6. *Dialogue*

'DIALOGUE. Middle English *dialoge*, French *dialogue*, Latin *dialogus*, Greek *dialogos*, from *dialegesthai*, to converse; *dia*, through + *legein*, to speak.

1. A written composition in which two or more persons are represented as conversing or reasoning on some topic; as, the *Dialogues* of Plato.

2. A colloquy or conversation between two or more persons; conversation; particularly, formal conversation in the drama or in scholastic exercises (*Webster's New International Dictionary*) and, whether formal or informal, in the short story, the novel, etc.

In the drama, conversation is selected and conflated, in order, positively, to heighten the dramatic effect and, negatively, to remove those tedious patches which mar the artistic unity of almost every natural conversation. Moreover, it is accelerated, not merely by the processes of selection and conflation, but in actual delivery of the 'speeches'. Conflation or 'telescoping' is the running of two or three artless or normal statements into one 'speech'. It has been said that dramatic dialogue is 'as large as life and twice as natural';[1] it is neither the one nor the other; nor, artistically, could it be.

But dialogue as it occurs in fiction has become increasingly natural. Nowadays it is almost completely natural, with the result that, if carried on for long, it becomes intensely boring. In a short story or a novel, or in a short dialogue written as an exercise, the simplest—the best—course to pursue is: to keep the dialogue entirely natural and commendably brief; where, as in the dialogue-exercise, it cannot be shorter than a stated length, it is advisable to diversify the conversation as much as possible—diversity of the length of speeches, of tone, of speed, with an occasional interpolation.

In the writing of dialogue, the most important thing to remember is to speak in character: every speech, every turn of phrase, every word has to be, not merely what the particular person could but also what he would, in those circumstances, have said. The most frequent fault in dialogue is that every character is made to speak like the author or, less reprehensibly, like the members of one social class. In dealing with current

[1] The phrase was first used by Lewis Carroll, in *Through the Looking-Glass*, 1872.

speech, these faults stand out with an unpleasant sharpness: they 'hit you in the eye'. Yet they stand out almost as much in imaginary conversations; the one fault of Walter Savage Landor's magnificent *Imaginary Conversations* is this tendency of all the characters to speak so much like one another, and so much like Walter Savage Landor. This fault is less marked in the less famous imaginary conversations written by Walter's brother, Robert Eyres Landor, by H. D. Traill and G. W. Steevens and Maurice Baring.

You cannot, at your age, rival *The New Lucian* and *Monologues of the Dead* and *Diminutive Dramas*, but you can learn much from the chapter 'Imaginary Conversations' in S. P. B. Mais's *The Fun of Writing*. Nor need you confine yourselves to the imaginary: try your hand at recording conversations in which you have shared or which you have overheard.

EXERCISES

1. What is the etymology of *dialogue*?
2. What is a *monologue*? What a *duologue*? Is there any difference between a monologue and a soliloquy?
3. Set forth (*a*) the similarities and (*b*) the differences between everyday dialogue, i.e. ordinary conversation, and theatrical dialogue.
4. Now those between natural dialogue and the sort of dialogue you find in contemporary novels.
5. Write a criticism, not necessarily adverse, of the dialogue in Dickens *or* Thackeray *or* Meredith *or* Galsworthy; or in Washington Irving *or* Hawthorne *or* Sinclair Lewis *or* Steinbeck.
6. Compare the prose with the verse dialogue in Shakespeare.
7. What do you think of the dialogue in the plays by Goldsmith and by Sheridan?
8. Criticize the dialogue in George Bernard Shaw *or* in Eugene O'Neill.
9. Name three English authors of imaginary historical conversations and their relevant work.
10. What are the essentials of good dialogue, considered both intrinsically and extrinsically, in the short story?
11. How does short-story dialogue differ from dialogue in novels?
12. Discuss the place, if any, of dialogue in
    (*a*) history,
    (*b*) private letters.
13. Into what faults of dialogue does a playwright fall the most frequently?
14. Write a critical appreciation of the dialogue in the novels and short stories of:

    Thomas Hardy
    H. G. Wells
    Aldous Huxley *or* R. C. Hutchinson.

15. Write a brief imaginary conversation, *either*
    (*a*) between you and Bill Smith on the next Rugby international *or* the next cricket ' test ';
    (*b*) between you and Mary on the next hockey *or* lawn tennis match.
16. Now try your hand at an imaginary dialogue between Queen Elizabeth and Queen Anne.
17. You should be able to write a good conversation between some of the following pairs of collocutors:
    Caesar and Mussolini
    Genghiz Khan and Hitler
    Shakespeare and Bernard Shaw
    Mark Antony and Mark Twain
    Mohammed and T. E. Lawrence
    Buddha and Mahatma Gandhi
    George Washington and Baron Münchhausen (*anglicé* Munchausen)
    Dante and Voltaire
    Confucius and Dr Johnson
    Marlborough and Montgomery; *or* Generals Stonewall Jackson and George Patton
    Walt Whitman and T. S. Eliot
    Abraham Lincoln and Franklin Delano Roosevelt
    Henry Lawson and O. Henry
    Burke and Sir Stafford Cripps
    Nelson and the commander of the Swiss Navy
    Columbus and Captain Cook
    Don Quixote and Henry Ford
    Galileo and Galen
    Michelangelo and Augustus John; *or* Velazquez and J. S. Sargent
    Bach and Stravinsky
    Beethoven and *either* Gershwin *or* Cole Porter
    Archimedes and Newton
    M. & Mme Curie and Rutherford the physicist
    Stentor and Edison
    Ulysses and Machiavelli
    Diogenes and Rockefeller.
18. A conversation between a genial Frenchman and a stiff, elderly Englishwoman in a railway carriage.
19. Between an American and a Briton in a subway.
20. An Australian and a New Zealander in Fiji.
21. A German and an Italian in Westminster Abbey (year: 1949).
22. A new boy (girl) and a Sixth-Former thrown together in a train collision.
23. A retired headmaster of a great Public School and a trainee teacher.
24. A Martian and a terrestrial on D-Day, 1944.
25. A Conservative and a Socialist in Hades (year: 1950).
26. A Canadian and Australian (or New Zealand) lumberman.

§7. *Essays*

Much has already been said[1] about essay-writing. Repetition would insult you. To say much that is new, even about subjects requiring

[1] Book I, ' Composition '; Book II, ' Composition '.

intellection and reflection, explanation and discussion, would bring you less benefit than you would derive from a close study of half a dozen twentieth-century essays by such writers as George Santayana, Logan Pearsall Smith, George Gordon, Alexander Woollcott, E. V. Lucas, Ivor Brown, Charles Morgan, Robert Lynd, John Brophy.

No matter how 'advanced' the essay-writing, the secret lies in the etymology of *essay*, of which Francis Bacon (1597) remarked, 'The word is late, but the thing is ancient'; Bacon adopted it from the *Essais* of Montaigne, the world's greatest essayist. The French *essai* comes from the Low Latin *exagium*, a balance: compare Classical Latin *examen*, a weighing, and *exigere*; one of the two basic senses of *exigere* is 'to complete', with derivative 'to weigh'—via 'to complete a weighing'.

An essay is a weighing: a weighing-up, followed by a declaration of the weight. The weight of whatever matter or subject or topic is under consideration. But you—not your teacher, nor your examiner—*you* do the weighing and declare the weight. In the opening paragraph you put the article into the scale; in the body of the essay, you weigh it carefully; at the end, you declare the weight and set the article aside.

An essay is your personal weighing of the subject. Your *examination* of the subject is partial and selective, the choice of the aspects being your, not someone else's choice. You might weigh incorrectly: the error is far less important than the activity. You do the weighing yourself, not supervise some third party. You express freely whatever *you* have to say.

Your own response to a subject, be that response intellectual, aesthetic, emotional, is what the reader expects; if he didn't, he would go to an encyclopaedia or some other source. You will be personal even about the esoteric significance of cubism, no less than about 'The Happiest Day of My Life'. Naturally, however, you will, quantitatively, be less personal upon Shinto than, unless you are a Japanese, upon rock-gardens; more personal upon 'What I Hope to Do in Life' than upon municipal libraries. Each subject dictates or, at the least, suggests the degree of 'personalness' you will express: but no rules can be laid down upon the subject. You will develop a flair in these matters—a flair consisting of good taste, social tact, reticence, and so forth.

Of the principles of essay-writing, you already know sufficient. Anything further you may wish or be obliged to learn, you will be wise to assimilate rather than to 'swot'. Your teacher and, if you go to a university, your tutor will instruct you indirectly by criticizing your essays. Also, you will 'learn as you go' from the mere act of writing essays.

In addition to the essayists I have recommended in the opening paragraph of this section, study the following essay by Wilson Benington. It is partly descriptive, partly historical, partly reflective.

THE GARDEN BONAPARTE[1]

(Legends of Luxembourg)

Beyond the wrecked magnificence of the Castle of Vianden a straight path leads across the steep fields of ripening rye, into the Sacred Wood of the White Lady. Some hundred paces before the edge of the wood, in the angle of a hillside gully, is the Holy Spring of Hildebour. Here, before the Romans came to confuse with their half Grecian, half Etruscan gods, the Celtic or Germanic deities, and long before the first evangelists imposed a newer hierarchy upon this groundwork of mingled myths, the wild inhabitants made sacrifice to Hulda, protectress of fields and boundaries. The chill spring, innocent of the flight of ages, gushes from a little tunnel in the rock with that persistent, gentle power which can alone ' wear out the everlasting flint ', and fills a stony pool by the wayside. A small and aged oak tree stands solitary beside it, a Druid still.

This is the *Ruomeberg* or Roman mountain, and the haunted wood before us is *Pôrbrétchen*, sacred to *Brét* or Berta, goddess of the shining moon and mother of Thor. A few tall fir trees darken its entrance, but within, the wood is of oak and beech. The trees are tall and well grown, not thick-boled and low-branched like those of English parkland, but aspiring to the light and admitting it into their midst. It is said that the belated wanderer may be confronted here at midnight by the White Lady. Her other name is *Freia*, goddess of spring (for so are the myths confused); and who should fear such lovely apparition? She was the legendary mother of the great house of Orange-Nassau-Vianden. For centuries her appearance was to that noble family a harbinger of death. It can be so no more, for the line is now extinct, and the present Grand Duchess of Luxembourg is not of the true descent.

The broad, soft footpath leads to the abrupt edge of a gorge. Green forest climbs its shoulders. The rocks that break through the ground in slaty precipices where the path turns sharply and narrows along the side of the ravine are a nesting-place of the long-winged hawk which hovers over the valley. Almost a hawk's view is ours as we look down on the windings of the Our and away to the shattered towers of Falkenstein perched on their rocky steep. A little chapel stands here on the platform at the angle of the hill, the chapel of Bildchen. The Christian myth enshrined in it is stranger than the Pagan associations that surround it. Legend is very exact and circumstantial in this instance. In the year of our Lord 994, on the first of May, children were gathering wood for a fire on the hillside, when one of them found in an oak tree a little wooden image. They promptly threw it into the flames, where it glowed with a strange and increasing brightness, but was in no way consumed. The frightened youngsters ran home with their story, and soon the townsfolk

[1] Written ca. 1937 and published in my anthology, *For These Few Minutes*, 1938.

flocked to see the marvel. The clergy also came, and by them the miraculous thing was plucked out of the fire, showing no trace of burning, and carried to Vianden Church. They declared it to be an image of the Blessed Virgin. Next morning it had disappeared and was found again in its old place in the oak tree. When this miracle had been twice repeated, a little shrine was made for the image in the tree itself, and when in the course of centuries the oak decayed, this shrine was removed to a niche in the rock hard by. Only last century the present chapel was built and the little statue of the Virgin, beautifully robed and bearing the child on her left arm, placed above its altar. Year by year it is a place of pilgrimage, and in a well some few yards away afflicted folk bathe their ailing eyes; for the well, too, is holy and was famed for the curative virtue of its water in pre-Christian, prehistoric times. Once a year the Virgin is carried in procession through the wood with banners and with singing to the Church of Vianden and, after due reverence, carried back again to the home she chose for herself a thousand years ago.

In the midst of the wood there is a chestnut tree (*marronnier d'Inde*). It was planted to celebrate the birth of Napoleon's son, the ill-starred King of Rome. Its tall, straight trunk and three upright branches bear a load of foliage whose darker green is conspicuous among the other trees of the wood. The seat placed under it long ago has fallen to ruin; the little stagnant pool beside it is choked with the fallen leaves of many autumns. This spot is called the Garden Bonaparte, but none regard it now. The White Lady is remembered, the sacred springs are sacred still, the antique image is revered as of old, but Napoleon and his conquests have become a myth.

EXERCISES

1. What light does the word-history of *essay* throw upon the scope and the essentials of the essay?
2. Write a brief criticism of the essays by Oliver Wendell Holmes *or* James Russell Lowell *or* Robert Benchley *or* H. L. Mencken *or* George Jean Nathan *or* Stephen Leacock.
3. Compare Lamb and Leigh Hunt, *or* Hazlitt and Matthew Arnold, as essayists.
4. Write an appreciation of one of these essayists: Dean Inge (primarily a theologian); A. N. Whitehead (primarily a mathematician); Bertrand Russell (primarily a philosopher); George Santayana (philosopher).
5. Wherein lies the charm of ' The Garden Bonaparte '?
6. Who is your favourite twentieth-century essayist, and why?
7. Compare the art of the essay with that of autobiography.
8. Do you think that, in essay papers, examiners allow candidates a sufficient range of subjects from which to choose?
9. What are the main differences between an essay and a leading article?
10. Between an essay and an article (a ' middle ') in a magazine?

11. Discuss the role of the essay in the development of one's good taste.
12. Here are a few subjects capable of eliciting good essays—or, at the worst, designed to afford good practice.

The cinema as the acme—nay, the apotheosis—of wishful thinking
Hollywood as a purveyor of culture
Film and fashion (in clothes and furniture)
The psychological effect of a new hat
The relationship of the verbal to the pretentiously-named practical joke
Sentiment is an important part of life
Sentimentality is to sentiment what crude oil is to refined
The detective in fiction
The detective on the stage *or* on the films
Horse sense, common sense, good sense
A defence of clichés
The value of proverbs
The art of the epigram
'History teaches us nothing—except that history teaches us nothing'
Sadism in the novel
Myth and superstition
'The best education is that which is the least utilitarian'
Perhaps the most enduring, the best things in life are the intangibles and the imponderables
Benevolent autocracy
Compare music and poetry
What differentiates poetry from verse?
If you were to live for one year as a hermit and were restricted to three books, state which they would be, 'because . . .'
Describe the most beautiful machine you know
A pen-picture of Paris *or* Berlin *or* London *or* Edinburgh *or* New York *or* Chicago *or* San Francisco *or* Sydney *or* Cape Town *or* Bombay *or* Toronto
'The wide open spaces'
Town *v.* country as a place to live if you had the choice
The passion for speed
'Integrity, the one safe anchor'
'Destroy religion and you destroy you know not what'
'Self-forgetting is self-realization'
How would Napoleon have regarded the war of 1939–45?
'War is a cleanser'
Discontent as a cause of progress
Party government *v.* national government
'Silence will soon be taxed'.

§8. *Reports and Memoranda*

In Book II, or while you were studying for a School or Leaving Certificate or some similar examination, you worked at précis-writing. What you learned will enable you to write any report[1] that consists merely in a summary. You have only to remember that the report should omit no

[1] Etymologically, *report* is 'something carried back', Latin *res reportata*—or simply *reportatum*, 'a thing carried back'. The Romans used it of, e.g., messages.

important topic or point, be clearly and tersely written, suitably brief, follow the logical or natural order of topics, and perform the function demanded of the report.

There is, however, another sort of report. A report you make of, for instance, a visit to a factory or a school, a survey of a district or a gold-field, the potentialities of trade, the merits of a book or a play, the advantages and disadvantages of a certain invention, and so forth. Here, you collect the evidence, arrange it, write an account as logically, lucidly, concisely as possible; omitting all irrelevancies and all trivialities.

Report made, June 16, 1948, *on* X

At the end (or at the beginning), the place at which the report was made—on the left; on the right, signature

(who you are).

If the report exceeds one paragraph, introduce each paragraph with a sub-heading, preferably in the middle of the page and on a line to itself.

Normally the order of a report is this:

accurate naming of the event, the thing or the person concerned
exact locality under consideration
what the survey or inspection has revealed
actual value
potential value
advantages (or merits)
disadvantages (or defects)
verdict or decision.

If you examine that list of essentials, you will find that it fits man or metal, book or blue print, invention or discovery, site or building, play or musical composition, goldfield or 'gold digger', success or failure, fortune good or ill, silviculture or sericulture, the actual or the potential, the real or the imaginary.

Perhaps an example would help.

The typescript of a book has been sent to me by a publisher, who wishes me to read it for him and to report upon it. This, roughly, is the form of report I make:

The Spider's Web:

a novel by Billy Fly. Date of report (*Could go at end*)

Length: 75,000 words.
The author: First book; if this is not his first, the names of at least some of his other books; who he is.
Story: a summary in 150–300 words.

Criticism: if the book is bad, very brief; if worth publishing,
(*a*) its merits and
(*b*) its saleability

Yes or No.

(Date) Signature of ' reader '.

A memorandum is sometimes, though very loosely, taken to be the same as a report of the second kind. Strictly, however, a memorandum is, in commerce ' an informal communication, especially one on paper headed " memorandum " with the sender's name and address '[1] or, more fully, ' an informal epistolary communication without signature or formula of address or subscription, usually written on paper with a printed heading bearing the word " Memorandum " and the name and address of the sender '[2] and, in diplomacy, ' an informal summary or statement of the grounds for or against an action, the state of a question, or the like '.[1] Literally, *memorandum* is ' a thing to be remembered ', from Latin *memorare*, ' to bring to mind '; the usual plural is, as in Latin, *memoranda*, but the more English plural *memorandums* is fast gaining ground.

Ministries play a round game, which consists of the despatch of multitudinous memoranda from one department to another—less politely known as ' passing the buck '; these memo's often come home to roost. The initiators mostly take the trouble to write them well, for they are filed. But why should I take the bloom off an innocent pleasure, which some few of you will, some day, share?

EXERCISES

1. Distinguish between
   (*a*) the two kinds of report;
   (*b*) report and memorandum.
2. What are the etymologies of *report* and *memorandum*?
3. State the essentials of a good report.
4. Write
   (*a*) a mining engineer's report upon a suspected (not a suspect) goldfield.
   (*b*) a report upon the teaching of English in your school. (You need not fear reprisals; you might even—who knows?—win gratitude.)
   (*c*) a report upon the terrain of a proposed attack with tanks *or* upon the possibilities of a sea-raid upon an enemy port.
5. What would *you* expect to find in a memorandum?
6. Send a memo, as from the captain of football to the captain of hockey, *or* from that of hockey to that of rounders *or* from that of baseball to that of (American) football, upon the state of the playing field.

[1] *Webster's New International Dictionary.*
[2] *The Oxford English Dictionary.*

§9. *Articles*

ARTICLE. Originally, a joint of the body—or a part between joints. Hence, a distinct portion of a discourse or a literary work. Hence, a literary composition forming part of a cyclopaedia, a magazine, a newspaper. (*Webster's New International Dictionary.*)

ARTICLE. From Latin *articulus*, a joint of the body. Hence, in rhetoric, a division. The Latin original is a diminutive of *artus*, limb of a body, and it derives from the Greek *arthron*. The radical or base is a presumed *ar*, ' to join '.

It is not incorrect to equate *article* with *essay*; and a serious or somewhat academic essay, provided it appear in a newspaper or a magazine, may correctly be called an article. But *article* has a wider application than *essay*, for it also includes ' leaders ' or leading articles (editorials), and also literary compositions that, although cast into the mould of the essay, not only lack its literary graces but also may deal with topics not normally the subjects of essays—statistics, dietetics, scientific discovery, formal philosophy, and the like. An examination of the articles in an encyclopaedia and then a comparison of these articles and any essays with which you are familiar (Bacon's, Lamb's, Lynd's, for instance) will show you the practical application of my theoretical remarks.

A further point to notice is that *a leading article* in newspaper or magazine reflects the policy of the periodical concerned; but *an article* in a magazine (or, indeed, a newspaper) may be independent of that policy.

But every article is characterized by its distinct—its clear and decisive—treatment of the subject. Therefore, an article properly so called tends to be both more formally or logically systematic and more comprehensive than an essay; it should be as systematic as possible and as comprehensive as space will allow.

It follows, therefore, that an article is more judicial, more judicious, more formal, and less, sometimes much less, personal than an essay. The writing of an article is a science; that of an essay, an art. This is not to say that an article lacks art, but merely that usually it is, as compared with an essay, rather lacking in art.

Here is an article I wrote many years ago. I do not claim that it is a good one, but merely that, being very much an article, it will show you precisely what a (rather literary) article, addressed to non-medical readers, might be in form.

Opium in the Age of Anne

The word *opium* comes direct from the Latin of Pliny and derives from the Greek *opion*, poppy-juice, itself a development of *opos*, vegetable-juice. In English, the earliest recorded mention of the word *opium* is

in 1498, although the form *opie* occurs in Chaucer a century earlier. Compounds such as *opium-eater*, *opium-smoker*, do not appear till about 1800, whereas *opiate* in its various senses established itself in the period 1550–1650. *Dope*, meaning opium and any other drug, is a recent Americanism; it was at first (perhaps about 1860) used of any thick liquid or near-liquid serving as a lubricant or as an article of food; the verb *to dope* is much too modern to have got into the great *Oxford Dictionary*, and I doubt whether it existed prior to the late 1880's.

Opium was employed medically as early as the first century B.C. Until the year 1200 A.D. the only kind known in commerce was that which was brought from Asia Minor;[1] early in the sixteenth century, Indian opium became well known, and the next century witnessed the first real popularity of Persian opium. It was the Arabs who introduced opium into China in the thirteenth century, but opium-smoking did not become prevalent in that country till about 1700. By 1890, opium was produced in every province in China, where, even now and despite rigorous laws, opium-smoking is more widespread than anywhere else. 'Dope-fiends', when they can get it, nowadays prefer smoking opium to eating it or drinking it dissolved. The opium officially imported into Britain for medical use comes chiefly from Asia Minor, Greece and Persia.

The great Greek physician Galen, who flourished in the latter half of the second century A.D., and who, as the founder of experimental physiology and as a voluminous writer, had such an influence that 'after his death, European medicine remained at the same dead level for nearly fourteen centuries' (Garrison: *The History of Medicine*)—Galen in his prescriptions showed that he thoroughly understood the medical use of opium and other drugs. During the Middle Ages, however, opium (like hemlock, the favourite of the Greeks) yielded to mandragora as a soporific. Early in the sixteenth century, Paracelsus, who in some ways was far ahead of his time, made opium a very important part of his medicine-chest. In 1751 Dr Richard Brookes named it as one of the four 'Herculean' (we should say 'sovereign') remedies.

It may not be amiss to remind those who have not seen the finished product that opium is worked into balls, small cakes, or slender sticks, and that it gives off a heavy smell, tastes bitter and has a reddish-brown colour. The definition in that famous book, *Squire's Companion to the British Pharmacopoeia* (I consulted the nineteenth edition), reads so like Dr Johnson at his best that, in moments of fatigue or annoyance, I murmur it as a charm: 'the milky exudation of *papaver somniferum* obtained by incision from the unripe capsules, and inspissated by spontaneous evaporation'. If only the compiler had put *lacteal* for *milky*, and *immature* for *unripe*, Dr Johnson could not have bettered it. He would probably have been gracious enough to translate the Latin as 'soporific poppy'; *inspissated* (i.e. thickened) was a favourite word of his. Ordinary doctors employ

[1] The French often say just *opium*, but *opium de Smyrne* is more correct, and until 1914 it was more frequent.

opium very widely (though less now, I believe, than before the War of 1914–1918) as a hypnotic and a sedative; occasionally as a refresher, an expectorant, a liniment; there are several other uses not to be recorded here.

The most famous book relating to opium is, of course, De Quincey's *Confession of an English Opium-Eater*, 1822. That very 'modern' French writer, M. Jean Cocteau, has published an entertaining little volume, entitled with terse effectiveness: *Opium*. A work that, very little known indeed, should be read by all interested in the subject, *Opium Eating*, is evidently written by an exceedingly well-educated man: this anonymous American served in the Civil War and did not bring out his tragic and realistic autobiography until 1876. Precisely ninety years earlier, one of his countrymen had published what is probably the best book on the subject prior to 1800: the *Experimental Inquiry into the Properties of Opium*, by John Leigh.

But of the technical and semi-technical accounts of opium, the most readable that I have chanced upon is that in Richard Mead's *Poisons*, 1702. Mead was the leading English physician of the years 1715–1754, and it was by this book that he became famous. Essay the Fourth deals solely with opium and begins: 'The Ancients having experienced that Opium would oftentimes kill, tho' taken in no large quantity, ranked it with the Poisons, and gave it the first place among those which, from their stupefying quality, they call'd narcotic'. (The word *narcotic* is used by Chaucer in *The Canterbury Tales*.)

Mead holds that the history and preparation of opium, 'so celebrated a drug',[1] is so well known that he can pass immediately to more serious matters. After a lively and arresting account of the true differences between sleeping and waking, he goes on to say: 'They who take a moderate Dose of Opium, especially not long accustomed to it, are so transported with the pleasing Senses it induces, that they are, as they sometimes express themselves, in Heaven; and tho' they do not always sleep (which proceeds from the presentation of pleasing Images to the Mind being so strong that, like Dreams, they do over-engage the Fancy, and so interrupt the State of Rest), yet they do however enjoy so perfect an Indulgence and Quiet, that no Happiness in the world can surpass the charms of this agreeable Extasy'. The Doctor, speaking of those who take large doses, remarks of the Turks and the Persians that they often eat a dram or two at a time and that the effects 'are no other than downright Drunkenness; upon which account it is as common a saying with them, and on the same occasion, *He has eat Opium*; as with us, *He has drunk too much Wine*'. (Mead nowhere alludes to opium-smoking: it seems certain that he had not heard of it.)

He mentions that those Egyptians who craved for, but could not get opium, would, as a substitute, drink 'large doses of Cretic Wine made hotter by the infusion of Pepper, and the like strong Aromatics'. As

[1] *Drug* first occurs in the fourteenth century.

pepper is not an aromatic, the latter part of this ambiguous sentence may be supposed to read: ' or of the like strong aromatic Wines '. He refers to, and satisfactorily explains, the fact that madmen can take a quadruple dose without much effect.

Mead declared that ' there needs no more to make Opium prove destructive or a Poison, than to take too great a quantity of it; for then it must inflame the Stomach, and rarefy the blood to such a degree, that the Vessels cannot again recover their Tone, whereupon Apoplectic Symptoms, etc., will insue '. He came to this conclusion after a ghastly experiment upon a small dog, which he forced to swallow ' half a drachm of Crude Opium ' dissolved in water. The dog rid himself of it. ' But repeating the Trial, by holding up his Head, I made him retain three or four Doses.' After an hour, the dog began to sleep, ' but presently started up with Convulsions, fell into universal Tremblings, his Head constantly twitched and shaking; he breathed short and with Labour, lost entirely the use first of his hinder Legs and then of his Fore ones, which were stiff and rigid like Sticks. As he lay snorting, to hasten his End I was giving him some more of the Solution, but on a sudden his Limbs grew limber, and he died.'

Yet Mead was humane and kind.

EXERCISES

1. Relate the etymology of *article* to its meaning in literary composition.
2. What is the difference between
   (*a*) a leading article and an article in an encyclopaedia
   (*b*) an article—or ' middle '—in a weekly or monthly magazine and a leading article.
3. What, in your (not your teacher's, nor my) opinion, constitutes a good article?
4. Who is your favourite article-writer, and why? Confine your answer to writers in weekly, bi-weekly, monthly, quarterly magazines, but choose either a Briton or an American, as you prefer.
5. Write short articles (300–1,000 words) on
   (*a*) A paradise of tourists
   (*b*) The dangers of muzzling the Press
   (*c*) What science has, in the twentieth century, done *for* civilization
   (*d*) What science has, since the fourteenth century, done *against* civilization
   (*e*) Cinema *v.* theatre
   (*f*) Radio *v.* theatre
   (*g*) Cinema and radio *v.* reading
   (*h*) ' Socialism means the government of all by all for all, not the government of all by some for some '
   (*i*) ' Conservatism means the preservation of the good, not merely of goods and property '
   (*j*) The place of the poet in the modern State
   (*k*) The absurdity of glorifying an athlete or a games-player
   (*l*) ' Art, like literature and music, would benefit by a discriminating Government patronage'.

§10. *Autobiography*

As its etymology shows, autobiography is the telling of one's own life-story: Greek *autos*, self, with combining-form *auto*; *bios*, life, with combining-form *bio*; *graphë*, a writing.

We all of us know the boy or the girl, the man or the woman, who, on any provocation or none, launches upon the excessively boring story of his or her life, the worst of it being that these incontinent creatures usually have no story to tell and proceed to tell it at great length and, if anything, with even greater incoherence. People will ramble so when they get onto their own self-fascinating lives! They have, most of them, very little sense of order and almost no sense of the need to select. An autobiography is not an aggregate nor an accumulation, it is a selection.

> Before you start your autobiography you must make notes about it, construct a sort of scaffolding on which to build it. You have to build it room by room, chapter by chapter. . . . Only when the scaffolding is up and the notes arranged in their right order can you start. The important thing to remember about starts, whether in a race or a book, is to get quickly off the mark. . . . Your object is . . . to prove that your actual life is interesting in spite of the fact that you aren't a buccaneer or a cow-puncher. You'll really be surprised to find, once you have made a start, . . . how easily your pen runs on, and how it all comes back to you. . . . If you don't find it going as well as you expect, give it a rest, and try writing the autobiography of other people and other things,[1]

—and then come back to it.

Or alternatively read three or four of the classic autobiographies and see how the authors have gone about the writing. Say Gibbon's, E. J. Trelawney's, Trollope's. Having read and studied them, you will feel that now you are aware of the difficulties—but also of how to overcome those difficulties.

EXERCISES

1. Differentiate autobiography from
   (*a*) letter-writing;
   (*b*) keeping a diary.
2. Write a brief appreciation (15–20 lines) of an autobiography you have enjoyed.
3. How would you set about writing your autobiography?
4. Write the autobiography of
   (*a*) a half-crown piece
   (*b*) a ten-guinea watch

[1] S. P. B. Mais, *The Fun of Writing*, chapter on 'Autobiography'.

(*c*) a scientific invention
(*d*) an idea
(*e*) a book
(*f*) a chemical element
(*g*) a form of energy in physics
(*h*) a professional cricketer *or* footballer *or* baseball player
(*i*) a train-driver
(*j*) an aircraft pilot
(*k*) a schoolmaster or schoolmistress
(*l*) a domestic servant
(*m*) a dog *or* a cat *or* a horse
(*n*) a bicycle
(*o*) a school text-book either of history or of English, from the time it comes on the market until it becomes salvage.

§11. *Biography*

If you put yourselves in the place of a half-crown piece, a book, an idea, etc., and tell its story in the First Person, you can equally well tell its story in the third—that is, as biography instead of as autobiography. The transition from the one to the other is slight.

The greatest difference is that, whereas in telling your own story, you know all about it, in telling that of someone else, you have to find out: from the person himself, if possible; from his friends, if they are not dead; from his diaries, letters, autobiography or other literary works; from obituaries, appreciations, articles; and—unless, naturally, you're the first in the field—from any other biography. Many things you can never definitely know: you have to divine and to interpret.

If the person died before your own generation or lived in a country of which you possess no first-hand knowledge, you must acquaint yourself with the political and economic, geographical and social, intellectual and spiritual setting, background, environment, history.

All that, evidently, applies to full-scale biography. Anything you may attempt will hardly exceed 5,000 words and very rarely exceed 2,000. Within that scope, the setting can only be indicated; sketched, not painted; only the most outstanding events in the person's life can be treated; only the important influences exercised upon him by others, the chief by him upon others, can be mentioned; historical portraiture rather than pure biography will be attempted.

Within that scope, you will, to achieve your aim, cause the biography to flow as naturally as a short story and as smoothly and agreeably as an essay. For you, then, biography will differ but little from essay: it will be virtually an essay, the theme biographical.

If you wish to further your knowledge of the art of biography for use by yourselves at the present stage of your development, I recommend that you read and re-read the chapter 'Biography' in S. P. B. Mais's *The Fun of Writing*.

EXERCISES

1. Differentiate between biography and autobiography.
2. Show how a person's diary will assist you in the writing of his biography.
3. What differences must there be between a biography of (say) 70,000 words and one of (say) 3,000?
4. If you had to help someone to write your biography, what would you be prepared to do and what would you expect him to do for himself?
5. How would you go about writing a biography (3,000 words) of
   (*a*) Alexander the Great *or* Julius Caesar
   (*b*) Joan of Arc *or* Queen Elizabeth
   (*c*) Pasteur *or* Edison.
6. Write a short biography (500–1200 words) of
   (*a*) Alfred the Great
   (*b*) William Shakespeare
   (*c*) George Washington
   (*d*) Lord Byron
   (*e*) Edison
   (*f*) General Eisenhower *or* Field-Marshal Alexander
   (*g*) a friend
   (*h*) any hero in fiction
   (*i*) your favourite uncle *or* aunt *or* grandparent.

§12. *Travel*

'To be a good traveller you've got to cultivate the kind of mind that misses nothing, and to keep the same sort of wild excitement going that you had when you first saw the sea,' advises S. P. B. Mais in his very readable chapter 'Travel' in *The Fun of Writing*. About the sort of mind, the attitude, I agree heartily, but I think that even more important than the excitement (certainly it need not be wild) is an incessant, lively, perceptive curiosity.

Travel may take place in your own country as well as abroad. All travel should be conceived and executed in a spirit of adventure; it does not have to be, in itself, perilous. The seeing eye, the open mind, the alert senses: equipped with these, you will hardly go wrong.

But the best way to learn how to write about travel is, apart from constant or, at the least, frequent practice in writing, to read some of the classics of travel. They are fascinating books and, because they were written at first hand, they are very well written. Try Marco Polo, a selection from Richard Hakluyt, Charles Waterton's *Wanderings in South America*, Parkman's *The Oregon Trail*, Kinglake's *Eothen*, H. W. Bates's *The Naturalist on the Amazons*, Sir Richard Burton's *A Pilgrimage to El-Medinah and Mecca* and *First Footsteps in East Africa*, Charles Montagu Doughty's *Travels in Arabia Deserta*, one or two of Conrad's novels of the sea, the story of Captain Scott at the South Pole, and, among

contemporary writers, H. M. Tomlinson, Peter Fleming, Freya Stark. An excellent example of the easier, more domestic, less perilous sort of travel is afforded by Robert Louis Stevenson's *Travels with a Donkey in the Cévennes.*

The writing of a good book of travel, whether near or far, safe or dangerous, by land, sea, air, depends upon equal abilities in narrative and in description and, less, upon a happy knack of apposite dialogue. Yet it need not be a book: it might be an article, an essay, a literary sketch:[1] forms with which you yourselves are well able to deal.

EXERCISES

1. Write a short appreciation of any classic of travel, with something about the author as well as about the book.
2. Form a list of all the travel books
   (*a*) you have read;
   (*b*) you have heard about—
   author's name, title of book, date if possible, country or region concerned.
3. Write a travel essay or article or story about any
   (*a*) country district (in your own land) you have lived in or visited
   (*b*) foreign country to which you have travelled
   (*c*) sea voyage you have made.
4. 'The best kind of travel is that undertaken from an arm-chair by one's own fireside':
   (*a*) defend this paradox;
   (*b*) attack it.
5. What would you look for in
   (*a*) the Rockies *or* the Himalayas
   (*b*) on the Amazon *or* the St Lawrence *or* the Ganges *or* the Murray *or* the Thames?

§13. *Conclusion*

You have probably arrived at your own conclusions.

Nevertheless, I advise that, first, you scrupulously re-read the preceding sections, then, if you have the time or even if you haven't, read at least the Introduction and Part I (Description of Action, i.e. narrative; Description of People; Description of Things) of Professor Bonamy Dobrée's *Modern Prose Style.*

Part II of that original book treats of Explanatory Prose, the sort of prose you may expect to find and hope to write in science, law, philosophy, morals, theology, political science, history, criticism.

[1] The *sketch,* as a literary form, obviously derives most of its meaning from the sketched as opposed to the finished drawing or painting of an artist. 'Webster' defines it as 'a brief simply constructed literary composition, as a short story'; it may also be a word-picture of a scene, a building, a person. A sketch of character may be real or imaginary, physical or psychological. As applied to short story it implies slightness of theme, with little or no plot—a mere incident, a conversation within a sketched-in setting.

Part III: Emotive Prose. Prose that aims at arousing emotions.

Part IV: Modern Prose Style: (i) The New Way of Writing; (ii) Experiments.

I particularly and very warmly recommend this book, for its author is not only a distinguished Professor of English Literature; he is a man of action, a soldier, and a traveller. In his book, theory comes vivifyingly from a spring of action. It is theory guided by practice.

EXERCISES

1. What is your general impression of the tenor and of the basic idea of sections i–xiii?
2. How would you extend the teaching that is either explicit or implicit there? You are of an age to do that for yourselves; you might, however, find something helpful in the final chapter, 'Links', both to widen and to deepen your knowledge and your appreciation. Do you see how this could be done?
3. Discuss Professor Bonamy Dobrée's classification of prose and formulate an alternative division.
4. Apply
   (*a*) Professor Dobrée's
   (*b*) your own classification
   to verse. Or do you not think that a different criterion should be applied? If so, what criterion?

APPRECIATION AND ' LECTURE EXPLIQUÉE '[1]

Non est ulla studiorum satietas (In studies there is no satiety, no saturation-point).—Erasmus, *Adagia* (sayings).

Crafty men contemn studies[2]; simple men admire[3] them; and wise men use them.—Francis Bacon, ' Of Studies ', in his Essays.

What is the end of study? let me know.
Why, that to know, which else we should not know.
Things hid and barr'd, you mean, from common sense?
Ay, that is study's god-like recompense.—Shakespeare.

Beholding the bright countenance of truth in the quiet and still air of delightful studies.—Milton.

NOR are there any more ' delightful studies ' than those of literature—hence, through literature, of literature's vehicle, language. Unless you have been unlucky, you already know this for yourselves.

§1. *Everybody His Own Critic*[4]

' The common ground on which the scholar and the cultivated man should meet and can meet is not . . . literary history; it is the criticism of literature. In the critical functioning of the mind . . . the unpretending pleasure of the [averagely intelligent] reader of books is refined and deepened,' says Louis Cazamian, who, though a Frenchman, is a profound critic of English and American literature. Criticism, he continues, ' implies more than intelligent contact with the stimulus of a book. It is a rich, positive activity, which through sympathy shares in the creative act of the artist'. Appreciation of literature attains its acme only when the appreciator shares sympathetically with the creative artist the wonderful experience of the creative act as expressed in the finished work; literary

[1] The teacher and the private student alike would do well to precede this chapter with ' How to read ' in Book I and with ' Literary Appreciation ' in Book II.

[2] L. *studium*—cf. *studēre*, to study; via Old Fr. *estudie, estude.* Latin *studēre* is literally ' to be zealous or eager for or about ' (one's work); *studēre litteris*, ' to be eager at learning ', whence our senses of ' to *study* '.

[3] Wonder at; are stricken with awe at the mere idea of.

[4] Based upon and much indebted to ' The Object of Criticism ' and ' Eugenius; or, Everybody His Own Critic ' in *The Aims and Method of Higher Literary Studies*, by Louis Cazamian. (Houston, Texas, 1929.)

criticism arises immediately the appreciator puts *his* experience into adequate words.

If with our imagination we follow the creative artist, the writer especially, in his creative act or series of acts, we can see his artistic purpose—the central theme and the dominant ideas; see the construction,[1] both in its general effect and in its details; see the meaning of each separate character and the deeper meaning of that group of characters which endows the work with a broad yet deep humanity, in addition to psychological penetration; perceive the significance of the visible setting and of the spiritual background; assess the composition at large and the style in little; above all, understand and enjoy the total impression, the organic unity of the whole literary creation, whether play, poem, story, essay, or history.

By the aid of our imagination, working at its most perceptive, we develop a sort of literary intuition—not instinct but flair, an ever-developing flair. Yet intuition and imagination, though in the main separate, cannot be separated; they interact; they assist and enrich and energize, each the other. The intuition is perhaps best called 'critical intuition'; the imagination, 'creative imagination'. Certainly they should be apprehended in that more active, more intellectual, more spiritual manner.

To ease the working of that imagination, to humanize and develop that intuition, sympathy is the quintessential means and the very precondition. Sympathy is indispensable. Not a sloppy, inchoate, ineffective sympathy. But a sympathy generated by will; by good will. And suggested, aroused and maintained, informed and illuminated by knowledge. A knowledge not abstract but concrete, not second-hand but immediate.

Why immediate and direct? Because a writer,[2] by and in his work, reveals himself, without delay and without interference. Or rather, if there be either delay or interference, it is caused, not by a good writer but by a bad reader. Sympathy can render any good work enjoyable by anyone of average intelligence and of average sensitiveness to order and beauty, to power and truth. Sympathy, however, requires exercise, and at first the exercise may have to be strenuous; life consists in activity: and sympathy—if it is not to be mere sentiment—has to be active.

'What is true of the child is true as well of the young man or woman; the reaction of personality to the stimulus of beauty[3] in words is at all ages the genuine productive influence, that from which the enlargement and refining of mind and heart can be expected; and there is no more real profit

[1] In Fielding's *Tom Jones* the construction is at once so majestic and so skilful, so artificial yet so natural, that it merits the designation *architectonics*: it is as magnificently architectural as (say) the structure of Notre Dame de Paris.

[2] The same applies to a composer of music, a painter of pictures, a sculptor.

[3] Not merely the beauty of externalities, or aesthetic beauty; but also the beauty of mind and of spirit.

to be sought in the study of literature, than just that enlargement and refining' (Cazamian): by 'enlargement' the writer means 'invigoration, broadening, and liberation', and by 'heart' he means both sentiment and spirit. 'Literature,' he continues, 'is precisely the expression and reflection of spiritual man; its humanity is its all in all; to use it as a collection of documents like any other [collection of documents] is to rob it of its privilege. . . . Great books will serve their most substantial end, if they are an incentive to the realization of [the student's—nay, any reader's] personality, intellectual, emotional, moral. His own mind will find itself' (realize itself) 'in the hard exciting tussle with a master spirit—a struggle in which he will be conquered, but out of which he will emerge a fuller man': an emotionally and morally, an intellectually and spiritually richer and stronger man, hence a happier one.

§2. *Some General Hints*

One of the best ways, perhaps quite the best way, of benefiting by what you read for examination is to subject it to an *explication française*[1]—or to an English adaptation thereof. For general reading, there are several hints you might bear in mind; you will say, 'How very obvious these hints are!' Agreed; but are they so obvious that they have become second nature?

1. Don't expect the literature of knowledge or information—expository books—to contain a 'story'. If the information (history, geography, criticism, science, technics, etc.) is conveyed in an orderly, lucid manner, that should be enough. In fact, however, you will find that much history, geography, criticism and even science is attractively written, but you have no business to *expect* it to be attractive. The pleasures of expository literature are primarily intellectual, only secondarily aesthetic.
2. On the other hand, don't expect the literature of imagination—poetry, drama, novels, short stories—to have a moral or 'message', for primarily it is not didactic. It aims to delight—to enrich us emotionally; to move us.
3. Nor is imaginative literature a matter of logic—of arguments and propositions; it is not to be criticized by the standards applicable to the literature of knowledge, except in so far as all literature whatsoever should be artistically coherent and consistent.
4. Midway between the literature of knowledge and the literature of imagination stand the essay and the imaginary conversation,[2] of which

[1] See § 3.

[2] Not, of course, any dialogue at all, but the literary form known as Imaginary Conversation, where the characters are historical.

the latter usually approximates more closely to the literature of knowledge, whereas the former may emphasize either the one or the other. Do not, therefore, be dogmatic about this half-way literature, wherein the writer has considerable freedom.

5. As, on the one hand, the literature of knowledge may be structural, as in history; analytical, as in a thesis; critical, as in literary or artistic or musical criticism; structural and analytical and critical, as in philosophy; or persuasive, as in theology or propaganda: so, on the other hand, the literature of imagination is of various kinds, poetry being epic, lyrical, dramatic, reflective, etc.; drama being comedy, farce, tragedy, tragedy-comedy; fiction being short or long, the novel itself being historical, domestic, adventurous, satirical, etc. Be careful not to condemn one genre for differing from another.

In addition to the advantages to be derived from an intelligent use of *explication française*, benefit can be derived from such an approach to fiction as this:[1]

> I shall . . . risk suggesting five questions which will help anyone form a critical judgment on fiction.
>
> (1) To what degree has the work unity? (2) How great is the complexity of parts and elements which that unity embraces and organizes? (3) Is it a likely story, that is, has it the inherent plausibility of poetic truth? (4) Does it lift you from the ordinary semi-consciousness of daily life to the clarity of intense wakefulness, by stirring your emotions and filling your imagination? (5) Does it create a new world into which you are drawn and wherein you seem to live with the illusion that you are seeing life steadily and whole?[2]

Style, you see, is ignored: not because it is unimportant, but because it is inherent in every genre of imaginative, every genre of informative literature.

The same writer has pointed out that every reader, whether of literature or of a newspaper, a magazine, a pamphlet, an official set of instructions—that every reader without exception must ask himself four questions:

(1) *What in general is being said?*
(2) *How in particular is it being said?* (Style—composition—language in general.)
(3) *Is it true?* Either factually or artistically.
(4) *What of it?* If you find that it is gibberish, don't waste your time reading any further.

[1] Most of it applicable also to poetry and drama.
[2] Mortimer J. Adler (an American educationist), *How to Read a Book*, 1940.

§3. ' *Lecture Expliquée* ' *or* ' *Explication Française* '

Introductory.—The French excel at what is variously called *lecture expliquée* (' reading explained '—step by step) or *explication française* (French method of explanation) or *explication de texte* (explanation of the text) or *littérature expliquée* (' literature explained ') or *méthode française* (' French method '). The last three terms are too general. Like Professor G. Rudler,[1] who has written the best book on the subject, I prefer *explication française* to *lecture expliquée*, because it gives credit where it is due. Since ca. 1920, however, *lecture expliquée* has, in England at least, been gradually gaining the primacy: and *Lecture Expliquée*[2] is the title of Dr Annie Owen's book, which, published in 1938, is designed for teachers and sixth-form students of French and which, in the foreword, contains the prophetic comment, ' As this is the method used in the teaching of the mother tongue in France, an exposition of it may also be of some interest to teachers of English and Welsh literary texts in our country '.

In the afore-mentioned[3] *Eugenius*, Professor Cazamian, having remarked that the skill developed by France in the interpretation of literature ' has evolved a technique which is perhaps an original contribution to pedagogy; if not to scholarship ', points out that

> The technical aspect of the *explication de texte* is simple enough. It consists in the union of two things: an analysis on the one hand; a critical interpretation on the other. . . . Its principle is concrete, and pedagogic or artistic; the spirit of science has very little to do with it; but this spirit has very little to do with life itself, and education, when all is said, is the apprenticeship of living. As a first stage, then, the student is expected to give a clear and connected survey of the passage in hand, studying its content, bringing out all the author's intentions, and leaving nothing unexplained in the local development or expression of his thought.

' *Explication française* ' *explained.* The actual order in which the method is practised will depend upon whether the matter or the manner is the more important. If the language is difficult, the difficulties must be cleared up before the style and metric (or, in prose, rhythm) can be analysed—the composition (plan, paragraphing, etc.) studied—the ideas examined.

[1] *L'Explication française*, 7th Edition, 1938. (Librairie Armand Colin, Paris.)

[2] University of London Press.—In fairness both to Professor Rudler and Dr Owen, and to myself, I state that I perceived the method's adaptability to the teaching and study of English long before I met with Dr Owen's book; that I adapt, not Dr Owen but Professor Rudler; and that, to adjust the method to English requirements, I have very considerably modified and developed the procedure.

[3] § 1, p. 96.

Whether the subject be a poem, a scene or a speech from a play, an essay, a short story, a self-contained passage from history, biography, autobiography, criticism, two facts are obvious: the reading comes before the analysis; the synthesis or summing-up, together with the general appreciation (or interpretation), comes last.

The order I propose—an order variable according to need, and often with one or more elements omitted as too neutral to mention—is this:

I. *Preliminary*, or *Localization:*

(1) The author's title of a self-contained, complete work; or the teacher's or private student's title of an extract, with a statement of the source and of the place of the extract within that source.
(2) The name of the writer; where necesssary, a few biographical details.
(3) The date of the piece or the extract.
(4) The place of that piece or extract in the corpus of the writer's work.
(5) Very briefly, the place of the complete work within contemporary English or American literature.
(6) If derivative, from what? If original, its influence? In either event, its popularity?

II. *Reading:*

(1) The text is read[1] quickly, for the 'story' or the general impression.
(2) Then slowly, to gain a sound idea of the text as a whole.

III. *Form:*

(1) The difficult words are explained.
(Words obsolete or obsolescent or rare or technical.)
(2) The etymologically or historically interesting words are commented upon.
(3) The vocabulary in general is 'described'.
(4) The syntax. (But only if defective or otherwise noteworthy.)
(5) The figures of speech, especially the images (metaphors and similes).
(6) The style in general is criticized: its nature, individuality, correctness; degree of adequacy, etc.
(7) The metric of verse or the rhythm of prose
  (*a*) is named or commented upon;
  (*b*) any irregularity or audacity is noticed;
  (*c*) assonance in verse and alliteration in either verse or prose are remarked;

[1] If in class, aloud by the teacher or by one or several pupils.

(*d*) anything else that is noteworthy—e.g., echoism, enjambement—is pointed out.

(8) The structure or plan is determined; i.e., composition in the wider sense as opposed to style.

(9) The writing as a whole is assessed.

IV. *Matter:*

(1) The setting of the play, the story, etc.
(Often indeterminate or unascertainable.)

(2) The main idea or the prevailing sentiment or emotion is
(*a*) determined,
(*b*) analysed,
(*c*) criticized.[1]

(3) The subordinate ideas (e.g., sub-plot; author's asides) are noted and, if noteworthy, analysed and criticized, and the secondary sentiments and feelings, if any, are mentioned.

(4) The relationship of the thought to the matter; e.g., is the former adequate?

(5) The principal characters; the general characterization.

V. *Conclusion:*

(1) Synthesis, in brief, of the preceding analysis.

(2) Interpretation, or general appreciation, of the entity presented for examination: one's final intellectual judgment, emotional response, and sense of spiritual gain or loss; this interpretation should include 'atmosphere' and 'dominant trend'.

Several obvious variations are these:
It will sometimes be desirable to take II (the reading)[2] before I (the localization); yet clearly II and I, or I and II, must precede the rest.—If there were *no* difficult words to be explained (III, 1), I myself should always take IV (matter) before III (form).—Even if there are some difficult words, the teacher can explain them (or the private student can look them up in his 'set book' or in his dictionary) beforehand and thus enable IV (matter) to be taken before III, 2–9 (the rest of form) is put in hand.[3]

[1] Usually either an analysis or a criticism will suffice, but where the thought is difficult, both will be required. In the literature of knowledge, the idea is more important than the sentiment or emotion; in that of the imagination, the feeling is usually the more important. Sometimes both are involved.

[2] Clearly the reading is not part of the explanation itself; no less clearly, however, it is part of the total process.

[3] 'Matter and form are, as it were, the counter-test, and verification, each of the other, precisely as the whole and the parts, the text and the context, reciprocally explain and illuminate each other,' G. Rudler, op. cit. (Professor Rudler's book is in French; Dr Owen's in English.)

The conclusion (V) being irremovable, the teacher or the private student will, therefore, move within this field:—

I, *then* II; *or* II, *then* I;
III, 1;
III, 2–9, *then* IV; *or* IV *and then* III, 2–9;
V.

Now consider III: Form. Manifestly, (5) could precede (3) and (4); and (8) could immediately follow (6) or even (5). If (8) immediately follows (5), then (6) and (9) may often be advantageously merged: if the passage is difficult, or if it is stylistically and structurally remarkable, and especially if it is both difficult and remarkable, I recommend the retention of my order as a whole; but, if the passage is both easy and stylistically unremarkable, I suggest that (2) and (3), and (6) and (9), be merged and that (4) be included in the (6)-and-(9) merging. But omit nothing and merge nothing without making sure that the simplification does not darken rather than clarify.

The teacher must first determine that order of the *explication française* which will best suit the subject—and the class. The private student does what is correspondingly the same thing. Without method, pupils and student will land themselves into confusion and incoherency; yet any system could, in the hands of an unimaginative teacher or student, become artificial and rule-of-thumb; which is the last thing that a sensibly, sensitively handled *explication française* either should or would do. On the contrary, it ' enlarges and liberates the intelligence, forms the judgement, sharpens and refines the taste, and enables the practitioner to gain a sense, an understanding, of historical periods, arts and styles, to accumulate knowledge, to multiply experiences, to gather points and means of comparison; in short, *l'explication française* enables him to cultivate his mind and heart and spirit and to develop an alert awareness of life itself '.[1]

Commentary of this sort will achieve two things: a better understanding, a keener enjoyment, of the literary entity concerned; and an enrichment of the practitioner's entire appreciative equipment. Practised regularly and consistently, this method of criticism and appreciation has inevitably a snowball effect, for every occasion enriches and strengthens both the general and the particular, *ad hoc* ability of the practitioner. Being myself a not catastrophically gullible person, I yet ask you to take my word for it that this method (call it *commentary*, if you like), which, so far, has not been practised in the teaching of English, will effect the incalculable benefits either stated or implied in the course of this section.

Explication française isn't merely a matter of preparing yourselves to

[1] A paraphrase of a passage in the chapter on Principles in M. Rudler's book; a book at once profound, emotionally and spiritually sensitive, and impeccably practical.

pass an examination; it certainly is a means, the best means, of enabling you to matriculate in the university of the world as something better than zombies.

§4. *The Commentary (or Explication Française) in Action*

First, let us take a passage and examine it methodically in the order and according to the scheme set forth in the preceding section.

EXAMPLE I

> Sometime the snow would be lift clean from the ground up into the air, and by and by it would be all clapped to the ground as though there had been no wind at all, straightway it would rise and fly again.
>
> And that which was the most marvel of all, at one time two drifts of snow flew, the one out of the West into the East, the other out of the North into the East: and I saw two winds by reason of the snow the one cross over the other, as it had been two highways. And again I should hear the wind blow in the air, when nothing was stirred at the ground. And when all was still where I rode, not very far from me the snow should be lifted wonderfully. This experience made me more marvel at the nature of the wind, than it made me cunning in the knowledge of the wind: but yet thereby I learned perfectly that it is no marvel at all though men in a wind lose their length in shooting, seeing so many ways the wind is so variable in blowing.

I. *Preliminary.* (1) This passage, which we might call 'The Marvel of Wind', occurs in *Toxophilus*, which (2) was written by Roger Ascham (1515–68), scholar and author, much respected in his lifetime and anthologized ever since, especially for *The Schoolmaster*, published in 1570, and (3) *Toxophilus*, literally 'Devotee of Archery', in 1545. The latter (4) made his reputation, for it was not merely a treatise; it contained much readable observation of man and nature. In *Toxophilus* (5) we see English prose beginning to take a modern shape, although the extract has been quoted in modernized spelling. (6) The title constitutes one of many indications that Ascham, the first Regius Professor of Greek at Cambridge, was a man of the Renaissance. His influence was felt rather in pedagogy than in prose.[1]

II. *Reading.* You have read the passage before reading the preliminaries; but the passage, easy to understand in its general meaning, requires a second and careful reading before you can deal with:

[1] I could be detailed in the same way as III and IV; III and IV could be 'consolidated', i.e. paragraphed, in the same way as I. Either system or both can be employed, even within one commentary.

III. *Form.*

(1) *Sometime* = sometimes;
clapped = cast, let fall;
most marvel = greatest marvel (source of wonder);
as it had been = as if . . .;
nothing was stirred at the ground = nothing stirred at ground level, neither grass nor leaves;
wonderfully = strangely or mysteriously;
marvel at = wonder at (compare *most marvel*);
cunning = skilled, well versed.

(2) Both *marvel* and *wonder(fully)* have, like *cunning*, rather changed in meaning since the mid-sixteenth century. Consult 'Skeat' or 'Weekley'.

Both *sometime* and *as* are now archaisms, whereas *nothing . . . ground* is an entirely obsolete turn of phrase; likewise *clapped* occurs in an obsolete sense, as also does *though* used for 'that'.

(3) The vocabulary is very 'English' and expressive; it causes us to think rather of Ascham the close observer of Nature than of Ascham the great scholar.[1]

(4) Although (to us) old-fashioned, especially in punctuation and in the length of three of the sentences, the syntax is lucid and logical.

(5) The passage lacks vivid metaphors and similes, but the scene is so objectively pictured and so immediately conveyed from author to reader, and the writing so pointed, that their lack is a merit, not a defect.

(6) The style is admirably suited to the matter; it contains only one ambiguity.

(7) One cannot measure a prose rhythm. If you set a semi-colon after 'at all' and a period after 'into the East'; if you understand that 'by reason of the snow' modifies 'saw'; if you slur the repetitious 'and'; and if to 'but yet' you accord no greater emphasis than you would to a modern 'but'; then you will see that, whether consciously or not, Ascham has caused us to share in the fitful rhythms of a capricious wind.

(8) The passage is too short for us to speak sensibly of either plan or structure. One surmises that wind affords the opportunity of a pleasing digression from the flight of arrow to the passage of snow and wind; yet how cleverly Ascham returns to his central theme.

(9) Ascham, knowing his subject, also knows how to treat that subject.

IV. *Matter.*

(1) The English countryside in ca. 1540.

(2) The main idea is not single but double: wind rendered visible, or at least traceable, by the effect it has upon the fallen snow; the apparent

[1] Not that one shouldn't be both! (Much more could, no more need, be said.)

fickleness of the wind. The author, deeply impressed, makes the wind appear sentient, almost purposive.

(3) Ostensibly central yet actually subsidiary is the relationship of wind to archery.

(4) The thought was suggested by the matter; no tortured cerebration here! The thought, moreover, is entirely adequate.

(5) The characters are two: Ascham riding along on his horse and keenly observant of the wind, which affects him as much as if it were a person acting capriciously yet notably.

V. *Conclusion.*

(1) An arresting phenomenon has been attentively observed and perspicuously described in a graphic, unforgettable picture and manner. (2) The entity being, in every way, satisfying, the reader gains an impression of a mind no less shrewd than the eye, and of an equal sympathy for man and Nature. Without mysticism and without supernaturalism, Ascham has yet imparted a sense of wonder; in simple language he has conveyed to us the marvel of those windy swathes delimited by the flying snow.

EXAMPLE II[1]

When to the sessions of sweet silent thought
I summon up remembrance of things past,
I sigh the lack of many a thing I sought,
And with old woes new wail my dear time's waste:
Then can I drown an eye, unused to flow,
For precious friends hid in death's dateless night,
And weep afresh love's long-since-cancell'd woe,
And moan th'expense of many a vanish'd sight:
Then can I grieve at grievances foregone;
And heavily from woe to woe tell o'er
The sad account of fore-bemoanèd moan,
Which I new pay as if not paid before.
But if the while I think on thee, dear friend,
All losses are restored and sorrows end.

Localization. This is No. 30 of the Sonnets published in 1609 by William Shakespeare (1564–1616) but probably written over a longish period (? 1598–1608); No. 30 perhaps belongs to ca. 1604, when, turning forty, Shakespeare may have looked back over his life. In any event, this sonnet forms part of the series written to some great friend of his. Sonnet-sequences were in the air; on the other hand, by giving to the sonnet a new form and a new fluency, Shakespeare exercised a considerable influence upon English sonnet-writing. As a sonnet-writer he has, among English-

[1] I have introduced a variation of treatment.

men, been rivalled only by Milton and Wordsworth, and near-rivalled only by Keats and Swinburne.

Matter. The dominant mood and the central theme are regret for wasted opportunity and for the loss of dear friends; the latter loss, however, is compensated by that 'dear friend' to whom the sonnet is addressed. The plangent mood is resolved, much as the bitterness of the period of the great tragedies (and bitter comedies) is resolved into the mellowness of the final, the tragic-comic period. Throughout, the thought marches with the matter.

Note. In Elizabethan times, men expressed sorrow as frankly as they expressed joy; to Shakespeare, a tear was not a confession of weakness but the admission of a heart.

Form. Before the composition, the style, the metric are considered, one would be wise to read the sonnet again and yet again, for although art has not wholly concealed art, it has at least obscured the supreme art of this sonnet, which should be compared with 'Let me not to the marriage of true minds admit impediments' or 'When in the chronicle of wasted time' or 'Th'expense of spirit in a waste of shame', not only for power and felicity of thought but also and especially for mastery and felicity of form.

So felicitous is the style that not a single word needs to be explained. The style is pointed, incisive, antithetic: 'I sigh the lack of many a thing I sought' and 'with old woes new wail my dear time's waste' and 'weep afresh love's long-since-cancell'd woe'. It is notable that Shakespeare, to make his points and to secure his effects, does not hesitate to repeat: 'dear time's'—'dear friend'; 'new wail'—'new pay'; 'love's . . . woe'—'from woe to woe'; 'grieve at grievances'. Yet the style has beauty unfading, as in verses 1 and 6: only Shakespeare could have written them. The metaphors and other figures are conceived largely and executed deftly, now musically and now powerfully; the alliterations are both cunning and apt. The style, in short, is so perfectly suited to the matter that, as in all the greatest writings, they are barely distinguishable.

The sonnet moves in a majestic rhythm and a smooth metric, basically iambic yet with numerous trochaic and other variants; compare, for instance, the comparative regularity of

I sigh' | the lack' | of ma' | (ny) a thing' | I sought'

with the subtlety of

When' to | the ses' | sions' of | sweet' si' | lent thought'

or of

For pre' | cious friends' | hid' in | death's' date' | less night'.

In structure, this sonnet proceeds unfalteringly to a crest of woe and then dispels it in a convincing couplet. A final couplet, self-contained yet

conclusive, is as marked a characteristic of the Shakespearean sonnet as is the running-on of the octet into the sestet.

Conclusion. One could easily have expanded the preceding paragraphs into a full-length criticism; but, within the limits of an *explication française*, nothing remains to be said except this, that Shakespeare here so exemplifies the almost undetectable welding of matter and form, of formal metric with moving matter, of emotion with expressive words and phrasing and syntax, that one would declare him to be here as much the supreme artist, the magnificent poet, as he is in the great dramas.

EXAMPLE III

In the second edition (published at Boston, Mass., in 1678) of her *The Tenth Muse Lately Sprung up in America, Or Severall Poems. . . . By a Gentlewoman in those Parts* (first issued, in London, in 1650), Anne Bradstreet, born at Northampton, England, in 1612[1] and migrant to North America in 1630, when, as one of Winthrop's party of settlers on Massachusetts Bay, she had already been married for two years—in that second edition, there were many new poems, especially ' Contemplations ', probably her best, certainly her most personal and ' modern ' work. As *The Tenth Muse* was the earliest book of verse written by an Englishwoman in America, so ' Contemplations ' is the earliest notable poetry written in America by man or woman. From ' Contemplations ', for the most part non-derivative and, as a whole, influential in early American literature, I select the opening stanzas:

Some time now past in the Autumnal Tide,
When *Phœbus* wanted but one hour to bed,
The trees all richly clad, yet void of pride,
Were gilded o're by his rich golden head;
Their leaves and fruits seem'd painted, but was true
Of green, of red, of yellow, mixed hew;
Rapt were my sences at this delectable view.

I wist not what to wish; ' yet sure ', thought I,
' If so much excellence abide below,
How excellent is He that dwells on high,
Whose power and beauty by his works we know!
Sure He is goodness, wisdome, glory, light,
That hath this under-world so richly dight! '
More Heaven then Earth was here, no winter and no night.

[2]Anne Bradstreet, whose husband was erudite and well-regarded, disliked America when she landed: yet became a good American. Her

[1] She died in 1672.
[2] Another and more considerable variation of the method is here exemplified.

language is in the main traditionally English and traditionally poetic; in the main, too, slightly inferior to the matter, though less so in 'Contemplations' than in the poems she composed in the 1640's. Often learnèd and often Classical, she here implies rather than proves her Classical knowledge. Phoebus, the sun-god (Phoebus Apollo); Greek *phoibos*, 'brilliant', Homeric epithet that yields *Phoibos*, 'the Shining One'—*Phoebus* was a conventional figure of speech at that date, hence the allusions were obvious; far more obvious then than now, when, to some students (those without a Classical training), it is necessary to explain that the time was one hour before sunset and that 'gilded o're by his rich golden head' refers to the golden rays of the setting sun. The vocabulary is conventional and to us, though never difficult, often archaic, as in *the Autumnal Tide* (Autumn; *tide* being 'time'), *wist* for 'knew', *under-world* for 'world below'—the earth, and *dight* for 'clad'. Archaic also were the spellings *o're* (o'er), *hew* (hue), *sences*, *wisdome*, *then* (than).

Such mingling of pagan lore and Christian thought has characterized English and American poetry ever since the so-called Dark Ages, for although *under-world* may not, in fact, allude to the Classical country of the dead, 'More Heaven then Earth was here, no winter and no night' almost certainly alludes to the Isles of the Blest. Despite the tottery syntax of stanza i, verses 5–6 ('was' = were), the language is lucid.

The staple of the metric in vv.1–6 of each stanza is the iambic decasyllable:

> Some time′ | now past′ | in the′ | Autum′ | nal Tide′,
> When Phoe′ | bus wan′t | ed but′ | one hour′ | to bed′;

but the seventh verse in each stanza is irregular, and is susceptible of several scansions.

One cannot fittingly speak of structure without seeing the entire poem of thirty-three stanzas; but one may note the quietly adequate if somewhat conventional setting for the one character (the poetess) and her contemplations, evoked and maintained by the 'delectable view'. Nature, 'excellent', is o'ershadowed by God, wise and omnipotent. In the contemplation, the scene passes into the background; contemplation and adoration transcend the earthly beauty.

The thought almost keeps pace with the theme: at Earth's shrine, a mortal worships God in and beyond and greater than Nature. Anne Bradstreet, no Wordsworth, no Elizabeth Barrett Browning, fails, in all, to do justice to the theme. She fails with dignity and grace, for she leaves us with a profound conviction that, as sincere as she was religious, she was even more attached to mankind than to Nature, yet observant of both, and that she possessed a genuine poetic gift that, although stylistically and metrically limited, was as natural as it was cultured.

EXAMPLE IV[1]

I crossed the river to the mills. I had the grief to find them both stand as still for the want of water as a dead woman's tongue for want of breath. It had rained so little for many weeks above the falls that the naiads had hardly water enough left to wash their faces.

naiad: in Greek mythology, a water nymph.

However, as we ought to turn all our misfortunes to the best advantage, I directed Mr Booker, my first minister there, to make use of the lowness of the water for blowing up the rocks at the mouth of the canal. For that purpose I ordered iron drills to be made about two foot long, pointed with steel, chisel-fashion, in order to make holes, into which we put our cartridges of powder, containing each about three ounces. . . .

minister: assistant. (Cf. L. *minor*, an inferior.)

The water now flowed out of the river so slowly that the miller was obliged to pond it up in the canal by setting open the flood-gates at the mouth and shutting those close at the mill. By this contrivance, he was able at any time to grind two or three bushels. . . .

pond: a practical man's verb formed from the noun.

I paid a visit to the weaver, who needed a little of Minerva's inspiration to make the most of a piece of fine cloth.

Minerva: the Roman goddess of wisdom and learning.

In mid-September, 1732, William Byrd (1674–1744), planter, official and author, who, born in Virginia, had been educated in England and Holland and had returned in 1692 to Virginia, where he became a leading citizen—in 1732 Byrd was active on his estates and making a journey that furnished the matter of *A Progress to the Mines*, which, like his other two chief writings, did not appear until 1841: *The Westover Papers*.

'These works, as well as his private letters, show a grace, wit and sprightliness unique among the colonists' (*Dictionary of American Biography*): not only wit but humour, as we see in the allusions to 'a dead woman's tongue' and to Minerva. Though well-educated (*naiads*, *minister*, *Minerva*), he wrote like the man of action, shrewdness, sharp observation, and practicality that he so outstandingly was.

If he owed anything, it was to such 'Anglo-Saxon', such direct, writers as Defoe and Swift. But, above all, he causes us to wish to read more of his work.

[1] This arrangement, which can be advantageously used only with straightforward texts, offers an instructive variation (*modus perdicalis*) of the commentary. For a philological commentary, only two columns would be needed.

EXAMPLE V

Whether on Ida's shady brow
Or in the chambers of the East,
The chambers of the Sun, that now
From antient melody have ceas'd;

Whether in Heaven ye wander fair,
Or the green corners of the earth,
Or the blue regions of the air
Where the melodious winds have birth;

Whether on chrystal rocks ye rove,
Beneath the bosom of the sea
Wand'ring in many a coral grove,
Fair Nine, forsaking Poetry!

How have you left the antient love
That bards of old enjoy'd in you!
The languid strings do scarcely move!
The sound is forc'd, the notes are few!

Localization. 'To the Muses' forms one of the lyrics that compose *Poetical Sketches*, published in 1783 and written by William Blake (1757–1827): the first of his three series of lyrics and the first of his numerous volumes of verse, all of which, after *Songs of Innocence* (1789) and *Songs of Experience* (1794), was either mystical or prophetic, or both: 'the production of untutored youth', Blake called the *Sketches*.

Painter and poet, Blake was profoundly mystical and almost entirely other-worldly: he had less common-sense than the average child, more good sense than twelve grown men. An original of the originals, he was—except to Ossian twice and Shakespeare once in *Poetical Sketches*, to Milton vaguely in much of his verse, and to Flaxman in painting—indebted only to himself. Regarded by his contemporaries and for a generation after his death as hopelessly visionary and by many as mad, he left no impress upon English literature, until a biographer and two critics —Gilchrist (1863), Swinburne (1868), W. M. Rossetti (1874)—focused attention upon him. Since the 1870's, Blake's influence has been considerable, not only upon English literature but upon English mysticism.

Matter. Probably one of the latest-written of the *Sketches*, 'To the Muses' stands apart from the rest.

Blake deplores the state into which, in the later 1760's, all the 1770's, and perhaps the early 1780's, English poetry had fallen. During the period 1764–1782, the only notable publications of new verse had been Gray's *Poems* in 1768, Goldsmith's *The Deserted Village* in 1770, Chatterton's *Rowley Poems* in 1777, and Cowper's early *Poems* in 1782. Probably

in order to bring that decay the more clearly home, Blake pictures the Muses as wandering anywhere but in Britain and also as having abandoned the cause of poetry. Of the few poets writing at all, the poems are artificial and unnatural: a criticism that, with a few honourable yet not-of-the first-rank exceptions, is true. The critical thought, occurring only in the final stanza, is as smoothly conveyed as the lyricism of the rest: the very pithiness of the judgement gains by the musical leisureliness of the introduction.

Form. Mount Ida, in Crete, was the reputed home of the Nine Muses (' fair Nine '), of whom Erato represented lyric poetry and Calliope epic poetry, but of whom Melpomene, tragedy, and Thalia, comedy, were also concerned with poetry, since Greek plays were written in verse (' ancient melody '): the imagery connected with the Muses informs the entire poem, even ' strings ' and ' notes ' referring to the connection between music (the lyre and the flute) and verse. In ' the chambers of the East, The chambers of the Sun ' Blake introduces another Classic myth: that of Phoebus Apollo, the sun-god in his connection with poetry: the idea of the sun rising in the East is blended with that of the poetic freshness of dawn: Apollo, omniscient, is the god of divination, and he delivers his oracles in verse-form, hence his presidency over the Muses. But the Classic imagery is momentarily forgotten in the unthinking substitution of ' Heaven ' for ' Olympus '; and Classic nomenclature is abandoned in the use of ' bards ' for ' poets '. (But ' coral grove ' is not, as you might think, a geographical misplacement: Ovid and Pliny have *coralium* and, centuries earlier, several Greek writers had *korallion*.)

The phrasing is smooth and melodious, the metric regular without being pedantically so; the verses are freely run-on. Scansion:

Whe'ther | on I' | da's sha' | dy brow'	(Perhaps: Whether')
Or' in | the cham' | bers of' | the East',	(Perhaps: Or in')
The cham' | bers of' | the Sun', | that now'	
From an' | tient me'l | ody' | have ceas'd'.	

The syntax is notable, because the ! after ' Poetry ' (at end of the third stanza) obscures the fact that the actual ' stop ', as at the end of the first and second stanzas, is a semicolon, and the first principal verb is ' have left '.

Rhetorically considered, the poem consists of a magnificent ascent, the crest being reached only at ' enjoyed in you! ' A quiet reflection, which is at the same time a special application to Britain of the general thought expressed in all that precedes, quietly concludes the argument and the poem.

Conclusion. In short, ' To the Muses ' contains good criticism, lyrically and eloquently expressed in smooth numbers and mellifluous phrasing. As a piece of contemporary criticism, it is, indeed, remarkable: ' untutored

youth' could be applied to this poem only with irony or with Philistine crassness.

Postscript to Localization and Conclusion. The dissatisfaction voiced by Blake must have been felt by others; that a powerful leaven was at work appears from the fact that in 1786 and 1787 came the Kilmarnock and Edinburgh editions of Burns's poems; in 1793, Wordsworth's *Descriptive Sketches* and *The Evening Walk*; in 1796, Coleridge's *Poems on Various Occasions* and *The Departing Year*; and, the breaking of 'the languid strings' and the acquisition of new, Wordsworth and Coleridge's *Lyrical Ballads*, 1798.

EXAMPLE VI

Helen, thy beauty is to me
  Like those Nicéan barks of yore,
That gently, o'er a perfumed sea,
  The weary, way-worn wanderer bore
To his own native shore.

On desperate seas long wont to roam,
  Thy hyacinth hair, thy classic face,
Thy Naiad airs have brought me home
  To the glory that was Greece,
And the grandeur that was Rome.

Lo! in yon brilliant window-niche
  How statue-like I see thee stand,
  The agate lamp within thy hand!
Ah, Psyche, from the regions, which
  Are Holy Land!

Localization. The poem, inspired by Mrs Helen Stanwood, mother of one of his friends and 'the first purely ideal love' of his life, was written during his 'passionate boyhood' (= youth) by Edgar Allan Poe, who included it in *Poems by Edgar A. Poe*, 1831.

Poe, dying in 1849 at the age of forty, died too early for literature, yet perhaps none too early for his own good. Both in prose and in verse he was independent of any major influence: both in prose and in verse he has exercised, from 1831 in the latter and from 1838 (*The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym*) in the former, a powerful, (until ca. 1914) increasing, and apparently enduring influence upon American, British and European Continental literature, nor only in *The Raven*, his most famous poem, and in the stories of detection; his esoteric influence has been considerable—as, for example, upon Baudelaire and Ambrose Bierce.

A sympathetic and masterly biography of this strange, self-torturing man was published in 1926 by Hervey Allen: *Israfel*, in memory of Poe's *Israfel*, itself based upon a passage in The Koran: 'The Angel Israfel, whose heart-strings are a lute, and who has the sweetest voice of all God's

creatures': *Israfil* or *Israfeel*, the Mohammedan angel of music and the destined sounder of the trumpet at the resurrection.

Matter. The poem constitutes a youthful outpouring of a lyrically idealized passion of love for a woman adored from afar; one at whom he reverently gazed from the street and saw as beautiful, as divine in the 'Holy Land' of her home as was a Greek goddess upon Olympus; not Venus but Psyche—not physical but spiritual love. Such love honoured and perpetuated the lover no less than it did the beloved.

Form. The very matter has perhaps been suggested by form: by the name *Helen*, 'the Torch' that set men's hearts aflame: a flame quenched by the pure waters of the soul (psyche). Opening with Helen the destroyer, the poem ends with Psyche the preserver; Poe, despite his 'passionate boyhood', is, by the power of the soul's beauty, preserved to write in honour of his Helen-Psyche.

Nicéan barks: sailing-ships of Nicaea, usually identified with the older, more extensive Liguria. (The sailors of Liguria, ancient or modern, have always been fine sailors.) Perhaps *Nicéan barks*, like *perfumed sea*, is merely atmospheric—a poet's licence. Poe, however, seems to be speaking of Ulysses (Odysseus, 'the Wanderer') after he fought at Troy, where, naturally, he had seen Helen.

On desperate (dangerous) *shores long wont* (accustomed) *to roam:* the young, inexperienced poet likens himself to the experienced Ulysses.

Thy hyacinth hair = the more conventional *hyacinthine locks:* hair the colour of hyacinth, the gold-yellow flower named after Hyacinth, the young Lacedaemonian transformed by Apollo into a flower.

Naiad airs: the naiads or water-nymphs (whether of stream or of sea) are represented as wafting the weary traveller to his spiritual home—

the glory that was Greece, And the grandeur that was Rome: the Greece and Rome of the Ancient Classics. The phrases have in their eloquent descriptiveness a reminiscence of Byron, with whose poetry and character the young Poe felt himself to be profoundly in sympathy.

statue-like continues the Classical allusiveness of the preceding references, to which add *thy classic face;* an allusiveness continued in *agate*, regarded by the Ancients (e.g. Theophrastus) as a semi-precious stone, and in—

Psyche, the Greek goddess of spiritual love, this being a special application of *psyche*, the soul (Greek *psukhē*). The development of *psukhē* is this: 'breath, breathing' becomes 'vital breath, life-giving breath'; thence 'soul' and finally 'life itself'. Since *Psyche* represents one of the highest manifestations of Greek religion and philosophy, the collocation of the pagan *Psyche* with the Christian *Holy Land* is less incongruous than it might seem.

The versification is saved from mellifluous conventionality by the frequent enjambment, by the audacity of 'which' at the end of the penultimate verse, and by the irregularity of the ultimate verses of the first

and third stanzas. The measure is predominantly, not monotonously iambic, as in

He'len, | thy beau' | ty is' | to me'
Like those' | Nice' | an barks' | of yore'.

The structure is, within the narrow space, masterly; the style, adequate. The first alliterative sequence (' weary, way-worn wanderer ') is deliberate, not entirely felicitous; the second (' glory that was Greece, And the grandeur . . .') is perhaps unintentional but certainly superior.

Despite several defects, an exquisite poem.

Conclusion. Supremely artificial, *To Helen* yet rings natural and moves with the grace of a Greek goddess. One of the great short lyrics.

EXAMPLE VII[1]

> Perhaps the best of songs heard, or of any and all true love, or life's fairest episodes, or sailors', soldiers' trying scenes on land or sea, is the *résumé* of them, or any of them, long afterwards, looking at the actualities away back past, with all their practical excitations gone. How the soul loves to float in such reminiscences!
>
> So here I sit gossiping in the early candlelight of old age—I and my book—casting backward glances over our travel'd road. After completing, as it were, the journey—(a varied jaunt of years, with many halts and gaps of intervals—or some lengthen'd ship-voyage, wherein more than once the last hour had apparently arrived, and we seem'd certainly going down—yet reaching port in a sufficient way through all discomfitures at last)—After completing my poems, I am curious to review them in the light of their own (at the time unconscious, or mostly unconscious) intentions, with certain unfoldings of the thirty years they seek to embody. These lines, therefore, will probably blend the weft of first purposes and speculations, with the warp of that experience afterwards, always bringing strange developments.

Localization and Matter. These are the opening paragraphs of the preface to *November Boughs*: a collection containing new poems, published in 1888 and written by Walt Whitman, then in his seventieth year; he died four years later. His most famous collection of poems, *Leaves of Grass* (1855) and his most famous book of prose, *Specimen Days and Collect* (1882–83), contain a larger proportion of enduring work than do his numerous other publications. In writing this preface, Whitman had an agreeable theme, which he handled mellowly and agreeably—and more lucidly than, whether in prose or in verse, he handled the majority of his

[1] ' A Backward Glance o'er Travel'd Roads ' is the title given (to the entire essay, not merely this fragment) by the editors of *The Oxford Anthology of American Literature*, 1938: William Rose Benét and Norman Holmes Pearson.

themes; reminiscence blended with self-criticism could hardly fail to delight 'the grand old man', who had the honesty to admit that later experience might be colouring the reminiscences; but then, he had always been honest and frank—too frank for many people. Although he made a great stir during his life-time, he has been little imitated by other poets and little read by democrats; thus has *tempus fallax* disappointed two of Whitman's fondest hopes.

Matter and Form. At his best, Whitman was a great writer, both in prose and in verse: a master of phrase and rhythm, a supreme architect of poem-structure, an inventor of images. In this short passage, we see Whitman standing rather apart from the greatness and the bathos between which he so maddeningly oscillated, yet in form repeating, although less egregiously, some of the faults that marred all but his best work.

In paragraph 1, we notice an irritating attempt at a precision ('the *résumé* of them, or any of them') that remains imprecision; 'looking at actualities . . .', without a related noun or pronoun; the triviality of 'trying scenes'; the infelicity of *résumé*.

Paragraph 2 yields, to even the most cursory glance, such awkwardnesses as that monstrous second sentence with its inordinate first parenthesis, its unnecessary second parenthesis, and the incredible verbosity of the sentence as a whole; and the ambiguity of 'in the early candle-light of old age' and of 'the warp of that experience afterwards'. These defects are rendered the more glaring when set against the felicity of the allegory and the aptness of the final metaphor.

The over-emphasis of such a statement as 'How the soul loves to float amid such reminiscences!' is typical of Whitman, who arouses us to reverence and dowses us with bathos.

Form and Conclusion. Except when, in his verse, he is irresistibly and simply lyrical, and when, in his prose, he is content with straight narrative or unembroidered description, Whitman tends to the vatic style: large in promise, vague and loose in form, emotional in manner: depending on rhythm rather than on metric in his poems, and on rhetoric rather than immediacy in his prose. The exceptions, however, are sufficient both in quality and in quantity to preserve the writer and to cause the social and moral theorist and self-appointed prophet to be forgotten: the theorist and prophet forgotten, the audaciously experimental, the generously movingly lyrical poet and the arresting prose-writer will live the longer and the more highly regarded, the better understood, appreciated, enjoyed.

EXAMPLE VIII

Diaries

I suppose there is no type of literature more big with promise and none more fraught with failure than a diary, none which all have such ambitions to plan, so many the common sense to neglect, and so few the ability to perform. For it is not easy to be intimate, not easy to preserve the privacies

when one has put swing-doors on the soul, and made a public bar-room of one's heart. I like to peep into my own penetralia, but the peep must not be public: I like to air my linen however lamentable, but not on the king's highway. Indeed the little dignity that I have would hardly survive the deep domestic drops of a common confession, which, however courageous the cause, could only be crude in its effects. And yet a diary of one's own is most revealing reading. We are all glad to dip into the lilliputian past, to rummage amid unmarketable memories, and to brood over the details of long ago. How many of us have not entertained the prosperous ambition of writing such pleasing bagatelle, and of embalming the idle litter of our idle days in the scrap amber of lead-pencil prose? And how many of us have not collected on the very first day the straw and stubble of the small talk we have heard, have not skipped the sentences and recorded the commas of life, written our rigid report of nothing in particular, with thoughts of Pepys, and with hopes perhaps of a halo in after years? It is a private truism of every one, no less than a public confession of my own. I have written many such. The first day was literature, or something very like it, and I lapped my soul in the lily illusion that it would always be so—for the next day, for the day after that, and for many days to come. But the second day came and went, and literature went with it, and I saw the sun go down on my wrath and my wretchedness with no prospect of an aurora for the morning. And from that hour my diary became a nightmare. Literature went, even journalese went, my rhetorical roses withered, my flowers of fancy famished away, the wastrel weeds of Whitechapel, the brambles and briars of Billingsgate overran the page, till on the seventh day of my creation I careered into a chaos, so void and without form, that I dreaded the thought of a Fiat Lux and let darkness brood in dark places for evermore. I was left with a log-book, a tetrachordon of four trumpery items,—what I had for breakfast, what I had for dinner, what I had for supper, and—the price! Such have been my diaries of the past, diaries that tapered off in interest as a pyramid from its base, diaries that began in an equatorial downpour of inspiration and ended like a tiny Nile which flowed across the desert page, whilst all around the lone and level sands of unfilled margins stretched far away.

The hopes of fools are proverbially the despairs of the wise, and mine, though I admit it, were very hardy, such as could wait for the consolation of Israel and keep up expectations for a seventh monarchy when those for a fifth had been long relinquished. I took courage from many things, and reflected that man is born only for glimpses of glory, that youth is a breath, spring a passing blush, and that noon-day simply comes and goes with the tick of it. I had just to wait for the hour, I reasoned, bide the times and seasons which were appointed for all things, not to buttonhole the principalities and powers and to dun my destiny every daily day with a diary, but to forbear, and to be as patient with the refusals as I was pleased with the favours of providence. I found the thought a consoling one, and drank deeply of this sedative of the times and soothing syrup of the

seasons, the whiles I remembered that Milton himself was dependent on the turn of the year, and was unable to write, as he once informed a friend of his, from the autumnal equinox to the vernal. For this information I was grateful, as I should never else have had the courage to believe it of myself. Indeed I was not only consoled, I was elated, and felt a pious pride in the blankness of my pages, seeing that the stars in their courses had deigned to fight against me, that the very skies had conspired, and that nothing less than the universe was the cause of it all. I at once lumped Milton into my litanies, sponsored on him all my open spaces, and feeling honoured in humiliation and distinguished in defeat actually went so far as to believe that even nothing attempted was something done. Thus I became more and more enamoured of my idleness, and dawdled and dozed on the endymion eiderdown of delay, while the days drifted and the months meandered by, and all my life lapsed into one long lounging lullaby between the grand equinoxes of birth and death.

I have admitted, however, that I wrote trash. I had vowed when writing my diary to be artless, I might almost say innocent, and to my regret found that I was keeping my word. In all forms of literature it is agreeable to be commended for simplicity, but very aggravating to be accused of it, and though many poets have boasted of having lisped in numbers it is perilous to begin lisping in prose. However, I was not discountenanced. I reduced neither myself to despair nor my effusions to the dustbin, but still persevered both in my nothingness and in my next-to-nothingness for a rout of reasons. For instance, I realized that though Rome could, by a freak, have been built in a day, a diary by its very nature demanded a number, and I did not doubt that in the course of them I should improve. From hour to hour I should go from strength to strength until in the last triumphs of taste and in the final supremacies of style I should write into every little syllable of time the significance of a library. For this hope I was indebted to no less a writer than Virgil, who, when lapsing into more lowly lingo than was his wont, spoke of wooden props which would serve till the marble columns arrived. So that was the principle, you lumbered first and quarried afterwards, and as lumbering was more in my literary line I lumbered, naturally not with any godless and graceless grudging at heart, but, reflecting that other wise men had also worked in wood, I laboured with abounding solace in the memory of Solomon and the cedars of Lebanon. Everything I wrote was wooden, by design of course, or 'according to plan' as homebound generals express it, and though as might be supposed I was more prodigal of props and more economic of marble than my master, I was always mindful of the old adage that if you took care of the posts, the columns would take care of themselves. And to this adage I added another, one very sacred in spirit, very apocryphal in form, and very profane in application, namely that the morrow should take thought for the morrow—and incidentally for the marble—enough for the day is the timber thereof.

For years I must have been immured in these mute imaginings, happy

to believe that only by nigger-driving the muses, or soundly horsing the heralds of inspiration, should I ever indulge the realized ideal of a diary. I was pleased to think that the chastisement of their peace was upon me, and out of artistic courtesy forbore to retaliate, allowing the dust of idleness and the cobwebs of excuse to settle on the whips and scorpions which might have leathered the Olympian ladies into compliance. But the hour came when I had exhausted all my incense at the silent shrine, when I grew tired of swinging the censer in the one hand and of swinging the lead in the other, and when, having cashed all my courtesy and got very little change out of the deal, I bethought me once more of those whips. And success was mine. I ceased to pray, and began flogging for favours, and the mincing muses who had been speechless in the sanctuary were very eloquent at the cart-tail. And it came about in this way.

One day I not only promised myself a diary but I promised it in public. I published my purpose in the university syllabus, entitled my lectures 'Diary of a Journey in England', promised pictures, and on the first day of the vacations set out on my travels. It was like taking fortune at the flood, after drifting in the shallows, flats, and backwaters, and finding in every cross wind and cloudy sky a reason for casting anchor till more favourable weather set in. It was like putting my hand to the helm or rather my shoulder to the wheel after idly stretching out my arms in longing for the farther shore. It was like shelving the thoughts of the morrow and, for once at least, tackling the deeds of the day. And I did them. Formerly I had been over-nice about my nibs, fastidious about my paper, finicky about my ink, so plausible in my pretences, so devious and designing in my delays, that I was less stricken in conscience by anything neglected than by anything done. In fact, I had become problematic, and could not only think two things at once, however contradictory, but, worse still, could prove to the satisfaction of all, and at times of my secret self, that both were the same. But my public promise was like a public confession, for whereas confession always closes the door on the past, it is publicity which bolts it. At last I stood exposed, and had no alternative but to honour the vows of reform with the fruits of repentance.

The diary, however, which I wrote then was not the diary of which I shall speak now, for it was too monotonous. Every lecture which I delivered on my return, no less than every picture which I displayed, was a twin brother of the last. Week after week I showed my audience series and series of river scenes, where the difference lay rather in the name of the river than in the character of the scene. In fact, England from my lectures appeared to be merely one long river, a mighty meandering Mississippi, flowing on like time without beginning and without end. It was the same a year later when all who attended my lectures left with the idea that England was a conglomeration of racecourses and cathedrals. Every town I entered had a cathedral, and every cathedral town I entered had a racecourse. Indeed, it seemed that all England was either praying or racing. The whole land was one piebald panorama of the temple and

the turf, an olla podrida of bookmakers and priests, where one hardly knew whether the general hosannas were for the mercies of the Almighty or for the winners of the last chase. And so in the turmoil of my divided pilgrimage to the turf and to the altar, I sometimes sought the bookies and sometimes sought the saints, made my racing-card a bookmark for my testament, and said grace and spotted winners with tumultuous abandonment.

It is said that one sees what one will. I think it truer, however, to say that the eye is never so open as when closed, but the sense is perhaps a little distilled. Looking over my diaries I feel that my eyes have been very faulty servers, though it may be more justly censured that I have not thought as I should nor written as I ought. However that may be, the judgment lies with others.

Localization. This essay[1] represents, not an entity but the opening chapter, entitled ' My Diary ', of *A Journey in England*, published in 1931 and written by Frank Binder, whose *Dialectic; or, the Tactics of Thinking* appeared a year later. In 1931–32, as for some years before, Frank Binder was a lecturer in English history at the University of Bonn am Rhein. In 1933 or early 1934, he was dismissed because of his opposition to the political theory and practice of Adolf Hitler: in Germany, Hitler was already showing his hand clearly enough to those whose eyesight could discern the mailed fist: Binder was one of the clear-sighted. Since 1934, despite several attempts to trace him, I have had no news, either from or of this Englishman, whose first book (he wrote only the two mentioned) I had the honour of publishing and whose second book was published by my partner; nor can I think myself either melodramatic or too imaginative when I state my belief that Frank Binder, in addition to sacrificing a good post in a university he loved (for he refused to recant), paid an even higher price as his contribution to the cause of that liberty and that beauty, that sense of history and that transcending compulsion of intellectual and spiritual integrity which shine unobtrusively from the pages of *A Journey* and *Dialectic*. Frank Binder was—I hope that ' was ' should be ' is '—one of the elect: one of the small band of men and women whose integrity and courage, whose intellectual powers and moral beauty, impress[2] even the barbarian and the trifler, the fool and the knave. Writing in 1930, Frank Binder[3] had exclaimed,

> But where is there any foundation under the sun ? And what is more idle than to raise hopes on duration in life, to speculate on favours above the universal fate, or to repine at the raft of earth when so hope-

[1] The last five words of the original (' and so to my diary ') have been omitted.

[2] Those who, as I, had the privilege of knowing Samuel Alexander, the philosopher (1859–1938) will perceive what I mean.

[3] Binder was, I believe, a graduate of the University of Liverpool. The passage occurs in the final paragraph of ' Conclusion ' (the last chapter of *A Journey*): in reference to the transiency of literary work.

lessly cast away on the waves of time? From lamenting our lot we come to lament the labour of it, to expect echoes louder than our speech, rewards transcending our deserts, and wisdom beyond our power to understand it.

Matter. Frank Binder writes what is at once an essay and a disquisition upon diaries: the matter that composes them and the manner of their recording, with many asides prompted by that matter or that manner. The whole makes a very thoughtful and eminently literary essay, a delightfully informal yet penetrating disquisition. It must, however, be added that his own diaries are not just diaries, but journals of travel: daily records of things seen and done, and the aesthetic responses, the afterthoughts, to and about those experiences.

Manner. Binder's prose is characterized by an easy flow of thoughts in such language as fits them closely yet comfortably, by arguments cogently developed in a manner so persuasive that the reader fails to realize that he is being persuaded, and by all the resources of prose rhythm, with many a figure of speech, the whole in a style at once artificial yet beautiful. Binder thinks that a good subject merits an 'imperial prose', as once he phrased it in a letter to my publishing partner: he bedecks that subject. But it would be a grave mistake to suppose that he is ever insincere. He himself has indicated a few aspects of his theories upon the writing of good prose when, near the end of *A Journey in England*, he says,

> Sometimes I have been in doubt myself, and when lingering overlong on elegancies of expression, on the lilts of language, and on the loveliness of alliteration, have wondered whether it is wise to venture everything on a breath, or to allow the hours to run to vagrancy in pursuit of failing forms and of evanescent voices . . . It is a precarious prosperity that comes of embarking the spirit on the instability of syllables and sounds.

Few would deny that a great or an intensely moving or a beautiful subject[1] deserves the best of which a writer is capable; many subjects, indeed, have defied even a Shakespeare to render them justice. Binder does not write on utilitarian or official or trivial subjects: he deals with subjects that deserve good writing. To him, alliteration is almost as necessary as rhyme is to a poet employing rhyme; as a poet is not forced to employ rhyme, so Binder is not forced to employ alliteration; the employment is deliberate. But it is noticeable that even alliteration is, in Binder's prose, subordinated to rhythm, and it is advisable to remember that by 'elegancies' he means, not pretty-prettiness but a certain deftly delicate suitability and artistic adequacy of style to subject.

No less noticeable is the wealth of allusion. Allusion not only to literature but to the lowliest idioms and similes, proverbs and metaphors, occasionally with such remoteness as prevents all but the very perceptive

[1] Obviously a subject may also possess any two or all three of these qualities.

from noticing the pointedness of the modification. To draw attention to every allusion in Binder's essay would necessitate ten or even twenty pages of commentary. In the opening paragraph, here are a few of the words and phrases containing allusions: *big, swing-doors, penetralia, air my linen, lilliputian, embalming, amber, straw and stubble, Pepys, lap one's soul, lily illusion, saw the sun go down on my wrath, aurora, Whitechapel, Billingsgate, seventh day of my creation, void and without form, Fiat Lux, log-book, tetrachordon, Nile . . . desert page, margins.*[1]

You will, by now, have noticed that Frank Binder frequently employs both antithesis and structural balance (often they come to the same thing) in a peculiarly effective manner, not by being Lyly-tortuous and far-fetched but to point a pointed thought. Look at the antithesis, the structural balance, the mordancy of the opening sentence: by all means, roll it over on your tongue, speak it aloud as though you were chanting a paean, but also taste its sharp flavours with your mind and work out for yourselves the structure of trenchant thinking. Despite the extremely mannered nature of his prose, Binder exemplifies; as every notable writer, whether of prose or verse, inevitably exemplifies; the indistinguishable interaction, the ultimately-intimate union, of matter and form—of subject and style.

Conclusion. One could say much. Perhaps, however, this *multum in parvo* will suffice to persuade you that you have far more to gain by a close, sympathetic, alert examination of the essay by and for yourselves than from any expatiation of mine: you are dealing with a superior intellect, a highly sensitized nature, a spirit elect, expressing its three-in-one in a manner that fully yields its secrets, its charm, its invigoration, only after several readings and communings. As with every other literary work, you will get much from it only by putting much into it. Appreciation is not something superimposed by you, nor something wholly created by you: it is co-operation by you with the creative artist: and by that co-operation you yourselves become creative artists.

EXAMPLE IX

To quote a passage from a work of one's own is a piece of conceit and a breach of good taste that require justification.

The justification lies in this. Only a practised writer can analyse a literary work and tell you what the author has attempted to do, and only the author himself can tell you why he has written it. Only the autobiographer can impart the feelings he had at the time of the event in which he shared, and illuminate his distillation of that experience; only he knows how far he has failed to pass on to the reader what he intended to convey.

[1] I suggest that the English master or mistress, or the private student, take the Binder essay paragraph by paragraph and set forth the allusions; indeed, every paragraph except the final one would provide sufficient material for an exercise in commentary (or *explication française*); why not, therefore, add these exercises to that formal set of exercises which appears at the end of this chapter?

Only he, in short, can furnish you with the information by which you may assess and appreciate his autobiographical writings.

To receive such inside information—provided it be given honestly—is, I assure you, an infrequent experience. Evidently you cannot expect me to praise the following passage: I wish to do, not that but something useful and strictly relevant. To enable you to praise or blame, as you see fit; more importantly, to understand; most importantly of all, to share in a creative act. If you read understandingly, i.e. sympathetically, both the passage itself and then my commentary, you will get as close to a writer's intention and to his imperfect performance as it is possible to get: and that is certainly close enough to follow him, both in the fact and in the reminiscence of that fact.

Don't assume that such a commentary is easy to write, nor that it could have been shorter without impairing the total impression I wish you to gain, the final judgment I hope you will be able to form. A disarming casualness and a constitutional, or even a calculated, meiosis may be delightful in social intercourse, but they would prove to be exasperatingly unsatisfactory in an exposition, a commentary, an *explication française devenue anglaise*[1] of this kind. *Allons-y!*

The Somme: 1916. *An Incident*

At about eight o'clock on the warm, clear evening of July 28, 1916, the battalion left the bivouac for the front line. They set off in fours, single file being adopted a little before they came to the first communication-sap; at the beginning, there were intervals of fifty yards between platoons, two hundred yards between companies, but these spaces were much reduced when the approach in single file commenced. At first they passed through a seemingly quite innocuous area, but soon they entered Sausage Gully, where, since the First Australian Division's successful attacks of a week before, cannon had been massed. Every night, there was a short artillery duel, but the present attack would not be preceded, nor even accompanied by any special activity; the guns were to play, not too significantly, on the front trench for a minute or so. Apparently it was thought at headquarters that the attack would come as a surprise.

The men fortunately did not realize what was ahead of them: they merely knew that they were to attack, and they assumed that there would be an adequate artillery preparation and support; this was just as well, for if they had heard that they were an experiment, they would certainly have had something to say. It was their first serious battle, and they went in with a high heart, not joyously, not sadly, not arrogantly nor slightingly, not timorously nor misgivingly. They felt that the batteries in Sausage Gully were a good augury, as they passed first the imposing, deadly-looking six-inches, then the sixty-pounders with their slim beauty of line, their exquisite poise, and finally the rearward eighteen-pounders (the

[1] Example IX constitutes yet another variation of *lecture expliquée.*

forward batteries were not visible); beside the faint gleam of the barrels, and the heavy mass of the bodies of these guns, the artillerymen, stationary, appeared somehow symbolic in the deepening obscurity as the infantry passed. And as they passed, the gunners, wishing them luck, thought: 'Poor devils, going over the top; if they fail, we'll get hell; in fact, we'll get hell anyway'; and the infantrymen said to themselves: 'I hope they'll put it in hot and strong', adding, with a grim smile, 'We'll need it all'.

On leaving Sausage Gully, they entered a main communication-sap, which, for some distance, was high, comfortably wide, and level underfoot. But, inevitably, it became rough and difficult, what with fallen clumps of earth, pieces of wire, the darkness. Here the sap was ridiculously low, more like a ditch than anything else; there the parapet—if the complete absence of sandbags permits the use of this reassuring word—had been widely gapped by shells; elsewhere the parados formed a mere low mass of powdered soil. Except during the last half-mile, where the sap became a bitter jest, a few men from another brigade rested out of the way in small cavities on the forward side: they watched with interest the passage of these fresher troops, but they said little; they felt that there was little to say. The going was arduous. In places the ground sank flabbily and strangely beneath one's feet, and it was only when this had happened several times that one realized that men lay hastily buried where they had been killed, perhaps smothered. The roaring of the guns grew louder, and it hardly ever ceased; Very and other lights appeared near-by. The last half-mile was along what served the triple purpose of a line of direction, a haphazard communication, and a front line, alternately held and abandoned: it was little more than a low, dry, and broken ditch. The trees, vague in the gloom, stood out, in the intermittent flashes of light, in the semblance of huge skeletons. Of this small wood, the leaves were withering fast, the trunks and branches torn and gashed by shells.

Shells now began to fall, mostly among the trees on either side, and Frank Honywood had an ominous feeling that this surprise attack might not be catching the enemy unawares. Just before they reached the final halting-place, his section passed a sombre group of four N.C.O's, of whom one was temporarily dazed by the shell that, exploding several yards away, had severely wounded two and killed the fourth.

The men left the front line to lie, waiting, some fifty yards out in No Man's Land. They did this none too soon, for shells were now pounding the wood, roaring overhead if they were five-nines, whizzing close if seventy-sevens; sometimes one distinguished the whine of a heavy shell travelling towards the British batteries in the Gully. Behind them the shells crashed uncomfortably close, though safely distant; shrapnel pellets made a tearing sound as they ripped through the foliage, a sharp crack as they hit a branch, a duller smack against a trunk; fragments ricochet'd hither and thither. The big shells lit momentary, noisy bonfires as they met the earth.

At last, though in fact they could not have waited more than ten minutes, midnight came. Midnight was ' zero '. Glad to escape from a state of suspension between the two worlds of their own familiar area and the unknown German trenches they had to capture (the attack must be made, then let it be done with! They could not easily go back through that curtain of fire, and all had been pretty quiet in front of them), they set off towards the German line. A few of the officers, who had earlier been up to the front to reconnoitre the terrain, knew where that German line was, but the men had only the faintest idea beyond the fact that it was more or less straight ahead of them; they were told that, on the average, it was roughly nine hundred yards away. The ground was level except for slight undulations; the shell-holes were few. The British batteries opened fire when the attackers were about a hundred yards from the jumping-off line, which had been taped. Although this bombardment indicated to the silently moving attackers the approximate goal, it also warned the Germans that perhaps an attack was making. Some advance-posts, lying far out in No Man's Land, gave the alarm as the Australians swept down on them; they died gamely, those outposts in their tiny saps, and they it was who foiled the attack.

Frank and his companions seemed to be gliding rather than doubling solidly, everything was so silent; silent because they could not hear their own steps, could hardly hear their own voices, for there was a constant, thunderous rumble of sound: the British shells bursting ahead of them, the German shrapnel beginning to fall among them, and the German shells exploding to their rear. The night was star-lit, but as the fiery trails of the rockets sank down, the attackers were momentarily at a loss in the seeming darkness. It all seemed unreal; yet one saw spurts of flame ahead and tiny clouds of dust where pellets impinged on the earth; men were falling, some to rise, some to lie there for hours, some to lie there for ever. When the Germans perceived that their outposts must have been overcome and passed, they opened fire with machine-guns, and though the Australians increased their pace over the last three hundred yards, many dropped by the way. On reaching the objective they found to their horror and fury that the barbed-wire entanglements were impassable, the bombardment having killed but few of the enemy and left his protection almost intact. They made for the openings, exposed all the while to machine-gun and rifle fire: in scattered groups and rapidly lessening numbers they rushed the trench. Nearly everyone who reached so far then perished; the survivors managed to crawl away, if they were not made prisoners. Amongst those who died at the final assault was Captain Tom Hewitt. Through one of the gaps in the barbed wire he had led a party; he shot several of the enemy before, himself shot in the very act of waving on his men, he fell on the parapet. But perhaps a quarter of the attackers had not succeeded in getting so far. Small blame to them, since the guiding officers had either been shot down or, with the most active of the men, gone so far ahead that they were out of sight;

the objective was difficult to gauge, for there seemed to be (and, in point of fact, there was) a semi-circle of flashing rifles and machine-guns almost hemming them in.

Many Australians had stopped in a very slightly sunken third-class road, now covered with grass; this they proposed to strengthen. At a dangerous bend, swept by machine-gun fire, they build a sand-bag wall. Every few minutes, some one pitched forward with a bullet in his head or throat—the latter man would fall with a horrible gurgle—and had to be pulled off the sand-bags and set on one side so that he should not impede the movement of those who were not yet killed. On the forward side of the road, a small party had dug a short sap, which they manned with a machine-gun; they belonged to another brigade, and as they were not included in the Seventh Brigade's orders to retreat, they most gallantly remained there the whole of the next day; word was somehow got through to them finally that they were to escape from an untenable position. Among the defenders building the sand-bag wall was Frank, who had halted to see whether he could assist a very fine up-country Queenslander named Hamilton, who lay mortally wounded. There was nothing to be done for the wounded man, whose brother, curiously enough, was killed by a shell in Sausage Gully ten days later. Frank found himself somewhat isolated, but he continued to advance at the double; he came to the sunken road, and there he saw several men moving along it to the left as to a rallying-point; they soon met with the party that had begun to defend what appeared to them to be an important turn in the road, a strategic position. They remained there for some time, for they were anxious about those who had gone ahead; the enemy's machine-gun fire continuing unabated. Then they were recalled.

Many fell before they regained the deep communication-sap, for No Man's Land whistled with bullets, their own front line was being pelleted with shrapnel and breached by five-nines, and the sunken road, which fortunately led back to their own area, was swept by the pitiless machine-guns. The men retired by various routes, for either no definite order was given as to the point of assembly, or, if given, it reached very few; but as they all had a sound general idea of the direction to take, there was no likelihood of their becoming dangerously scattered. Just as the day was breaking (it seemed hours since he had seen daylight, for even though the night had passed in a fantastic unreality, yet it was the unreality of a terrible, nerve-racking nightmare), Frank found himself skirting the wood from which his battalion had emerged so thankfully; the path was rough until it joined with the main sap. Precisely where this sap ended, Frank, who had fallen in with two others, found a large group of the survivors gathered by the roadside. They waited perhaps an hour for the rest; stragglers continued to arrive during the day. While waiting, they saw approaching a small fatigue party from B Company, men who had cursed because they were not to take part in the attack; those regretful curses had been comprehensible twelve hours before, the survivors would

themselves have cursed; how ignorant, how mad, how appallingly laughable that attitude appeared now to those who had been over the top and seen that the going was not good. Among the cursers was Felipé, who, meeting Frank, gazed long at him, gripped him hard by the hand, and exclaimed, almost brokenly, with a dawning wonder in his face, 'My God, old man, you look as if you'd gone through hell!'

'Not so bad as that, Felipé; but it was a horrible business.'

Frank had gone through the night as though thrust forward, willy-nilly, by some power that impelled all his fellows equally. He had seen one friend killed, several others badly wounded, yet their very helplessness, and his, had dulled the pain of it: and inexplicably these friends had appeared to be the particular point on which his general pity could focus itself even while they elicited from him a diluted personal regard that was wondrously sweetened and mercifully deflected by his outraged humanity stirred to something deeper than a selfish grief.

Perhaps one might best describe his experience by saying that he stalked, all night, through a chamber of horrors that, although they were always gibbering at the doors opening on a dark and lurid passage without actually stepping out into it, might at any moment assume reality and mutilate or slay him. That night was a grievously conscious somnambulism, and when he woke up, he at first rejoiced to be awake; that night, however, had changed his whole moral composition, though it took him a day or two to realize the change. At the time, the figures of his mates, moving in the strange half-light, wreathed in smoke at one moment, clear-cut in the rocket-flares at another, were pathetically significant puppets in a huge phantasmagoria controlled from without; the hurtling fragments, the whistle of bullets, the deafening though not oppressive clamour that enveloped all those men and gave them uniformity of surrounding, uniformity of fate, were the natural, the inevitable setting for a witches' sabbath where all were victims. But afterwards the tragedy of that attack —tragedy noted with an almost photographic unconsciousness and potentially grasped during the succession of incidents—came to the surface of his mind and, in an hour of leisure, unrolled itself in its full physical and emotional detail. When he learned that only five or six hundred men remained unkilled or unwounded out of the two thousand five hundred that had set forth from the bivouac, he grieved for the loss of the many and regretted the absence of a few, yet at the same time he felt unreasonably comforted to know that the tragedy had been actual, not foisted on his imagination by an utterly new set of circumstances.

Localization. For most of what remained of the daylight of July 29, the unwounded survivors slept. After a big meal served in the evening, they slept again. The next morning, Frank Honywood (pseudonym of Eric Honeywood Partridge) briefly recorded his experiences on that lovely summer night of July 28–29. 'Felipé' represents his friend Howard Phillips, who died in action, September 1918.

Rather more than two years later—it happened to be a fortnight or so after Armistice Day, November 11, 1918—that account, about half the length of 'An Incident', appeared in *Galmahra*, the magazine written and edited by the undergraduates of the University of Queensland.

In 1928, I rewrote that account in such a way that it formed an integral part of a supposedly fictional story in *Glimpses*, a volume of short stories published in November of that year: a story based upon the literally Active Service part of my service with the Australian Imperial Forces. In 1929, I amplified the *Glimpses* version and added an introductory chapter (pre-Gallipoli) and a concluding one (post-France, with a long letter from Felipé), and included the whole in *Three Personal Records of the War*, my collaborators being R. H. Mottram and John Easton, two men well known in the world of fiction; the book appeared in October of that year.

In 1937 I re-cast the Somme part of the *Records* version, mostly by rendering the composition tauter, the style more objective, and included it in *For These Few Minutes: Almost an Anthology*, which appeared in February, 1938. The earlier half of this latest 're-write' (entitled 'I. Failure') has been detached from the latter half ('II. Success'[1]) and, with a few slight changes, reprinted here.

Those various re-writings are important, for they help to explain how an intensely personal set of impressions can be gathered into a coherent picture and how a perhaps excessively personal set of responses can be rendered sufficiently objective to convey to the reader an experience that, differing from individual to individual, yet has many features common to most of the participants.

At the time of this battle at Pozières I was twenty-two and, although I had been earning a living since the age of sixteen, idealistic, passionately fond of literature, and somewhat given to philosophy both formal and informal. I had, soon after my twenty-first birthday, interrupted an Honours course in Classics at the University of Queensland in order to enlist, but although I had, from the age of ten, written a few very short stories and, at twelve to thirteen, a novel, I had written nothing original from my fourteenth to twenty-first year; nothing but compositions and, at the age of twenty, a slim volume of third-rate verse translations from the French, issued privately in November, 1914, and at twenty or early twenty-one a set of verse renderings of Greek and Latin poets, wisely never issued at all. Gallipoli had not cured me of idealism.[2]

Although the treatment was in no way derivative, I don't suppose that any of the hitherto published versions, either of this particular incident or of any other incident or of my 1914–1918 war reminiscences as a whole, has exercised the slightest influence on other writers. Neither *Glimpses* nor *Three Personal Records* nor *For These Few Minutes* had a large, although the second had a satisfactory, sale.

[1] Exactly a week later, we attacked again—and captured our objective.

[2] Not even the war of 1939–1945 has quite succeeded in doing that. 'But then, some people never learn!' True; perhaps, however, some people refuse to join the ranks of the defeatists.

Matter. To the men of the 2nd Australian Infantry Division, that fruitless attack was known as the First Battle of Pozières; the successful attack, as the Second. The village of Pozières lay perhaps seven miles from Albert, itself eighteen miles north-east of Amiens. The country in the vicinity of Albert is rolling downland, with a few small woods; all of it was very pleasant during that lovely summer.

By the time of the second attack, Pozières had been reduced to rubble. The officer commanding the 7th Brigade, who had ignored his very able Brigade-Major's advice, abstained from leading his men.

Inevitably the description of an attack that fails cannot possess the ardour and excitement of an attack that not too expensively succeeds. An account of such costly failure, such bitter frustration, such infuriating helplessness cannot thrill the reader as does an account of a sweeping charge and of the capture of one objective perhaps merely preceding the capture and occupation of a further objective. But far too many histories of campaigns and far too many personal memoirs either omit or scant the failures: yet one learns much more from one's failures than from one's successes.

My own part in this particular failure was quite unheroic; I hope that I have been able to render to the heroes—Tom Hewitt and those others who died on the lip of the German trench—some small measure of the praise their due. Had I not been unable to keep up with the first wave of our onset, I should not be here to relate what, in that lurid and fitful light, I was able to glimpse in snatches: yet even now I feel somewhat ashamed, both that I got no further than I did and that, along with the rest of the 7th Brigade survivors, I had to abandon that small party of another brigade which gallantly held on in their short sap. Later, that other brigade occasionally jeered at us for abandoning their men. We had no choice: we were ordered to 'get out' or, as military euphemists phrase it, 'retire', for of course one never 'retreats'. The retreat was made slowly and, to avoid further losses, in ones and twos and, at most, threes. Certainly our officers and our non-participant companions never suggested, nor (I believe) thought, that we could have turned failure into success.

Form. Although the third person has been used in order to avoid the egotism of a constantly recurrent 'I', no veil has been thrown between writer and reader. But the incident has been described as a minor incident in history, not as an exercise in psychology: the purpose was that of narrative, not of analysis. If it fails as narrative, it fails altogether. Atmosphere is important, not predominant; without that atmosphere, the 'story' would lack an adequate framework, for the merely physical setting would by itself have been insufficient to convey the spiritual significance of that chiaroscuro of dusk and shell-burst, dark and machine-gun fire and grenade, and of that apparently illogical sequence of small movements against a tremendous backcloth: tiny, unconquerable men in a Dantesquerie of grimly real unreality, wherein, with an oddly detached

clarity, one observed the trivial and the transitory as vividly as one perceived the gigantic forces in operation and the doom impending over all that kaleidoscope of event and scene.

There are no irrelevancies, no divagations; one other character's thoughts and feelings are invoked, but no other's experience narrated. In the strain of carrying out the orders in very difficult circumstances; in the concentration of all one's activities and awareness upon the need to act and, in order to act, to remain alive—in so far as one did at all possess control over external forces; in the alertness required, once the moonless night had fallen, merely to keep touch and direction; in that setting, not only did all one's fellows seem unreal but one had to grip oneself firmly and unremittingly, to avoid being engulfed in the strange whirlpool of noise and light and danger and thereby losing consciousness of self, hence of the reality that one could not ignore without becoming either useless—or a coward.

The manner is inadequate to the matter, the style to the subject. Some readers may also feel that the writing is insufficiently close, sharp and objective; but the 'story' itself should make it clear that to objectify any further would have been to falsify the writer's apprehension of what was a devastatingly pertinent experience, not a spectacle viewed from afar. I have endeavoured to share with the reader my experience as it happened, not as I regarded it some years later: and free of the bitterness that ensued and was in turn vanquished, or almost vanquished.

The structure is based upon a faithful adherence to sequence; at least, up to and including the meeting between Frank and Felipé. The remainder, which could have been written only after an interval of reflection and distillation, of recollection and ordonnance, has been added because it was needed to round off, to complete, to crystallize the experience.

Conclusion. There has been no attempt to 'write up' that experience; none to heighten or to glamorize it. Devoid of literary allusions and containing only such figures of speech as sprang unsummoned from the nature and intensity of the experience itself, 'An Incident' may yet strike the unliterary as being a shade too literary: that impression, if anyone has, after all, been left with that impression, could have arisen only from the fact that I was a student reared upon literature, delighting also in art and music, temperamentally thoughtful and intense, analytic and potentially creative, sensitive and observant. Fortunately I was, throughout that long night, far too deeply impressed by the drama about me and amazed by my share in that drama to feel much, or long, afraid. I remained fully capable of apprehending everything that happened.

'An Incident' has been honestly conceived, frankly written; in the best sense, ingenuous; not (because not intended to be) ingenious, nor sophisticated; neither underwritten—except in so far as such a theme is bound to be inadequately handled—nor, I feel, overwritten.

EXERCISES

Set A : Tests in Judgement and General Appreciation

1. Date, approximately, the following passages and give your reasons for the dating:

(*a*) It fortuned that kyng *Robert* of *Scotland* was right sore aged, and feble; for he was greatly charged with the great sickenes so that ther was no way with hym but deth. And when he felt that his ende drew nere, he sent for suche baronis & lordis of his realme as he trusted best . . . : Commaundyng them on the faith and trouth that they owed hym, truly to kepe the realme, and ayde the yong prince *David* his sonne.

(*b*) As thus I lay, between content and longing, a faint noise stole towards me through the pines. I thought, at first, it was the crowing of cocks or the barking of dogs at some very distant farm; but steadily and gradually it took articulate shape in my ears, and I became aware that a passenger was going by upon the high-road in the valley, and singing loudly as he went. There was more of good-will than grace in his performance; but he trolled with ample lungs; and the sound of his voice took hold upon the hillside and set the air shaking in the leafy glens.

(*c*) Alas, what is the world? A sea of glass!
Alas, what's earth? It's but an hourglass!
The sea dissolves; the glass is quickly run;
Behold, with speed man's life is quickly done.
Let me so swim in this sea, that I may
With Thee live happy in another day.

(*d*) On one of those sober and rather melancholy days, in the latter part of Autumn, when the shadows of morning and evening almost mingle together, and throw a gloom over the decline of the year, I passed several hours in rambling about Westminster Abbey. There was something congenial to the season in the mournful magnificence of the old pile; and, as I passed its threshold, seemed like stepping back into the regions of antiquity, and losing myself among the shades of former ages.

(*e*) Gaily the girls troop in to town,
Each in her airy summer gown;
Modest in muslin, prim in print,
They tread the everlasting flint
And smile when skies forget to frown.

Long labours and lean profits theirs
In other folk's unblest affairs:
We cage the lark and chain the dove;
There's little grace and little love
In office desk and office stairs.

Oh, is it faith or is it art,
Or innocence and ease of heart
Lets youth upon life's highway put
So light—and lightly shod—a foot,
And trip so dainty to the mart?

(*f*) With leaden feet Time creeps along
While Delia is away:
With her, nor plaintive was the song,
Nor tedious was the day.

Ah, envious Pow'r! reverse my doom;
Now double thy career,
Strain ev'ry nerve, stretch ev'ry plume,
And rest them when she's here!

2. The following passages contain evidence—now external and now internal—for a correct identification, with reasons, of their authorship.

(*a*) Thou didst swear to me upon a parcel-gilt goblet, sitting in my Dolphin Chamber, at the round table, by a sea-coal fire, on Wednesday in Whitsun week, when the Prince broke thy head for likening him to a singing man of Windsor; Thou didst swear to me then, as I was washing thy wound, to marry me, and make me my Lady thy wife. Canst thou deny it?

(*b*) I celebrate myself, and sing myself,
And what I assume you shall assume,
For every atom belonging to me as good belongs to you.

I loaf and invite my soul,
I lean and loaf at my ease observing a spear of summer grass.

My tongue, every atom of my blood, form'd from this soil, this air,
Born here of parents born here from parents the same, and their parents the same,
I, now thirty-seven years old in perfect health begin,
Hoping to cease not till death.

(*c*) About a stone-cast from the wall
A sluice with blacken'd waters slept,
And o'er it many, round and small,
The cluster'd marish-mosses crept.

Hard by a poplar shook alway,
All silver-green with gnarlèd bark:
For leagues no other tree did mark
The level waste, the rounding gray.

(*d*) She was thinking of a hunter,
From another tribe and country,
Young and tall and very handsome,
Who one morning, in the Spring-time,
Came to buy her father's arrows,
Sat and rested in the wigwam,
Lingered long about the doorway,
Looking back as he departed.
She had heard her father praise him,
Praise his courage and his wisdom;
Would he come again for arrows
To the falls of Minnehaha?

(*e*) He [Shakespeare] was the man who of all Modern, and perhaps Ancient Poets, had the largest and most comprehensive soul. All the Images of Nature were still present to him, and he drew

them, not laboriously but luckily; when he describes anything you more than see it, you feel it too. Those who accuse him to have wanted learning give him the greater commendation: he was naturally learned; he needed not the spectacles of Books to read Nature; he looked inwards, and found her there. . . .

As for *Johnson*[1] . . . if we look upon him while he was himself (for his last Plays were but his dotages), I think him the most learned and judicious Writer which any Theatre ever had. . . . He invades Authors like a Monarch; and what would be theft in other Poets is only victory in him.

(*f*) This is a spray the Bird clung to,
Making its blossom with pleasure,
Fit for her nest and her treasure.
Ere the high tree-top she sprung to,
O, what a hope beyond measure.
Was the poor spray's, which the flying feet hung to,—
So to be singled out, built in, and sung to!

(*g*) These overwhelming walls of Ely Cathedral seemed to have closed on the light of life for ever, and as I stood in the dimness and darkness of that vast vault I felt the full terror of the thought that the feet which had first walked there, that the voices which had first echoed there, that the eyes which had set those heavy arches and had looked with gladness towards the growing grace of the choir, were dead for evermore. I had stepped into a lofty sepulchre of stone, a mausoleum of medieval memory, one of the stately desolations of Isaiah which served as proof of the failing frailty of humanity, and as a wrecking rebuke to perspiring ambition and pride.

3. Determine the country in which, and concerning which, each of the following passages was written; and state why it is (say) Canada rather than the United States, why Australia rather than New Zealand, why South Africa rather than India, or why Great Britain rather than any other country.

(*a*) In the gathering of night-gloom o'er head, in
The still silent change,
All fire-flushed when forest-trees redden
On slopes of the range;
When the gnarled, knotted trunks Eucalyptian
Seem carved like weird columns Egyptian,
With curious device, quaint inscription
And hieroglyph strange;

In the Spring, when the wattle-gold trembles
'Twixt shadow and shine,
When each dew-laden air-draught resembles
A long draught of wine;

. . . . . .

Such songs have been mine.

(*b*) When first I took up my abode in the woods, that is, began to spend my nights as well as days there, which, by accident, was

[1] Ben Jonson.

on Independence Day . . ., my house was not finished for winter, but was merely a defence against the rain, without plastering or chimney, the walls being of rough, weather-stained boards, with wide chinks, which made it cool at night.

(*c*) Even here
In this strange barren land of rocks and trees,
With no green English fields,
No little rain-washed breeze
To scent the evening air,
There's a glory from the setting sun.

(*d*) What do we know of the city's scorn, the hum of the world amaze,
Hot-foot haste, and the fevered dawn, and forgotten yesterdays?
Men may strain and women may strive in busier lands today,
But the Pace of the Ox is the pace to thrive in the land of veld and vlei.

(*e*) Pundit, do tell the King that the Goddess of Fortune deserts him who gives way to melancholy.
Sruti-bhushan, what is my Vizier whispering to you?
He tells me, King, to instruct you in the ways of fortune.
. . . . . .
Ah, Pundit. One breath of your teaching blows out the false flame of ambition.

(*f*) A teamster from the Beaver Pass—
'What news of the Express?'
''Twas there last night, if I heard right;
'Twill be in today, I guess.'
A miner, next on William Creek
Arrived, from wint'ring south,
'He heard some say 'twould be to-day
Expected at the Mouth'.
But here comes Poole, in haste his rule—
'Hallo! what of the mail?'
From him we learn, with some concern
'Just two days out from Yale!'

(*g*) It's the cussedest land that I know,
From the big, dizzy mountains that screen it
To the deep, deathlike valleys below.
Some say God was tired when he made it.

(*h*) Sweet are the shy recesses of the woodland. . . . A film athwart the pathway quivers many-hued against purple shade fragrant with warm pines, deep moss-beds, feathery ferns. The little brown squirrel drops tail, and leaps; the inmost bird is startled to a chance tuneless note.

(*i*) The wing of spring stirs the Laurentian hills,
Sunders the rock, wakens the sleeping root;
To bring the winter dream to flower and fruit,
And purpose to a world of insect wills.

(*j*) *Wuthering Heights* was hewn in a wild workshop, with simple tools, out of homely materials. The statuary found a granite block on a solitary moor; gazing thereon, he saw how from the crag might be elicited a head, savage, swart, sinister.

(*k*) Loose-limb'd, he slouches shambling in the cool;
Head down, hide rippling over lazy might;

Thoughtful and terrible he leaves the pool—
Shumbo the Lion, passing to the night.

(*l*) Ay! in this realm of seeming rest,
What sights you meet and sounds of dread!
Calcareous caldrons, deep and large,
With geysers hissing to their marge;
Sulphureous fumes that spout and blow;
Columns and cones of boiling snow;
And sable lazy-bubbling pools
Of sputtering mud that never cools;
With jets of steam through narrow vents
Uproaring, maddening to the sky.

4. Compare and contrast the following groups of passages:

(*a*) I took them a burster, nor eased her nor nursed her
Until the black bullfinch led into the plough,
And through the strong bramble we bored with a scramble—
My cap was knock'd off by the hazel-tree bough.

(Adam Lindsay Gordon, *How We Beat the Favourite*)

Like a rocket shot to a ship ashore
The lean red bolt of his body tore,
Like a ripple of wind running swift on grass;
Like a shadow on wheat when a cloud blows past.

(John Masefield, *Reynard the Fox*)

With my ' *Tinka-tinka-tinka-tink!* '
(And the axe has cleared mountain, croup and crest!)
So we ride the iron stallions down to drink,
Through the cañons to the waters of the West!

(Rudyard Kipling, *The Song of the Banjo*)

When out of the night, which was fifty below, and into the din and the glare,
There stumbled a miner fresh from the creeks, dog-dirty, and loaded for bear.
He looked like a man with a foot in the grave and scarcely the strength of a louse,
Yet he tilted a poke of dust on the bar, and he called for drinks on the house.

(Robert W. Service, *The Shooting of Dan McGrew*)

(*b*) If you're up against a bruiser and you're getting knocked about—Grin.
If you're feeling pretty groggy, and you're licked beyond a doubt—Grin.

. . . . . .

If Fate should down you, just get up and take another cuff,
You may bank on it that there's no philosophy like bluff,
And grin.

(Robert W. Service, *Grin*)

If you can make one heap of all your winnings
And risk it on one turn of pitch-and-toss,

And lose, and start again at your beginnings
  And never breathe a word about your loss;
. . . . . .
. . . . You'll be a Man, my son!

(Rudyard Kipling, *If*)

(*c*) The harbour of Constantinople, which may be considered as an arm of the Bosphorus, obtained, in a very remote period, the denomination of the *Golden Horn*. The curve which it describes —might be compared to the horn of a stag. . . . The epithet of *golden* was expressive of the riches which every wind wafted from the most distant countries into the secure and capacious port of Constantinople. . . . We are at present qualified to view the advantageous position of Constantinople; which appears to have been formed by Nature for the centre and capital of a great monarchy. . . . The Imperial city commanded, from her seven hills, the opposite shores of Europe and Asia; the climate was healthy and temperate, the soil fertile.

(Edward Gibbon, *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*)

As they approached the Indian city, they saw abundant signs of cultivation in the trim gardens and orchards that lined both sides of the road. . . . The edifices of the better kind were of stone and lime, or bricks dried in the sun; the poorer were of clay and earth. All were patched with palm-leaves, which, though a flimsy roof, apparently, for such structures, were so nicely inter-woven as to form a very effectual protection against the weather.

(William Prescott, describing Cempoalla in *The Conquest of Mexico*)

(*d*) Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness!
  Close bosom-friend of the maturing sun;
Conspiring with him how to load and bless
  With fruit the vines that round the thatch-eaves run;
To bend with apples the moss'd cottage-trees,
  And fill all fruit with ripeness to the core;
    To swell the gourd, and plump the hazel shells
  With a sweet kernel; to set budding more,
And still more, later flowers for the bees,
Until they think warm days will never cease,
  For Summer has o'erbrimm'd their clammy cells.

(John Keats, *To Autumn*)

I saw old Autumn in the misty morn
Stand shadowless like Silence, listening
To silence, for no lonely bird would sing
Into his hollow ear from woods forlorn,
Nor lowly hedge nor solitary thorn;—
Shaking his languid locks all dewy bright
With tangled gossamer that fell by night,
  Pearling his coronet of golden corn.

(Thomas Hood, *Autumn*)

(*e*) It is . . . Death alone that can suddenly make man to know himself. He tells the proud and insolent that they are but Abjects, and humbles them at the instant; makes them coy, complain, and repent, yea, even to hate their forepassed happiness. He takes the account of the rich and proves him a beggar; a naked beggar

which hath interest in nothing but the gravel that fills his mouth. He holds a Glass before the eyes of the most beautiful, and makes them see therein their deformity and rottenness; and they acknowledge it.

O eloquent, just, and mighty Death! whom none could advise, thou hast persuaded; what none hath dared thou hast done; and, whom all the world hath flattered, thou only hast cast out of the world and despised: thou hast drawn together all the far-stretched greatness, all the pride, cruelty, and ambition of man, and covered it all over with these two narrow words, *Hic jacet.*

(Sir Walter Raleigh in *A History of the World,* 1614)

Laodameia died; Helen died; Leda, the beloved of Jupiter' went before. It is better to repose in the earth betimes than to sit up late; better, than to cling pertinaciously to what we feel crumbling under us, and to protract an inevitable fall. We may enjoy the present, while we are insensible of infirmity and decay, but the present, like a note in music, is nothing but as it appertains to what is past and what is to come. There are no fields of amaranth on this side of the grave; there are no voices, O Rhodope, that are not soon mute, however tuneful; there is no name, with whatever emphasis of passionate love repeated, of which the echo is not faint at last.

(Walter Savage Landor, *Aesop and Rhodope*)

(*f*) The Ogillallah, the Brulé, and the other eastern bands of the Dahcotah are thorough savages, unchanged by any contact with civilization. Not one of them can speak an European tongue, or has ever visited an American settlement. Until within a year or two, when the emigrants began to pass through their country on the way to Oregon, they had seen no whites except the handful employed about the Fur Company's posts. They esteemed them a wise people, inferior only to themselves, living in leather lodges, like their own, and subsisting on buffalo. But when the swarm of *Meneaska,* with their oxen and wagons, began to invade them, their astonishment was unbounded. They could scarce believe that the earth contained such a multitude of white men. Their wonder is now giving way to indignation; and the result, unless vigilantly guarded against, may prove lamentable in the extreme.

(Francis Parkman, *The Oregon Trail*)

If it was a point of honour with the Indian warrior to redeem his word, when pledged to return and meet his death at a given hour, so it was a point of characteristic pride to show no womanish impatience, but to re-appear as nearly as possible at the appointed moment. Something of this dramatic effect mingles with most of the graver usages of the American aborigines. . . . As respects Deerslayer, though he took a pride in showing his white blood, by often deviating from the usages of the red-men, he frequently dropped into their customs, and oftener into their feelings, unconsciously to himself, in consequence of having no other arbiters to appeal to than their judgments and tastes. . . . The American Indian always deemed his moral victories the noblest . . . To slay, and not to bring off the fruit of victory, indeed, was scarcely deemed honourable.

(James Fenimore Cooper, *The Deerslayer*)

(*g*) Good people all, of every sort,
Give ear unto my song;
And if you find it wond'rous short,
It cannot hold you long.

In Islington there was a man,
Of whom the world might say,
That still a godly race he ran,
Whene'er he went to pray.

(Oliver Goldsmith, *Elegy on the Death of a Mad Dog*)

I wrote some lines once on a time
In wondrous merry mood,
And thought, as usual, men would say
They were exceeding good.

They were so queer, so very queer,
I laughed as I would die;
Albeit, in the general way,
A sober man am I.

(Oliver Wendell Holmes, *The Height of the Ridiculous*)

When 'Omer smote 'is bloomin' lyre,
He'd 'eard men sing by land an' sea,
An' what he thought 'e might require,
'E went an' took—the same as me!

(Rudyard Kipling, *When 'Omer Smote . . .*)

Set B: Commentary (or Explication Française)

All but one of the following passages are susceptible of one or other of those modifications of *explication française* which I have set forth in § 4 of this chapter; one or two of the passages may suggest yet other modifications, although only No. 12 does, in fact, require a different treatment.

1. *A Natural Mistake.*

November 21, 1753. From Lowitz through Vernico, to Lubiana or Lubatz, a well situated, handsome town with a river running thro' it, making one of the streets not unlike the canals of Venice.

Here we met with an adventure which caus'd us some mirth and gave us some concern.

The stables were good, the yard spatious and the house presented an appearance much above the Inns we had been used to in Italy. Under such promising appearances, hungry and cold we quitted our carriages, and leaving our only german servant to see the horses changed and settle with the Postillions, we made the best of our way into the kitchen, and taking possession of the fire-side made signs for something to eat: But tho' there were two or three decent young women there, we were not a little surpris'd that they shewed no inclination to understand, or serve us, but rather seemed diverted with our behaviour. Seeing some eggs on a shelf, we made signs that we wished to have them boiled hard, but without success, so that we took down a saucepan and cook'd them ourselves. Then, indeed they brought us salt and bread, and we sat down and regaled ourselves. In the meantime we cou'd not but observe the door frequently open and persons, out of curiosity looking in upon us, guests, as we suppos'd lodging in the house, and among

them we perceiv'd a gentleman in a German uniform, who gave us a significant look and retir'd without speaking, which gave us no favourable impression of german politeness, and afforded matter of some diversion to us. In the midst of our mirth, our Interpreter inform'd us that the carriages were at the door; and being ordered to pay the Reckoning—'Reckoning', he replied, 'this house is not an Inn, but occupied by an officer of rank in the Garrison, who has let the stables to the Postmaster'. This intelligence gave a present check to our mirth, and hasten'd our departure leaving him to make a suitable apology to the General and to distribute something handsome to the servants.

(*From an anonymous unpublished diary of a journey from Venice to Vienna*)

2. Besides the danger that ensu'th
To him that speaks or writes the truth,
The premium is so small:
To be call'd Poet and wear bays,
The factor turn of songs and plays,—
This is no wit at all.
Wit only good to sport and sing
Is a needless and an endless thing.

Give me the wit that can't speak sense,
Nor read it but in's own defence,
Ne'er learn'd but of his Gran'am!
He that can buy and sell and cheat
May quickly make a shift to get
His thousand pound per annum;
And purchase without more ado
The poems, and the poet too.

(Alexander Brome)

3. Of manners gentle, of affections mild;
In wit, a man; simplicity, a child:
With native humour temp'ring virtuous rage,
Form'd to delight at once and last the age:
Above temptation, in a low estate,
And uncorrupted, ev'n among the great:
A safe companion, and an easy friend,
Unblam'd through life, lamented in thy end.
These are thy honours! not that here thy bust
Is mix'd with heroes, or with kings thy dust;
But that the worthy and the good shall say,
Striking their pensive bosoms,—*Here* lies Gay.

(Alexander Pope, *Epitaph on John Gay* in Westminster Abbey, 1732)

4. And so for ever, o'er this parcel'd globe,
In every language, learned wisdom hath
A moral's close, a maxim's guarantee,
A child's example when he tutors pride,
A sage's proverb if he speaks of death,
Or preacher's text to warn how riches flee.

(Robert Eyres Landor, '*Twas Ever Thus*)

5. She was at Mallow for the sake of the Spa, it being understood that she was consumptive, though I'll answer for it her lungs were not

touched; and I never saw any signs of consumption about her, except at meal-times, when her consumption was undoubtedly great. However, her mother, a very nice middle-aged woman—she was of the O'Regans of the West, and a perfect lady in her manners, with a very remarkable red nose, which she attributed to a cold which had settled in that part, and which cold she was always endeavouring to cure with various balsamic preparations taken inwardly—maintained that her poor chicken, as she called her, was very delicate, and required the air and water of Mallow to cure her. Theodosia (she was so named after some of the Limerick family), or, as we generally called her, Dosy, was rather of a sanguine complexion, with hair that might be styled auburn, but which usually received another name. Her nose was turned up, as they say was that of Cleopatra; and her mouth, which was never idle, being always employed in eating, drinking, shouting, or laughing, was of considerable dimensions. Her eyes were piercers, with a slight tendency to a cast; and her complexion was equal to a footman's plush breeches, or the first tinge of the bloom of morning bursting through a summer cloud, or what else verse-making men are fond of saying. I remember a young man who was in love with her writing a song about her, in which there was one or other of the similes above mentioned, I forget which. The verses were said to be very clever, as no doubt they were; but I do not recollect them, never being able to remember poetry. Dosy's mother used to say that it was a hectic flush. If so, it was a very permanent flush, for it never left her cheeks for a moment, and, had it not belonged to a young lady in a galloping consumption, would have done honour to a dairymaid.

(William Maginn, from *Bob Burke's Duel*)

6. *Captain John Smith, in the year* 1608, *describes certain Indians of Virginia.*[1]

So fat they fed me that I much doubted they intended to have sacrificed me to the Quiyoughquoslcke, which is a superior power they worship; a more uglier thing cannot be described. . . . To cure the sick, a man with a rattle and extreme howling, shouting, singing, and such violent gestures and antic actions over the patient, will suck out blood and phlegm from the patient, out of their unable stomach or any diseased place, as no labour will more tire them.

Tobacco they offer the water in passing in foul weather. The death of any they lament with great sorrow and weeping. Their kings they bury betwixt two mats within their houses, with all his beads, jewels, hatchets, and copper; the others in graves like ours. They acknowledge no resurrection. . . .

From Werowacomoco is but twelve miles, yet the Indians trifled away that day and would not go to our fort by any persuasions, but in certain old hunting houses of Paspahegh we lodged all night.

The next morning ere sunrise we set forward for our fort, where we arrived within an hour; where each man with the truest signs of joy they could express welcomed me.

7. *Benjamin Franklin* (1706–1790) *wrote thus concerning style:*

To be good, it ought to have a tendency to benefit the reader by improving his virtue or his knowledge. But, not regarding the intention of the author, the method should be just; that is, it should proceed

[1] In the modernized version published in *The Oxford Anthology of American Literature.*

regularly from things known to things unknown, distinctly and clearly without confusion. The words used should be the most expressive that the language affords, provided that they are the most generally understood. Nothing should be expressed in two words that can be as well expressed in one; that is, no synonym should be used, or very rarely, but the whole should be so placed as to be agreeable to the ear in reading; summarily it should be smooth, clear, and short, for the contrary qualities are displeasing.

But, taking the query ['What is a good style?'] otherwise, an ill man may write an ill thing well; that is, having an ill design, he may use the properest style and arguments (considering who are to be readers) to attain his ends. In that sense, that is best wrote, which is best adapted for obtaining the end of the writer.

8. Five mites of monads dwelt in a round drop
That twinkled on a leaf by a pool in the sun.
To the naked eye they lived invisible;
Specks, for a world of whom the empty shell
Of a mustard-seed had been a hollow sky.

. . . . .

But while they led their wondrous little lives
Æonian moments had gone wheeling by,
The burning drop had shrunk with fearful speed;
A glistening film—'twas gone; the leaf was dry.
The little ghost of an inaudible squeak
Was lost to the frog that goggled from his stone;
Who, at the huge, slow tread of a thoughtful ox
Coming to drink, stirred sideways fatly, plunged,
Launched backwards twice, and all the pool was still.

(Edward Rowland Sill, American teacher and, 1874–82, Professor of English Literature, and poet; in 1868 he published *The Hermitage and Other Poems*; from 1882 until his death in 1887 at the age of forty-six, he contributed verse and prose to the magazines. Intensely shy, he yet was a poet eager to clarify the ideas, whether prevalent or latent, of his day. The form of his verse was less unconventional than his thinking. The quoted passage consists of the first and last stanzas of 'Five Lives'.)

9. Earth has not anything to show more fair:
Dull would he be of soul who could pass by
A sight so touching in its majesty:
This City now doth like a garment wear

The beauty of the morning: silent, bare,
Ships, towers, domes, theatres, and temples lie
Open unto the fields, and to the sky,
All bright and glittering in the smokeless air.

Never did sun more beautifully steep
In his first splendour valley, rock, or hill;
Ne'er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep!

The river glideth at his own sweet will:
Dear God! the very houses seem asleep;
And all that mighty heart is lying still!

(William Wordsworth, *Upon Westminster Bridge*, September 3, 1802)

10. Buffalo Bill's
defunct
who used to
ride a watersmooth-silver
stallion
and break onetwothreefourfive pigeonsjustlikethat.
(E. E. Cummings, born in 1894, is an American—and a brilliant experimental poet.)

11. If th'Assassination
Could trammell up the Consequence, and catch
With his surcease, Successe: that but this blow
Might be the be all, and the end all. Heere,
But heere, upon this Banke and Schoole of time,
Wee'ld jumpe the life to come. But in these Cases,
We still have judgement heere, that we but teach
Bloody Instructions, which being taught, returne
To plague th'Inventer. This even-handed Justice
Commends th'Ingredience of our poyson'd Challice
To our owne lips. Hee's heere in double trust;
First, as I am his Kinsman, and his Subject,
Strong both against the Deed: then, as his Host,
Who should against his Murtherer shut the doore,
Not beare the knife my selfe.

(William Shakespeare, *The Tragedie of Macbeth*, I, vii)

12. Set it for a moment beside one of those white Greek goddesses or beautiful women of antiquity, and how would they be troubled by this beauty, into which the soul with all its maladies has passed? . . . She is older than the rocks among which she sits; like the vampire, she has been dead many times, and learned the secrets of the grave; and has been a diver in deep seas, and keeps their fallen day about her; and trafficked for strange webs with Eastern merchants: and, as Leda, was the mother of Helen of Troy, and, as Saint Anne, was the mother of Mary; and all this has been to her but as the sound of lyres and flutes, and lives only in the delicacy with which it has moulded the changing lineaments, and tinged the eyelids and the hands.

(In *The Renaissance*, 1878, Walter Pater, who died, 1894, in his middle fifties, described his aesthetic and spiritual response to that famous portrait of Monna Lisa—almost ' my Lady Elizabeth '—the Neapolitan wife of Zanobi del Giocondo (hence the other name of the portrait: *La Gioconda*, the Jocund Lady, though literally no more than ' Giocondo's Wife ') which was painted in 1503–6 by Leonardo da Vinci.)

13. *The Spirit sings:*

Sabrina fair
Listen where thou art sitting
Under the glassie, cool, translucent wave,
In twisted braids of Lillies knitting
The loose train of thy amber-dropping hair,
Listen for dear honour's sake,
Goddess of the silver lake,
Listen and save!

. . . . .

Sabrina replies:

By the rushy-fringèd bank
Where grows the Willow and the Osier dank,
My sliding Chariot stayes,
Thick set with Agat, and the azurn sheen
Of Turkis blew, and Emrauld green
That in the channell strayes,
Whilst from off the waters fleet
Thus I set my printless feet
O'er the Cowslips Velvet head,
That bends not as I tread,
Gentle swain at thy request
I am here. (John Milton, *Comus*)

14. Whoever considers the final cause of the world will discern a multitude of uses that enter as parts into that result. They all admit of being thrown into one of the following classes: Commodity; Beauty; Language; and Discipline. . . .

Nature is the vehicle of thought, and in a simple, double, and threefold degree.

1. Words are signs of natural facts.
2. Particular natural facts are symbols of particular spiritual facts.
3. Nature is the symbol of spirit. . . .

A new interest surprises us, whilst . . . we contemplate the fearful extent and multitude of objects; since 'every object rightly seen, unlocks a new faculty of the soul'. That which was unconscious truth, becomes, when interpreted and defined in an object, a part of the domain of knowledge,—a new weapon in the magazine of power.

(Ralph Waldo Emerson, 1803–1882, anonymously in 1836 published an idealistic study of mankind; he called it *Nature*.)

LINKS

Reading maketh a full man; conference[1] a ready man; and writing an exact man.—Francis Bacon, in his essay *Of Studies*, 1597.

Reading is to the mind, what exercise is to the body. As by the one, health is preserved, strengthened and invigorated; by the other, virtue,[2] which is the health of the mind, is kept alive, cherished, and confirmed. —Addison in *The Tatler* (1711–12).

The habit of reading is the only enjoyment in which there is no alloy; it lasts when all other pleasures fade.—Anthony Trollope in a speech, 1868.

By 'links' you are to understand 'the links of English with other subjects—and of other subjects with English'. 'English and Its Associated Subjects' might have served as a title, were it not for the fact that every subject whatsoever is associated with English, simply because, without English, no subject can, by a person dependent upon this language for expression, be studied, or even known, at all. Certain subjects, however, are much more closely associated with English than are others: manifestly history, geography, philosophy, and languages are more intimately connected than are, say, mathematics, mechanics, chemistry, physics, botany. In short, with the exception of mathematics, the subjects known as 'Arts' (languages, history, philosophy, etc.) come much closer than do those known as 'Sciences'; also than Medicine and Engineering. Law, you might say, is remote from English; certainly you have no need to read legal books in order to enrich your knowledge of the world or, except slightly, to improve your English; nor will it be treated here; yet, as you doubtless perceive, Law is utterly dependent upon sound reasoning soundly expressed and upon a very good knowledge of English at the service of lucid thinking, thought being unable to operate without language—and language being helpless, meaningless, without thought.

Somebody once remarked, in some such words as these: It's extraordinary how useful a store of miscellaneous knowledge can be. That this should be true of an historian, a writer upon language, a novelist, an essayist, a journalist, hardly merits the epithet 'extraordinary'. One can easily see, too, how very useful such knowledge must be to a policeman, whether ordinary or detective. It is not impossible to guess that a teacher finds it serviceable. Crossword devotees proclaim the fact, day after day.

[1] Speech; conversation.

[2] Here, *virtue* means neither the Latin *virtus*, 'manliness; courage', nor the narrowed nuance, 'chastity', but 'mental and moral capacity', especially 'intellectual honesty and moral integrity'—perhaps with emphasis upon the latter.

No; it was an ordinary man, or rather an unordinary man in an ordinary profession, who made the remark; not apropos of crosswords.

The utilitarian value of knowledge does not require to be stressed: it is evident.

The non-utilitarian—that is, the spiritual, intellectual, aesthetic—value of knowledge stands in a rather different position and in a very different relation. This sort of knowledge is the more notable in that it far transcends knowledge: it means far more than mere information. Of utilitarian knowledge, one can hardly say more than, ' Can I use it? Is it relevant? ' Concerning non-utilitarian knowledge, one sometimes has the oddest feeling or surmise, expressed in a perhaps not entirely inadequate, not wholly misleading, manner by the thought, ' Is it using me? ' or ' Am *I* worthy of *it*? ' With the key of so-called ' practical ' knowledge, you pass from one instrument to another, perhaps from one technical system to another; and these are important transitions. With ' impractical ' knowledge you will sometimes do nothing so worth-while: on the other hand, you may change your character, your outlook, your whole life: you may pass, not from one room to another, nor from one house to another, but from one world to another—from mediocrity to distinction—from dulness to excitement—from the ordinary to the extraordinary—from dust to destiny—from clod to creative artist.[1]

In the third quotation[2] at the head of this chapter, Anthony Trollope touched lightly, practically, by all comprehensibly, upon a great truth. Reading provides not merely a distraction from care, a diversion from boredom, but, at one level, entertainment, at another comfort and solace, at another a profound and immediate joy and a deep lasting happiness. ' There is a great deal of difference between the eager man who wants to read a book, and the tired man who wants a book to read,' as G. K. Chesterton noted in his provocative *Charles Dickens*, 1903.

' A learnèd man,' said Phaedrus (first century A.D.), ' always possesses wealth in himself.' True; but learning, worthy and delightful though it is and exciting though, to its possessor, it may be, accounts for only a part of the charm and value of an appreciative knowledge of great or notable works in poetry and the drama, history and the novel, religion, philosophy, art, music, science.[3]

Companionship with great or even with stimulating minds is hard to come by: converse with them in their printed work, or it may be in their painted or chiselled work, or in their musical compositions, or again in their plays acted in the theatre, *this* converse lies within the reach of almost everyone. If it were not for the gap between wish and will, that gulf which characterizes, largely constitutes and mainly causes the world's distress and difficulties, one could assert that this easier converse, this no

[1] This term covers painters, sculptors, musical composers, dramatists, poets and other writers.

[2] Such a quotation, like one on the title-page of a book, is known as an *epigraph*: Greek *epigraphé*: *graphein*, to write, *epi*, upon.

[3] A very few classics in science; a few classics about science.

less intellectual and spiritual companionship, is attainable by everyone without exception.

Intellectual and spiritual joy and happiness are things no government can filch from you: clear vision, a sense of values, determination[1] will come from citizenship in the world of art, literature, drama, music; and will, in their turn, enrich and fortify your pleasure, joy, happiness in art, literature and the rest.

That is not sermonizing (so easy), nor moralizing, but merely an imparting of information you may not yet have acquired for yourselves.

Libraries and 'Libraries'

Most schools possess a tolerable, some few possess a good library, the selection of reference books being usually superior to that of general books.

This is hardly the place for a list of books that I should hold to be indispensable in a school library. Many such books will be mentioned in the course of subsequent sections of this chapter, but they are not to be taken as anything more than representative. They are suggestive, not comprehensive; yet they will be worth every student's while, whether he be a candidate for some examination or simply desirous of enlarging his interests, extending his knowledge, improving his education, attaining to some degree of culture.

Nor is it quite the place to speak in detail about other libraries. Every township, town, city has either a municipal or a county library: and almost everybody can there find at least some of the books he needs. The librarian is prepared, he will probably be glad, to help a serious reader, for in the world of learning (nor am I confining myself to academic learning) there is a wonderful freemasonry, far more catholic and far less esoteric than Freemasonry. If your municipal or county library does not stock such or such a book, the librarian can, for a student or other serious reader, usually obtain it from that entrepot, that distributive storehouse, the National Central Library. If you live in a big city, there are certain other libraries, concerning which your municipal or country librarian will be pleased to tell you.

But the word *library* is also applied to certain comprehensive series or sets of books. The two best-known general 'libraries' are *Everyman's Library* and the rather smaller, though in some ways better, *The World's Classics*. Those two libraries contain imaginative literature (poetry, drama, fiction), the classics of history, geography, religion, philosophy, science, the theory and history of art and music, and—*Everyman's Library* only—books of reference. They are representative, both of the Literature of Power and of the Literature of Knowledge, as De Quincey phrased it; the literature of imagination and the literature of (real or supposed) fact.

[1] Or *voluntas* as distinguished from *velleitas*; *will as distinguished from either apathy or accidia.*

The two groups are not mutually exclusive; for instance, a great historical work, originally and ostensibly an example of the Literature of Knowledge, may come to belong also to the Literature of Power, as you will see when you consider such historians as Thucydides, Gibbon, Prescott, Michelet, Mommsen, G. M. Trevelyan.

The Literature of Knowledge has several very good 'libraries' devoted to it. To name but two: *The Home University Library*[1] and the *Teach Yourself . . .* series. The former is much the more extensive and is much less directly pedagogic: more general, more literary, yet covering a very wide field. Both the Oxford University Press (in addition to *H.U.L.*) and the Cambridge University Press, Messrs Cassell, Messrs Routledge, Messrs Bell, and three or four other publishers issue 'libraries'[2] that no genuine seeker after knowledge (nor only knowledge) can safely ignore: I suggest that you ask your bookseller to acquaint you with these. Did not Carlyle, so long ago as 1841, say, 'The true University of these days is a collection of books'?[3]

In all these 'libraries' you will find suggestions for further reading. The suggestions may be explicit, as 'Books for Further Reading', or implicit, as 'Sources' or 'Books Consulted' or 'Bibliography'. If you are especially interested in one particular subject, you will, nearly always, find hints on how to increase your knowledge. If you are either a reader, not merely a dipper, or a student (actual or virtual), not a butterfly 'pass-the-timer', you will be wise to read the Preface or Foreword, as well as the Introduction, of every book you peruse: they can be, often are, most revelatory of the author's character or motives or sources or methods. One of the masterpieces of English literature is the Preface[4] to Dr Johnson's Dictionary. That, admittedly, is an exception; yet the majority of prefaces, although not literary masterpieces, are pleasantly human documents, as also are dedications.

Languages

To know, intimately, another language is to afford oneself an enduring source of instruction and entertainment. For practical purposes, a modern language; preferably French or German or Spanish. For cultural purposes, either an Ancient Classic, preferably Greek, or a modern language in the Classical tradition—French or Spanish or Italian. For educational purposes, so far as they are distinguished from cultural: Latin or French. If you know both Latin (or Greek) and a modern European language, preferably French or Spanish, so much the better. Intimate knowledge

[1] Abbreviated as *H.U.L.*

[2] *Benn's Sixpenny Library* has unfortunately disappeared; it contained many very good little books.

[3] 'The Hero as Man of Letters' in *On Heroes, Hero-Worship, and the Heroic in History.*

[4] It should be read along with that vigorous reproach to Lord Chesterfield which is often known as 'A Letter to a Noble Lord'.

of another language furnishes you with the pass-key to another civilization —another mode of thought and feeling—another source of religion and philosophy—and much else. Thereby it saves you from the constricting bonds of insularity: it deepens and widens your entire cultural background and outlook: it renders you more critical of a political system and a way of life that hitherto you have, unwittingly, taken too much for granted: and it supples and subtles your means of expression as well as your method of thinking.

Greek.[1] Certain universities and certain examining boards, recognizing that not everyone can afford the time to learn Greek and yet remembering the inestimable benefits to be derived from a knowledge of Ancient Greek life, thought, art and literature, reconcile these merely apparent irreconcilables by prescribing a course wherein one can study the history, thought, literature and the rest in a recommended list of excellent text-books and translations.

To set the Greek civilization within the framework of contemporaneous European and Near-Asiatic life and thought, you can draw much sustenance from such a book as James Henry Breasted's *Ancient Times*, or, less advanced, T. R. Glover's very readable *The Ancient World;* useful, too, is some such work as F. A. Wright's *The Romance of Life in the Ancient World.* But a student desirous of much fuller information should betake himself to *The Cambridge Ancient History.*[2] A good general book on ancient Greece itself is Will Durant's *The Life of Greece.*

To say anything useful about translations from Greek literature without appending a list is difficult. The best ' library ' of translations is the Loeb Classical Library of Greek and Latin Authors; all have the text on one side, the prose translation on the other, and a modicum of essential footnotes. Many of the translations in Bohn's Library are quite readable, and there are various translations of this writer or that, this work or that, published by such notable firms as the University presses, Messrs Macmillan, Messrs Longmans, Green and others. *Everyman's Library* and *The World's Classics* contain many fine renderings. A serviceable guide to translations from Greek and Latin literature is F. Seymour Smith's *The Classics in Translation.*

Certain English versions of Greek works are in themselves great works. To name but a few: *The Oxford Book of Greek Verse*, in English; Pope's *Homer* (not much like Homer), and in prose, T. E. Lawrence's *Odyssey*,[3] and those renderings of *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey* in which Andrew Lang had a share. Gilbert Murray's renderings of Euripides, Sophocles, Aeschylus, Aristophanes; Bickley Rogers's renderings of certain Aristo-

[1] One of the two or three best short histories of Greek Literature is that by Gilbert Murray. There is, in French, a monumental and memorable book by those two remarkable Greek scholars, the Croisets.

[2] For mythology, antiquities, etc., see the next section—*Latin.*

[3] A very good translation for the modern reader is E. V. Rieu's in ' The Penguin Classics '.

phanic comedies; Conington's *Agamemnon*; Jack Lindsay's, C. S. Calverley's, R. C. Trevelyan's *Theocritus*; Rawlinson's *Herodotus* and Jowett's *Thucydides*; Jebb's *Attic Orators*; Jowett's *The Dialogues of Plato* and *The Republic*; Sir Ernest Barker's *The Politics*, S. H. Butcher's *The Poetics*, Jebb's *The Rhetoric* of Aristotle; John Addington Symonds's, J. W. Mackail's, F. L. Lucas's, Humbert Wolfe's selected verse translations from *The Greek Anthology*, which has also been well translated into prose in the Loeb Library.

If, however, you are so fortunate as to be studying Classical Greek, you have been made free of a gracious, subtle world. Greek dramatic verse, Greek epic verse, Greek lyric and epigram are, in the original, unforgettable. Yet, for anyone concerned with style, a perhaps even greater benefit flows from a study of Greek prose than from that of Greek verse, for the prose is so extraordinarily musical and supple and fluent, surmounting every cragginess, undulating into every crevice, and, by its astounding manipulability, its fascinatingly protean variety, capable of dealing with swift narrative or leisurely description, with dialogue, with profound thoughts, as happy in synthesis as in analysis. To attempt to show, to one ignorant of Greek, how this is done would be futile; to one familiar with it, supererogatory. But this, at least, can usefully be said: Of all the most famous ancient languages (all others too); Sanskrit, Hebrew, Greek, Latin; Greek approximates in ease and naturalness of syntax, including word-order, far more closely to English and French, Spanish and Italian, than do the others—even more closely than Latin to Italian.

From Greek we derive most of the technical terms current in logic, ethics, psychology, metaphysics; in literary and dramatic and aesthetic theory and criticism; in philology; in science—though mainly from the Latin forms of the Greek words; and many of those current in geography, history, sociology, political economy, mathematics, and medicine.[1]

Latin. Much less lissom than Greek, Latin is a forceful and eloquent language, direct and economical. An intimate knowledge of the sonorous lucidity of Cicero, the simplicity of Caesar and Sallust, the packed concision of Tacitus can do much to improve our own prose. The poets, especially Lucretius, Virgil, Horace, Catullus, have much to teach us, even in translation. Latin Literature has been charmingly treated by J. W. Mackail.

Among the more notable translations are John Bailey's *Lucretius*, Dryden's and John Conington's verse renderings of Virgil, Theodore Martin's *Horace*, Jack Lindsay's complete translation of and Hugh MacNaghten's selected renderings from Catullus; Church and Brodribb's *Tacitus*; the Loeb Caesar, Cicero, Livy.

Rome may be studied in the general books on the ancient world already mentioned; and a good outline is contained in *Rome* by W. Warde Fowler (*H.U.L.*).

[1] But for this aspect of Greek, see the chapter on Language.

There are several excellent dictionaries of Greek and Roman mythology, and companions to Classical history and literature, the latter usually containing mythology as well. The handiest single-volume, reasonably-priced work for the general reader is Sir Paul Harvey's *The Oxford Companion to Classical Studies*. Two very useful supplementary volumes are *The Legacy of Greece* and *The Legacy of Rome*; to which should be added Leonard Whibley's *Companion to Greek Studies* and J. E. Sandys's *Companion to Latin Studies*. The best dictionaries are Lewis & Short's Latin and Liddell & Scott's Greek.

French. Students of English language and literature can learn far more from French, a Romance language (i.e., descended from Latin), than from any of the Teutonic languages, including German; more from its admirable prose than from its verse. To read the great French prose writers in the original is a liberal education. Passing by Rabelais and Montaigne, who are rather difficult, but readily available in spirited English renderings, I recommend especially, as masters of the art of writing: Pascal, Voltaire, Diderot, Vigny, Musset, Michelet, Hugo, Flaubert, Renan, André Gide, Paul Valéry, all of whom have exercised a considerable influence upon English writing and thought. To study their styles as exemplars of logic and clarity (Hugo falls a little short in these qualities), of picturesque objectivity, of adequacy of means to end, is to learn more than we can from any British prose-writers except Milton, Gibbon, Landor, Newman, Collingwood. It is true that, for a poetical sort of prose, the French have no one comparable with Sir Thomas Browne and De Quincey—except Michelet and Renan in a few passages and E. M. de Vogüé in many—that sort of thing being, in the main, foreign to the French genius. To read the best French prose is to afford oneself an intellectual pleasure of the first order.

The best one-volume history of French literature is Lanson's; among the most penetrating studies of French writers are those by Faguet. Noteworthy English historians are Dowden and Saintsbury; Lytton Strachey's *Landmarks in French Literature* (*Home University Library*) is sectional but stimulating. René Lalou has written provocatively upon the literature dating from 1870.

For the French language, you will find the books by Albert Dauzat to be very scholarly and very readable. Professor Ewert's valuable book, in English, is more advanced.

Italian is particularly interesting as the modern continuation of Latin, for it constitutes also a commentary upon the Classical tradition. Dante, Tasso, Leopardi, Carducci are four poets of whom any literature might well be proud; its prose writers are less outstanding. The best English translation of Dante's *Divina Commedia* is that in ' The World's Classics '. A quite useful English history of Italian literature is Richard Garnett's; note C. Foligno's *Epochs of Italian Literature*, very brief but good; note

also that F. de Sanctis's classic has been translated into English. But whatever else you may read upon the subject, you must not omit to read Lauro de Bosis's brilliant introduction to his *The Golden Book of Italian Poetry* (Oxford University Press).

Italian civilization merits study also for the magnificent contribution made by the art of Italy to the art of the world. Michael Angelo, Leonardo da Vinci, Titian, Botticelli and the rest . . . need one say more?

Spanish. Spain, too, has its very great painters—Velazquez, Murillo, Goya. Its painters, like its writers and musicians, have a note, a tang, quite different from that of any other European nation. Cervantes, an exact contemporary of Shakespeare, wrote that very adult masterpiece of prose fiction, *Don Quijote de la Mancha* or, as we say in English, *Don Quixote*, of which there are several adequate translations. No modern Spanish novelist has achieved a comparable fame, yet the best Spanish novels, like the short stories and like the philosophy and literary criticism, possess an inimitable distinctiveness and immediacy. Of the lyric poetries of the world, Spanish comes next to English in freshness; such poets as Espronceda and Lorca have an indescribable appeal.

Spanish history[1], literature, art, music have been magistrally concentrated in J. B. Trend's little book, *The Civilization of Spain* in the *Home University Library*; Professor Trend's anthology, *The Oxford Book of Spanish Verse* is no less masterly. (For the great poetries of the world, the 'Oxford Books of Verse' are indispensable.) The standard large history of Spanish literature is J. Fitzmaurice-Kelly's.

The Spanish language is a wonderful medium. It also happens to rank, commercially, next in importance to English. Spanish can be, and often is, like Italian a flowery language; but handled by a writer that faithfully expresses the national genius, its prose as richly rewards study as does French prose. An unhappy, unfortunate country, Spain has retained its courage, its dignity and its gaiety.

German is still very important in the commercial world and may again be very important in the world of art, literature, music and scholarship. German poetry, with Schiller, Goethe, Heine and Grillparzer, is something no man of culture can afford to ignore; and, except Grillparzer, they have been adequately translated, Goethe's *Faust* being skilfully rendered by Bayard Taylor, Theodore Martin and Anna Swanwick. Goethe, it must not be forgotten, ranks only after Shakespeare and Homer, and sharing third place with Dante, among the world's greatest writers. Of German literature as a whole there are two excellent short histories by British scholars: J. G. Robertson's in the *Home University Library* and Gilbert Waterhouse's; among more comprehensive works, Robertson's larger book stands very high.

[1] For the dauntless Spanish explorers, see F. A. Kirkpatrick, *The Spanish Conquistadores.*

German language is of especial interest to British and American philologists because of the very close linguistic link between English and German. But newcomers to this field tend to fall into the elementary mistake of deriving an English word from a German word when, as so very often happens, the two words are cognates, and into the almost equally crude mistake of forgetting that England possessed a notable literature long before Germany did.

European Literature. This is a convenient point at which to interpose a little information about European literature as a whole—and even about world literature. There are several ' dictionaries ' of the subject, including R. Farquharson Sharp's little book in *Everyman's Library* and Laurie Magnus's very much larger one; the Oxford University Press has issued a most helpful dictionary of the European literature since 1870. A consecutive history of European literature has been written by Laurie Magnus (good up to about the year 1850); for the early period, H. M. & N. Chadwick's *The Growth of Literature* (3 vols.) is the only dependable authority; John Drinkwater's *The Outline of Literature* (Europe and America), revised by myself in 1942; by another, in 1948; is a popular exposition of the subject, yet not to be despised.

World literature is beyond the knowledge of any one man: a useful popular work is Ford Madox Ford's *The March of Literature*; less popular is A. Guérard's *Preface to World Literature*; another serviceable book is J. A. Macy's *The Story of the World's Literature.* All such attempts should be read with sympathy but accepted with reserve.

American English has been treated earlier in this book. All I need do here is to refer you to the works by H. L. Mencken, George Philip Krapp, P. G. Perrin, and H. W. Horwill.

But the study of the American language, American English, must be related to, must be based upon, American literature, by which we mean that of the United States of America. Not only fiction but poetry, drama, essays, history, philosophy: to all of these, a splendid guide is furnished by James D. Hart's *The Oxford Companion to American Literature.* Of histories of American literature, the following will serve adequately as an introduction: the volume in the *Home University Library*; C. Angoff's *Literary History of the American People*; H. S. Canby's *Classic Americans*; O. Lowe, *Our Land and Its Literature*; C. & M. Van Doren, *American and British Literature since* 1890, first issued in 1939. But, above all, make yourselves acquainted with the works of American writers. The granary is: *The Cambridge History of American Literature.*

Dictionaries. In Book I, although necessarily somewhat elementarily, you have received hints concerning the way in which to use a dictionary and which dictionaries to use. If in doubt, ask your teacher or your librarian; failing either, you will always ask a good bookseller, for he can

often tell you what you need to know or, at the least, show you how to go about it.

Subject dictionaries abound. Much of the same information, although more briefly, is usually available in such general or ordinary dictionaries as *The Oxford English Dictionary*, or *A Dictionary of American English*, or *Webster's New International Dictionary*; if you require biographical information, you go to an encyclopaedia or to a biographical dictionary.

As for quotations, there are four excellent dictionaries: Bartlett's; Benham's; *The Oxford Dictionary of Quotations*; and Stevenson's. The first and fourth are American publications (reprinted in England) and are therefore invaluable for quotations from American writers. All four contain quotations from the Greek and Latin classics and from modern European literature.

History

The inter-relationships of English and History have already, though very briefly, been outlined in the concluding chapter of Book II.

To attempt to understand the English, or the American, language and literature without a tolerable knowledge of English and American history would be not merely stupid but impossible; it is impossible to understand any country's language and literature without knowing at least the fundamentals of that country's history. It would be even stupider, if that were possible, to attempt to understand the development of language (or literature) in general without knowing the historical outlines of the other important factors in that aggregate which we call civilization. The history of any and every language and of any and every literature forms a part of civilization: the rest of civilization is as dependent upon language and literature as language and literature upon their context, i.e. their place, whether temporal or spatial, in history.

All that must seem self-evident to you. But was it self-evident before you thought it out? A book that will help you to clarify your ideas is *The Use of History*, by A. L. Rowse.

I have heard it said, ' Oh yes! Clearly, if you're going to read historical novels,[1] Walter Scott's or Bulwer Lytton's or Maurice Hewlett's or Jack Lindsay's or Philip Lindsay's or Fenimore Cooper's or William Hervey Allen's or Kenneth Roberts's or Brian Penton's, you must know rather more British or Continental or American or Australian history than the novelists themselves tell you. But you probably don't require to know history to enjoy an essay and you certainly don't require any to enjoy poetry or an ordinary novel or a play.'

It depends upon the essay, the poem, the novel, the play. If it is an historical drama or ballad or commemorative ode, you obviously do need to know the occasion celebrated, the achievement sung, the background and the principal characters of the drama. If the essay is by Addison or

[1] Of which, more later.

Steele or Johnson or Goldsmith or Hazlitt or Lamb or Leigh Hunt or Oliver Wendell Holmes or Ambrose Bierce or anyone else who flourished before the period with which you are familiar at first hand, you need some knowledge of the author's biography or autobiography: and what, pray, are biography and autobiography but the histories of individuals, those individuals themselves being, if important or influential, a part—indeed makers—of history? Do you suppose that one needs no history in order to appreciate the ' ordinary ' novels and stories of Dickens and Thackeray, Washington Irving and Nathaniel Hawthorne?

Take a perhaps less obvious instance: the social or sociological novels of twentieth-century writers—let us say, John Galsworthy or Somerset Maugham in England, Godfrey Blunden or Kylie Tennant in Australia, Sarah Gertrude Millin in South Africa, Mulk Raj Anand in India, Upton Sinclair or Sinclair Lewis or John Steinbeck or John P. Marquand in the United States. History is social as well as political, economic as well as military. If you are not familiar with life in any of the countries mentioned, do you delude yourself into believing that you fully understand the novels and stories of the writers I've mentioned? Your ignorance, my ignorance of the one or the other, these do not deter us from reading their books: we may read them for the very reason that we do wish to learn something more of life and social custom and prevalent thought in the countries concerned. But we assuredly require to know at least a little of the contemporary history of lands other than our own.

Now suppose you wish to read the three or four best novels dealing with the war of 1914–18. You would gain far more from them by first reading Cruttwell's history of that war than by plunging straight into the novel or, at any rate, by reading it and then neglecting to acquaint yourself with the general trend of the war. Arnold Zweig's *The Case of Sergeant Grischa*, *Wooden Crosses* by Dorgelès, *Fire* by Barbusse, *Her Privates We* by Frederick Manning, the literarily inferior *All Quiet on the Western Front*, by Erich Maria Remarque, or such a book of reminiscences as Edmund Blunden's *Undertones of War*,—these can be enjoyed for themselves alone; yet they will be more deeply enjoyed and much better understood by someone who has read the history of the war as a whole.

But perhaps you will prefer to read novels and reminiscences of the war of 1939–1945. We still stand too close to be able to select the best books; for one thing, we may have to wait for many years until all the personal reminiscences and the novels based upon first-hand experience have been written. None the less, it will, if we are to appreciate and understand those books, be necessary to read the history, itself not yet adequately written. The only novelists I dare mention are James Aldridge, John Prebble and Alexander Baron, but I can at least assure you of this: you will enjoy and benefit by them the more if you make it your business to get a clear outline-picture of the campaigns with which they concern themselves.

Has it ever occurred to you to ask why it is that history, whether political, military, social, economic, or cultural, is so popular? Why, for

instance, G. M. Trevelyan's *English Social History* or James Truslow Adam's *The Epic of America* have had such a success? It is because people do desire to understand the history, recent, modern, medieval, ancient, of their own country and of other countries; not only because it is history —that is, not merely intrinsically—but also because, extrinsically, they crave to understand them and to comprehend what, in (for instance) a novel, is said or implied about the inhabitants of the country or some event of that country's history.

History has, in the twentieth century as never before, been popularized in novels: the history of every country and every period, including pre-history. That excess of historical detail, especially of architecture, costume, furniture, which vitiated the work of Walter Scott, Bulwer Lytton and Dumas, has almost disappeared, but a certain amount survives because a certain amount is unavoidable—or, at the least, advisable. American novelists have for some years been pouring forth a stream of books about the history of the United States both before and after the United States came into existence. Not only Britons but Americans, to enjoy these tales, have to learn more history than ever they had, most of them, learnt before. British novelists, whether in the British Isles or in the rest of the Commonwealth, are resuscitating their past. Everywhere, novelists are recalling the dead past of the entire world. These novelists are sending readers to serious histories; historians are sending students to the novels; they and we are playing postman's knock, to the great benefit of education.

—' All very cosy! But it's not much good talking about history if you can't say anything useful about it—for instance, to recommend a few dependable and preferably readable historical books.'

—' You've taken the very words out of my mouth. I am not a walking dictionary, nor an ambulatory encyclopaedia, nor a cursive catalogue, nor any sort of subject-index. Still, I'll do my best in a brief and summary way. You have teachers within call, librarians within reach, and eyes in your heads: ask the first, consult the second, use the third, whenever my information is patchy, irritating, unsympathetic or, briefly, unsatisfactory or inadequate.'

(*But enough of this badinage!*)

Before I deal with Universal History, European History, American History, British Empire (or British Commonwealth of Nations) History, and British History in the narrower sense, I should like you to take note of a fascinating book by Owen Barfield: *History in English Words*. This you might care to supplement with Ch. ix.B of my *The World of Words* and with many of the entries in my *Name into Word*. Hence to etymology is a leap that any active young mind can very easily make, as you will have perceived in the chapter entitled ' Word-Histories, or Etymology '.

•

Universal History. A stimulating introduction to the study of history is supplied by C. S. S. Higham, *Discovering History*; a short account of the so-called pre-history is V. Gordon Childe's *What Happened in History*

(Penguin Books). *The Cambridge Ancient History—Medieval History—Modern History*, three sets of books by various authorities: these form the soundest storehouse of historical information available in English. Invaluable in themselves and well written, they also provide very extensive reading lists. Less bulky are such works as these: J. H. Breasted, *The Conquest of Civilization*; Stanley Casson, *Progress and Catastrophe. An Anatomy of Human Adventure*; H. A. Davies, *An Outline History of the World*; W. J. Durant, *The Story of Civilization*; H. W. Van Loon, *The Story of Mankind*—like Wells's book, very readable; J. E. Swain, *A History of World Civilization*; and J. C. D. Clark, *From Savagery to Civilization*, good though very brief. The famous, yet to-be-used-with-caution, short history of the world by H. G. Wells, and Oscar Browning's aseptic world-history, have already been mentioned at the end of Book II.

Subserving the histories are those extremely useful adjuncts or, rather, companions: chronology charts, sometimes called time charts; and dictionaries of dates. For example, the evergreen *Hadyn's Dictionary of Dates*, the date-dictionary in 'Everyman's Library', G. P. Putman's *Dictionary of Events*; and A. P. Trotter's *A Chart of Three Thousand Years*, L. H. Dawson's *The March of Man*, R. J. Hart's *Chronos*, and S. H. Steinberg's *Historical Tables*. As British History must be connected with European, so must European and American History be linked with that of the entire world; only thus can we succeed in viewing civilization as a whole and in seeing men and things in perspective and in proportion.

European History has inevitably been treated, and probably been accorded the place of chief importance, in the works listed in the preceding sub-section. But it merits further treatment, for European civilization has done more for the world than the older civilizations of the Mesopotamian basin, of India, of China, of Central America.

One of the best books is H. A. L. Fisher's *A History of Europe*, in both the Liberal and, better still, the liberal tradition. Other good books are R. Flenley's *World History. The Growth of Western Civilization*, A. F. Hattersley's *A Short History of Western Civilization*, F. S. Marvin's *The Unity of Western Civilization*; in *The Home University Library*, G. A. J. Cole's *The Growth of Europe* (geological), and *Medieval Europe* by H. W. C. Davis, author of that other excellent piece of historical writing, *Europe from 800 to 1789*, introductory to which is Henry St L. B. Moss's *The Birth of the Middle Ages*, 395–814.

Of Europe in pre-Christian times, something has been said in sub-section 'Greek' in the 'Languages' section of this chapter; more, in the sub-section preceding this one.

For those who read French, I recommend the histories of Europe written, or supervised, by Rambaud, Lavisse, Seignobos.

British Empire. The fullest and most dependable work is *The Cambridge History of the British Empire*, edited by J. Holland Rose, A. P. Newton

and E. A. Benians, and published in eight large volumes, 1929–1936. Very much shorter, yet dependable and readable, are: James Truslow Adams, *Building the British Empire* (the American viewpoint); another American view, this a shade premature, is that presented by Robert Briffault in *The Decline and Fall of the British Empire*, 1938; J. A. Williamson's two books on *The British Empire*; A. P. Newton, *The British Empire to* 1783 and A. P. Newton & J. Ewing, *The British Empire since* 1783; W. H. Woodward, *The Expansion of the British Empire*; H. V. Hodson's notable pamphlet, *The British Empire;* A. F. B. Williams's book in The *Home University Library*; and, perhaps most notable of them all, Sir Ernest Barker's *The Ideas and Ideals of the British Empire.*

India has, not unnaturally, attracted much attention: there is even *The Cambridge History of India* in six volumes, 1928–1935; and the handier *The Cambridge Shorter History of India.* Note also H. C. Rawlinson's *A Concise History of the Indian People*, Sir George Duff-Sutherland's *A History of India*, and Vincent A. Smith's *The Oxford History of India*, written with distinction. An attractive little book is E. B. Havell's *Short History of India.* For Ceylon, see H. W. Codrington's *Short History of Ceylon.*

The other constituents of the Commonwealth of Nations must be treated more briefly.

Canada: G. M. Wrong, *The Canadians. The Story of a People; The Encyclopaedia of Canada*, edited by W. Stewart Wallace in 6 vols.

Newfoundland: R. H. Tait, *Newfoundland.*

British West Indies: A. Macmillan, *The West Indies, Past and Present.*

South Africa: E. A. Walker, *A History of South Africa.*

New Zealand: J. C. Beaglehole, *The Discovery of New Zealand* and *New Zealand. A Short History.*

Australia: the two best short histories are W. K. Hancock's and Ernest Scott's. The latter's *Australian Discovery by Sea* and ' The Exploration of Australia, 1813–1865 ' in *The Cambridge History of the British Empire* make excellent reading.

British Isles. In so far as the ground has not been covered already, only a few books need be mentioned. J. R. Green's *Short History of the English People* is still worth reading. G. M. Trevelyan's *A History of England* and *English Social History* are thoroughly trustworthy, and delightful to read, for England itself. *The Oxford History of England* in fourteen volumes, not yet all published, is the best large-scale work. But the Welsh, the Scots, the Irish are justified in asking for something particular and specialized; the following books will suffice as a general introduction.

Wales: Albert Hughes Williams, *An Introduction to the History of Wales;* Emrys George Bowen, *Wales: A Study in Geography and History.*

Scotland: A. Lang, *A History of Scotland* (four volumes); Agnes Muir Mackenzie, *Scotland in Modern Times*, 1720–1939; and R. S. Rait's book in *The Home University Library.*

Ireland (and Eire): E. Curtis, *A History of Ireland;* Sean O'Faolain, *The Story of Ireland.*

United States of America. James Truslow Adams's *The Epic of America* has already been mentioned; he has written a larger work, *History of the United States,* in four volumes; D. W. Brogan's *U.S.A.: An Outline of the Country, Its Peoples and Institutions* should accompany Adams and preface the reading of any—or all—of the following notable books: John Gunther, *Inside America;* C. A. & M. R. Beard, *The Making of American Civilization* ; Cecil Chesterton, *A History of the United States,* which, like R. B. Mowat's *The American Venture,* represents an English point of view, as also does D. C. Somervell, *A History of the United States* ; and several works by Allan Nevins.

The early history of the U.S.A. has often been described, but never more readably and picturesquely than by Francis Parkman the younger, especially in *The California and Oregon Trail.* But I warmly recommend also the historical novels by James Fenimore Cooper, William Hervey Allen, Kenneth Roberts.

The value of American history is manifold. Not the least valuable aspect is the picture it offers of a race that, as Americans say, stemmed from the British and then ran a parallel and increasingly independent course.

General. There are dictionaries of history, dictionaries of dates, chronology charts. Also to be noted are two dependable general dictionaries of biography: ' the Merriam-Webster ' and ' Chambers's '. For British biography, consult the volumes of *The Dictionary of National Biography,* of which there is a one-volume abridgement; for the U.S.A., *Dictionary of American Biography.*

The philosophy and art of history have been brilliantly treated by Arnold Toynbee in *A Study of History* (advanced, difficult, remarkable), very ably abridged in one volume by D. C. Somervell. Either of these should be companioned by R. G. Collingwood's *The Idea of History,* a book no less brilliant, no less remarkable, though inevitably less monumental than Toynbee's.

Geography

To understand mankind, it is necessary to understand his environment. Not merely the social environment but the geographical. To understand political economy, it is necessary to understand geography; such a book as Lionel W. Lyde's *Man and His Markets*[1] is helpful. To read history with understanding and a sense of proportion, it is, evidently, necessary to know the scene of an event, the region or the ocean traversed in a military or naval campaign, the geographical limitations and facilities of an historical process, a great man's country, and so on and so forth. I

[1] Be careful to read it in the latest edition.

recommend that you read James Fairgrieve's *Geography and World Power*. For the various names of geography—mathematical, physical, political, economic or commercial, and historical[1]—you have only to consult a good dictionary; most of you will already have studied two or more of these subdivisions.

But you may not have sufficiently studied geography to get the best out of history and literature. The geographical basis requisite to a proper appreciation of such classics of travel and scientific exploration as those written by Marco Polo, Hakluyt, Waterton, Kinglake, Darwin, Burton, Doughty, Hudson, Cunninghame Graham, must[2] be, as the original say, 'clear to the meanest intelligence'. Two books I especially recommend to you are L. W. Lyde's *The Continent of Europe* and *The Continent of Asia*. Then there is an excellent series of advanced geographies published by Messrs Methuen; written by such eminent geographers as L. Dudley Stamp, W. Fitzgerald, Griffith Taylor.

If for any reason you have missed the benefits of geography by having omitted to study the subject, you can retrieve the situation by starting with J. C. Kingsland & W. B. Cornish, *Teach Yourself Geography*.

Historical Geography

'The term "Historical Geography" has been applied to a variety of subjects—to the story of geographical exploration and of geographical science, to the history of changing political frontiers, and to the study of the influences of geographical factors upon historical events. . . .

'As our text we might well take the words of Jean Baptiste Brunhes,[3] one of many French geographers whose contributions are so outstanding:

> L'homme entre en rapport avec le cadre naturel par les faits de travail, par la maison qu'il construit, par le champ qu'il cultive, par la carrière qu'il creuse, etc. . . . C'est, en effet, l'intermédiaire du travail et des conséquences directes de ce travail qui établit la vraie connexion entre la géographie et l'histoire.

'These consequences, with their changing distributions, form much of the subject-matter of historical geography.'—H. C. Darby, editor of *An Historical Geography of England before A.D.* 1800.

Lyde's *Europe* and *Asia* contain much historical geography; nor would it harm you to re-read Lyde & Garnett's *Time and Place* and to read W. A. Gauld's *Man, Nature and Time*. Two well-known books are Sir George Adam Smith's *The Historical Geography of the Holy Land* and W. Gordon

[1] See the next section.

[2] This applies equally (need one add?) to such contemporary writers as Freya Stark and Peter Fleming.

[3] The reference is to his *La Géographie Humaine*, translated as *Human Geography*. With Camille Vallaux, Jean Baptiste Brunhes is also the author of *La Géographie de l'Histoire*.

East's *An Historical Geography of Europe;* the latter should be supplemented with N. J. S. Pounds's *An Historical and Political Geography of Europe;* less comprehensive than the books by East and Pounds, with the emphasis rather upon the history, is J. M. Thompson's *Historical Geography of Europe:* 800–1789, but excellent reading. My own *Name into Word* contains many short passages exemplifying this sort of geography —probably the most exciting of all the kinds of geography. A good introduction to the study of Historical Geography is provided by W. Gordon East, *The Geography behind History.*

Ethnology, Anthropology, Sociology

In order to weigh the evidence of history, geography, literature, art, music, it is necessary, not to be widely read in these subjects, but at least to know precisely what ground they cover and what they imply. The very close interconnection of all these subjects is implied in such a book as *The Earth and Its Peoples: Geology: Geography: Ethnology: Archaeology: Anthropology,* by H. A. T. Child.

You will obtain all you need, and probably a little more, from the following not too difficult books.

ETHNOLOGY: R. W. Firth, *Human Types*; I. Harris, *Race and Civilisation*; Ruth Benedict, *Race*; W. Ripley, *The Races of Europe.*

ANTHROPOLOGY: Stanley Casson, *The Discovery of Man*; V. Gordon Childe, *Man Makes Himself*; R. Linton, *The Study of Man.*

SOCIOLOGY: E. R. Groves & H. E. Moore, *An Introduction to Sociology*; R. G. Collingwood, *The New Leviathan*;[1] P. H. Furfey, *A History of Social Thought*; Louis Mumford, *The Condition of Man.* And, of course, the *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences,* (social sciences being a synonym of 'sociology'), edited by E. R. A. Seligman.

Whether sociology is, any more than economics, a science, would seem to be extremely debatable: for an understanding of its problems, sympathy is a primary, science a secondary need.

Philosophy

Etymologically 'love of wisdom', *philosophy* means that branch of learning and study which consists of four subjects: Metaphysics (Aristotle's *first philosophy*: philosophy *par excellence*); Logic; Ethics; Psychology. The term is also, as in 'a philosophy of art', used of a systematic body of general conceptions and the principles of their practical application. 'An attempt to present all or many [arts and] sciences in their mutual relations is usually [called] a *system of philosophy*' (*Webster's New International Dictionary*).

[1] A rather advanced book.

Metaphysics: ' That division of philosophy which includes ontology, or the science of being, and epistemology, or the theory of knowledge ' (Webster); the three other forms of philosophy depend thereon.

Logic:[1] ' The science or art of exact reasoning, or of pure and formal thought, or of the laws according to which the processes of pure thinking should be conducted; the science of generalization, judgment, classification, reasoning, and systematic arrangement ' (Webster).

Ethics: ' The science of moral duty; more broadly, the science of the ideal human character '; derivatively, ' Moral principles, quality, or practice; a system of moral principles ' (Webster), as in ' social *or* medical ethics '.

Psychology: ' The science of mind; systematic knowledge and investigation of the genesis, powers, and functions of mind ' (Webster); modern psychology includes experimental psychology, itself including physiological psychology and psychopathology (including psychiatry)—terms to be consulted in a good dictionary.

Each of these is a formidable subject, metaphysics being the ' toughest ' and profoundest; the four taken together constitute the deepest, hardest study to which one can devote oneself. Only one in ten thousand of you will become even moderately proficient in any one of these four related subjects; only one in a hundred thousand (or perhaps one in a million) will become a good all-round philosopher.

But: every single one of you could obtain vast benefits from a serious study of either metaphysics or psychology, the latter yielding the greater immediate, the more practical profit, the former yielding the better intellectual discipline or training. Ethics, too, has its value for every human being; logic subserves all formal thinking. As intellectual exercise and discipline, philosophy goes deeper and further than any other subject: it deals with the mystery of God, the mystery of being, the mysteries of life and the universe.

Before I list a very few important books in each of the four branches of philosophy, I should like to recommend A. N. Whitehead's *Adventures of Ideas*, most lucidly written and available in ' Penguin Books ', and Olaf Stapledon's *Beyond the Isms*, a provocative, most helpful book; and all the works of the most provocative and brilliant British mind of the twentieth century: R. G. Collingwood, a Classic, an historian, and a philosopher, who died untimely in 1943.

Philosophy in general:

E. Gilson, *The Unity of Philosophical Experience.*
R. G. Collingwood, *An Essay on Philosophical Method.*
R. G. Collingwood, *The Idea of Nature.*

[1] Not to be confused with *logistics*, the military art and science of supply and transport.

Viscount (H. L.) Samuel, *Belief and Action.*
Bertrand Russell, *A History of Western Philosophy.*[1]

Metaphysics:

R. G. Collingwood, *An Essay on Metaphysics.*
A. C. Garnett, *Reality and Value.*
Aldous Huxley, *The Perennial Philosophy* (an anthology).
H. J. Joachim, *The Nature of Truth.*
Jacques Maritain, *A Preface to Metaphysics.*
Jacques Maritain, *The Degrees of Knowledge.*

Logic:

F. H. Bradley, *The Principles of Logic.*
John Dewey, *The Principles of Inquiry.*
Jacques Maritain, *An Introduction to Logic.*
A. Wolf, *A Textbook of Logic.*

Ethics:

J. H. Breasted, *The Dawn of Conscience.*
A. R. Tuker, *The Past and Future of Ethics.*
Ernest Barker, *The Values of Life.*
J. Dewey & J. H. Tufts, *Ethics.*
Olaf Stapledon, *A Modern Theory of Ethics.*

Psychology:[2]

C. E. Spearman, *Psychology down the Ages.*
W. MacDougall, *Psychology* (Home University Library).
J. S. Ross, *Basic Psychology. How We Behave and Why.*
G. F. Stout, *A Manual of Psychology* (analytic).
R. H. Thouless, *General and Social Psychology.*

Science

Practical science is irrelevant to our multiple theme. But the principles of science, the relations of science with religion and philosophy, the history of science (a notable part of the history of civilization), these form very important links. It is true, both that few scientists write well, the Huxleys, T. H. and his grandson Julian, being examples on the right side; and that some of them think they have no need to—Albert Einstein believes that, so long as he conveys the facts and the theories, it does not matter how badly he does so. It is hardly for me to attempt to assess which are the classics of science; I should, however, be scamping my work if I failed to set you along the right road. Most of the great scientists

[1] Earl Russell tends to ignore such philosophers as he personally dislikes; it is, however, a stimulating book.

[2] I omit experimental psychology, which, especially in psychiatry, changes from year to year.

have, or will have, a biography: this is something that you can very easily find out for yourselves.

Here is a short list of some instructive books on the history and the principles of science.

History:

R. H. J. Gibson, *Two Thousand Years of Science.*
F. W. Westaway, *The Endless Quest: Three Thousand Years of Science.*
B. Farrington, *Science in Antiquity* (Home University Library).
A. P. Rossiter, *The Growth of Science* (a ' Pelican ').
Sir William Cecil Dampier, *A History of Science.*
Sir William Cecil Dampier, *A Shorter History of Science.*
G. Sarton, C. Singer, A. Wolf } various books, all very important.

Principles and Relations:

J. D. Bernal, *The Social Function of Science.*
H. Dingle, *Through Science to Philosophy.*
Sir A. S. Eddington, *The Philosophy of Physical Science.*
Sir J. A. Fleming, *The Scientific Method.*
J. B. S. Haldane, *Science and Everyday Life* (a ' Penguin ').
Lancelot Hogben, *Science for the Citizen.*
Sir James Jeans, *The Mysterious Universe* (a ' Pelican ').
Sir James Jeans, *Physics and Philosophy.*
Jacques Maritain, *Science and Wisdom.*
J. W. N. Sullivan, *The Bases of Modern Science* (a ' Pelican ').
J. W. N. Sullivan, *The Limitations of Science* (a ' Pelican ').
F. S. Taylor, *The World of Science.*
A. N. Whitehead, *Science and the Modern World.*

Dictionaries:

C. M. Beadnell, *A Dictionary of Scientific Terms.*
E. B. Uvarov, *A Dictionary of Science* (a ' Penguin ').

Fiction and Drama

As literary forms, you will justly remark, these no more demand a section than, say, the essay or the lyric. True; they have not been introduced on the account of their form, but because some guidance may be necessary.

The drama is the literary form of what, in practice, is the theatre. As a means of propaganda,[1] the stage and its published plays have been almost

[1] Not in its modern sense, facts so arranged or twisted as to serve a political or a religious cause, but in its true sense—the propagation of the truth by persuasive speech and writing.

as influential as the novel. With the aid of the novel (and, less notably, the short story) and of the drama, one can keep abreast of modern thought and modern British and American usage: with trends of opinion and fashions in artistic, musical, literary theory. As the world wags, so do the novel and the drama: to the world of action, as well as of thought, fiction and the theatre hold up a mirror. If you lack the training to read politics and economics, sociology, science, and the theories in the creative arts, you can at least assimilate the easier aspects and parts of these subjects by going to the theatre (or by reading the published plays) and by reading fiction. There are more onerous, less agreeable activities.

Art

In the complex of culture, art is a powerful element. Apart from the fact that it is an entity in its own right, art ministers, as does music also, to the cause of culture and contributes to the wealth, the universality, of mind and spirit.

Great artists are great men. Like great musical composers and great writers, they store and foster, preserve and extend our civilization. The biographies of the world's most eminent artists—Goya, Michelangelo, Leonardo da Vinci, Rembrandt, Velazquez, and their fellows—make an illuminating and inspiriting story.

Before you read these biographies it is well to know something of the history and the principles of art. I shall name a few histories and general books that can be understood and enjoyed by everyone.

History:

S. W. Cheney, *A World History of Art.*
H. Gardner, *Art Through the Ages.*
Eric Newton, *European Painting and Sculpture* (a ' Pelican ').
Sir W. Orpen, *The Outline of Art.*
F. V. Rutter, *Modern Masterpieces.*
E. W. Walters, *The Book of Art.*
Sir Frederick Wedmore, *Painters and Painting* (Home University Library).

Principles and Nature of Art:

Thomas Bodkin, *The Approach to Painting.*
R. G. Collingwood, *The Principles of Art.*
Henri Focillon, *The Life of Forms in Art.*
Roger Fry, *Vision and Design* (a ' Pelican ').
Eric Gill, *Sculpture.*
Eric Gill, *Beauty Looks after Herself.*
F. C. Tilney, *The Lure of the Fine Arts.*
R. H. Wilenski, *The Modern Movement in Art.*

Those few books, or even the Newton and Cheney histories and the Bodkin and Tilney general books, will open a new world or, if you know something of it already, will enrich and enlarge that world for you. Later, read the books by Collingwood, Fry, Gill, Wilenski.

Music

Here is another world; yet linked, intimately linked with those of art and literature. Your music master or mistress will tell you, better than I can, how to go about becoming a citizen of that world.

But if you are interested in music at all, whether as a musician or as an 'outside' lover of music, you should acquire *The Oxford Companion to Music*, by Dr Percy Scholes, encyclopaedic, alert, open-minded, and not devoid of wit and humour.

To that, you need few additions, few complements. The following, however, will help you, the titles being sufficiently descriptive.

Percy Scholes, *The Listener's Guide to Music.*
Percy Scholes, *The Listener's History of Music.*
J. A. Westrop, (editor) *The New Oxford History of Music* (forthcoming).
Sir W. H. Hadow, *Music* (Home University Library).
Sir W. H. Hadow, *The Place of Music among the Arts* (a pamphlet).
C. Gray, *Predicaments; or Music and the Future.*
L. F. Abbott, *An Approach to Music.*
Neville Cardus, *Music for Pleasure.*
Sir James Jeans, *Science and Music.*
C. S. Macpherson, *Music and Its Appreciation.*
Sir Donald Tovey, *A Musician Talks.*

General Knowledge

General knowledge is that peculiar sort which causes people to say, in awed whispers, 'There's an extraordinarily well-informed man (girl, woman)!' But unless this general knowledge is acquired with some sort of system, it tends to resemble the objects accumulated by an acquisitive magpie: and to be as useless.

Don't clutter your mind with a mass of odds and ends. Let the general knowledge you wish to *remember* be of the sort that will help you in your work and your thinking. For instance, a writer accumulates information about literature, the theatre, art, music, philosophy, history; an engineer, about machinery, mechanics, physics; a craftsman, about the history of his own craft and the history and principles of other crafts. The person desirous of culture will cover much the same ground as the writer.

But there constantly arise certain points concerning which one needs prompt and dependable information, or a subject on which one would wish to know rather more. For these needs, there is only one satisfaction. Encyclopaedias. Latterly, *The Encyclopaedia Britannica* should have been re-named *The Encyclopaedia Americana*: which is all very cosy for Americans and for those others who wish or need to possess a wealth of data upon the U.S.A. The best British encyclopaedia now is the re-cast *Chambers's Encyclopaedia.*[1] Smaller encyclopaedias are those in *Everyman's Library* and the one-volume works issued by Messrs Routledge and Odhams Press.

The Bible

Religion is—beyond all else—faith. One must have faith of some kind; the most important kind is religion; and for most Britons and Americans, that religion is Christianity, based upon the Bible.

The best Bible I know is *The Bible for Today*, edited with a general introduction, a special introduction to each Book, and a sufficient minimum of very helpful notes by John Stirling.

Concerning the Bible there has grown up a vast body of works. Here is a brief list of important works, every single one offering a rich reward:

Sir Frederick Kenyon, *The Story of the Bible.*
A. S. Cook, *The Authorized Version of the Bible and Its Influence.*
James Hastings, *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics* (a monumental work in thirteen large volumes).
C. H. Irwin, new edition of *Cruden's Complete Concordance.*
C. H. Irwin, *The Universal Bible Commentary.*
James Orr, *The International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia* (in five volumes).
Sir George Adam Smith, *The Historical Geography of the Holy Land.*
The Catholic Encyclopaedia in seventeen large volumes.

The best historical encyclopaedia of Christianity is Cabrol & Leclerq's, a magnificent work in French; most of it was written by that very remarkable scholar, Dom Henri Leclerq.

Retrospective

All the information, like all the hints, in the preceding sections is to be taken as subserving, both the study of British and American literature and language and the improvement and enrichment of one's intellectual and spiritual powers and potentialities. The literature of information is

[1] Published by Messrs George Newnes.

valuable in itself, it is still more valuable in the assistance it renders to the appreciation, evaluation, promotion of the cause of truth and beauty.

First, one enjoys and assimilates the beauty and the truth of a poem, a drama, a novel, an essay; secondly one continues to enjoy and assimilate its beauty and truth; finally, one enjoys and assimilates and spiritually profits by its beauty and truth and therefore also goodness—*τὸ ἀλεθὲς, τὸ ἀγαθὸν καὶ τὸ καλόν*: the true, the good and the beautiful. Information comes later: that is, not before, certainly not during, the first reading; then, before a re-reading comes background, or context or atmosphere, call it what you will; then, during the third reading, particular information can—and should—be conveyed by the teacher and noted by the private student.

If, at the end, a teacher has conveyed, a private student has learnt, only how to annotate a fine drama, a notable essay, a great novel, a beautiful poem, to classify it, to state its origins, that teacher and that student have failed. One reads literature, not primarily for the information it gives, much less for the knowledge it demands: one reads it in order to enjoy it: one enjoys it only by sharing in the creative experience of the writer, by sympathizing with him, and by accepting the situation, characters, atmosphere, language, and so forth the writer presents to us. To be indifferent to that great experience is to insult the creative writer, artist, composer—and to cheat ourselves.

Nevertheless, such various reading as has been suggested in the sections preceding this will enable you to enjoy more keenly and to understand more fully, not only what the writer (or artist or composer) has done but also what he has tried to do. Nor will such reading blunt your aesthetic perceptions, your intellectual comprehension and your spiritual awareness, providing you continue to ' put first things first ' and to form and preserve a proportionate sense of values. Get your values right and everything else comes right.

It is not enough to become a citizen of the world (the world can be too much with us): for our own happiness, our own good, it is advisable to become a spiritual citizen of the universe of all things lovely and enduring.

BOOK III

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