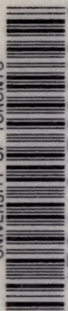
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THE ESSENTIALS

OF

COMPOSITION AND RHETORIC

BY

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To

Fred Lewis Pattee

PREFACE

In this book the author has endeavored to present a clear and comprehensible discussion of the *essentials* of Rhetoric and English Composition, and to furnish the student with suitable constructive and critical exercises. The statement of rhetorical principles as set forth in the text and the exercises placed at the end of each chapter have been the outgrowth of nine years' experience in the teaching of high school and college students. The book is especially designed to furnish a practical course for pupils in the high school and for freshmen in college. Neither the text nor the exercises, it is believed, will be found too difficult for the high school student or too elementary for the average college freshman. Such a course of instruction as is embodied in this book should form part of the training of every young man and woman.

In three respects this book is different from most other books on Composition and Rhetoric. First, it is written from the practical rather than the literary point of view. The author has constantly aimed to put himself in the place of the teacher, who must explain the principles of composition so clearly that the average student can understand them, and so convincingly that he cannot help seeing their practical value. The author has not imagined himself to be a literary man addressing a literary audience, nor has he taken it for granted that the students who use this book are going to produce literature. Secondly, he

has restricted the discussion to those things which are teachable. He has recognized the fact that certain of the finer qualities and graces of style are not directly communicable, — that the student cannot acquire them from the text-book or the teacher. Thirdly, the author has not ransacked the classics of English and American literature in order to make a collection of exercises illustrating faulty English. The makers of our literature have fairly won their way to fame, and they have not committed any faults so serious that they deserve to be put in the pillory by every schoolmaster. There is something ludicrous in setting a schoolboy the task of correcting the work of such writers as Macaulay, Addison, and Lowell. The task, moreover, is a discouraging one; the young writer will naturally despair of attaining grammatical correctness or rhetorical excellence if he is thus led to believe that the masters themselves have failed.

No one who writes a text-book on Rhetoric nowadays can, with honesty, lay claim to much originality. This is necessarily true of a science which had reached a considerable degree of completeness more than twenty centuries ago, and which has ever since been generally taught and used as a basis for practical work. This book is simply a new statement of old truth. The author has not sought mere novelty. He has aimed simply to set forth the principles of Rhetoric in a plain, fresh, and interesting way, and to show their practical bearing upon the art of Composition. Whatever originality the book possesses lies in the method of presentation and in the illustrative material. The numerous examples and exercises are, for the most part, entirely new.

Of the five short preliminary chapters, the three which discuss "The Value and Importance of Composition,"

"Methods of Study," and "The Student's Equipment" are intended to be read rather than studied. The reading of these chapters and the careful study of the two chapters on "Definitions" and "Fundamental Facts and Principles" will, it is hoped, furnish the student with a helpful introduction to the intelligent study of the main discussion. The numerous practical exercises are fully as important as the text. If the student is drilled in these exercises, he can hardly fail to make a practical application of the principles of Composition. The Appendices will be found valuable for reference. The large list of classified theme-subjects in Appendix E is likely to prove useful to many a puzzled student and teacher.

The author is indebted, consciously and unconsciously, to the work of many writers on Rhetoric. Doubtless he owes most to those books with which he has become familiar either as student or teacher. As a pupil he pored over Hill's "Principles of Rhetoric" and Wendell's "English Composition." As a teacher he has used Carpenter's "Exercises in Rhetoric and English Composition," Newcomer's "Elements of Rhetoric," and Pearson's "Principles of Composition." Professor Wendell's and Mr. Pearson's books have appealed to him as containing the soundest exposition of rhetorical principles, and his debt to these writers is very great. Finally, he is especially indebted to Professor Fred Lewis Pattee, of the Pennsylvania State College, for many valuable criticisms and suggestions.

A. H. E.

STATE COLLEGE, PA.,
June 1, 1904.

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I

PRELIMINARIES

COMPOSITION AND RHETORIC

CHAPTER I

THE VALUE AND IMPORTANCE OF COMPOSITION

No doubt the student who takes up this book may ask himself, at the very beginning: Why should I pursue the study of English Composition? What practical benefits can be derived from it?

The answer to these questions is obvious. The importance of Composition and the practical value of skill in the art of writing should be evident to all thoughtful people. No one can escape the necessity of communicating his thoughts to others. Most of us are obliged to use written language every day of our lives. Some people, it is true, possess more natural aptitude for composition than others; but skill in the use of language can come only as the result of careful training. The mastery of any art comes not by chance, but by long study and practice. The inexperienced writer is likely to phrase his thoughts crudely, vaguely, and inaccurately. Even those who seem to be endowed by nature with the happy gift of ease and aptness in the expression of their thoughts find that invariable clearness and force can be acquired only by conscious effort and constant vigilance. The study and the practical application of the principles of Composition are therefore important for two reasons: first, because Composition is an

art of great practical value; and second, because proficiency in this art can be acquired only by practice.

Some practical training in Composition is now very properly considered an essential part of every one's education. No part of the discipline that one usually receives in school and college can ever be turned to more constant use and greater practical account than skill acquired in the difficult art of Composition. The ability to use one's mother tongue is in itself no mean education. The power to express our thoughts clearly and forcibly, to say precisely what we think and feel, is of the utmost value in all the affairs of our everyday life. Letters must be written, speeches must be prepared, articles must be contributed to literary, scientific, and professional periodicals, addresses must be delivered before popular audiences and professional bodies, reports must be made to employers, and expert opinions submitted to corporations; indeed, there is scarcely any limit to the amount and the variety of composition imposed by our complex modern life. Nowadays the man who has never learned to write with ease and precision will inevitably find himself handicapped in the conduct of his affairs.

The practical value of Composition has been well stated by Professor Arlo Bates. "It is perhaps not necessary," says he, "to speak much of the value of the art of Composition; but there is one point which needs to be touched upon. There is a prevalent if not generally spoken idea that while this skill is an excellent thing, it is really necessary to nobody save professional writers; that while persons who give their lives to writing must of course master technique, it is not at all worth while for others to bother about a thing so difficult. That this error is less widespread than of old is evident from the increased attention

which is everywhere given to Composition in all modern schemes of education; but it survives in popular misapprehension. The truth is, on the contrary, that as society is organized to-day it is essential that every man or woman who hopes to make his or her way at least to anything like eminence even comparative, shall be able to write fairly good English. In a world so largely dominated by the printing-press as is ours in these modern days, not only has the man who can express himself in ink a manifest advantage, but he who cannot is hampered from the start. The highest skill in Composition which can be acquired is of instant practical value in every profession. Students of technical and scientific subjects seem to me to be as truly acquiring practical training when they are improving their skill in writing as when they are performing experiments in the laboratory or smelting ores at the furnace. In reports to corporations, papers on sanitary engineering addressed to city officials, schemes for railroads or telegraphs laid before legislative committees, they will have need of all the literary cleverness that they can compass, all the literary skill which they are able to acquire. Competition is fierce all along the line, and facility in the use of the pen counts in every trade and in every profession no less truly than it does among avowed writers." [1]

Moreover, the immediate practical value of English Composition is not the only reason why it should be studied. Thoughtful educators realize that careful training in the use of written language is also valuable as a sure means of intellectual discipline. There are in fact few studies that stimulate into constant and vigorous activ-

[1] Arlo Bates's "Talks on Writing English," page 15. Published by Houghton, Mifflin and Company. Quoted by permission.

ity so many faculties of the mind. The apparently simple task of writing an ordinary theme may become a valuable exercise in developing, training, and strengthening the intellect. The student who enters upon his work with interest and enthusiasm, who collects and arranges his materials with thoughtful care, who bends all his intellectual energies to the task of overcoming the difficulties that stand in the way of clear and forcible expression, is sure to find himself steadily gaining in strength and breadth of mind. His powers of observation will become more accurate; his ability to make nice distinctions will be exercised; his sense of proportion will be cultivated; the logical faculty of seeing things in their right relations will be developed; the imagination will be stimulated and strengthened; in short, there will be a conscious gain in general accuracy, clearness, and vigor of the most important intellectual processes.

The mental discipline which the student obtains in the writing of themes depends chiefly upon a clear conception of his thought and upon the correct and effective use of language. The things with which he has to work are ideas and words. He has to deal with these two distinct elements, — the thought that he wishes to express, and the arbitrary symbols used in communicating this thought to others. Now the number and the kinds of ideas that arise in the mind of man are practically infinite. On the other hand, the number of words in our language, although very large, is yet strictly limited. The difficult question, then, that confronts every student of Composition, and that sets a task for his wits and gives educational value to his work, is, How can I best give expression to the variety and complexity of the thoughts and feelings that arise within me? How can I, by putting into significant combinations the words of my limited vocabulary, communicate to others the

infinite number of ideas that naturally arise in the thinking mind? The student who conscientiously seeks to make his practical work an answer to this question is likely to find Composition a study of absorbing interest. At any rate, he need not find the task of writing themes a dull one; certainly he will not find it unprofitable.

CHAPTER II

METHODS OF STUDY

Having inquired into the reasons why we should study Composition, we may now ask ourselves: What plan of study shall we adopt? How can we acquire the ability to write clear, forcible, straightforward English?

A glance at the history of the subject, with a view to the methods that have been followed at various times, will help us to answer these questions. The science of Rhetoric states the principles which underlie the art of Composition, and which serve as its rational basis. This science is a very old one; it began with Aristotle's Rhetoric more than twenty centuries ago, and since then it has stoutly held its place in ancient, mediæval, and modern schemes of education. Up to the present time there have been four fairly distinct methods of studying the subject. These we may, for convenience, call the *theoretical*, the *literary*, the *critical*, and the *practical* methods. It will be worth while to note the nature, the aim, and the value of each.

1. The *theoretical* method of studying Rhetoric is based upon Aristotle's treatise. He formulated the principles of rhetorical science with a view chiefly to the *rhetor*, or public speaker. He defined Rhetoric as "the faculty of discovering all the possible means of persuasion on any subject." He declared that the rhetorician must "be competent to reason logically, to study human characters and virtues, the nature and quality of the several emotions, the

sources from which they spring, and the methods of exciting them." A rhetorical equipment of this sort must rest upon a broad philosophical basis, and must involve extensive study in such fields of knowledge as Logic, Ethics, and Psychology. It would be a mistake, however, to suppose that the ancient treatises on Rhetoric, written by Aristotle and Quintilian, were without a definite practical purpose. They aimed to teach the art of public speaking. Aristotle "investigated the principles of Rhetoric with great penetration. Some of the profoundest things which have been written on the passions and manners of men are to be found in his treatise on Rhetoric."[1]

In later periods of Greek and Roman culture, and especially in the mediæval universities, Rhetoric was generally studied, not for any immediate practical end, but merely as a branch of knowledge. Its aim was, first, to set forth the principles which govern the use of spoken and written language, usually with special reference to argumentative discourse; and secondly, to seek to give some satisfactory explanation of these principles. Scholasticism made Rhetoric a dry and formal science. Dull and unprofitable it remained until the eighteenth century. It was then that scholars first sought to widen the field of rhetorical theory by making the science of Rhetoric apply to all the forms of prose literature. In 1759 Dr. Hugh Blair first delivered, in the University of Edinburgh, his "Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres." In his introductory lecture he takes pains to state the purpose of rhetorical study: "The exercise of taste and of sound criticism is, in truth, one of the most improving employments of the human

[1] Dr. Hugh Blair's "Lectures on Rhetoric," Lecture XXXIV, on "Means of Improving in Eloquence."

understanding. To apply the principles of good sense to composition and discourse; to examine what is beautiful and why it is so; to employ ourselves in distinguishing accurately between the specious and the solid, between affected and natural ornament, must certainly improve us not a little in the most valuable part of all philosophy, the philosophy of human nature." The scope of his work is shown by the way in which he divides his subject: "First, some introductory dissertations on the nature of taste and upon the sources of its pleasures; secondly, the consideration of language; thirdly, of style; fourthly, of eloquence, properly so-called, or public speaking in its different kinds; lastly, a critical examination of the most distinguished species of composition, both in prose and verse."

It is clear that Dr. Blair's treatise is based upon the Rhetoric and the Poetics of Aristotle. Dr. Campbell, whose "Philosophy of Rhetoric" was written at about the same time, and Dr. Whately, whose "Elements of Rhetoric" appeared more than fifty years later, must both, in like manner, own Aristotle as their master. Although the study was still theoretical, it should be noted that two important additions had been made to Aristotle's conception of Rhetoric: first, its field was extended so as to include all forms of literature; and second, it was made to comprise the principles of good taste and their application to the critical study of literature.

2. These additions naturally lead up to what have been called the *literary* and the *critical* methods of study. The literary method depends, for its results, upon a study of the great masterpieces of literature. It aims to obtain skill in expression by careful literary analysis and the conscious imitation of the works of great writers, as well as by wide reading and the unconscious absorption of the good

qualities of style. "The true way to achieve clearness, force, and elegance in our English," says an advocate of this method, "is not to study the rules laid down in the rhetorics, but to become familiar with writing that is clear, forcible, and elegant. The knowledge most directly fundamental to intelligent control of one's own expression is an historical acquaintance with the language and the literature. The manuals of Rhetoric fill the youth's mind with prohibitions of objectionable words and constructions; but the fund of diction on which the youth must learn to draw is our standard prose. The main thing is to become free of the English vocabulary and to acquire the habit of elegant choice and construction by contact with interesting writing." Wide reading and literary study are of undoubted value to all students of Composition; and it must be admitted that we can scarcely hope to acquire the higher qualities of style without becoming familiar with the masterpieces of English prose.

3. The *critical* method of studying Rhetoric makes use of a much more minute kind of criticism. It concerns itself chiefly with matters of detail in the realm of Good Use, and with particular rhetorical devices. Such criticism is verbal and grammatical rather than literary. At its worst, it tends to "fill the student's mind with prohibitions of objectionable words and constructions." At its best, it places the proper and the improper forms side by side, in order that the student may choose the good and avoid the bad. The value of the critical method lies in the opportunity which it gives the student to examine his work and to get rid of faulty and feeble modes of expression.

4. Within recent years, partly no doubt as a result of the strong practical tendency in our modern education, an effort has been made to find a more *practical* method of

studying English Composition. A generation ago many schools and colleges paid far more attention to the *science* of Rhetoric than to the *art* of Composition. As a result they imparted much excellent theory, but gave very little practice in writing. Educators did not seem to realize how important it is that students should first of all learn how to write clear and vigorous English. To give the learner a maximum amount of theory and a minimum amount of practice seemed to be the general rule. An exhaustive discussion of the figures of speech was, for instance, considered an essential part of every text-book on Rhetoric. The student, it is true, often received many valuable suggestions in the domain of literary interpretation and criticism, but very little helpful guidance in the use of his mother tongue. A few writers on the subject, in their effort to be practical, made the further mistake of giving too much prominence to grammar and mechanical processes, and of laying down for the student a bewildering number of rules, instead of emphasizing a few fundamental general principles.

The *practical* method of studying Composition is based upon the simple principle that we learn to do a thing by doing it. Constant and painstaking practice is the only way to obtain proficiency in any art. No one, for instance, could learn to cook merely by reading the cook-book, or by listening to lectures on the scientific principles of cooking. In like manner no one can learn to write with skill and ease except by extensive practice. It is only thus that we can become familiar with the instruments of expression. By no other method can we hope to overcome the difficulties in our way. We must write frequently; we must criticise our work closely; we must aim at positive excellence, and seek to avoid what we know to be weak and faulty.

The aim of practical training in Composition is twofold: it should seek, first, to give the student the power to express his thought correctly, clearly, and forcibly; and secondly, to impart to him the ability to write with some degree of ease and rapidity. It is not enough that he should be able to write well; he should also learn to write rapidly. In order to accomplish the first of these objects, he should carefully plan and write at least one theme a week. These themes should be examined and criticised by the instructor. They should then be returned to the student for revision in accordance with the teacher's criticisms and suggestions.[1] To accomplish the second object, frequent exercises in rapid composition should also be given in the class-room. Fifteen minutes can readily be set aside each day for such a short impromptu theme.[2]

In regard to the criticism of themes, both teacher and student should "bear in mind that the object of such corrections is not to give the student a perfectly correct style, but rather to give him the ability to do his correcting for himself. When he comes to work of his own, whatever it may be, that calls for written expression, he will have no one at hand to correct it." The work in school and college, then, "should aim not so much to give him a perfectly correct style as to give him the instinct for self-correction and improvement. Any one who has got so much can look out for himself, and on looking out will find everywhere means for correcting and improving what he has written."[3] In his practical exercises, therefore, the student should seek to acquire the habit of critical revision and the instinct for self-improvement.

The method of study, then, to be followed in this book

[1] See Appendix C. [2] See Chapter XIII on "The Paragraph Theme."
[3] "Constructive Rhetoric," by Edward Everett Hale, Jr., page viii.

is intensely practical. The student can acquire skill only by painstaking practice. He should, however, make the other methods of study tributary to his practical purpose: he should turn to the science of Rhetoric for help and guidance in his practical exercises; he should consider carefully the criticisms applied to his themes by his instructor, that he may eventually become fully competent to revise his own work; and finally, by wide reading and literary study he should strive to enrich his vocabulary and even achieve some of the higher qualities of style.

CHAPTER III

DEFINITIONS

Composition is the art of expressing thought and feeling by means of words. Without some such medium of communication as language it would be impossible for us to make our thoughts known to any one else; for our thoughts and feelings are in reality immaterial things: they have neither form nor substance. It is the object of written or printed discourse to give them a material form, that they may thus be made known to others. We are impelled by a strong natural impulse to share our thoughts and feelings with those around us. This desire has led to the invention of certain devices, or arts of expression, which aim to make others acquainted with what is passing in our own minds. Of these devices written language is the most convenient and practicable means of telling others what we think and feel. English Composition may be defined as the art of using the English language skilfully and effectively.

We have called Composition an art rather than a science. The distinction is an important one. Science is theoretical; art is practical. A science is simply a branch of knowledge, as, for example, Physics or Political Economy. It consists of a body of organized and systematized knowledge concerning some particular class of things. It states the essential facts and the general truths about some given subject. For instance, we speak

of Psychology as a science because it tells us what is known about the activities and the processes of the mind. An art, on the other hand, is the method of performing some operation. It is the way in which a thing is done, the method by which a process is carried out. The object of an art is to do something or to make something. We may, for instance, speak of the art of cooking, the art of debate, or the art of bookbinding, as well as of the art of Composition.

There is often, however, a close relation between a particular art and a particular science. The general principles that underlie some common process often form a distinct science. This is especially true of arts that have long been practised. The general principles upon which the successful practice of a given art depends are expressed in a body of systematic knowledge and practical directions which may properly be called a science. Thus we may speak both of the art and of the science of cooking. In like manner it has been possible to find a scientific basis for the art of Composition. This science, or statement of general laws which govern the art of Composition, is called Rhetoric. As a science, Rhetoric states the theory or general principles upon which clear and effective discourse depends. Composition makes a practical application of these principles to the art of writing.

We have said that Composition is the art of expressing our ideas by *means of words;* for there are other arts of expression which make use of different means. The so-called fine arts, such as sculpture, painting, architecture, and music, employ each a different medium. The sculptor's bronze or marble, the painter's canvas and colors, and the musician's "concord of sweet sounds" have all their peculiar advantages as means of expressing certain ideas

and feelings. From the very nature, however, of the means that these arts employ, they are not the most convenient methods of making others acquainted with our ordinary thoughts. Language is by far the most useful and practicable medium of expression. Words, therefore, variously combined, form the most common means of communicating our thoughts.

Words are nothing but the signs or symbols of certain ideas. The ideas that the words stand for are, as we have seen, invisible and immaterial things. Written words, by becoming the symbols of these ideas, serve to give them a material and visible body. Our ideas are thus put into a form which the eye can see. We unconsciously learn to interpret a given word, whether we hear it in ordinary speech or see it on the printed page, as the sign of a particular idea.

By combining and arranging words in the form of a sentence we give expression to a series of related ideas called a thought. It thus becomes the function of each sentence to express a complete thought. Again, a series of sentences all bearing upon the same topic forms a paragraph. That is to say, it has become customary to put into one paragraph all the connected thoughts about a particular topic or convenient subdivision of a subject. In like manner, a series of paragraphs which are all related to the same general subject usually forms, when they are taken together, the largest unit of expression, which we call the whole composition.

The units of expression, then, with which we have to deal in the study of Composition are Words, Sentences, Paragraphs, and Whole Compositions. These have for convenience been called "the elements of style." This term merely indicates that in analyzing any given piece of

written discourse and in resolving it into its component parts, we must pass successively from the whole composition to the paragraph, from the paragraph to the sentence, and from the sentence to the individual words that compose it. Each of these units of expression, or "elements of style," will in turn receive detailed discussion.

The question naturally arises, Which of these elements of style or parts of discourse shall be taken up first? It has been the experience of teachers that it is best to begin their discussion of the principles of Composition with some directions concerning the whole theme. After the whole composition has been treated we shall see how the principles of Composition apply also to the paragraph and to the sentence. The reason for following this order is that the student begins his practical work of theme-writing by composing a whole rather than a part. It seems desirable to begin, therefore, not with the sentence or with the paragraph, but with the whole theme, in order that the student may thus receive some help at the very beginning of his work; for it is at the beginning that he feels most need of practical advice. After these opening chapters, then, which aim to give some important preliminary suggestions, we shall show how the principles of Composition apply, first, to the whole composition; next, to the paragraph; and lastly, to the sentence.

We have defined Composition as the art of expressing our thoughts and feelings by means of words. Most writers who have discussed this subject have defined Style in much the same way. There have, of course, been many widely different definitions of Style, most of them conceived from a literary rather than a rhetorical point of view. It is therefore desirable to state just what the word stands for in the study of Rhetoric. By Style is meant the mode

or manner in which we phrase our thoughts and feelings. Our ideas and emotions are the subject-matter of Composition. The term "Style" designates the way in which we give expression to this subject-matter by means of words. In this sense Style refers to two distinct things: first, to the selection of suitable words for the expression of our ideas; and second, to the best method of combining and arranging these words, and even such larger elements of Composition as phrases, clauses, and sentences. To refer to the first of these two things, we generally use the word "Diction." With the second, that is, the proper form and effective arrangement of the several elements of Composition, the largest part of our discussion will necessarily deal.

When both the choice of words and the arrangement of parts are considered together in a finished piece of writing, it is often convenient to use the expression "qualities of style" to refer to the characteristics of good composition. It would of course be easy to enumerate many desirable qualities or characteristics of effective writing; but they all so shade off into one another that, for our purpose, it is scarcely necessary to mention more than three. These preëminent qualities of style are Clearness, Force, and Elegance. To attain these qualities, it is necessary, first, that we say, precisely and unmistakably, just what we mean; secondly, that we write with such sincerity, conviction, and earnestness as to hold our reader's attention and to impress our thought and feeling upon him; thirdly, that we set down our ideas as skilfully and artistically as we can, seeking not so much to find ornament and mere verbal finery as to avoid any violation of propriety and good taste. These three qualities of style are the cardinal virtues of all good writing; and we should have them in mind and strive to attain them in all our compositions.

A good style, or the clear, correct, and effective expression of thought, depends upon the writer's close attention to two things: (1) he should not violate Good Use; and (2) he should apply to his work the principles of Composition. Each of these requires some definition and explanation.

Good Use is a name given to the present fashion in language. In any living language, the spelling, the meaning, and the grammatical forms of words differ from time to time. The language of Chaucer or of Shakespeare, for instance, differs in all three of these respects from the language that is spoken and written to-day. A considerable change has taken place even in the pronunciation of some words, like *tea* and *join* and *oblige*, for example, since the time of Pope. Within the past century a very noticeable change has also occurred in the use of capital letters and marks of punctuation. It would be hard — in most cases impossible — to give any rational explanation of how these changes came about. Reason cannot justify the present fashion in words any more than it can explain the prevailing mode in manners or in dress. Good Use, then, is an arbitrary and conventional thing, the result of custom and common agreement; but it is not, for this reason, any the less binding. We should no more think of violating what is generally admitted to be good usage in language than of disregarding the recognized usages of polite society; for if we offend against good usage in language or in behavior, we are likely to fall into disrepute among our associates.

Good Use, it has been said, includes such matters as spelling, grammar, pronunciation, the meaning of words, and the use of capital letters and marks of punctuation. In these matters many rules have been laid down for our

guidance. Most of us have already been obliged to familiarize ourselves with some such body of rules. If we were to examine some of these rules, we should notice that their application is restricted, and that they usually refer to matters of detail.

The principles of Composition differ from the rules of Good Use in two important respects: in the first place, these principles, as will be seen in our discussion of them, have a very broad and general application; in the second place, they rest upon a rational basis. They are not of the nature of those specific rules which set forth the prevailing fashion in language and arbitrarily restrict us to what has met with the approval of the best writers; but they have their sanction in reason, experience, and common sense.

These general principles of Composition, unlike the rules and requirements of Good Use, do not always have precisely the same application to all kinds of written discourse. It is both convenient and necessary, therefore, to make some classification of the different kinds of writing according to their nature and purpose. The most common types of Composition are called Narration, Description, Exposition, and Argument. (1) A *narrative* tells how a series of events occurred. The numerous works of history and of fiction are familiar examples of narrative writing. (2) A *description* delineates the outward aspect of an object; its aim is to tell how a particular thing appears to our senses. For instance, a theme on the subject "How my Room Looks" would be an exercise in description. (3) An *exposition* explains or expounds something. Ordinarily exposition means simply explanatory writing. In a restricted sense the term is sometimes made to mean the unfolding of a general idea. A theme on "Social Life in

the Country," a statement of the symptoms of typhoid fever, or a discussion of the uses of natural gas, will serve as an example of expository writing. (4) An *argument* aims to prove the truth or falsity of a proposition. "A Plea for Good Roads" would, for instance, be a specimen of argumentative writing designed to establish the proposition that "our country should have good roads." It often happens that the characteristics of several of these types are combined in a given piece of writing, and sometimes it may be hard to classify a particular composition under any one head. The classification, however, is exhaustive enough to answer our practical purpose.

To sum up, Composition is the art of communicating thought and feeling by means of words. Rhetoric is the science that states the principles underlying this art. There are other arts of expression, but language is the most common and convenient. Words are the instruments which this art employs as the symbols of our ideas. When we put a number of words together so as to express certain related ideas, we form a sentence. Likewise a group of sentences that refer to the same topic makes up a paragraph. A series of paragraphs bearing upon the same general subject constitutes a whole composition. Of these elements of style the whole composition should be studied first, because the student begins his work, not by composing isolated sentences and paragraphs, but by planning whole compositions. In his diction, in the grammatical construction of his sentences, and in the mechanical details of his work, the writer should not run counter to the requirements of Good Use, which is only another name for the present fashion in language. The combination and arrangement of words, sentences, and paragraphs are governed by certain principles of Composition, which rest

upon a rational basis, and which have a very broad and general application. Good Use, on the other hand, is often arbitrary in its requirements, and is usually definite and specific in its application to certain details of the writer's task. It should also be noted that there are four distinct kinds of Composition, usually called Narration, Description, Exposition, and Argument. Some of the principles of Composition occasionally have a special application to each of these types.

CHAPTER IV

THE STUDENT'S EQUIPMENT

THE student must have some definite equipment for theme-writing. He should not enter upon his practical work without some degree of preparation. It is worth while for him to know what this equipment should be, in order that he may be constantly improving and increasing it. It is taken for granted that his observation and experience have given him a stock of thoughts, opinions, convictions, and impressions. His previous education and knowledge of life have supplied him with a considerable body of general information. On many subjects he has clearly defined thoughts; on many questions he holds definite opinions and convictions. His contact with men and things has given him interesting impressions. All this stock of acquired knowledge and experience supplies him with the first requisite for his work, — something to write about.

It will pay the student to keep adding to this fund of material from which all interesting composition must be drawn. Of course, as his experience increases and his education proceeds, he is constantly adding to his stock of ideas, opinions, and impressions. Besides this steady increase, there is nothing that will help him so much as the habit of close and accurate observation. The man who will but train his eyes to see will find suitable subject-matter all around him. The world, with its countless

objects of interest and beauty, with its myriad creatures, with its varied human concerns, pursuits, diversions, and passions, will furnish him with a never failing supply of material. Let him but cultivate his powers of observation. Let him get into the habit of using his eyes and his ears to some purpose. If he will only keep his senses alert and his mind receptive, his ordinary surroundings and his daily life, with its manifold interests, will prove to be an inexhaustible storehouse of subjects and ideas.

In the second place, as a necessary part of his equipment, the student should master the principles of Composition. It is for this purpose that the science of Rhetoric is taught. Experience has shown that successful work depends upon certain principles of selection, arrangement, and structure. The inexperienced writer must learn these principles in order that he may apply them to his practical work.

In the next place, the student should already be familiar with many matters of Good Use. He should spell correctly; he should command a fair-sized working vocabulary of words that are in recognized good use, and he should be constantly increasing it; he should have a fair knowledge of English grammar and a familiarity with English idiom; and he should know what Good Use has prescribed in regard to punctuation, the use of capital letters, and certain other mechanical features of his work. These things may be called the *mechanics of expression;* and it must be evident that they are indispensable in the equipment of any one who wishes to write well. In fact, the man who is lacking in these bare essentials is commonly judged to be either illiterate or poorly educated.

It is especially important that the student know how to spell ordinary words. A sufficient reason for this requirement is that the ability to spell correctly is usually taken as

a test of one's education. In this matter, as in everything else that requires a knowledge of Good Use, the main thing for the student to do is to keep a sharp lookout for his own deficiencies. He should resolve not to make the same mistake twice. It is hardly likely that the worst speller among college students commonly misspells more than one hundred or one hundred and fifty different words. If he can find out what these words are, it ought not to be a very difficult task for him to improve his orthography. It is to be feared that misspelled words in a written exercise are generally due to laziness or undue haste. When one is in doubt, the dictionary stands ready to befriend him.[1]

Next, the student should have a good working vocabulary ; and he should constantly strive to make this vocabulary more copious. Indeed, no part of his equipment is more important than this. The need of words, which are the instruments of expression, is fundamental. We require a large vocabulary before we can express much complexity or much variety of thought. It has been estimated that the working vocabulary of the average college freshman contains about twelve hundred words. The writer of themes should realize that such a vocabulary is a very slender equipment for the work of written expression. As his education advances he is constantly widening his range of thought and becoming familiar with new ideas. For the adequate expression of these new ideas, he should therefore make it a matter of conscience to enlarge and enrich his vocabulary by every available means. For supplying this deficiency in his equipment he will find the habit of looking up all new words in the dictionary exceedingly valuable.[2]

[1] See Appendix B.

[2] Read Chapter XXII on " How One may Improve his Vocabulary."

The habit of choosing his words with care and of putting them together according to English grammar and English idiom is also an important element in the student's equipment. The importance of this habit is well emphasized in Dean Swift's famous definition of a good style as consisting of "proper words in proper places." The writer should seek to acquire a habit of mind that will lead him to note the exact meaning and value of words. This habit, if judiciously exercised, can be made to yield an added value to his reading. By learning to appreciate the power of words and the value of the apt phrase in the writings of others, he will receive help and stimulus in the choice of words and in the phrasing of his thoughts.

There are several purely mechanical features of the student's work which are determined by convenience and Good Use. In such mechanical processes as the preparation of manuscript and the correct use of capital letters and marks of punctuation, custom prescribes pretty clearly what we ought to do and what we ought to avoid. If, then, we are to make our work correct and accurate, we must learn at the outset what Good Use, or uniformity of custom, requires of us in these mechanical processes of composition. Order and clearness are often conserved by attention to mechanical details.[1]

We may say, then, by way of summary, that the student, in writing themes, will find use for his knowledge, experience, and previous mental training. The fund of information and experience which he has already acquired will furnish him with interesting subject-matter for his themes; and the habit of observation will aid him in fur-

[1] In Appendix A, on "Mechanical Processes," will be found some practical directions for the preparation of manuscript, a brief statement of the rules for the use of capital letters, and a discussion of the subject of punctuation.

ther increasing this stock. He should study the principles of his craft in order that he may apply them to his work. He should have obtained something like mastery over such elementary matters of Good Use as spelling, grammar, punctuation, and the use of capitals. He should have a serviceable working vocabulary of words in recognized good use, and should be constantly improving and increasing it. In the preparation of his manuscript he should be willing to pay careful attention to correctness of form in those mechanical details which have been determined by custom and convenience.

CHAPTER V

FUNDAMENTAL FACTS AND PRINCIPLES

The student of English Composition should realize at the outset that his success will depend chiefly upon himself. He should, of course, have the help of a practical text-book and of a competent teacher. A good text-book will give him a clear presentation of the general principles of Rhetoric, and will make him acquainted with their application to his work; it may even give him some direction in the more minute details of Composition. Moreover, the practical help, guidance, and criticism of a competent teacher cannot but be of great service to him. Both text-book and teacher are in fact valuable aids in his work; but neither the instructor nor the book, however excellent in themselves, can insure the student's success. This will depend largely upon his disposition of mind and upon the way in which he regards his work. The degree of proficiency which he acquires will be measured mainly by his own desire for improvement, and by the amount of labor which he is willing to give to the study. Impatience, carelessness, haste, and laziness are his worst foes. An enthusiastic interest in his work, a disposition to take pains with his themes, and a willingness to profit by criticism will count for more than all else. These things lie at the very foundation of his success. Nothing can take the place of downright earnestness and seriousness of purpose.

The student who writes his themes in a purely perfunctory spirit, merely as so much task-work, can hardly hope to receive much benefit. There is no "short cut" to successful composition. All who attain excellence — even those who possess great natural aptitude for expression — must travel the same road. Even if our progress is slow, we must be content and persevere; for we know that persistent practice must produce substantial and permanent results.

Another fact of fundamental importance should be noted. It is desirable to keep the many detailed matters of Good Use distinct from the broader applications of general principles. Professor Wendell was the first to point out that in the study of Composition two different kinds of questions arise, and that much misdirected effort and misunderstanding have resulted from the habit of confusing them. The first of these classes of questions concerns itself chiefly with matters of detail; the second deals with more general considerations requiring the exercise of the judgment and the application of rhetorical principles.

Matters of detail are so numerous that no treatise on Rhetoric could, even if it were desirable, take account of them all. The larger number, however, of the particular difficulties that confront the young writer will entirely disappear after he has mastered the principles of his art; for most questions of detail will then group themselves under general principles. Yet there will remain not a few difficult matters of detail which will demand the student's attention. These often concern themselves, for example, with grammatical constructions and the correct meaning of words. Such questions must be settled by a knowledge of reputable present use. It is proper in such cases to speak of a given construction or of a particular use of a

word as being either right or wrong; for Good Use is generally positive and rigid in its requirements.

Most questions, however, which arise in our study are not questions of correctness or incorrectness, like processes and results in an algebraic problem. We cannot speak with mathematical exactness and certainty concerning them. They are generally matters that require the careful exercise of one's judgment. Only a dogmatist would speak of such discretionary matters as being eternally right or wrong. It is proper for the writer, in such cases, rather to ask himself the questions: Which is the better way? Can this be improved? Can the meaning be made clearer, or stated more forcibly? In order to answer these questions as they come up in his work, the student must have recourse to the principles of Composition.

The most important of these general laws of Composition are the principles of Unity, Coherence, and Emphasis. Of these, Unity is sometimes made to include the principle of Selection, and Emphasis is often made to embrace the principle of Proportion. It seems best, however, to regard Selection and Proportion as distinct principles. Another canon of great importance is the principle of Variety. These fundamental principles have usually a threefold application, and a large part of our discussion will necessarily be given to an endeavor to show how they apply to the three units of expression, — the whole composition, the paragraph, and the sentence. Some of them also have a particular application to the several kinds of Composition. A brief general statement of these principles may be given as a preliminary to their detailed discussion.

1. The principle of Unity requires us to stick closely to our subject. Nothing should be admitted into a theme unless it has a direct bearing upon the topic under discus-

sion. Digressions are to be avoided; all irrelevant matter must be rigidly excluded. The paragraph should be a unit in itself, and all the sentences in it should treat of one particular subdivision of the general subject. The sentence should express a single thought, a unified group of related ideas.

2. The principle of Selection determines what ideas are to be chosen. Of the many thoughts that naturally arise on any subject, we should select only those which are most useful for our immediate purpose. We should discriminate between what is essential and what is unimportant. We should seize upon those things which are necessary and valuable, and exclude whatever is obvious and trivial.

3. The principle of Coherence demands that our thought be orderly. Our ideas are not to be set down at haphazard, but with due regard to logical sequence. There should be a definite reason why one part of a subject is taken up before another. The sentences which make up a paragraph should follow one another according to a definite order of thought. Even the phrases and clauses which compose a sentence should be clearly and coherently put together. A natural and logical arrangement of one's thoughts is necessary for the sake of clearness and effectiveness.

4. The principle of Proportion deals with the relative importance of our ideas. We should exercise our sense of proportion in our theme-writing. We must examine all our thoughts on a given subject in order to determine what are the most important. Then we should so plan our work as to give the greater amount of space to those ideas which are most significant. We should dwell at length upon those thoughts which are valuable and im-

portant, and should not give insignificant ideas a disproportionate amount of room.

5. The principle of Emphasis requires that special stress be placed upon the most important ideas. This object is, to be sure, sometimes accomplished by the amount of space we give to a particular thought. There are, however, certain devices of arrangement and expression which can be used to give stress to what ought to be made especially emphatic. It has been found, for instance, that, whether we are writing a theme or a paragraph or merely a sentence, particular prominence can be given to an idea by placing it either at the beginning or at the end.

6. The principle of Variety demands that we should vary our expression as much as possible. Tiresome repetitions should be avoided. Our paragraphs, for example, should not all be built up on the same model. Our sentences should not all be of about the same length, or cast in the same mould. We should not repeat the same word or phrase unless it is really necessary. In short, a writer should avoid mere repetition and monotony, and should seek to give his style as much variety as he can.

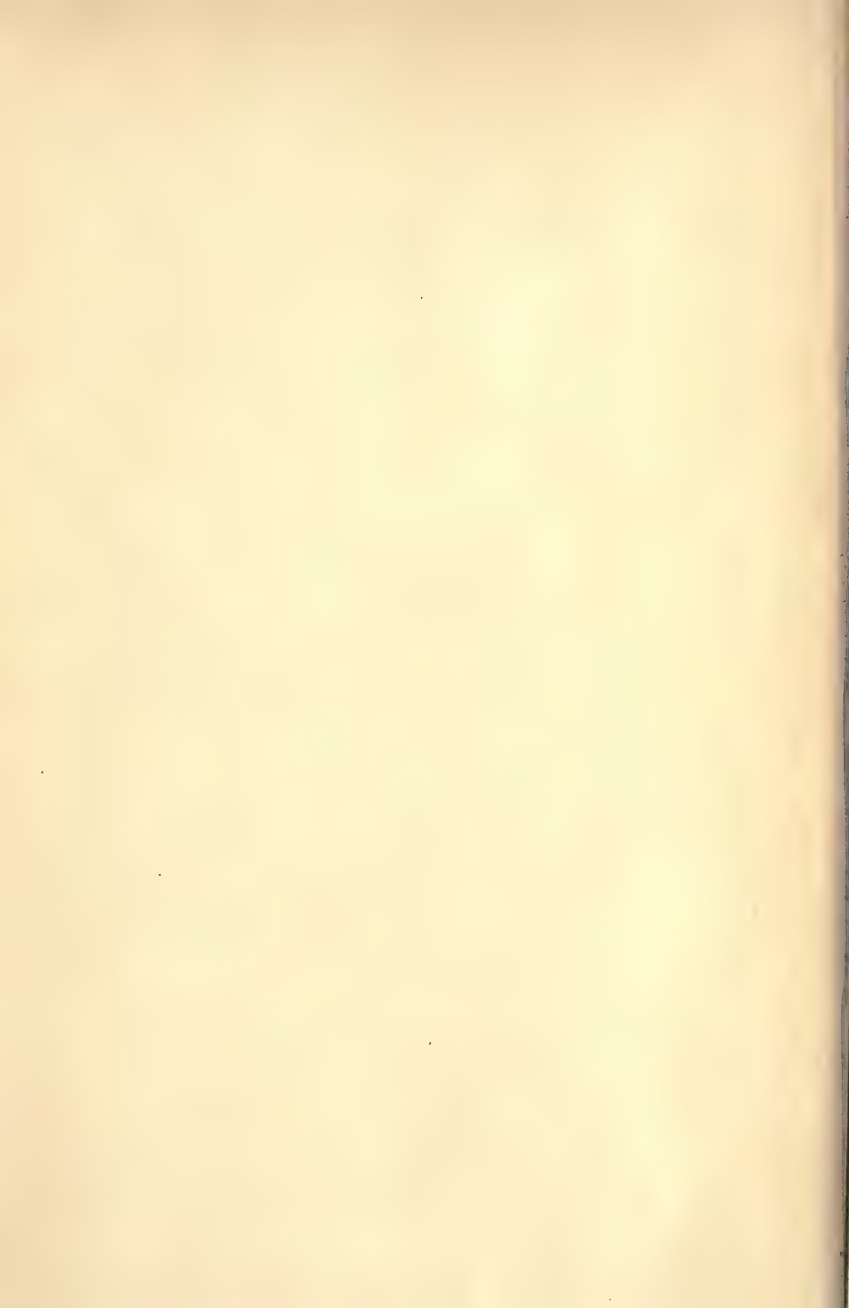
These principles of Composition are, as has been said, the result of experience. Men have been writing a long time, and from their experiments, their successes and failures, it has been possible to derive these general laws for our practical guidance. The basis of their authority rests upon long experience. They are as truly the legitimate inductions from observation and experiment as the laws of physics; and within their realm they are quite as valid and valuable. Their authority is in fact so well established that we can accept them and use them without further question. It is but reasonable that we should be willing to profit by the experience of centuries. These principles are

nothing more than reason and common sense applied to the art of writing.

To sum up: It is a fact of fundamental importance that the student's success will depend, not upon the text-book or the teacher, but mainly upon his own disposition and efforts. His desire for self-improvement should urge him to take a keen interest in his work. He should be painstaking and patient. Skill and facility depend upon tireless practice. In his study of Composition two classes of questions will arise: first, matters of detail; second, matters of discretion. Such matters of detail as cannot be brought under the principles of Composition are questions of right or wrong, to be answered by an appeal to Good Use. Most matters that come up for decision, however, require an exercise of the judgment; the question that they raise is, which of two given modes of expression is better or worse. Such problems are to be solved by the principles of Composition. The six general principles of Unity, Selection, Coherence, Proportion, Emphasis, and Variety refer particularly to the whole composition, the paragraph, and the sentence. From their very nature, they apply not only to the planning and the actual writing of the theme, but also to its criticism and its final revision. Their authority is based upon the common experience of generations of writers.

II

THE WHOLE COMPOSITION



CHAPTER VI

THE SUBJECT

MANIFESTLY the first step for the student of Composition is to secure a subject. To the practical writer outside the class-room — to the business man, the professional man, and the author — the selection of a subject presents no difficulties. He already has something to write about; it is for this reason only that he wishes to write. To the student of English Composition, however, who is writing simply for practice, to gain command of his pen and to secure some degree of clearness, force, and ease, the choice of a suitable subject frequently presents real difficulty.

This difficulty is often a very embarrassing one. If the student is asked to choose his own subject, he is in danger of wasting his time and of misdirecting his efforts. There is such a variety of subjects that he scarcely knows which one to take. Thus he is likely to spend considerable time in his quest. When, however, after diligent search and due consideration, he has at last decided on a subject, he might reasonably hope that his greatest difficulty has been overcome; but it often happens that his worst troubles now begin. These usually arise from the nature of the subject that he has chosen. The student who is allowed to make his own selection without the guidance of an experienced teacher often finds that he has taken a subject too broad for adequate treatment in a short theme, or too difficult for his limited knowledge and powers. The un-

practised writer who makes this mistake can scarcely be blamed; for many text-books on Composition and many unskilful teachers have fallen into the same error. For example, a treatise on Composition printed less than a quarter of a century ago suggests the following as suitable subjects for students' themes: "War," "Mountains," "Disease," "Honor," "Newspapers," "The Fickleness of Fortune," "The Love of Fame," "Comets," "The Pleasures of Memory," "Knowledge is Power," "Greek Mythology," and "The Immortality of the Soul." If a student who is left to his own devices selects such subjects as these, he will soon conclude that English Composition is a hard taskmaster. The teacher who is guilty of assigning to his pupils such theme-subjects as "Disease," "Comets," and "The Love of Fame" cannot reasonably complain if they conceive a hearty dislike for theme-writing.

Even the practised writer might find it extremely difficult to write on any of the subjects just named. The beginner, it is true, is often attracted by abstract themes like "The Fickleness of Fortune," "The Love of Fame," or "The Pleasures of Memory"; but as soon as he begins to write he discovers that he has little knowledge and few thoughts bearing upon his subject, and that the little which he can say possesses but slight interest to the ordinary reader. Such subjects as "Mountains," "War," and "Disease" are less abstract and ambitious; they are much more likely to come within the range of the ordinary man's thought and knowledge; yet they are almost as difficult, because it is well-nigh impossible to give them anything like adequate treatment in a short theme. The fault with these subjects is that they are too broad and general. They are not sufficiently restricted. On a broad subject like "War" there are so many things to be said

that the writer is almost as much at a loss as he would be were he entirely without a subject.

The difficulty, however, will disappear as soon as the general subject has been narrowed down to something definite and familiar. A student's subject should be so restricted that he can give it satisfactory treatment within the limits set for his short theme; and it should be so familiar as to come within the range of his knowledge or experience. The man, for instance, who finds it impossible to write about war in general might produce a very creditable composition on "Gettysburg as a Turning-point of the Civil War." The student who can say nothing of interest about "Mountains" might write an entertaining theme on "A Tramp to the Mountains." "Disease" would no doubt have proved a difficult or impossible subject to a young man who wrote an interesting account of "The Anthrax Plague in our Village." It is thus found to be easier to deal with a restricted and familiar subject, because one has something definite to write about and is more likely to have something interesting to say.

The writer's ability, knowledge, experience, and interests should all have weight in the choice of a subject. Whether the student's judgment on these matters is likely to be as sound as that of his teacher is a debatable question. The beginner to whom is given entire freedom of choice may very easily plunge himself into serious difficulties. He may take a subject which is quite beyond his knowledge or ability; he may decide on a subject altogether too large for adequate discussion in the limited space allotted to him; and in any case, he is likely to spend a good deal of time in trying to find something to write about. If, however, his teacher assigns him a subject sufficiently restricted in scope and intimately related to his

interests, his knowledge, and his experience, he can set to work at once. With such guidance he is not likely to go far astray; he need waste no time in coming to a decision; and he will not be obliged to consult books of reference in quest of material. It is generally best, therefore, for student and teacher to coöperate in the selection of subjects. The pupil may suggest subjects on which he can write, and these may be submitted to the instructor for his approval. But whether the student finds his own subject, or takes one assigned by his teacher, it is most important that he should write on a definite and restricted topic, easily within the range of his knowledge and ability.

It may be well to consider briefly the most accessible sources of material for themes. Men who write draw their material from one of three distinct sources. (1) Their compositions may be based upon their reading and research. Books are read, works of reference are consulted, investigations are made, notes are taken — all for the purpose of obtaining relevant material. The composition produced from material thus secured may be a thesis, a literary criticism, an historical study, a biographical sketch, or a scientific investigation. (2) Again, a writer may draw entirely upon his own imagination. In telling a story he may invent his own characters, scenes, and incidents; he need in no wise restrict himself to the portrayal of actual characters or to the recital of actual occurrences. As a result, he produces a novel, a romance, or a short story. (3) He may, without consulting books, give expression to his own observations, experiences, opinions, convictions, and impressions. In this way are written letters, news items, editorials, descriptions, personal narratives, reports of work done, and explanations of processes familiar to the writer.

There are, then, three sources from which writers draw their subject-matter. An author, of course, may go to more than one of these sources for his material. The novelist, for instance, even though he draws upon his own imagination for the characters, scenes, and incidents of his story, writes only after close observation, long experience, and wide reading. Again, even in writing the most personal composition, one may have occasion to support his own observations by those of other men. Yet these three divisions, although they occasionally merge into one another, stand out more or less distinct.

Of these three kinds of writing the last is by far the most in demand by the practical world. In professional work, in business relations, in political life, in ordinary correspondence, in journalism above all, one must be ready, without study or previous preparation, to express on the instant, with ease, accuracy, and clearness, the thing that he thinks or feels or knows. This fact is sufficient reason why the student should, in his theme-writing, draw chiefly upon his own fund of knowledge, experience, and personal impressions. The thought as well as the mode of expression will then be all his own. It is, moreover, easier for him to write about what he has himself thought or seen or experienced than to express another's thought at second hand; and on a familiar subject he is far more likely to write in an interesting and natural manner. The student, therefore, will usually get his most valuable practice by writing on familiar subjects.

A word should be said about the title of the theme. This should be a brief but exact designation of the subject. Subject and title are occasionally, but not always, the same. The title is simply the name that the writer gives to his composition. Frequently it is an abbreviated form

of the subject. For example, the student who entitled his theme, "A Tramp to the Mountains," really had for his subject "What I Saw and Did while Taking a Tramp to the Mountains." It is also well for a writer to seek an attractive title. Thus a student who told how a destructive fire almost effaced his native village entitled his theme, "The Night I did not Sleep." The title, then, gives to the theme a brief, appropriate, and attractive name, while the subject, as conceived by the writer, usually contains, when fully expressed, a more extended and definite description of the composition.

The title and the theme should, of course, be kept entirely distinct. The title is not the real beginning. The composition starts with the first sentence, and in this opening sentence the title should in no way be implied or taken for granted; that is to say, the beginning of the theme should not contain any word which implies that the reader has a knowledge of the title. A writer may, for instance, be tempted to let some word in the title serve as the antecedent of a personal pronoun or pronominal adjective used in the opening sentence. This fault is illustrated in the first sentence of a composition entitled "The Industries of my Native Town": "*They* are cigar-manufacturing and paper-making." Another theme bearing the same title began thus: "My native town contains so many different industries that in writing on *this subject* I can discuss only the most important." The reader of these themes, of course, does not know, without referring back to the title, what the words *they* and *this subject* mean; and therefore each of these opening sentences, when read by itself, is lacking in clearness.

The student may conclude, then, that after he has obtained a restricted and familiar theme-subject, com-

ing within the range of his knowledge, experience, and interests, and has devised for his theme an appropriate and attractive title, he is ready for the actual work of composition.

EXERCISES

I. Narrow each of the following general subjects, which have been taken from an old text-book on Composition. From each general subject try to obtain four or five theme-subjects sufficiently restricted in scope for treatment in short themes containing about four hundred words each: —

1. Flowers. 2. Forests. 3. Mountains. 4. Summer. 5. Disease. 6. War. 7. Night. 8. Winter. 9. City Life. 10. Newspapers. 11. The United States. 12. The Bible. 13. The Earth. 14. Rain. 15. Rivers. 16. The Ocean. 17. Government. 18. Manufactures. 19. Commerce. 20. College Life. 21. Gardening. 22. American Literature. 23. Music. 24. Snow. 25. Country Life. 26. The Applications of Steam. 27. Natural History. 28. Fashion. 29. Election Day. 30. The Great West.

II. Criticise each of the following as subjects suitable for themes containing four hundred words each. What are the merits or the faults of each? How much space is required for the adequate treatment of each? From the reader's standpoint, what are the most interesting subjects in the list? What are the least interesting? Are any of them too broad and general for discussion in short themes? If there are any such in the list, suggest how each may be improved as a theme-subject. By what kind of composition — narration, description, exposition, or argumentation — should each subject be treated?

1. The Indians at the Time of the Colonization of America.
2. Scenes in Maine.
3. How the Illinois Central Railroad is Inspected.
4. Chinese Civilization.
5. The Autobiography of a Dime.
6. How I Earned Money to Pay my College Expenses.
7. Across the Continent on a Freight Train.
8. How Potatoes are Grown.
9. A Colonial Ball.
10. A Fishing Trip to the Grand Banks.

11. Yellowstone Park.
12. Fear.
13. An Exciting Ride on a Hand-car.
14. The Caves and Sink-holes of "Sinking Valley."
15. Shooting an Oil-well.
16. Forest Fires.
17. How I Caught a Pair of Young Foxes.
18. Belief in the Supernatural.
19. The Daily Life of a Roman Youth.
20. A Visit to the Ephrata Cloisters.
21. Winter Sports.
22. A Trapping Trip on Raccoon Creek.
23. How to Break a Colt.
24. The Effect of Inventions upon the Laboring Class.
25. How a Country Newspaper is Made.
26. The Life of Abraham Lincoln.
27. My First Day as a Country School-teacher.
28. Out on the Ocean in a Row-boat.
29. The Negro Question.
30. How I Found a Bee Tree.
31. My Visit to Penn's Cave.
32. How Bituminous Coal is Mined by Machinery.
33. Stock-raising.
34. How I Read a Newspaper.
35. Niagara Falls.
36. Modes of Transportation.
37. My Experience in Underground Surveying.
38. Down the Susquehanna River on a Raft.
39. College Athletics.
40. How I Caught a Burglar.
41. A Comparison of Modern with Ancient Warfare.

III. Suggest suitable titles for themes on the following subjects: —

1. The state of Virginia should have better roads.

2. Women should be allowed to vote.

3. Pittsburg is a great industrial centre.

4. The length of a college course should be reduced to three years.

5. Students should be required to take some regular physical exercise.

6. A college education is a helpful preparation for business life.

7. Practice in the art of debate is an excellent means of training the intellect.

8. The United States government should own and operate all the railroads in the country.

9. A college education is the best investment a young man can make.

10. The science of chemistry has materially aided in the industrial progress of the United States.

IV. 1. Make a list of five good theme-subjects suggested by familiar scenes, interesting experiences, or important events in your life.

2. Make a list of five theme-subjects dealing with the exposition of some processes or mechanical appliances with which you are familiar. (See List V, in Appendix E.)

3. Make a list of five familiar subjects suitable for narrative themes.

4. Make a similar list of five good subjects for descriptive themes.

V. Let the instructor select for each student four or five theme-subjects from the list of twenty subjects thus submitted. Let the student make a memorandum of the subjects which have been approved.

VI. On one of the subjects write a theme containing about four hundred words.

CHAPTER VII

UNITY AND SELECTION

THE principle of Unity as applied to the whole composition requires that the writer shall have a definite purpose and shall stick to it. If the finished theme is to stand out as a consistent whole, the writer must be sure that every thought in it is a relevant and unmistakable part of that whole. To attain this end, he must form a clear conception of his subject, and must have in mind a definite purpose while he writes; he must make a painstaking selection of such thoughts as contribute to the development of his subject and the accomplishment of his purpose; and he must so phrase these thoughts that the reader can readily see why they form parts of the composition. The whole composition, then, should possess *unity of purpose:* one central idea and purpose should be evident throughout. In the next place, the composition should be about one thing: there should be *unity of thought.* Nothing should be admitted which does not contribute to the one central thought. In every composition there should also be *unity of treatment:* every thought should be so expressed that its relation to the subject is evident to the reader. Finally, there should be *unity of feeling:* that is, there should be no departure from the general tone or feeling of a composition. These four aspects of Unity it is necessary to consider in detail.

1. Before a writer can select his material, he must form

a clear conception of his subject. He must know exactly what he is going to write about. Such a conception is necessary because it forms the central idea of the whole composition. This central idea the writer must always keep consciously before him. It serves as a nucleus round which are to be grouped the various thoughts necessary to the development of the subject. Every paragraph and every sentence in a theme should be related to this central thought. A writer, therefore, should have a clear conception of his subject, or the central idea of his composition. This is the first step in the attainment of unity.

In the next place, a writer should not work without a definite aim or purpose. He must have an object as well as a subject, and must make both as definite as possible. In fact, the writer's purpose is an essential part of his subject; for the object he has in view modifies the subject and often determines the method of treatment. For instance, if a man were to write about a political convention that he had attended, he might, according to his purpose, either describe the assemblage of people, or relate a series of events that happened at the meeting. In a newspaper account of the same convention a reporter might combine description with narration. It is evident, therefore, that the writer's purpose must be considered in the selection of material. Moreover, there can be no unity of purpose in a composition unless the writer constantly aims at one and the same object. If he should suddenly change his plan, or if he should write without any well-defined purpose, he is in danger of violating the principle of Unity. For the sake of consistency, then, there should run through every composition a fixed and definite purpose.

In forming this purpose a writer must also consider the class of readers for whom he writes. He must take into

account their intelligence and their previous knowledge of the subject. For instance, a man who attempts to explain to a sailor the cause of tides is not likely to select the same material that a college professor would use in explaining the same subject to his classes. Again, an author, in writing for *The Popular Science Monthly* an account of the eruption of Mont Pelée, would scarcely employ the same ideas or method of treatment that he would use in preparing an article on the same subject for *The Youth's Companion.* Thus we see that many compositions are intended for special classes of readers.

The majority of books and periodicals, however, are written for readers of average intelligence. Every man who writes for the general public must take into consideration the ability and the knowledge of the average reader. A writer should not make the mistake of supposing that the average man is brilliant, or highly educated, or intellectually acute. Nor, on the other hand, should one assume that his reader is ignorant or stupid. It is more correct to think of the average reader as a man who possesses an ordinary degree of intelligence and a fair stock of general information. More than this a student should not take for granted in his theme-writing. He should write with a view to the knowledge and mental capacity of the average reader.

To secure unity of purpose, a writer should also have a fixed point of view. Just what "point of view" means as applied to the writer's task may best be explained by several illustrations. A man, for instance, who wishes to paint a picture must first select some point from which he can look at the object to be portrayed. This point of observation he will choose with care, for the character of his picture will depend largely upon the point of view

chosen. From this one point he will depict the whole scene spread out before him. In photography, also, one can still more readily see the importance of having a fixed point of view. If, in photographing an object, one should take upon the same plate several views from different points, the result would be little better than a blur: the picture would lack unity of impression. Let us suppose, now, that instead of making a picture, one should attempt to describe what he has seen. If he would write a vivid and consistent description, he must likewise choose a definite point of view and stick to it. If he is constantly changing his angle of observation, he is sure to give his reader a distorted impression. Such a description would lack unity because it presents to the reader several different views of the same object. A concrete case may make the matter a little clearer. If, for instance, one sets out to describe a college campus as seen from the top of some high building, he may utterly destroy the unity of his work by obtruding into his description such observations as can be made only by a person who strolls across the college grounds. His work will lack unity of purpose because he has no fixed point of view.

These considerations enable us to see the importance of keeping the point of view unchanged in descriptive writing; for in this kind of composition a writer must look at things from an actual physical standpoint. It is possible, however, to have a mental as well as a physical point of view. It is this mental point of view that we refer to when we commonly say that there are different ways of looking at the same thing. By "point of view," then, we ordinarily mean the writer's attitude of mind — his way of looking at his subject. In this figurative sense the term is applied to all kinds of composition. For instance, a

man who relates his own experiences writes from a personal point of view. The events in a game of football may be recounted from the standpoint of a participant, or from that of a spectator. A novelist may tell his story in the first person or in the third. If a man has set himself the task of writing about Washington as a great general, he should have nothing to say about Washington's family or his private life at Mount Vernon. Having once chosen his point of view, he should not depart from it. These illustrations also show that one's point of view often forms an essential part of his subject or of his purpose in writing. It is for this reason that a writer should keep to one fixed point of view.

In fact, to change the point of view is one of the ways in which an unpractised writer is most likely to violate the principle of Unity. In descriptive writing, where there is an actual physical standpoint, one can readily see how blurred and indistinct is the impression produced by a change in the point of view, and he is therefore less likely to err; but in those kinds of composition in which the point of view is a mental attitude, representing the way in which the writer regards his subject, it is usually much easier to change the point of view, and thus to violate Unity. A single example will be enough to show how easy it is to make such a mistake, and how completely a change in the point of view destroys the unity of the composition: —

Then, again, the book-agent comes into close relation with actual life in the world. He observes men at their work. He sees the women and the children in their homes. He notices how the houses are furnished and adorned. He learns something of the inner life and ambitions of the people among whom he works. He is able to see, more clearly than most observers, what things the common people value most

highly, what things they strive hardest to get. Many persons, for instance, will ask him this question, "Will your book help me to make more money?" The price of the book and the amount of good that it will do the reader from the financial point of view determine to a large extent the number of the agent's sales. Most people look at a book not from the standpoint of culture, but from the practical side. Many will say, "I must learn things through experience; books will never teach me what I want to know." Thus one sees very clearly that commercialism is the leading tendency of to-day, that the majority of people are interested in business alone, endeavoring to do as much work and to receive as much money as possible. If these things are so, is it not the tendency of the age for men to get into a narrow groove of life and to miss the best part of this world's good? It seems impossible for such persons to enjoy true pleasure. It is all very well to be up and doing something, but if that doing is spurred on by a narrow greed for material gain to such a degree of strenuousness that it results in a weakening of one's finer nature and in a lessening of his love for his fellow-men, then it is wrong, for it is not conducive to the development of the highest type of character. If men could only see that "a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth," they would enjoy life more, and would better fulfil their obligations to their fellow-men and their God.

In this passage the writer completely changes his point of view. In that part of the theme which is not quoted and in the beginning of this paragraph, he relates his personal experiences and observations; but about the middle of the paragraph he ceases to give his observations and begins to moralize upon them. In short, the observer has turned moralist. The writer's moral reflections are given for their own sake; they throw no light upon his experience as a book-agent. Here the change in the point of view results in what is practically a digression from the subject.

Every writer, then, in order to make a judicious choice of materials, must aim to give his work unity of purpose. The first step to this end is a clear and well-defined conception of one's subject. In the next place, one should

have a definite purpose in writing. Furthermore, it is usually helpful to take into account the reader's knowledge and mental capacity. Above all, a writer should have a fixed point of view. By compliance with these requirements one can give consistency and unity of purpose to his work, and can more readily select such ideas as will contribute to the development of his subject.

2. Every composition should also possess *unity of thought*. By this is meant that all the ideas which the composition contains shall have a direct and unmistakable bearing upon the one central thought which forms the subject. Now, unity of thought obviously depends upon the writer's selection of ideas. The choice of suitable material for a given composition is one of the most difficult parts of the writer's task. In selecting his ideas, the inexperienced writer, unless he is on his guard, is liable to fall into several serious errors. He is often disposed to think that every idea suggested by his theme, every thought that occurs to him in connection with his subject, should go into his composition. Thus he is in danger of admitting into his theme ideas that are either irrelevant or unimportant. Again, he may leave out some idea of vital significance. That he may be on his guard against making these mistakes, he should bear in mind what has been said about unity of purpose. If he has a well-defined purpose and a clear conception of his subject, if he has correctly estimated the reader's ability, and has chosen a fixed point of view, he should find it easy to restrict his selection of ideas to what is relevant and essential.

The principle of Unity, in the first place, forbids the intrusion of irrelevant ideas. A composition cannot have unity of thought if it contains any ideas that are in no way related to the subject. A writer should admit into his

composition only those thoughts which have a distinct relation to the topic under discussion. Whenever he introduces into a composition anything that is foreign to its general idea and purpose, he destroys its unity. The composition is no longer about one thing.

In the next place, according to the principle of Selection only those ideas should be chosen which are important and essential. A writer should exclude from his composition all that is unimportant, trivial, or obvious, and should put into it only those thoughts that really contribute to the development of his subject. If this principle is followed, many particulars that are worse than worthless will be left out. Unnecessary facts and details only stand in the way of more important ideas. Their presence tends to obscure what is essential and vital. The beginner should guard against the danger of saying too much. He should not think it necessary to write down all that can be said on a given subject; to do so, he will find, is about the surest way of boring his reader. Few subjects need to be treated exhaustively. The writer who has learned to make a judicious selection of ideas will often imply or suggest what another would give in full. A suggestive style will always leave much to the intelligence and the imagination of the reader. There can be but one reason for putting a given idea into a composition; and that reason is to be found in the fact that the idea contributes something which is important and essential to the development of the subject.

Finally, a writer should not omit from his composition any idea that is indispensable to the adequate discussion of his subject. If, for instance, one should write an exposition which aims to set forth the qualities that form the basis of sound scholarship, and should say nothing about the need of accuracy in the scholar's work, his discussion

would not be complete, and his composition would be lacking in unity. In fact, the omission of some thought that is indispensable to the adequate treatment of a subject is often quite as serious a fault as the intrusion of extraneous or unimportant ideas. When some essential idea has been omitted, the theme lacks unity because it is incomplete. Such an omission usually means that the writer has not properly mastered his subject.

What is the most practicable method by which a writer can make his selection of ideas? Does he have any sure way of knowing what is valuable, essential, indispensable? In answer to these questions it may be said that one can usually help himself in the choice of ideas by looking at his subject from the standpoint of the reader. Let him put himself in the reader's place and ask himself intelligent questions about his subject. Suppose, for instance, that a student has taken as his theme-subject, "The Most Interesting Places near my Home." Let him ask himself, In my neighborhood, what are the three or four places or sights most likely to interest a stranger? At the very beginning he will find that he is in danger of choosing too many points of interest: he wants to tell about all the interesting places in his vicinity. This, of course, cannot be done in a short theme, and he will accordingly find it better to choose the three or four places of greatest interest. Next, taking up each place separately, he will ask himself, What is it that makes this place interesting? What would interest a stranger most in seeing it for the first time? What distinguishing characteristics or peculiarities does it have? Is there connected with it any bit of local history or tradition likely to interest the stranger? In short, what facts and details are necessary to make the reader see this place and think of it as I see it and think

of it? If the student makes a practical answer to such questions as these, he is likely to hit upon those ideas which are essential to his subject and indispensable to his purpose. Again, if he is writing a story, he may likewise question himself from the point of view of the reader. He will ask, What is the main incident? What details of character and action are necessary in order to give a unified and vivid impression of this main incident? In like manner, if one is writing on an expository subject, he will again naturally try to put himself in the reader's place. He will ask, What does the average reader already know about this subject? With this bit of common knowledge as a starting-point, what things will have to be explained? What are the essential facts in this explanation? What are the difficult points? By what aids can these difficult points be made clear? Again, if one is arguing a question, he may ask himself, By what facts, or argument, or reasoning, can this proposition be established? Thus, whatever the nature of the subject, the writer will generally find it helpful to put himself in the reader's place and, from this standpoint, to ask himself questions about his subject.

Another method of selection which many a writer has found helpful is to jot down all the ideas that occur to him in connection with a given subject, and to choose from this list those ideas which suit his purpose. For example, a student who was planning to write a composition on "The Town I Live in," set down the following list of ideas as possible material for his theme: —

1. The name and location of the town.
2. Its size.
3. Its general appearance.
4. The history of the town.

5. An interesting Indian tradition.
6. How the town was named.
7. The surrounding country.
8. The leading industries.
9. The village magnate.
10. How the town is drained.
11. How it is supplied with water.
12. Its means of communication with other towns and cities.
13. The new railroad station.
14. The general character of the people.
15. The great fire that occurred in 1890.
16. The recent work of the Village Improvement Society.

From this list the student, by a process of exclusion, chose the material that he intended to use. It was his purpose to tell, within the limits of four hundred words, the most important facts about the town in which he lived. He had to make his selection in accordance with this purpose. He found, on examination, that the ideas in this list naturally divided themselves into three classes, — those which had an undoubted place in the theme, those which were clearly out of place in so short an essay, and those which seemed to be "just on the line." After a careful examination he came to the conclusion that some use should be made of numbers 1, 2, 3, 8, 12, and 14; that he would have no occasion to use numbers 4, 5, 6, 9, and 13; and that the remainder, numbers 7, 10, 11, 15, and 16, were on the line. The seventh he finally discarded as having no vital relation to his subject and purpose. He decided to use the tenth and the eleventh because the nature of the drainage and of the water-supply affected the healthfulness of the town. The fifteenth was included because, as a result of a large fire, almost half of the town had recently been rebuilt. The sixteenth was also retained because of its close relation to the third.

Ordinarily a writer will have no difficulty in deciding what ideas clearly form a part of his subject, nor will he have much trouble in recognizing those ideas which are plainly outside his theme. The class of ideas from which he will have most difficulty in making a judicious selection consists of those that lie, as it were, just on the boundary line of his subject. Not one of the ideas in this class should be used without sufficient reason. The writer must carefully consider each of them with a view to its exact bearing on his subject and his purpose. Not until he has given it the closest scrutiny will he be able to decide whether it shall be used or rejected. He must ask himself whether the idea under consideration forms an essential part of his subject, or makes a valuable contribution to his purpose. If it is relevant and valuable, it should be included; if it is irrelevant and unimportant, it should be left out.

Against two common ways of violating the unity of thought in a composition the student should be especially on his guard. These are irrelevant introductions and digressions.

Many a student seems to think that he ought not to begin to write about his subject at once, but that he should lead up to it gradually; and accordingly he writes what he calls an "introduction." The schoolboy introductions which are prompted by this impulse are one of the commonest faults of young writers. Most of them are accurately described as irrelevant; they do not, in fact, form any part of the subject. Thus, at the very beginning, the student often makes the mistake of starting out on the wrong track. If he is telling a story, he is likely to begin with something which happened just before the event, but which really had nothing to do with it. In other words, he begins too far back. For instance, a student who wrote

a theme on "A Visit to an Indian Reservation" thought it necessary to devote one-third of his space to an introductory paragraph explaining how he happened to be in the Indian Territory. Again, the young writer is often disposed to start a little aside from the main line of his thought. The following "introduction," taken from a theme entitled "My Last Year's Work in the High School," illustrates this kind of false beginning: —

> The class of 1903 in the A—— High School was composed of thirteen members, — six boys and seven girls. Of the boys, one was Irish and had an Irishman's mother-wit. One was of an ethical turn of mind and was always eager to discuss some ethical question. Another was a linguist and excelled in his English work and in the modern languages. Still another was a scientist and was fond of working out problems in chemistry and physics. The seven girls all seemed to have a literary turn, though several of them excelled in mathematics.

The reader naturally wonders what all this has to do with the work that the writer did during his last year in the high school; and the writer himself, at the end of his introduction, finds that he is no nearer to his subject than he was at the beginning.

In the next place, the writer should be on his guard against digressions. Almost every one who has ever attempted to write knows how difficult it is to keep to the main line of his thought, and not to wander away from his subject. "To press to the sense of the thing itself with which one is dealing," says Matthew Arnold, "not to go off on some collateral issue about the thing, is the hardest matter in the world." One idea, which obviously belongs to the subject, will often suggest another idea, which is plainly outside the subject, but which the writer is tempted to use because he happens to be particularly interested in it. In this way one may lapse into a digression almost be-

fore one is aware of it. "When a man once gets switched off on a digression," it has been aptly said, "he is like a car left on one of the sidings that railroad men call 'spurs'; he can have no hope of further progress until he gets back to the main line." A single example will suffice to show how easily a writer, by digressing from his subject, may become completely "side-tracked." A student who was writing a theme on "How Hay is Made" wandered from his subject in order to explain in detail the construction of the mowing-machine: —

The process of making hay is an interesting study. In the first place, the farmer must know when the grass is in proper condition to cut. He has learned that as the grass grows the nourishing particles rise toward the head of the stalk, and that at the same time the lower part of the stalk begins to dry out and turn brown. When the farmer notices that this discoloration has begun, he knows that "haying time" has come, and he begins to cut his grass. For this purpose he uses a "mower," a machine that cuts a swath about forty inches wide.

This machine is, on the whole, very simple in its construction, but it has one very complicated part, — the gearing. This gearing is placed under a board, and by means of its drivers and cog-wheels the knives are worked. The board just mentioned is about two feet wide and three feet long. Above it is placed a seat where a man sits to regulate the levers and to drive the team. Beneath the board is a shaft that serves both as a driver for the gearing and as an axle for the two wheels on which the machine runs. In this manner is obtained the power which sets the machinery in motion. By means of this central shaft, etc.

3. If the principle of Selection is properly applied to those ideas which are just on the boundary line of a subject, not one of them will be admitted without some special reason. This fact brings us to another important phase of Unity, which is frequently neglected by the young writer. Too often he takes it for granted that the reader will inevitably see why a given idea has been included in a theme.

The writer cannot reasonably assume that the reader possesses any such power of intuition. Hence, unity of purpose and unity of thought are not of themselves sufficient: there must also be *unity of treatment*. Nothing can be more obvious than that the reader should be able to see just how each idea relates to the subject. Unity of treatment requires that every idea shall be so expressed that the reader can instantly see its exact relation to the writer's subject and purpose. If, for instance, after due scrutiny and deliberation, the idea which is just on the line has been included, it should be so treated that the reader will immediately see how it is connected with the subject, and, in consequence, why it has received a place in the composition.

4. Another aspect of Unity has been variously called *unity of feeling* or *harmony of tone*. "Every composition," says Professor Newcomer, "has its 'pitch,' which should be preserved throughout. It may be oratorical and impassioned, it may be argumentative and calm, it may be scientific and technical, it may be literary and colloquial; but whatever it is, it should be consistent." There should be no jarring notes, no discordant tones. One should remember that composition aims to give expression not only to thought, but also to feeling. Accordingly, the principle of Unity requires that a given piece of writing possess consistency and unity of feeling as well as of thought. This emotional consistency, or unity of feeling, is an artistic quality. The average reader scarcely thinks of it at all when it is present; but when it is lacking, he realizes that something is wrong.

Several examples will help the student to see the effect of violating unity of feeling. Sometimes there may be a lack of harmony within the limits of a single sentence. A

country newspaper, for instance, says of a deceased citizen, "He was an affectionate husband and father, a devout Christian, and a life-long Democrat." The following passage, taken from the conclusion of a student's theme on "A Visit to an Old-fashioned Camp-meeting," illustrates the effect produced by disregarding unity of feeling: —

I shall never forget the meeting which I attended in the forest that evening. The service began shortly after twilight set in. The sombre oak trees, the gathering shadows of night, the flickering streaks of light from the torches, glancing here and there through the branches, all helped to make the scene and the occasion impressive. When the service began, I knew for the first time what Bryant meant when he said, "The groves were God's first temples." The audience was, for the most part, composed of simple-minded, impressionable country people. The minister, a sweet-faced old gentleman with snowy locks, was eloquent and fervent. His voice was at first quiet and subdued, but it soon became earnest and impassioned. He spoke in tones of awful conviction and warning. His listeners were profoundly moved. Soon the penitents came forward and crowded about the rude railing. They sobbed and moaned and prayed. At times their voices rose in a loud wail. And yet above all the tumult could be heard the clear warning tones of the preacher. At last I looked at my watch and saw that he had been speaking just one hour and ten minutes. I rose and went to the hitching-post where my horse was tied. As I had already stayed longer than I had intended, I was in a hurry to get home; and so I took the Danville road, although I knew that it had been made very dusty by the many vehicles which had passed that way.

Most readers will feel that the last three sentences of this passage strike a discordant note. The truth is, they are not in harmony with the preceding part of the composition. To express the same idea a little differently, they are clearly below the emotional level of the rest of the passage. That is to say, they violate unity of feeling, and naturally lead one to suspect the writer's sincerity.

Briefly to recapitulate: To secure consistency and unity

of purpose, a writer should have a clear conception of his subject, a definite aim in writing, some notion of the reader's knowledge and ability, and a fixed point of view. He should take pains not to destroy the unity of his composition by changing the point of view. In order that his theme may possess unity of thought, the student should make a careful selection of ideas. He should not admit any irrelevant ideas; he should choose only what is important and essential; and he should not leave out any idea that is indispensable to the development of his subject. One way in which a writer may help himself in making a choice of ideas is to put himself in the reader's place and ask himself questions about his subject. Another way is to jot down all the possible ideas on a subject and to make a selection by a process of exclusion. Against irrelevant introductions and digressions the student should be especially on his guard, since these are the two most common ways of violating the unity of thought. All the ideas that are admitted into a theme should receive unity of treatment; that is, they should be so expressed that the reader can readily see their connection with the subject and with the writer's purpose. One should also be careful not to destroy unity of feeling by using any idea or expression that is not in accord with the general tone of the composition.

EXERCISES

I. 1. Jot down all the ideas that suggest themselves as possible material for a theme on any one of the following subjects: —

1. My Preparation for —— College (or —— School).
2. Why I Came to —— College.
3. My Preparation in English.
4. Who I Am.
5. The Needs of my Preparatory School.

6. My Last Year in the —— School.
7. My Journey to —— College (or —— School).
8. The Teacher Who has Helped me Most.
9. The Chief Industries of my Native Town.
10. My Best Friend.

2. Examine each idea in your list with a view to determining whether it should receive a place in your theme.

3. Write your theme, using only those ideas which you have selected after careful consideration.

II. Write a brief description of a student's room from different points of view, as follows: —

1. Individualize the room; that is to say, in describing it, dwell on those things that give the room individuality, those details that make it differ from all other rooms.

2. Describe the room in such a manner as to indicate the character of its occupant.

3. Suppose that an old man who had occupied the room forty years before should call on the present occupant. Describe the room from the standpoint of this imaginary visitor.

4. Suppose that your father or mother should make you an unexpected visit. Describe the room from your father's or mother's standpoint.

5. Describe the room from an impressionist's standpoint; that is, dwell only on the most striking features and heighten these.

6. Describe the room simply for information: give its dimensions; make a list of the articles it contains; tell what position each occupies.

III. Criticise the following theme in regard to unity of purpose and the selection of ideas: —

Some Places of Interest near my Home

There are many places of interest in the West Branch Valley in Clinton County.

The mountains, hills, and valleys are bare of timber except for a few trees here and there, which were left standing when the lumberman passed through with his ax.

About thirty years ago this valley was considered the best timber-producing region in the state. The mountains were covered with a

heavy growth of pine and oak, interspersed with chestnut, walnut, hemlock, maple, and hickory. For the last thirty years lumbering has played an important part in the industrial and commercial life of this vicinity. It is said that several million feet of lumber have been floated down the river each year since the lumbermen came into the region.

On the hills and in the valleys near my home are many natural curiosities. At no great distance from my father's farm there is a large table-like expanse of rock, with a single tall tree growing in the very midst of it, and with a carpet of moss and a thick growth of small shrubbery surrounding it.

In the small streams there are many waterfalls from eight to ten feet high. These waterfalls are very beautiful, especially in winter, when they freeze solid.

The bottom of the Susquehanna River, about two miles from my house, is composed of a solid layer of rock, which extends for a distance of about half a mile. Here the water is very shallow and during the summer months is never more than two or three feet deep. On one side of the river the mountain-side extends down to the edge of the water, and for a distance of half a mile small springs ooze out of the rocks near the edge of the water. These springs give forth water which has a very salty taste. During the summer the cows which the villagers have turned out to pasture may be seen licking these rocks all day long.

On the side of the mountain just opposite the town there is a large stone-quarry. This quarry, which is no longer used, was opened up in order to furnish the ballast needed for the railroad that was built through the valley more than a decade ago. The whole mountain seems to be a solid rock, and this great hole is a very interesting sight.

On the mountain which faces the other side of the town there is another interesting sight. Near the top and extending the whole length of the mountain, which is nearly a mile long, there is a row of stones about a hundred feet wide. There is not a tree or bush of any kind here, because there is not enough earth to support vegetation. The place looks as though the trees had been cut down in this one place, while the other trees had been left standing.

At another place, near the top of the mountains, there is a small plateau, which is called "Birch Flat" on account of a species of birch that grows there. The trees are snow-white and are commonly called

"white birch." This place is particularly noticeable in the autumn when the leaves have fallen from the other trees, for this is the only place where the white birch is known to grow.

Near my home are many other noteworthy sights, which, though they may seem ordinary, are nevertheless very interesting to close observers of nature.

CHAPTER VIII

COHERENCE

After the writer has selected the ideas that he intends to use, his next care should be to find a clear and orderly arrangement. If the ideas have been selected with a view to unity, they will necessarily bear some relation not only to the subject under discussion, but also to one another. It is their relation to the subject that justifies the writer in using them as material for his composition; but unless he can so present them as to show their logical relation to one another, his composition as a whole will fail to produce an impression of unity. It is the principle of Coherence that governs the logical relation of ideas and binds them firmly together in a coherent and consistent whole.

This principle as applied to the whole composition is chiefly a question of order or arrangement. A writer cannot, of course, present his thoughts all at once, but must be content to write them down one at a time. He proceeds step by step. He analyzes his subject and divides it into a number of subdivisions. Each subdivision or topic represents one of the main ideas of his theme. To the development of each he plans to give a separate paragraph. Closely related to each topic are various subordinate thoughts to be used in building up the paragraph. The paragraphs which thus make up the whole composition are not distinct and independent units, but are all related

to the subject and to one another. It is an important part of the writer's task to make their relation perfectly clear to the reader. Each paragraph, each sentence must be made to serve as a natural and logical link in the writer's chain of thought. The reader must be able to see why one idea precedes another, why one paragraph is placed after another. Each part should be clearly related to that which precedes and to that which follows. There should be no weak or broken links. The whole should be firmly and closely bound together. In the arrangement of his ideas the writer should keep his reader from all possibility of misapprehension, confusion, or perplexity. This result can be accomplished only by careful attention to the order of thought.

A coherent arrangement is not the result of mere chance or whim: coherent composition is the natural outcome of coherent thinking. The human mind works in accordance with certain laws of association. With these laws we are all more or less familiar, for they help to regulate our mental activities. The things that we perceive and know become so closely related in our thoughts that one idea naturally and invariably suggests another. One event, for instance, makes us think of another event that happened at the same time or immediately afterward. The sight or thought of some well-known object calls to mind some other closely associated object. Again, if we are trying to explain to a friend some strange mechanical contrivance, or to describe some object unfamiliar to him, we naturally say that it is like or unlike something else with which he is familiar. Or if something startling or unusual has happened, we are prompted by a natural impulse to ask the cause. Thus our ideas seem to be naturally related by the laws of association; and it is the part of

wisdom for us to use these laws for the purpose of securing a logical arrangement for our ideas.

These laws of association have to do with four distinct relations. The first is the relation which events bear to one another in sequence of time. One naturally thinks of events in the order of their occurrence. The writer, then, in narrating a succession of incidents, finds it best to follow a chronological order. The second relation is that of nearness in space. Objects which are placed near one another are naturally associated together. When a person looks at a number of objects in space, he is generally impressed first by those that are near, or by those that are most prominent. More remote objects and more minute details are seen later. The third law of association is that of similarity. The human mind, in dealing with what is new and unfamiliar, naturally seeks some point of likeness to something that is already known. This fact gives the writer a valuable suggestion. When he sets out to explain something, he usually starts with what is already familiar to his reader and proceeds to what is unknown. The fourth law to be noticed is the law of cause and effect. A cause generally suggests its accompanying effect; and an effect suggests the cause that produced it. They are invariably associated. This law can frequently be used to give logical coherence to expository and argumentative writing.

These considerations will generally suggest how the writer may best arrange his ideas. Each kind of composition has its characteristic sequence of thought. Whenever the element of time is prominent, as in narrative writing, it is best to follow the chronological order. In description it is natural to pass from the near to the remote, and from prominent objects or features to matters of detail. In

exposition it is frequently best to proceed from the familiar to the unfamiliar, from the known to the unknown. In argumentation the writer or speaker often starts with a fact or a statement which is admitted to be true, and in proceeding with his discussion uses the law of cause and effect to give logical coherence to his argument. It must not be supposed, however, that these suggestions are of the nature of rules, to be followed inflexibly. The writer, in deciding upon the best arrangement for his material, may sometimes combine several of these laws of association. There may also arise special cases in which each order here suggested will have to be modified.

The chronological order the writer will find to be the natural arrangement in dealing with a series of events or with a succession of actions that follow one another in the order of time. In narration the sequence of ideas is simple and natural. The writer is not obliged to ponder over the problem of coherent arrangement: the order is ready-made. In most cases all he has to do is to take up the incidents of his story in the order of their occurrence. The strictly chronological order may, of course, occasionally be modified for the sake of securing greater effectiveness.

The Parable of the Prodigal Son presents a good example of a coherent narrative. The three steps in the progress of the story may be represented by the following brief statements: (1) The younger son leaves home and becomes a prodigal. (2) When he repents and returns, his father receives him joyfully. (3) The elder son sulks and is reproved. These are taken up in the order of time, and a paragraph is given to each. Within each paragraph and throughout the story, the events follow one another in strictly chronological order.

1. The Prodigal Son

A certain man had two sons. And the younger of them said to his father, "Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me." And he divided unto them his living. And not many days after, the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance in riotous living. And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want. And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. And he fain would have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat; and no man gave unto him.

He leaves home and becomes a prodigal.

And when he came to himself, he said, "How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and say unto him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants.'" And he arose and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him. And the son said unto him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son." But the father said to the servants, "Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet; and bring hither the fatted calf and kill it; and let us eat and be merry; for this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found." And they began to be merry.

When he repents and returns, his father receives him joyfully.

Now his elder son was in the field; and as he came and drew nigh to the house, he heard music and dancing. And he called one of his servants, and asked what these things meant. And they said unto him, "Thy brother is come; and thy father hath killed the fatted calf because he hath received him safe and sound." And he was angry, and would not go in; therefore came his father out and entreated him. And he, answering, said to his father, "Lo, these many years do I serve thee, neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment; and yet thou never gavest me a kid that I might make merry with my friends. But as soon as this thy son was come, which hath devoured his living with harlots,

The elder son sulks and is reproved.

thou hast killed for him the fatted calf." And he said unto him, "Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine. It was meet that we should make merry and be glad: for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found."

Frequently, however, from the very nature of the subject, the element of time does not enter into the composition; and consequently the chronological arrangement cannot be used. In such cases the problem of coherence is always more difficult. In descriptions, for instance, the element of space is most prominent. Although the whole of an object or scene is spread out at once before the eye of the beholder, he can describe only one part at a time. The scene must be presented little by little until the various parts, by adroit arrangement, give the reader a correct impression of the whole. This end the writer can accomplish by starting with objects that are near and passing to those that are remote, or by rendering first the more prominent parts and then the details. In descriptive writing it is natural to take up the parts in this order because this is the order in which they impress the beholder.

The following description of the Yosemite Valley illustrates this method of arrangement. In the first paragraph the writer draws the outlines of the valley as a whole; in the second he describes the part nearest in space, the one prominent thing in the very midst of the valley, — the river that flows through it; in the third he pictures a more distant object, — the great mountain wall; and in the fourth he describes the far-off peaks that dominate the scene. Further, within each paragraph, it will be observed, the general order is from points of prominence to matters of detail. This plan is not obtruded upon the reader's notice; he will scarcely think of the method unless his attention is called to it; yet the arrangement of ideas seems perfectly

natural throughout. The order is admirably adapted to the purpose of giving the reader a coherent impression of the whole scene.

2. The Yosemite Valley

The valley as a whole.

The one distinguishing feature of the Yosemite is a double wall of perpendicular granite, rising from half a mile to a mile in height, and enclosing a valley about half a mile in average width, and from six to eight miles in length. It is a chasm, rather than a valley, in mountains of solid rock. At many points there is not breadth enough for one of its walls to lie down; and yet it offers all the fertility and all the beauties of a rich valley. There is meadow with thick grass; there are groves of pine and oak, — the former exquisite in form and majestic in size, — rising often to one hundred and fifty and even two hundred feet in height; there are thickets of willow and birch, bay trees and dogwood, and various flowering shrubs; primrose and cowslip and golden-rod and violet and painted-cup, more delicate than Eastern skies can welcome, make gay garden of all the vacant fields in August. The air is heavy with the aroma of mint, of flowers, of pine and fir.

The river.

Winding in and out among all flows the Merced River, so pure and transparent that one can hardly tell where the air leaves off and the water begins. It rolls rapidly over polished stones or soft sands, or stays in wide, deep pools that invite the bather and the boat. The trees, the shrubs, and the flowers that grow along the Merced are much the same in general character and variety as those that grow in the valleys of New England; but they are richer in development and greater in number. They borrow of the mountain fecundity and sweetness, and they are fed by occasional summer rains as those of other California valleys rarely are.

The mountain wall.

Now imagine, rising up sheer and sharp, on each side of this line of fertile beauty, irregularly flowing and variously crowned walls of granite rock, thrice as high as Mount Tom and Mount Holyoke, and fully as high as Mount Washington. The one great, conspicuous object of the valley is this massive, two-sided wall, standing out into and over the meadow, and rising up into space — unbroken, square, perpendicular — for fully three quarters of a mile. The color of the rock varies greatly. A grayish drab or yellow — warm

and sóft — is the dominant shade. In large spots, it whitens out; and again it is dark and discolored as if by long exposure to rain and snow and wind. Sometimes, on a single wall, the light and dark shades are thrown into sharp contrast.

Over the sides of the mountain wall pour streams of water out of narrow valleys still above; and yet higher and farther away rise to twelve and thirteen thousand feet the culminating peaks of the Sierra Nevadas, with ever visible fields of melting snow. These mighty mountains look down upon all forms and shapes and colors of majesty and beauty. This narrow spot seems to have been created as the home of all that is richest in inspiration for painting, for poetry, for heroic living, for imaginative religion.

The distant peaks.

In exposition and argument Coherence is generally a more difficult matter than in narrative and descriptive discourse. Sometimes, to be sure, particularly in the exposition of special processes, the chronological order is the best. Exposition and argument, however, do not as a rule follow any law of continuity in time or of contiguity in space. In these two kinds of composition the sequence of ideas is determined not so much by external conditions as by the internal relation of thought. The elements of time and space may be entirely absent. Even when present, they are usually of less importance than the strictly logical connection of the ideas presented. Now in narration and description the coherent order lies, as it were, on the surface. The arrangement of ideas is determined by the actual order of events, or by the relative position and prominence of objects in space. In exposition and argument, on the other hand, the relation of ideas is not external and physical, but internal and mental. It is obvious, then, that the strictly logical connection of ideas is not always in plain view.

Exposition and argument constitute what has fitly been styled "the literature of thought." They are both the

result of reasoning processes. They do not deal primarily with events or with the outward aspect of things. They seek not to tell how events happen, or how objects look, but to *explain* the nature of things and the cause of phenomena. The literature of thought aims not at the expression of particular facts, but at the presentation of general truth. An exposition explains some phenomenon, or makes a statement of general characteristics; its main business is to furnish instruction and information. An argument seeks to convince men of the truth of a proposition. To accomplish these ends, both these types of composition must take account of the law of cause and effect. Strictly speaking, both are logical processes; and in both the writer must take pains to make the reader see the logical relation of his ideas.

The very nature of the literature of thought shows how important and at the same time how difficult it is for the writer to secure a logical arrangement. To present his ideas in a coherent order, he must take into account the way in which the normally constituted mind usually works. It is hard to lay down any more definite general rule. Only by close and careful thinking can the writer hope to hit upon the most coherent arrangement. The logical order he must seek and find for himself. Each composition thus becomes a separate problem in Coherence. The paramount facts which the writer must remember are that the successive ideas in an exposition or in an argument are connected by an internal logical relation; that the main ideas must therefore follow one another in logical sequence; and that this careful attention to arrangement is necessary in order that the thought may be presented to the reader in a clear and comprehensible manner.

Although it is not possible to lay down any rule by

which the writer can see at once the logical order for his thoughts, a few general suggestions may be of some service to him. In exposition and argument it is natural, as has been pointed out, to start with what is already known or believed to be true. From this standpoint of common knowledge or belief the writer can lead the reader logically, step by step, to the various points which are to be explained or proved. For the literature of thought the familiar order usually followed in the demonstration of a theorem in geometry may be considered as, in a sense, the typical arrangement. The general order is from the known to the unknown; and the relation of cause and effect, the law of reason and result, is the logical principle that binds the various parts together in a coherent whole.

The student will have no difficulty in finding examples to illustrate the way in which the principle of Coherence is applied to the literature of thought. He may study any of the chapters of this book for the purpose of seeing how the writer has sought to present his discussion in a logical order. An examination of the table of contents will show how the same principle has been applied to a more extended exposition. The student will find it still more instructive to note how the principle has been used for the purpose of securing coherence in a short composition. For the sake of illustration the following theme on "How to Write a Good Paragraph" has been introduced. The student is asked to note the order of thought in this theme. First, the Paragraph is defined. The principle of Unity is next discussed because it is to this principle that the Paragraph owes its existence. The principle of Coherence is then taken up before that of Emphasis because the writer's paramount aim should be to make his thought clear. The discussion of Emphasis follows that of Coh-

rence because force is secondary to clearness. This seems to be the most logical order. As it is not necessarily the most emphatic arrangement, the concluding paragraph gives emphasis to the main ideas by summarizing the thought of the whole theme.

3. How to Write a Good Paragraph

Definition. A paragraph is a series of connected thoughts which constitute the development of a single topic. In every paragraph one definite idea, clearly and forcibly expressed, should be immediately evident to the reader. In this definition are implied all the essentials of a good paragraph. First, the paragraph is the development of a single idea, and therefore it must be a unit. Secondly, it is a series of connected thoughts, and hence it must possess Coherence. Thirdly, its main idea should be made to stand out prominently; the most important points in the paragraph should give emphatic expression to the central thought. A paragraph, then, may be regarded as a small theme, and it is consequently governed by the same principles that govern the whole composition. To produce a good paragraph, therefore, the writer must apply to his work the fundamental principles of Unity, Coherence, and Emphasis.

Unity. The principle of Unity requires that the paragraph be about one main idea, clearly separated from everything else. All the thoughts that are necessary for a thorough explanation of this single idea should be grouped about it; for unless this is done, the paragraph will present only the fraction of an idea. At the same time, the writer should be very careful not to admit any thought that does not contribute to the explanation of the main topic. If any outside thought is included, the paragraph will contain several distinct ideas and will no longer be a unit. Such a paragraph is faulty because it is likely to confuse and mislead the reader. It is necessary, then, to avoid any digression or break in the series of connected thoughts that make up a paragraph. As a final test for unity, the writer should try to sum up the whole paragraph in a single sentence.

The second principle which must be regarded in making a good paragraph is that of Coherence. This principle requires that all the subordinate thoughts introduced for the purpose of explaining the

central idea of the paragraph shall be clearly and logically arranged. The sentences of each paragraph should be closely connected in thought, and should follow each other in a logical order. In narratives this coherent arrangement of sentences is secured by relating events in the order of their occurrence. In some kinds of writing, however, such as exposition and description, a chronological arrangement is impossible. To secure coherence in such compositions, the writer must resort to some other order. When he cannot follow the sequence of events, he will find it best to begin with what is known and advance to what is unknown, or to start with what is near and proceed to what is remote. In this way a coherent arrangement of the related thoughts in a paragraph may usually be obtained.

Coherence.

The third and last requirement of a good paragraph is that it shall possess Emphasis. In every paragraph there are undoubtedly some parts which ought to be made more conspicuous than others. That the most important parts of a paragraph may be duly emphasized, they should be placed in the most prominent positions, which are the beginning and the end. The beginning is an important place in the paragraph because it is the part that the reader sees first. The end is also important because the reader sees it last. The opening sentence of the paragraph should be short and clear, and should usually phrase the main thought. The last sentence should generally contain an emphatic concluding statement of the central idea. In the body of the paragraph should be placed whatever is essential to the development of the topic, — details, which are necessarily of minor importance. Thus each idea will receive prominence in proportion to its relative value.

Emphasis.

In short, the paragraph is simply a miniature composition. To write a good paragraph, one is obliged to observe the principles of Unity, Coherence, and Emphasis. Every sentence should help to amplify one central thought. All the sentences should be arranged in a natural, comprehensible order, and should be firmly and logically bound together. The central idea should receive emphatic expression and should occupy a position of prominence. A paragraph thus constructed will leave upon the reader's mind a distinct impression of one idea fully and logically developed.

Summary.

From the foregoing discussion of Coherence it is evident that the chief service which this principle performs is to

help the reader to a quick and correct apprehension of the writer's thought. In his endeavor to secure coherence, moreover, the writer himself often receives valuable guidance and suggestion. In the first place, this principle shows him how to begin his composition. It answers for him the difficult question, What shall I say first? It teaches him that he is to start with the event that happened first, with the object that is nearest or most prominent, with the fact that is known or admitted to be true. Further, in his effort to find the best starting-point he is likely to see the various parts of his subject in their logical connection. Thus the application of the principle to the very beginning of his composition will often suggest a coherent plan for the whole.

The writer's first aim, then, should be to arrange his ideas in a logical order. After he has found a coherent arrangement, he should next take pains to use certain devices which will help to make the logical connection of ideas apparent to the reader.

The proper division of a composition into paragraphs is in itself a valuable aid to coherence. At the point of division between two paragraphs the reader knows that the writer has finished the discussion of one main idea and is about to begin that of another. Thus with every new paragraph the course of thought takes, as it were, a new direction. The reader has completed one stage of his progress and is on the point of setting out on another. Within the paragraph, his direction is always straight ahead, and he is not likely to lose his way. When, however, he comes to the end of a paragraph, there is a turn in the thought. A new idea is to be taken up, and the writer, by starting a new paragraph, notifies his reader that the thought is to move in a somewhat different direction.

The point of division between two paragraphs is therefore important; for this is the one place where the reader may lose his way. It is the writer's business to keep his reader on the right track. The new direction which the thought is about to take must be unmistakable. At every point of division the reader can glance back over the course already pursued, and can look forward to that stage of his journey which lies immediately before him. Between the two paragraphs some connection must be evident. Occasionally the logical relation is so close and clear that no connecting word or phrase is needed. For example, the opening sentence of the paragraph that introduces the Parable of the Prodigal Son on page 69 does not contain any connecting word. The word *therefore* in the first sentence of the present paragraph shows how this paragraph is connected with the one that precedes it. In the fourth paragraph of this chapter (page 68), the phrase *these laws of association* helps to make the connection evident to the reader by referring him to the foregoing paragraph. The phrase *these considerations* at the beginning of the fifth paragraph (page 68) performs a like service. In the paragraph at the bottom of page 74, the clause, *although it is not possible to lay down any rule by which the writer can see at once the logical order for his thoughts*, makes the necessary connection between two successive paragraphs. Sometimes a mere word or phrase or clause does not suffice to make the relation evident; in such cases it is often necessary to link two main ideas together by means of a connecting sentence. An example can be found in the opening sentence of the paragraph that comes immediately after the Parable of the Prodigal Son (page 71): *Frequently, however, from the very nature of the subject, the element of time does not enter into the composition; and*

consequently the chronological arrangement cannot be used. This connecting sentence, it will be noticed, joins together two of the larger divisions of thought. The writer has finished his discussion of the chronological order used in narrative writing, and is about to apply the principle of Coherence to other kinds of composition. He should not pass abruptly from one part of his subject to another without warning his reader. The transition at this point can best be made by means of a connecting sentence. In the paragraph at the bottom of page 77, the opening sentence, *From the foregoing discussion,* etc., performs a similar service. In these various ways the writer can mark the separate stages in the progress of his thought. Thus connecting words, phrases, clauses, and sentences may be used for the purpose of indicating the relation between two main ideas.

An examination of almost any well-written book will show what pains a careful writer takes to indicate the connection of his ideas and the direction of his discussion. The following are the opening sentences of the first nine paragraphs of Chapter I, in Sellar's "Roman Poets of the Augustan Era." These sentences not only show how each paragraph grows out of the preceding one, but also contain a statement of the topic to be discussed in each paragraph. The connecting expressions have been italicized: —

¶ 1. The Augustan Age, regarded as a critical epoch in the history of the world, extends from the date of the battle of Actium, when Octavianus became undisputed master of the world, to his death in the year 14 A.D.

¶ 2. The whole of *this period* was one of great literary activity, especially in the department of poetry.

¶ 3. *But* it is *rather* in their political feelings and relations, and in the views of life arising out of these, *than in the principles and practice*

of their art, that the new poets are separated from, and antagonistic to, the old.

¶ 4. *Yet, while separated from the literature of the Republic in many of its ideas, and in the personal and political feelings on which it is founded*, the poetry of the Augustan Age is, in form and execution, the mature development of the efforts of the previous centuries.

¶ 5. *But* the poetry of the new era has *also* certain marked characteristics, . . . which proclaim its affinity with great literary epochs of other nations rather than with any period of the national literature.

¶ 6. On the whole, the closest parallel, in respect *not so much of the substance and form of composition as* of the circumstances and conditions affecting the lives and tastes of poets and men of letters, is to be sought in the age of Louis XIV of France.

¶ 7. *And not only the political but* the purely literary conditions of the two epochs were in some respects parallel.

¶ 8. *A further parallel* might be drawn between the material conditions of the Augustan Age and those of the age of Louis XIV.

¶ 9. *But instead of tracing these resemblances farther, it is more important to observe that, though the outward influences acting upon the poets of the two eras were in many respects parallel, yet* in form and substance the poetry of the Augustan Age is quite different from that of the age of Louis XIV.

The use of a conjunctive expression or of a connecting sentence at the beginning of a paragraph is usually sufficient to show the reader how the central thought of the paragraph is related to that which precedes it. In short themes it is hardly ever necessary to employ any other means of connection. In longer compositions, however, where the writer is obliged to pass from one main division of his subject to another, he sometimes finds it necessary to employ transition paragraphs and summaries.

A transition paragraph bridges over the chasm that separates two grand divisions of the writer's subject. In the present chapter, for example, the writer first explains the principle of Coherence, and next discusses the devices used for the purpose of making the logical relation of ideas

evident to the reader. These two main divisions are connected by means of a transition paragraph (see page 78). A transition paragraph, it will be noticed, generally contains two clauses or two sentences. The first refers back to that division of the subject which has just been discussed; the second introduces the part which is to be taken up next.

Between still larger divisions of a subject it is often well to pause and rapidly review the ground that has just been covered. Thus Burke, in his "Speech on Conciliation with the American Colonies," after discussing at length the various conditions that have fostered the spirit of liberty among the colonists, pauses to make the following summary before passing on to the next main division of his subject: —

> Then, sir, from these six capital sources — of descent, of form of government, of religion in the northern provinces, of manners in the southern, of education, of remoteness of situation from the first mover of government — from all these causes a fierce spirit of liberty has grown up.

In this book it has been thought best to place similar summaries at the end of the most of the chapters. Such summaries perform for the reader a twofold service: they emphasize the ideas already presented, and they enable him to focus these ideas, as it were, at one point before he passes on to another grand division of the subject.

Occasionally a single paragraph may be used for the double purpose of summarizing one part of a subject and of making the transition to another. The ninth paragraph in the chapter on "Unity and Selection" (at the bottom of page 51) performs this double function.

Another device, helpful to both reader and writer, is what may be called the outline paragraph. At the very beginning it is often well for the writer to state the various parts into which he has divided his subject and the exact

order in which he intends to treat these divisions. For instance, in the first paragraph of the theme entitled "How to Write a Good Paragraph" (page 76) will be found a statement of the outline which the writer intends to follow. Again, in the first paragraph in the chapter on "Unity and Selection" (page 46), the writer intimates that he will discuss, first, "unity of purpose," next, "unity of thought," thirdly, "unity of treatment," and lastly, "unity of feeling." The student will find the outline paragraph a valuable aid to coherence, especially in short expository themes. For example, a student's theme on "The Industries of my Native Town" contains the following introductory paragraph: —

> The principal industries of York, Pennsylvania, are the curing and packing of tobacco, the making of wall-paper, the weaving of silk, and the building of agricultural machinery.

The writer, after thus introducing and outlining his subject, discusses these four subdivisions in the order indicated and devotes a paragraph to each. The student should of course remember that having once indicated the order of treatment, he should not depart from it. Any change of plan will inevitably confuse the reader.

It may be said then, by way of summary, that a writer should show the relation of his ideas by means of a coherent arrangement, and that he should use such devices as will make their logical connection evident to the reader. In the recital of events or of the successive stages in a process, he will naturally follow a chronological order. In description he will pass from the near to the remote, or from objects of prominence to matters of detail. In expository and argumentative writing the problem of arrangement is more difficult, because coherence is usually

determined, not by the sequence of events in the order of time, or by the relative position and prominence of objects in space, but by an internal logical relation of the ideas presented. This internal relation depends upon reasoning processes. In the literature of thought it is usually best for the writer to advance from the known to the unknown, or from that which is admitted to that which he wishes to prove. Every paragraph in a composition should represent a distinct stage in the progress of the thought. The beginning of each paragraph should inform the reader of the new direction which the thought is about to take, and should show him how the central idea of the new paragraph grows out of the preceding discussion. The relation between two paragraphs is usually shown by means of some connecting word, phrase, clause, or sentence. Transition paragraphs often bridge over the gap that lies between two grand divisions of a subject. Between still larger parts of an extended discussion, summaries are sometimes used. Occasionally a single paragraph performs the double duty of summing up one part and of making the transition to another. At the very beginning of a composition the writer may often use an outline paragraph to indicate the order that he intends to follow. All these devices will help him to show the logical connection of his ideas.

EXERCISES

I. Write a theme on one of the subjects selected by your instructor from the list of twenty theme-subjects which you prepared in Exercise IV, page 45.

II. Apply the principle of Coherence to the theme "Some Places of Interest near my Home," quoted under Exercise III, page 63. What faults are apparent? How may they be removed?

III. In like manner apply the principle of Coherence to the following themes. Point out the faults, and show how they may be corrected :—

1. How Flour is Made

Flour is made from the seeds of wheat. The two chief processes of making flour are the "stone process" and the "roller process."

The wheat to be ground into flour by the stone system is first placed in a large box shaped like the inverted frustrum of a pyramid. The lower base is covered with a lid which gives way slightly at every revolution of the upper stone immediately below to let the wheat from the hopper into the circular cylinder hewn out of the upper stone.

The stones, two in number, are cellular silicious stones, the surfaces of which are radically grooved, and in these grooves the powdered material collects. The stones are about five feet in diameter and one foot thick. In grinding, the lower stone remains stationary, while the upper one moves at a lively rate.

The wheat which falls into the circular cylinder of the upper stone seeks its way into the grooves between the two stones and is ground into powder by the weight of the upper revolving stone. The powdered wheat is then carried by elevators into the sifter. The sifter is a long revolving cylinder, about twenty-five feet long and three feet in diameter, covered with a special kind of silk. The powdered grain is here separated. The finer part, or flour, falls through the small holes in the silk, while the bran does not and comes out at the end of the sifter.

The flour is now carried by elevators to the packing-room, where it is packed in sacks ready to be shipped to the consumer.

Wheat ground into flour by the roller system goes through a very different process. The wheat, instead of being placed in a hopper above the rolls, is brought on to the rolls by the elevators, and instead of being ground into powder by two stones, is crushed between two rollers made of steel. The ground wheat is then taken through the sifter, where the flour is separated from the bran in an entirely different way from the way in which it is separated in the stone system.

The flour is now elevated to the packing-room, where it is packed in bags by machinery, and is then ready for market.

The flour made by the stone system is commercially inferior to that made by the improved roller system; nevertheless, it is believed by some people to be more wholesome.

2. Oriole Cave

One of the curiosities of the region in which I live is a cave. Its discovery was strange and unexpected. The possessor of some property was at one time ploughing in the field when his horse suddenly sank a considerable distance into the ground. The man investigated this peculiar happening, and under the place where the horse sank he found a cave.

This cave has not attracted much attention, for, owing to a lack of necessary capital, the owner did not advertise or improve the cave, and did not make its surroundings attractive. For the same reason he did not have it fully explored, and its extent is still undetermined. The cave is situated in a narrow valley, and is at a moderately high altitude.

There is a hole at which one enters, and after going a short distance down an incline, he finds himself in the hollow of the ground. Just here, as a base on which to stand, is a small area. Through the cavern flows a narrow, rippling stream of cool, fresh water, which, moving boldly onward, makes an abrupt turn at the entrance of the cave. The entrance does not present a very alluring aspect, but when you are once inside, the walls, so picturesquely formed by nature, and the sparkling waters make a spectacle as grand as the approach to it is repelling.

The bottom of the cave is of solid limestone, a part of which forms the bed of the stream. The walls, likewise composed of limestone, are, on an average, about fifteen feet high to the level of the water, and are not more than twenty feet from there to the top of the cave. These walls extend for perhaps half a mile, where the stream at last finds an outlet into the Susquehanna River.

Certain features of the cave are such that they will well repay the visitor. While he is inside, the air, on account of its being surrounded by limestone walls and cooled by the fresh, running brook, to an incredible degree refreshes and invigorates one. Then a person finds other satisfaction and delight in imbibing the cool draughts of the superior mountain water.

Still another feature is the ride under the ground in a rowboat. For all these reasons, one of the most interesting peculiarities of my native region is Oriole Cave.

IV. Show how Coherence is secured in the following passage: —

The Law of Simplicity[1]

The first obligation of Simplicity is that of using the simplest means to secure the fullest effect. But although the mind instinctively rejects all needless complexity, we shall greatly err if we fail to recognize the fact that what the mind recoils from is not the complexity, but the needlessness. When two men are set to the work of one, there is a waste of means; when two phrases are used to express one meaning twice, there is a waste of power; when incidents are multiplied and illustrations crowded without increase of illumination, there is prodigality which only the vulgar can mistake for opulence.

Simplicity is a relative term. If in sketching the head of a man the artist wishes only to convey the general characteristics of that head, the fewest touches show the greatest power, selecting as they do only those details which carry with them characteristic significance. The means are simple, as the effect is simple. But if, besides the general characteristics, he wishes to convey the modelling of the forms, the play of light and shade, the textures, and the very complex effect of a human head, he must use more complex means. The simplicity which was adequate in the one case becomes totally inadequate in the other.

Obvious as this is, it has not been sufficiently present to the mind of critics who have called for plain, familiar, and concrete diction, as if that alone could claim to be simple; who have demanded a style unadorned by the artifices of involution, cadence, imagery, and epigram, as if Simplicity were incompatible with these; and have praised meagreness, mistaking it for Simplicity. Saxon words are words which in their homeliness have deep-seated power, and in some places they are the simplest because the most powerful words we can employ; but their very homeliness excludes them from certain places where their very power of suggestion is a disturbance of the general effect. The selective instinct of the artist tells him when his language should be homely, and when it should be more elevated; and it is precisely in the imperceptible blending of the plain with the ornate that a great writer is dis-

[1] From George Henry Lewes's "The Principles of Success in Literature." Every student of English Composition can read this book with profit. "It is just the work to go into the hands of that hope and despair of the teacher of Rhetoric, — the callow young man with a sneaking ambition for literature, much sentiment, and a decided relish for rhetorical decoration." The best edition is the one edited by Professor Fred N. Scott and published by Allyn and Bacon.

tinguished. He uses the simplest phrases without triviality, and the grandest without a suggestion of grandiloquence.

Simplicity of style will therefore be understood as meaning absence of needless superfluity. Its plainness is never meagreness, but unity. Obedient to the primary impulse of adequate expression, the style of a complex subject should be complex; of a technical subject, technical; of an abstract subject, abstract; of a familiar subject, familiar; of a pictorial subject, picturesque. The structure of the "Antigone" is simple; but so also is the structure of "Othello," though it contains many more elements; the simplicity of both lies in their fulness without superfluity.

Whatever is outside the purpose or the feeling of a scene, a speech, a sentence, or a phrase, whatever may be omitted without sacrifice of effect, is a sin against this law. I do not say that the incident, description, or dialogue, which may be omitted without injury to the unity of the work, is necessarily a sin against art; still less that, even when acknowledged as a sin, it may not sometimes be condoned by its success. The law of Simplicity is not the only law of art; and, moreover, audiences are, unhappily, so little accustomed to judge works as wholes, and so ready to seize upon any detail that pleases them, no matter how incongruously the detail may be placed, that a felicitous fault will captivate applause, let critics shake reproving heads as they may. Nevertheless the law of Simplicity remains unshaken, and ought only to give way to the pressure of the law of Variety.

CHAPTER IX

PROPORTION AND EMPHASIS

THE principle of Proportion is so broad that it applies to most arts. For instance, in drawing, in sculpture, and in architecture, a nice sense of proportion is essential to anything like successful workmanship. The artist must be careful not to make any part either too large or too small. He must take into account the scope of his work as a whole and the relative size of the various parts. He must judge accurately the exact amount of room which each part ought to occupy. If he makes some parts too large and others too small, he will spoil the symmetry of the whole. His work will then appear exaggerated, deformed, distorted, because certain parts are out of proportion.

The writer must apply the same principle to his work. The composition that he intends to write contains a number of parts or subdivisions. These parts are not all of equal importance; therefore they should not all receive the same amount of space. The more important ideas should be discussed at length; the less important should be passed over quickly. The writer should amplify those thoughts that are valuable and weighty. To ideas that are unimportant he should not give a disproportionate amount of room. To each part of his composition he should assign an amount of space proportionate to its importance. To do this he must examine all his thoughts on a given subject with a view to determining which are the most significant.

He must take into account the entire amount of space at his disposal, and he must consider the relative importance of the various subdivisions of his subject. He should then so plan his work as to give the greater amount of space to the more important ideas. Thus the relative value of each idea will determine how large a share of the whole space it shall occupy. The principle of Proportion, then, concerns itself with the relative amount of space which should be given to the different parts of a composition.

If a writer is to make a practical application of this principle, he must have a definite notion of the scope of his work. He cannot determine the relative amount of space which each part of his discussion should receive unless he knows how much space the whole composition is to occupy. The length of his composition, however, very rarely gives him much anxious thought: the amount of space which he may fill is generally determined for him. The writers who contribute to newspapers and magazines must usually keep their articles within certain prescribed space limits. Editors generally inform their contributors that stories or articles should cover a certain number of pages, or contain a certain number of words. Even the author who is preparing to write a book usually plans his work on a certain scale: he knows, before he puts pen to paper, the approximate number of pages which his work will cover. In like manner, a limit is generally set to the length of a student's theme: he may be asked to write a single paragraph containing about one hundred and fifty words; or perhaps a theme containing about four hundred words; or occasionally a longer essay containing a thousand words. Thus his space, like that of professional writers, is definitely limited. This limitation is both necessary and useful. As soon as the student knows how

much space is at his disposal, he can decide how much room he can give to each part of his composition.

The writer, in applying the principle of Proportion, must use his judgment. He is here thrown entirely upon his own resources. He alone can determine how much space each thought should receive. He should be especially on his guard against treating this principle as though it were an inflexible rule. At the outset he knows two things, — the amount of space that is allotted to him and the ideas that he has selected. He starts with a clearly defined subject and with a definite purpose in writing; obviously, the end that he has in view will not only affect his selection of ideas, but will also influence him in the division of his space. Sometimes an important thought may require only a relatively small amount of space because it is familiar or easily understood. Such a thought may be stated with special emphasis, or it may be made to occupy a prominent place in the composition. Occasionally a writer may be led to give considerable space to some idea simply because is is difficult and requires extended explanation and illustration. Again, if a man is writing for a special class of readers, this fact may induce him to give greater space to certain thoughts. However, inasmuch as he will generally write for the average reader, the intrinsic value of the ideas selected will, in most cases, be the only thing that requires consideration. To the amplification of one part of his composition it may be necessary to devote a long paragraph. For another idea, which is clearly of less value, only half as much space may be needed. Some thought of slight significance may require only a single short sentence. As soon as the writer has carefully weighed his ideas and has determined their relative importance, he can apportion

to each the amount of space which it ought to occupy. He will generally find it best to decide on the approximate number of words that are necessary to the adequate treatment of each subdivision of his subject. He will thus have to treat each composition as a separate problem in proportion; and in each instance he will have to make a judicious apportionment of his limited space.

The principle of Proportion is violated whenever one part of a composition occupies too much space and another part too little. In the work of a careless writer one idea will sometimes receive exhaustive treatment; another idea, of equal or greater importance, will be dismissed with a sentence or two. The writer may chance to have an abundance of good material bearing upon one part of his subject; with this part he happens to be most familiar; his thoughts lie, as it were, on the surface; they come to mind readily, and he jots them down rapidly. He may thus be tempted to treat one part of his composition with favoritism, and to discuss it at unusual length. In this way, before he comes to the most important division of his subject, he has almost unconsciously used up the greater part of his space; and the idea that should have received the most room is crowded into a corner. Again, Proportion is sometimes violated by the beginner because he finds it difficult to amplify one of his main ideas. Naturally averse to the hard task of thinking, he hurries on to something easier. Thus he slights the very thought that he ought to expand, and wastes his space on trivial or obvious matters that need no extended discussion. Frequently the novice writes without attempting to apportion his space. He imagines that he has written a composition when he has produced the required number of words. With slight regard for Unity and Coherence, and with no thought

whatever of Proportion, he sets down anything that his subject happens to suggest. When he has written words enough, he stops short: his composition is "finished." A theme written in this fashion is about as aimless and ineffective as the speech of a man who is unexpectedly called upon to "make a few remarks." Gross violations of Proportion, then, are usually due either to thoughtlessness or to laziness.

A single example will be enough to show how the careless writer is liable to disregard this principle. A student chose for his subject, "The Life and Work of the Country Physician." His theme was to contain about four hundred words. He planned to write three paragraphs on the following topics: (1) The duties and responsibilities of the country physician; (2) The hardships of his life; (3) His compensations. This writer proportioned his space in the following manner: —

¶ 1. The duties which a country physician has to perform are numerous. Etc. (One hundred and sixty words.)

¶ 2. In the performance of his professional duties he is obliged to expose himself to many dangers and to endure many hardships. Etc. (Two hundred and ten words.)

¶ 3. It may be said, however, that in compensation for his arduous work and for the dangers and the hardships that he daily meets, the country physician generally makes a fairly comfortable living. (Thirty-two words.)

The writer of this theme no doubt found it easy to discuss the first two topics. For the second he seems to have had a superabundance of material. Hence he gives nearly all his space to the first two paragraphs. Now the compensations that a country physician receives stand as a sort of offset to the work that he does and the hardships that he endures. Surely money is not his only reward,

though the writer seems to think so; the physician receives other compensations, less gross and material, but not less real. Certainly, then, this topic is by no means the least important of the three; nor does the second paragraph deserve more space than the first and third together receive. This student, it may be supposed, found it harder to write on the third topic than on the other two; and he doubtless felt a sense of relief when he discovered that he had room for only one more sentence. The last sentence does not complete the theme; it seems rather to have been added as an afterthought. It is not unfair to attribute this writer's violation of Proportion to thoughtlessness and laziness. His theme is faulty because he has failed to apportion his space with a view to economy and effectiveness.

The principle of Proportion, if judiciously applied, will help the writer both to economize his space and to give due prominence to his main ideas. Good proportion is a valuable aid to effectiveness. By this means the writer can make the most of his limited space; and he can also help the reader to see the relative value of the different ideas presented. Careful attention to Proportion, however, is not the only means that the writer may use to give prominence to important thoughts. Closely related to the principle of Proportion is another valuable aid to effectiveness, —the principle of Emphasis.

According to this principle important ideas should be put in prominent positions. The two most important places in a composition are the beginning and the end. An idea placed at either of these two points is more likely to attract the reader's attention than an idea placed in the body of a composition. To show why the beginning and the end are the most prominent positions, a word of explanation may be necessary.

The beginning is important because it is the first thing that meets the eye. Nothing comes before it. When one takes up a book or a magazine article, his attention is generally fresh and alert; his mind is receptive; he is ready to learn what the writer has to say; he is eager to receive something in the way of entertainment or information. The opening sentences give him his first impressions. If the first few lines engage his attention and stimulate his interest, he is likely to read farther. For this reason the beginning is a vantage-point for the writer. If he can captivate his reader's interest at the start and can make good his promise of better things to come, his story or article will not be laid aside until it is finished. As the reader proceeds, the keen edge of his attention may be dulled a little by long use. As he nears the end, however, his interest is again aroused: he wants to get the writer's last words, to know the conclusion of the whole matter. What he reads last is likely to remain with him, for nothing comes after it. The end, then, is another point of vantage; and the writer who wishes to leave a lasting impression will place at the end of his composition some thought that deserves special emphasis.

Since the opening sentences of a composition occupy an emphatic position, it is worth while to inquire what constitutes a good beginning. Generally speaking, directness and brevity are qualities of paramount importance. The very first words should, if possible, be words of weight; and they should lead directly to the subject. The common fault of writing irrelevant introductions has already been pointed out. (See page 57.) Roundabout and lengthy introductions, which do not come directly to the matter under discussion, are perhaps still more frequent in the work of unpractised writers. They not only use up the writer's

space, but they weary the reader's patience and destroy his interest. Diffuseness at the very beginning of a composition promises nothing but tediousness, and is fatal to emphasis. The value of directness and brevity in the opening sentences is well exemplified in the three compositions quoted in the preceding chapter: —

1. THE PRODIGAL SON

A certain man had two sons. And the younger of them said to his father, "Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me." And he divided unto them his living. (See page 70.)

2. THE YOSEMITE VALLEY

The one distinguishing feature of the Yosemite is a double wall of perpendicular granite, rising from half a mile to a mile in height, and enclosing a valley about half a mile in average width, and from six to eight miles in length. It is a chasm, rather than a valley, in mountains of solid rock. (See page 72.)

3. HOW TO WRITE A GOOD PARAGRAPH

A paragraph is a series of connected thoughts which constitute the development of a single topic. In every paragraph one definite idea, clearly and forcibly expressed, should be immediately evident to the reader. In this definition are implied all the essentials of a good paragraph. First, the paragraph is the development of a single idea, and therefore it must be a unit. Secondly, it is a series of connected thoughts, and hence it must possess Coherence. Thirdly, its main idea should be made to stand out prominently; the most important points in the paragraph should give emphatic expression to the central thought. A paragraph, then, may be regarded as a small theme, and it is consequently governed by the same principles that govern the whole composition. (See page 76.)

These are examples of good beginnings for short compositions. With commendable brevity and directness they go straight to the point. They perform two important services: (1) at the very outset they catch the reader's atten-

tion; and (2) they get the composition started at once, without wasting words on a formal introduction and without giving an impression of abruptness. It will be noticed, further, that each of these beginnings not only gets the theme under way, but also makes a substantial contribution to the development of the subject.

The following additional examples of good beginnings have been taken from students' themes: —

1. How Bricks are Made

The first requisite in the making of bricks is to have the clay in such condition that it may readily be moulded into shape. Etc.

2. An Afternoon's Clamming

When I was at N——— last summer, a friend asked me one day to go "quahaugging" with him. Having lived at the seashore only a few days, I did not know what he meant. He explained that the "quahaug" was a kind of clam found in the bed of creeks near the ocean. Being eager for every new experience, I readily consented to go.

We put on our bathing-suits and rowed up a little creek that flowed through the salt marshes. Etc.

3. The Influence of Athletics in a High School

Are athletics a benefit to a high school? This question has received much attention from many broad-minded men, and still their opinions differ widely. Even high school principals do not agree on this subject. The college-bred teacher takes the affirmative; and with equal force and insistence some "old fogy" principal, who has already given the best years of his life to school work, sees in athletics the ruin of his school. Some teachers give the matter no attention whatever, but their indifference is more than offset by the enthusiastic spirit of the students, who are unanimously in favor of high school athletics. It is proper, then, that we should put aside all prejudiced and personal opinions, and try to take as broad a view of the subject as we can. Etc.

With the six examples of good beginnings which have just been cited, the student should contrast the following lengthy, irrelevant, and roundabout "introduction": —

My Largest Bass

The black bass has of late years become very plentiful in many of the streams and lakes of the northern states. At one time he was considered to be the king of the smaller game fishes, and for several years state governments and angling associations continued to stock all fishing waters with bass fry. It was soon discovered that the bass was fierce and voracious, that he multiplied rapidly, and that he soon depopulated the streams of all other desirable fish. There are to-day many fishermen who would gladly exterminate the bass from the trout and pike waters, but to attempt it would be like trying to wage war against flies.

There is no question, however, about the gameness of the bass. He fights to the last minute; he jumps now and then from the water in a way to bring a fisherman's heart into his mouth; and if he is large, he is sure to give one an exciting quarter of an hour before he comes up to the boat-side for the gaff. There is, too, an element of uncertainty about the feeding of the bass that adds to his popularity as a game fish. He is exceedingly fastidious. To-day he will bite greedily at a certain bait, and to-morrow he will not even look at it. The first question that one bass fisherman asks of another is, "What are they biting to-day?" To be successful day after day requires extensive experience, and on this account there is what is called a "bass cult" among fishermen.

Last year I camped for ten days on Mooselookmaguntic Lake. Our party took canoes to the head of the Black stream, and then "toted" our outfit over the divide. We reached the borders of the lake just at nightfall. The air was thick with mosquitoes, and the black flies found the places that the mosquitoes could not get at. To crown all a thunder-storm was coming up. [Here follows an account of the storm and the miseries of the ensuing night.]

The next morning, however, dawned clear and bright. We got an early breakfast and were ready for our fishing by seven o'clock. I was fishing with a ten-ounce rod and was using a helgramite. In less than

ten minutes from the time I first cast out I had hooked my fish. Then followed twenty minutes that I shall never forget. Etc.

The faults of such a beginning are readily apparent. The writer cautiously beats about the bush. He seems to be on his guard against coming upon his subject too suddenly, and approaches it as though he were stalking game. The theme begins as if it were to be a treatise on "The Black Bass." The second paragraph has for its subject "The Black Bass as a Game Fish." In the third paragraph the subject changes again. The writer sets out to give an account of his camping experience in the Maine woods. It is not until the fourth paragraph is reached that he begins to treat of his subject. Thus he improvidently devotes almost half of his space to an "introduction" that is worse than useless. Such a beginning utterly disregards the principles of Proportion and Emphasis, to say nothing of Unity.

In longer compositions, such as magazine articles and books, formal introductions often perform a valuable service in giving the writer an opportunity to set forth his purpose, his point of view, or his method of treatment. The first five paragraphs of Macaulay's "History of England" and the first thirteen paragraphs of Burke's "Speech on Conciliation with the American Colonies" may be cited as excellent examples of such formal introductions. Huxley prefaces his lecture "On the Study of Biology" with the following introductory paragraph: —

It is my duty to-night to speak about the study of biology; and while it may be that there are many of my audience who are quite familiar with that study, yet as a lecturer of some standing, it would, I know by experience, be very bad policy on my part to suppose such to be extensively the case. On the contrary, I must imagine that there are many of you who would like to know what biology is; that there

are others who have that amount of information, but would nevertheless gladly hear why it should be worth their while to study biology; and yet others, again, to whom these points are clear, but who desire to learn how they had best study it, and, finally, when they had best study it. I shall therefore address myself to the endeavor to give you some answer to these four questions: what biology is; why it should be studied; how it should be studied; and when it should be studied.

This passage is a good illustration of the kind of introduction which a speaker or a writer often finds necessary in the composition of an elaborate argument or an extended exposition. The student, however, will rarely need any formal or lengthy introduction for his brief themes.

How to end a theme is, with most young writers, almost as perplexing a question as how to begin. It is natural for one to feel that the end of a composition should give the reader a sense of its completeness. The desire to avoid an abrupt ending no doubt leads many a young writer to devise a needlessly long and formal conclusion, just as the effort to keep from beginning too abruptly often leads him to compose useless introductions. A good ending will do one or both of two things: (1) it will leave with the reader a feeling that the composition has been finished; and (2) it will usually give emphatic expression to some weighty thought or to some concluding or summarizing statement. The closing sentences of the three compositions quoted in the preceding chapter may be cited as examples of good endings: —

1. The Prodigal Son

And he said unto him, "Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine. It was meet that we should make merry and be glad: for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found." (See page 71.)

2. The Yosemite Valley

These mighty mountains look down upon all forms and shapes and colors of majesty and beauty. This narrow spot seems to have been created as the home of all that is richest in inspiration for painting, for poetry, for heroic living, for imaginative religion. (See page 73.)

3. How to Write a Good Paragraph

In short, the paragraph is simply a miniature composition. To write a good paragraph, one is obliged to observe the principles of Unity, Coherence, and Emphasis. Every sentence should help to amplify one central thought. All the sentences should be arranged in a natural, comprehensible order, and should be firmly and logically bound together. The central idea should receive emphatic expression and should occupy a position of prominence. A paragraph thus constructed will leave upon the reader's mind a distinct impression of one idea fully and logically developed. (See page 77.)

The Parable of the Prodigal Son, it will be noticed, ends as it begins, almost abruptly. In a brief narrative like this nothing in the way of formal introduction or conclusion is necessary: the writer will begin to tell his story at once and will stop as soon as he has finished it. In the closing sentences of the second composition, which is a descriptive theme, the writer gives his concluding impression of the scene as a whole. The last example briefly summarizes the thought of the whole theme. The summary at the end of a composition is an excellent device for giving special emphasis to the most important ideas in an exposition or an argument.

In the following additional examples of good conclusions the principles of Proportion and Emphasis have been carefully observed: —

1. Thus I jot down in a note-book all my ideas or thoughts about the subject on which I intend to write, and by examining, assorting, rearranging, and proportioning my material I am able to make a ser-

viceable outline for my theme. (End of a theme entitled "How I Make the Outlines for my Weekly Themes.")

2. In short, my native town is enjoying unbounded prosperity, the like of which is seldom found in cities of even much greater population. Sharon has many industries; it has abundant communication with the outside world; its people are energetic, thrifty, public-spirited citizens: what more could any one say for his native place? (End of a theme entitled "Sharon, — its Industries and its People.")

3. The early morning ride through the country, the hurry and bustle of the awakening city, the strange scenes and the unfamiliar life, the dinner hour and its attractions, and finally the long ride home, — all these things made a full and eventful day. It was these market days that gave me my first vivid impressions of the busy world in which I live. (End of a theme entitled "Going to Market with Father.")

4. Think what changes have occurred about this historic spot! The electric launch has taken the place of the bark canoe; the beautiful driveway is now used instead of the rugged winding path; the ancient stillness of the place has given way to the rumbling noise and roar of toboggans and roller-coasters. All these changes, however, have made the old home of the sachem Shenango a very picturesque and beautiful pleasure-ground. (End of a theme entitled "An Historic Spot.")

Each of the foregoing conclusions gives the reader a sense of the completeness of the theme and impresses upon his mind that thought which the writer deems to be final and important.

It is worth while to point out, by way of warning, several common faults that the inexperienced writer is likely to commit at the end of his themes. One of these has already been hinted at: many a student who makes too literal and too general an application of the statement that the three grand divisions of a composition are the introduction, the body, and the conclusion, frequently writes a long "conclusion" when no formal conclusion at all, or, at most, only a brief final statement, is needed. Such an ending is clearly a violation of Proportion. Another fault,

somewhat akin to the first, is the failure to stop when the theme is finished. Perhaps the writer feels that he has not yet said all that it is possible to say on the subject; perhaps — especially if he has not taken pains to plan his theme — a brand-new idea has just occurred to him; or perhaps his theme has not yet reached its required length. For some such reason he does not conclude his theme when it is finished, but allows himself to run on aimlessly and ineffectively. A third fault, more common perhaps than either of the others, is the practice of stopping short before the theme has reached anything like completeness. Some students, indeed, take no pains to *conclude* their themes: when they have written down the prescribed number of words, they simply *stop* short "as if they were sawing off a board at a specified length." A theme ended in this fashion is not a finished composition, but a mere fragment. Such an ending plainly violates both the principle of Proportion and that of Emphasis. The writer who would take advantage of the opportunity of securing special emphasis at the end of his themes should beware of these three common pitfalls.

In conclusion it may be said that to secure force or effectiveness is the general purpose of the two related principles of Proportion and Emphasis. The principle of Proportion concerns itself with the relative importance of ideas, and helps the writer to decide how much space he shall give to each part of his composition. All the ideas that he has selected should be carefully weighed, and the relative value of each should be accurately determined. To each idea should be allotted an amount of space commensurate with its importance. Each theme thus becomes a separate problem in Proportion; and, in conformity with the principle, the student should endeavor, in every in-

stance, to make a judicious apportionment of the space at his disposal. The principle of Proportion, if applied with careful judgment, will help the writer not only to economize his space, but also to give to each idea the degree of prominence that it deserves. Another method by which one can lay particular stress upon certain ideas is by placing them in prominent positions. According to the principle of Emphasis the two most important points in a composition are the beginning and the end. The opening and the closing sentences, therefore, require particular attention. The beginning should be brief, direct, and emphatic. It should aim to catch the reader's attention at once and to get the theme under way. Irrelevant, lengthy, roundabout introductions violate both the principle of Proportion and that of Emphasis. The end of a theme is likewise a point of vantage for the writer. In the closing sentences he can give his final impression, his concluding thought, or a summary of his most important ideas. By ending a theme in this way he can leave with the reader a sense of its completeness, and he can lay special stress upon that idea which he deems to be of paramount and final importance. He should guard against the temptation to write long, formal conclusions, the disposition to run on ineffectively after the theme has really been finished, and the common fault of stopping short before the theme is in any sense complete. If a writer makes a judicious apportionment of his space and pays careful attention to emphasis at the beginning and the end of his composition, he will have little difficulty in giving due prominence to his most important ideas.

EXERCISES

I. Write a theme on one of the subjects selected by your instructor from the list of twenty theme-subjects which you prepared in Exercise IV, page 45.

II. Write the opening sentences of a theme on one of the subjects given in Exercise I, page 62.

III. Write also the closing sentences of a theme on any one of these ten subjects.

IV. Criticise and discuss the following beginnings: —

1. A Day at the Centre County Fair

Accompanied by a friend, I visited this fair during the season of 1903. We paid the usual admission fee, and then set out to see the sights. We began our examination at the stables. Here all the race-horses were kept and cared for. We first looked at all the horses more through idle curiosity than for any other reason. Etc.

2. The Coke Industry near Connellsville

The Connellsville coke region is one of the most beautiful sections of southwestern Pennsylvania. It not only abounds in that mineral which now helps to make possible the industrial supremacy of a great nation, but it is also rich in varied agricultural resources. Its wide valleys and rolling uplands yield grasses, grains, and fruits in profusion. In quality and in abundance these products rival those of any other part of the United States. Through this region flow the tributaries of the Monongahela and the Youghiogheny, which supply it with the finest water from the mountain springs of the Alleghanies. An abundant supply of good water is indispensable to the successful manufacture of coke. Etc.

3. How to Hunt the Pheasant

There are many sportsmen who enjoy the pleasures of hunting game, but who do not thoroughly understand the art of shooting. [Here follow some hints on the art of shooting.]

It is indeed good sport to carry a gun over one's shoulder and to plod through the thick woods in the pleasant autumn weather. The forest possesses a kind of fascination for the most prosaic nature. One finds a quiet enjoyment in the unfamiliar sights and sounds of the

woods. Then, again, the true sportsman is always in a state of suppressed excitement ; he is ever expectant, ever on the alert for something to happen. Occasionally, as he picks his way through the bushes, he gets a shot at a rabbit or a squirrel. But I know of no kind of hunting that affords so much harmless excitement, that offers so many startling surprises, and that is on the whole so uncertain, as the hunting of the pheasant. Etc.

V. Criticise and discuss the following conclusions: —

1. I have no desire ever again to spend another half-hour like that one, which lasted from the time we first broke into the barn until we picked ourselves up at the bottom of the curve and began to scrape off the mud from our drenched clothes. In my mind I can see it all even now as plainly as when it first occurred. (End of a theme entitled "My Most Exciting Half-hour.")

2. It is probable that within a few years the main part of the board-walk will be widened to one hundred feet. On many evenings last summer the walk was so crowded as to cause much discomfort to the promenaders. It is also thought that the receding of the coast-line will, in a few years, make it necessary to move the whole structure farther seaward. At several places the water-line is now nearly three hundred feet from the walk. (End of a theme on "The Board-walk at Atlantic City.")

3. Of course, we knew how much material there was in each cut. So, at the end of each month, we would estimate the percentage of material that had been excavated. The contractor was paid so much a yard for the material he took out. Ten per cent of the full amount of money was, however, held back until the completion of the work. As there was nothing else for us to do after this job had been finished, we were dismissed from the service and went home. (End of a theme entitled "A Winter's Experience on an Engineering Corps.")

VI. Criticise the following theme with regard (1) to the subject; (2) the introductory sentences; (3) the selection of ideas; (4) coherent arrangement; (5) the principle of Proportion; and (6) the conclusion: —

Factory Legislation in England

Upon considering the questions suggested by the facts in relation to obtaining factory legislation in England in connection with a study of

laissez-faire theory, the vistas for speculative thought, contemplative reasoning, and logical research into cause and effect are so multitudinous and far-reaching, that it is difficult, if not impossible, to condense into a short essay any phase of a subject of such vast and enlightening importance as well to the student of history as to the political economist. So important, indeed, is the history of the struggle for this legislation that the only reason it has not received a more prominent place in the history of the period during which it occurred must be attributed to the fact that there is doubtless no portion of the world's history so crowded with important and startling events as that from the middle of the eighteenth to the middle of the nineteenth century. Factory legislation came by a slow struggle from the closing years of the eighteenth century to the passage of the Act of 1844. It was based upon the deplorable condition of child labor; a condition lamented by the petite hand of the poetess, deplored by the earnest voice of the elder Pitt, and mitigated in a great measure through the patient efforts of the seventh Earl of Shaftesbury.

One interesting point in regard to this struggle was the charge of inconsistency made against some of the supporters of the various bills for factory legislation. This charge came in connection with the corn laws. The idea that governmental interference in one case might be an evil, and in another case, in some respects parallel, might be a necessity, does not at the present day seem to be a question difficult of demonstration; but it must be remembered that at this time those who held the *laissez-faire* theory were violently opposed to anything that appeared in the least to be tinged with "legislation in restraint of trade," or governmental interference with individual rights so dear to the heart of the Englishman.

That cupidity was the motive inducing this bitter and prolonged fight against factory legislation, does not preclude, but rather explains the fact that many persons were honestly opposed to what they regarded as dangerous interference on the part of the government.

It is interesting and instructive to consider the effect of the economists upon the reasoning of the period. The mill-owners had a plentiful supply of pauper children from the work-houses in the large cities, and, as a rule, they made little, if any, effort to preserve the supply they had on hand.

CHAPTER X

THE OUTLINE

PROFESSOR WENDELL has pointed out that the principles of Composition as applied to the whole theme aid the writer chiefly in the prevision, or the planning, of his work. When applied to the paragraph they help him both in the prevision and in the revision of his writing. In sentences their main function is to assist him in the work of revision. The principles of Composition have been discussed first in their relation to the whole composition in order that the student may use them in planning his themes.

Some plan or outline seems to be necessary in almost every work that involves construction. It is well for the student to consider the literal meaning of the word *composition;* the derivation of the word (from *com*, together, and *ponere*, to place) implies that the act of composition is the art of putting things together. In this sense the word is frequently applied to music and painting as well as to writing. It has already been seen that the writer should select with care the ideas that he intends to use, and should put them together as skilfully and effectively as he can. He must know all the parts that he will need in building up his structure of thought, and he must see exactly how these parts are related to the whole fabric and to one another. Before he begins to write, he should

endeavor to form, if possible, an accurate conception of his composition as a whole.

The writing of a theme is in some respects like the building of a house. In the work of building the first thing that is determined is the kind of house to be erected. Then the architect's plans are drawn up. The requisite materials are next brought together. When everything is in readiness the actual work of construction begins. It is in this operation of skilfully fitting together the various parts of the projected structure that the architect's plans are of substantial help to the builder. The work of the writer must pass through precisely the same stages. He must find a subject and must have a definite end in view. Next, he should so plan his composition as to indicate the scope of his work, his choice of materials, and his method of putting them together. Then follows the actual work of composition. The materials selected must be brought together, elaborated, and finished. In this last stage of the writer's task the plan which he has prepared will serve as a valuable guide.

A writer, then, will find it worth while to plan his work with care. There are several ways in which an outline will help him. In the first place, it will help him to keep his work within bounds. In making an outline he will have to test each idea by the principle of Unity. When he has once planned his theme, it will be easier for him to avoid digressions and to exclude all extraneous ideas. In planning his work, moreover, the writer can best determine what is the most logical order of thought. In an outline the main ideas of a composition should be set down in their natural sequence. This logical sequence of ideas is by no means always obvious; and sometimes it can be seen only after considerable thought. To provide for an orderly

arrangement of the various subdivisions of one's subject is always an important step in the planning of a composition. Again, the writer who plans his work before he writes is more likely to find an effective arrangement. Thus the making of an outline helps the writer to apply the principle of Emphasis to his work. Finally, it is only after he has made his plan that he is in a position to consider the relative importance of the different parts of his composition. He can then determine how much space is to be given to each subdivision. Thus it may be seen that the practice of planning a composition with care is one of the very best ways of applying to it the principles of Unity, Selection, Coherence, Emphasis, and Proportion. Furthermore, the very act of planning a composition will often suggest new and valuable material. It is frequently true that one does not know exactly what are his ideas on a subject until, in his effort to plan his composition, he is obliged to take account of stock. Above all, if a writer's outline is the result of close and careful thought, it will enable him, so to speak, to see his composition as a whole before it is written.

Such are the advantages that arise from the practice of making and using an outline. In view of the great practical help that a writer can thus give himself by a well-considered prevision of his work, it is surprising that many students are disposed to neglect this important preliminary step. Many a young writer seems to think that, by following an outline, he will be putting his composition into a sort of strait-jacket, — that he will thus hamper his freedom and put a stumbling-block in the way of originality. In consequence, he begins to write as soon as he has decided on a subject. He is apparently in so great a hurry that he does not stop to take account of his stock of ideas, to deter-

mine upon a logical arrangement, and to examine his thoughts for the purpose of seeing their relative value. He jots down his ideas at haphazard, one after another, just as they occur to him. It is no wonder that a composition written in this fashion is rambling, incoherent, and ineffective. Properly speaking, it is not a composition at all: it is simply a jumble of ideas. Indeed, such a medley no more deserves to be called a composition than a pile of stones deserves to be called a house. For writing of this sort there can be only one prescription: let every writer, after deciding upon his subject, make for his guidance such an outline as will indicate the selection, the coherent arrangement, and the relative importance of his ideas. By careful planning, one can best secure unity, logical connection, effective arrangement, and proper proportion.

Thus a serviceable outline is usually the result of a careful application of the principles of Composition to one's work. The important questions which the writer, in making his outline, should ask himself, are: (1) What are the main ideas to be used? (2) What thoughts are of coördinate rank, and what thoughts are clearly subordinate to the others? (3) What is the most coherent and effective arrangement? (4) How much space shall be given to the development of each of the main ideas?

Professor Wendell, in his "English Composition," has suggested an excellent method, which any writer may follow in outlining his subject. "On separate bits of paper," he says, "I write down the separate headings that occur to me, in what seems to me the natural order. Then, when my little pack of cards is complete, — in other words, when I have a card for every heading I think of, — I study them and sort them almost as deliberately as I should sort a hand at whist; and it has very rarely been my experience

to find that a shift of arrangement will not decidedly improve the original order. Ideas that really stand in the relation of proof to proposition frequently present themselves as coördinate. The same idea will sometimes phrase itself in two or three distinct ways, whose superficial differences for the moment conceal their identity; and more frequently still, the comparative strength and importance, and the mutual relations of really distinct ideas, will in the first act of composition curiously conceal themselves from the writer. A few minutes' shuffling of these little cards has often revealed to me more than I should have learned by hours of unaided pondering."

It is clear, then, that a writer should make some analysis of his subject before he begins to write. This he should do in order to determine what ideas are of primary importance, and what ideas are clearly secondary and subordinate. Such an analysis is necessary in order that each dependent idea may be brought under the main idea to which it is logically related. Every careful writer desires to see just what are the necessary subdivisions of his subject, and what are the related and subordinate ideas that belong to each subdivision; for he has learned that it is customary to put into one paragraph all the thoughts that contribute to the development of one main idea.

In the finished composition a separate paragraph should be given to all the thoughts that properly belong to each important subdivision. If the writer, in planning his work, has taken pains to bring together under one head such thoughts as are closely related, each subdivision, together with the subordinate ideas that belong to it, will furnish material for a separate paragraph. Thus the writer can make his outline serve as a guide to the paragraph structure of his composition. The student should,

however, take great pains not to make too many subdivisions. He should consider the scope of his work. He must remember that he is planning only a short theme, and that if he makes too many paragraphs, his composition is likely to seem fragmentary and disjointed. A searching analysis of one's subject and a close scrutiny of the materials that are to be used in discussing it will generally save one from the common error of having too many subdivisions. Even after an outline has been made, a careful analysis will often enable the writer to see a more consistent division and to devise a more coherent arrangement of paragraph-topics. This fact can perhaps be made clearer by means of an illustration.

The following was submitted by a student as an outline for a theme on "How to Conduct a Lumber Business": —

¶ 1. Buying the stock.
  (*a*) The kind to buy.
¶ 2. The arrangement of the lumber in the yard.
  (*a*) It should be piled in sheds.
¶ 3. Requisites for conducting the business.
  (*a*) Good teams and reliable men.
  (*b*) A sufficient supply of good lumber.
¶ 4. Accuracy in measuring and counting.
¶ 5. Promptness in filling orders.

A little examination of the foregoing outline will reveal the fact that there are in reality only three main ideas to be discussed. Both ¶ 1 and ¶ 2 deal with the work of getting the stock of lumber together in readiness for purchasers. The subject of ¶ 3, with the exception of (*b*), is the necessary equipment for conducting the business. The last two topics have to do with the business details of operating a lumber-yard. It would seem, then, that for the treatment of this subject within the narrow limits of a

brief theme, only three paragraphs are required. Moreover, before a lumber-dealer buys and arranges his stock, he will naturally be at some pains to secure the equipment he needs for carrying on his business. A transposition of these two ideas will therefore help to produce a more logical arrangement. The revised outline, then, with some additional material suggested by the new analysis, will assume something like the following form: —

¶ 1. The equipment needed for the successful operation of a lumber-yard: horses, wagons, sidings, reliable men, etc.

¶ 2. How to stock the yard: hints as to the purchase, the arrangement, and the care of the lumber.

¶ 3. How to attend to the business details: the value and importance of courtesy, promptness, accuracy, and sound business methods.

Many persons do not find it necessary to write down an outline for a short theme, but every one will find it advantageous to have an outline either in mind or on paper. The average student, it is believed, can work best with his plan spread out before him. This is certainly the case in the writing of longer compositions, where it is often a matter of some difficulty to make the proper subdivisions and to settle questions of arrangement and proportion. The following outline, which the author drew up as his plan for Chapter VII, on "Unity and Selection," will serve to show how fully a composition may be outlined before it is written. In this outline the larger divisions of the subject have been marked with Roman numerals and printed in small capitals, and the central thought of each paragraph has been stated in a single sentence.

I. Unity of Purpose

¶ 1. Four things are necessary to the unity of the whole composition: unity of purpose, unity of thought, unity of treatment, and unity of feeling.

¶ 2. A writer must first have a clear conception of his subject.

¶ 3. He should have a definite aim or purpose.

¶ 4. He should also consider the class of readers for whom he writes.

¶ 5. The "average reader" is the person for whom most books and periodicals are written, and for whom the student is supposed to write his themes.

¶ 6. The "point of view" can best be understood by reference to painting, photography, and descriptive writing.

¶ 7. One should have a definite and fixed point of view in all kinds of composition.

¶ 8. A single example will show how Unity may be violated by a change in the point of view.

¶ 9. It is by attention to these four requirements that the writer can secure unity of purpose and can best prepare himself to make a selection of ideas. (Summary and transition.)

II. Unity of Thought

¶ 10. All the ideas of a composition should have an unmistakable bearing on the subject.

¶ 11. The principle of Unity forbids the intrusion of any irrelevant ideas.

¶ 12. According to the principle of Selection only those ideas should be chosen which are important and essential.

¶ 13. No essential idea should be omitted.

¶ 14. One way in which the writer can help himself in the selection of ideas is to ask himself questions about his subject.

¶ 15. Another way is to jot down all possible ideas on a subject and, by a process of exclusion, to choose what is valuable and essential.

¶ 16. It is hardest for the writer to make a choice from those ideas which are just "on the line."

¶ 17. The student should be especially on his guard against two common ways of violating the unity of thought.

¶ 18. He should avoid irrelevant introductions.

¶ 19. He should not digress from his subject.

III. Unity of Treatment

¶ 20. Unity of treatment requires that the writer shall make the reader see how each idea is related to the subject.

IV. Unity of Feeling

¶ 21. Unity of feeling means emotional consistency.

¶ 22. The effect of disregarding unity of feeling can be made evident by several examples.

V. Summary

¶ 23. Such are the requirements of the principles of Unity and Selection as applied to the whole composition. (A summary of the whole chapter.)

We may say, then, in summing up, that it is just as necessary and helpful for the student to make an outline of the composition that he is going to write as it is for the architect to make a careful plan of the house that he intends to build. The making of an outline is one of the most practicable ways of applying the principles of Composition to the whole theme. If the student plans his work with care, he will be able to avoid the faults that arise from the practice of writing down his thoughts at haphazard, and will have for his guidance such a plan as will indicate the selection, the coherent arrangement, and the relative importance of his ideas. Every writer finds it helpful to have some such outline either in mind or on paper. Even in the writing of short themes the student can lighten the work of revision and can secure better results if he has a carefully prepared plan before him; and in the writing of longer compositions he will find an outline well-nigh indispensable.

EXERCISES

I. Select some chapter in this book and make an outline of it similar to the author's outline of the chapter on "Unity and Selection." Ch. III

II. Make a similar outline of some article in a current magazine.

The instructor may assign a different magazine article to each member of the class.

III. 1. Select any one of the general subjects given under Exercise I (page 43), or take any general subject of a similar character, and by narrowing it down, derive from it five restricted subjects suitable for short themes.

2. From this list of five subjects pick out the one subject on which you could most easily write a theme.

3. Jot down all the ideas which occur to you as possible materials for a theme on the subject you have chosen. Set down these ideas just as they occur to you and number them.

4. Now put a cross before each idea which has an undoubted place in the theme. Strike out every idea which clearly does not belong in the theme. If there are any ideas which seem to be just "on the line," put a question mark before each of them. Give this third class of ideas careful consideration. Do not use a single one of these doubtful ideas unless you can give yourself a satisfactory reason for including it in the theme.

5. Having thus chosen the ideas for your theme, arrange them in the most coherent and effective order.

6. Decide on the number of paragraphs which the theme is to contain. Put into a single sentence the central thought which is to form the subject of each paragraph.

7. With the understanding that the theme is to contain about four hundred words, indicate how much space is to be given to each paragraph.

8. Write the theme.

IV. The following have been prepared by students as suitable outlines for short themes containing about four hundred words each. In these outlines each paragraph-topic has been indicated, and at the end of each topic numerals have been placed to show the probable number of words that are to be used in the development of each paragraph. Study these outlines, and point out the defects or the merits of each: —

1. The Original Name of my Native Town

¶ 1. The early history of the Standing Stone. (200)

¶ 2. The settlement and the naming of the town by the whites. (100)

¶ 3. The change of the name to Huntingdon. (100)

2. Lost in the Woods

¶ 1. I start to the woods with orders for the log-cutters. (70)

¶ 2. I come to the log camp, and on my way back I am caught in a snowstorm. (230)

¶ 3. I finally reach home. (100)

3. Going to Market with Father

¶ 1. I always found the morning ride to town pleasant and interesting. (100)

¶ 2. After our arrival we were kept busy selling our produce. (100)

¶ 3. The dinner hour was most welcome. (50)

¶ 4. We always hurried after dinner to see how soon we could get started on the long ride home. (100)

¶ 5. Conclusion. (50)

4. How I Make the Outline for My Weekly Theme

¶ 1. Note-book ideas or thoughts. (50)

¶ 2. Assorting material. (125)

¶ 3. Rearranging material. (125)

¶ 4. The number of words in each paragraph. (60)

¶ 5. Conclusion. (40)

5. A Trip down a Coal Mine

¶ 1. Going down. (100)

¶ 2. My first impression. (90)

¶ 3. What I saw. (150)

¶ 4. Coming up. (60)

6. Why the Sharon Steel Company is the Greatest Competitor of the Steel Trust

¶ 1. The Sharon Steel Company is a great competitor for two reasons: (*a*) size; (*b*) cheap production of finished work. (75)

¶ 2. Size of the works: (*a*) facts showing its size; (*b*) divisions of the plant; (*c*) the largest independent corporation. (125)

¶ 3. Cheap production: (*a*) reasons for it, — the Company owns its own ore and limestone, and everything possible is done at the works; (*b*) its excellent system illustrated. (150)

¶ 4. Conclusion and summary. (50)

7. ON THE HUDSON RIVER DURING A STORM

¶ 1. The storm comes upon us. (75)
¶ 2. An account of the storm. (100)
¶ 3. The boat capsizes and one boy is drowned. (225)

8. FAMILIAR SCENES ALONG YANKEE RUN

¶ 1. Yankee Run: what it is, and how people look upon it. (75)
¶ 2. The familiar places: (*a*) the "Old Bridge"; (*b*) the "Oil Hole"; (*c*) near "Meadows Farm"; (*d*) "Whittacker's Woods." (175)
¶ 3. Arthurholt's Mill: (*a*) its inhabitants; (*b*) the mill and the dam. (75)
¶ 4. Conclusion. (75)

9. THE PREPARATION OF COAL FOR THE MARKET

¶ 1. The breaker: the machine and its devices. (100)
¶ 2. The process at the breaker: (*a*) breaking; (*b*) assorting; (*c*) purifying. (200)
¶ 3. The process of washing: (*a*) assorting and purifying; (*b*) the use of water; (*c*) the double process of purification. (100)

10. HOW TO RAISE BUCKWHEAT ON POOR GROUND

¶ 1. Introduction: an outline statement of main facts in theme. (30)
¶ 2. Preparation of the ground: (*a*) ploughing; (*b*) harrowing. (110)
¶ 3. Drilling: (*a*) when it should be drilled, and why; (*b*) amount to be drilled in each acre. (80)
¶ 4. Fertilizer: (*a*) kind; (*b*) the amount to be put on an acre; (*c*) a mistake that farmers commonly make. (130)
¶ 5. Summary. (50)

11. AN EXCITING FOX CHASE

¶ 1. Introduction. (50)
¶ 2. An account of fox-chasing in Chester County. (75)
¶ 3. The preparation for the chase. (80)
¶ 4. The freedom of the fox. (40)
¶ 5. The hunt or chase. (60)
¶ 6. Accidents that happened during the chase. (70)
¶ 7. Conclusion. (25)

12. Our Township High School

¶ 1. Introduction: its organization. (100)

¶ 2. The school: (*a*) buildings; (*b*) number of pupils; (*c*) remarks. (100)

¶ 3. The work of the school: (*a*) its purpose; (*b*) how it differs from city high schools. (100)

¶ 4. Its promise for the future. (75)

¶ 5. Concluding thought. (25)

III

THE PARAGRAPH

CHAPTER XI

THE PARAGRAPH: THE PRINCIPLES OF COMPOSITION

1. **Definition.** — A paragraph is "a connected series of sentences constituting the development of a single topic." From this definition it is clear that a paragraph may be a short composition, complete in itself; that is to say, the "single topic" which is developed may be a narrowly restricted subject capable of being adequately treated in a single paragraph. Usually, however, the paragraph forms only a part of a larger whole. We have already seen that in gathering material for his composition the writer is obliged to make a selection. As soon as he has begun to think about his subject, he seizes upon certain ideas that are essential to the development of his theme. While these ideas are all related to the general subject, they are all more or less distinct from one another. In other words, each main idea possesses a certain unity. These main ideas constitute the natural subdivisions of a subject. All the sentences that bear upon one of these natural subdivisions are grouped together in a single paragraph.

It is not difficult, therefore, to understand the origin and purpose of the paragraph. The reader should have an opportunity of becoming just as familiar with the subdivisions of a given subject as is the writer himself. Accordingly, if the various thoughts which go to make up a composition are to be so presented that the reader may apprehend them with ease and distinctness, and

with the least possible expenditure of mental energy, each important subdivision should in some way be kept separate from every other. The writer naturally feels bound to help the reader as much as possible. He accordingly tries to separate the group of thoughts that centre around one main idea from the group of thoughts that centre around another distinct subdivision of his subject. This effort to help the reader to a clear and easy apprehension of the writer's thought has resulted in the conventional division known as the paragraph. Each new paragraph marks for the reader a new turn in the writer's thought. The paragraph, then, is a convenient mechanical device by which the writer may bring together, for the sake of the reader, each group of ideas that are closely connected, and keep apart those ideas that do not belong together. Thus it has become a matter of custom, or Good Use, to put into one paragraph all the connected thoughts about a particular topic or convenient subdivision of a subject.

2. **Unity**. — The very nature and purpose of the paragraph make unity absolutely essential; for a paragraph is a group of sentences constituting the development of a *single* topic or a *single* subdivision of a subject. With respect to the whole composition, each paragraph is but a fractional part; but when isolated from the rest of the composition, each paragraph may be regarded as a distinct unit. The paragraph stands as an intermediate unit between the whole composition on the one hand, and the sentence on the other. It is a smaller unit than the whole composition, just as a foot is smaller than a yard; and it is a larger unit than the sentence, just as a foot is larger than an inch. To possess unity a paragraph should contain all the sentences that contribute to the development

of one main idea, but no more. Each paragraph is printed or written in such a way that it stands out as a single unit, distinctly separated from that which precedes and from that which follows. If a paragraph is made to contain either more or less than the thoughts that are necessary to the amplification of a single central idea, it violates the principle of Unity.

Since it is the business of the paragraph to give the development of one main idea, the central thought should always be readily apparent. In fact, one of the best ways in which a writer can test the unity of his paragraphs is to see whether the thought of each can be summed up in a single sentence. Usually the topic is explicitly stated at the very beginning of the paragraph. The central idea should never be lost sight of until the end is reached. Unless a connecting sentence is necessary at the beginning of the paragraph, the sentence that contains a statement of the topic to be treated usually stands first. This opening sentence, which sets forth the subject of the paragraph, may for convenience be called *the topic-sentence*. In the following quotation, which may be taken as an example of a well-unified paragraph, the topic-sentence has been italicized: —

We can nowhere find a better type of a perfectly free creature than in the common house-fly. In every step of his swift mechanical march, and in every pause of his resolute observation, there is one and the same expression of perfect egotism, perfect independence and self-confidence, and conviction of the world's having been made for flies. Strike at him with your hand ; and to him the aspect of the matter is what to you it would be if an acre of red clay, ten feet thick, tore itself up from the ground and came crashing down with an aim. He steps out of the way of your hand, and alights on the back of it. You cannot terrify him, nor govern him, nor persuade him, nor convince him. He has his own positive opinion on all matters — not an unwise one,

usually, for his own ends — and will ask no advice of yours. He has no work to do — no tyrannical instinct to obey. The earthworm has his digging; the bee her gathering and building; the spider her cunning network; the ant her treasury and accounts. All these are comparatively slaves, or people of business. But your fly, free in the air, free in the chamber — a black incarnation of caprice — wandering, investigating, flitting, flirting, feasting at his will, with rich variety of choice in feast, from the heaped sweets in the grocer's window to those of the butcher's back-yard, — what freedom is like his? [1]

The division of a composition into paragraphs is with many writers merely a matter of whim or chance. One paragraph may consist of but a single sentence comprising about a dozen words; another may contain four or five hundred words. Many persons seem to obey no law or principle of paragraph division. Their paragraphing is faulty simply because they have not yet learned the meaning and use of the paragraph. The careless writer may violate the Unity of the paragraph in any one of three ways: he may make some of his paragraphs contain only fractional parts of the development of one main idea; or he may make a paragraph contain more than the development of one topic; or he may allow himself to digress from the topic which the paragraph discusses. Each of these three violations of Unity in the paragraph is deserving of further comment.

In the first place, one should not make the mistake of putting into a separate paragraph less than the complete development of one topic or subdivision of a subject. Inexperienced writers are likely to make too many paragraphs. This is perhaps the most common fault in paragraphing. Many students start a new paragraph with every new sentence. Thus their paragraphs are too short

[1] From John Ruskin's "Queen of the Air."

to possess unity. This violation of Unity, like the opposite fault of putting too much into a paragraph, occurs either because the writer has not yet learned to recognize the paragraph as a unified group of sentences bearing upon one central idea, or because he has failed to make a careful analysis and division of his subject. The following passage, taken from a student's theme, illustrates the way in which many persons divide their writing into paragraphs: —

Some dairymen who live in the vicinity of Pittsburg, while driving to the city in the morning, are in the habit of staying on the tracks and delaying the electric cars as much as possible.

One bright, cold morning in midwinter, when the ground was frozen hard and covered with a deep snow, I was riding on one of these cars.

The rails were very slippery, and the motorman was compelled to use a good deal of sand.

I had almost reached my destination when I saw one of these milkmen in front of the car.

The car was going down a very steep hill at the time, and the motorman at once began to ring his gong.

The milkman paid no attention to it.

The car continued to bear down upon the wagon, and only when it got within a few yards of the vehicle did the motorman attempt to stop.

But it was too late: although the wheels were locked, they went sliding along the shining rails, and the heavy car bumped into the wagon.

The fault of writing down a series of short paragraphs, each one a sentence or two in length, is especially common in narrative writing. In this kind of composition there seems to be a special temptation to violate the Unity of the paragraph. The reason is perhaps to be found in the fact that short paragraphs, like short sentences, seem to produce an effect of progress, to give a sense of rapid

movement. All readers know, however, that the effect is purely artificial and often illusory. It sometimes happens that such a group of short paragraphs makes little or no real progress in the story. They are like a hobby-horse: they give one the sense of motion even though no real progress is made.

A second way in which the Unity of the paragraph is often violated is by the practice of putting into one paragraph more than belongs to the development of one topic. A careless writer, who has never learned to appreciate the value of the paragraph both to himself and to the reader, and who does not take pains to outline his theme, frequently makes a paragraph contain what properly belongs to two or three distinct divisions of his subject. Sometimes a theme containing five or six hundred words is put into a single paragraph. Page after page is written without a single break. This violation of Unity arises from the fact that the writer has either failed to analyze his subject, or neglected to mark the proper divisions of his thought. When no effort is made to indicate the distinct stages of the writer's progress, the reader is obliged to shift for himself. He gropes, as it were, in the dark. He is likely to become confused and perplexed; he may be misled. A great, unwieldy paragraph, which really has no central unifying thought, but which treats of a number of different things, is a serious stumbling-block to the reader's understanding. It would be difficult indeed to follow the thought of this chapter, for instance, if it were all printed as a single paragraph.

A third way in which the Unity of the paragraph may be violated is by the introduction of digressions and irrelevant matter. The paragraph-topic should be kept in mind from the beginning to the end. Throughout the paragraph

the writer should never let his reader lose sight of the one central idea. As in the whole composition, he should allow no digressions, however tempting, to lead him away from the main track of his thought. He should rigidly exclude all irrelevant matter. In short, he should not admit into the paragraph a single sentence or a single clause that does not help to explain or to expand or to enforce the central thought.

3. **Selection.** — A writer should select with care his material for the development of each paragraph-topic. The principle of Selection must be applied to the paragraph no less rigidly than to the whole composition. One should no more think of putting into a paragraph everything that can be said about a given topic than of including in the whole composition all that it is possible to set down about a given subject. The material selected will depend upon the purpose of the writer and the nature of the subject. Whatever is necessary and valuable for one's immediate purpose should be included; whatever is unimportant and trivial should be left out. Especially in the writing of narrative and descriptive paragraphs is the learner likely to err in the choice of fit material. Here the principle of Selection is of paramount importance. It is fatally easy for the inexperienced writer to clog the movement of his story with a great mass of descriptive and narrative particulars. Both obscurity and dulness may arise from too great fondness for minute details. "A few well-chosen points will usually serve better than the mention of many minute and unimportant particulars." What to omit is often quite as important a question as what to include.

4. **Proportion.** — The principle of Proportion requires that each paragraph shall have space enough for the adequate presentation of the central thought. Since para-

graph-topics differ in extent and in importance, the length of paragraphs will vary considerably, and no rigid rule can be given. Except in narrative writing, it is hardly possible to make a satisfactory paragraph of a single sentence. It is safe to say that a paragraph should contain at least two or three sentences. On the other hand, the longest paragraphs in the work of our best writers rarely contain more than three hundred and fifty words. "The advantage of at least one paragraph indentation on almost every page of a printed book is felt by every reader."

The principle of Proportion determines also how much space shall be given to each of the various facts, ideas, details, or illustrations introduced for the purpose of expanding and enforcing the central thought of the paragraph. As in the whole composition, the problem of proportion is a matter of relative values. Each idea should receive an amount of space commensurate with its importance. The nature of the topic and the purpose of the paragraph will usually help the writer to solve the problem of proportion. He should remember that plain facts do not require a lengthy statement, and that simple things need not be elaborately illustrated.

5. **Coherence.** — In the paragraph, as in the whole composition, the principle of Coherence deals with the order of thought or the sequence of ideas. It requires that the development of the central idea of the paragraph be orderly, logical, clear. Since a paragraph consists of a group of related thoughts all bearing upon a single topic, the writer should so phrase and so place these thoughts as to make the reader see their relation both to one another and to the paragraph-topic. The sentences that make up a paragraph should follow one another in logical sequence. Each sentence must be in its proper place. The reader is

sure to be confused if the sentences of a paragraph are written down at haphazard, without logical law or order. There should be no gaps in the continuity of the thought. Any break in the thought is likely to produce obscurity and to destroy the reader's interest.

In the opening sentence or sentences of a paragraph the skilful writer will not only give the reader a clear notion of the topic to be treated, but will also show how this topic is related to the preceding discussion. The logical connection between two paragraphs is often made evident by means of some connecting word, phrase, clause, or sentence. Sometimes, however, the relation is so clear and close as to be readily understood without the use of any connecting expression. The topic, as we have seen, is usually stated in so many words at the beginning of the paragraph. In some cases, however, especially in narrative writing, the paragraph-topic may be implied rather than expressed. Whether the central idea of the paragraph be expressed or implied, it should always lie, as it were, on the surface, so that the reader will have no difficulty in seeing what the paragraph is about.

The principle of Coherence binds the sentences of a paragraph in a compact and consistent whole. Each sentence grows out of that which precedes, and leads up to that which follows. This is true no matter what law of association determines the exact order of thought. The narrative paragraph will naturally follow the chronological order. The descriptive paragraph will proceed from the near to the remote, or from some object of prominence to matters of detail. The expository and the argumentative paragraph will follow an order of thought determined by logical processes. In every case, however, there will be an unbroken "line of thought" running through the

paragraph. If a paragraph is coherent, the thought which it develops will be continuous and progressive.

Not only should the writer make the thought of each paragraph coherent and consecutive, but he should also use such connecting words and expressions as will serve to make the logical relation of his ideas clear to the reader. There are two classes of words used for the purpose of joining the thought of one sentence to that of another. These two classes of words are conjunctions and words of reference. Some of the most common conjunctions and conjunctive expressions thus used to show the relation between two sentences are *however*, *therefore*, *thus*, *also*, *besides*, *moreover*, *nevertheless*, *accordingly*, *consequently*, *then*, *now*, *yet*, *hence*, *as a result*, *on the contrary*, *on the other hand*, *finally*, *in conclusion*, *for example*, *for instance*, *first*, *secondly*, *next*, *again*, *further*. The student should be perfectly familiar with the correct use of these and of like conjunctive expressions. The most common words of reference are the personal pronouns, the adjective pronouns, and certain adverbs of time, place, and manner. As connecting words the personal pronouns *he*, *she*, *it*, and *they*, and the adverbs *now*, *then*, *here*, *there*, *so*, *thus*, are not so important or valuable as the adjective pronouns. *This* and *that*, *these* and *those*, are used more frequently than any other words of reference. Other adjective pronouns in common use are *such*, *same*, *some*, *one*, *all*, *other*, *another*. As to the use of these words of reference, whether they be personal pronouns, adjective pronouns, or adverbs, a word of caution is necessary. Always be sure that the reference is absolutely clear. One should never be afraid to repeat whenever repetition is necessary for the sake of clearness. Especially after the adjective pronouns *this*, *that*, *such*, etc., clearness often requires the

repetition of a noun or the use of some synonymous expression. Thus the repetition of a word or of an idea may become a valuable aid to coherence.

Conjunctions and words of reference are the ligaments of thought. They join one sentence to another, and they serve to bind the sentences of a paragraph together. To be sure, the logical sequence of ideas may sometimes be so clear that no connectives are needed; but, as a rule, conjunctions and adjective pronouns are almost indispensable aids to clearness. When accurately used, they join sentence to sentence, and help to make the exact relation of thought immediately evident to the reader. The following passage is cited for the purpose of illustrating the use of conjunctions and reference-words in ordinary prose: —

Different occupations, *however*, differ widely in the character of their special vocabularies. In trades and handicrafts, and other vocations, like farming and fishing, that have occupied great numbers of men from remote times, the technical vocabulary is very old. *It* consists largely of native words, or of borrowed words that have worked their way into the very fibre of our language. *Hence*, though highly technical in many particulars, *these* vocabularies are more familiar in sound, and more generally understood, than most other technicalities. The special dialects of law, medicine, divinity, and philosophy have *also*, in their older strata, become pretty familiar to cultivated persons, and have contributed much to the popular vocabulary. *Yet* every vocation *still* possesses a large body of technical terms that remain essentially foreign, even to educated speech. *And* the proportion has been much increased in the last fifty years, particularly in the various departments of natural and political science and in the mechanic arts. *Here* new terms are coined with the greatest freedom, and abandoned with indifference when they have served their turn. Most of the new coinages are confined to special discussions, and seldom get into general literature or conversation. *Yet* no profession is nowadays, as all professions once were, a close guild. The lawyer, the physician, the man of science, the divine, associates freely with his fellow-creatures, and does not meet them in a merely professional way. *Furthermore*, what is

called "popular science" makes everybody acquainted with modern views and recent discoveries.[1]

The student who examines the foregoing passage will also note how the repetition of a word or an idea sometimes serves to bind two sentences more closely together. In the ninth sentence, for instance, the phrase "most of the new coinages" is clearly a repetition of the idea expressed by "new terms are coined" in the preceding sentence. By such repetition the thread of one thought is interwoven, so to speak, with that of another.

The omission of connecting words and the lack of skill in their use are among the commonest faults of young writers. In a poorly constructed paragraph, in which the writer has taken no pains to show the logical relation of his thoughts, "the sentences have the same connection with each other that marbles have in a bag: they touch without adhering."[2] Whenever a necessary connecting word is omitted between two sentences, there is nothing to hold them together, and consequently they seem to stand apart. The failure to use connectives is sure to make one's style jerky and disjointed. The student can verify this fact for himself by attempting to omit, from the passage cited above, all the italicized words. The loss in smoothness and clearness will be instantly apparent.

6. **Emphasis**. — In the paragraph, as in the whole theme, the beginning and the end require special care. As these are the most prominent places in the paragraph, they will readily catch the reader's eye. At the beginning and the end of each paragraph, therefore, the writer will do well to place those thoughts that deserve to be especially empha-

[1] Greenough and Kittredge's "Words and their Ways in English Speech," page 42.

[2] Coleridge's "Table Talk."

sized. Now, generally, the most important thing in a paragraph, especially in expository and argumentative writing, is the statement of the paragraph-topic. Accordingly, the topic-sentence will usually stand at or near the beginning of the paragraph. It is the writer's business, at the outset, to give the reader a clear understanding of the paragraph-topic, and definitely to impress this topic upon the reader's mind. The opening sentence will therefore usually contain a clear and striking statement of the central thought of the paragraph. To this statement brevity often lends added emphasis. The body of the paragraph will, of course, contain explanations, facts, details, illustrations, — whatever, in short, is needed for the development of this central thought. The last sentence, which, like the first, occupies an emphatic position, will contain the conclusion. It is often convenient and desirable to put in the closing sentence a brief summary of the whole paragraph. It rarely happens, however, that the concluding sentence is simply a restatement of the topic-sentence; for the thought of a paragraph does not move in a circle, but is progressive and cumulative. When the reader comes to the end of a paragraph, he feels that some advance has been made, that some conclusion has been reached, that another stage in his progress has been finished. The whole paragraph has moved steadily toward this end. The concluding sentence of the paragraph is, in fact, the capstone that rounds out the whole structure. The last sentence, then, in a well-planned paragraph will contain an emphatic statement of the concluding thought, and will so present it as to give the reader the impression that he has completed one definite stage in his progress.

The thought of a paragraph, it has just been said, should be progressive and cumulative. In the ideal paragraph

each sentence advances the thought; each makes a definite addition to what has gone before; each gives a new stimulus to the reader's attention. Thus something like a climax is produced. The thought steadily advances in importance, in force, and in interest until the end is reached. This cumulative and progressive development of a topic is well illustrated by the following paragraph: —

The silent captain by the river, still holding his antagonist fast in his capital, had now shown, by the end of March, that the army of that antagonist was the rebellion, and he prepared to strike. At the extreme left of his line the sting of the swift and fiery Sheridan struck the enemy first. He winced and suddenly recoiled. But sharper grew the sting, swifter and more fiery, until the word came, "Sheridan is sweeping all before him from the west!" Then the genius of the great captain, seconded by the tireless valor of his soldiers, lightened all along the line, struck everywhere at once, burst over the enemy's works, crushed his ranks, forced his retreat, and at the same moment the master, loosening his victorious columns in pursuit, checked the rebel flight, and overwhelmed Lee and his army as the Red Sea engulfed Pharaoh and his host. So opened and closed the great campaign. So the Army of the Potomac, often baffled, struck an immortal blow, and gave the right hand of fellowship to their brethren of the west. So the silent captain, when all his lieutenants had secured their separate fame, put on the crown of victory and ended civil war.[1]

7. **Variety.** — The student of style soon discovers that there is much variety in the structure of paragraphs. This variety arises partly from the inherent difference in the nature of subjects. The four different kinds of composition — exposition, argumentation, description, and narration — have in fact given rise to certain kinds of paragraphs which may be regarded as typical. To be convinced of this fact, the student has only to compare the paragraphing of a text-book with that of a novel. The writer of the

[1] Taken from an address which George William Curtis delivered at West Point, New York, October 21, 1868.

text-book and the novelist, he will find, do not follow exactly the same principle of paragraph division, and do not attempt to develop their paragraphs by precisely the same methods. This difference in paragraphing and in the methods of amplifying paragraph-topics is due to the essential difference in the nature of the subjects. Further, even within the limits of the same composition, different topics will have to be developed in different ways. The plan and purpose of the writer, as well as the nature of the topic to be discussed, will have much to do with his choice of method. In one case he will have to prove a proposition. In another he will have to explain a general truth. In still another he will have to show how a given cause has produced certain effects. Sometimes he will aim to make his thought more clear by means of comparison, illustration, or example. At another time he will make an event or a scene or a general statement more vivid by the use of suggestive details. Again, he will perhaps wish to enforce his thought by means of repetition or contrast. In actual practice he will often combine several of these methods in the composition of a single paragraph. To the thoughtful writer, in short, each paragraph presents a separate problem in structure, in selection, and in proportion. There is therefore little excuse for making all paragraphs of about the same length, and still less excuse for making them all, so to speak, after the same pattern. There are, indeed, different types of paragraphs, just as there are different kinds of sentences; and the writer who does not wish to weary his reader will do well to vary both the length and the structure of his paragraphs. That the student may receive some hints as to the various ways in which a paragraph-topic may be developed, the next chapter has been given to a discussion of the different methods of amplification.

8. **Summary**. — A paragraph consists of a series of sentences all bearing upon a single central thought or topic. Although a paragraph may be a complete composition on some narrowly restricted subject, it more commonly forms only a part of a larger whole. The paragraph is, from its very nature, a unit. It should contain all that a writer has to say about one particular subdivision of his subject. One should therefore be on his guard against allowing himself to digress from the paragraph-topic, and against putting into a paragraph either more or less than belongs to the development of one main idea. The selection of material and the apportionment of space will be determined by the purpose of the writer and by the nature of the paragraph-topic. A writer should select with care the various facts, ideas, details, and examples to be used in amplifying his paragraph-topic, and should give to each of these an amount of space in proportion to its importance. The principle of Cohere ce requires that the thought of a paragraph advance logically from the beginning to the end, and that connectives and words of reference be used to indicate the relation that exists between successive sentences. A regard for Emphasis will lead the writer to make the most of the beginning and the end, the two strategic points of the paragraph. The beginning introduces the paragraph-topic; and it should tell the reader, in a clear and striking way, just what the paragraph is to be about. The last sentence should give the writer's concluding thought on the topic. The thought of the whole paragraph should, so far as possible, be progressive and cumulative, so as to produce an effect of climax. Finally, one should not fall into the error of making all his paragraphs alike, but should seek variety both in length and in structure.

EXERCISES

I. Write a theme on one of the subjects found in List V, Appendix E, or on some subject suggested by this list.

II. Show how the paragraphing of the following passages may be improved: —

1. An Engineer's Dilemma

Every railroad company lays down certain rules for the guidance of its engineers.

Some of these rules often place an engineer in a difficult position; for he is liable to get into trouble either by obeying or by disobeying them. For instance, one of the rules of the Philadelphia Division of the R—— Railroad requires its engineers to approach a certain crossing on its road with their trains running at a rate of speed not exceeding six miles an hour.

Just beyond this crossing is a steep grade, the top of which cannot be reached by an ordinary freight train unless it runs at a speed much higher than that allowed by the rule.

Engineers who strictly obey this rule find it impossible to get their trains over the hill. If this failure is repeated several times, the delinquent engineer is taken off this "run," because, as the Company puts it, he is "unable to do the work." The engineer's only way out of this difficulty is to violate the rule and get his train over the steep place in the road.

But here he is again in trouble, for if an accident were to happen, he will be held responsible because he has violated one of the Company's rules.

One of the rules of the W—— Railroad requires that the engineers of passenger trains on its division shall approach South Street with their trains completely under control.

And yet if they do this, their trains are sure to arrive at the terminal station a few minutes late. Here the engineer is once more in trouble, for he must account for every minute of time lost during the trip.

Although this rule requires a reduction of speed, the schedule makes no allowance for lost time. Apparently the engineer's only way out of the difficulty is to violate the rule.

But if an accident should occur, the engineer is again at fault, for he has run contrary to a rule of the Company.

Throughout the Philadelphia yards of the R—— Railroad, trains are frequently run eastward on a west-bound track on oral orders from a yard-master. Of course, in this case, an engineer is not obliged to obey an oral order; for according to the rules of the Company all orders must be given in writing under the signature of the superintendent.

Yet as an engineer who is engaged in yard work finds it necessary to make such a run many times in a single night, he usually does so on a mere oral order from the yard-master. Naturally he does not wish to have the yard-master telegraph to the superintendent every time he desires to make a movement.

Yet if he should meet with an accident while running under oral orders, he is to blame, for the book of rules prohibits this very thing.

These considerations show that the minor rules of a railroad company are devised mainly for its own protection, and not for that of the engineer.

They frequently place the engineer in a difficult and embarrassing position, for he does not know whether to obey them or not.

2. Some Sound Principles of Taxation

The right of a state to tax its citizens rests upon its sovereign power to control, within constitutional limits, all persons and things within its territory. This right must be exercised for the common good, and nothing more be taken from the people than their good demands. Frugality is as essential for a state as for an individual, and extravagant public expenditure is sure to demoralize the people, discourage industry, and diminish the wealth of the country. On the other hand, so far as public expenditure tends to encourage the industry, promote the wealth, and develop the intelligence of the people, it is a blessing, and taxation is to this extent a necessity. The system of taxation may be unjust and even ruinous when the amount is not excessive. In regard to this, the most important part of the subject, Americans seem to be both careless and ignorant. I looked through a large public library in the city of Boston to-day without finding a single book by an American author devoted to this subject. Yet here is the true field of social science and genuine statesmanship. I venture to specify a few important principles under this head. The system should be permanent. Constant changes are fatal to prosperity. This has long been

one of the most serious difficulties in the United States, especially in regard to indirect taxation. No one can tell what absurdities a new Congress may bring forth, and our House of Representatives is renewed every two years. Business is constantly disturbed by the fear of new interpretations of existing laws. Another fundamental principle is equality in the distribution of taxation. It should reach all classes of people and all kinds of property alike, without unjust discrimination in favor of any. The application of this principle involves many of the most difficult of social problems. We may even question as to what equality means. For example, it may be said that it is easier for a man with an income of five thousand dollars to pay a tax of ten per cent than for a man with an income of five hundred dollars to pay a tax of five per cent; that equality demands this difference. On the other hand, if this idea were accepted, we might go still farther and exempt all except the rich from taxation. The same question comes up in regard to revenue derived from import duties. Shall we tax only those articles used by the rich? The application of the principle of equality is difficult, but the neglect of it is subversive of civil liberty. Unequal taxation has always been characteristic of despotic and barbarous governments. It is the curse of the East, where the burden of taxation is borne chiefly by the agriculturist, and where the rich generally escape. In the United States the tendency is in the other direction — to favor the poor at the expense of the rich. Certain kinds of property are also exempted from all taxation. In some places all personal property is exempt. All property in government bonds is exempt. Generally churches, schools, and benevolent institutions are not taxed. On the other hand, excessive taxes are levied on banks and corporations generally. Another fundamental principal is publicity. This is the greatest safeguard against inequality and injustice. Too great publicity cannot be given to the amount of tax assessed upon each individual in the community. In this respect there is nothing more to be desired in the United States, and this is the one thing which has compensated to a considerable extent for the general ignorance of other important principles. Everything in regard to the taxes is made public. Every man can compare his own position with that of his neighbor, and if he can show any inequality he has public opinion on his side in demanding redress. The same publicity is given to every item of public expenditure, so that if there is extravagance, it is the fault of the people themselves.

III. Criticise and discuss the way in which the principles of Unity, Selection, Coherence, Proportion, Emphasis, and Variety have been applied to the paragraph structure of the following themes: —

1. "Some Places of Interest near my Home," on page 63.
2. "How Flour is Made," on page 85.
3. "Oriole Cave," on page 86.
4. "Factory Legislation in England," on page 106.

CHAPTER XII

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PARAGRAPH

THE literature of thought, that is, explanatory and argumentative writing, in which paragraph structure is usually found at its best, offers the student the best illustrations of the various ways in which the central thought of a paragraph may be developed. It will be worth his while to study the various methods of amplification. The following are some of the commonest methods of expanding a topic-sentence into a paragraph.[1]

1. *One method of amplifying a paragraph-topic is by means of repetition.* The main idea is expressed in different ways. The central thought is held up, as it were, and viewed in various lights. The writer helps the reader to see its different aspects. By looking at an idea in different lights and by seeing it in all its bearings, one can enlarge and expand the central thought of a paragraph. By repetition, of course, is not meant the mere iteration of the same words or of the same idea. The kind of repetition which best contributes to the development of a paragraph-topic always brings with it some distinct addition to the thought. When used by a skilful writer, this kind of repetition may become one of the most effective means of developing and enforcing the central idea of a paragraph. An example or two will serve to illustrate how this method

[1] For some suggestions used in this chapter the author is especially indebted to Scott and Denney's "Composition-Rhetoric," Chapter III.

is used. In Chapter IX of this book the second paragraph (page 89) is amplified by means of repetition. The following paragraph is another example of the use of this method: —

> This vigorous vitality which underlies the Elizabethan drama is essentially mundane. To it all that is upon this earth is real; and it does not concern itself greatly about the reality of other things. Of heaven or hell it has no power to sing. It finds such and such facts here and now, and does not invent or discover supernatural causes to explain the facts. It pursues man to the moment of death, but it pursues him no farther. If it confesses "the burden of the mystery" of human life, it does not attempt to lighten that burden by any "Thus saith the Lord" which cannot be verified or attested by actual experience. If it contains a divine element, the divine is to be looked for *in* the human, not apart from the human. It knows eternity only through time, which is a part of eternity.[1]

The first sentence of this paragraph states the thought quite simply. The next repeats and explains the idea expressed by the phrase "essentially mundane." In the third the thought of the first two is repeated and made more explicit. The fourth sentence is, in like manner, both a repetition and an outgrowth of all that precedes it. The same method is followed throughout the rest of the paragraph. All the succeeding sentences, by showing the attitude of the Elizabethan drama toward human life, repeat and enforce the idea stated at the outset.

2. *Another way in which a writer may develop a paragraph-topic is by comparing one idea or thing with another.* The mind naturally seeks and dwells upon points of likeness. Some analogy or similarity furnishes the writer with a convenient means of explaining and expanding an idea.

[1] Edward Dowden's "Shakspere: A Critical Study of his Mind and Art," page 23.

One can often help others to understand a given fact or idea if he compares it with something else that they are already familiar with. Thus what we already know helps us to apprehend new ideas.[1] The following example illustrates how this method is used in amplifying a paragraph-topic: —

Ariosto tells a pretty story of a fairy, who, by some mysterious law of her nature, was condemned to appear at certain seasons in the form of a foul and poisonous snake. Those who injured her during the period of her disguise were forever excluded from participation in the blessings which she bestowed. But to those who, in spite of her loathsome aspect, pitied and protected her, she afterward revealed herself in the beautiful and celestial form which was natural to her, accompanied their steps, granted all their wishes, filled their houses with wealth, made them happy in love and victorious in war. Such a spirit is Liberty. At times she takes the form of a hateful reptile. She grovels, she hisses, she stings. But woe to those who in disgust shall venture to crush her! And happy are those who, having dared to receive her in her degraded and frightful shape, shall at length be rewarded by her in the time of her beauty and her glory.[2]

The value of this method of building up a paragraph is well exemplified by the foregoing passage. Without some such device the author could hardly have made his thought clear. The first three sentences tell the story of the fairy in order that, in the rest of the paragraph, the spirit of liberty may be compared to her.

Another example may be useful in illustrating this method of amplification. In the following paragraph the first sentence states the topic in the form of a metaphor, — "literature is the brain of humanity." The remaining sentences explain and elaborate this comparison. Thus the whole paragraph is built up on an analogy: —

[1] See the author's discussion of the laws of association in Chapter VIII, page 67.
[2] Macaulay's "Essay on Milton."

In conclusion, literature is the brain of humanity. Just as in the individual the brain preserves a record of his previous sensations, of his experience, and of his acquired knowledge, and it is in the light of this record that he interprets every fresh sensation and experience, so the race at large has a record of its past in literature, and it is in the light of this record alone that its present conditions and circumstances can be understood. The message of the senses is indistinct and valueless to the individual without the coöperation of the brain; the life of the race would be degraded to a mere animal existence without the accumulated stores of previous experience which literature places at its disposal.[1]

3. *A writer may also amplify a paragraph-topic by contrasting one idea or thing with another.* We are often able to form a clearer notion of a given thing if we understand just how it differs from some familiar object. Certain facts stand out in stronger relief when they are contrasted with other facts. Thus this method helps both to explain and to enforce the central idea of a paragraph. The following passage exemplifies this method of amplification: —

The catastrophe of this splendid drama is at hand. What actors are met! Two races, that of merchants and mariners, that of laborers and soldiers; two nations, the one dominant by gold, the other by steel; two republics, the one theocratic, the other aristocratic. Rome and Carthage! Rome with her army, Carthage with her fleet; Carthage, old, rich, and crafty, — Rome, young, poor, robust; the past and the future; the spirit of discovery and the spirit of conquest; the genius of commerce and the demon of war; the East and South on one side, the West and North on the other; in short, two worlds, — the civilization of Africa and the civilization of Europe.[2]

This contrast between Rome and Carthage helps to give the reader a vivid notion of the "splendid drama" which is about to be enacted. In thus contrasting two ideas or

[1] W. Basil Worsfold's "Judgment in Literature," page 15.

[2] Victor Hugo's "Fragment d'Histoire."

things a writer will often make, in the first part of the paragraph, a full statement and explanation of one idea. Then the contrasted idea is introduced and emphasized by some such connective as *but*, *however*, *nevertheless*, *yet*, *on the contrary*, *on the other hand*.

4. *Again, one may develop a paragraph-topic by telling first what a thing is not, and then what it is.* This method is sometimes called "obverse iteration." A writer may explain an idea by showing not only what does, but also what does not belong to it. Both sides are given. By this means one is able to define an idea by marking out its exact boundaries. The reader, after learning what characteristics a given thing does not possess, is often better prepared to understand its distinctive character and qualities. This method of amplification closely resembles the use of contrast. Both methods are valuable in enforcing as well as in explaining an idea. The following example illustrates this method of developing a topic: —

The proposition is peace. Not peace through the medium of war; not peace to be hunted through the labyrinth of intricate and endless negotiations; not peace to arise out of universal discord fomented from principle in all parts of the empire; not peace to depend on the juridical determinations of perplexing questions, or the precise marking the shadowy boundaries of a complex government. It is simple peace, sought in its natural course and in its ordinary haunts. It is peace sought in the spirit of peace, and laid in principles purely pacific. I propose, by removing the ground of the difference, and by restoring the former unsuspecting confidence of the colonies in the mother country, to give permanent satisfaction to your people; and (far from a scheme of ruling by discord) to reconcile them to each other in the same act and by the bond of the very same interest which reconciles them to British government.[1]

[1] Burke's "Speech on Conciliation with the American Colonies."

In this paragraph the topic-sentence is, "The proposition is peace." Next follows a statement which sets forth what peace is *not* meant. The second half of the paragraph, beginning with "It is simple peace," then explains what peace *is* meant.

5. *A further method of amplifying a paragraph-topic is based upon the relation of cause and effect.* A cause is first stated, and its effects or consequences are then given. Occasionally this order is reversed: the effects, results, or consequences are given first, and these lead up to the cause that produced them, to the reason that explains them. In either case the method is the same. Careful study of the following example will enable the student to understand this method of constructing a paragraph: —

The general social system was one of individual freedom without individual responsibility. This is plainly a habit of the frontier. Widely scattered groups of individuals, removed from the control of public opinion, driven by necessity to act, on the spur of the moment, for and by themselves, naturally develop an impatience of restraint, social, legal, or moral, that is handed down to later generations as a social tradition. *For this reason* the reign of law has never been thoroughly and fully established in this country. Popular feelings of indignation or prejudice against certain classes of offenders, of compassion for certain others, are always pressing upon the framework of law to bend it from its fixed pattern, or even to break it altogether, as in the numerous cases of lynching reported to us year after year. It need not be shown in detail how demoralizing such a system as this is to incoming peoples. Not only law but morals have suffered as a result of this general impatience of restraint. Where each man depends on himself wholly to say what is right and wrong, where he is so separated from others as not to know or care what they think of him, personal interest is very apt to lead him, even without his own knowledge, into bad ways. This cause is seen at work all through our history, and to it may be attributed some of the evils we are so ready to ascribe to the immigrant.[1]

[1] Kate Holloday Claghorn, in *The Atlantic Monthly*, October, 1900.

The first sentence of this paragraph states the topic, — "individual freedom without individual responsibility." The next two sentences explain how this "impatience of restraint" originated. The condition thus set forth in these first three sentences is regarded as a cause; and all the rest of the paragraph, from the phrase "for this reason" to the close, treats of the effects that have been produced by this cause, not only upon native Americans, but also upon immigrants. Thus the paragraph first states a social condition, which is looked upon as a cause, and then sets forth the natural consequences that have resulted from this condition.

6. *A paragraph-topic may also be developed by means of formal proof.* A general statement is usually made at the beginning, and some proof of this proposition is presented in the sentences that follow. This method of amplification is commonly used in argumentative writing. The following paragraph will serve as an example: —

> Brutes are able to compare and to distinguish. A parrot will take up a nut and throw it down again, without attempting to crack it. He has found that it is light. This he could discover only by comparing the weight of the good nuts with that of the bad. And he has found that it has no kernel. This he could discover only by what philosophers would dignify with the grand title of syllogism; namely, "all light nuts are hollow; this is a light nut; therefore, this nut is hollow." [1]

Here the proposition to be established is stated in the first sentence. Then follow the sentences which give the proof of this proposition.

Sometimes this order is reversed; the proof precedes the proposition. The idea and purpose of the paragraph are thus kept in suspense until the end is reached; and the

[1] Max Müller's "Lectures on the Science of Language," Lecture IX.

last sentence, instead of the first, states the paragraph-topic. The following paragraph is an example: —

When the supply of anything exceeds the demand for it, each person who wishes to sell the particular thing will be afraid that his stock of it will be the portion of the supply which the demand will not reach. He will therefore put down his prices in order to induce buyers to take his wares instead of those of his neighbor. Each seller will do this; consequently general prices will fall. If there is a demand for nine brooms and a supply of ten, each broom-seller will fear that one of his brooms will be left on his hands. To prevent this, he will mark down his prices; therefore, brooms will be cheaper. Hence greater production and greater cheapness go hand in hand.[1]

In this paragraph the very last sentence states the proposition in the form of a conclusion. All the preceding part of the paragraph sets forth the proof and prepares the way for the concluding statement, — "Hence greater production and greater cheapness go hand in hand."

7. *Still another method of developing a paragraph-topic is by means of examples or specific instances.* It often happens that only a single specific instance is cited by way of illustration. In this paragraph, for example, and in each of the eight paragraphs that precede it, a single example is sufficient to explain and illustrate the paragraph-topic. The central thought of each would hardly be clear without some such illustration. Sometimes, as in the following paragraph, which illustrates this method of amplification, a number of examples are cited: —

There are many other illustrious names which might be cited to prove the truth of the common saying that "it is never too late to learn." Even at advanced years men can do much, if they will determine on making a beginning. Sir Henry Spelman did not begin the study of science until he was between fifty and sixty years of age. Franklin was

[1] Lalor and Mason's "Primer of Political Economy." Cited in Scott and Denney's "Composition-Rhetoric," page 57.

fifty before he fully entered upon the study of Natural Philosophy. Dryden and Scott were not known as authors until each was in his fortieth year. Boccaccio was thirty-five when he commenced his literary career, and Alfieri was forty-six when he began the study of Greek. Dr. Arnold learned German at an advanced age, for the purpose of reading Niebuhr in the original; and in like manner James Watt, when about forty, while working at his trade of an instrument maker in Glasgow, learned French, German, and Italian, to enable himself to peruse the valuable works on mechanical philosophy which existed in those languages. Thomas Scott was fifty-six before he began to learn Hebrew. Robert Hall was once found lying upon the floor, racked by pain, learning Italian in his old age, to enable him to judge of the parallel drawn by Macaulay between Milton and Dante. Handel was forty-eight before he published any of his great works. Indeed hundreds of instances might be given of men who struck out an entirely new path, and successfully entered on new studies, at a comparatively advanced time of life. None but the frivolous or the indolent will say, "I am too old to learn." [1]

The first two sentences of this paragraph state the topic. Then eleven examples are cited in support of the statement "it is never too late to learn." After these instances have been given, the last two sentences repeat the central idea by way of conclusion.

8. *Finally, one of the commonest methods of amplifying a paragraph-topic is first to make a general statement, and then to add particular facts and details.* Particularization serves to make the general statement more clear, more vivid, more impressive. This method of building up a paragraph is well illustrated by the following example: —

I go into my library, and all history unrolls before me. I breathe the morning air of the world while the scent of Eden's roses yet lingered in it, while it vibrated only to the world's first brood of nightingales and to the laugh of Eve. I see the pyramids building. I hear the shoutings of the armies of Alexander. I feel the ground shake

[1] Samuel Smiles's "Self-Help," Chapter XI.

beneath the march of Cambyses. I sit as in a theatre, — the stage is time, the play is the world. What a spectacle it is! What kingly pomp, what processions file past, what cities burn to heaven, what crowds of captives are dragged at the chariot wheels of conquerors! I hear or cry "Bravo!" when the great actors come on, shaking the stage. I am a Roman emperor when I look at a Roman coin. I lift Homer, and I shout Achilles in the trenches. The silence of the empeopled Syrian plains, the outcomings and ingoings of the patriarchs, Abraham and Ishmael, Isaac in the field at eventide, Rebekah at the well, Jacob's guile, Esau's face reddened by desert sun-heat, Joseph's splendid funeral procession, — all these things I find within the boards of my Old Testament.[1]

In this paragraph the first sentence makes the general statement "all history unrolls before me." All the rest of the paragraph is given to details. Particular events and facts are mentioned, and the images of particular persons are called up, in order to vivify and enforce this general statement.

√ This method of amplification is frequently used in descriptive writing. In fact, the typical paragraph of description may be said to proceed from the general to the particular. The outline of the object or scene is first drawn, and the details are then filled in. This method is exemplified in the descriptive passage cited on page 72. The following example also illustrates how particularization is used in building up a descriptive paragraph: —

When he entered the house the conquest of his heart was complete. It was one of those spacious farmhouses, with high-ridged, but lowly sloping roofs, built in the style handed down from the first Dutch settlers; the low projecting eaves forming a piazza along the front, capable of being closed up in bad weather. Under this were hung flails, harness, various utensils of husbandry, and nets for fishing in the neighboring river. Benches were built along the sides for summer use; and a great spinning-wheel at one end, and a churn at the other, showed the

[1] Alexander Smith.

various uses to which this important porch might be devoted. From this piazza the wandering Ichabod entered the hall, which formed the centre of the mansion and the place of usual residence. Here rows of resplendent pewter, ranged on a long dresser, dazzled his eyes. In one corner stood a huge bag of wool ready to be spun; in another, a quantity of linsey-woolsey just from the loom. Ears of Indian corn and strings of dried apples and peaches hung in gay festoons along the wall, mingled with the gaud of red peppers; and a door left ajar gave him a peep into the best parlor, where the claw-footed chairs and dark mahogany tables shone like mirrors. Andirons, with their accompanying shovel and tongs, glistened from their covert of asparagus tops. Mock-oranges and conch-shells decorated the mantelpiece; strings of various-colored birds' eggs were suspended above it; a great ostrich egg was hung from the centre of the room; and a corner cupboard, knowingly left open, displayed immense treasures of old silver and well-mended china.[1]

This same method of particularization is also commonly used in narrative writing. A general statement of the event is first made, and then all the narrative details are filled in. The following paragraph shows how this method may be used in narration: —

I made a laughable mistake this morning in giving alms. A man stood on the shady side of the street with his hat in his hand, and as I passed he gave me a piteous look, though he said nothing. He had such a woe-begone face and such a threadbare coat, that I at once took him for one of those mendicants who bear the title of *poveri vergognosi*, — bashful beggars; persons whom pinching want compels to receive the stranger's charity, though pride restrains them from asking it. Moved with compassion, I threw into the hat the little I had to give; when, instead of thanking me with a blessing, my man with the threadbare coat showered upon me the most sonorous maledictions of his native tongue, and, emptying his greasy hat upon the pavement, drew it down over his ears with both hands, and stalked away with all the dignity of a Roman senator in the best days of the republic, — to the infinite amusement of a green-grocer, who stood at his shop-door

[1] Irving's "Sketch-Book"; from "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow."

bursting with laughter. No time was given me for an apology; but I resolved to be, for the future, more discriminating in my charities, and not to take for a beggar every poor gentleman who chose to stand in the shade with his hat in his hand on a hot summer's day.[1]

The eight methods that have just been explained are the commonest ways of developing a paragraph-topic. From the examples that have been cited to illustrate these typical methods it is evident that a whole paragraph is often built up by one single method of amplification. Frequently, however, two or three or any number of these methods are used in the same paragraph. This statement the student may verify for himself by careful study of the methods of paragraph structure used in any piece of standard prose. It is worth noting that the various combinations of these eight methods still further increase the variety that is possible in paragraph structure.

All that has so far been said of the principles of Composition as applied to the paragraph, and of the different methods of amplification, refers particularly to what may be called the "ideal paragraph." "In the ideal paragraph," says Professor W. E. Mead, "there is (1) a sentence that contains the topic of the paragraph; (2) a group of sentences amplifying and illustrating this topic; (3) a concluding sentence that ties together the whole of the thought of the paragraph. This ideal scheme cannot always be followed. In some forms of composition, as, for instance, narrative, we cannot always find a topic that can be expanded throughout the entire paragraph. Hence the structure of the paragraph allows much freedom; and conformity to the ideal will depend upon the nature of the topic treated."

[1] Longfellow's "Outre-Mer," page 248. Quoted in Scott and Denney's "Composition-Rhetoric," page 53.

The narrative paragraph, in fact, only rarely conforms to the ideal. Narrative writing is, from its very nature, perhaps harder to paragraph than any other form of composition. For this reason it will be worth while to examine a specimen of narration with a view to finding out something like a law or principle of paragraph division. The following passage from Thackeray's "Henry Esmond" will serve to show how narrative writing is paragraphed: —

1. To work upon the faith of her young pupil, Esmond's kind mistress sent to the library of her father the Dean, who had been distinguished in the disputes of the late king's reign; and, an old soldier now, had hung up his weapons of controversy. These he took down from his shelves willingly for young Esmond, whom he benefited by his own personal advice and instruction. It did not require much persuasion to induce the boy to worship with his beloved mistress. And the good old non-juring Dean flattered himself with a conversion which, in truth, was owing to a much gentler and fairer persuader.

2. Under her ladyship's kind eyes (my lord's being sealed in sleep pretty generally), Esmond read many volumes of the works of the famous British divines of the last age, and was familiar with Wake and Sherlock, with Stillingfleet and Patrick. His mistress never tired to listen or to read, to pursue the texts with fond comments, to urge those points which her fancy dwelt on most, or her reason deemed most important. Since the death of her father the Dean, this lady had admitted a certain latitude of theological reading which her orthodox father would never have allowed; his favorite writers appealing more to reason and antiquity than to the passions or imaginations of their readers, so that the works of Bishop Taylor, nay, those of Mr. Baxter and Mr. Law, have in reality found more favor with my Lady Castlewood than the severer volumes of our great English schoolmen.

3. In later life, at the University, Esmond reopened the controversy, and pursued it in a very different manner, when his patrons had determined for him that he was to embrace the ecclesiastical life. But though his mistress's heart was in this calling, his own never was much. After that first fervor of simple devotion which his beloved Jesuit priest had inspired in him, speculative theology took but little hold upon the young man's mind. When his early credulity was disturbed, and his

saints and virgins taken out of his worship, to rank little higher than the divinities of Olympus, his belief became acquiescence rather than ardor; and he made his mind up to assume the cassock and bands, as another man does to wear a breastplate and jack-boots, or to mount a merchant's desk, for a livelihood, and from obedience and necessity, rather than from choice. There were scores of such men in Mr. Esmond's time at the universities, who were going to the church with no better calling than his.

4. When Thomas Tusher was gone, a feeling of no small depression and disquiet fell upon young Esmond, of which, though he did not complain, his kind mistress must have divined the cause; for soon after she showed not only that she understood the reason of Harry's melancholy, but could provide a remedy for it. Her habit was thus to watch, unobservedly, those to whom duty or affection bound her, and to prevent their designs, or to fulfil them, when she had the power. It was this lady's disposition to think kindnesses and devise silent bounties, and to scheme benevolence, for those about her. We take such goodness, for the most part, as if it was our due; the Marys who bring ointment for our feet get but little thanks. Some of us never feel this devotion at all, or are moved by it to gratitude or acknowledgment; others only recall it years after, when the days are passed in which those sweet kindnesses were spent on us, and we offer back our return for the debt by a poor tardy payment of tears. Then forgotten tones of love recur to us, and kind glances shine out of the past — oh so bright and clear! — oh so longed after! — because they are out of reach: as holiday music from within-side a prison wall, or sunshine seen through the bars; more prized because unattainable, more bright because of the contrast of present darkness and solitude, whence there is no escape.

5. All the notice, then, which Lady Castlewood seemed to take of Harry Esmond's melancholy, upon Tom Tusher's departure, was, by a gayety unusual to her, to attempt to dispel his gloom. She made his three scholars (herself being the chief one) more cheerful than ever they had been before, and more docile too, all of them learning and reading much more than they had been accustomed to do. "For who knows," said the lady, "what may happen, and whether we may be able to keep such a learned tutor long?"

6. Frank Esmond said he for his part did not want to learn any more, and cousin Harry might shut up his book whenever he liked, if he would come out a-fishing; and little Beatrix declared she would send

for Tom Tusher, and he would be glad enough to come to Castlewood, if Harry chose to go away.

7. At last comes a messenger from Winchester one day, bearer of a letter, with a great black seal, from the Dean there, to say that his sister was dead, and had left her fortune of £2,000 among her six nieces, the Dean's daughters; and many a time since has Harry Esmond recalled the flushed face and eager look wherewith, after this intelligence, his kind lady regarded him. She did not pretend to any grief about the deceased relative, from whom she and her family had been many years parted.

8. When my lord heard of the news, he also did not make any very long face. "The money will come very handy to furnish the music-room and the cellar, which is getting low, and buy your ladyship a coach and a couple of horses that will do indifferent to ride or for the coach. And, Beatrix, you shall have a spinnet; and, Frank, you shall have a little horse from Hexton Fair; and, Harry, you shall have five pounds to buy some books," said my lord, who was generous with his own, and indeed with other folks' money. "I wish your aunt would die once a year, Rachel; we could spend your money, and all your sisters', too."

9. "I have but one aunt — and — and I have another use for the money, my lord," says my lady, turning very red.

10. "Another use, my dear! And what do you know about money?" cries my lord. "And what the devil is there that I don't give you which you want?"

11. "I intend to give this money — can't you fancy how, my lord?"

12. My lord swore one of his large oaths that he did not know in the least what she meant.

13. "I intend it for Harry Esmond to go to college. Cousin Harry," says my lady, "you mustn't stay longer in this dull place, but make a name to yourself, and for us too, Harry."

The foregoing passage is fairly representative of the way in which narration is paragraphed. These thirteen paragraphs possess unity, but unity of a somewhat different sort from that which one usually finds in expository, argumentative, and descriptive writing. At the point where this passage begins, the main thread of the narrative has

been broken off, in order that the writer may introduce a separate episode or incident. The first paragraph tells how the theological books that were borrowed from the Dean helped to bring about Henry Esmond's "conversion." The second paragraph gives something like a detailed account of the way in which Lady Castlewood directed this course of theological reading. It is the business of the third paragraph to finish this episode, even though it takes the reader far ahead of the rest of the story. This paragraph tells what was the result of Esmond's theological bent, and what calling he had for the work of the ministry. When the episode is finished, another break occurs. The main thread of the narrative is to be resumed. Accordingly, in the opening sentence of the fourth paragraph, the reader finds himself once more on the main line of the story — but only for a moment; this first sentence merely introduces the bit of characterization found in the next two sentences. All the rest of the paragraph is given to the author's comment on a certain trait of Lady Castlewood's character. This fourth paragraph is open to some criticism. It would perhaps have been better to make one paragraph of the first three sentences, and to have put all the rest, which contains the author's comment, into a separate paragraph. At the end of this comment another break occurs, and in the fifth paragraph the main thread of the story is once more taken up, not to be dropped again until the close of the chapter. This paragraph recounts what Lady Castlewood did and said after Tom Tusher's departure. The sixth paragraph tells what the children said. The seventh deals with a separate incident: it tells of the messenger and the news that he brought. The eighth relates what Viscount Castlewood said when he heard the news. The ninth gives Lady Castlewood's reply. The next four

paragraphs continue the conversation. To each separate speech, it will be noticed, a separate paragraph is given.

From the passage which has just been cited and from his reading, the student will be able to deduce something like a law or principle of paragraph division for narrative writing. He has noticed that a story naturally divides itself up into more or less distinct events, incidents, or episodes. To each event or incident — that is, to each stage or step in the progress of the story — a separate paragraph is given. The seventh paragraph of the passage quoted from Thackeray is a good example. When the episode is somewhat longer, like the one at the beginning of the passage cited, it may be divided into several subdivisions. Again, a new paragraph may be made for the purpose of introducing a bit of description or of characterization, some word of explanation, or some pertinent comment. Thus a new paragraph is made whenever there is any sudden or decided break in the continuity of the narrative. Furthermore, in the paragraphing of conversation, it is customary to put into a separate paragraph every separate speech of each character, together with any explanatory remark that may accompany this speech. The way in which conversation is ordinarily paragraphed is well illustrated in the last six paragraphs of the quotation from "Henry Esmond." All these considerations, when taken together, constitute something like a principle of paragraph division for narrative writing. When the paragraphs of a narrative are constructed in accordance with this principle, they will perform their true function of keeping together those things which are closely related, and of keeping apart those things which do not belong together.

The commonest methods, then, of amplifying paragraph-topics into paragraphs are by means of repetition, comparison, contrast, obverse iteration, the relation of cause and effect, formal proof, specific instances, and particularization. One or two or more of these methods may be used in the construction of a single paragraph. While all kinds of subjects are developed by means of these methods, they are more frequently used in expository and argumentative writing than in description and narration. The method of building up a paragraph by means of particulars or details is so frequently used in descriptive writing that it may be considered the typical method of amplifying a descriptive paragraph. The same method is also sometimes used in narration. In the writing of stories a new paragraph is made whenever there is a sudden or decided break in the continuity of the narrative. The paragraphs mark the distinct stages or steps in the progress of the story. A new paragraph is given to each main incident or event, and to the separate speech of each character. A new paragraph is also begun whenever the writer introduces a short descriptive passage, a bit of characterization, a word of explanation or of comment.

EXERCISES

I. Write a theme on one of the following subjects: —

1. The Characteristics of a Good Student.
2. How I Read the Newspapers.
3. The Needs of my Native Town.
4. My Purpose in Securing an Education.
5. What is a Practical Education?
6. My Advice to a Freshman Who is just about to Enter College.
7. How an Electric Railway Benefits a Town.
8. My Aim in Life.

II. Criticise the structure of each paragraph of your theme.

III. Make a critical study of the paragraph structure of the following extract from Washington Irving's "Sketch-Book." By what method or methods is each paragraph developed?

Rural Life in England

1. The stranger who would form a correct opinion of the English character must not confine his observations to the metropolis. He must go forth into the country; he must sojourn in villages and hamlets; he must visit castles, villas, farmhouses, cottages; he must wander through parks and gardens, along hedges and green lanes; he must loiter about country churches; attend wakes and fairs and other rural festivals; and cope with the people in all their conditions and all their habits and humors.

2. In some countries the large cities absorb the wealth and fashion of the nation; they are the only fixed abodes of elegant and intelligent society, and the country is inhabited almost entirely by boorish peasantry. In England, on the contrary, the metropolis is a mere gathering place, or general rendezvous, of the polite classes, where they devote a small portion of the year to a hurry of gayety and dissipation, and having indulged this kind of carnival, return again to the apparently more congenial habits of rural life. The various orders of society are therefore diffused over the whole surface of the kingdom, and the most retired neighborhoods afford specimens of the different ranks.

3. The English, in fact, are strongly gifted with the rural feeling. They possess a quick sensibility to the beauties of nature, and a keen relish for the pleasures and employments of the country. This passion seems inherent in them. Even the inhabitants of cities, born and brought up among brick walls and bustling streets, enter with facility into rural habits and evince a tact for rural occupation. The merchant has his snug retreat in the vicinity of the metropolis, where he often displays as much pride and zeal in the cultivation of his flower garden and the maturing of his fruits as he does in the conduct of his business and the success of a commercial enterprise. Even those less fortunate individuals who are doomed to pass their lives in the midst of din and traffic contrive to have something that shall remind them of the green aspect of nature. In the most dark and dingy quarters of the city the drawing-room window resembles frequently a bank of flowers;

every spot capable of vegetation has its grass-plot and flower-bed; and every square its mimic park, laid out with picturesque taste and gleaming with refreshing verdure.

4. Those who see the Englishman only in town are apt to form an unfavorable opinion of his social character. He is either absorbed in business or distracted by the thousand engagements that dissipate time, thought, and feeling, in this huge metropolis. He has, therefore, too commonly a look of hurry and abstraction. Wherever he happens to be, he is on the point of going somewhere else; at the moment he is talking on one subject, his mind is wandering to another; and while paying a friendly visit, he is calculating how he shall economize time so as to pay the other visits allotted to the morning. An immense metropolis like London is calculated to make men selfish and uninteresting. In their casual and transient meetings they can but deal briefly in commonplaces. They present but the cold superficies of character — its rich and genial qualities have no time to be warmed into a flow.

5. It is in the country that the Englishman gives scope to his natural feelings. He breaks loose gladly from the cold formalities and negative civilities of town; throws off his habits of shy reserve and becomes joyous and free-hearted. He manages to collect round him all the conveniences and elegancies of polite life, and to banish its restraints. His country-seat abounds with every requisite either for studious retirement, tasteful gratification, or rural exercise. Books, paintings, music, horses, dogs, and sporting implements of all kinds are at hand. He puts no constraint either upon his guests or himself, but in the true spirit of hospitality provides the means of enjoyment, and leaves every one to partake according to his inclination.

6. The taste of the English in the cultivation of land and in what is called landscape gardening is unrivalled. They have studied Nature intently, and have discovered an exquisite sense of her beautiful forms and harmonious combinations. Those charms which, in other countries, she lavishes in wild solitudes are here assembled round the haunts of domestic life. They seem to have caught her coy and furtive graces and spread them, like witchery, about their rural abodes.

7. Nothing can be more imposing than the magnificence of English park scenery. Vast lawns that extend like sheets of vivid green, with here and there clumps of gigantic trees, heaping up rich piles of foliage. The solemn pomp of groves and woodland glades, with the deer trooping in silent herds across them; the hare, bounding away to the

covert ; or the pheasant, suddenly bursting upon the wing. The brook, taught to wind in natural meanderings or expand into a glassy lake — the sequestered pool, reflecting the quivering trees, with the yellow leaf sleeping on its bosom, and the trout roaming fearlessly about its limpid waters ; while some rustic temple or sylvan statue, grown green and dank with age, gives an air of classic sanctity to the seclusion.

8. These are but a few of the features of park scenery ; but what most delights me is the creative talent with which the English decorate the unostentatious abodes of middle life. The rudest habitation, the most unpromising and scanty portion of land, in the hands of an Englishman of taste, becomes a little paradise. With a nicely discriminating eye, he seizes at once upon its capabilities, and pictures in his mind the future landscape. The sterile spot grows into loveliness under his hand ; and yet the operations of art which produce the effect are scarcely to be perceived. The cherishing and training of some trees ; the cautious pruning of others ; the nice distribution of flowers and plants of tender and graceful foliage ; the introduction of a green slope of velvet turf ; the partial opening to a peep of blue distance or silver gleam of water, — all these are managed with a delicate tact, a pervading yet quiet assiduity, like the magic touchings with which a painter finishes up a favorite picture.

9. The residence of people of fortune and refinement in the country has diffused a degree of taste and elegance in rural economy that descends to the lowest class. The very laborer, with his thatched cottage and narrow slip of ground, attends to their embellishment. The trim hedge, the grass-plot before the door, the little flower-bed bordered with snug box, the woodbine trained up against the wall and hanging its blossoms about the lattice, the pot of flowers in the window, the holly providently planted about the house to cheat winter of its dreariness and to throw in a semblance of green summer to cheer the fireside, — all these bespeak the influence of taste, flowing down from high sources and pervading the lowest levels of the public mind. If ever Love, as poets sing, delights to visit a cottage, it must be the cottage of an English peasant.

10. The fondness for rural life among the higher classes of the English has had a great and salutary effect upon the national character. I do not know a finer race of men than the English gentlemen. Instead of the softness and effeminacy which characterize the men of rank in most countries, they exhibit a union of elegance and strength, a

robustness of frame and freshness of complexion, which I am inclined to attribute to their living so much in the open air and pursuing so eagerly the invigorating recreations of the country. The hardy exercises produce also a healthful tone of mind and spirits, and a manliness and simplicity of manners, which even the follies and dissipations of the town cannot easily pervert and can never entirely destroy.

11. In the country, too, the different orders of society seem to approach more freely, to be more disposed to blend and operate favorably upon each other. The distinctions between them do not appear to be so marked and impassable as in the cities. The manner in which property has been distributed into small estates and farms has established a regular gradation from the nobleman, through the classes of gentry, small landed proprietors, and substantial farmers, down to the laboring peasantry ; and while it has thus banded the extremes of society together, it has infused into each intermediate rank a spirit of independence. This, it must be confessed, is not so universally the case at present as it was formerly ; the larger estates having, in late years of distress, absorbed the smaller and, in some parts of the country, almost annihilated the sturdy race of small farmers. These, however, I believe, are but casual breaks in the general system I have mentioned.

12. In rural occupation there is nothing mean and debasing. It leads a man forth among scenes of natural grandeur and beauty. It leaves him to the workings of his own mind, operated upon by the purest and most elevating of external influences. Such a man may be simple and rough, but he cannot be vulgar. The man of refinement, therefore, finds nothing revolting in an intercourse with the lower orders in rural life, as he does when he casually mingles with the lower orders of cities. He lays aside his distance and reserve, and is glad to waive the distinctions of rank and to enter into the honest, heart-felt enjoyments of common life. Indeed, the very amusements of the country bring men more and more together, and the sound of hound and horn blends all feelings into harmony. I believe this is one great reason why the nobility and gentry are more popular among the inferior orders in England than they are in any other country, and why the latter have endured so many excessive pressures and extremities without repining more generally at the unequal distribution of fortune and privilege.

13. To this mingling of cultivated and rustic society may also be attributed the rural feeling that runs through British literature ; the frequent use of illustrations from rural life ; those incomparable de-

scriptions of nature which abound in the British poets, which have continued down from "The Flower and the Leaf" of Chaucer, and have brought into our closets all the freshness and fragrance of the dewy landscape. The pastoral writers of other countries appear as if they had paid Nature an occasional visit and become acquainted with her general charms ; but the British poets have lived and revelled with her ; they have wooed her in her most secret haunts ; they have watched her minutest caprices. A spray could not tremble in the breeze, a leaf could not rustle to the ground, a diamond drop could not patter in the stream, a fragrance could not exhale from the humble violet, nor a daisy unfold its crimson tints to the morning, but it has been noticed by these impassioned and delicate observers and wrought up into some beautiful morality.

CHAPTER XIII

THE PARAGRAPH THEME

So far the paragraph has been considered chiefly as the related part of a larger whole. In magazine articles and in the chapters of a book each paragraph is but the fractional part of a longer composition. The paragraph may, however, be a composition complete in itself. In fact, much of our reading in the daily newspapers is made up of just such short compositions, each of which contains only one paragraph. To a single event or item of news it happens that only a single paragraph can be given. The "personal column" of a newspaper usually contains a number of isolated paragraphs, each of which recounts some facts of personal interest about some well-known man or woman. Again, in a single paragraph some interesting anecdote or entertaining incident is related, or perhaps something new or curious or remarkable is described. On the editorial page, too, are usually found a number of these paragraph compositions, generally argumentative or expository in nature, each setting forth, briefly and pointedly, the editor's opinion or his comments on certain matters of current interest. Thus in the columns of one of our daily newspapers a large number and variety of subjects, requiring more or less skill and facility in the various kinds of written discourse, receive brief but sufficient treatment in these miniature compositions. In each case the writer has only a limited amount of space in which to set down all that he

has to say on a given subject. Thus it has come about that these isolated paragraphs, each dealing with a separate topic, form a familiar part of our everyday reading and constitute almost a distinct type of composition.

The common use of these isolated paragraphs suggests a valuable exercise in composition. With teachers it is a matter of common experience that a short theme containing but a single paragraph of about two hundred words offers just as valuable an exercise in composition as a much longer and more ambitious essay. True it is that "a short exercise of ten lines, carefully and thoroughly polished, will often do more for the student than a wordy 'essay' of as many pages." The paragraph theme is simply a short composition which is complete within the limits of a single paragraph. The writing of such themes is a valuable exercise for the student mainly because it imposes the strictest limitations upon his work. A paragraph theme should ordinarily contain between one hundred and fifty and two hundred and fifty words. Within so small a space it is obvious that one may not wander about aimlessly and ineffectively without violating, in the most conspicuous manner, some of the principles of Composition. The student who wishes to write a satisfactory paragraph theme must first have a definitely conceived and carefully restricted subject; next, he must keep his theme within the prescribed space limit; and finally, he must, within this limited space, make a rigid application of the principles of Composition.

The writing of paragraph themes is especially valuable as an exercise in rapid composition. To be able to write clearly, correctly, and even forcibly can no longer be deemed sufficient; the student must also learn to write easily and rapidly. In the exigencies of our modern life

there are occasions when a man is called upon, on the spur of the moment, to express his thoughts without waste of time or words. It is worth while to be prepared for such an emergency. To this end the student of Composition should strive to attain some degree of facility in the expression of his ideas. No better exercise in rapid composition can be devised than the writing of paragraph themes on restricted topics with which the student is familiar. Teachers and students who desire to make the most practical use of their time can well afford to reserve the last fifteen minutes of the recitation period for the writing of an impromptu paragraph theme.[1]

Frequent practice in the writing of paragraph themes is valuable also because this exercise, no less than that of writing longer themes, calls into active use all the principles of Composition. Indeed, it lays upon the student the necessity of making the closest and most painstaking application of these principles; for in a single paragraph any violation of fundamental principles is likely to be, as a rule, far more noticeable than in longer compositions. The reason is evident. The paragraph theme is short, and

[1] It is safe to say that the teacher of Composition who has once made the experiment of having his students write impromptu paragraph themes in the class-room each day needs no argument to convince him of the value of such an exercise. In the use of this exercise the author has met with the most gratifying results. Almost every day the last fifteen minutes of the recitation period have been set aside for the writing of a paragraph theme. Sometimes the subject has been assigned; at other times the student has been asked to make his choice of subject before he comes to class. In every case the subject should be familiar; for the student should be ready to begin to write at once. He is usually advised to devote the last three or four minutes to the careful revision of his work. These themes should be criticised by the teacher and returned to the student. Sometimes the teacher may read and criticise them in the presence of the class. Occasionally each student may be asked to read his theme in order that the other members of the class may criticise and discuss it. The practice of writing daily paragraph themes is sure to give the student facility, confidence, and power.

its structure is simple. If the writer disregards the principles that should govern his work, neither length nor complexity obscures the fault. A digression from the main line of thought that constitutes the paragraph-topic, an injudicious selection of material, an incoherent arrangement, a violation of Proportion, a feeble beginning, or an ineffective ending, — any of these common faults will stand out far more prominently in a single paragraph than in a longer composition. The student should not fail to see how grossly the principles of Composition are violated in the following paragraph : —

You may be surprised to learn that the Indian who lives on a reservation takes no interest in agriculture. Yet such is the case. I mean the full-blooded Indian. He is not allowed to sell because the United States government fears that he may be cheated. If the Indian is to be cheated at all, the government apparently desires to have a monopoly of the privilege. Some of the Indians have leased their lands away and manage to live comfortably on the proceeds. The Indian has never outgrown his love for the free, wild life of forest and plain. In the Indian Territory the soil is rich, and agricultural opportunities are abundant. The mixed Indian is the one who cultivates the soil. The full-blooded Indian is shiftless, and generally will not take advantage of his opportunities. He prefers to isolate himself and to roam about and hunt when there is any game. The Indian's doom was sealed from the time when the fertile valleys and uplands were first opened up to the white farmer and herdsman. The Indian of to-day presents the pitiful spectacle of a man who is out of harmony with his environment. In the Territory there is abundant rainfall, and the climate is favorable to farming. A New England farmer could soon become rich in so fruitful a region. The Indian who does engage in agriculture farms only enough land to supply his needs. The remainder of his land is uncultivated.

The paragraph theme furnishes excellent exercise in applying the related principles of Unity and Selection. Within so narrow a space any deviation from the main thought that forms the paragraph-topic will be apparent at

once. Thus the student can readily detect the presence of irrelevant material. Anything in the nature of a digression, however, is far less likely to occur when the writer has but a small amount of space and must exercise the strictest economy. The limitation of space will also help him to apply the principle of Selection. From the numerous ideas that are suggested by his subject he is obliged to select his material with painstaking care. If he desires to make the most of his limited space, he will choose only those ideas that are weighty, valuable, essential. In a single paragraph he will have no room for any idea that is irrelevant, incidental, or unimportant.

The habit of devising a logical arrangement for one's ideas can also be acquired from writing paragraph themes. In the composition of single paragraphs one soon learns the necessity of binding all his sentences together in a coherent whole. Moreover, when one is writing a theme on a small scale, he can more readily detect any lack of connection between the successive parts of his work. In a single paragraph the writer covers only a small space, and he will therefore the more easily notice any breaks in the continuity of his thought. When he once begins to recognize these gaps, he is in a fair way to master the principle of Coherence. If, in his paragraph theme, he notices any violation of Coherence, he will, in the first place, so recast and rearrange his ideas that each sentence will naturally grow out of the preceding one and will logically lead up to the sentence that is to follow; and he will, in the second place, make this logical arrangement entirely evident to the reader by inserting the necessary connecting words or phrases.

In writing these miniature compositions the student also has an opportunity of learning how to apply the principles

of Emphasis and Proportion. The joint purpose of these two principles is to place special stress upon the most important ideas. Both the beginning and the end of an isolated paragraph stand out with special prominence; and in so small a space any lack of proportion is sure to distort and enfeeble the whole. The beginning should give emphatic expression to the paragraph-topic, and the last words should lay particular stress upon the writer's concluding thought. To each thought that contributes to the amplification of the topic should be assigned an amount of space commensurate with its importance. In so short a composition, an unemphatic beginning, a faulty apportionment of one's space, or a slipshod ending, which gives neither emphasis to the central idea nor completeness to the theme, is likely to be glaringly apparent. In a single paragraph the writer will be able to notice any faults like these, and to correct them in the revision of his work. Thus, by practice in writing paragraph themes, careful attention to Emphasis and Proportion may become habitual.

All the principles that have just been discussed apply not only to the composition of the paragraph, but also to its final revision. If it is true that the common violations of these principles can readily be detected in the isolated paragraph, the student should take advantage of this fact by carefully revising every paragraph theme as soon as it is written. In the absorption and haste of composition it is quite possible for any writer to violate one or more of the principles of Composition. Some faulty and feeble modes of expression are almost certain to find their way into his theme. These should be sought out and corrected. The student who has taken pains to cultivate a critical disposition toward his work, and who, in the revision of his theme, is able to see and remove these

faults, will soon find himself able to write good paragraphs, whether as complete themes or as related parts of longer compositions.

Any one who has had considerable practice in writing paragraph themes is not likely to produce, in his longer essays, what may for convenience be called the "undeveloped paragraph." This type of paragraph, which occurs with annoying frequency in students' themes, has a beginning and an end, but no substantial body. The central thought is stated, but either from laziness or lack of material, it is not sufficiently developed and enforced. Every paragraph, whether it is complete in itself or only a part of a longer composition, should have an appreciable body; and this fact the student is likely to realize from his experience in writing paragraph themes.

Almost any kind of subject — narrative, descriptive, expository, or argumentative — can be treated in the paragraph theme. Care should always be taken, however, that the subject be sufficiently restricted in scope and entirely familiar to the writer. The following paragraph themes, which students have written as class-exercises, are quoted not as models of perfect composition, but as fair illustrations of the quality of work that can be produced and the range of subjects that can be treated. The first paragraph is a short narrative. The second example is descriptive. The third is a brief description and characterization. In the fourth exposition and description are combined. The last is a short argumentative paragraph written as an editorial for a college paper.

1. A Foolish Trick

One day, when another boy and I were out hunting, we came to an old oil-well. The derrick had been taken away and the well "plugged."

On approaching the well we heard a bubbling sound which we immediately knew to be escaping gas. As the odor of the gas was very faint, we concluded that not much was escaping, and we decided to light it. So I threw a lighted match over the well, but the gas would not ignite. I then removed the "plug" and threw a lighted match down into the hole. No sooner had I done this than there was a violent explosion. The fire, bursting forth from the well, blew my hat off, singed my hair and eyebrows, and scorched my clothes. The gas which had collected in the well had exploded. After the explosion the fire went out, as there was not enough gas escaping to keep it going.

2. A Queer Craft

Some years ago, in company with a fellow-student, I took a trip down the Susquehanna in a boat different from any that I have ever seen. Those who had no personal interest in it called it a scow; and, indeed, its square ends, only a little narrower than the middle, its flat bottom and low sides, made it much like a scow. Then, too, its motion was scow-like; it moved with equal ease and rapidity in any direction, — forward, backward, or sidewise. But that which gave it distinction was the superstructure. Instead of the stationary cabin of the ordinary house-boat, it had movable wooden posts placed in sockets at the ends and sides, so as to form a sort of picket fence as high as a man's head. Over this framework a canvas roof was drawn, with curtains for the sides, to shut out sun and rain. Along each side of the boat was a row of strong hooks, on which was fastened at night a heavy canvas deck to serve as a bed. On rare days, when the weather was fair and the wind favorable, the roof and the curtains and all the posts except the one at the forward end were taken down. With a rude sail rigged on this post, and a board nailed to the side to serve as a keel, we could make four or five miles an hour. For the most part, however, our boat moved only with the current. A strange craft it must have looked from the shore as it drifted aimlessly down the stream, the white canvas almost covering the gray woodwork, and seeming to rest on the very water like a floating tent.

3. Father Harley

Father Harley was a familiar personage to the children of B——. His title of "Father" had no ecclesiastical significance, for he was only a country pack-pedler. It was a tribute of respect for his age and of

affection for his kindly character. I can see him still as he used to come up the single street of the little town with a troop of children at his heels. He always wore a long black coat, a faded velvet waistcoat, and a loose cravat such as one sometimes sees in portraits of fifty years ago. His white hair, worn long enough to fall on his coat collar, and his flat-brimmed silk hat made his appearance still more old-fashioned. His face had the clear, rosy complexion of healthy old age; his eyes, a little dimmed and watery, gleamed kindly through his huge iron spectacles; and the serious lines of his mouth were always ready to break into a smile at the antics of the attendant children. Only the little pack of notions supported on his shoulder prevented the passer-by from taking him for an aged clergyman who had clung to the fashions of his youth. Father Harley has been long in his grave, but I am sure that none of the boys and girls who once clung about him has forgotten his venerable and antiquated figure.

4. A Machine for Cleaning Cranberries

For a long time the growers of cranberries in the lowlands of New Jersey and other cranberry-producing localities were perplexed over the problem of how to separate the soft and worthless fruit from the sound berries without the slow and expensive method of picking them all over by hand. The cranberries, as they come from the bogs, where they have been raked from the vines, are mixed with bad berries, leaves, and other impurities. Some years ago it was discovered that a perfectly sound cranberry is a remarkably elastic body. When it falls from a height it rebounds like a rubber ball. The cleaning machine takes advantage of this property. The mass of uncleaned berries is led through a spout sufficiently inclined to allow them to move with a moderate speed. From the end of the spout the fruit falls several feet upon a sheet of glass which is slightly inclined, and to which is given, by means of a hand-wheel, a gentle shaking motion. On all sides of this glass rises a kind of wooden partition several inches high. The sound cranberries, when they strike the glass, rebound nimbly over this partition into a trough which leads into a large bin; while the soft berries and other rubbish do not rebound, but slide down over the glass into a waste-box below the machine.

5. Honesty in College Work

There is one phase of "sponging" of which we have never heard any one speak: it is the injustice to the student who is honest in all his

college work both in the class-room and in examination. At the present time the college offers cash prizes amounting to nearly one thousand dollars, for which men may compete during their course; and the deciding point is almost entirely a matter of high grades. Again, the faculty is just now making a trial of exemption from examination in the case of students who attain a certain per cent in their class-room work. Finally, membership in the honorary fraternity Phi Kappa Phi is almost entirely a question of high grades. Since so much depends on one's class standing, it seems to us that no one should be so lost to a sense of honor as to put one of his classmates at a disadvantage in order to help or to save himself. It seems strange, too, that one man will allow another, by unfair means, to gain better grades and thus stand a better chance for material benefits. Surely no man would, without some protest, allow another to steal his books or his purse. Why, then, should one man allow another to steal from him class honors and prizes? If college men will not be honest because they ought to be, they certainly should be forced into an honest course by those whom they wrong, and by the moral sentiment of the college community.

EXERCISES[1]

I. Write a narrative paragraph on one of the following subjects: —

1. An Exciting Experience.
2. A Comical Situation.
3. A Pitiful Story.
4. An Act of Kindness.
5. An Heroic Deed.
6. An Amusing Incident.
7. A Bit of Adventure.
8. My Father's Favorite Story.
9. A Street-car Incident.
10. An Introduction to the President.
11. A Bicycle Accident.
12. My Experience with a Runaway Horse.
13. An Unpleasant Predicament.
14. A Schoolboy Prank.
15. Almost Arrested.
16. Among the Fakirs.
17. Hauling in the Net.
18. How I Captured a Hornets' Nest.
19. One of my Mistakes.
20. A Skating Adventure.
21. A Relic of the War.
22. My Experience with a Burglar.
23. My Earliest Recollection.
24. A Mysterious Story.
25. The Funniest Story I ever Heard.

[1] After the writing of daily paragraph themes has begun, the student may, throughout his course, constantly draw upon the lists of subjects given in this group of exercises.

II. Write a descriptive paragraph on one of the following subjects, or on some subject suggested by the following list: —

1. A Busy Street Corner.
2. The Village Oracle.
3. The School Bully.
4. A Local Politician.
5. A Corner in —— Park.
6. An Old-fashioned Singing School.
7. Jerry the Policeman.
8. My Dog Fido.
9. The Belle of the Village.
10. A Model Farm.
11. Waiting for the Mail.
12. The House across the Street.
13. In an Old Book-store.
14. A Peculiar Person.
15. Waiting for the Ferry-boat.
16. The Village Crank.
17. A Suspicious Character.
18. A Wayside Inn.
19. A Picturesque Tramp.
20. In a Junk-shop.
21. The Village Gossip.
22. A Wayside Watering-trough.
23. An Old Homestead.
24. The "Best Room."
25. An Old Skinflint.

III. Each of the following brief sentences may be used as the central thought of an expository paragraph. Take any one of them as the subject of a paragraph theme: —

1. Football is a scientific game.
2. It does not pay to worry.
3. The farmer's life is the most healthful.
4. A man's face and bearing are an index to his character.
5. Is criticism a good thing?
6. College life is strenuous.
7. Composition is a difficult art.
8. Lincoln was the typical American.
9. Human life is the subject-matter of literature.
10. The habit of reading is a valuable help in composition work.
11. A student has particular need to take good care of his eyes.
12. Climate influences character.
13. The wearing of Panama hats is an expensive fad.
14. The life of a country doctor is a hard one.
15. For various reasons a student has trouble in preparing his Monday lessons.
16. Accuracy is one of the essentials of sound scholarship.
17. A coal mine is a dangerous place.
18. A student needs recreation.
19. Many students fail in their work because they are too fond of social pleasures.

20. A good preparation in elementary subjects lightens college work.

21. Trout-fishing is an art.

22. My bicycle is a great convenience to me.

23. The daily newspaper is a great educator.

24. Mathematics is the foundation of a technological education.

25. "The true university of these days is a collection of books."

IV. The following propositions may be used as subjects for argument. Write a paragraph theme on any one of them: —

1. Examinations should be abolished.

2. Vivisection should be prohibited.

3. There should be more elective studies in the college course.

4. Students and teachers are disposed to lay too much stress on examinations.

5. It is not unpatriotic to buy goods that are made abroad.

6. Stricter entrance examinations should be given to men who apply for admission to —— College.

7. The conduct of college students should be judged by the same standards as that of other young men.

8. The college student has too little time for general reading.

9. Gas is a better fuel than coal.

10. Should attendance at chapel be compulsory?

11. Can any form of hazing be justified?

12. A college should look after the health as well as the education of its students.

13. All men are more or less superstitious.

14. Teachers are not adequately paid.

15. All electric wires in cities should be placed under ground.

16. A successful football team is a benefit to a college.

17. The college library should be open on Sunday.

18. It is useless to attempt intercollegiate debating in a technological institution.

19. The gymnasium should be open to every one from early morning until late at night.

20. Every American college ought to offer a good course in Spanish.

V. Write a paragraph theme on some topic chosen from the following list of miscellaneous subjects: —

1. An Historic Spot.
2. The Main Street of ——.
3. My First Lesson in ——.
4. A Mennonite Meeting.
5. How I have Planned this Week's Work.

My schedule

6. What has Become of Dewey?
7. An Incident of the Game.
8. A Peculiar Sect.
9. A Trip on a Flatboat.
10. The Value of Writing Paragraph Themes.
11. The Importance of the Study of English Composition.
12. A Beautiful Harbor.
13. One of the Uses of Adversity.
14. A Village Merry-making.
15. The Noon Hour on the Farm.
16. A Chronic Loafer.
17. A Barn-raising.
18. The Country Beau.
19. Decoration Day in ——.
20. A Peculiar Superstition.
21. My Experience with a Snake.
22. An Afternoon Walk in Autumn.
23. The Advantages of a Restricted Theme-subject.
24. One of the Compensations of a Farmer's Life.
25. The Book that has Helped Me Most.
26. A Curious Custom.
27. The Minister's Donation Party.
28. The Critical Inning.
29. My First Chemical Experiment.
30. A Costly Mistake.
31. The Person I Know Best.
32. An Admirable Character.
33. The Daily Chapel Service.
34. A Morning at the Teachers' Institute.
35. A Strange Combat.
36. My Most Difficult Study.
37. A Costly Accident.
38. A Balky Horse.
39. My Sensations when Themes are Read in Class.
40. The First Wild Flowers.

VI. Choose some subject of general interest to the college community and write a short editorial article suitable for publication in the college paper. The various college interests, activities, and organizations will furnish a wide range of subjects for editorial comment. The following general subjects may suggest some topic for an editorial paragraph: —

The football, the baseball, and the basket-ball teams; tennis tournaments, track athletics, indoor gymnastics, the management of the athletic organizations, and the use of the gymnasium; college holidays and vacations; the college library; objectionable college rules and practices; the summer school; military drill; college songs and musical organizations; intercollegiate debating and oratorical contests; the college publications; the dramatic club; the chapel services and other public gatherings; the relations between students and faculty; commencement week; prizes and scholarships; the social and the religious life of the college.

IV

THE SENTENCE

CHAPTER XIV

CORRECTNESS

A SIMPLE statement contains two essential elements, which are called the *subject* and the *predicate*. The subject is the person or the thing about which something is said. It is always a substantive, — that is to say, a noun or a pronoun, or some phrase or clause used as a noun. Any words or phrases used to modify the noun or pronoun belong to the subject. The predicate is the "something" which is said about the subject. It consists of the finite verb with all its modifiers and complements. When this combination of subject and predicate stands alone and makes a complete statement, it is called a *simple sentence*; otherwise it is called a clause. For example, "English grammar is a formal statement of the decisions of Good Use in the construction of sentences," is a simple sentence. It contains but a single subject, "English grammar," and a single predicate, "is a formal statement of Good Use in the construction of sentences." When two or more of these simple statements are joined together by coördinate conjunctions, such as *and*, *but*, *or*, and *for*, the sentence thus formed is called a *compound sentence*, and the clauses are said to be *coördinate*. "Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers," is a compound sentence made up of two coördinate clauses. A clause used as a noun, an adjective, or an adverb, is said to be *subordinate* or *dependent*. A sentence consisting of an independent clause and one or more dependent clauses is called a *complex sentence*. The simple

sentence already quoted may be made complex by the addition of a subordinate clause: "English grammar, *which most schoolboys study as a part of their elementary education*, is a formal statement of Good Use in the construction of sentences." Grammatically considered, sentences are simple, complex, or compound; clauses are either independent or dependent. A phrase is a group of words which does not contain a predicate verb; the expression "grammatically considered" in the preceding sentence is an example.

The meaning of the terms commonly used in grammar should be clear to every student of Composition. He will find it necessary to use these terms in the discussion of the grammatical relations that exist between the various parts of the sentence. In addition to the definitions given in the preceding paragraph, he should know exactly what is meant by such technical terms as *noun*, *pronoun*, *verb*, *adjective*, *adverb*, *preposition*, *conjunction*, *number*, *gender*, *person*, *case*, *tense*, *mood*, *voice*, *direct object*, *indirect object*, *participles*, *infinitives*, etc.

Words, phrases, and clauses are the elements out of which sentences are formed. English grammar has formulated the rules which Good Use has laid down for the proper combination of these elements into sentences. Grammar is therefore nothing more than a systematized record of Good Use. The rules of grammar are rigid; we may not disobey them. In most questions of grammar there is an absolute standard of correctness: a given construction is either grammatical or ungrammatical, either correct or incorrect. The student of Composition may not with impunity disregard the uniform practice of the best writers; he must obey the recognized laws of the language. The man who attempts to speak or to write the English language must combine words according to the English

fashion. Grammatical purity is absolutely essential to good English.

That it is not an easy thing to write without occasionally violating the rules of grammar is a fact amply demonstrated by experience. Many text-books on Rhetoric are filled with mistakes made by eminent writers of English. Few there are who never lapse into occasional solecisms, or errors in grammar. Yet the essentials of grammatical correctness are so simple and easy that any one can master them. Although errors are frequently due to ignorance, they are more commonly the result of inadvertence, haste, or carelessness. Every writer must be constantly on his guard. If one is careful and watchful, especially in the revision of his work, he can make all his sentences conform with the requirements of grammar. The important thing to remember is that, in order to avoid mistakes, constant vigilance is absolutely necessary.

"To avoid solecisms it is necessary not only to keep strictly in mind English usage in matters of grammar, but also to beware of certain common errors, and to know why they are errors." It is therefore deemed desirable to warn the student against the most common solecisms. The following list points out nearly all the errors that he is likely to fall into. He should examine the errors specified in this list, and should note any mistakes that he has been in the habit of making. By this means he can readily ascertain his own faults; and by painstaking effort he can rid his speech and his writing of solecisms.

1. Plural forms should not be used as if they were singular. The following sentences illustrate common errors: —

> He walked *a short ways* up the side of the mountain.
> Near the river there is *a large dye works*.
> At last our party came to *a dense woods*.

I will make *a memoranda* of your request.
Let us now examine *this peculiar phenomena* a little more closely.
A little below the surface we found *a strata* of limestone.

It should be noted that *news* and *molasses* are singular. *Means* and *species* are either singular or plural. Nouns ending in *-ics*, such as *economics*, *politics*, *mathematics*, etc., with the possible exception of *athletics*, are now generally treated as singular.

2. Singular forms should not be used as if they were plural. The following sentences are incorrect: —

He shot *seven* or *eight duck* on the bay.
He hauled from the lumber-yard *ten large plank*.
Bear are always less plentiful than *pheasant* and other small game.

The nouns *sheep*, *deer*, *trout*, *shad*, *heathen*, *yoke*, *pair*, and *cannon* have the same form for both singular and plural.

3. The subject and the predicate verb should agree in number. Common violations of this rule arise from various causes. Sometimes intervening words and details obscure the grammatical subject. Sometimes, when the sentence begins with the introductory word *there*, or with some adverb of time or place, and when, in consequence, the verb precedes the subject, there is danger of using a singular verb with a plural subject. Sometimes a plural verb is incorrectly used because the writer forgets that such expressions as *with*, *together with*, *combined with*, *as well as*, *including*, etc., are not conjunctions. Sometimes a group of different things possesses a kind of unity which leads the writer into the error of using a singular verb. The following mistakes are typical: —

The nature of his duties *compel* him to do many unpleasant things.
At ten o'clock the President, with the receiving party, which usually

consists of his wife and the wives of Cabinet officers, *enter* the Red Room of the White House.

Thus a fair knowledge of arithmetic, algebra, and geometry *were* obtained.

A box of cakes and candies *were* sent to me at Christmas.

In this town *is* a planing-mill, a tannery, and a cigar factory.

In almost every college there *is* a football team, a baseball team, a glee-club, and similar organizations.

This location, combined with its beautiful scenery, its cool breezes, and its pure water, *make* it an ideal spot for a summer home.

Her wit as well as her pleasing manners *make* a favorable impression on all who meet her.

The sallow face, the stooped shoulders, and an occasional absence from class *reveals* to his teacher the fact that his work is too hard for him.

When, however, the subject is plural in form but singular in meaning, the predicate verb should be in the singular; when the subject is singular in form but plural in meaning, the verb should be in the plural. A singular verb should be used with a collective noun when the group is regarded as a whole; a plural verb when the individual members of the group are thought of. The following are correct:[1] —

The end and aim of both Hebraism and Hellenism *is*, as I have said, one and the same.

The crown and glory of life *is* character.

In early times the great majority of the male sex *were* slaves.

The class *is* now at work in the laboratory.

4. The writer should take pains not to omit the verb or any essential part of it. A change in the number of the subject or in the auxiliary used frequently makes it neces-

[1] In this chapter and in Chapters XV and XVII, the author, in order to illustrate correctness, unity, and effectiveness in the structure of sentences, has taken his examples mainly from standard English and American prose-writers. It has seemed unnecessary to give, in each case, the name of the author and of the book in which the sentence occurs.

sary to use a different form of the verb. The following sentences illustrate common faults: —

His manners were faultless and his character ^ excellent.

My young friend has worked industriously, and he has promised his parents that he always will ^.

He will perform this task as conscientiously as he has ^ former ones.

I was born and reared in the South, you ^ in the North.

5. A pronoun should agree in number with its antecedent. Such words as *each*, *every*, *anybody*, *nobody*, *a person*, etc., are always singular. When they are used as antecedents the pronouns that refer to them should be in the singular number. Solecisms like the following occur frequently: —

When the regiment returned, each town had a reception for *their* home company.

He called to every one on the hand-car to jump for *their* lives.

I have always thought it wise to let everybody attend to *their* own business.

We decided to let some one else try *their* skill at the game.

Let me say that if any one thinks it an easy task to act as manager of a baseball team, *they* will change *their* mind as soon as *they* try it.

It is thought that a fox will generally run faster if *they* are a little hungry.

6. The pronominal adjectives *these* and *those* should not be used with *kind* and *sort*. These adjectives are plural in number, and the nouns are singular. Use *this kind* (or *sort*), *that kind* (or *sort*). The following are incorrect: —

I despise *those* kind of people.

I find it difficult to correct *these* kind of sentences.

7. The correlative conjunctions *either . . . or*, *neither . . . nor*, are disjunctive. A subject consisting of two singular nouns joined together by either pair of these

correlatives should be followed by a singular verb; for these conjunctions distribute rather than compound the subject. *Or* should not be used as a correlative of *neither*. The following sentences are faulty: —

Either the education he received at school or the training he received at home *were* at fault.

Neither the fear of detection *or* family pride *are* sufficient to restrain him.

8. The articles *a* and *the* should not be omitted when they are necessary to the sense. Note the difference in meaning when the article is repeated: —

1. *a*. My friend had a black and white dog.
   b. My friend had a black and *a* white dog.
2. *a*. Here we found the secretary and treasurer of the insurance company busily at work.
   b. Here we found the secretary and *the* treasurer of the insurance company busily at work.

9. The objective case of pronouns should not be used for the nominative; and the nominative should not be used for the objective. The following sentences contain common solecisms: —

When my father returned, he gave my sister and *I* a box of figs.

He selected the man *whom* he thought was best fitted for the position.

He knew as well as *me* that such a thing was not permissible.

This responsibility will rest on *whomsoever* happens to be elected to the office.

10. The possessive case should not be used with nouns that denote inanimate things. The use of the possessive case in the following sentences is incorrect: —

New York's governor became President of the United States.

A good deal of this money was spent for the *laboratory's* equipment.

In a few years this man became *Australia's* champion prize-fighter.

In these sentences, *of New York*, *of the laboratory*, and *of Australia* should take the place of the possessive forms. Such phrases, however, as *a week's vacation*, *last year's work*, *ten minutes' intermission*, *the law's delay*, are well established idioms.

11. The relative pronoun *which* is used to refer to things and to animals, but not to persons. The relative *who* is generally used only with reference to persons. The following are incorrect: —

Some of these soldiers *which* we saw exercising were perfect types of manhood.

Near the barn were several frisky colts, *who*, as we drew near, kicked up their heels and scampered across the pasture.

12. *Which* should not be used with a phrase or a clause as its antecedent. The antecedent of a relative pronoun should be as explicit and unmistakable as that of a personal pronoun. The following sentences illustrate one of the most common faults of young writers: —

He consequently sent me to report to the foreman, *which* I did.

At times these young men became very noisy, *which* had a bad influence upon the others.

The citizens keep everything neat and clean, *which* makes this town one of the most desirable places of residence in the state.

About eight o'clock the cashier's report came in, and then I began to post the sales of the preceding day, *which* generally kept me busy until noon.

It cannot be denied that good writers occasionally make *which* refer to a phrase or a clause as its antecedent, but the construction is nevertheless inelegant and faulty. The best usage is against it. In correcting this fault the writer can usually supply an antecedent: *a thing*, *a fact*, *a practice*, *a process*, or some similar expression, can often be in-

serted just before the relative pronoun. The two sentences which follow show how this fault may be corrected: —

The citizens keep everything neat and clean, *a practice which* makes this town one of the most desirable places of residence in the state.

About eight o'clock the cashier's report came in, and then I began to post the sales of the preceding day, *a task which* generally kept me busy until noon.

13. A relative clause should be coördinated only with another relative clause — never with a mere word or phrase. Before a relative pronoun, *and* or *but* should be used only for the purpose of joining the clause that follows to some preceding relative clause. The faulty "and which" construction, illustrated in the following sentences, is a solecism of frequent occurrence: —

To the west extends a range of hills covered with farmsteads, *and which* present scenes of ever changing beauty.

The first person to ask for something was a little man with high topboots and a broad-brimmed hat, *and who* wore a heavy beard.

There is nothing so grand *nor which* can be enjoyed so much as the works of nature.

The following are examples of correct usage: —

The books *which* were ordered last week, *and which* arrived yesterday, have been placed in the library.

My friend, *who* was considerably older than I, *and who* had been a public-school teacher for several years, helped me to prepare for college.

14. An adjective should not be used for an adverb; and an adverb should not be used for an adjective. The following illustrate common errors: —

This event occurred *previous* to my graduation from the high school.

The physicians' bulletin announced that King Edward was *some* better this morning.

The pupils in this class behaved so *bad* that the teacher could not control them.

What distressed me most was a streak of *almost* cruelty in my friend's character.

This measure was strongly opposed by the *then* principal, Mr. Allen.

15. It is well to remember that in English two negatives are equivalent to an affirmative, as in the sentence, "This method was *not un*like the one that we followed." The faulty use of *but*, *hardly*, or *scarcely* with *not* is similar to the incorrect use of two negatives. When such words as *not*, *no*, *none*, *nothing*, *never*, occur in the first member of an alternative expression, the conjunction *or* should be used rather than *nor* just before the second member; as, "*Never* again did I ask this man to help me *or* to show me any special favor." To this safe general rule, however, there are occasional exceptions. Shakespeare, for instance, says, "I love him *not nor* fear him." *Nor*, in the sense of *and not*, may be used to join together two coördinate negative clauses; but when so used, it furnishes the only negative needed in the second clause; as, for example, "Man does not stand in awe of man, *nor* is his genius admonished to stay at home." The following sentences illustrate several common mistakes in the use of negatives: —

Certainly we can*not* approve of the practice of hazing, *no* more than we can sanction any other violation of one's personal rights.

I can*not hardly* reconcile myself to the use of translations in the study of Latin and Greek.

We could *not* find *but* three specimens of this plant.

I then decided that I had no time *nor* money to devote to amusements.

16. The prepositions *without* and *except* and the adverbs *like* and *directly* should not be used as conjunctions. The following are incorrect: —

Without you give the most careful attention to this preliminary work, you can hardly expect to succeed.

He said that he could not grant his permission *except* we promised to return before ten o'clock.

He told me that there would be no trouble if I did my work carefully, just *like* all the other men did.

Directly the procession stopped, the cheering began.

In the foregoing sentences, *unless* should be used instead of *without* and *except*; *as* instead of *like*; and *as soon as* instead of *directly*.

17. When the comparative degree is used, the subject of comparison should be excluded from the class with which it is compared. When the superlative degree is used, the subject of comparison should be included in the class with which it is compared. When only two things are compared, the comparative degree should be used. The following errors are typical: —

No President had a harder task than Washington.

He has done more than any member of his church for the extension of its beneficent work.

Among my other experiences I shall always consider my first day's work in the woods as one of the hardest.

Last year we had a better schedule than any team in the country.

Of these two courses the first is by far the easiest.

18. "Mixed comparisons" should be avoided. The following sentences illustrate a common error: —

The freshman football team is as good if not better than that of the sophomores.

After the "reform" administration municipal politics were as bad or even worse than before.

It is not always an easy matter to correct this fault. When the missing *as* is supplied, the construction is grammatical but awkward: —

After the "reform" administration municipal politics were as bad as, or even worse than before.

A writer will usually find it best either to avoid double comparisons, or to complete one comparison before beginning another: —

After the "reform" administration municipal politics were as bad as before, or even worse.

19. *Than* should not be used after *different*, *hardly*, or *scarcely*. After *different* use *from;* after *hardly* and *scarcely* use *when*. The following are incorrect: —

The end of this game was somewhat *different than* that of most games.

Hardly had we entered the town *than* it began to rain heavily.

20. *But that* should not be used for *that;* and *but what* should not be used for *but that*. Each of the following sentences illustrates a common fault: —

No one can doubt *but that* he is the best man for the office.

I do not know *but what* he had the best of the argument.

21. Sometimes a transitive verb is incorrectly used for the corresponding intransitive verb. *Set* is wrongly used for *sit*, *lay* for *lie*, and *raise* for *rise*. The careless writer is liable to make mistakes like the following: —

We all assembled under the shade of a large elm and *set* down to a good dinner.

I came at last to a large tree *laying* across the road.

As we were going through the locks the boat, instead of *raising*, began to sink, as if it had sprung a leak.

One can easily avoid such mistakes if he remembers the principal parts of each of these verbs: *set*, *set*, *set;* *sit*, *sat*, *sat;* *lay*, *laid*, *laid;* *lie*, *lay*, *lain;* *raise*, *raised*, *raised;* *rise*, *rose*, *risen*.

22. The indicative mood should not be used for the subjunctive. The subjunctive mood, though now less used than formerly, has not yet disappeared from the language. Its common use is to indicate some degree of doubt or to express an unreal supposition. The subjunctive mood should be used in the following sentences: —

I shouldn't do that if I *was* you.

Then my companion began to wish that he *was* home.

Suddenly the reel began to hum as though it *was* run by machinery.

If hazing *was* entirely abolished, there would be a more friendly spirit among the students.

23. The "split" or "cleft" infinitive is frequently pointed out as a solecism. An adverb or adverbial phrase should not be allowed to split the infinitive by coming between *to* and the verb. The adverb should be placed either before or after the infinitive. The split infinitive, whether it be an error in grammar or not, is generally regarded as an awkward and inelegant construction. The fault is illustrated in the following sentences: —

It requires much care to *properly* arrange one's ideas.

I have been unable to *thoroughly* prepare my algebra lesson.

It requires several years to *fully* master the trade of wood-turning.

24. The substantive to which a participial phrase refers should always be expressed. The reference should be clear and unmistakable. When a participle refers to a noun or pronoun which does not occur in the sentence, or which occupies a very obscure position, it is left without any means of grammatical or logical support. Such a participle has been aptly called a "dangling participle." There is perhaps no solecism more common than this. The dangling participle sins against both grammar and coherence. The following sentences contain dangling participles: —

Coming up the main walk, the Engineering Building is seen.

Hanging on a limb, we could see a hornets' nest.

Following the river either way, it could be seen to wind around a distant elevation.

After *living* thus for three years, the farm was advertised for sale.

Situated as it is in the centre of the Pittsburg coal fields, the chief occupation of the people is mining.

Whenever a participial phrase stands at the beginning of a sentence, the participle should refer to the subject of the sentence. By applying this simple test to the foregoing sentences, one can readily see why they are vague and ungrammatical. The preceding sentence and the four following sentences illustrate the correct use of the attached participle: —

The farms, *stripped* of their fences and *deserted* by their owners, had for years produced only weeds.

The wind, *roaring* round its broad verandas, *hissing* through every crevice with the sound and force of steam, appeared to waste its rage.

Lying down on the grass, I spoke in my soul to the earth, the sun, the air, and the distant sea far beyond sight.

They came and went restlessly, *sitting* down and *knocking* their steel scabbards against the tables, or *rising* and *straddling* with their long swords kicking against their legs.

A somewhat different form of the dangling participle is seen in the following sentences: —

It had been warm in the cave, *making* it seem all the cooler now.

The rest of the water enters the spring from under the stone wall, thus *showing* the existence of an underground current.

The engine-cab is built over the rear end of the boiler, just in front of the fire-box, thus *placing* the engineer's seat nearly twelve feet above the rails.

These detached or "trailing" participles, thus loosely tagged to the end of the sentence, refer rather to the whole

statement than to any single noun or pronoun. This construction is both ungrammatical and ineffective.

25. A participial noun should not be used as if it were a participial adjective. The following sentences are ungrammatical: —

The danger was averted by the brakeman *detaching* that part of the train which was on fire.

I think that no harm can result from a student *being required* to attend the chapel service.

This end was accomplished by the president *giving* each member of the society a question to be answered at the next meeting.

One can easily correct the foregoing sentences by putting the nouns *brakeman*, *student*, and *president* in the possessive case.

26. To be consistent and accurate in the use of the different tenses is no easy matter. Some writers err because they do not have a correct understanding of the exact function of each tense. Thoughtless or hurried writers are likely to make unnecessary and confusing changes in tense. Frequent errors arise also from a failure to observe the proper sequence of tenses. The time expressed by the verb in a dependent clause is relative to the time expressed by the verb in the independent clause. A past tense in the independent clause, especially in indirect discourse, is usually followed by a past tense in the dependent clause. A present or a future tense is generally followed by a present or a future tense. The following sentences illustrate common errors in tense: —

I immediately *wrote* that it *will give* me pleasure to accept his invitation.

Then we *went* into the smoking car and *sat* down. After a little while, along *comes* a newsboy with the current magazines.

The men *were* so busy at their work that they *can* hardly find time to eat their dinner.

I *wanted* to *have taken* all the high school courses in the natural sciences, and to *have done* the laboratory work as well.

27. Every writer should train himself to make the proper distinctions between *shall* and *will*, *should* and *would*. (*a*) To express simple futurity in statements one should use the following forms: *I shall*, *you will*, *he will*; *we shall*, *you will*, *they will*. For example: —

I *shall* take a walk this afternoon.

If you look closely, you *will* notice that these are not petals at all.

I am sure that he *will* be at the station to meet you.

(*b*) When one wishes to make a statement expressing determination, command, intention, or promise on the part of the speaker, he should use the following forms: *I will*, *you shall*, *he shall*; *we will*, *you shall*, *they shall*. For example: —

I *will* see that this does not happen again.

Then he said to the child, "You *shall* have what you want."

They *shall* never again deceive me by such pretences.

(*c*) In questions one should use that form which may be expected in the answer. For example: —

Will you lend me these books for a few days?

Shall he do this with impunity?

(*d*) When a statement is changed from the direct to the indirect discourse, no change is made from *shall* to *will*, or from *will* to *shall*. For example: —

He says that he *will* make an effort to be present. (His exact words were, "I *will* make an effort to be present.")

Then the teacher told me that I *should* have to learn my lesson. (His exact words were, "You *shall* have to learn your lesson.")

He says that he *shall* be too busy to see any one. (His exact words were, "I *shall* be too busy to see any one.")

Should and *would* generally follow the same rules that govern the use of *shall* and *will*. (*a*) *Should*, however, sometimes means *ought;* as, *e.g.*, "Every writer *should* apply the rules of grammar as well as the principles of Rhetoric." (*b*) In conditional clauses *should* is used in the sense of *were to;* as, *e.g.*, "If the wind *should* fall to-night, and if at the same time it *should* become colder, the river would soon be covered with ice as smooth as glass." (*c*) Sometimes *would* indicates habitual action; as, *e.g.*, "Every morning my brother *would* call me, and we *would* together go down the long lane and drive the cows from the pasture to the barn."

In the following sentences, *shall*, *will*, and *would* are used incorrectly: —

There is one thing that I *shall* never do : I *shall* never undertake a piece of work that I cannot perform.

No doubt I *will* be so unfortunate as to arrive at the station about midnight.

I did this because I thought that I *would* probably meet with some accident while on the road.

The following statement[1] will furnish further explanation and illustration of the correct distinction between *shall* and *will:* —

Will in the first person expresses a resolution or a promise. (*a*) "I *will* not go;" *i.e.*, "It is my resolution not to go." (*b*) "I *will* give it you;" *i.e.*, "I promise to give it you." *Will* in the second person foretells : "If you come at twelve o'clock, you *will* find me at home." *Will* in the second person, in questions, anticipates a wish or an intention : "*Will* you go to-morrow?" *i.e.*, "Is it your wish or intention to

[1] Adapted from Sir Edmund W. Head's little book on "Shall and Will." Quoted in A. S. Hill's "Principles of Rhetoric," page 40.

go to-morrow ?" *Will* in the third person foretells, generally implying an intention at the same time, when the nominative is a rational creature: "He *will* come to-morrow" signifies (*a*) what is to take place, and (*b*) that it is the intention of the person mentioned to come. "I think that it *will* snow to-day" intimates what is probably to take place. *Will* must never be used in questions with nominative cases of the first person: "*Will* we come to-morrow ?" *i.e.*, "Is it our intention or desire to come to-morrow ?" is an absurd question.

Would is subject to the same rules as *will*. *Would* followed by *that* is frequently used (the nominative being expressed or understood) to express a wish: "*Would* that he had died before this disgrace befell him" is equivalent to "I wish that he had died before this disgrace befell him." *Would have*, followed by an infinitive, signifies a desire to do or make: "I *would have* you think of these things;" *i.e.*, "I wish to make you think of these things." *Would* is often used to express a custom: "He *would* often talk about these things;" *i.e.*, "It was his custom to talk about these things."

Shall in the first person foretells, simply expressing what is to take place: "I *shall* go to-morrow;" no intention or desire is expressed by *shall*. *Shall* in the first person, in questions, asks permission: "*Shall* I read ?" means "Do you wish me, or will you permit me, to read ?" *Shall* in the second and third persons expresses a promise, a command, or a threat: (*a*) "You *shall* have these books to-morrow" is equivalent to "I promise to let you have these books to-morrow." (*b*) "Thou *shalt* not steal" means "I command thee not to steal." (*c*) "He *shall* be punished for this" means "I threaten or promise to punish him for this offence."

Should is subject to the same rules as *shall*. *Should* frequently expresses duty: "You *should* not do so"; *i.e.*, "It is your duty not to do so." (Or, "You ought not to do so.") *Should* often signifies a plan: "I *should* not do so"; *i.e.*, "It would not be my plan to do so." *Should* often expresses a supposition: "*Should* they not agree to the proposals, what must I do?" The conditional clause means, "Suppose that it happen that they will not agree to the proposals."

EXERCISES

I. Write a theme on one of the subjects found in List I, Appendix E, or on some subject suggested by this list.

II. Criticise and correct the following sentences: —

1. I then took up English literature, a much more interesting study than mathematics, and which I therefore took more pleasure in.

2. Every star in the heavens had apparently come forth to have one more peep at the world before daylight drives them all to their retreat.

3. While enjoying a cigar after luncheon, clouds began to gather and we decided to go no farther.

4. Such was the character and such the peculiarities of some of the men which I met on my tour across the plains.

5. "It don't make any difference," he replied angrily; "I shall never agree to such an arrangement."

6. As I was born and reared in a seaboard town, I have always been keenly sensitive to the ocean's beauties.

7. These pioneers were all men of Puritan principles like their fathers were.

8. There are many thriving towns near, which is an advantage it has over many older cities of its size.

9. Although our algebra was not as difficult, we found it less interesting than history.

10. To fail in an examination may prove to be a lesson of considerable value, and which is likely to show one the necessity of preparing his lessons every day.

11. Certainly the inexperienced man cannot do this work as good as the man who has had a thorough training.

12. Probably more games will be played in town this year than in former years, thus doing a great deal to arouse the enthusiasm of the student body.

13. No one would take the time and pains to study a subject unless he thinks that it will be of some use to him.

14. In order to get men to work for him, this contractor was obliged to pay as much if not more than his fellow-contractors pay.

15. If I should be at home on New Year's Day, I will probably call on my friends.

16. These factories tend to not only increase the population of the city, but to also make it more widely known.

17. After chatting a half-hour with my friends, they bade me good night. When they were gone, I went into my room and laid down to rest.

18. Volcanic phenomena has aroused a good deal of discussion since the destructive eruption of Mont Pelée.

19. On this pillar is cut the image of the king worshipping the sun god, and two hundred and eighty separate laws in forty-four columns.

20. In laying a concrete walk, the most important thing is to get a solid foundation.

21. Finally, when the last boards were carefully fitted together and the last nail driven, the stairs were completed, which finished my work.

22. The white of the snow, contrasted with the colors of the water and the evergreen trees, form a scene long to be remembered.

23. I can't hardly decide whether I shall spend the summer vacation in the mountains or at the seashore.

24. Being on the main line of the Delaware, Lackawanna, and Western Railroad, its other industries are given wide-open doors to the Atlantic Ocean and the Great Lakes.

25. The next spring a track team was organized and by good coaching were enabled to beat several of the strongest teams in the state.

26. As it is a rule with me always to choose the least of two evils, I wrapped myself in my blanket and laid down to sleep.

27. This was kept up during the whole journey, stopping every few miles until we could get more steam.

28. In another quarter of an hour every one had retired to their own rooms.

29. This newspaper contains frequent reference to Philadelphia's corrupt politics.

30. It has no railroad or trolley connections with surrounding towns and cities, which prevents it from decreasing in population.

31. On either side of the town, the Alleghany Mountains raise to a height of fifteen hundred feet.

32. The walls seem to gradually fade into the blue vault overhead.

33. I saw that unless I rode faster I would not reach Topeka that day.

34. I then learned the places where each of these articles were kept.

35. No one can say but what our football team has made an enviable record during the past season.

36. We soon discovered that it was a long ways to the top of the mountain.

37. In certain localities, by chipping off a few layers of the rock, many beautiful fossils of ferns and other plants are found.

38. Scarcely had we entered the zoölogical garden and began to look around us than we were startled by a loud roar, followed by a commotion in the building where the wild beasts were housed.

39. We certainly studied as hard for this teacher, if not harder, than for any teacher in the school.

40. Those kind of labor agitators really hurt the cause which they profess to serve.

41. On approaching the town, the first thing that attracts the attention of the traveller is the beautiful buildings of the state Normal School.

42. This new work on pedagogy was dedicated to Dr. William Harris, America's greatest educator.

43. I then and there made up my mind that this would never happen again.

44. A house and barn have recently been built on this property.

45. When we parted, he said that he would have liked to have accompanied me on the journey.

46. The buildings being widely scattered gives one the impression of the town being much larger than it really is.

47. It is impossible to thoroughly go over the whole subject in the allotted time.

48. We had no sooner reached the end of the path when the rain began to fall in torrents.

49. The frog lays on the top of the water among the weeds, and as the light falls upon their eyes, they are momentarily blinded. It is then struck with a paddle and killed.

50. Before going to college, my father told me that he will not cut down my allowance except he finds it absolutely necessary.

51. It is clear that everybody cannot follow out their own way of doing things.

52. I then employed a tutor whom I had reason to believe was competent to teach me geometry and algebra.

53. When I heard the noise, I thought it was caused by a rattlesnake, although I had never heard of any being in that vicinity.

54. Our team at last obtained the ball and rushed through their centre again and again, which soon resulted in a touch-down.

55. After I entered college, I found that there was not near as many students without conditions as I had thought.

56. If this pony was like the one I had at first, I would not have sold it.

57. As the traveller goes through Bavaria he finds a crucifix at almost every cross-roads.

58. Running a pump in mines is often a difficult job; but when they are in good condition the work is easy.

59. Before setting the apple tree in the hole, all its branches except four are cut off.

60. It soon became evident that if nothing was done to save it, the house would burn too.

61. The mountain range, which stretches far to the north and south, with the river winding along at its base, and with the numerous towns and villages which dot its banks, present a magnificent view to the observer.

62. When thus placed, the water flows freely between the stones.

63. Above this there is a belt of barren land, a few weather-beaten pines, and an immense amount of rocks.

64. It was necessary for me to take the readings with care, which for several days I found rather difficult work.

65. This lad did not carouse and dissipate like the majority of us did.

66. Coming into the town on the railroad, the first thing that is seen is the flagpole, over a hundred feet high.

67. Some of the seniors soon became alarmed at so many juniors being around.

68. The earthworm is sensitive to the light. Although they have no eyes, they are nevertheless in some mysterious way affected by the light.

69. After returning from our camping expedition, things remained quiet until a three days' trip on our wheels was proposed.

70. At the banquet which was given in Prince Henry's honor, the soldier and sailor, the merchant and broker, the orator and statesman, the poet and scholar, all sat down together.

71. This boy always treated me as if I was in some way answerable to him for my actions.

72. The town can be reached by railroad from almost any point in the surrounding country, thus making Mahaffey one of the most important business centres in Clearfield County.

73. This is the kind of an athlete that every one admires.

74. I then rented three or four rooms as a dwelling-place for mother and I.

75. I always have and I always will maintain that the most important part of one's education is not learned in school and college.

76. If the carriage had turned to the other side, we would have been hurled out and probably killed.

77. On the 8th of August, 1778, James Brady, with fifteen men, were guarding a party of settlers, who were at work in the fields.

78. As I was looking out of the car-window on my way home, who do you think I happened to see?

79. This affair ended a little different than most cases of the kind generally do.

80. I was setting with a boy considerably older than myself, and who told me that I should have to wait until the other boys had left the room before I could go.

81. Then follows an hour of study and, if enough time is left, a short walk before breakfast.

82. I was not sorry that I took the trip to Mount Tom.

83. The library has the pleasantest location of any other room in the building.

84. After the chores are done and everything closed up for the night, the evenings were generally spent in reading and playing games.

85. When going along river banks or creeks, fossils may be seen very frequently, having perhaps been carried there by the water from some distant place.

86. I believe that every one should live and dress suitable to their income.

87. Neither my father or my mother were at first reconciled to my going to college.

88. It may safely be said that the French people are more fickle, and the French government more unstable than any European nation.

89. I took part in a number of athletic games, and these coming every evening after school made it impossible for me to put the necessary amount of time on my studies.

90. The sewerage system of this city is as near perfect as can well be made.

91. Because of the town's increase in population the primary schools are becoming crowded, thus hindering the young people from receiving the attention they deserve.

92. The spectator of the game raises to his feet and waits in breathless excitement.

93. I then go to my room and get the books that I will need during the forenoon.

94. A certain writer has remarked that it is difficult in some cases to distinguish between an interrogative and exclamatory sentence.

95. As I set there on the beach, I noticed some large cables laying near the edge of the water.

96. My father being a tailor accounts for the number of spools and empty boxes which I accumulated.

97. The students would then all try to at least make a grade of eighty-five per cent.

98. The location and scenery of the college was beautiful, but I would not be permitted to enjoy it.

99. Then he expressed his regret that he could not help us nor serve us in any way.

100. Careful attention to these points always enable the football player to use his strength to the best advantage.

101. This candidate believed that his chances of reëlection might be injured if it was generally known that he voted against the appropriation.

102. The young man who has stood at the head of his class in the high school never doubts but what he will make a record in scholarship when he goes to college.

103. The first two years are devoted largely to preparatory work, thus giving one a thorough preparation for the studies of the last two years.

104. These men then removed the furniture and the carpet, so as to entirely clear the room.

105. There is therefore no danger of the ladder breaking when in use.

106. The building where the animals are slaughtered and the meat sold is not very large.

107. Then he turned around and said, "What would you do if you were me?"

108. The land on which the town is built, and the surrounding country, is nearly level.

109. His death, which has made that home desolate, was caused by cutting himself in the leg with an ax while chopping a limb from a tree.

CHAPTER XV

UNITY OF THE SENTENCE

According to the principle of Unity a sentence should contain but one thought. Just as the whole composition is usually made up of a number of related paragraphs, which are not only parts of the same general subject, but also distinct units in themselves, so the paragraph is usually composed of a number of sentences, each of which not only contributes to the development of the paragraph-topic, but also gives expression to a single distinct thought. Both the grammarian and the rhetorician recognize the sentence as a unit. It may, in fact, be defined as the verbal expression of a single thought. It may contain but a single word, or it may contain a hundred words or more. It may consist of one simple statement; or of a single statement qualified by phrases and clauses; or of several coördinate statements so intimately related as to form but a single unit. In other words, a sentence may be either long or short; it may be simple, complex, or compound. Neither its length nor its complexity necessarily destroys its unity.

For both the reader and the writer the sentence is the most natural and convenient unit of expression. The faithful application of the principle of Unity to the construction of sentences is therefore likely to be helpful to the writer himself as well as to the reader. The practical value of this principle has been well explained by

Mr. Henry G. Pearson in his excellent little book, "The Principles of Composition."

"From the reader's point of view," he says, "the principle that every sentence should be a unit is one of the greatest importance. For him, generally speaking, the length of one sentence measures the amount that he comprehends at one time. He takes in a sentence at a glance, and takes it in as a whole. If, now, what it brings to him is not a whole, if it forms an incomplete statement, or two statements crowded together, the reader does not get from the unit of expression a unit of thought. In order that there may be no confusion of this sort in his mind, each group of words that represents a sentence should represent also one idea, no more and no less. In this way each thought is shown complete and single, an independent thing separated from everything else.

"From the writer's point of view, also, the principle of Unity is one of especial and practical consequence. By its means he is able to make a separation of his ideas, to recognize one idea as it stands by itself, and finally, isolating it, so to say, in a single sentence, to make its unity evident to the reader. By this principle he decides what modifications and qualifications do and what do not belong to a sentence, and accordingly by it he tests words, phrases, and clauses. For the writer, then, the principle of Unity as applied to the sentence performs a twofold service. It teaches him to recognize a thought as a unit to be expressed in one sentence, and it forms a test by which may be detected in that sentence, when it is written, the presence of any word or phrase that is irrelevant." [1]

A sentence may be compared to a physical organism.

[1] "The Principles of Composition," by Henry G. Pearson, page 83. D. C. Heath and Company. Quoted by permission.

An organism has been defined as "a living body, composed of different organs or parts with functions that are separate, but mutually dependent, and essential to the life of the individual." A living creature that lacks certain essential parts, or that possesses unnatural members, or that is abnormally joined to another creature, is regarded as a monstrosity. Such a creature lacks organic unity. It is either less or more than a complete organism. So it is with the sentence. Each part has its separate function; yet all the parts are related, and all are essential to the organic unity of the whole. If any essential member is lacking, or if any unnatural or irrelevant part is added, the result is either more or less than a unit. When a sentence possesses unity, every clause, every phrase, every word that it contains forms an integral part of the whole. The sentence is, in fact, an organism, and its unity depends upon the organic relation of its parts.

The student will perhaps better understand the organic unity of the sentence and the organic relation of its parts if he will take pains to analyze sentences and to notice how they grow. Each of the following six sentences possesses unity. At first the thought is conceived quite simply. Then, by the addition of various modifiers, it gradually becomes more and more complex: —

1. He was a great favorite among all the good wives of the village.

2. He was a great favorite among all the good wives of the village, who took his part in all family squabbles.

3. He was a great favorite among all the good wives of the village, who, as is usual with the amiable sex, took his part in all family squabbles.

4. He was a great favorite among all the good wives of the village, who, as is usual with the amiable sex, took his part in all family squabbles and never failed to lay all the blame on Dame Van Winkle.

5. He was a great favorite among all the good wives of the village,

who, as is usual with the amiable sex, took his part in all family squabbles and never failed, whenever they talked those matters over in their evening gossipings, to lay all the blame on Dame Van Winkle.

6. Certain it is that he was a great favorite among all the good wives of the village, who, as is usual with the amiable sex, took his part in all family squabbles and never failed, whenever they talked those matters over in their evening gossipings, to lay all the blame on Dame Van Winkle.[1]

In the foregoing sentences an effort has been made to mark the stages in the growth of a sentence. The sixth sentence is, like the first, an organism, but it is a far more complex organism. The student, of course, knows that in the actual composition of a given sentence the human mind often works so rapidly that it is impossible to recognize the various distinct steps in the conception and the expression of thought.

The writer is often at a loss to know just how much he should put into a single sentence. He is not likely to violate the principle of Unity so long as he makes each sentence consist either of a single independent statement with all its necessary modifications and qualifications, or of several coördinate statements so closely related in thought that they possess organic unity. The six sentences which have just been cited are good examples of the first type of sentence. Each of them contains a single independent statement and the various modifying and dependent elements that belong to it. So far as the unity of the sentence is concerned, it makes no difference whether the dependent members are merely words and phrases, or subordinate clauses. It is not always so easy, however, to apply the principle of Unity to compound sentences as it is to simple and to complex sentences. The several

[1] This sentence is quoted from Irving's "Rip Van Winkle."

coördinate clauses which are joined together in a compound sentence should be so closely and intimately related that they possess organic unity. When coördinate clauses are thus organically related, they form natural and necessary parts of the same sentence. In each of the following compound sentences, the student will readily see the natural relation of the coördinate clauses and the organic unity of the whole: —

1. In cities we study those around us, but in the retirement of the country we learn to know ourselves.

2. This brook has ever since been considered a haunted stream, and fearful are the feelings of a schoolboy who has to pass it alone after dark.

3. I could brook condescension from my father, for I looked upon him with awe as a superior being; but I could not brook patronage from my brother, who, I felt, was intellectually my inferior.

4. Marble columns may indeed moulder into dust, time may erase all impress from the crumbling stone, but their fame remains; for with American liberty it arose, and with American liberty only can it perish.

All sentences are either periodic or loose. A sentence, the meaning of which is incomplete until the last word is reached, is called a *periodic* sentence. The foregoing is an example. The following sentences are also periodic: —

1. In the construction of this bridge, the great discoveries of chemistry, the nature of gases, the properties of metals, the laws and processes of physics, from the strains and pressures of mighty masses to the delicate vibrations of molecules, have all been recorded.

2. While a considerable part of the army of Bengal was thus engaged at a distance, a new and formidable danger menaced the frontier.

3. When Tamerlane had finished building his pyramid of seventy thousand human skulls, and was seen standing at the gate of Damascus, glittering in his steel, with his battle-ax on his shoulder, till his fierce hosts filed out to new victories and carnage, the pale looker-on might have fancied that nature was in her death-throes.

It will be noticed that not one of these sentences is either logically or grammatically complete until the period is reached.

On the other hand, when the meaning of a sentence is complete at one or more points before the end is reached, it is called a *loose* sentence. The following sentences will serve as examples: —

1. The child soon becomes a boy, and he is sent out into the rough world, where all the nonsense about giants and fairies is soon knocked out of him.

2. The English stage-coachman has commonly a broad, full face, curiously mottled with red, as if the blood had been forced by hard feeding into every vein of the skin.

3. He was a great favorite among all the good wives of the village, who took his part in all family squabbles and never failed to lay all the blame on Dame Van Winkle.

Each of these sentences may be ended at any one of several points before the period is reached.

To make a sentence periodic, one must, before starting to write, think out the entire sentence from beginning to end. The writer must decide beforehand what the main statement is to be, and by what modifiers it is to be qualified. In short, he must conceive the sentence as a whole. Before he writes it down he must be able to see the beginning and the end and all the intermediate parts. For this reason the writing of periodic sentences has frequently been recommended as an exercise likely to aid the student in giving unity to his sentences. He cannot write a periodic sentence without stopping to consider all its parts; and if he stops to consider every part, he is not likely to violate the principle of Unity. The loose sentence, on the other hand, need not be thought out from beginning to end before it is written. It is made up of several clauses,

which are usually added one after the other, just as they occur to the writer. From its very nature the loose structure is liable to be abused. Unless one is constantly on his guard he is likely to add some clause that will destroy the unity of the sentence. Even though the loose sentence is, as a matter of fact, more common than the periodic, the young writer will find it best to get into the way of making many of his sentences periodic. He should, at any rate, form the habit of thinking out his sentences before he writes them down. If he does this, many of them will at least approach the periodic structure. The tendency to write loose sentences is so strong that there is but slight danger of his making every sentence periodic.

The sentence is, in a peculiar sense, the unit of thought; and the student, therefore, in the composition of his sentences, should carefully guard against violating the principle of Unity. A sentence that contains either less or more than a complete thought is lacking in unity.

1. One of the most frequent violations of Unity is the error of writing a mere phrase or clause as though it were a separate and complete sentence. It is of fundamental importance that the student be able to recognize the sentence as a unit. He can hardly hope to write good sentences unless he is able to recognize a sentence when he sees one, unless he knows the difference between a complete sentence and a mere fraction or fragment of a sentence. He should never allow himself to fall into the error of trying to make a phrase, or a subordinate clause, or a coördinate clause, stand alone as a separate sentence.

(*a*) The following examples illustrate the fault of mistaking a mere phrase for a sentence: —

1. When the engine tilted, the boiler exploded. Thus adding to the dreadful scene.

2. The barn seems to have been completely stripped of everything. With the exception of a reaper on the second floor.

3. After a warm rain in the spring, the snow melted and the streams became very high. Especially the West Branch of the Susquehanna and its tributaries.

4. We at last decided, after considerable discussion, to stay at this wayside inn until the next morning. The night being very dark, and the road across the mountain being both difficult and dangerous.

In each of these examples the second member is not a sentence at all, but a mere phrase belonging grammatically to the preceding sentence.

(*b*) Akin to the fault that has just been noticed is the mistake of separating a subordinate clause as if it were a distinct sentence. This error is illustrated by the following examples: —

1. A certain writer has prophesied that fifty years from now the whole country will be supplied with electricity by a few gigantic power-plants. And that these stations will be established along large rivers where abundant water-power can readily be obtained.

2. Again, our athletics have attained a high standard of excellence. Since in our last game with Yale only eleven points were scored against our team.

3. Very few people can see anything wrong in reading a novel or in making a call on Sunday. Although they strenuously oppose the opening of museums and theatres on the Sabbath day.

4. Rhetoric as a science sets forth the theoretical principles of expression. While Rhetoric as an art shows us how to make a practical application of these principles.

The student will readily see that in each of the foregoing examples the second member, although written as a separate sentence, is in reality only a subordinate clause, unnaturally and ungrammatically detached from the rest of the sentence.

(*c*) A coördinate clause is also sometimes improperly written as a distinct sentence. The following examples illustrate this fault: —

1. When the Indians went to war they did not form an army and go out to fight in open battle. But they would send out several small parties to kill any persons whom they found at a distance from the settlement.

2. Nothing sooner inspires people with confidence in a business man than punctuality. Nor is there any habit which sooner saps his reputation than that of being always behind time.

3. Byron's constitution had long been seriously impaired. And his health suffered among the marshes of Missolonghi.

4. Even when the sparrow flew into the study we had difficulty in catching it. For it would flit and hop nervously about without remaining still for more than an instant.

Each of these examples should be written as a single sentence; for the thought expressed by each is a unit. At the beginning of a sentence it is generally best not to use the conjunctions *and*, *for*, and *but*. They are more properly used to indicate the close connection that exists between two coördinate clauses of the same sentence.

2. The fault of putting too little into a sentence does not always, however, consist in making a mere phrase or clause stand alone as a separate sentence. It often happens that several short sentences contain what really ought to go into one sentence. A writer should not make the mistake of chopping his thought up into sentences so small and unimportant as to offend and irritate his reader. The habit of making the unit of expression too small is sometimes little less than an insult to the reader's intelligence. Several examples will be enough to show the student the error of breaking up the thought of one sentence into several small and insignificant fragments: —

1. Below the chutes are the "sorters." These are huge steel screens. They are about twenty feet wide and thirty feet long. They are nearly level. In fact, they slope only about an inch to the foot.

2. On the same floor is the library. It contains about 12,000 volumes of choice books. It also has many of the current periodicals.

3. Most of the residents of my native town received their first education in this little schoolhouse. My father and mother obtained their education in this small structure. Some of the most influential men of Mifflin County went to school in this building.

4. They first build a shanty in which to live while they are working. In this shanty they keep their food. The tools that they need in the construction of the raft are also stored here.

These examples have been revised in order that the student may see how the fault which they illustrate may be removed or avoided: —

1. Below the chutes are the "sorters" — huge steel screens about twenty feet wide and thirty feet long, and so nearly level that they slope only about an inch to the foot.

2. The library, which contains more than 12,000 volumes and many of the current periodicals, is on the same floor.

3. My father and mother, and in fact most of the residents of my native town, as well as some of the most influential men of Mifflin County, received their early education in this little schoolhouse.

4. They first build a shanty in which to live while they are working, and in which to keep their food and to store the tools that they need in the construction of the raft.

The faults which have been specified and illustrated show that the unpractised writer frequently has considerable difficulty in dividing his composition into well unified sentences. Whenever he mistakes a mere fraction of a sentence for a grammatical unit, or breaks up the thought of one sentence into several paltry and insignificant fragments, he is violating the unity of the sentence by making it contain less than one complete thought.

3. Of still more frequent occurrence is the opposite fault

of attempting to make a sentence contain more than one complete thought. One of the commonest violations of Unity in the sentence is what has variously been styled the "heterogeneous sentence" or the "bad loose sentence." Unless the young writer takes pains to think out each sentence from beginning to end before he writes it down, he may fall into the habit of linking together, in a "bad loose sentence," several distinct and heterogeneous thoughts by means of such connectives as *when*, *while*, *who*, *which*, *as*, *so*, *and*, *but*, etc. This fault is exemplified in the following quotations from students' themes: —

1. As a general rule Italians are employed to work in the quarry, for they learn the trade in Italy before coming to this country, and they come to this country because they receive three times as much pay for their work, and they can board for the same rate that they pay at home and save more than twice as much.

2. The road over which we were travelling was overhung with the branches of trees, and as we drove along I happened to look up, and perched upon a limb not far ahead, I saw the glaring eyes of a wild-cat, and pointed out the animal to my cousin, who immediately took aim and fired.

3. We were living in the midst of a country community about five miles distant from the railroad, and the people were a hard-working class, but believed in having a good time, and that very frequently, so we were often invited to attend some of their festivities, such as "spelling-bees," dances in the barns, and other amusements, all of which were new to us, but you may be sure we thoroughly enjoyed them all.

4. The next morning about six o'clock we set off, and as the wind was very low, we paddled up the river about a mile, when a good stiff breeze overtook us and carried us along for about an hour, when it suddenly died out, thus making us paddle for another half-hour, when another breeze came along, which took us to the lock, and after passing through the lock, we stopped to take a rest and to eat a lunch, after which we were ready to continue our journey, which took us as far as the mouth of the Youghiogheny River, where we landed and took a good swim, after which we ate the rest of our lunch, but from here on

the wind was hard against us and we had to paddle the rest of the distance, which was about twelve miles, but we finally arrived there about five o'clock in the afternoon, and, I assure you, we slept soundly that night, for none of us had been used to such violent exercise.

The violation of Unity in these sentences is glaringly apparent. There can be no organic unity in the bad loose sentence; for it contains several heterogeneous thoughts. To a sentence of this sort there is really no logical end. Any number of distinct thoughts may be thus loosely strung together. The writer himself does not know and apparently does not care what the end will be. Thus, for careless and inexperienced writers, a peculiar danger lurks in the loose structure. A number of thoughts are written down and loosely linked together just as they occur to the writer. A period and a capital letter may be inserted almost anywhere. No foresight is required in the composition of such sentences. To avoid this violation of Unity, the writer should try to foresee the logical end of each sentence. He must remember that the point of division between two sentences is to be determined, not by mere whim or chance, but by a natural division of the thought. Above all, he should give himself practice in the writing of periodic sentences, or of sentences that approach the periodic structure.

4. Another violation of Unity, not unusual in the compositions and examination papers of students, is the so-called "comma blunder." This fault consists in writing two complete sentences as one, with only a comma between them. The following examples illustrate this error: —

1. Another violation of Unity is the "comma blunder," this fault consists in writing two sentences as one.

2. The speed of the automobile seemed to be greater than it really was, this was due no doubt to the absence of all noise.

3. In the spring the ice always piles up on these rocks and causes a flood, this in turn does a great deal of damage by filling the cellars and by putting out the factory fires.

4. The principal industry of the town is cigar-manufacturing, it contains six factories, the largest one employs about fifty men.

This fault cannot be too severely condemned. The presence of the "comma blunder" may be taken as a sure sign that the writer does not really know what a sentence is.

5. Not only should each sentence contain a single complete thought, but this thought should be so expressed that the reader can readily see its unity. Unity of thought sometimes exists without unity of expression; that is to say, the thought contained in a sentence may really be a unit, although the form of the sentence or the mode of expression may be such as to obscure its unity. Unity of expression is often destroyed by improper coördination. Coördinate clauses should not be used unless the statements that they contain are of equal rank and weight. When a subordinate idea is raised to the rank of a coördinate clause, the lack of unity in the form of the sentence is likely to obscure or conceal the real unity of thought. When the coördinate clauses of a sentence are connected by such conjunctions as *so*, *then*, *hence*, *therefore*, *consequently*, *accordingly*, *also*, *besides*, *moreover*, *however*, and *nevertheless*, and when only a comma stands between these clauses, the lack of unity in the form of the sentence is especially apparent. These conjunctions do not ordinarily indicate the close connection that exists between coördinate clauses of the same sentence, but are generally used to join together the larger divisions of thought. The following sentences possess unity of thought, but are, in a greater or less degree, lacking in unity of expression: —

1. The milk is run into this pan, and on its way it passes through several strainers, and these take out all dirt and foreign matter.

2. Our schools and colleges have of late years come to recognize the importance of careful training in public speaking, and this is only another sign of the strong practical tendency of modern education.

3. Some of the trees were affected with this blight, and these were immediately cut down and burned.

4. I was unable to master this subject alone, so I decided to employ a tutor.

5. I turned out the electric light and made the room perfectly dark, then I opened the shutter of the camera.

In each of the foregoing sentences there should be but one main statement, to which all the other parts should be properly subordinated. The thought of each can be expressed in a single unified sentence. The second and third examples illustrate a common mannerism, which is often very persistent. The thought of the sentence is divided into two clauses of about equal length, and these are joined together by *and* or *but* or some other coördinate conjunction. The sentence which precedes this is intended as an additional example. Many students write "seesaw sentences" with fatal ease and frequency. This type of sentence, even when it may be made to possess unity, should be used with extreme caution. A false balance of this sort is an abomination. The student who finds that he has acquired the habit of writing "seesaw sentences" can rid himself of the fault by first deciding just what the main thought of each sentence is to be, and by keeping all the other parts subordinate. The use of *so* as a connective in the fourth example and of *then* in the fifth produces an effect not unlike that of the "comma blunder," which has already been discussed. Yet neither the fourth nor the fifth example contains two distinct sentences. Careful study of these five faulty sentences will convince the

student that unity of expression depends mainly on the accurate use of connectives. These examples have been revised in order that he may see how this violation of Unity in the sentence can be avoided or removed:—

1. As the milk runs into this pan, it passes through several strainers, which take out all dirt and foreign matter.

2. That our schools and colleges have of late years come to recognize the importance of careful training in public speaking is only another sign of the strong practical tendency of modern education.

3. The trees that were affected with this blight were immediately cut down and burned.

4. As I was unable to master this subject alone, I decided to employ a tutor.

5. After turning out the electric light and making the room perfectly dark, I opened the shutter of the camera.

To sum up, then, the sentence should, according to the principle of Unity, contain only one complete thought. When the sentence possesses perfect unity, it becomes, for both reader and writer, the natural unit of expression. It measures for the reader the amount of thought which he is able to comprehend at a single glance. The principle of Unity teaches the writer how much he may put into a single sentence. The sentence is, in fact, not unlike an organism. Each part has its function to perform; yet all the parts are organically related, and all are necessary to the organic unity of the whole. By analyzing sentences and by noticing how they grow, the student can arrive at a better understanding of the organic unity of the sentence and the organic relation of its parts. The writer can best apply the principle of Unity by making each sentence consist either of a single independent statement with all its modifiers, or of several coördinate statements so closely related that they possess organic unity. Because, from its

very nature, the periodic sentence must be conceived as a unit and thought out from beginning to end before it is written down, the practice of writing periodic sentences is recommended as an exercise likely to help the student in attaining unity. The Unity of the sentence is violated (1) whenever a mere phrase, or a subordinate clause, or a coördinate clause, is set apart as though it were a separate sentence; (2) whenever a thought that should be expressed in a single sentence is chopped up into several small and insignificant sentences; (3) whenever several heterogeneous thoughts are crowded into a "bad loose sentence"; (4) whenever two sentences are written as one, with only a comma between them; and (5) whenever the form of the sentence or the mode of expression is such as to obscure the unity of thought.

EXERCISES

I. Write a theme on one of the subjects found in List II, Appendix E, or on some subject suggested by this list.

II. On one of the subjects given in Exercises I–VI (pages 175–8), write a paragraph theme consisting entirely of periodic sentences.

III. Examine the passage entitled "Rural Life in England," on page 161, for the purpose of determining whether the principle of Unity has been rigidly applied to the structure of the sentences.

IV. Each of the following sentences violates the principle of Unity. In each case point out the fault and show how it may be removed: —

1. I spent the time in fishing, in doing chores, and in horseback riding, which I liked best of all, for I had been in the country before and could take care of myself in the saddle, and though the first ride made me feel sore and tired, I was all right afterward; but at last the time was up and I returned home, feeling much better for the exercise I had taken.

2. The storekeeper at this place is obliged to compete with the enormous department stores and wholesale houses in the city, and accord-

ingly makes but a scant living. While the business man can, after the day's work is done, step on a car and in fifteen minutes be at his home in Germantown.

3. This place always abounds with life and activity. It is a place for men to go to during their leisure hours.

4. I have lived in West Chester for the past few years, where I graduated from the high school, and I also took a preparatory course at the West Chester Normal School last summer.

5. On one side of the river the country is comparatively level. But on the other side there are large hills almost as high as mountains.

6. The wind had been blowing rather hard for about a week, and this put into our heads the notion of sailing up the river to visit a friend living in East Liberty about thirty miles above our home, so after gaining the consent of our parents, we bought a lot of eatables, for we intended to take things slow and easy, and at last, when all was ready, the night before our departure, we carried all our things down the river and packed them in a canoe.

7. McKeesport can be reached by two railroads, one of which is the main line of the Baltimore and Ohio, besides there are two electric-car lines that connect it with Pittsburg.

8. A trip through these caves is very exciting, and as curiosities of nature they are the most wonderful in western Pennsylvania.

9. There are two ways of laying the rails of an electric railway. Either by putting them on wooden ties and spiking them down, or by laying them together on a concrete base and fastening them together by very strong bands.

10. Every year about three thousand buggies and carriages are shipped from this town, and in building these about three hundred men are employed.

11. The telegraph, the telephone, and the railways brought the scattered industries into closer touch with each other. While the people willingly invested their money in any project which promised good returns.

12. If we should walk into the country from the west end of the town we should soon come into the lumber-producing region, here vast rafts of timber are made and floated down the creek to the saw-mills on the river.

13. When the swallows fly high, we may look for fair weather. But when they skim along close to the ground, we may expect rain.

14. As can be expected from this description, the principal industry is farming, and during the summer months the fields are waving with ripening crops, or dotted with the harvested grain.

15. Sometimes there are two or three log-drivers. These go down the river once a year.

16. During these three years of teaching I discovered that I did not enjoy the work, therefore I decided to go to college and prepare for some other occupation.

17. The discussion seems to have resulted in a pretty general agreement among thoughtful educators that the truth lies at neither extreme. That each of these two classes of studies has as its peculiar province the development of certain powers or faculties of the mind. That in consequence neither should be allowed an exclusive place in any course of study which aims at general culture. And that, if education is to result, not in a partial and one-sided discipline, but in the symmetrical development of all the faculties of the mind, each of these two grand divisions of knowledge is needed to supplement and reënforce the other.

18. I at last accepted a position on an engineering corps that was working for the Illinois Central Railroad and reported to the assistant engineer for duty at seven o'clock in the morning of the 1st of August, when he gave me a pass and told me to go to Jackson on the eight o'clock train, and when I arrived there I was to walk eastward about half a mile, where I would meet a corps of engineers who were staking out curves.

19. On my way home I thought of the great interest which was shown by the people for this society, and I felt as though I could go back again, and I did.

20. This building also contained fancy articles, and the people who owned the finest of these received prizes.

21. My father was not educated, and no one else took any interest in me except my mother, who gave me all the encouragement that was possible, but her education was very limited, so even she did not know what a thorough education meant to a person, so I simply learned what higher education would do for one, and where it was to be had, by hearing others talk about such training and the different schools that gave a thorough course.

22. Long before the first attack on San Carlos Minister Bowen was appointed to settle the trouble, and he came to Washington with full power to deal with Germany and the other nations, and this

fact makes the destruction of a fort and the shedding of blood appear inexcusable.

23. Shortly after we had chased the deer, we roused a bear from his hiding-place, and following his track for about two hours, we gave it up, as he was all the time leading us farther and farther into the forest, and it was then time for us to start home.

24. Shipping is carried on to a considerable extent by the two lines of steamships that run between Collingwood and other lake ports, these lines of steamships distribute grain, fish, and manufactured goods.

25. I had about an hour's stay at the latter place, so I took a short stroll up Broad Street and ate my dinner.

26. During the return trip we were all tired and sleepy, hence very few stories were told.

27. During my junior year I had eight recitations a day. Each being about forty-five minutes in length.

28. The subject of a theme should be restricted because most subjects are found to come under the head of one large general subject, and to discuss this general subject is more than could be done in a short theme, and if a writer tries to discuss fully one of these general subjects, he is sure to tire his reader, and unless he knows his subject thoroughly, he cannot finish it or discuss it fully.

29. I cannot now recall the causes and details of what is known as the celebrated Braintree church case. But I know that it was an effort to restore to the people as rate-payers certain rights and privileges of which they had been deprived by the Established Church.

30. You cannot cut the alfalfa the first year, but it can be grazed by turning in horses and cattle, but after the first year you can cut four or five crops according to the climate and get from two to five tons at a cutting.

31. His legs, though exceedingly short, were sturdy according to the weight they had to sustain. So that, when erect, he had not a little the appearance of a beer barrel on skids.

32. The sleeping quarters are provided with cots, and everything about these rooms has an air of simplicity. It being the owner's idea to get as close as possible to the manner in which men lived when the best houses in the land were log cabins.

33. We started to mow in one of the fields, and before we had been at it long, the neighbors began to arrive in great numbers, till by noon over thirty had assembled and were working fully as hard and as will-

ingly as if it were their own hay that was being stowed away in the big barn.

34. Last fall I happened to be driving through a small town. It was located in the eastern part of Westmoreland County. I was a stranger to this region. As I was driving along I noticed a weather-beaten house. In front of it hung a grocer's sign.

35. The principal industry of the town is manufacturing, and a great deal of farming is done in the surrounding country.

36. The writer should aim, in the very beginning of a narrative, to get the story started. And he should also try to catch and hold the reader's attention.

37. This town has a large sash-factory, which keeps from thirty to forty men busy. Also a flour-mill, which is kept in operation throughout the year.

38. The steel in this vast structure cost over two million dollars, this combined with the cost of the stone and the cost of construction makes a total of nearly four million dollars.

39. Their way of life was far enough from being decorous. Although the account of their orgies which he gives in the first canto of "Childe Harold" is certainly much overcolored.

40. At that time of day the trout did not bite very well, and we fished for about three miles without catching any, but toward evening the fishing became more interesting, but we had to stop at last, and at about six o'clock we reached a point where the stream divided, and there we ended our fishing for the day.

41. After dinner we waited awhile, then we set out to explore the rocks in the neighborhood.

42. The game was played in Johnstown, and though there was a large crowd of spectators on the grand stand and along the side-lines, very few of them cheered our high school team.

43. When the cigars were passed around among the workmen, I took one. I put it in my pocket so that no one would see that I was going to smoke.

44. This fellow, feeling very important, opened and read his letter, then he hurried out to tell the news.

45. We found this place too rocky for game, so we went back into the gap between the mountains.

46. The horses on the transport were fed three times a day. Hay, oats, and water constituting each meal.

47. The Philippine question has been constantly discussed in this country for several years, and only recently have we been able to reduce the affairs of that country to a peaceful and happy condition.

48. The process of making artificial teeth is a very complicated one, therefore each phase of their construction can be treated only very briefly.

49. It is the duty of the physician to go whenever he is called, and to give relief to the sick or the injured if it is in his power to do so, and he must visit the poor as well as the rich.

50. Every book was studied with care and diligence. This enabled me to understand their substance clearly.

51. This piece of bar steel I took to the blacksmith, who hammered it out and bent it to the required shape, then he tempered it until it was very hard.

52. These cars are all made in St. Louis, and they are the best that can be obtained.

53. There is a connection, it is said, between the moon and earthly things. Not a natural connection, of course, such as is observed in tides. But the moon is supposed to exert on terrestrial objects a subtle influence which is supernatural.

54. The milk is strained and mixed with sugar, then it enters the condensing pan.

55. If the power is obtained from the creek, a house must be built there and wires must be put up from the power-house at Mifflinburg, also a man must be paid to live there and watch the machinery.

56. The country merchant is the leading man in the village. The man about whom a great deal of interest is centred.

57. By this time the train was due, so I made my way as quickly as possible to the station.

58. As one approaches the town from the south, he follows the road along this stream until he reaches the main street, where the town is made visible to him through a grove of beautiful maple trees, whose tops interweave and thus form a sort of tunnel, of which, as one goes through it in summer, he cannot help thinking, "Oh, how beautiful!" while in winter he is protected by the great limbs and trunks, which, as the wind blows against them, make a sound that is mournful to many but cheerful to some.

59. The public schools of the town are the best graded public

schools in the state, there are three different buildings completely fitted with all the modern improvements.

60. The entire area of "the Knob" is probably not more than ten acres. But it is large enough for a dwelling-house and all necessary outbuildings.

61. After dinner we went to see the fakirs, and they certainly did swindle the people.

62. This building contains a large music-hall. This room is capable of seating seven hundred people. Twice a week the Pittsburg Orchestra gives a concert in it. This orchestra is one of the largest and best in the country.

CHAPTER XVI

COHERENCE OF THE SENTENCE

In the sentence, as in the whole composition and the paragraph, the principle of Coherence has to do with the arrangement of parts and with their relations to one another. A sentence is composed of words, phrases, and clauses. Of these elements some are coördinate, others are subordinate. The various words, phrases, and clauses in a sentence perform different grammatical functions. One serves as subject, another as object. One modifies a noun, another a verb. Some words — nouns, verbs, and adjectives — are symbols of things, acts, and qualities; other words — prepositions and conjunctions — are symbols of relation and connection. Often a word or phrase in one sentence refers to something which has gone before, or which follows immediately after. The various parts of a sentence are all grammatically related to one another. In fact, no word or phrase or clause stands by itself: each part is related to other parts; yet each part has its own function to perform; and all the parts taken together are necessary to the unity and the coherence of that carefully articulated whole which we call a sentence.

The principle of Coherence, then, as it is applied to the sentence, is mainly a question of relation and arrangement. It must necessarily concern itself with the grammatical construction of the sentence and with the arrangement of its parts. The English language is com-

paratively an uninflected language. In the absence of inflectional forms the grammatical function and the meaning of each part must often be made clear by its position. The problem of arrangement in the English sentence is therefore a matter of especial importance.

Stated briefly, the requirement which the principle of Coherence makes of the writer is this: the various elements that make up the sentence ought to be so phrased and so arranged that the precise meaning and function of each part, the interrelation of the different parts, and the exact meaning of the whole will be readily and unmistakably apparent. The parts should *cohere*, or stick together, in such a way as to make an intelligible whole. Thus coherence in the sentence aims at clearness, the greatest of the three cardinal virtues of all good writing. To secure coherence, the writer will do well to bear in mind a few simple precepts.

1. *Give every personal, demonstrative, and relative pronoun an explicit and unmistakable antecedent.* A pronoun stands for a noun. The noun for which it stands is called its *antecedent*. The antecedent of a pronoun is usually expressed. This expression of the antecedent is necessary in order to make the meaning of the pronoun definite and specific. When the antecedent is omitted, as in the sentence, "*Those* who are strong ought to help bear the burdens of their weaker brethren," the pronoun *those* needs no antecedent because the meaning is made definite by the relative clause. Indefinite pronouns, especially such words as *one*, *anybody*, *something*, etc., do not require a definite antecedent. Personal, demonstrative, and relative pronouns, however, require an explicit antecedent. The relation between the pronoun and its antecedent should be unmistakable. When a pronoun is without an

antecedent, or when any one of several substantives may serve as antecedent, the sentence is sure to be incoherent. The student should note how carelessness in the use of pronouns has produced incoherence in each of the following sentences: —

1. After having had a serious accident with an uncleaned rifle, I have always been on my guard against *them*.

2. The last duty of the day was to take the fruit and other produce from the stand in front of the store, and carry *it* to the cellar.

3. Although none of the work requires muscular strength, yet under the strain of school work *they* often become weak and flabby and waste away.

4. For two years I worked diligently and lived economically, *which* enabled me to save money enough to pay my first year's expenses at college.

5. The society of Minneapolis has all the effeteness of the East without *their* reserve.

6. These stalagmites, on being struck with a piece of metal, give forth musical sounds not unlike the tones of a large pipe-organ, and as *such* they have been named.

7. When *he* asked the general to surrender, *he* replied that *he* could enter the fort as soon as *he* captured it.

8. In a single week I ploughed this steep and rocky hillside field, but I found *it* very difficult.

9. He replied to Mr. Anson that *he* felt sure *he* would not have *him* in *his* church because *he* would have to profess what *he* did not believe, or *he* would *himself* be ignoring the requirements of *his* church in receiving *him* as a member. *He* felt sure that *he* would not do the one *himself* or have *him* do the other.

An examination of these sentences will show that not one of the italicized pronouns has an explicit and unmistakable antecedent. In the first sentence the plural pronoun *them* refers to a singular substantive — either *uncleaned rifle* or *serious accident*. In the second example the singular pronoun *it* seemingly refers to the compound

subject *fruit and other produce*, but may refer also to the singular noun *stand*. In the third sentence *they* has no antecedent, unless it be *muscles*, apparently implied in the adjective *muscular*. The relative pronoun *which* in the fourth example vaguely refers to the whole preceding clause. *Their* in the fifth is entirely without an antecedent. In the sixth sentence, it is doubtful whether *such* refers simply to *pipe-organ*, or to *pipe-organ* as qualified by the adjective *large*. The pronoun *he* in the seventh example ambiguously refers to two different persons. In the eighth sentence *it* has no antecedent, but seems to refer vaguely to something in the first clause. In the last example the indirect discourse has made the obscurity of the pronouns complete. In every one of these examples the relation between the pronoun and its antecedent is either obscure or ambiguous. Yet the writer in each instance no doubt thought that his meaning was clearly expressed in a grammatical sentence. The faults illustrated in these examples should convince the student that he cannot be too careful in the use of pronouns and similar words of reference.

2. *Make every participial phrase refer definitely and unmistakably to some substantive in the sentence.* A participial phrase generally modifies some noun or pronoun which is used in the nominative or the objective case. The connection between a participle and the substantive to which it refers should be as clear as the connection between a pronoun and its antecedent. Sometimes participles are left without any governing word. Frequently they are made to refer grammatically to words that they do not actually modify. Incoherence in the use of participial phrases arises from the fact that the relation between the participle and the substantive to which it

belongs is either ambiguous or obscure. The use of "dangling" and "trailing" participles, already discussed in section 24, page 193, is a common cause of incoherence. One must always bear in mind that every participial phrase should refer grammatically to the noun or pronoun to which it actually relates. The student, in examining the following sentences, should note the cause of incoherence in each, and should correct the false participial constructions : —

1. While thus sitting and dozing on the bank, a fish took my bait.

2. Being a manufacturing town and having so large a laboring class, unions prevail in every trade.

3. Having descended the mountain, it was not long before the conductor called out, "Lemont!"

4. By breaking up the rock, rounded forms consisting of stony materials are found.

5. While thus meditating, my attention was called to the barn, where the threshers were at work.

6. This fault must be guarded against at all times and especially when using the flat chisel.

7. Subscriptions may be mailed at once, using the attached form.

8. The general appearance of the town is very pleasing, having some beautiful dwellings and other well-built edifices.

9. The cars used in summer are open, permitting a breeze to pass through.

10. But the boards holding the bricks which are to be pressed, instead of being put into the racks, are laid upon the ground.

11. The public school is conducted in connection with the normal school, thus giving the senior class practice in teaching as well as theory.

In every one of the foregoing sentences incoherence has resulted from a failure to make every participial phrase refer unmistakably to some substantive in the sentence. A careful study of these examples will make it clear that one cannot be too watchful in the use of participial phrases.

In the first five examples the student can readily detect the cause of incoherence by applying to each the simple rule that a participial phrase which stands at the beginning of a sentence should be made to refer to the subject. In the fourth, fifth, sixth, and seventh examples can be seen another common cause of incoherence in the use of participial phrases. The writers of these sentences have in each instance used the participial phrase in the active voice and have then, in the main clause, put the predicate verb in the passive voice. In the eighth example the sense makes it necessary for the reader to refer *having* to *town*, although the participle in this sentence belongs grammatically to the subject *appearance*. The ninth and eleventh sentences contain examples of the "trailing" participle. In this faulty construction the participial phrase in each instance refers rather to the preceding clause than to any noun or pronoun in the sentence. In the tenth example the participle *being put* may refer either to *boards* or *bricks*. In the correction of these sentences it will often be found best entirely to dispense with the participial phrase. For instance, in the first, fifth, and sixth sentences, one can remove the incoherence and absurdity by supplying in each case the words necessary to a complete subordinate clause. The incoherence of these three sentences is in fact caused by the omission of necessary words. These three examples suggest a word of warning against another frequent cause of incoherence.

3. *Do not omit any word that is essential to the clear expression of your thought.* Incoherence often arises from undue ellipsis. Sometimes a writer, in his effort to be concise, omits words that are absolutely necessary to the sense. The omitted word may be almost any part of speech, — an article, a noun, a pronoun, a verb, a preposi-

tion, or a conjunction. The student should point out the cause of obscurity in each of the following sentences, and remove it by supplying, in each instance, the necessary word or words: —

1. I soon found myself as unpopular with the yard-master as the fireman.

2. In this second experiment I noticed some phenomena with which I was unacquainted and had never before investigated.

3. I soon became acquainted not only with the storekeeper and postmaster of the little village, but also with the minister and schoolmaster.

4. When four years of age, we moved to the city of Albany, and there I began to go to school.

5. That night, when the callers had all gone home, I was less disposed to ask my father than my mother.

6. He was advanced from a humble clerk to the junior partner in the great firm.

7. In all other respects the results were the same as our previous experiment.

8. This state of affairs has resulted in a scarcity of skilled operatives capable of doing the more delicate and difficult work, and other industrial changes likely to embarrass the manufacturers of textile fabrics.

9. In my class there were two young men who made no use of their opportunities, but wasted these years in idleness and dissipation, under the impression that they were having a good time, and apparently had no serious thought of preparing for any useful work.

10. It is now generally believed that the destruction of our forests is resulting in a reduction of the rainfall, and by the removal of roots and leaves water is not absorbed and held in quantities, and, as a consequence, that which falls as rain runs off quickly, soon leaves the hillsides dry and bare, and results in sudden high water or floods.

The ambiguity or the obscurity of the foregoing examples will be evident without much comment. In order to give the first sentence a definite meaning some word or words

must be supplied after the second *as*. In the second example both coherence and correctness require the repetition of the relative pronoun *which* after *and*. The writer of the third sentence really speaks of becoming acquainted with only two persons, although he may mean to mention four. After *when*, in the fourth example, a subject and a verb should be supplied. The incoherence of the fifth sentence is similar to that of the first. The writer of the sixth sentence seems to say that some one was advanced from one person to another rather than from one position to another. In the seventh example several necessary words are omitted after *as*. In the eighth sentence the preposition *in* should be repeated after the second *and*. The ninth sentence does not become entirely clear until the relative pronoun *who* is repeated before the word *apparently*. In the tenth sentence the incoherence results from the failure to repeat the conjunction *that* after the first subordinate clause.

4. *Place every modifier as near as possible to the word that it modifies*. This rule applies with especial force to the position of *only*, of relative clauses, and of adverbial expressions. "Clearness requires that the words and clauses which are distinct in thought shall be distinct in expression, and that those nearly related in thought shall be brought as near to each other in expression as possible. By conformity to this principle, the mutual relations of the constituent parts of a sentence, on the one hand, will be clearly indicated; and the words which go to make up each part, on the other hand, will be closely bound together."[1] By examining the following sentences, the student can readily see how incoherence is caused by the false position of modifiers: —

[1] A. S. Hill's "Principles of Rhetoric," page 135.

√1. At first I only took snap-shots.

2. I could only find this specimen along the rocky slopes near the river.

3. He was not nominated for this office because he possessed the necessary qualifications, but because he was thought to be a good party man.

4. There was a large consignment of goods in these boxes, which we had to stow away on the shelves.

5. The fireman had to shovel the earth and the stones from the track, which had slid down the mountain-side.

6. After this hollow has been filled out, a piece of sole-leather, which is of the shape of the whole bottom of the shoe, that has first been soaked in water and thoroughly pounded, is sewed firmly to the welt.

7. He had discovered slot-machines and other devices tabooed by the anti-gambling laws in operation at a church fair.

8. I remember this incident distinctly because some little folks had come to play with me that afternoon while I was sleeping.

9. The teacher looked out and saw the superintendent coming through the window.

10. I was soon made aware that refreshments were to be obtained across the street, by a middle-aged man beating a big brass pan and calling the name of the various articles to be had.

The incoherence of these sentences shows how important it is that modifiers be placed as close as possible to the words that they modify. The first two examples illustrate the common error of placing *only* in a false position. Examples four, five, and six show how relative clauses, when wrongly placed, may give rise to incoherence. The last four examples illustrate the ambiguity and the absurdity often produced by the misplacement of adverbial expressions. It will be noticed that the writer of the last sentence, as if to apologize for the incoherence which he took no pains to remove, has placed a comma just before the ambiguous modifier. The faulty position of *not* in the third sentence suggests the importance of placing correlative connectives

next to the words, phrases, or clauses that they join together.

5. *Place correlative connectives next to the expressions that they connect.* The most common correlative connectives are *not only*, *but also*; *either*, *or*; *neither*, *nor*; *both*, *and*; *on the one hand*, *on the other hand*. By means of these correlative conjunctions, expressions that go in pairs are so joined that the first member of the pair is set off against the second member. If either of the two correlatives is placed in a false position, the reader is confused and misled; for he does not know what expressions the writer intends to join together. The faulty placing of correlative conjunctions is particularly exasperating because all connectives — and especially these "correspondents" — are used for the sake of coherence. The student should carefully examine the following sentences, note the cause of incoherence in each, and try to remove it: —

1. He was *not only* successful as a teacher of the natural sciences, *but* he attained eminence *also* as a popular lecturer on scientific subjects.

2. Beside it was a red woodshed, the door of which was usually *either* hanging on loose hinges, *or* else about half the boards were torn off.

3. My employer *both* offered to give me an increase in my salary *and* a small share in the business.

4. The High School Journal is beneficial *not only* to the students, *but* it *also* gives others a high opinion of the school.

5. He *neither* cared for an academic education *nor* to become a clerk in his father's office.

6. I was now confronted by a serious difficulty: *on the one hand*, I felt that I could not betray the interests which the company had intrusted to me; and, *on the other hand*, I could not prove false to my friend.

In all these examples the fault is the same: the expressions which the correlative conjunctions seem to connect

are not really coördinate and parallel. In order to illustrate the correct use of these correspondents, the first sentence may be rewritten in several ways: —

a. *Not only* was he successful as a teacher of the natural sciences, *but* he *also* attained eminence as a popular lecturer on scientific subjects.

b. He was *not only* successful as a teacher of the natural sciences, *but also* eminent as a popular lecturer on scientific subjects.

c. He was eminently successful *not only* as a teacher of the natural sciences, *but also* as a popular lecturer on scientific subjects.

6. *Be sure that every sentence possesses both unity of thought and unity of expression.* Lack of unity in the sentence is only another form of incoherence. Two parts cannot cohere if they are unrelated or incongruous. Nor can the reader be expected to see the true relation between two given parts of a sentence when they are joined together by the wrong conjunction. Connectives, when properly used, are great aids to coherence; but when misused, they are almost sure to produce incoherence. Sometimes *and* joins together two clauses which ought to stand apart as separate sentences. *And* and *but*, commonly used by careless writers to indicate almost any kind of connection or relation, are frequent offenders against coherence. Incoherence is also very often the result of improper coördination or of improper subordination. One can hardly expect to write coherent sentences without first learning how to use conjunctions with skill and accuracy. The following sentences show that more or less incoherence is often produced by the lack of unity and the misuse of conjunctions: —

1. We made the platform so strong that it lasted for two years, when it was taken down because it creaked when the wind shook the trees.

2. The roads were in good condition, and I kept up a good pace in the cool of the morning.

3. Although the college is beautifully located, the expenses are moderate.

4. The pink flowers are usually gathered in clusters, and they have a fragrant odor, but they are becoming rare and can be found only in extensive woodlands.

5. I thought that the experience would help me very much, so I went to work.

6. The number of pounds given out was always noted, so an exact account could be kept.

7. We were nearly halfway across the river when the lightning struck the bridge somewhere near us.

8. Merion contains about four hundred inhabitants, and the dwelling-houses are all surrounded by tall and delightful shade trees, while the streets are lined with Norway maples, and are also well paved.

Although there is no serious ambiguity or obscurity in any of the foregoing sentences, yet they are all more or less incoherent. In each example there seems to be expressed or implied some connection or relation that does not exist. The first example possesses neither unity of thought nor unity of expression. When it is divided into two sentences, the improvement is apparent: —

We made the platform so strong that it lasted for two years. It was finally taken down because it creaked when the wind shook the trees.

The second sentence lacks unity of expression. The same thought can be much more coherently expressed in the following form: —

As the morning was cool and the roads were in good condition. I kept up a rapid pace.

These two examples are sufficient to show that the principle of Unity and the accurate use of conjunctions are valuable aids to coherence. A few brief comments may help the student to see the specific fault in each of the remaining sentences. Between the two clauses of the

third sentence, it is hard to see the relation which is usually expressed by the concessive conjunction *although*. Indeed, it is difficult to see any relation whatever. No one but the writer of the fourth sentence could explain why he has used *and* between the first two clauses and *but* between the second clause and the third, or why he has put these four clauses into one sentence. The first clause of the fifth sentence should be made subordinate. In the sixth sentence, it is not clear whether *so* is intended to be a loose coördinate connective, as in the fifth, or to take the place of the subordinate conjunction of result, *so that*. In the seventh sentence, the main statement is found in the dependent temporal clause introduced by *when*. "When we were nearly halfway across the river, the lightning," etc., is apparently what the writer meant to say. It is hard to see why the various clauses that make up the eighth example are joined together. Certainly the third clause of this example is no more subordinate than the second clause; why, then, it may be asked, did the writer use the subordinate conjunction *while?*

7. *When several parts of a sentence are similar in thought, make them similar also in construction.* The similarity in construction will help the reader to see the similarity in the relation of ideas. Any unwarranted change in the construction is sure to confuse him. Infinitives and participles, for example, are not good yoke-mates. A substantive clause should not be joined to a noun when the two express parallel ideas. There should be no needless change of subject or of person. One should not unnecessarily shift from one voice or tense or mood to another. Within the sentence the construction of parallel ideas should be kept uniform. Careful study of the following examples will show the incoherence and the inef-

fectiveness that arise from any unnecessary change in construction: —

1. I determined on preparing for college as soon as possible and to try the examinations in the following September.

2. The principle of Unity requires the careful selection of material, and that one should exclude all irrelevant ideas from his theme.

3. Wood is generally used for firing the evaporator, but some use coal.

4. I should advise one never to enter the freshman class with conditions, for when you have entered, you will have all the work that you are able to do.

5. Although we had gathered a large quantity of grass to lie on, a very uncomfortable night was passed.

6. The colt should be bridled as soon as possible. Leave the bridle on for a few hours.

7. I realized how little I knew and the many advantages that an educated man has over one that is not educated.

8. Having nothing to do, and as school did not begin for more than a month, I accepted the position.

9. The cakes of ice which I handled were twenty-eight inches long and twenty-two inches wide, and ranging from ten to fourteen inches in thickness.

10. Military training teaches a man obedience, to think quickly, and how to command others.

In the first of these examples the conjunction *and* joins together a participial phrase and an infinitive. In the second sentence a substantive clause is joined to a noun. In the third and fifth sentences an unnecessary change is made both in subject and voice. The writer of the fourth example makes an unnecessary shift from the third person to the second. The sixth example contains an abrupt change in mood. The writer of the seventh sentence has joined a noun to a substantive clause, and has tried to make an adjective balance a relative clause. In the eighth example the conjunction *and* connects a participial phrase

and a dependent clause, as if they were coördinate and parallel expressions. In the ninth sentence the adjectives *long* and *wide* are followed by the prepositional phrase *in thickness*, and the finite verb *were* by the participle *ranging*. In the last example the three direct objects of *teaches* are all in different constructions. The student will find it possible to correct most of these examples in several different ways.

8. *Finally, so phrase the thought of every sentence that it can have only one meaning.* Ambiguity sometimes arises from a careless use of words. To make this fact evident, a few examples will be more useful than much extended comment: —

1. Hog cholera is working havoc among the farmers of the vicinity.

2. My father promised that he would let me go to Europe for a graduation present.

3. In England a family has been discovered every member of which has six fingers and six toes on each hand and foot.

4. The annual sale of the members of the Christian Endeavor Society will take place at the church next Saturday evening.

5. The farmer is worried if his grain is spoiled by not enough or by too much rain.

6. This was the first time that the greater part of us had been on a ship.

7. Several years ago the minister in our town, who happened to have a fondness for poultry, was greatly troubled with chicken lice.

The student will have no difficulty in seeing that the ambiguity of these sentences is caused either by a careless choice or by an unfortunate combination of words. To remove the incoherence, he will find it necessary, in each case, to make some change in the wording or in the form of the sentence.

EXERCISES

I. Write a theme on one of the subjects found in List III, Appendix E, or on some subject suggested by this list.

II. Point out and correct any incoherence in each of the following sentences: —

1. In storms the wires are often blown down in the streets, thus placing horses and pedestrians in great danger of their lives.

2. You could see them jump from the spring-board and their feats of diving from it.

3. The prayer meetings of the Amish are like those of the Quakers: no one speaks until the spirit moves them.

4. Then the tree, falling in an opposite direction from which I intended, lodged in the top of another tree.

5. The most important industries of my native town are fishing, the building of ships, the manufacture of ropes, and a meat factory.

6. Thus, on this trip, we had the pleasure of visiting this farm, with all its modern improvements, its record in grain-raising, the stock belonging to it, and its prominence, which made it the most valuable farm in that part of the state.

7. Although the soldier performs many duties and undergoes many hardships, the United States government cares for them both during their active service and after they have been retired.

8. After leaving Baltimore, our journey continued without interruption as far as Norfolk.

9. In order to grow cress successfully, there must not be any water in the dam that has come a long distance.

10. The way to get the most fun out of catching minnows is for several boys to fish together, and the fellow who catches the least number of minnows must do all the disagreeable work.

11. The place is noted not only for its natural curiosities, but it also has an interesting history.

12. These men may have answered the very same questions which are now asked several months ago.

13. After swimming across the Schuylkill River, my highest ambition was to swim across the Delaware.

14. If the instructions of the employer are followed exactly by the civil engineer, he will not be at fault if the work is not done correctly.

15. By this teacher we were given a start in algebra, and something in the way of literature was attempted.

16. Therefore it is clear that overhead wires are a nuisance, and instead of being strung from pole to pole, they should be placed under ground, where they do not spoil the appearance of the street and do not endanger people's lives.

17. When all these processes are finished, the print is mounted while still wet on a card.

18. The marsh marigold, though not a flower most people would care to gather, is nevertheless attractive as it rises above the waters of the swamp from a distance.

19. The knives fall at regular intervals, cutting the shale into bricks, and are capable of cutting forty-eight hundred an hour.

20. Wishing to enter college without conditions, it was necessary that I should prepare for an examination in the English Classics.

21. There are two answers to the question, Why did I come to the State University? They are, first, my desire for a better education; and second, that I wanted to study agriculture or scientific farming.

22. The absence of officers of the law and the need of such are features of which few cities can boast.

23. The bridge is so constructed that in case of the ice and logs becoming jammed, seven piers may be removed, leaving every eighth pier standing, and these will then form arches.

24. You are expected to make a mark of sixty in your entrance examinations, so do not think that by mere reading and not studying the condition will let you pass.

25. My first experience as a lumberman was when I was a mere boy along the banks of the West Branch of the Susquehanna River.

26. I can see the stacks of the steamers as they go up and down the river from my study window.

27. I was interrupted by a body of negroes who had lately arrived in town to take the place of the strikers, marching up and down the street with guns and clubs and very desperate looks.

28. The photographer at last succeeded in taking a picture of a very doubtful character.

29. My idea of the cave was that it was in the side of the mountain, and I was much surprised when told that I was there, that I was unable to see any sign of a cave.

30. You will find them an industrious people, owning their own homes and with a little in the bank for a "rainy day."

31. We went nutting but were not able to find any.

32. Trout-fishing is good sport, although it requires some skill.

33. My room-mate, who had been critically ill for some time, and whose life had even been despaired of, was now getting better very slowly, to the great delight of his friends.

34. The robin's plump little breast was toward me, with little tufts of red appearing here and there, and eyes which shone like dewdrops in the sunlight, he was a picture to behold.

35. As I am familiar with the locality in which the hospital is to be built, and knowing something of the reasons why it is being built, I should have no trouble in writing about it.

36. The other sections form a part of the framework which separates the mows and threshing-floors.

37. Any one or all of the generators can be applied to any particular circuit or circuits, and thereby securing the utmost flexibility.

38. Having three hours to wait in this town, sight-seeing was naturally my main occupation.

39. Some merchants were at the fair and tried to show how much more it would be to the advantage of the farmer to buy his goods than that of other people.

40. I was disappointed, for I either expected to find him at his home or at his office.

41. The work of the last year was not mere task-work on account of the whole class taking an interest in it.

42. I had to make up all the work that I missed by taking examinations for which I had to study hard to get through.

43. The gymnasium adjoins the main building, so the students who enter it will not be compelled to go out of doors.

44. We had a short tin tube about six inches long and one in diameter.

45. Examinations should be abolished for two important reasons: first, because it is not a fair test of what a man knows about the subject; and, second, because they cause a great deal of cramming in many cases, which goes to extremes, and breaks up the nervous system, the most important part of which is the brain.

46. By taking this precaution, very little coal will be needed in order to keep the fire going a long time.

47. The owner of this park and of the animals that it contains will permit no one to enter it unless he is with them.

48. I told him that the cement was not good and should not be used, and to use some that had just been shipped to him.

49. I was obliged to drive into some road other than the one where the carriages had to go in order to get back to the gate.

50. Trout are only found in small streams.

51. In the shallower boxes I packed the different sizes of spools, and these I sold to my friends, who were also in the same business at wholesale rates.

52. It is situated in the central part of the historic Wyoming Valley, and lying on a broad, level stretch of land.

53. My teacher not only promised to write Mr. Hardy a personal letter in my behalf, but also a recommendation setting forth my special qualifications for the place.

54. When the chisel is forced into a piece to be turned at a wrong angle, this is called "catching a crab."

55. Once out of the city, a fine macadamized road stretched before us, known as the "Eastport Speedway."

56. I could only keep a collar round my fat beagle's neck by connecting it to a second strap around his body.

57. These Swedes are employed mostly around mills and as servants.

58. Taking careful aim with his shot-gun, he pulled the trigger, but there was no report. Then he tried the other barrel, and this time it went off.

59. The lumber is then cut according to the pattern chosen by men on circular and band saws.

60. The raft was made of small logs each about a foot in diameter, and were fastened together by boards which are nailed to the upper sides.

61. It can be reached by the largest ocean steamers and is connected by rail and navigable waters with the coal regions of the state, thus making it the greatest coal market in America.

62. Bellefonte is the best town in Pennsylvania for a home, as a business location, or in which to seek rest and quiet.

63. It is a small place of about four hundred inhabitants scattered over a great deal of ground.

64. The word *coward* is the most disgraceful term that can be applied to any one, and there are few other words that men hesitate upon so long before applying it to another.

65. Amusements of all kinds were going on during the day, and the night was spent in eagerly awaiting the election returns.

66. Every article was put in its place as soon as it was received, so the salesman would know where to find them when they were needed.

67. This blue-print told us the required dimensions and how to make the first piece.

68. My friend showed me an old sword and he immediately began to tell me the story connected with this relic in the following manner.

69 A German sneezes with all his might, and if there is a compatriot within hearing, he says, "Gesundheit!"

70. As I was unloading grain from a wagon into a car last summer, while carrying a bag into the car, the horses took fright and began to run.

71. In the town of Wyoming stands a monument in commemoration of the battle seventy feet high.

72. At first the freshman line wandered in a zigzag manner, being unable to see their opponents.

73. This farmhouse is a favorite resort for bicyclists, for it not only furnishes a cool resting-place, but also pure water, which comes from a spring near by.

74. To one entering the town on a train, the appearance is that of a manufacturing centre, and also the homes of the working class come before the eyes of the beholder.

75. The town is noted for its large tin works and for having a very complete street-car system.

76. On arriving at the railway station, your impression of the town is likely to be poor; on reaching the main street, however, your opinion is soon changed.

77. When I left the drill-press to work on the lathe, I had had experience in drilling holes in almost every part of an engine.

78. This name offers as an advantage the permitting of all the emphasis to be placed upon the definite article that it is a gratification to any of us to hear.

79. One of the worst features of our deficient railroad system is that our merchants do not carry a large stock of goods, thus limiting the choice of the purchaser.

80. Our class made trips to the mountains for the purpose of studying the different formations of the rocks, and also to gather fossils, which were to be placed on exhibition in the schoolroom.

81. By plunging directly into the subject, a clear and vivid impression will stay with the reader.

82. He should be as economical as possible, and he should use the things that are placed in his charge to the best advantage.

83. Some benches have been placed in these little parks along the well-kept walks, which furnish pleasant resting-places for tired pedestrians.

84. As this was my first visit to New York, and having no thought that my friends would not meet me at the station, I scarcely knew what to do.

85. The sides of this mountain are covered with loose boulders and half-rotten logs, but with scarcely any vegetation.

86. When completed the capacity of the power-plant at Niagara will be 105,000 horse-power.

87. My rapid progress was due partly to my regular attendance, and partly because my father was my teacher.

88. If these boards are not placed directly over the larger timbers, they will become curved and warped, thus making them unfit for use.

89. The train was running slow enough for us to get on, which you may be sure we did.

90. The printer takes the retouched negative and makes as many prints as are desired on sensitized paper.

91. The notable circumstances of a woodman's life are his way of living, the hardships connected with his work, and being deprived of refining influences.

92. After leaving the bottle in the tester twenty minutes, the machine is stopped and the bottle taken out.

93. The country school-teacher has to teach algebra to the most advanced pupils, and the youngest he must teach to count.

94. It was just eight o'clock and we expected to be at the camp about eleven, for the brush was very thick on the road on account of not being used very much.

95. They often had to stop along the way for repairs or to get up more steam.

96. There are some of the farms which are good naturally, and some which have been made so by picking the stones off.

97. The stove in this opening does not give enough heat to warm both rooms, so if a person goes there to wait for a train, he must suffer from the cold until the train arrives.

98. A branch of the Colegate Iron Company established a foundry in our town, which employs about four hundred men, and a large addition is being built at present.

99. His conception of character is not only that of the skilful playwright, but the man who delineates character with an exact and vivid literary touch.

100. We could see boats of all sorts in the river; the high buildings of New York and Brooklyn could be plainly seen; and then there was the construction of the bridge itself; all these things contributed to our pleasure.

CHAPTER XVII

EFFECTIVENESS

JUST as every paragraph is likely to comprise some sentences that are more important than others, so every sentence is likely to contain some words or phrases that are more weighty than the rest. To give forcible expression to a thought, one must make the important parts stand out prominently and at the same time keep the unimportant parts, as it were, in the background. In the spoken sentence, for instance, one habitually and unconsciously secures emphasis by placing special stress of voice upon the most significant words. In written discourse, however, there is no such easy method of obtaining emphasis. If any one of that group of related ideas which we call a thought is to make a deeper impression upon the reader's mind than the rest of the sentence, it must be so phrased and so placed as to attract his attention. To secure force, then, the writer must give careful attention both to the mode of expression and to the arrangement of words and phrases.

The first of these, the mode of expression, is largely a matter of diction. The choice of words is so important a part of the writer's task that a separate chapter has been given to the subject (see Chapter XXI). In addition, however, to the selection of such words as precisely and forcibly express one's thought, there are several emphatic modes of expression which deserve special mention.

In the first place, a writer can often make a thought

especially emphatic by putting it in a short, pithy sentence. A brief and pointed expression of an important thought will undoubtedly make a deeper and more lasting impression than a lengthy statement. This fact Shakespeare both expressed and exemplified when he said, "Brevity is the soul of wit." The value of the brief, pointed sentence as a means of securing special emphasis is demonstrated by the fact that most popular quotations are short. A short, pithy sentence will be readily grasped and retained because the main thought is not obscured by a multiplicity of details and qualifications. Subject and predicate are made to stand alone; necessary modifications are made to form the subject-matter of less emphatic sentences. The effectiveness of the short sentence is well illustrated by the following examples:—

> Diffuseness is fatal to emphasis.
> Even Saint Paul had his bad moments.
> Literature is the immortality of speech.
> Education is the cheap defence of nations.
> Civility costs nothing and buys everything.

Conciseness is in fact a valuable aid to effective expression. Wordiness, on the other hand, destroys emphasis. Human ingenuity could not devise any surer way of enfeebling the writer's thought and dulling the reader's attention than by the use of twice as many words as are really needed. The following examples show the value of conciseness as a means of securing emphasis:—

1. *a.* He returned back to the city which he claimed as his birthplace.
   b. He returned to his native city.

2. *a.* There is quite a good deal of labor and expenditure of money involved in the laying out and the making of a good tennis-court.
   b. To make a good tennis-court requires considerable labor and money.

3. *a.* In the various country communities everybody knows everybody else, and is generally on friendly terms with him or her, as the case may be.

b. In the country everybody knows his neighbors, and is usually on friendly terms with them.

4. *a.* I was finally compelled to abandon the study of these subjects on account of the fact that my father informed me that I should be obliged to give up my intention of going to college the following fall.

b. My father told me that I could not go to college the following fall; consequently I was at last compelled to give up these studies.

In the next place, a writer may occasionally obtain special emphasis by adroitly repeating important words or phrases, or by repeating the same form of sentence. The value of repetition as a means of securing emphasis is illustrated by the following quotations: —

1. He was *hated* throughout the country, *hated* at the India House, *hated*, above all, by those wealthy and powerful servants of the Company whose rapacity and tyranny he had withstood.

2. *All that is* good, *all that is* true, *all that is* beneficent, *be it* great or small, *be it* perfect or fragmentary, natural *as well as* supernatural, moral *as well as* material, comes from God.

3. *He knew that* the standard of morality among the natives of India differed widely from that established in England. *He knew that* he had to deal *with men* destitute of what in Europe is called honor; *with men* who would give any promise without hesitation, and break any promise without shame; *with men* who would unscrupulously employ corruption, perjury, forgery, to compass their ends.

4. He ordered his army to march against the English. He countermanded the order. He tore Clive's letters. He then sent answers in the most florid language of compliment. He ordered Watts out of his presence, and then threatened to impale him. He again sent for Watts and begged pardon for the insult.

In the third place, the use of figurative language is often a valuable aid to effectiveness. No definition is needed to explain the meaning of the term "figures of speech," or

"figurative language." The ordinary speech of plain people, as well as the more formal language of writers, abounds in words and phrases and statements that cannot be taken literally. With most people figurative language is as easy and natural as literal language. The average man uses it unconsciously and understands it without difficulty. He needs neither interpreter nor definitions of simile, metaphor, and personification when he reads sentences like the following: —

The sea was blanketed with a thick fog.

Books are lighthouses erected in the great sea of time.

If you would be pungent, be brief; for it is with words as with sunbeams — the more they are condensed, the deeper they burn.

The equator burns its course through the Indian Ocean, belts a path across Sumatra, strikes again into the sea, — and just here Asia ends and finishes with a period. This is the island and town of Singapore.

What a cunning silversmith is the Frost! The rarest workmanship of Delhi and Genoa copies him but clumsily, as if the fingers of all other artists were thumbs. Fern-work and lace-work and filigree in endless variety, and under it all the water tinkles like a distant guitar, or drums like a tambourine, or gurgles like the tokay of an anchorite's dream.

The figurative use of language, as exemplified in these quotations, serves to make the thought more clear, more vivid, more impressive, more striking. Oftentimes it happens that the thought and the feeling which one would express can be communicated in no other way so clearly and effectively as by the aid of figurative language. To be effective, figures of speech should not be labored or far-fetched, but should come naturally, almost unconsciously. Their proper function in prose composition is not to adorn, but to illuminate and enforce the writer's thought. Figurative language is effective because it gives to one's thought clearness, vividness, animation, impressiveness, emphasis.

The special force of the simile, the metaphor, and per-

sonification, three of the commonest figures of speech, depends upon resemblance and comparison. The examples of figurative language quoted in the foregoing paragraph are all based upon some real or fancied similarity. In the *simile* the resemblance is expressed: the qualities or the actions of one class of objects are explicitly compared with the qualities or the actions of another class. In the *metaphor*, on the contrary, the resemblance is not expressed, but implied: similar things or similar qualities are identified with each other. In *personification* the attributes and actions of human beings are assigned to animals, to inanimate objects, or to abstract qualities. Personification is also a mode of comparison, and rests upon some implied resemblance. The following quotations will not only serve as examples of these figures of speech, but will also illustrate the peculiar force of figurative language: —

Simile. — We all do fade as a leaf.

Happiness is reflective, like the light of heaven.

A man without a purpose is like a ship without a rudder.

Metaphor. — The Lord God is a sun and a shield.

Composition is the flowering out of a man's mind.

The Christian faith is a grand cathedral with divinely pictured windows. When you are standing without, you see no glory, nor can possibly imagine any; when you are standing within, every ray of light reveals to you a harmony of unspeakable splendor.

Personification. — The stars in their courses fought against Sisera.

Wit loses its respect with the good when seen in the company of malice.

Nature comes home to one most when he is at home; the stranger and the traveller find her a stranger and a traveller also.

Contrast, as well as comparison, is frequently used as a means of securing emphasis. Sharply contrasted ideas are set off against each other in the same sentence. This figure is commonly called *antithesis*. Its rhetorical value

depends upon the fact that when ideas are placed in contrast or opposition to each other, they are likely to produce a strong and vivid impression. Sometimes a writer finds it desirable further to increase the force of the contrast by putting the opposing ideas in the same grammatical construction. This form of antithesis is called the "balanced sentence." The similarity of structure is made to heighten the dissimilarity of ideas. The following quotations, the last three of which are examples of the balanced sentence, all illustrate the special force of antithesis: —

Affectation hides three times as many virtues as charity does sins.

There is in every true woman's heart a spark of heavenly fire, which lies dormant in the broad daylight of prosperity, but which kindles up and beams and blazes in the dark hour of adversity.

To err is human; to forgive, divine.

A false balance is an abomination to the Lord; but a just weight is His delight.

The mountains give their lost children berries and water; the sea mocks their thirst and lets them die.

To be effective, a writer should not only phrase his thought in forcible language, but he should also arrange the most important parts of a sentence in such a way as to give them the greatest prominence. The most emphatic points in the sentence are the beginning and the end. The very fact that the sentence is in a special sense the unit of discourse — the measure of one complete thought — makes the beginning and the end particularly emphatic; for the period at the close of a sentence marks the point where one thought ends and another begins. This point of separation between two sentences serves as a momentary resting-place for the eye. The word or phrase which immediately precedes it and the word or phrase which immediately follows it — that is, the end

of one sentence and the beginning of another — stand out with special prominence. Other marks of punctuation, notably the colon and the semicolon, afford similar resting-places for the eye, and also give some degree of prominence to words or phrases placed immediately before or after them. The period, however, since it marks a "complete stop," gives greater prominence than any other mark of punctuation. According to the principle of Emphasis, then, words and phrases of weight should, whenever it is possible, be placed at the beginning and the end of a sentence. Such an arrangement is sure to make upon the reader the strongest and most lasting impression. The most unemphatic arrangement is that which masses the most important words in the middle of the sentence; for the most significant parts are thus likely to be obscured by that which precedes and that which follows. It is the business of the writer, in applying the principle of Emphasis to the arrangement of the words, phases, and clauses of a sentence, first to decide which parts deserve the greatest prominence, and then to put these important parts at the beginning and the end. One can thus secure emphasis either by transposing important words, phrases, and clauses, or by changing the grammatical construction.

Some degree of emphasis is given to a word or phrase that is merely transposed from its natural position in the sentence, even though it may not be placed at the beginning or the end. In the normal arrangement of the various parts of the English sentence the subject stands before the predicate, an adjective precedes the noun that it modifies, an adjective phrase or clause follows the noun that it qualifies, and the adverbial elements are placed after the verb to which they belong. Any legitimate departure from this normal order will attract the reader's

attention and thereby make the transposed element emphatic. Thus mere inversion produces emphasis. Furthermore, when the transposed member stands either at the beginning or the end of the sentence, it becomes doubly emphatic. In the following sentences emphasis has been obtained by some change or changes from the normal order : —

Steadily the wondrous transfiguration went on.

Great are the triumphs of modern mechanical ingenuity.

Slavery they can have anywhere. . . . Freedom they can have from none but you.

Where population is sparse, discussion is difficult.

Among the members of this celebrated body was one to whom it owed the greater part of its celebrity.

When the Yosemite was discovered, it was supposed to be the only valley of its kind.

Being a little too fond of playing "the lady bountiful," Dora Vernon often bestowed her gifts indiscriminately and ostentatiously.

Sometimes, in order to make a sentence emphatic, it may be necessary to change the grammatical construction. The order of words in the English sentence, as has already been pointed out,[1] is a matter of special importance because the position of words, phrases, and clauses is one means of indicating grammatical relations. Whenever, in the arrangement of the various parts of a sentence, there appears to be a conflict between the principle of Coherence and that of Emphasis, Coherence should always have the right of way. Clearness and grammatical correctness are more important than emphasis. Usually, however, with a little ingenuity, it is possible to make a sentence both coherent and emphatic. If one form of expression, or mode of phrasing a thought, will not allow

[1] See page 228.

the important elements to stand at the beginning and the end, the grammatical construction can generally be so changed as to put the significant words in prominent places. Several examples will suffice to show how the emphasis of a sentence may thus be improved by a change in the grammatical construction: —

1. *a.* There are two kinds of drawings which have to be made.

b. Two kinds of drawings have to be made.

2. *a.* It is no less a piece of human perfection to detect the flavor of an olive than to find beauty in the colors of a sunset.

b. To detect the flavor of an olive is no less a piece of human perfection than to find beauty in the colors of a sunset.

3. *a.* It was a dark, cold night in midwinter that this lonely old mansion was entered by three burglars, who must somehow have obtained secret information concerning the plan of the house and the habits of its inmates.

b. One dark, cold night in midwinter three burglars, who must somehow have obtained secret information concerning the plan of the house and the habits of its inmates, entered this lonely old mansion.

4. *a.* At the surface I was supplied with a lamp and some matches by my guide.

b. At the surface my guide supplied me with a lamp and some matches.

Perhaps the most common type of unemphatic sentence is that which is produced by a feeble ending. Many sentences end weakly because some unimportant word or some subordinate element, such as a prepositional or a participial phrase, a relative or an adverbial clause, or perhaps a series of such phrases or clauses, has been permitted to stand at the end. Such sentences are ineffective because some insignificant and subordinate part has been allowed to usurp the place of greatest prominence. If a writer finds it impossible to make both the beginning and the end of a sentence emphatic, he should at least take pains to avoid a feeble ending. He can readily do this

by placing the subordinate parts in the body or at the beginning of the sentence. In other words, he can generally avoid an unemphatic ending by so rearranging the parts as to make the sentence periodic, or almost periodic. A few examples will show how the emphasis of a sentence may often be improved by some rearrangement which follows or approaches the periodic structure: —

1. *a.* The tramp jumped at least ten feet when I drew the pistol.

b. When I drew the pistol the tramp jumped at least ten feet.

2. *a.* Land that has never been farmed does not need any fertilizer, as a rule.

b. Land that has never been farmed does not, as a rule, need any fertilizer.

3. *a.* A solitary house stands upon a high hill near the town which I live in.

b. On a high hill near the town in which I live stands a solitary house.

4. *a.* In Shylock's opinion, Antonio committed the greatest wrong imaginable by practising those Christian virtues which are opposed to usury and mammon worship.

b. In Shylock's opinion, Antonio, by practising those Christian virtues which are opposed to usury and mammon worship, committed the greatest wrong imaginable.

Climax is another valuable aid to effectiveness. By climax is meant the arrangement of a series of words, phrases, or clauses in the order of their strength or importance. The whole series is arranged in a sort of ascending scale, with the weakest or least important member first, and the strongest member last. The advantage of this order is that the addition of each successive member of the series increases the strength or force of the sentence. The value of climax as a means of securing an effective arrangement of the words, phrases, and clauses of a sentence is illustrated by the following example: —

While a multitude of changes has remoulded the people of Europe, while languages and laws and creeds have passed over it like shadows over the landscape, the children of the Celt and the Goth, who fled to the mountains a thousand years ago, are found there now, and show us, in face and figure, in garb and in language, what their fathers were; show us how great is the contrast between them and the modern tribes dwelling below and around them; and show us, moreover, how adverse is the spirit of the mountains to mutability, and that there the fiery heart of freedom is found forever.

When this order is reversed, and the words or phrases or clauses of a series are arranged in anticlimax, the sentence becomes feebler and feebler as it approaches the end, because each successive member is weaker than the preceding one. The enfeebling effect of anticlimax is exemplified in the following sentences: —

He was dumfounded, amazed, surprised, by this unexpected turn of affairs.

Beside the most horrible chasms, amid intense darkness, along unseen paths, through falling snows, the mountain climber fearlessly and resolutely pursued his way, ever upward and onward.

The Puritans, who made the name of England terrible to every nation on the face of the earth, who trampled down king, church, and aristocracy, who formed, out of the most unpromising materials, the finest army Europe had ever seen, who directed their measures through a long series of eventful years, who roused the people to resistance, were no vulgar fanatics.

The student, by rearranging, in the order of their strength or importance, the series of words, phrases, and clauses in the foregoing sentences, can see for himself how valuable climax is as a means of securing effectiveness.

The writer, then, in order to make his sentences forcible, must give careful attention both to the mode of expression and to the arrangement of words, phrases, and clauses. The selection of precise and vivid words, the use of short,

pointed sentences whenever the thought is to be made particularly emphatic, the skilful repetition of important words, and the occasional resort to figurative language are all valuable aids to effective expression. Wordiness should be avoided because it enfeebles the thought and dulls the reader's attention. The places of greatest prominence in a sentence are the beginning and the end; and accordingly, to secure emphasis, the most important parts of a sentence should be placed at these two points. This emphatic arrangement one can obtain either by transposing words, phrases, and clauses from their natural order, or by changing the grammatical construction. The student should especially guard against ending a sentence feebly with some unimportant word or phrase, or with a succession of participial phrases or subordinate clauses. A feeble ending of this sort he can generally avoid by such a rearrangement as will make the sentence approach the periodic form. Further, in the arrangement of a series of words, phrases, or clauses, the order of climax should be followed. By these various means a writer should have no difficulty in making his sentences forcible in expression and emphatic in arrangement.

EXERCISES

I. Write a theme on some subject found in List IV, Appendix E, or on some subject suggested by this list.

II. Show how each of the following sentences may be made more emphatic: —

1. This steel is especially suitable for the making of razors and fine instruments on account of its hardness.

2. A school for so many pupils should have no less than six teachers to do justice to so many pupils.

3. A leather belt is placed around this wheel and around the other wheel at the end of the spindle.

4. A single brass bedstead stood in the corner and was surrounded by a large canopy.

5. The paper is put on one end of the machine in large rolls weighing five hundred pounds each.

6. Stores and saloons occupy the main street, and these are owned by negroes who have been thrifty and successful in the past.

7. There is a certain time in the year when one should begin to salt a deer-lick. This time is during the summer months, when the deer are running about from place to place in search of new grounds where they can find forage.

8. He said that the Indians had not had a happy day since the French fort was taken.

9. The merchants of the town thought that they saw ruin before them when the population of the town was thus reduced almost one-half.

10. Honor, liberty, life, property, are all at stake.

11. My father's house is by far the most interesting, as it contains many relics of the Civil War.

12. The plan was a failure, as a large part of the tunnel was under the river and the water came in.

13. The trip was taken on a beautiful day in the early part of the month of August in 1899.

14. There are twenty-five of these machines that the wood-pulp must pass through.

15. We put up in an old farmhouse for the night, because it looked very much like rain, and it was five miles to the nearest village.

16. The language of the imagination is the language of all the higher temperaments and moods of man's mind, the language of his devotions, of his aroused passions, of his excited intellect.

17. I worked as a salesman in a shoe-store on Saturdays and during my vacations while I was attending the high school.

18. The entire equipment of the school is out of date and is in fact just like that which was used in the public schools of a generation or more ago.

19. Thus the rural free delivery of mail is actually becoming self-supporting, instead of adding to the amount of taxation.

20. The wood loses about twenty-five per cent of its bulk and about eighty per cent of its weight in the process of changing to charcoal.

21. It will be a good thing for you to come to college prepared for the various "rushes" by bringing an old suit of clothes along with you from home.

22. In fact, the work, which was tiresome at first, soon began to seem less so.

23. There are also a number of men who have played basket-ball before, trying for the team.

24. The house in which the first American flag was made is the one place which holds the most fame in history of all the places of interest which I have ever visited.

25. There was a great deal of property taken and destroyed in the vicinity of my home at the time of General Lee's invasion of Pennsylvania.

26. It is examined again very carefully before it is passed into the trimming-room.

27. The danger in crossing a desert is very great, owing to the scarcity of water and the possibility of losing one's way.

28. Very little now remains to mark this spot but the foundation and a few pieces of wood.

29. The room had four large windows, which let plenty of light in.

30. One is free to give his attention to all the means of oratorical effectiveness when he has once memorized a declamation.

31. It may be true that college men have only a little practical training, but they generally do have some; and this small amount of practical training gives college men the lead in nearly every profession because it is reënforced by a broad theoretical training.

32. On the right extremity of Cemetery Ridge is Culp's Hill, rising at a sharp angle and covered with trees and underbrush.

33. The window-sashes have the glass all broken out of them and several have old green shades drawn over them.

34. He was uniformly successful and inspiring as a teacher.

35. We knew that the horse was somewhat wild, but we had never had any trouble with him before to speak of.

36. We spent several hours here in looking through the building under the direction of a guide.

37. The freshman mathematics are likely to prove difficult even to one who has had sufficient preparation, owing to the fact that the time which can be given to each branch is short, and the lessons are long on that account.

38. This house was built of stone and it should have stood for many years, since the walls were nearly two and a half feet thick.

39. Very little is known of Thomas Paine's life from the time of his release from prison in 1794 to that of his return to the United States on the invitation of Thomas Jefferson in 1802.

*40. I might perhaps have been inclined to ask questions at another time.

41. This stream is a most remarkable one on account of its picturesque surroundings and its pure water.

42. He was appointed by Napoleon municipal magistrate of Milan at the time of the French occupation of that city.

43. The most efficient help that we could have desired now arrived, as if on purpose to second our undertaking.

44. As a Christian he was pure, devout, and truthful; as a friend and neighbor he was helpful and unselfish; as a husband and father he was loving, kind, and genial; in politics he was an uncompromising Democrat.

45. The water flows from under a large rock at the foot of a hill, forms into a stream, and runs down through the valley till it meets the creek, as one would naturally expect.

46. Theoretical principles are set forth by a science, while an art makes a practical application of these principles.

47. The land on which the village stood is used for farming purposes at the present time.

48. For over two miles the bottom is of solid rock except in a few places where there are falls.

49. Much of the contention and the bitterness of the world will disappear when we shall have learned to put ourselves in the place of others.

50. Our car was completely smashed to pieces, having been struck by the engine of the other train.

51. A wheel, which has little ridges on its surface, is placed in a tapering circular tube, and a small handle is fastened at the point where the axis enters the tube.

52. It began to rain shortly after I took refuge in the tree, and I was compelled to stay here in the rain for the rest of the afternoon, by the bull, which was at no time more than twenty yards away.

53. I could readily write a theme on "How Coal is Mined," as I live in the heart of the largest anthracite coal region in the world.

54. Nearly all the misery, crime, distress, and idleness in the world can be traced to strong drink.

55. There are four small rooms on the first floor.

56. Most of the positions which yield large salaries are held by college graduates at the present time.

57. The force is doubled when one stationary and one fixed pulley are used.

58. Any one can readily see that these doctrines are objectionable to a certain extent, from an orthodox point of view.

59. Meet, if you dare, the appalling countenances of those who sent you here, and tell them that you suppressed all the noble feelings prompted by religion, by humanity, by national independence, and by liberality; that the spectres of cimeters and crescents gleamed before you and alarmed you; that you cannot tell how, but that some unknown dread, some indefinable danger, some indescribable apprehension, affrighted you; and that you shrank from the declaration of your own sentiments.

60. I made no systematic study of electricity until I entered the high school and there took up the study of physics. I studied as much of this, the subject that I liked best, as is contained in an ordinary high school text-book on physics. I spent considerable time on the study of physics. It soon became evident to me that the part of physics which appealed to me most strongly was that which dealt with the subject of electricity. I had not lost my early fondness for mechanics, but I had a greater liking for that branch of physics which treats of electricity.

CHAPTER XVIII

EASE AND ELEGANCE

To attain the highest success, a writer should phrase his thoughts not only with clearness and force, but also with ease and elegance. Clearness is the first requisite; one should say precisely what he means. Force, or effectiveness, stands next in importance; one ought to express his meaning in such a way as to command the reader's attention. These two qualities are absolutely indispensable; and they should therefore take precedence of all others. It rarely happens, however, that there is any real conflict between these two essentials and those artistic qualities which help to give literary value to a composition. Smoothness and refinement are worth striving for because they please the reader. They are worth seeking both because they are positive excellences, and because they help to hold the reader's attention. Any lack of ease, or of dignity, or of refinement, offends good taste and destroys interest. An awkward or crude or vulgar mode of expression is a stumbling-block in the way of the reader.

Some workmen do things easily and naturally, without hitch or jar; others toil at their task clumsily and awkwardly, tugging and straining with great apparent effort. There is the same difference in writers. The style of the great English and American prose-writers is easy, smooth, and flowing. These masters appear to accomplish their purpose without effort. Their thought seems almost to

phrase itself. They leave no gaps or rough places. The reader glides on smoothly from sentence to sentence, from paragraph to paragraph, and turns over with pleasure one perfect page after another. The unpractised writer, on the other hand, can hardly compose a short theme without showing the mighty effort he is putting forth. He violates both emphasis and euphony by the unnecessary repetition of the same words or the same sounds. He uses the same form of sentence with monotonous frequency. He may write either a series of long, lumbering sentences or a succession of short, jerky ones. Oftentimes his thought, instead of flowing smoothly in a straightforward, natural course, will turn and twist about, and occasionally hide behind some harsh or clumsy phrase. His work lacks ease because he has not yet fully learned his art.

No text-book can give the student a satisfactory recipe for ease; no teacher can tell him precisely how he may acquire an easy style. "True ease in writing," says Pope, "comes from art." In other words, ease comes only with a mastery of the language as the instrument of expression. The student must, for the most part, learn for himself. He must write constantly; he must make innumerable experiments; he must apply to his work the most searching criticism. Yet, although ease is not a thing that can be taught, like the rules of grammar, it is perhaps possible to make a few helpful suggestions.

1. *Study the great masterpieces of English prose.* Read and study the works of such writers as Hawthorne, Irving, Addison, Macaulay, Newman, Ruskin, Stevenson, and Thackeray. You will thus learn something of the infinite variety and flexibility of which the English language is capable. You may thus obtain some degree of ease in your own writing, not by conscious imitation of these great

models, but by a process of unconscious absorption; for an easy style, like easy manners, is partly due to the unconscious influence of good associates.

2. *Seek variety.* "The one rule," says Stevenson, "is to be infinitely various." Monotony of any sort displeases and repels the reader. Any repetition, except when it is necessary for clearness or force, wearies him. The English language is rich in synonyms, and there is little excuse for the tiresome repetition of the same word or the same sound. One soon tires of a writer who makes all his sentences of about equal length, or casts them all in the same mould. Our native tongue is flexible enough to admit of a wide variety in the length and the structure of sentences, and in the arrangement of words, phrases, and clauses. By using synonyms, by transposing words and phrases, by changing the grammatical construction, by varying the form and the length of his sentence, by constantly experimenting with the language, the student can secure a pleasing variety in the mode of expression. In short, with a little ingenuity, almost any one can obtain enough variety in word and sound and structure to make his thought flow easily and smoothly.

3. *Test every sentence by reading it aloud.* Ease is very largely a matter of euphony. The ear must be trained to detect the needless repetition of words, the jingling recurrence of the same sound, and any combination of words which are hard to pronounce together. These common sins against euphony a writer can usually discover only by reading his composition aloud. When he has once detected any disagreeable roughness or sameness of sound, he will generally find it an easy matter to remove the fault by the use of different words, or by some change in the grammatical construction, or by a rearrangement of the

sentence. The student must train himself to recognize any lack of smoothness in his work; and he can best give himself this training by reading aloud every sentence and paragraph that he writes. It is perhaps worth while to point out more fully and to illustrate the commonest violations of euphony.

(*a*) The needless repetition of the same word annoys the reader and spoils the ease and smoothness of the sentence. This fault is illustrated by the following examples: —

> We are willing to admit *that* it is not at all improbable *that* some students may become so deeply interested in their athletic sports *that* they will actually forget *that* to acquire an education was their primary purpose in coming to college.
>
> The man who does this work is called a *drawer*. A *drawer* ordinarily *draws* two or three ovens a day, but a good *drawer* can sometimes *draw* four. A *drawer* begins his work about two o'clock in the morning and finishes about noon.

(*b*) Akin to the faulty repetition of the same expression is the jingling recurrence of the same sound. The specific fault may be an inadvertent rhyme, the unintentional repetition of some syllable like *-ness*, *-ence*, *-in*, *-ly*, or *-ing*, excessive alliteration, or too much sibilance. These faults, which can generally be removed with a little ingenuity, are illustrated by the following sentences: —

> When the cutting is com*pleted*, the mass again is *heated*.
>
> By wak*ing* ear*ly* morn*ings*, by be*ing* particular*ly* active*ly* engaged all day, and by study*ing* hard even*ings*, he attained success, but ruined his health.
>
> In ordinary prose the *al*leged "*a*rtful *a*id" of *al*literation *al*most *al*ways *a*ppears to be *a*n *a*rtificial *a*nd questionable device.
>
> Euphony en*j*oins us to avoid *jingling* and *jangling* and *j*arr*ing* sounds.
>
> Careful writer*s* alway*s* avoid *s*uch ex*cess*ive *s*ibilan*c*e a*s* i*s* produ*c*ed by a *s*uc*cess*ion of *s*-*s*ound*s*.

(*c*) The easy movement of a sentence is sometimes clogged by a harsh combination of sounds, or by a succession of accented or of unaccented syllables. In the following sentences the lack of smoothness is evident: —

He took up the *whole frail fabric* and carefully removed every *fifth thread.*

This little group of timid children seemed to recoil when they heard the *voices of the hoarse roysterers* who were coming down the street.

He worked hard there and got no pay.

This tribunal was not the first peremptorily to adjudge a prisoner's guilt and arbitrarily to pronounce his doom.

In the first two sentences smoothness is destroyed by certain combinations of sounds which are hard to pronounce together. The third sentence lacks ease because it is made up of a series of accented monosyllables. In the fourth example a group of six unaccented syllables occurs in each of the two phrases, "peremptorily to adjudge" and "arbitrarily to pronounce."

Perhaps the most serious and frequent violations of ease are caused by sheer awkwardness either in the mode of expression or in the arrangement of words and phrases. The offending member is often a clumsy and unwieldy expression. Sometimes the awkwardness is caused by an unbroken cluster of adverbial phrases. Occasionally a single word ends a sentence with a sudden jerk. Again, when unimportant words are so placed as to receive undue stress, the easy movement of the sentence is destroyed. All these faults are illustrated by the following examples: —

1. The harvesting of tobacco occurs in the latter part of August.

2. Certainly no one can entertain an idea other than that electric lights would be a benefit to Milton.

3. I stepped off the train at Philadelphia, in the Broad Street Station, at eight o'clock in the morning.

4. The mill contains a cylinder in which a horizontal shaft, about twenty feet long and similar to a screw-propeller, revolves.

5. This course is quite as good as, and in some respects better than, the one given last year.

With very little effort all awkwardness can be removed from these sentences; and any one can see how much is gained by the revision: —

1. Tobacco is harvested in the latter part of August.

2. Certainly every one must admit that electric lights would be a benefit to Milton.

3. At eight o'clock in the morning I stepped off the train in the Broad Street Station at Philadelphia.

4. The mill contains a cylinder in which revolves a horizontal shaft about twenty feet long, and similar to a screw-propeller.

5. This course is quite as good as the one given last year, and in some respects even better.

Elegance, like ease, is an artistic quality. It has been defined as that "quality of style which pleases the taste." It is impossible to give any very satisfactory definition or description of this quality. The term *elegance* stands for propriety, good taste, and refinement in the use of language. Here, again, in the way of positive directions, a text-book cannot give the student much help. No one can furnish him with a simple analysis of elegance or an easy recipe for securing it. He must be content to advance slowly. Two things he can do for himself: by reading the works of good English and American prose-writers he can cultivate good taste in literature, a sense of propriety in the use of language, and an intelligent appreciation of literary refinement and beauty; and in his practical work of theme-writing he can strive to show his regard for good taste and propriety, and to give refinement and finish to his work. Positive elegance must come to a writer as a

result of thoughtful reading and that unremitting practice which alone brings mastery.

Positive inelegance should always be avoided. No one can afford to offend his readers by ignorance, awkwardness, or slovenliness. A man's style will justly be considered inelegant if he allows himself to violate Good Use or good taste. He must avoid solecisms and improprieties in the use of words. He must shun incongruity, uncouthness, and vulgarity. The man who keeps his writing free from violations of Good Use and good taste, and who conscientiously aims at refinement in the use of language, is in a fair way to attain elegance.

Good taste is sometimes violated in the use of figurative language. Several common errors should be pointed out. First, in prose composition figures of speech should not be used purely for ornament; nor should they be used when the thought is ordinary and commonplace. Secondly, figurative language should not be incongruously mixed with literal statement. Thirdly, a figure of speech should not be inconsistent or absurd. Fourthly, one figure of speech should not be mixed with another. These faults in the use of figurative language are illustrated by the following examples: —

1. It was then that the finger of Finance first pointed out the possibilities of fruit culture.

2. Chaucer was the father of English poetry and a great student of Italian literature.

3. Finding that he could not succeed in athletics, he next tried his hand at singing.

4. This statement was the keynote of the Democratic platform, and strict adherence to it was regarded as a sure touchstone for testing party loyalty.

In conclusion, a word of caution is necessary. Ease and elegance should not be obtained at the expense of

clearness and effectiveness. Sense should not be sacrificed to sound; nor should strength give way to smoothness and refinement. Artistic perfection should be made to accompany the more substantial qualities of good writing, but it should never be allowed to take their place.

EXERCISES

I. Write a theme on one of the subjects found in List V, Appendix E, or on some subject suggested by this list.

II. Point out, in each of the following sentences, any violation of ease or elegance, and show how the fault may be removed: —

1. The river, sparkling in the sun, and the distant mountains, clothed in blue, made a scene that, if once seen, will never be forgotten.

2. At the age of nineteen a boy begins to look at life from a more serious point of view than that from which he did a few years previously.

3. By doing piece-work, in each month the wood-turner receives as much as if not more than if he were working by the day.

4. On one side of the street was a gutter, in which ran clear, cold spring water, which had been caught on Mont Pelée, which seemed to tower above us now.

5. A man will not deal there unless he has to.

6. Those defects that are detected are immediately corrected.

7. At that time the country was densely covered with huge pine, hemlock, and oak trees. These forests furnished a fine rendezvous for large game. It was for this game that a party of settlers decided to hunt.

8. I have always regarded my then situation as an exceedingly annoying and perplexing predicament.

9. The barrel was now taken in tow by men in a boat and taken to the shore.

10. In the early spring the maple-sugar makers get ready to make maple sugar.

11. As a result of the hills of Greensburg, it is well drained and therefore free from much sickness.

12. The new material alone is treated in this way, as the advertisements are set up by hand each day.

13. He walked about twenty yards away from, then leisurely returned to, and finally entered the carriage.

14. The stowing away of the hay in the mow is a very hot job for the person in the mow. The farmer will probably stand on the wagon and pitch the hay into the mow, while his helpers will be in the mow, distributing the hay evenly over the mow.

15. The hardest part of my preparation for college was deciding where to prepare for college, and what college I was going to prepare for.

16. The incompetent school board is not by any means the weakest of the four mentioned points.

17. There are decidedly two sides to this question.

18. Men and women of this class seem to have no perception of the proper blending of colors whatever.

19. Scarcely a day passes by but one may find a crowd of young people here having a picnic.

20. As soon as the wild-cat hit the ground one of the men hit it with a large club.

21. The new political current, which was fanned into an ardent flame by the fiery eloquence of the spell-binders, failed to take root in this region.

22. A physician must take the abuse of patients who do not wish to take his medicine.

23. Upon this grave stood a battered iron cross badly rusted by the tooth of time.

24. A few weeks ago, on a Sunday afternoon, I with three of my friends took a trip up Standing Stone Mountain.

25. The grounds of the different schools are beautiful. They are planted with different kinds of shade trees. Upon each campus is a well of excellent water. These wells are cleaned out at least once every year. This precaution removes all fear of disease. Each campus also has a tall flag-pole. From each pole float the stars and stripes during school days. This teaches patriotism.

26. The next speech was little more than a flowery flow of language.

27. That is an abuse that, I am sure, even the plea that such has always been the custom should not excuse.

28. He was much astounded by the — to him — impossible and unheard-of combination of drunkenness and religion.

29. These two teachers influenced me in that they also caused me to take a deeper interest in my studies and to prepare for college.

30. Then I looked and saw that goat go straight up the plank.

31. If the students are required to attend chapel, the teachers should be required to too.

32. All these have had their day, and they have gone their way, and now we hear of them no more.

33. There are fewer outbreaks here than might be expected in a country which is only just emerging from the pursuit of its infant industries.

34. The water is run through large pipes and filters from the reservoirs into the pumps by means of gravitation.

35. The business buildings are, on the whole, modern in structure, there being a number of large business blocks and handsome residences.

36. Being thus connected with the rest of the country, we received good fresh provisions and many visitors.

37. It seems that her years of observation, as well as those of her ancestors, had made it conclusive that it was a certain condition of the new moon that caused the rainy weather.

38. The cries of anguish that arose from those dishevelled and grief-stricken women presented an exciting spectacle.

39. When one is studying by one's self, it is a great deal harder to get a lesson by himself than if he had some one with him that has been over like work before.

40. In this question, as in all matters of economic interest, any steps that the government takes must go hand in hand with those of the manufacturers.

41. By means of the telephone and the telegraph intelligence is transmitted almost instantaneously to great distances over a wire.

42. The soft sticky mud associated itself intimately with our shoes and trousers.

43. The land being near Philadelphia, which affords a good market for produce, the principal occupation of the people is farming.

44. Two reservoirs of this size keep the town from any fear of the demand exhausting the supply of water in case of a large fire or a prolonged drought.

45. These match-splints are cut out of blocks of wood twice as long as the match, as we see it, is.

CHAPTER XIX

THE REVISION OF THE SENTENCE

However skilful a writer may be, it rarely happens that the first draft of his composition is a finished piece of writing. The important work of revision yet remains. In the haste of composition, when a number of thoughts come thronging into one's mind, and in the all-absorbing task of giving adequate expression to each thought as it arises, every one is liable to violate some of the principles of Rhetoric and some of the requirements of Good Use; for no man, in the act of expressing his thoughts, can give his conscious attention to the many matters of detail and the various devices which are necessary to the correctness, clearness, and effectiveness of the sentence. Hence, in the revision of his theme, the student will find it necessary to correct any violations of Good Use, and to make a rigid application of the principles of Composition to the construction of his sentences.

In revising his work one should first of all see that each sentence is perfect in such purely mechanical matters as capitalization, punctuation, and spelling. No one is likely to find it a very difficult task to learn the correct use of capital letters and the marks of punctuation. Such errors as are due to haste or inadvertence can readily be corrected. If a student has any doubt as to the correct spelling of a word, he should not be too lazy or indifferent to consult

the dictionary. Having learned what Good Use has prescribed in these matters, he should make it a point to see that every sentence is mechanically perfect before he leaves it.

Again, both in the words that he uses and in the grammatical construction of his sentences, the student, in revising his theme, should be on the lookout for any violation of Good Use. He should not permit himself to use a single word loosely or carelessly, without sufficient knowledge of its meaning and its propriety.[1] Any doubt should be immediately cleared up by reference to the dictionary. In like manner he should scrutinize each sentence for the purpose of discovering and correcting any error in grammar or any violation of English idiom. In the haste of composition scarcely any one writes with invariable correctness. Yet if the student's work receives competent criticism, he soon learns what particular mistakes in grammar he is liable to make. In revising the first draft of his theme he should make it his business to correct those errors which are peculiar to himself and any others which he may have unwittingly made.

When the sentence has been made to conform to all the requirements of Good Use, it should next be examined with reference to the principles of Composition. The student will find it natural to inquire first whether the principle of Unity has been applied to the sentence; for it is to this principle that the sentence owes its existence. He will test the unity of each sentence by asking himself questions like the following: Is this group of words really a sentence? Is it grammatically complete, or is it merely a phrase or a clause masquerading as a sentence? Does it

[1] For a discussion of Good Use as it applies to words, the student is referred to the next chapter.

express a complete thought, or is it only a fragment of a complete thought, belonging in reality to the preceding or to the following sentence? Are all its parts so intimately and inseparably related as to give it organic unity? Or does it express several complete thoughts which should be put into separate sentences? Finally, does it possess unity of expression? That is to say, is the form of the sentence such as to make the unity of thought immediately evident to the reader? By applying such tests as these one will be able so to revise each sentence as to give it both unity of thought and unity of expression.

The principle of Coherence should next be applied to the revision of each sentence. The writer should ask himself: Is there a clear, logical relation between this sentence and the preceding sentence or sentences? Is a connecting word necessary, and have I used the right one? Does every personal, demonstrative, and relative pronoun have an unmistakable antecedent? Does every participial phrase refer definitely to the noun or pronoun to which it belongs? Have I omitted any word or phrase that is essential to perfect clearness? In the expression of ideas that are similar and parallel, have I made any needless or confusing change in the grammatical construction? In short, have I expressed my thought with such absolute clearness that the reader cannot possibly misunderstand my meaning? The student who can give himself satisfactory answers to these questions may feel sure that he has applied the principle of Coherence to his sentences.

When a writer has made each sentence coherent, he should next aim to make it emphatic. In his endeavor to secure effectiveness he may well ask himself (1) whether he has adopted the most effective mode of expression, and (2) whether he has obtained the most emphatic arrange-

ment. In seeking a practical answer to the first of these questions, he may occasionally find it possible to use a more forcible word, or to express his thought more concisely, or to emphasize important words by skilful repetition, or to obtain vividness and force by the use of figurative language. In the second place, he should note whether the most important words in the sentence stand at the beginning and the end. If he finds them massed somewhere in the body of the sentence, he should so rearrange the parts or so change the construction as to give the most significant words a place of prominence at the beginning or the end. If he finds it impossible to make both these points emphatic, he should at least avoid a feeble ending. He should also take pains to follow the order of climax in the arrangement of a series of words, phrases, or clauses. By thus scrutinizing both the mode of expression and the arrangement, he can readily apply the principle of Emphasis to the revision of his sentences.

Finally, the student should examine all the sentences of his theme in order to detect any violations of ease and elegance. In revising his work he should try to secure sufficient variety in the length and the grammatical construction of sentences, and in the arrangement of phrases and clauses; he should remove tiresome repetitions, any jingling recurrence of the same sound, any harsh or unwieldy phrases; he should be on the lookout for any awkwardness in expression or in arrangement; and he should correct any violations of good taste. In a word, he should polish his work; he should aim to give artistic perfection to every sentence and every paragraph that he writes.

EXERCISES

I. Write a theme on one of the subjects found in List VI, Appendix E, or on one of the subjects suggested by this list.

II. Criticise the following sentences, and revise them in such a way as to remove all errors and defects: —

1. Train-load after train-load of coal are hauled out of this region daily.

2. The stone is now taken to a planer. This planer consists of a moving, platform-like table. This table carries the stone back and forth under sharp chisels.

3. He receives a certain sum for each trip according to the distance, which averages about a dollar a mile.

4. I went home saying I should never yell and get so excited again, and I never have.

5. There is enough and to spare of ways to curb the most lordly spirit without being cruel.

6. This second mode of powwowing is best illustrated at a shooting-match, where most of the shooters are of a superstitious nature. If some one is doing good shooting, and suddenly he makes a few bad shots, he immediately believes that his gun is bewitched.

7. My native town is a city of about fifty thousand people, with abundant communication with the outside world, whose principal industry is the mining of anthracite coal.

8. On returning home, the certificate which I had received as a result of this examination admitted me to the Leavenworth High School.

9. The snowball battle which occurred last Thursday between the two classes was the result of the freshmen getting their picture taken.

10. The passengers stepped out at Mount Vernon and visited the home of the nation's great founder for an hour.

11. The English work consisted of the study of rhetoric and a little practice in composition was given the first year.

12. The Hungarians have black hair, dark eyes, a high forehead, and a large round face.

13. On each side of the grove is situated two apple orchards.

14. One row of cottages were now on fire, so we had to retire.

15. There are mountains on the other side of the river and at the east end of the town the river turns south, cutting through the moun-

tains, which gives a view of Columbia, Wrightsville, and the surrounding country.

16. This man then made a visit to each of their homes and tried to persuade him to become a book agent.

17. Pig-iron is made at Greenwood Furnace differently from what it is at any other place in the state.

18. The dance is one that is looked forward to by all the teachers as a night of great enjoyment.

19. In the packing-room girls sort the matches and pack the good ones into boxes. These boxes hold from fifty to five hundred matches each.

20. Although my native town is not so large, it has a neat appearance.

21. Other men are employed by the Sheridan Iron Company and work in the furnaces at Sheridan.

22. The trip coming back seemed longer than the one going.

23. Straight before us we beheld a beautiful sunset. It was sinking and was soon a mere segment cut out by the V of the hills.

24. In the rolling-room iron bars are gradually flattened into plates about an eighth of an inch thick, after running through eight sets of rollers.

25. Remembering that a lumberman claims no place in society nor tries to win for himself any fame, and then to look at the noble deeds of loyalty and finally at the compensation they receive for their work, I think that the life of a lumberman is a most interesting one.

26. The last reason is perhaps as important in a sense and yet not more so than the first.

27. The game that impressed me most was one of destiny.

28. Much driftwood and valuable timber was sweeping along with the flood.

29. If we did not play well, we played up to a standard that we thought well.

30. But a fireman has something else to do than to sit and ring the bell, and it was not very long before I found out that it was hard work.

31. This single ladder is wide enough to admit of another narrower one laying between the stiles.

32. Everything seemed to be fast asleep except a rooster, who loudly announced the coming of day.

33. After pouring, the sand is knocked off and the castings are ready for use, as soon as they become cool enough to handle.

34. The first years, then, when the foundation is laid, is what requires care and thought.

35. The air at this hour was cool and added greatly to our enjoyment.

36. Thousands of men are engaged in digging and conveying coal from the mines to the consumer.

37. The situation of the school makes it an ideal place for students, as it has a healthful climate.

38. A certain amount is put into the furnace at one time. This is regulated by the number of blowers at work.

39. When I thought of what depended on me, it was felt by me as a constant spur to do my best.

40. When this is done, the cigar is laid on the cutter, cut off the proper length, laid on a rack, tied a hundred in a bundle, and taken to the packing-room.

41. The photographer was very slow and in consequence he did not take a good picture, as some of the sophomores spied us, and a number of freshmen had to protect his instruments.

42. While swearing at a man who had lost all his money by gambling, and who had come to him asking him for a loan, he fell over dead.

43. Marion is situated in the Cumberland Valley, midway between Harrisburg and Winchester, which is one of the most delightful valleys in the state.

44. A large amount of time and money are spent each year in training the various athletic teams.

45. I always found him exceedingly amusing when watching him driving his team.

46. The house in which they were concealed was a large double one built of stone, and which a man of the name of Bowen owned, who rented it to John Powell, who owned the slaves.

47. I turned from them with my ardor for selling books at low tide.

48. We ate like starvelings, and after finishing our meal, we decided to let some one else try their luck.

49. I then made a device the shape of a figure 4 out of a one-half-inch-square stick, to hold the lid up.

50. Seven years I spent in foolish idleness, twelve in going to school, and one in an insurance office.

51. Desirous of becoming an electrical engineer, no other college offered me a course in which theory and practice are as judiciously combined as in this institution.

52. The finest and greatest quality of manliness is love. The quality which makes us think kindly of our fellow-men whenever it is at all possible to do so; the quality which bids us think as little as possible of ourselves and to concede as much as possible to others.

53. At last we reached home, much too early for us, but to the great delight of the chaperons, who thought we were the noisiest crowd they ever took care of.

54. When the pattern-maker gets the drawings, his business is to make all the parts which are to be cast, out of wood.

55. So that we would not miss the same recitation two days of every week, we would not go the same period every week, but change our time of going.

56. I desire to be a good mechanical engineer, for I think it is the finest profession a man can follow.

57. Catching crabs is different from all other kinds of fishing, for they are caught by salted eels being inserted between the strands of a rope.

58. There has recently been a few houses built on the spot where the town stood originally.

59. I remember entering the clothing store of a Jew, who, as everybody knows, is a close business man.

60. The cylinders are then flattened by rubbing blocks of hard wood fastened to long poles, over them.

61. After walking about the grounds for an hour, the whistle sounded and we had to hurry away.

62. We were fishing with pickerel hooks, and we caught a big one in less than ten minutes.

63. A fuse is also placed near this switch. This fuse is a small wire tested to carry a certain number of volts. Its purpose is to prevent heavy currents of electricity from passing into the building.

64. As soon as it was light the people begun to search for dead bodies, which probably continued for nearly a month.

65. An hour's rowing tired us, so we landed and had our lunch.

66. Nearly every wave broke over the boat and were fast filling it with water.

67. After drifting helplessly for a half an hour, a change of wind drove us toward a small island.

68. There were three drawers in the end of each table, in which to store unfinished pieces of work.

69. When the athletic teams go away to play with another team, many lessons are missed, and those that have too much interest in athletic sports are generally those that do not make up the lessons they missed.

70. It seems perfectly natural that a doctor should go in and see a person who may have the most contagious disease, and nevertheless be placed in a most dangerous position, as, after all, he is only human and is liable to contract the same disease and carry it to his family or some other patient, all of which go to make up the perils of a doctor's life.

V

WORDS AND PHRASES

CHAPTER XX

GOOD USE

"LANGUAGE," says Dr. Campbell in his "Philosophy of Rhetoric," "is purely a species of fashion, in which, by the general but tacit consent of the people of a particular state or country, certain sounds come to be appropriated to certain things as their signs, and certain ways of inflecting and combining these sounds come to be established as denoting the relations which subsist among the things signified. It is not the business of grammar to give law to the fashions which regulate our speech. On the contrary, from its conformity to these, and from that alone, it derives all its authority and value. . . . To the tribunal of use, as to the supreme authority, we are entitled to appeal from the laws and decisions of grammarians."[1]

Good Use governs not only the forms of words and the ways in which they may be combined into sentences, but also the selection of words which one may use with propriety. Certain requirements of grammar, or rules of Good Use in the sentence, have already been set forth in the chapter on "Correctness." Good Use, as it applies to individual words and phrases, has for more than a century been discussed under three heads, — *reputable*, *national*, and *present* use.[2] These technical terms need some explanation.

[1] See page 10.

[2] The next three paragraphs contain, in an abridged form, Dr. Campbell's ex-

Good Use implies not only currency, but *reputable* custom. "Among the populace many words and idioms prevail which, notwithstanding a use pretty uniform and extensive, are considered as corrupt, and which, like counterfeit money, though common, are not valued. This is particularly the case with those terms and phrases which critics have denominated vulgarisms. Their use is not reputable. From the practice of those who are conversant in any art, we always take the sense of the terms belonging to that art. In like manner, from the practice of those who have had a liberal education, we judge of the general use in language. In what concerns the words themselves, their construction and application, it is of importance to have some certain, steady, and well-known standard to recur to, a standard which every one has access to canvass and examine. This can be no other than authors of reputation. Accordingly, we find that these are, by universal consent, in actual possession of this authority. To this tribunal, when any doubt arises, the appeal is always made." Under Good Use "we must understand to be comprehended whatever modes of speech are authorized as good by the writings of a great number, if not the majority, of celebrated authors."

"Another qualification of the term *use* which deserves our attention is that it should be *national*." National use stands opposed to provincial, professional, and foreign use. A provincialism is a term that passes current only in some particular district or locality. The same reasons which for-

position of Good Use as set forth in his "Philosophy of Rhetoric." Dr. Campbell's analysis and discussion of Good Use are so excellent that nearly all subsequent writers who have treated this subject have been constrained to accept his conclusions. Where his exact words have been given, marks of quotation have been used, even though much is omitted, and though the passages quoted are not continuous.

bid the use of provincial dialects "may be applied to professional dialects, or the cant which is sometimes observed to prevail among those of the same profession or way of life. The currency of the latter cannot be so exactly circumscribed as that of the former; but their use is not on that account either more extensive or more reputable. National use may also be opposed to foreign. The introduction of extraneous words and idioms from other languages and foreign nations cannot be a smaller transgression against the established custom of the English tongue than the introduction of words and idioms" peculiar to some particular locality. "The only difference between them is that one is more commonly the error of the learned, the other of the vulgar. Thus two essential qualities of usage in regard to language have been settled, — that it be both reputable and national."

There will naturally arise here another question: Is not reputable and national use in the same country different at different periods? "If so, to the usage of what period shall we attach ourselves as the proper rule?" In other words, it may be asked, In what sense are we to understand the term *present use?* "How far may we safely range in quest of authorities? At what distance backward from this moment are authors still to be accounted as possessing a legislative voice in language?" To these questions "it is difficult to give an answer with all the precision that might be desired. When the word *present* is used of language, its proper contrary is not *ancient* but *obsolete*." It is best for a writer to consider those words and idioms as obsolete which have been disused by all good authors. "On the other hand, it may be said, Are we to catch at every new-fashioned term and phrase which whim or affectation may invent, or folly circulate? Can this ever

tend to give dignity to our style, or permanence to our language? Surely it cannot. If we recur to the standard already assigned — namely, the writings of a plurality of celebrated authors — there will be no scope for the comprehension of words and idioms which can be denominated novel and upstart. It must be owned that we often meet with such terms and phrases. They obtrude themselves upon us from every quarter, in all the daily papers, letters, addresses, etc. Such words and phrases are, at the most, but the insects of a season. The people, always fickle, are just as prompt to drop them as they were to take them up. Not one in a hundred survives the particular occasion or party-struggle that gave it birth."

Good Use, then, is determined by a threefold standard: a word or an idiom is considered to be in good use when it has received the sanction of the best writers; when it is generally acceptable and intelligible throughout the country; and when it is used by the best writers of the present day. *Reputable*, *national*, and *present* are, as Dr. Campbell says, the essential attributes of "that use which is the sole mistress of language."

From this brief discussion it is clear that Good Use changes from time to time. In Chaucer and in Shakespeare and in Milton are found many words and turns of expression that are now obsolete. The English that was written a thousand years ago, in the time of King Alfred, can hardly be recognized by the ordinary reader as the language that he speaks and writes to-day. On the other hand, the best writers of the present time employ many words that would have been unintelligible only a generation ago. Great changes in the life and civilization of a people usually affect the language. With the disappearance of the feudal system, for instance, many words

that had long been in common use ceased to live. Again, some new invention, which, like that of the steam-engine, has a far-reaching effect upon human life and progress, is likely to usher in a throng of new words. Thus many old words disappear because they are no longer needed, and many new words come into use because they are needed as the symbols of new ideas. Often, however, words come and go at the whim of inexplicable fashion. Growth and change mark the history of every living language. Only a dead language can stand still.[1]

The violations of Good Use are commonly divided into three classes, — *solecisms*, *barbarisms*, and *improprieties*. A solecism is a construction that violates some rule of grammar. The commonest solecisms have already been pointed out in the chapter on "Correctness." A barbarism is a word that is not in reputable, national, or present use. An impropriety is a word that is used in a sense not authorized by Good Use. Among the common classes of barbarisms and improprieties may be noted the following: —

1. There are a large number of *common vulgarisms* which writers of good sense and good taste will instinctively avoid. The use of such words as the following is an indication of vulgarity or ignorance: —

chaw	nigger	complected
cuss	overly	flustrated
dern	ain't	disremember
grub	gab	hadn't ought

2. Another class of words not in reputable use comes from that "vagabond language" called *slang*. "Slang is seldom controlled by any regard for propriety, and it bids

[1] See page 20.

deliberate defiance to all considerations of good taste." The writer who has any regard for the purity of his diction and the integrity of his vocabulary will avoid such expressions as the following: —

cinch	rubber-neck	bug-house
grind	spondulix	snide
all-fired	in cahoot	savvy
bang-up	out-of-sight	nit
corker	soft snap	pal
swipe	knocker	on a toot

3. A careful writer will avoid *provincialisms* because they are not in national and reputable use. Therefore they are not generally intelligible. It is worth one's while to keep his speech and writing free from all dialect forms. Some localisms are improprieties; others are barbarisms. The following terms, each of which is peculiar to some particular locality or district, are not in good use: —

dumb (stupid)	clever (good-natured)
gums (overshoes)	puny (sickly)
tote (carry)	reckon (suppose)
sun-up (sunrise)	a poke (a paper bag)
favor (resemble)	a dornick (a stone)
a banquette (a balcony)	smart (clever)
a spider (a frying-pan)	a slice (a fire-shovel)

an infare (a wedding reception)
near (stingy)
a rig (a horse and carriage)
jerkwater (applied to a railroad)
a bulkhead (an outside cellar door)
a maverick (anything obtained dishonestly)

4. In ordinary composition *technical words* are to be avoided because, like provincialisms, they are not generally intelligible. The use of a particular group of technical terms is ordinarily confined to a small class of specialists.

A professional dialect is no more in national use than is a provincial dialect. In ordinary speech and in general literature technical words have no meaning. To the average man the following terms are no more intelligible than so many words taken from some unknown foreign language: —

septicæmia	inductance	bucholzite
rubeola	caponiere	epicenter
polyphase	multipolar	kilowatt
colloidal	quadrigeminal	quoins
petrography	stereotomy	schizopoda

5. Some silly writers who know a little Latin or a little French are fond of displaying their verbal finery. They seem to think that the use of *foreign words* is a mark of distinction. As a matter of fact, it is a sure sign of vanity and affectation. It is only after foreign words have been naturalized that they are in good use as a part of the language. Such naturalization occurs whenever a foreign word fills a real need. So long as a given idea can be fully and clearly expressed by a native word, any foreign substitute is very properly looked upon as an alien and an interloper. The following words and phrases violate national use: —

alter ego	*entre nous*	*affaire du cœur*
per se	*nouveau riche*	*artiste*
chic	*mal de mer*	*faux pas*
svelte	*coup de soleil*	*ab initio*
abattoir	*ne plus ultra*	*distingué*

6. Some writers have a special fondness for *archaic words.* Obsolete and obsolescent words violate present use. There are certain archaic words and forms which are proper to poetic diction, but which are not commonly

used in prose. In ordinary composition such words as the following should be avoided: —

yclept	mayhap	spake
'neath	yea	yore
'midst	ere	eld
e'er	withal	afeard
shoon	albeit	otherwhiles
kine	hight	whit
wight	prithee	wot
quoth	'twixt	peradventure

7. Every one is familiar with numerous *abbreviations* which are little better than slang. The following abbreviated forms are common violations of reputable and present use: —

pants (pantaloons)	rep (reputation)
gents (gentlemen)	exam (examination)
photo (photograph)	ad (advertisement)
'phone (telephone)	auto (automobile)
cute (acute)	'fess (confess)
typo (typographer)	spec (speculation)
pard (partner)	confab (confabulation)
doc (doctor)	incog (*incognito*)
prof (professor)	zoo (zoölogical garden)
cap (captain)	phiz (physiognomy)
bike (bicycle)	biz (business)

Sometimes an abbreviated form wins its way into good use. *Van* (from *avant*), *cab* (from *cabriolet*), and *hack* (from *hackney-coach*) are now good English words.

8. The newspapers are the common purveyors of *new words*. Occasionally words thus introduced or exploited are, after a while, admitted into good use; *canard*, *gerrymander*, and *boycott* are familiar examples. Usually, however, the hasty inventions of the reporter are, especially to the man who reads nothing but the newspapers, among the most insidious barbarisms: —

refereed	faddist	getable
suicided	a try	fake
outclassed	a tough	railroaded
derailment	a combine	confliction
burglarized	an exposé	second-handed
managerial	an invite	enthuse

9. *Improprieties* are "words used in a sense not English." A few occur in the foregoing lists. The origin of many improprieties can be traced to some similarity of form, or of sound, or of sense. Because of such resemblance, words and their meanings become confused. As a result, one word may be incorrectly used for another, or a word may be used in a sense somewhat similar to its correct meaning. The following are good English words which are often used in a sense not authorized by Good Use: —

accept (for except)
affect (for effect)
aggravate (for vex or annoy)
allude (for refer)
alone (for only)
among (for between)
anxious (for eager)
avocation (for vocation)
balance (for remainder)
between (for among)
claim (for maintain)
continual (for continuous)
demean (for debase)
eliminate (for derive)
enormity (for enormousness)
factor (for part)
fix (for mend or repair)
funny (for odd or unusual)
gentleman (for man)
healthy (for healthful)
individual (for person)
lady (for woman)
learn (for teach)
leave (for let)
liable (for likely)
limited (for small)
locate (for settle)
lots (for large number or abundance)
mad (for vexed or angry)
most (for almost)
observation (for observance)
partake (for eat)
party (for person)
quite (for rather, somewhat, etc.)
transpire (for happen)

Good Use applies not only to individual words, but also to those phrases or combinations of words which are com-

monly called *idioms*. An idiom is a mode of expression peculiar to the language. It cannot be translated, word for word, into another tongue. Idioms are irregularities of language that often defy both grammar and logic. If the grammarian deigns to notice them at all, he is disposed to regard them as exceptional and abnormal. Yet, when they have once been approved by Good Use, they become legitimate modes of expression, and can no more be questioned than those forms of speech which follow the strictest grammatical laws. Idioms, like the rules of grammar, receive their only sanction from Good Use, which is the highest law of the language.

The study of a few idioms, taken almost at random, will be sufficient to show the peculiar character as well as the strength and value of these native irregularities of our language: —

1. He is not to blame for this.
2. I had rather go myself.
3. Speak louder. Speak plain.
4. I spent the evening with a few friends.
5. Every now and then. Every here and there.
6. More than one man mourns his death.
7. A friend of mine.
8. A ten-foot pole. An eight-acre field.
9. Hold on! (*i.e.*, Stop! or, Wait!)
10. We could not make out the inscription.
11. Lend me a hand.
12. I cannot help praising him.
13. There is the man I was talking to.
14. With might and main. Without let or hindrance.
15. In this plan he at last acquiesced.

With such idiomatic expressions as these we have all become so familiar that we no longer think of them as being in any way anomalous. Yet each of these examples

shows some irregularity or peculiarity. In the first example the active form of *blame* is used for the passive. The meaning of this sentence, of course, is, "He is not to *be blamed* for this." In the second example grammar finds it no easy matter to justify the combination *had go.* The third example illustrates the idiomatic use of the so-called "flat adverb." "The man who writes 'speak loudly,' 'speak more loudly,' 'speak plainly,' 'walk fastly,' 'drink deeply,' 'speak lowly,' 'the moon shines brightly,' 'the sun shines hotly,' may have the applause of grammarians and his own misguided conscience, but he is not writing idiomatic English. His virtue must be its own reward, since he can never win the approval of lovers of sound, wholesome, living English. Those who use the language idiomatically write 'speak loud,' 'speak louder,' 'speak plain,' 'walk fast,' 'drink deep,' 'speak low,' 'the moon shines bright,' and 'the sun shines hot.' Yet these idiomatic distinctions are often very delicate. An adverb is sometimes used in its flat form with an imperative when in other cases the form in *ly* is proper. We say, for instance, 'walk slow, walk slower'; but 'He walked slowly across the field and more slowly over the bridge.' Nothing but the careful training of the perceptions avails for distinctions such as these."[1] Again, in the fourth example, how can the grammarian justify the use of the singular article *a* with the plural expression "few friends"? In the fifth, why should we be allowed to use the adjective *every* as a modifier of the adverbs *now* and *then*, *here* and *there?* In the sixth example, idiom, in open defiance of grammar, permits us to say, "More [men] than one man mourns his death." In the seventh example we have a double genitive in "a friend *of mine.*" In the eighth "a *ten-foot*

[1] Arlo Bates's "Talks on Writing English," page 50.

pole" seems to be a violation of one of the commonest rules of grammar. In the next four examples such expressions as "hold on," "make out," "lend a hand," "cannot help praising," do not literally mean the same thing that they mean idiomatically. In the thirteenth example the omission of the relative pronoun and the position of the preposition at the end of the relative clause are both idiomatic usages. Since, in the fourteenth example, there is no difference in meaning between *might* and *main*, and between *let* and *hindrance*, why should the use of both be tolerated? Such tautology has its only justification in idiomatic use. In the fifteenth example, why is it proper to say "acquiesced *in* this plan" instead of "*to* this plan"? The only answer is that idiom has prescribed that the preposition *in* shall be used with this verb.

This last example illustrates one of the commonest forms of idiom in our language. Good Use requires that special prepositions shall be used with certain words. The average student has considerable difficulty in mastering the idiomatic use of prepositions. In this part of his study, as in all other matters pertaining to Good Use, the habit of close observation is invaluable. The following list[1] shows the special prepositions which usually accompany certain words: —

abhorrence of
absolve from
accord with
acquit of
adapted to or for
affinity between, to, or with
agree with (a person)
agree to (a proposal)
averse from or to
bestow upon
change for (a thing)
change with (a person)

[1] A. S. Hill's "Foundations of Rhetoric," page 148. "Most of the words in this list," says Professor Hill, "are taken from Professor Meiklejohn's 'The English Language.' A few have been added and some changes have been made."

comply with
confer on (*i.e.*, give to)
confer with (*i.e.*, talk with)
confide in (*i.e.*, trust in)
confide to (*i.e.*, intrust to)
in conformity with or to
convenient for or to
conversant with
correspond to or with (a thing)
correspond with (a person)
dependent on (but independent of)
derogatory to
differ from (a person or thing)
differ from or with (in opinion)
disappointed of (what we cannot get)
disappointed in (what we have)
dissent from
glad at or of
involve in
martyr for or to
need of
part from or with
profit by
reconcile to or with
taste of (food)
taste for (art)
thirst for or after

To the writer a knowledge of English idiom is just as important as a knowledge of English grammar. The man who would write good and vigorous English must, at all hazards, obey the idiom of the language. It is only the grammarian and the pedant who are afraid of an idiom because it cannot be parsed or explained. The homely speech of plain people and the works of our best writers abound in idioms. Their use is commendable because they serve to give vigor and variety and individuality to the language. A mastery of these native peculiarities of a language is all the more difficult to obtain because they do not follow any rules or generalizations. Every idiom is, in fact, a law unto itself. Yet it is a law which must not be transgressed. The writer must master the irregularities as well as the grammar of his native tongue.

The worst and most frequent violations of English idiom occur in what has come to be known as "translation-English." It has already been remarked that an idiom cannot be literally translated from one language into another. Yet students, in their class-room translations from the ancient

and the modern languages, usually seem to be more desirous of translating with slavish literalness than of reproducing the thought in good, idiomatic English. Many a student, in his misguided effort to translate literally, often attempts to transfer bodily into the English language some idiomatic turn of expression peculiar to the Latin or the French or the German tongue, some grammatical construction or order of words utterly foreign to our language. The two sentences which follow illustrate what is meant by "translation-English": —

1. Once wrote the imprisoned one something on a silver plate, and cast the plate out at the window toward a boat which at the bank lay, close at the foot of the tower.

2. He, Marcus Messala and Marcus Piso being the consuls, having been induced by a desire of the reigning power, made a conspiracy of the nobility, and persuaded the state that they should from their own boundaries with all their forces depart; it was very easy, since they excelled them all as to valor, to secure the government of all Gaul.

The habit of producing translations like these destroys the student's command of English idiom. The harmful effects of such a practice cannot be overestimated. The use of foreign idioms is even worse than the use of foreign words; for the introduction of foreign idioms destroys the integrity and the individuality of the language. The student who would translate from a foreign language without violation of English idiom should follow this simple rule: *A foreign idiom should be translated by the corresponding English idiom; a foreign construction should be rendered by an English construction; and a foreign arrangement of words in the sentence should give place to the English order.* This simple prescription is the best cure for the evil known as "translation-English." Each language has its own characteristic peculiarities; and in our translations from one

language to another these native peculiarities should be respected.

Two important questions, which are of practical concern to the student, are suggested by this brief discussion of Good Use: (1) How can I obtain a serviceable vocabulary of reputable words and a mastery of English idiom? (2) How can I settle doubtful matters of idiom and diction? In Chapter XXII, entitled "How One may Improve his Vocabulary," an effort has been made to answer the first of these questions. In answer to the second question the best advice that can be given is: *Consult a good unabridged dictionary.* Although the dictionary records all words that have at any time attained any currency, it usually takes pains to mark those which are not in present, reputable, or national use. The larger dictionaries also give the more common idiomatic turns of expression. In the case of particular words and phrases the dictionary will usually suffice to settle questions of propriety.[1] To obtain a comprehensive knowledge of Good Use and of English idiom, however, one is obliged to keep good company and to read the best books. "The cultivation of correctness, the conscious refining of speech," it has been well said, "progresses not more by consultation of dictionaries than by living studiously with pure speech and pure writing."

To sum up, then, Good Use is determined by reputable, national, and present use. A word or an expression is in good use when reputable writers of the present day have used it and have given it national currency. Good Use frowns upon vulgarisms, slang, provincialisms, technical terms, foreign expressions, archaic words, improper abbreviations, new words not yet in reputable use, — in short, upon all kinds

[1] In Appendix D about two hundred of the commonest violations of Good Use are pointed out.

of barbarisms and improprieties. Good Use applies not only to individual words, but also to those native peculiarities of a language which are called idioms. In the realm of idiom Good Use reigns supreme; it even takes precedence of grammatical rules and logical consistency. A thorough knowledge of English idiom is of the highest value to every writer. The student should take pains to avoid the frequent violations of idiom which are likely to find their way into his translations from a foreign tongue. Finally, he should strive to acquire a serviceable vocabulary of reputable words and a mastery of English idiom; and he should seek to settle for himself, as they arise, all doubtful questions of idiom and diction.

EXERCISES

I. From the work of some standard German, French, Greek, or Latin author which you have read, carefully select a continuous passage containing five hundred words or more, and translate it into good, idiomatic English.

II. Read over the list of common improprieties and barbarisms pointed out in Appendix D, and carefully note any mistakes which you have been in the habit of making. Check off these errors, and in order that you may guard against them in the future, read frequently over the list of words that you have marked.

III. In the following sentences, point out and correct any violations of Good Use or of English idiom: —

1. After the chapel service I go to my room and grind my algebra for an hour or more.

2. Several of my friends informed me that the course was a cinch.

3. No one can help but be impressed by the simplicity of everything around Mount Vernon.

4. Everything was alright, and the raft ran smoothly for the first few rods.

5. Every afternoon our crowd of fellows would meet at the Opera House.

6. During these four weeks special care should be taken of the eggs so as not to leave them get cold.

7. My father, my mother, and myself lived at the end of the bridge that spanned Codorus Creek.

8. To the spectator the sight produces both wonder and admiration.

9. Apples were so plenty that year that it hardly paid to pick them.

10. These were hidden some place in the different rooms.

11. One morning after my arrival a neighbor gave the old folks a call.

12. Thus his labor will not benefit him any.

13. After a little persuasion he came down off of the platform.

14. As soon as the pistol cracks, the men start running as fast as they can.

15. Young men are done good by being obliged to attend the chapel service.

16. The wages paid in these shops are such that enable the workmen to live in good houses and have all the necessities of life.

17. With their guns the men kept them far enough away that they could not set fire to the fort.

18. He first takes the hunk of rubber and whittles it until it is round like a marble.

19. She persisted on venturing on the thin ice near the water.

20. In this school I studied nearly all of the subjects required to enter college.

21. After a little practice I found myself able to cook ordinary camp grub.

22. I decided that epigraphy was a very different subject than I had at first supposed.

23. I first talked the matter over with my father, who advised me to except the position.

24. A hurried examination was enough to show that one of the water-pipes had bursted.

25. I always enjoyed to use tools and to busy myself making different articles of wood and iron.

26. I had planned to take, on the following June, the examinations in mathematics and English, and to try and take the balance of the entrance examinations in September.

27. Then the men took the wagon further in the woods and soon begun loading on logs.

28. The surgeon soon found that more than half the soldiers in the camp were effected by this disorder.

29. He made on attempt in ridding himself of peculiarities.

30. Here we met a dark-complected, Spanish-looking gentleman.

31. The nearby farmers, who left us take all the fruit we wanted, proved very clever neighbors.

32. With this plan all of them readily acquiesced.

33. A fellow who spends his spare time in reading is liable to be well posted in all matters of general information.

34. The flowers of the red sage are a bright red and very showy.

35. I agreed on working for one dollar per day until I had learned the business.

36. This course would be improved, I think, if French or German were substituted in place of Latin.

37. We started hunting about an hour before sun-up.

38. These orations gave me some experience to speak before an audience.

39. When I told Mr. Barrows of this family, he said he expected they must somehow be related to him.

40. The eight or nine fellows in our crowd were very much enthused over our prospect of winning this game.

41. Those funny old farmers in the Kishacoquillas valley are not as dumb as they look.

42. The mother was proud of her little boy's cute sayings.

43. Something about our get-up seemed to surprise most everybody we met.

44. The City Council took a great interest to keep the water-works in splendid shape.

45. As the last car came along, I attempted and was successful in boarding it.

46. We rarely ever walked to the "Willows," though the distance was not overly far. On this occasion our party hired a three-seated rig.

47. Every year I learned some new ways to make camp life a pleasure.

48. I inserted an ad. in the local newspaper, and, as a result, I soon had a ready sale for three or four dozen photos every week.

49. There are a lot of young chaps nowadays who are afraid that they will be demeaning theirselves by doing any kind of manual labor.

50. Last evening the freshmen met back of the Armory with the purpose of bringing a barrel of cider on the Campus.

51. If you should travel through a farming region in September, you should likely pass some barn where a threshing-machine is at work.

52. Here everything seemed to be so quiet and lonely.

53. One of the passengers, a *chic* theatrical *artiste*, suffered horribly from an attack of *mal de mer*.

54. The reservoir is sixty feet long, fifty feet wide, and six feet deep, and with this-sized basin C—— is well supplied with water.

55. In a subdivision of my work it is permitted to me to say beforehand what several writers of history have stated at the beginning of their whole connected treatise, that I am going to write about a war the most memorable of all which have ever been carried on, that the Carthaginians, Hannibal being their general, waged with the Roman people.

CHAPTER XXI

THE CHOICE OF WORDS

WITHIN the limits set by Good Use, what principle should one follow in the choice of words? Young writers are frequently told that short words are better than long ones, and that words of Anglo-Saxon origin are to be preferred to those of Latin derivation. This familiar advice, it is to be feared, often mystifies the student quite as much as it helps him; and it is worth while to inquire what rational basis can be found for this frequently quoted general rule.

The English language is composed partly of native and partly of foreign words. The native element comprises approximately one half of all the words in the language. Of the other half, the great majority have been borrowed, directly or indirectly, from the Latin. As a matter of fact, words of Anglo-Saxon origin are far more frequently used than Latin derivatives. The native element forms the groundwork and the framework of the language. It comprises nearly all the prepositions, conjunctions, and pronouns, and most of the nouns, adjectives, and verbs in common, everyday use. In fact, it contains the shortest, simplest, and most familiar words in the language. The words of classical origin are, on the other hand, generally longer, more learned, more pretentious, and less familiar.

The real value or usefulness of a word is determined neither by its length nor by its derivation. It is true that, other things being equal, a short word, on account of its brevity, is usually better than a long one, and that a plain,

familiar word will generally prove more serviceable than an unfamiliar and pretentious one. This statement of fact is only another way of saying that conciseness is one mode of securing effectiveness, that simplicity is a valuable aid to clearness, and that a familiar word, because it makes a more immediate and more vivid impression on the mind, is generally more serviceable than an unfamiliar word. In speaking or writing of ordinary matters, one will find the short, familiar words of Anglo-Saxon origin best adapted to his purpose; but when dealing with scientific, complex, and abstract ideas, one must frequently resort to the longer and less familiar words, which are generally of classical derivation.

The following passages are worth studying. The authors no doubt tried to make the best possible choice of words, without regard to length or origin. The words of foreign derivation have been italicized. The first passage consists almost entirely of native English words; only about six per cent of the whole number are of foreign origin. In the second quotation one-fourth of the total number of words are foreign — about the usual proportion in ordinary prose. In the third passage, chiefly because of the nature of the ideas with which the writer deals, more than two-fifths of the words are of foreign origin: —

1. An acorn is not an oak tree when it is sprouted. It must go through long summers and *fierce* winters; it has to *endure* all that frost and snow and thunder and storm and side-striking winds can bring before it is a full-grown oak. These are rough teachers; but rugged *schoolmasters* make rugged *pupils*. So a man is not a man when he is *created*; he is only begun. His manhood must come with years. A man who goes through life *prosperous* and comes to his grave without a wrinkle is not half a man.[1]

[1] Henry Ward Beecher.

2. My *advice* to young working-men *desirous* of bettering their *circumstances* and *adding* to the *amount* of their *enjoyment* is a *very simple* one. Do not seek happiness in what is misnamed *pleasure*; seek it rather in what is *termed study*. Keep your *consciences clear*, your *curiosity* fresh, and *embrace* every *opportunity* of *cultivating* your minds. Learn to make a right *use* of your eyes: the *commonest* things are worth looking at — even stones and weeds and the most *familiar animals*.[1]

3. Our first *literature consisted* of *saintly legends* and *romances* of *chivalry*, though Chaucer gave it a more *national* and *popular character* by his *original descriptions* of *external nature*, and the *familiarity* and *gayety* of his *social humor*. In the time of *Elizabeth* it *received* a *copious infusion* of *classical images* and *ideas*; but it was still *intrinsically romantic*, *serious*, and even somewhat lofty and *enthusiastic*.[2]

It will be noticed that some of these words of foreign origin are short familiar words in common use; as, for example, *add*, *very*, *simple*, *clear*, *school*, *use*, *common*, *study*. The conclusion of the whole matter is this: a writer, in seeking to find the one word that will best express a given idea, need not make an anxious search for the shortest possible word, or be shy of using a good word because it happens to be of foreign origin; but he should rather inquire which word is best adapted to his special purpose, which word will most precisely and most vividly express his meaning. Adaptation, precision, and effectiveness are the soundest tests.

Accuracy or precision in the use of words is the prime requisite. A man should first of all have a clear conception of the exact thought that he wishes to communicate, and he should then choose such words as will convey his thought without loss, or addition, or misunderstanding; that is, the word which he chooses should exactly fit the idea that he wishes to express. He cannot afford to use

[1] Hugh Miller. [2] Francis Jeffrey.

words vaguely and inaccurately; he must not be content with mere makeshifts, which only approximately express his meaning. For the sake of precision he must, in every case, find the one word which exactly and inevitably fits his idea.

There are two important kinds of words, and it is necessary that a writer understand the nature and the function of each kind. These two classes are general and specific words. General words are simply the names of class ideas; as, for example, *animal*, *plant*, *man*, *boat*, *book*, *tree*. Each of these general words calls to mind a more or less extensive class of objects which have certain qualities in common. As the class becomes smaller, the word that designates it becomes less general, and is likely to call up a more definite conception in one's mind. *Quadruped*, *vegetable*, *storekeeper*, *steamboat*, *text-book*, and *fruit tree* are all less general than the words in the first list. As the class becomes still smaller, the word that represents it will become more specific, will necessarily have a more exact and definite meaning, and will call up a more vivid mental image. *Horse*, *asparagus*, *groceryman*, *ocean liner*, *spelling-book*, and *peach tree* are more specific than the corresponding words in the other two lists. It should be noticed also that they have a more exact meaning, and make a more definite impression on the mind. It is possible to go one step farther and find some expression that will designate a single individual member of each class. The following expressions are as specific as they can be made: *Maud S.*, *the bunch of asparagus that I bought this morning*, *the man who keeps the grocery store at the corner of Duke and Vine streets*, *the "Oceanic,"* *the spelling-book that lies on my desk*, *the crooked peach tree in the middle of the garden*. The distinction between general and specific terms applies

not only to nouns, but also to verbs and modifiers. For example, *walk*, *speak*, and *write* are general; *strut*, *yell*, and *engrave* are specific. In the expression, "a *good* man," the modifier is a general word; but when one speaks of "the man *who pays his debts*," the modifier is specific in meaning.

Both general and specific words form a valuable and necessary part of the language, and it would be a mistake to say that words of one class are better or more useful than those of another. General terms are well-nigh indispensable, for without them we should have no convenient way of designating general ideas. It is vastly easier, for instance, to say "all the countries of Europe" than to mention by name Great Britain, France, Germany, Austria, Russia, and a dozen or more other countries. Just as general ideas form an essential part of our thinking, so general terms are practically indispensable in the communication of our thoughts. They are of the greatest possible service in the literature of thought.

In description and narration, on the other hand, specific terms, which represent ideas definitely and concretely, are most useful for precise and effective expression. They possess great graphic power because they produce in the mind of the reader clear and vivid images. The mental images produced by general terms are, on the contrary, vague and shadowy. One of the commonest mistakes that young writers make in their choice of words is to use vague general terms when both precision and effectiveness demand specific language. An examination of the work of almost any successful writer will reveal an abundance of illustrations, concrete examples, precise and definite words. The following sentences, taken from Kipling's "Captains Courageous," illustrate the graphic power of specific language: —

The needle of the speed-indicator flicked and wagged to and fro; the cinders rattled on the roof, and a whirl of dust sucked after the whirling wheels.

The black bulk of the cook balanced behind the tiny galley over the glare of the stove, and the pots and pans in the pierced wooden board before it jarred and racketed to every plunge.

A jaunty little feather of water curled in front of it, and as it lifted it showed a long ladder of Roman numerals — XV, XVI, XVII, XVIII, and so forth — on a salmon-colored, gleaming side. It tilted forward and downward with a heart-stilling "Sssooo"; the ladder disappeared; a line of brass-rimmed port-holes flashed past; a jet of steam puffed in Harvey's helplessly uplifted hands; a spout of hot water roared along the rail of the *We're Here*, and the little schooner staggered and shook in a rush of screw-torn water as a liner's stern vanished in the fog.

To write effectively, one must also choose words and devise phrases that possess life and vigor. In various ways a large number of pretentious phrases, tawdry circumlocutions, and scraps of popular quotations have obtained a wide currency. They give a kind of cheap smartness to the talk of the half-educated, and they flourish unmolested in the columns of small country newspapers. A man who wishes to write with elegance and force should shun these trite or hackneyed phrases. They have been bandied about so much that they have lost all force and freshness. Most men have heard and seen them so often that their very familiarity has brought them into general disrepute and contempt. Some of them were apt and forcible when they were first used, but they have become so worn away and battered about by constant use that they have long since lost their original value and brightness. Hackneyed phrases are ineffective because they lack freshness and vividness.

Not every one, however, is able to recognize a well-worn phrase as hackneyed when he meets with it for the first time. To the young and inexperienced writer some un-

familiar expression may appear strikingly apt and forcible, and he accordingly treasures it up and uses it at the first opportunity, only to discover later that it has become so hackneyed as to have lost all power to produce a vivid impression. The student, therefore, needs to be warned against these threadbare expressions in order that he may avoid them. The following is a list of the most common hackneyed phrases, and the student will do well to be on his guard against them: —

Downy couch.
Lower limbs.
Lithe forms.
Pale as death.
A shining mark.
The briny deep.
A grand ovation.
A son of Nimrod.
The finny tribe.
Misguided youth.
Sumptuous repast.
Sylph-like forms.
Tonsorial artist.
Caudal appendage.
His native heath.
Kitchen mechanic.
Imposing edifices.
The lacteal fluid.
He wended his way.
Retraced his steps.
His native element.
His paternal acres.
Every walk of life.
Author of my being.
The finger of fate.
Dead as a door nail.
Faded into oblivion.
Culinary department.
To make night hideous.
A monster mass-meeting.
Launched into eternity.
Discoursed sweet music.
The green-eyed monster.
Too full for utterance.
Counterfeit presentment.
From morn till dewy eve.
Praiseworthy innovation.
Satisfied the inner man.
Disastrous conflagration.
The place of his nativity.
Applauded him to the echo.
Through storm and sunshine.
As happy as the day is long.
Lost his mental equilibrium.
He made a pronounced success.
Embarked on a new enterprise.
Shuffled off this mortal coil.
The observed of all observers.
The plaudits of the multitude.
The dreamy mazes of the waltz.
Shook off this earthly burden.
Blessed with liberal endowments.
Large and enthusiastic audience.
Partook of an elegant collation.
He held the multitude spellbound.
The edifice was entirely consumed.

His nether garments.
Expounded the Gospel.
The stealthy redskin.
The infuriated beast.
My paternal ancestor.
Victorious conflicts.
The silvery moonlight.
Down through the ages.
Dizzy heights of fame.
Solemnized the rites of matrimony.
He engaged in commercial pursuits.
In a beastly state of intoxication.
Old Sol diffused his genial warmth.
Interrupted with tumultuous applause.
Fraught with disastrous consequences.
Posing before the dazzling footlights.
He gazed upon a sea of upturned faces.
He was tendered a magnificent ovation.

The little hamlet nestled in the valley.
His spirit quitted its earthly habitation.
A successful aspirant for political honors.
He imbibed too freely of the cup that cheers.
Led the blushing bride to the hymeneal altar.
Throughout the length and breadth of the land.
Endorse the sentiments of the previous speaker.
Passed into the brighter light of an eternal day.
The progress of the devouring element was arrested.
The remains of the departed were consigned to earth.

Many of the pretentious phrases in the forgoing list are the product of what is commonly known as "fine writing." Some people, apparently fearing that their thought may appear too commonplace if clothed in plain, ordinary language, attempt to adorn it with all sorts of verbal finery. They have no appreciation of the fact that true elegance is the result of careful adaptation of language to thought, but seem to think that mere showiness is all that is needed to give beauty and distinction to one's style. By proceeding on this mistaken notion of what constitutes elegance they defeat their own purpose. Moreover, the thought soon ceases to be the writer's main concern; his only object is to seek many high-sounding words and phrases and to string them together as a child might string together a necklace of gay-colored beads. Sonorous phrases, excessive alliteration, an abundance of epithet, and a tropi-

cal luxuriance of figurative language are the distinguishing marks of "fine writing." All these characteristics may be seen in the following passage: —

> Napoleon, the adventurous vagrant of Corsica, first lifting the fair form of France, battered and bemired, from the slough of ignominy and revolution, and then marshalling the scions of her shattered and fallen chivalry, dauntlessly hurled them forward, with the flame of the tiger in their eyes, with the spirit of the lion in their breasts, and with the assurance of success in their deeds; and, by a few swift strokes, placed France upon the pinnacle of preëminence from which she spread her grandeur and glory over all Europe from Madrid to Moscow. Such was Napoleon, the young eagle of war, who feared naught but Nature; and even when she, stern and inexorable, blocked his path with insuperable obstacles, the valorous Corsican would cry, "Sound the charge!" and whether the blast pealed forth from the icy peaks of the Alps, or rolled along the sun-kissed plains of Austria, or bounded along the reddened drifts of Russia, France followed her undaunted chieftain to carnage and to glory.

Finally, if one would write with the highest art and skill, he must take into account the connotation as well as the denotation of words; he must consider the idea that a word suggests, or *connotes*, as well as the idea that it actually *denotes*. Many words have a subtle power of suggestion quite apart from their ordinary meaning; that is, they suggest or imply much more than they actually say. The same idea may be expressed in a number of ways, and in every case there will be a difference in the effect produced. For example, the phrases "old sailor" and "ancient mariner" are practically synonymous; yet they do not convey precisely the same thought or make the same impression. In the mind of the average reader each of these phrases is likely to produce a very different conception. The connotation of words, in fact, has much to do with the exact impression which a given thought makes upon the reader's

mind; and a writer, therefore, if he would choose words well adapted to produce precisely the effect he aims at, must take into account the suggestive force as well as the ordinary meaning of words.

EXERCISES

I. Write a theme on some subject found in List VII, Appendix E, or on some other subject approved by your instructor.

II. 1. In the following passages note the difference of effect produced by short words and long words.

2. Note the difference between the effect produced by Anglo-Saxon words and that produced by words of foreign derivation.

3. Make a list of all the words of foreign origin in each passage.

4. In the first passage what proportion of the words are of Anglo-Saxon origin? What proportion in the second passage?

(*a*) That part of our speech which comes down from our sires, far back in the days of yore, is made up in large part of those words which we can speak with one pulse of the breath and one stroke of the tongue. The stream of time, through a long tract of years, and from lands not our own, has brought down to us a vast drift of new and strange terms, poor as they are long, by which we lose in strength more than we gain in sound. But the good old stock of words is not lost. They shine out here and there from the heap in bright points, like stars when a fog dims the air, or the face of the sky is dark with clouds. It will pay us for our toil to mine out these gems and string them on the chain of our thoughts, which will then shine with a new light; and though the tongue may lose in sound, it will be all the more fit to speak all that the deep soul can feel. The heart beats throb by throb, and thus the tongue should keep in tune while it vents the heart's joys and pains. The arts of life and the lore of the head may call for terms cold and long; but let all that the heart thinks and feels come from the depths of the soul in "thoughts that breathe and words that burn."[1]

(*b*) An elegant style is a character expressing a higher degree of ornament than a neat one; and indeed the term is usually applied to style when possessing all the virtues of ornament without any of its

[1] G. W. McPhail.

excesses or defects. From what has been formerly delivered it will easily be understood that complete elegance implies great perspicuity and propriety: purity in the choice of words, and care and dexterity in their harmonious and happy arrangement. It implies, further, the grace and beauty of imagination spread over style, as far as the subject admits it, and all the illustration which figurative language adds when properly employed. In a word, an elegant writer is one who pleases the fancy and the ear while he informs the understanding, and who gives us his ideas clothed with all the beauty of expression, but not overcharged with any of its misplaced finery. When the ornaments applied to style are too rich and gaudy in proportion to the subject, when they return upon us too fast and strike us either with a dazzling lustre or a false brilliancy, this forms what is called a florid style, — a term commonly used to signify the excess of ornament.[1]

III. Translate the following sentences into more specific language: —

1. The man was tall and erect.

2. For some time he suffered from ill health.

3. The scarcity of fuel produced not a little distress.

4. One of these young women was a fine teacher and had very nice ways.

5. The man went into the house and made himself comfortable.

6. One of my friends spent the summer abroad in sight-seeing.

7. At college he studied English and had a good course in mathematics.

8. The noise of the saw and planes and wheels was heard above the noise of the water.

9. With a cry the animal moved toward me, and I immediately made haste to ascend a tree.

10. Some time ago I saw a man sowing grain. In the same field were some boys at work with farming implements.

11. We heard a noise in the thicket and a little later the frightened animal moved into the path.

12. The man had a curious voice. When he asked me to give up the instrument that I had in my hands, I felt queer.

13. We built a hasty structure of branches, made a bed of boughs, started a fire, and sat down and watched it light up the trees.

[1] Dr. Hugh Blair's "Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres," Lecture XVIII.

14. As I passed through the orchard, eating now and then of the fruit, I noticed the song of a bird among the foliage.

IV. Let each member of the class select, from some book or magazine that he has read, a passage that illustrates the graphic power of specific language ; and let him read this passage to the class.

V. Translate the following sentences into simple, unhackneyed language : —

1. On the eve of the glorious Fourth young America made night hideous into the wee, small hours.

2. Large strings of speckled beauties have lately gladdened the hearts of our local Izaak Waltons.

3. The infuriated animal, freed from the demolished vehicle, dashed through the great concourse of people, and at last sought refuge in his familiar habitation.

4. At the witching hour of midnight the assembled multitude, who had been tripping the light, fantastic toe and gliding through the dizzy mazes of the waltz, wended their way homeward.

5. At this stage in the proceedings an individual who is not entirely unknown to fame, and who is ordinarily designated by the not uncommon cognomen of Smith, at last acceded to the vociferous demands of the enthusiastic audience, and succeeded in scoring the success of the evening.

VI. Let each student collect from the columns of local newspapers passages that contain hackneyed phrases and "fine writing." These clippings the instructor can assign as blackboard exercises, asking the members of the class to translate the passages into simple, unhackneyed language.

CHAPTER XXII

HOW ONE MAY IMPROVE HIS VOCABULARY

Who has not, at some time or other, felt himself handicapped because he lacked instant command of just the right word? There can be no doubt that the working vocabulary of the average man is lamentably meagre. Men who have analyzed the vocabularies of college students declare that the average freshman has little more than twelve hundred words at his command. It is extremely doubtful whether the average business man is much better equipped. The educated man, according to a fair estimate, has a working vocabulary of about three or four thousand words. Yet the English language contains, according to the Century Dictionary, about two hundred thousand words.[1] Generally speaking, no two words have precisely the same meaning. Each word has its own work to do in the world of thought.

The student who has often felt himself at a loss for the one word that will express his exact meaning naturally asks himself, How can I increase and enrich my stock of English words? Since words are the instruments of thought and are absolutely essential to the expression of our ideas, this is a question of vital importance to every student of Composition. It is possible to suggest a few simple and practicable methods by which any one

[1] A large number of these words are, of course, purely technical terms which only specialists are likely to use.

can substantially increase and permanently improve his working vocabulary. These suggestions, it must be confessed, are simple and commonplace enough; but they should not be despised because of their simplicity.

1. Every one has really three vocabularies. One vocabulary, no doubt the smallest of the three, he uses in his everyday conversation. Another vocabulary, considerably larger than the first, he uses whenever he undertakes to commit his thoughts to paper. A third vocabulary, usually much larger than either of the others, he employs whenever he reads a book. These three vocabularies differ not only in size, but also in the kinds of words that compose them. For instance, in ordinary conversation almost every one permits himself the use of certain colloquialisms that he would not think of employing in formal and dignified composition. On the other hand, certain words that come readily to mind when we write are hardly ever used in our talk. These words are not out of place in our written compositions, but we have an uneasy feeling that they would sound stilted and bookish if used in our ordinary talk about common things. Now these two vocabularies, which are used in conversation and in formal composition, are kept in constant service. The words that they contain are "on the active list." They are like current coin which is kept in continual circulation.

The third vocabulary, however, which we use only in our reading, is passive and inactive. We use it for the apprehension of another's thought, but not for the expression of our own ideas. We understand the meaning of the words that compose it, but we have never become so well acquainted with them that we feel free to use them familiarly. The words that make up this inactive vocabulary are, so to speak, "on the waiting list." They are like

money which is hoarded up in the bank. No doubt almost every reader has a large supply of these available words "on the waiting list." They constitute one of the chief resources of every man who would improve his vocabulary. This stock of inactive words can readily be made useful if one is only willing to draw upon it; but, to use a commercial metaphor, they must be taken out of bank and put into circulation. They are ours to use; they have somehow become a part of our intellectual property. We may feel sure that they will prove to be as serviceable to us as to others. We should accordingly make a conscious effort to use them. In order to do so, we have only to overcome an initial sense of strangeness and timidity. We have only to conquer our "initial inertia," which is another name for laziness. After we have used these words once or twice, they become familiar and useful friends. Upon closer acquaintance they become indispensable. Then we wonder how we ever got on without them. *Therefore, if one would extend his command of language, he should make an effort to transfer these words from the waiting list to the active list.*

2. There are two respects in which the average man can improve his vocabulary: he can improve it both in *quantity* and in *quality*. The man who would strengthen his means of expression must have two definite ends in view: first, he must keep adding to his stock of useful words, so as to make an actual increase in his vocabulary; second, he must strive to learn the precise use and the exact value of every word that he calls into service. These two ends cannot be attained by reading the dictionary, though the student of words must constantly refer to a good unabridged dictionary. It will prove to be an excellent guide, counsellor, and friend. Yet one must remember that the two hundred

thousand words that make up the English language cover the whole field of human knowledge. No one can learn to use this vast number of words; no one will ever have occasion to use them all. In fact, the vocabulary which any one person needs in speaking and in writing necessarily forms only a very small part of the total number of words in the language. One's vocabulary, however, should be well enough stocked to meet all the exigencies of expression. Above all, within the limits of the restricted working vocabulary which every one employs, he should feel thoroughly at home; he should know what each word is worth; he should know just when and how to use each of these instruments of thought. If a man would say precisely what he means, if he would express his thought without loss, without waste of effort, without the possibility of being misunderstood, he must become as familiar with the means of expression as a carpenter is with his tools. *Let every one, therefore, "seek to find out acceptable words" and to know the exact value and use of each.*

3. What is the best way of adding to one's stock of words? The answer is simple: the best way to increase the size of one's vocabulary is to master every new word that one encounters. The student should not be content to guess at the probable meaning of the new words that he meets with in his reading. Here is an opportunity to become acquainted with these strangers and to make friends with them. They may do him many a good turn by and by. Now, in order to master a new word, one must learn at least three things about it: (1) its meaning, (2) its pronunciation, and (3) its spelling. These three things are absolutely indispensable. Certainly one should know the meaning of a word before he ventures to use it; otherwise he runs great risk of making himself ridiculous.

Secondly, one should learn the correct pronunciation of a new word; else he will never feel free to use the word in his conversation or to pronounce it when reading aloud. Thirdly, one should learn the spelling of a new word; else he will feel very reluctant about writing it down; and he may be strongly tempted to substitute another word which expresses his idea only approximately and inadequately.

The student is doubtless inclined to ask, Shall I run to the dictionary every few minutes? To this question there is only one answer: certainly he should consult the dictionary whenever it is necessary. The truth is, a man has never learned to *read* — that is, to apprehend the written thought of others — until he has acquired a large stock of English words. Nor will he be able to *write* — that is, to express his own thoughts with clearness and vigor — so long as his vocabulary is meagre and inadequate. He should therefore strive to overcome the "initial inertia" already mentioned. For a while, at least, he should be willing to make the dictionary his familiar friend and comrade. He should always have it within easy reach. It is poor economy to stow it away in some inaccessible corner and to pile other books upon it. To consult the dictionary immediately is, of course, often inconvenient or impossible. The student will therefore find it well to keep a tiny note-book in which he can jot down the new words that he meets. He can then look them up at his leisure. But whether the reader who meets with a new word consults the dictionary at once or at some more convenient season, he ought never to pass unthinkingly over a strange word as if it were a slight and insignificant thing. Only by mastering all the new words that he meets can he hope to make the most substantial additions to his vocabulary. He

should further seek to become thoroughly familiar with these new words by using them in his conversation and his compositions whenever occasion arises. By learning only five new words a day, the average man, in the course of a single year, can almost double his vocabulary. *The student should therefore learn the meaning, the pronunciation, and the spelling of every new word.*

4. Another way in which one can improve his vocabulary is by the study of Latin. Nearly one-half of our English words come, directly or indirectly, from the Latin language. The teacher of English is often constrained to lament the fact that the study of Latin in our high schools and colleges has of late years been a good deal discredited. It has been noticed that the student who pursues the studies usually required for admission to a scientific or a technological institution has a far more meagre vocabulary than the freshman who has prepared himself to take the old-fashioned classical course. Whatever else may be said of classical studies as means of intellectual discipline, it is certainly true that some knowledge of Latin, even though it be slight and superficial, is pretty sure to strengthen and enrich one's knowledge of English words. Even if the student can do no more than become familiar with the commonest Latin roots, prefixes, and suffixes, it is well worth his while to know these. *He should study Latin, therefore, if possible, since nearly one-half of our English words come from the Latin.*

5. One can also enrich his stock of English words by extensive reading. The student should read carefully, and he should read the best books by the best writers. After all, our English and American literature must serve as the great storehouse of English words. The literature of our language is the reservoir from which we must all

draw. The works of our best writers furnish us with the only trustworthy test of correctness, with the only standard of Good Use. The classics of our literature often give us help that the dictionary would be powerless to furnish. In the lexicon words are at rest. In our literature they are living and active. There we find each word in its appropriate setting. Do you recall that clause in Lincoln's Gettysburg Address which begins, — "that we here *highly* resolve"? Can any dictionary give so exact an appreciation, so vivid a sense of the value and use of that one little word *highly? The student, then, who is desirous of improving his vocabulary should read many good books, and should read them carefully and thoughtfully.*

6. One way in which the student will gradually but surely gain a better command of words is by writing a great deal. It is not sufficient merely to know words: one should get into the habit of using them readily and accurately. It is only by painstaking practice in writing and in speaking that any one can attain sufficient familiarity, facility, fluency, and precision in the use of words. In writing one should always take pains to find the one word that will exactly suit his idea. It may take anxious thought and careful search to find just the right word; but the result will be worth the effort. The careful writer is never content with substitutes and makeshifts; they are dangerous pitfalls. *By constant and painstaking practice in composition, then, the student can gain power and precision in the use of words.*

7. Another valuable exercise, closely related to that of composition, is the practice of translating from a foreign tongue. Nowadays almost every student studies at least one language besides his own. In order to make a satisfactory translation, one must transfer the thought from one

language to another without loss or addition, and without violation of English idiom. *Translation, therefore, furnishes an excellent exercise by which any one can gain the ability to distinguish the exact meanings of words, and acquire a working knowledge of the common English idioms.*

8. There is no better way in which one may improve the quality and serviceableness of his vocabulary than by honestly striving to observe these fine distinctions and delicate shades of meaning in the use of words. This power to make close and exact discriminations in words can be kept in a state of constant growth and activity. The student should always keep himself alert to the exact values of words and to their finer shades of meaning. This power of discrimination can be cultivated in several ways.

First, the student can help himself by making a study of synonyms and antonyms. Such books of reference as Crabbe's "English Synonyms," Roget's "Thesaurus of English Words," and Fernald's "Synonyms and Antonyms" are good teachers for every student of English Composition. *Secondly, one should study the history and the etymological derivation of words.* A knowledge of the origin and the life of a word will often help one to appreciate its force and value. Trench's "Study of Words" and "English Past and Present," and Greenough and Kittredge's "Words and their Ways in English Speech" are intensely interesting books and can hardly fail to give one a taste for studying the life-history of English words. Skeat's "Etymological Dictionary" will be found to be a valuable and authoritative book of reference. *Thirdly, one should assign himself the task of making lists of all the words that express various shades of the same general idea.* Let him take, for instance, the general idea expressed by

the word *see;* he will at once set down *examine*, *gaze*, *peer*, *peep*, *look*, *behold*, *espy*, *scrutinize*, *investigate*, *perceive*, *survey*, *glance*, *catch a glimpse*, etc. He can select other general words and make similar groups. *In these three ways almost any one can increase his ability to distinguish the finer shades of meaning in words.*

9. An important word of warning must here be given. *If one would have a large vocabulary of serviceable words at his ready command, he must make it a matter of conscience to avoid slang, hackneyed phrases, and the common vice of "fine writing."* It is customary to warn the student against these things because they are vulgar. But their vulgarity is not their only fault. Their use tends to produce a dangerous reaction upon one's vocabulary. The habitual use of slang, trite locutions, and verbal finery will eventually paralyze the most vigorous vocabulary. These vulgar substitutes for real words are merely counters and not true coin to be used in exchange of thought. One cannot habitually use such expressions without unconsciously transferring many good words in his vocabulary from the active to the retired list. Some people, for example, have acquired the unfortunate habit of expressing approval by saying that a given thing is "just perfectly lovely," or disapproval by saying that it is "perfectly horrid." Any one who has ever met such a person will understand the insidious danger that lurks in slang, hackneyed terms, and "fine writing." Indeed, the use of these expressions reacts upon one's mind as well as upon one's vocabulary. To the man who has but a single expression for approval or disapproval, all things are likely to be either good or bad, either black or white; there can be no intermediate shades.

10. *Finally, in all his writing and speaking, the student should seek to find the "inevitable word,"* — the one word

that will express his meaning as no other word can. He should see that every word he uses makes an exact fit. It should say neither more nor less than he means to say. He should remember that precision and elegance of diction will go a long way toward giving literary value to his writing. It is largely to this quality of inevitableness that our English Bible owes its high literary value as a model of good English. Every student should strive to cultivate a "sense for words." Such a sense of exact values in words comes to one as the natural result of practice, conscious attention, and constant interest in words. This sense the student of Composition should strive to acquire, and he should keep it alert and acute. It can be made to serve as a touchstone by which to test every word that he uses.

To this brief discussion no better conclusion can be given than the advice offered by Professor A. S. Hill, in his "Foundations of Rhetoric": "Other things being equal, it is obvious that the writer who has most words to choose from is most likely to find in his assortment just the word that he needs at the given moment. It is therefore worth while for a young writer to keep his ears open while conversation is going on about him, and his eyes open while he is reading; and to note and remember every word that is new to him in itself or in the meaning given it. He may thus, while avoiding vulgarisms on the one hand and high-flown expressions on the other, enrich his diction from the racy speech of plain people and the best utterances of great authors, the two sources of what is most alive in our language. If he is a student of other tongues, whether ancient or modern, he has at hand a third means of adding to his stock of English. 'Translation,' as Rufus Choate is reported to have said, 'should be pursued to bring to mind and to employ all the words you already own, and to tax and

torment invention and discovery and the very deepest memory for additional, rich, and admirably expressive words.'"

EXERCISES

I. Write a theme on one of the subjects found in Appendix E.

II. Make a study of the etymological derivation and the history of the following words: —

abominable	dahlia	pagan
academy	demagogue	parasite
affidavit	diamond	ponder
ambition	electricity	prevent
ammonia	enthusiasm	priest
auctioneer	geranium	prophet
bask	halibut	raisin
biscuit	incandescent	sardonic
blackguard	infant	sinecure
boycott	ink	solstice
cadaverous	lady	style
candidate	loafer	tribulation
capricious	meander	trite
cemetery	neuralgia	verse
church	nonplus	volume
clerk	orient	walnut
criticism	ostracize	whiskey

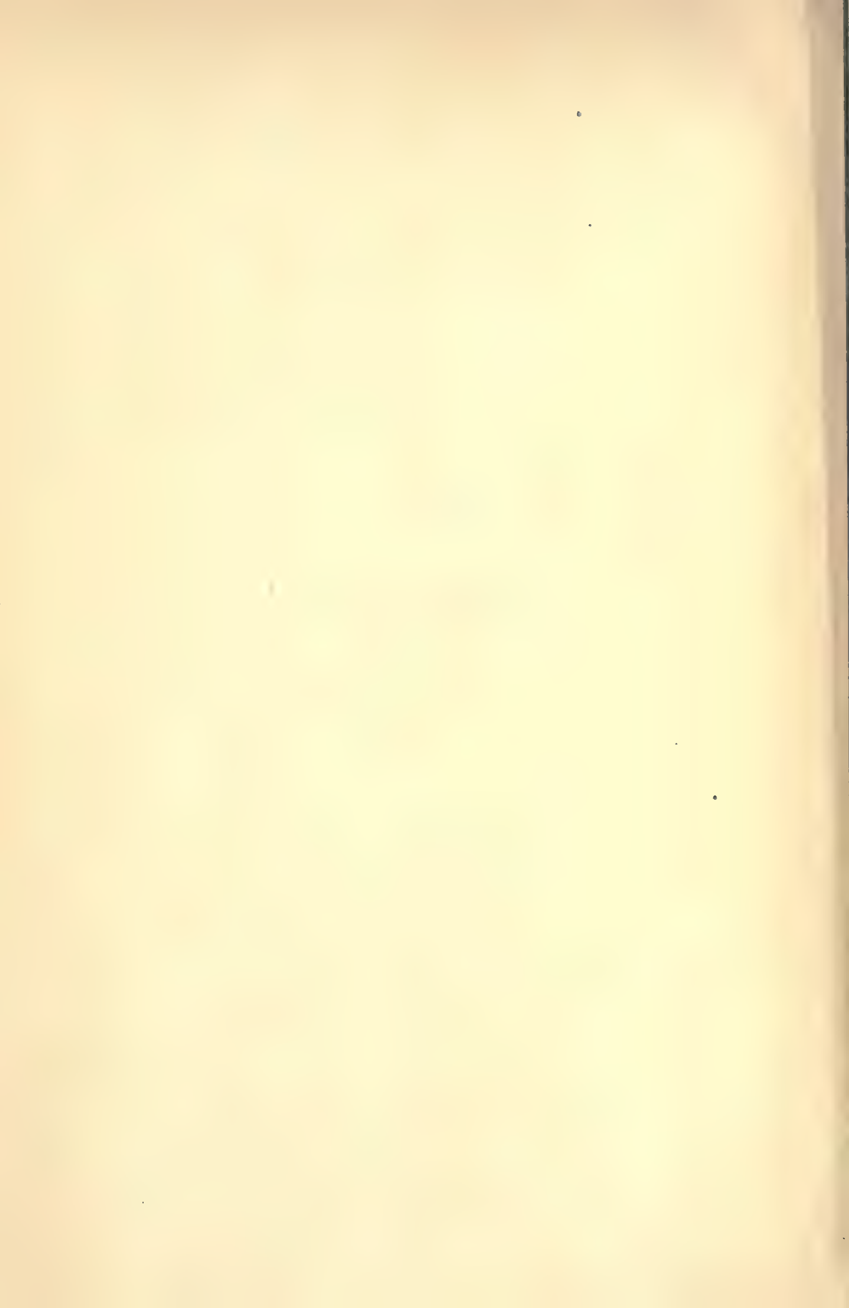
III. Take each of the following general words and group about it all the words that express different shades of the same general idea: —

road	good	to talk
book	bad	to help
building	happy	to see
dwelling-place	unhappy	to think
fear	beautiful	to answer
to fear	ugly	to go up
work	dress	to go down
to work	to dress	to go away
play	to travel	to carry
to play	to walk	to write

IV. Learn and point out the exact meaning of each word in the following groups: —

1. Love, like.
2. Wit, humor.
3. Pair, couple.
4. Talent, genius.
5. Purpose, propose.
6. Healthy, healthful.
7. Possible, probable.
8. Invention, discovery.
9. Valuable, invaluable.
10. Translate, paraphrase.
11. Pupil, student, scholar.
12. Power, ability, capacity.
13. Pride, vanity, arrogance.
14. Criticism, blame, censure.
15. Decide, resolve, determine.
16. Perfect, complete, finished.
17. Fear, alarm, fright, terror.
18. Agree, accede, acquiesce, yield.
19. Forbearance, leniency, clemency.
20. Hospital, dispensary, sanitarium.
21. Memory, remembrance, recollection.
22. Cunning, trickery, chicane, fraud.
23. Pleasure, delight, happiness, joy.
24. Dissipation, profligacy, debauchery.
25. Aged, ancient, antiquated, obsolete.
26. Occupation, calling, trade, profession.
27. Amusement, merriment, laughter, derision.
28. Education, instruction, tuition, training.
29. Wisdom, knowledge, information, erudition.
30. Difficulty, hardship, obstacle, hindrance.
31. Temper, disposition, character, reputation.
32. Home, domicile, house, residence, mansion.
33. Religious, pious, devout, devotional, holy.
34. Plain, clear, obvious, manifest, apparent, evident.
35. Famous, prominent, eminent, distinguished, notorious.
36. Pity, compassion, sympathy, commiseration, condolence.

APPENDICES



APPENDIX A

MECHANICAL PROCESSES: THE MANUSCRIPT, CAPITAL LETTERS, AND PUNCTUATION; EXERCISES

I. THE MANUSCRIPT

1. *Write legibly.* It is worth while to make your manuscript neat and your handwriting legible. A slovenly and illegible manuscript is a stumbling-block to any reader. It is desirable that both thought and construction shall stand out as clearly in a manuscript as on the printed page. A reader wastes his mental energy whenever he is obliged to spend it in deciphering a scrawl. Illegible penmanship is a positive discourtesy to the reader, and it is inexcusable because with a little care almost any one can make his writing legible. *Do not slant your writing too much.* It is often possible for one to make his penmanship legible by making it vertical. *Do not unduly extend loop letters* so that they run into the line above or the line below. *Write proper names with care.* Make capitals larger than other letters. *Avoid flourishes.*

2. *Do not crowd your writing.* There is often a temptation to do this at the end of a line or at the bottom of a sheet. Sometimes letters and words are written too close together. Leave sufficient space between words, and do not run two words together as if they formed a single unit. Between sentences leave more space than between words. Thus words and sentences will stand out as separate units.

On the other hand, never leave a space between two letters of the same word. Such a break often occurs immediately after a capital.

3. *Write on only one side of the paper.* The convenience of the reader and general custom in the preparation of manuscripts have made this practice necessary.

4. *Write the title above the theme*, and leave a space between the title and the theme.

5. *Leave a margin* of about an inch and a half. Good Use calls for a margin in all manuscript work. The margin of themes is a convenient place for the instructor's criticisms.

6. *Indent your paragraphs.* The first word of each paragraph should be indented about an inch.

7. *Number the pages of your manuscript*, and arrange them in the right order.

The foregoing directions all refer to matters of common custom and convenience, and for this reason uniformity of practice is desirable.

II. CAPITAL LETTERS

The following comprehensive rule covers most of the ordinary uses of capital letters: Capitalize all proper names and adjectives derived from proper names; the first word of a sentence, the first word in every line of poetry, and the first word of a direct quotation; the names of organizations, corporations, political parties, and religious denominations; the names of days and months (but not of seasons); the names and titles of God and personal pronouns used to refer to Him; the pronoun *I* and the vocative interjection *O*; the important words in the title of a book or any composition (usually all the words except articles, particles,

demonstratives, auxiliary verbs, and personal pronouns in the possessive case); and personal titles when used with a person's name, as in the sentence, "The book was written by Captain Mahan."

III. PUNCTUATION

The purpose of punctuation is to make the writer's thought more clear to the reader. The marks of punctuation are mechanical devices quite as important and useful in helping the reader to an immediate understanding of the writer's thought as are the spacing of words and the division of a composition into paragraphs. Without the aid of these marks it would often be difficult for us to take in at a glance what an author intends to say; sometimes it might even be impossible to comprehend his exact meaning. If, therefore, we would write with such clearness that others can readily understand just what we mean to say, it is worth our while to know how to use the marks of punctuation.

The art of punctuation is not really very difficult. It is to be feared that many have been frightened by lengthy treatises on the subject and by a formidable array of rules dealing with special cases. As a matter of fact, the writer who wishes to punctuate acceptably can help himself quite as much by the habit of close observation as by an attempt to follow out elaborately formulated rules. Let him observe and note how the marks of punctuation are used in good books and magazines. By the observation and imitation of correct models one can usually learn the main requirements of Good Use in punctuation; surely it is only in this way that one can master the finer points. The student who learns to punctuate by this method will, after a little

practice, point off his sentences almost as naturally and unconsciously as he dots his *i*'s and crosses his *t*'s.

A few rules, however, may help us if we do not follow them too blindly; for punctuation is not entirely a matter of taste. It is well to have a body of rules for study and reference because they furnish us with a convenient summary of the practice of the best writers. They serve the useful purpose of securing something like uniformity.

In the theory and practice of punctuation there has been, during the past century, a strong tendency toward simplification. Fewer marks are now used, and fewer rules are needed. There has been a wide acceptance of the sensible general rule that marks of punctuation are to be used only when they serve as aids to clearness and to the ready apprehension of thought, or when they can be made to contribute to the emphasis of the sentence. From the standpoint of clearness, it is often quite as serious a fault to use too many marks of punctuation as to use too few. Certainly, to put them in at the wrong places, where they may mislead the reader, is worse than to omit them altogether.

1. *Sentences.* (*a*) Punctuation has to do almost entirely with the sentence and its parts. Every one knows that after a declarative sentence, like this one and the one which precedes it, a period should be placed. For imperative sentences the following rule will itself serve as an example: "Put a period after every sentence that expresses a command." Again, who does not know that an interrogation mark should be put after a question? It is also customary to indicate, by an exclamation point, that a sentence expresses strong feeling; as when David exclaimed, "How are the mighty fallen!" These simple rules are certainly matters of common knowledge. When-

ever they are violated, the mistake is generally due to haste or carelessness. We should therefore keep our wits about us and punctuate each sentence before we leave it.

(*b*) The semicolon is often used to separate a series of short statements closely connected in meaning. Note the following examples: —

"They have no time; paper and ink are not at hand; they are slow with the pen; they find writing a difficult and tedious task."

"A writer first jots down his thoughts on any given subject; he selects those that suit his purpose; then he begins to write his composition."

2. *Coördinate clauses.* (*a*) If the coördinate clauses of a sentence are simple in form and closely connected in meaning, they should be separated only by a comma, as in the following examples: —

"The horse ran away, but the driver was uninjured."

"There are two ways in which a violation of the principle of Unity may occur, and these two ways it is well to consider in detail."

Occasionally, however, the connection may be so close and the clauses so short as to render the comma unnecessary, as in the following sentence: "The horse was injured and the carriage demolished."

(*b*) On the other hand, when the connection between coördinate clauses is somewhat loose, or when they contain dependent members set off by commas, they should be separated by semicolons. The following sentences will serve as examples: —

"The circumstances of a novel, which after all are not essential, may be imaginary; but the description of the rise and progress of the action, which is the substance of the novel, may be real."

"Fiction, therefore, has been invented and cultivated to supply the wants of man, and is necessary, just like tea or coffee or any other nutritious stimulant; and true to its character, it varies its form to suit the circumstances and tastes of each period of life."

"Imagination is an intellectual process common to philosophy and art; but in each it is allied with different processes and directed to different ends; and hence, although the 'Principia' demanded an imagination of not less vivid and sustained power than was demanded by 'Othello,' it would be very false psychology to infer that the mind of Newton was competent to the creation of 'Othello,' or the mind of Shakespeare capable of producing the 'Principia.' They were specifically different minds; their works were specifically different."

(*c*) The colon is the mark of anticipation and expectancy. When used in the body of a sentence, generally between two coördinate clauses, it indicates to the reader that something is to follow by way of example, explanation, or apposition of thought. Instances of this use of the colon can be found in any of the four paragraphs immediately preceding this. The colons in the following quotation lead the reader to expect something that will explain or amplify the thought: —

"Dull companions are the buffers of society: they prevent the more active and impetuous spirits from coming into collision. They are the shadows of society: they make the lights stand out in greater relief and brilliancy."

3. *Subordinate clauses.* (*a*) Subordinate clauses are either substantive, relative, or adverbial clauses, according as they perform the functions of noun, adjective, or adverb. Usually a single substantive clause needs no mark of punctuation. Very rarely, when a long substantive clause is used as subject, it is necessary, for the sake of clearness, to place a comma just before the predicate verb; as, for example, — "That Chaucer should not have found occasion to ride across from Milan to Padua for the sake of seeing the most famous literary man of the day, is incredible." When several substantive clauses are used together, as in the following sentences, they are generally separated by a comma or commas: —

"We are Knights of Labor because we believe that law and order should prevail, and that both should be founded in equity."

"Let us suppose that you have studied one or more of these standard authors, and that you are still anxious to extend your acquaintance with books."

(*b*) Relative clauses are of two kinds, restrictive and non-restrictive. A restrictive relative clause is inseparably connected with its antecedent. It is used, like the demonstrative adjectives *this*, *that*, *these*, *those*, to point out a particular person or thing or group. By specifying an individual object or group and excluding all other objects that belong to the same class, such a relative clause actually *restricts* the meaning of its antecedent. All the relative clauses that answer to this description are said to be restrictive, and should not be set off by commas. Each of the two preceding sentences contains an example. On the other hand, the non-restrictive relative clause, which usually adds to the antecedent some descriptive, explanatory, or incidental fact or circumstance, should always be set off by a comma or commas. The relative clause in the foregoing sentence is non-restrictive or explanatory. The difference in the punctuation of these two kinds of clauses is necessary to indicate the difference in meaning. The sentence, "Sailors who are superstitious will not embark on Friday," does not express the same meaning when the relative clause is made non-restrictive, — "Sailors, who are superstitious, will not embark on Friday."

(*c*) Adverbial clauses also are occasionally restrictive; that is to say, they are sometimes inseparably connected with the rest of the sentence. In the three sentences that follow, no commas should be used to separate the dependent clause from the independent clause: "I cannot leave until my friend arrives." "I will follow you whitherso-

ever you go." "We cannot succeed unless we are resolute and persevering." Most adverbial clauses, however, are non-restrictive, and should usually be set off from the independent clause and from each other by means of commas. When the adverbial clause, whether restrictive or non-restrictive, stands first, it should generally be separated from the independent clause by a comma. The following sentences will show how commas are used to set off adverbial clauses: —

"If you cannot read all the great masterpieces, read at least one."

"When you read a book written by a person you know, you are far more interested in it than in a stranger's book."

"I am willing to listen to the gentleman's arguments, although I feel sure that I can never accept his conclusions."

"When we turn to the graceful structure at whose portals we stand, and when the airy outline of its curves of beauty is contrasted with the overarching vault of heaven above and the ever moving flood of waters beneath, we are irresistibly moved to exclaim, 'What hath man wrought!'"

"But if you are active and earnest, if you wish to succeed in life, if you covet the title of rational creatures, if you have the sense to appreciate good advice and the resolution to carry it out, you will read according to a well-defined and rigid method."

(*d*) The semicolon is used to separate subordinate clauses, or even phrases, which have a common dependence: —

"He knew that the English nation was discontented with the way in which the war had hitherto been conducted; that nothing but rapid and splendid success could revive the enthusiasm of his friends or quell the spirit of his enemies; and that a defeat could scarcely be more injurious to his fame and to his interests than a languid and indecisive campaign."

"The true method seems to consist of two steps: to read first the one or two good standard works in each department of literature; and then to confine our reading to that department which suits the particular bent of our minds."

4. *Phrases and words.* The comma is used in the following cases: —

(*a*) To separate a participial phrase from the context, except when it is used instead of a restrictive clause. The participial phrase may be used at the beginning, at the end, or in the body of the sentence, or it may be used absolutely: —

"In treating of the reading of books, we do not refer to all kinds of books."

"Do not jump about from book to book, trying to read what any would-be judge recommends to you."

"Let us, in considering this subject, look at it from every point of view."

"Everything being now ready, the army began its long and wearisome march."

Of course, no comma is used to set off a participial phrase that is used restrictively: "I refer to all books *relating to history and biography*."

(*b*) To separate words or phrases used in a series: —

"Guided by this definition, we will include books relating to mental philosophy, history, biography, poetry, and fiction."

"A participial phrase may come at the beginning, at the end, or in the body of a sentence."

(*c*) To separate words or phrases that are contrasted with each other: —

"There are few voices in the world, but many echoes."

"We live in deeds, not years; in thoughts, not breaths; in feelings, not in figures on a dial."

(*d*) To separate from the context a word or phrase used in apposition: —

"Antonio Gallenga, the Italian publicist and patriot, was born in 1810."

(*e*) To separate transposed and parenthetical expressions from the rest of the sentence: —

"In course of time, we can almost imagine, it will be difficult to find a man who has not been guilty of authorship."

"The Italian poet Dante, on a certain occasion, went to a street to see some grand procession."

Sometimes parenthetical elements are set off by dashes or parentheses.

(*f*) To separate from the context adverbs used independently at the beginning of the sentence, and conjunctive adverbs like *however*, *moreover*, *then*: —

"Happily, this country is not a legitimate theatre for the political ambitions of European sovereigns."

"True oratory, then, is the art of convincing and persuading men."

(*g*) To separate from the context a word or phrase used in direct address: "And now, my friends, let us come to the paramount issue."

(*h*) Sometimes to indicate that a word is omitted: "To err is human; to forgive, divine."

(*i*) To introduce a short, informal quotation: "Christ said, 'Follow me.'"

5. *The hyphen* is used between the parts of many compound words. It would be hard to formulate any very helpful rule. Compound words which have long been in use, and which are no longer thought of as compound, are usually written without a hyphen. The following pairs of compound words may suggest the difference in usage: *cupboard*, *cup-shaped*; *blacksmith*, *black-eyed*; *semicolon*, *semi-civilized*; *honeycomb*, *honey-bee*; *steamboat*, *steam-heating*. The hyphen is also used to mark the divisions of a word at the end of a written or printed line. When thus used, the hyphen should come between two syllables of the divided word. A monosyllable should not be divided. Nor should a syllable of only one letter be allowed to stand at the end or at the beginning of a line.

6. *The apostrophe* is used in forming the possessive case. The apostrophe and the *s* should be placed after singular nouns and after the few plurals which do not end in *s*, as in *George's* and *men's*. This rule holds even when the singular noun ends in *s*, as in "Mr. *Jones's* estate." In order, however, to avoid disagreeable sibilance, the *s* should be omitted after the apostrophe in forming the possessive of such words as *Jesus, Crassus, Perseus.* To form the possessive case of plural nouns ending in *s*, only the apostrophe is used, as in "the *students'* petition." Another use of the apostrophe is to indicate the omission of a letter or letters, as in *doesn't, can't, o'clock.*

7. *Quotations.* The various examples quoted in this chapter will serve to illustrate the ordinary use of quotation marks (" "). Only the words quoted should be inclosed. In dialogue such expressions as *he exclaimed, said he, he thought*, form no part of the quotation. When the quotation extends through several paragraphs, marks should be used at the beginning of the quotation, at the beginning of each paragraph, and at the end of the quotation. It may here be noted that the colon is often used to introduce a long, formal quotation; for an example of this use see page 327. Single marks (' ') are used to indicate a quotation within a quotation, as in the example under 4, (*i*), on the opposite page.

8. *Abbreviations and numerals* are generally avoided in formal composition. There are, however, a number of abbreviations which form exceptions to this general rule. The following are in common use: etc., *i.e.*, *e.g.*, viz., A.D., B.C., A.M., P.M.; Mr., Mrs., Messrs., Dr., Capt., Rev., and similar abbreviations, when used before the names of persons; Jr., Esq., M.A., Ph.D., and like abbreviations, when used after proper names; inst., ult., prox., P.S., as

used in letters. Numbers should usually be spelled out. Numerals, however, are commonly used in dates, addresses, and in numbers containing more than three digits.

In regard to the foregoing mechanical processes, we should be on our guard, as students of Composition, against a few common pitfalls. *First*, it is well to remember that punctuation is an essential part of composition. We must know how to use the marks of punctuation, and we must not forget or neglect to put them in. The composition of a sentence is not complete until the proper marks of punctuation have been inserted. *Secondly*, punctuation is intended to help the reader. A writer, therefore, may defeat his purpose by using too many marks or by misplacing them. *Thirdly*, each mark has its legitimate uses, and one mark should not be made to perform the functions of another. It is easy, for instance, to fall into the habit of using the comma or the dash almost exclusively. The dash is perhaps the worst offender. It has, of course, its legitimate uses, which can best be learned by observation. *Fourthly*, we cannot depend entirely upon rules, nor should we follow them too blindly. Yet punctuation is not a mere matter of taste. If we would punctuate well, we should exercise our judgment, and seek, by observation, imitation, and practice, to gain a mastery of the best usage.

IV. EXERCISES

I. Take at random a page of your text-book, and endeavor to justify and explain the use of each mark of punctuation.

II. Take up one of the carefully printed popular magazines, such as the *Atlantic Monthly*, the *Century Magazine*, or *Harper's Magazine*, and go over each page with care, noting how the various marks are used in order to make the thought both clear and emphatic. Justify, if possible, the use of each mark.

III. Make every written exercise in all your studies an exercise in punctuation. Punctuate with care all your written work, — letters, themes, class-room exercises, reports, examination papers, etc. Above all, avoid the common mistake of using too many marks.

IV. Let the instructor read to his class a paragraph or two from some book or magazine in such a manner as not to indicate where marks of punctuation should be used. The students will write the exercise thus dictated, putting in such marks of punctuation as they think necessary. Let each student then compare the punctuation of the passage with that of the original. Discuss such cases as admit of several different ways of punctuation.

V. Punctuate the following, and insert capital letters wherever they should be used. Justify the use of each mark and capital letter that you insert: —

1. Adhering sir as I do to this policy as well as for the reasons I have just given I think this new project to be neither prudent nor practicable

2. I think that I am from these journals justified in the sixth and last resolution which is as follows

3. Spain in her provinces is perhaps not so well obeyed as you are in yours she complies too she submits she watches the times

4. Ireland before the English conquest though never governed by a despotic power had no parliament

5. But the reconciliation was on the surface only underneath the old hatred smouldered ready to burst forth into flame

6. The question is whether you will choose to abide by a profitable experience or a mischievous theory whether you choose to build on imagination or fact whether you prefer enjoyment or hope satisfaction in your subjects or discontent

7. Chester civilized as well as Wales has demonstrated that freedom and not servitude is the cure of anarchy as religion and not atheism is the true remedy for superstition

8. By means of the three principles of unity coherence and emphasis then the writer is able to govern the selection the arrangement and the proportion of the whole composition

9. But the population of this country the great and growing population though a very important consideration will lose much of its weight if not combined with other circumstances

10. Flowers brighter than the rose bloomed in the blackest of the heath for Emily out of a sullen hollow in a livid hillside her mind could

make an Eden she found in the bleak solitude many and dear delights and not the least and best loved was liberty Liberty was the breath of Emilys nostrils without it she perished the change from her own home to a school and from her own very noiseless very secluded but unrestricted and unartificial life to one of disciplined routine though under the kindest auspices was what she failed in enduring

11. Wondering to whom this odd tent could belong I advanced till I was close before it when I found that it consisted of two tilts like those of wagons placed upon the ground and fronting each other connected behind by a sail or large piece of canvas which was but partly drawn across the top upon the ground in the intervening space was a fire over which supported by a kind of iron crowbar hung a caldron

12. In every improved society the farmer is generally nothing but a farmer the manufacturer nothing but a manufacturer the labor too which is necessary to produce any one complete manufacture is almost always divided among a great number of hands

13. I will arise and go to my father and will say unto him father I have sinned against heaven and before thee and am no more worthy to be called thy son make me as one of thy hired servants and he arose and came to his father but when he was yet a great way off his father saw him and had compassion and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him

14. Shall California come in for myself upon my individual judgment and conscience I answer yes for my-self as an instructed representative of one of the states of that one of the states which is soonest to be pressed in commercial and political rivalry by the new common-wealth I answer yes let California come in every new state whether it come from the east or from the west every new state coming from whatever part of the continent it may is always welcome

15. Not the Spartans at Thermopylæ nor the old guard at Waterloo presented a spectacle of sublimer heroism than that handful of Englishmen surrounded by savage foes more than a hundred to one when the last cartridge was in their revolvers standing up in full view of their slayers reverently baring their heads and singing God save the queen

16. We have a fine moon-light night for riding on says Esmond. Frank we may reach Castlewood in time yet. All the way along they made inquiries at the post houses when a tall young gentleman in a gray suit with a light brown periwig just the color of my lords had been seen to pass he had set off at six that morning and we at three in the

afternoon he rode almost as quickly as we had done he was seven hours ahead of us still when we reached the last stage

17. Four years ago California a Mexican province scarcely inhabited and quite unexplored was unknown even to our usually moderate desires except by a harbor capacious and tranquil which only statesmen then foresaw would be useful in the oriental commerce of a far distant if not merely chimerical future

18. What appearance on the page of history would a record like this make in the month of January in the year of our lord and saviour 1824 while all European christendom beheld with cold unfeeling apathy the unexampled wrongs and inexpressible misery of christian Greece a proposition was made in the congress of the United states to send a messenger to Greece to inquire into her state and condition with an expression of our good wishes and our sympathies and it was rejected

19. Spinoza isnt a man of action his heroism such as it is is the heroism of contemplation he is not always let me tell you in his religious mood and when he is not he appears as a cynical observer of the vanity of mortal passions but as a religious thinker he is no cynic unswervingly he turns from the world of finite hopes and joys patiently he renounces every sort of worldly comfort even the virtue he seeks is not the virtue of the active man

20. Crossing the bridge we now proceed to the left through Church st. from the end of which a flight of 190 steps ascends to Saint Marys church where some traces of the original Norman work may still be distinguished a little to the right lie the picturesque Ruins of Whitby abbey originally founded in the 7th cent. but dating in it's present form from the 12th cent.

APPENDIX B

SPELLING

THE words in the following list[1] are frequently misspelled even by fairly good spellers: —

accidentally. Not *accidently.*
accommodate. Two *c*'s and two *m*'s.
acknowledgment. Cf. **judgment.**
all right. There is no such word as *alright.*
arrange. Not *arrainge.*
athletics. Three syllables; do not insert *e* after the first.
balance. Only one *l.*
battalion. Two *t*'s, as in *battle.*
believe. The proper digraph, *ei* or *ie*, can often be determined by use of the keyword *Alice*: that is, *i* follows *l*, *e* follows *c*: *believe*, *receive*, etc.
benefited. Only one *t.*
business. Not *buisness.*
Christian. That the *i* precedes the *a* can be determined by the pronunciation: *i*=*y.*
column.
criticise. Not *-ize.*
descendant. Not *-ent.*
describe, description. The prefix is *de*; if it were *dis*, we should have two *s*'s, as the root is *scribe*; besides, *dis* indicates separation, an idea that is not in the word.
despair. See **describe.**
develop, development. There should be no *e* immediately after *p.*
dilapidated. The prefix is *di* (same as *dis*), not *de.*
disappear, disappearance. A separation of the word *disappear* into its two elements, *dis* and *appear*, will show at once that there is no reason for two *s*'s.
disappoint, disappointment. See **disappear.**
dormitory. Not *dormatory.*
eighth.
envelop. A verb.
envelope. A noun.

[1] About two-thirds of the words in this list, as well as the remarks that accompany them, have been taken, by permission, from the list of misspelled words compiled by Professor A. G. Newcomer for his "Elements of Rhetoric," pages 283-286 (Henry Holt & Company). About thirty words have been added to Professor Newcomer's list.

equipped.

etc. An abbreviation of *et cetera*; therefore not *ect*.

February. Not to be pronounced or spelled *Febuary*.

forcible.

forty.

grandeur.

hers. Not *her's*.

huge. Not to be spelled *hugh*, after the manner of the proper name *Hugh*.

humorous. From *humor*; therefore not to be confounded with the physiological term *humerus*.

imagine. One *m*, as in *image*.

independent. Not *-ant*.

indispensable. Not *-ible*.

inseparable. Not *inseperable*. See **separate**.

irrelevant. There is no such word as *irrevelant*.

its. There is no apostrophe in the possessive form; *it's* is a contraction for *it is*.

judgment. *Judgement* is an antiquated form. The simpler spelling should be preferred.

laboratory. Five syllables; do not omit the first *o*; note the root, *labor*.

led. Past tense of *lead*; not like the past tense of *read*.

lose. *Lose* does not conform to the spelling of *choose*; *loose* is a different word, with a hissing *s*.

manufacture. Not *mani-* or *mana-*; note the root, *manu*, from the Latin noun, *manus*.

mimicking. The *k* is inserted before *e*, *i*, and *y*, to preserve *c* hard. Cf. **picnicking.**

near-by. An attributive adjective. Not *nearby*, after the manner of *nearly*.

necessary. When *c* is doubled, the first *c* is pronounced like *k*, as in *flaccid*, *accident*.

noticeable. The *e* must be retained to preserve *c* soft before *a*. The great difficulty is to remember whether the suffix is *able* or *ible*; this must simply be remembered, as there is no rule. When the suffix is *ible*, the *e* following *c* is dropped according to the rule for silent final *e*: *forcible*.

occasion. Double *s* only after short *a*, as in *passion*.

occasionally. Not *occasionly*, for *ly* is added to the adjective form. So also *accidentally*, *incidentally*. There must be two *l*'s, one belonging to the adjective, one to the suffix.

occurred. Two *c*'s and two *r*'s.

o'clock. The apostrophe should not be omitted.

one's. This possessive pronoun requires an apostrophe.

opportunity.

origin, original. Not *origion*; not *origional*. Careful pronunciation will fix the noun, while the adjective, by being referred to the noun, can be kept distinct from such words as *region*, *religion*.

ours. Not *our's*.

partner. Not to be pronounced or spelled *pardner*.

passable. "The roads are *passable*." *Passable* should not be confounded with the rare word *passible*, which has a very different meaning.

perform.

perseverance.

pervade.

picnicking. See **mimicking.**

precede. "To go before." The ending *-ceed* occurs only in *exceed*, *proceed*, and *succeed*.

preparation.

principal. Adjective, meaning *chief*. Also a noun, used in the sense of *that which* (*he who*) *is chief:* as, the *principal* of a school; the *principal* of a note, as opposed to the interest.

principle. Noun only; as a *principle* of action; the *principles* of Rhetoric.

privilege.

proceed. "To go on."

professor. Prefix *pro* — no reason for two *f*'s.

pursue.

receive. See **believe.**

recommend. Only one *c*; the prefix is *re*.

rhythm.

seize. French, *saisir*.

separate, separation. The second syllable can be determined by association with *compare*, *prepare*, *preparation*.

siege. French, *siège*.

similar. No *i* after *l*. Note that that there is no *y* sound, as in *familiar*.

sophomore. Not *sophmore*. Three syllables, not two.

stationary. Adjective, meaning *at rest*.

stationery. Noun, meaning *writing materials*.

superintendent. Not *-ant*.

surprise. Not *-ize*. Not to be pronounced or spelled *supprise*.

temperament. Four syllables.

theirs. Not *their's*.

together. No hyphen; no letter *a*.

too. Not to be carelessly written *to*.

truly. No *e*.

twelfth.

until. The *l* is doubled only in the monosyllable *till*.

village. No *i* after *l*. There is no *y* sound as in *familiar*.

villain. If *i* preceded *a*, we should have a *y* sound as in *Christian*.

volume.

whether. Not *wheather*.

writing. One *t*. (See 2, below.)

yours. Not *your's*.

The following suggestions, made by Professor Newcomer, will also be found useful.

1. Any tendency toward simplification is to be encouraged, and accordingly the following rules are commended for observance: —

Reject *e* after *g* in *judgment*, *acknowledgment*, *abridgment*, *lodgment*.

Drop final *me* in *program*, *gram*, etc.

Drop final *te* in *quartet*, *quintet*, *sextet*.

Substitute *e* for the diphthongs *æ* and *œ* when they are pronounced like *e* : *esthetic*, *fetid*.

When two spellings are in use, select the simpler: *wilful*, *fulfil*, *dulness*, *woolen*, *story*, *develop*, *ax*.

2. Uncertain spellers find much trouble with double consonants. It may be worth while to call their attention to a principle that is frequently overlooked ; namely, that a single consonant is regularly (there are many exceptions) associated with a preceding long vowel, a double consonant with a short vowel. Thus, *mate* gives *mated* ; *mat* gives *matted* ; *robe*, *robing* ; *rob*, *robbing* ; *dine*, *diner*, *dinner* ; *write*, *writing*, *written*.

APPENDIX C

I. DIRECTIONS FOR THEMES

PLEASE observe the following rules: —

1. Use "theme-paper." [1] All themes should be written on paper of uniform size approved by the instructor. This is a matter of great convenience to the teacher whose duty it is to look over a large number of exercises. Ruled paper, ten by eight inches, has been found to be a convenient size.

2. Use black ink.

3. Write legibly.

4. Write on one side only.

5. On the left side of each page leave the margin indicated by the red line. Do not crowd your writing at the end of the line or at the top or the bottom of the page.

6. Number the pages of your theme.

7. Fold the paper once lengthwise, and on the outside sheet write, at the place indicated, the title of your theme, your name, and the date on which the theme is due.

8. Each theme will be carefully examined by the instructor in charge and its faults will be indicated in the margin. On receiving his theme the student will at once make the indicated corrections and return the revised copy before the beginning of the next recitation. In revising his theme the student should not erase or obliterate either

[1] Many teachers will doubtless find it more convenient to have their students use "theme-books." A blank book, ten by eight inches, with stiff covers, makes a good theme-book. In such a book all the student's work for the term can be kept together. The blank pages opposite each theme may be used for the student's revision or corrections.

his original language or the criticism of the instructor. When he is required to rewrite his theme, he should hand in both the original and the rewritten copy.

9. Themes should be handed in promptly on the date and at the hour designated by the instructor. Any irregularity in this respect may seriously affect the student's grade.

II. INSTRUCTOR'S MARKS

NOTE. — Not all these marks are likely to be needed in the criticism of any given theme. Therefore, since only a few of them will ordinarily be applied to the work of any one student, no one need be confused or embarrassed by the large number of these arbitrary symbols. Each student should learn the meaning of those marks which have been used in the criticism of his themes. The teacher, in reading a large number of themes, will find some use for every one of the following marks.

A. Ambiguous.

Ant. The antecedent needs attention.

B. This expresses a meaning that you do not intend.

C. Clearness violated. Make your meaning perfectly clear.

cap. Capital letters are misused or not used at all. See page 334.

C. I. Consult the instructor.

C. s. Faulty coherence of the sentence.

C. p. Faulty coherence of the paragraph.

C. t. Faulty coherence of the whole theme.

D. Consult the dictionary.

d. w. Word divided wrongly at the end of the line. See page 342.

E. s. Emphasis of the sentence violated.

E. p. Emphasis of the paragraph violated.

F. Feeble.

G. Good Use violated. You have used a word or expression not employed by the best writers. Find some synonymous expression which is in good use.

gr. Bad grammar.

H. Haste. Carelessness and extreme haste are evident. Recast the sentence.

Hk. Hackneyed or trite. Use a more vivid expression.

I. S. Incomplete sentence.

J. Jerky. Too many short sentences. Combine into longer sentences and vary their form.

K. Awkward, stiff, or clumsy.

L. Long and involved sentence. Break it up into shorter ones.

Ms. Manuscript slovenly or illegible. Recopy with care as far as indicated by the side line.

N. S. Make a new sentence at the point indicated.

O. Omission. Something omitted which is necessary for strength, clearness, or correctness. Supply the omitted word or words.

P. Improper punctuation. Punctuate with care as far as indicated by the side line. Consult Appendix A, III.

P. W. Proportion of the whole theme violated. Rewrite.

R. Do not repeat the same word or expression unless it is absolutely necessary. Use a synonym or vary the construction.

Rel. Relative pronoun at fault.

Rw. Rewrite as far as indicated.

Sp. There is a misspelled word in this line. Spell it correctly and write the corrected form *on the back of the theme*.

T. Bad taste.

Taut. Tautology. The same idea repeated. Revise.

U. s. Unity of the sentence violated.

U. p. Unity of the paragraph violated.

U. t. Unity of the whole theme violated.

V. Vague. Want of clear thinking is evident. Reconstruct with care.

W. Wordy. Rewrite. Express your ideas with fewer words.

w. w. Wrong word. Find the word which exactly and correctly expresses your idea.

X. Some fault too obvious to require particularization.

1, 2, 3, etc. Words, phrases, or clauses to be rearranged in conformity with the numbering.

¶. Proper place for paragraph.

No ¶. Improper place for paragraph.

¶ A. Too many paragraphs. } Rearrange your paragraph structure.
¶ B. Too few paragraphs. }

?. Query. Are you sure that this is right ?

⁀. Join the parts of a word incorrectly separated.

N. B. One of the above marks placed *on the outside of a theme* warns the writer against a prevailing fault.

APPENDIX D

GOOD USE

In the following list some of the commonest violations of Good Use have been pointed out. Some words and expressions of doubtful or disputed propriety have also been included. The student is asked to go over this list with care and note any mistakes that he has been in the habit of making. It will be worth his while thus to become acquainted with his faults, in order that he may be on his guard against these errors in his subsequent work.[1]

For words and expressions not found in this list the student is referred to the dictionaries. He should, however, beware of an error frequently committed by those who consult the dictionaries for the purpose of determining questions of Good Use. Our larger dictionaries record all kinds of usage, — good, bad, and indifferent; and the student, therefore, should not make the mistake of supposing that all the words and all the meanings which he finds recorded in a dictionary are in present, reputable, and national use. He will do well to guard against using words that are labeled "obsolete," "obsolescent," "archaic," "provincial," "colloquial," "new," "slang," or

[1] The author wishes to acknowledge his indebtedness to the Appendix on Disputed and Faulty Diction in Professor A. G. Newcomer's "Elements of Rhetoric"; to the Appendix on Faulty Diction in the Standard Dictionary; and to Dr. R. H. Bell's excellent little book on "The Worth of Words." The last-named book should be read by all students of Composition. The Appendix on Faulty Diction in the Standard Dictionary is excellent.

"vulgar"; terms or expressions that are clearly technical or foreign; and meanings that apparently lack the support of the best writers.

Above. Not "the *above* remark," or "It is evident from the *above*." Do not use *above* as an adjective. *Foregoing* and *preceding* are convenient synonyms.

Accept and **except** are confounded only by the ignorant and the careless.

Acceptance, acceptation. "In the common *acceptation* of the word, *acceptance* means either the act of accepting, or a favorable reception."

Affect and **effect** should not be confounded. *To affect* means *to produce a change, to influence; to effect* means *to bring to pass, to produce, to accomplish.*

Aggravate, in the sense of *vex, provoke, exasperate*, is almost universally condemned. *To aggravate* means "to increase in weight, gravity, severity, or intensity"; *e.g.*, "The climate *aggravates* his disease."

A half an hour. *A half-hour* or *half an hour* is better.

Ain't, for *am not, are not*, or *is not*, is an obvious vulgarism.

All of. After *all*, "the best literary usage omits the *of* as needless, preferring 'I saw *them all*' (not *all of them*), 'Take *it all*' (not *all of it*), 'I saw *all* (not *all of*) my friends,' '*They all* (not *all of them*) came.'"

Allow, in the sense of *say*, is provincial and vulgar; *e.g.*, "He *allowed* that he would come."

Allude. "We *allude* to an event not distinctly mentioned or directly referred to." It is correct to say that "'Paradise Lost' contains many classical *allusions*."

Alternative strictly refers to "a choice between two things," or to "one of the two things of which either is possible or may be chosen." *Alternative* should not be applied to more than two things.

Alumnus, alumni. *Alumnus* is the masculine singular form; *alumni* is the masculine plural. *Alumna* is the feminine singular; *alumnæ*, the feminine plural.

Among, between. *Among* properly applies to more than two. *Between* should be used of two things only. It is incorrect to say, "We must choose *between* these four courses."

Anxious is not synonymous with *eager* or *desirous*. Even in the following sentence, *anxious* implies solicitude or anxiety: "He sneers

alike at those who are *anxious* to preserve and at those who are eager for reform."

Any may be used as an adverb of degree with comparatives, as in "*any* more," "*any* sooner," "*any* better"; but *any* should not be used absolutely with verbs, as in "Can you sing *any?*" and "It didn't rain *any* yesterday."

Any place should not be used for the adverb *anywhere;* as, *e.g.*, "We searched the grove, but could not find him *any place* in the neighborhood."

Appreciate means to *estimate justly* or "*value at real worth.*" In the sentence, "I very much *appreciate* the help you gave me," *very much* is superfluous. "The use of *appreciates* as equivalent to *likes* or *rises in value* is a mark of pretentious ignorance."

As should not be used for the conjunction *that* after *know.* Only an uneducated man would say, "I do not know *as* I can be present."

As far as and **so far as** may be used interchangeably. *So far as* is the more emphatic form.

As though, in the sense of *as if*, though often condemned by purists, is an old and well-established idiom.

At is to be "preferred to *in* before the names of cities and towns when they are thought of as geographical points"; *e.g.*, "He arrived *at* Philadelphia. He died *at* Pasadena."

Avocation, vocation. *Avocation* is loosely used for *vocation.* "Vocation strictly signifies the main calling or business of life; *avocation*, a diversion from that *vocation*"; *e.g.*, "The law was his *vocation;* literature was his *avocation.*"

Aware. See **Conscious.**

A ways. "I found that it was *a long ways* to the city" is incorrect. Use *way.*

Awful and **awfully** are vulgar and meaningless substitutes for *very.*

Back of is a provincial substitute for *behind.*

Balance should not be used for *remainder.*

Be back. The adverb *back* usually implies motion. The common colloquialism, "I'll be *back* soon," can hardly be defended.

Begin, commence. "In all ordinary uses," says the Century Dictionary, "*commence* is exactly synonymous with *begin*, which, as a purely English word, is nearly always preferable, but more especially before another verb in the infinitive."

Being, in such expressions as "The work is *being* done," "The carpet is now *being* beaten," has won its way into good use.

Beside, besides. *Beside* means *by the side of*; *e.g.*, "He stood *beside* me." *Besides* means *in addition to*; *e.g.*, "*Besides* my regular college studies, I took German lessons under a private tutor."

Between. See **Among.**

Blame should not be used with the preposition *on*. It is incorrect to say, "He *blamed* the accident *on* me." The correct idioms are *to blame for* or *to lay the blame upon*.

Bound, in the sense of *resolved* or *determined*, is purely colloquial.

Bring. See **Fetch.**

Bursted is a vulgarism. *Burst* is the correct form.

But what. Use *but that*, as in "I do not know *but that* they will arrive to-day." *But what* is correct when *what* is used as a relative pronoun; *e.g.*, "Nothing remained *but what* had been deposited in the savings bank."

By, with. "*By* is properly used before the agent; *with*, before the instrument or means"; as, "He was shot *by* a burglar," and "The boy cut his hand *with* the knife." Yet "active forces are often thought of as agents"; hence we say, "The man was struck *by* the train." *By* may also signify *by means of*; as in "He gained his ends *by* bribery."

Calculated implies purpose; it is "not merely equivalent to *likely*."

Can but, cannot but, cannot help, are all good idioms.

Cannot help but is an impropriety produced by combining two good idioms.

Caption, in the sense of *heading* (*e.g.*, "He wrote under the *caption* 'Good Roads'"), is a common Americanism. This impropriety is due to a mistaken etymology. *Caption* is derived from *capio*, not *caput*.

Claim, as a synonym for *maintain* or *contend* (in argument), though used with increasing frequency, is avoided by the best writers and speakers.

Clever, as a synonym for *obliging* or *generous*, is a provincialism. *Clever* means "possessing quickness of intellect, skill, dexterity, talent, or adroitness."

Commence. See **Begin.**

Complected is a vulgarism. We may say *dark-complexioned*, but not *dark-complected*.

Comprehensible, comprehensive. *Comprehensible* means "that which may be comprehended or understood"; *comprehensive* means "comprehending much in a comparatively small compass."

Condign, as applied to punishment, does not mean *severe*. Its correct meaning is *worthy* or *deserved*.

Conscious, aware. "*Aware* refers to objects of perception, things outside of ourselves; *conscious*, to objects of sensation, things within us." We are *conscious* of our own thoughts and feelings; we are *aware* of external facts, objects, and circumstances.

Contemptible, contemptuous. *Contemptible* means *worthy of contempt*; *contemptuous* means *manifesting or expressing contempt*; *e.g.*, "Benedict Arnold's conduct was *contemptible*." "He glanced *contemptuously* at the prisoner."

Continually, continuously. *Continually* refers to repeated action; *continuously* implies that the action is uninterrupted. "*Continuous* describes that which is absolutely without pause or break; *continual* that which often intermits, but as often begins again;" *e.g.*, "The flow of water was *continuous*." "The *continual* dropping of water will wear away a stone."

Convene means to *come together* or *assemble*: "Congress *convenes* on the first Monday in December." "The President may *convoke*, but he cannot *convene* Congress."

Council, counsel. A *council* is an advisory body; *counsel* means *advice*, sometimes a *legal adviser*: "A *council* often meets for the purpose of giving *counsel*."

Couple. *A couple of* is vulgarly used as a substitute for *several*. *Couple* strictly means "two related or associated persons or things."

Credible, credulous. *Credible* means *worthy of belief*; *credulous* means *disposed to believe on slight evidence*; e.g., "*Credulous* people sometimes believe *incredible* rumors."

Cute, a common colloquialism for *acute* and *cunning*, is a barbarism.

Data is the plural of *datum*.

Demean does not signify to *debase* or *degrade*. Its proper meaning is to *conduct* or *behave*; as, "They have *demeaned* themselves like men born to renown."

Depot. A *depot* is a storehouse. It is widely but incorrectly used for *railway station*.

Differ from, differ with. "*Differ from*, in character; *differ from* or *with*, in opinion."

Different than. Write *different from* or *other than.*

Different to, "though common in England, is not sustained by good authority." *Different from* is the correct idiom.

Directly is an adverb, not a conjunction. It should not be used for *as soon as*, or *immediately after*, as in "*Directly* I get there, I'll write."

Distinct and **distinctive** are sometimes confused. Distinct means *separate*, *different*; *distinctive* means *characteristic*, "*marking a distinction or peculiarity*"; *e.g.*, "These two nations are *distinct*, and each of them has its *distinctive* character and institutions."

Dock is often misused for *pier* or *wharf*. A dock is an "artificial basin for vessels."

Don't is a contraction of *do not*. Hence it is improper to use *don't* in the third person singular. The proper contraction is *doesn't*.

Doubt but that is wrongly used for *doubt that*. "There can be no *doubt but that*," etc., should be "There can be no *doubt that*," etc.

Dove. The colloquial preterite *dove* should not be used for *dived*.

Drive may mean to "travel in a carriage": "Did you *ride* or *drive* in the park ?" But it is an inexcusable impropriety to say: "He *drove* his friends to the station in his own carriage."

Each other, one another. "*Each other* may be used for more than two, though possibly *one another* is preferable, as serving to make a distinction."

Electrocute, "to infiict a death penalty by means of electricity," though frequently condemned as a barbarism and a monstrosity, seems destined to find a permanent place in the language. *Electricute* is preferred by the Standard Dictionary.

Elegant has a definite meaning and should not be used as a vague term of general approval. Strictly speaking, "that which is *elegant* is marked by refinement, or grace, or delicacy of stature, form, or action." See **Splendid**.

Eliminate does not mean to *elicit*, *derive*, or *deduce*. Its correct meaning is to *cast out*, *thrust out*, or *throw aside*. The mathematician *eliminates* a quantity from an equation.

Else's. *Somebody else's* is quite as correct as *somebody's else*, and is more natural and idiomatic.

Emigrate, immigrate. Note the prefixes *e-* and *im-* (for *in-*). *Emigrate* means to *migrate* or *move out of a country*; *immigrate* means to *move into a country*; *e.g.*, "Thousands of Irish *emigrants* leave Cork

every year. In our American cities these Irish *immigrants* sometimes become prominent citizens."

Endorse, in the figurative sense of *approve*, though often condemned by purists, is sanctioned by Good Use.

Enthuse is a barbarism.

Ere and **erelong** are poetic. They seem to be out of place in ordinary prose.

Expect is never equivalent to suppose. "I *expect* that they are somehow interested in this matter" is incorrect.

Extend is used incorrectly in such an expression as "to *extend* a vote of thanks," "to *extend* an invitation," "to *extend* a reception," etc.

Farther, further. "Writers who desire to keep the words distinct use the former for distance, the latter for quantity or degree."

Female, when used as a synonym for *woman*, is now regarded as a gross impropriety.

Fetch, bring. *Fetch* is a good English word. "*Fetch* expresses double motion — first from, then toward the speaker;" *e.g.*, "*Fetch* me the book" means "*Go and bring* me the book." *Bring* implies motion in one direction only — from the object to the speaker: "If you are at the book-case, I should like you to *bring* me the dictionary."

Fine should not be used as a vague, general term of approval. See **Elegant** and **Nice**.

Firstly. The correct adverbial form is *first*. In a series use the adverbs *first*, *secondly*, *thirdly*, etc.

First-rate is in good use as an adjective, but not as an adverb. Do not say, "I slept *first-rate* last night."

Fix should not be used for *repair*, *prepare*, or *arrange*.

Fly, flee, flow. "*Flee* is a general term and means to move away with voluntary rapidity. *Fly* is of special application and means to move with wings, either quickly or slowly." Streams *flow*. The principal parts of these verbs are *fly*, *flew*, *flown*; *flee*, *fled*, *fled*; *flow*, *flowed*, *flowed*. The forms of one verb should not be confused with those of another.

Folks is in very general colloquial use; as "the old *folks*," "poor *folks*," "the young *folks*." "The word *folks* is now well established."

Forward, forwards. See **Toward, towards**.

From hence, from thence, from whence. *From* is superfluous.

Funny does not mean *odd* or *unusual*.

Gent, gents. A vulgarism.

Gentleman should not be used when simply *man* is meant. Not all men are gentlemen. See **Lady.**

Good deal and **great deal** are both good idioms.

Got properly has the sense of *acquired* or *procured*, but should not be used to express mere possession. "Not 'The horse has *got* long ears,' because he has done nothing to get them."

Gotten, although once a good form, is now obsolescent and provincial. Some writers, however, have shown a disposition to revive it.

Graduated. "He was *graduated*" is to be preferred to "He *graduated*."

Grand, gorgeous, glorious. These words should not be used as vague terms of approval. See **Elegant** and **Splendid.**

Gumption is colloquial and provincial.

Had better and **had rather** are both good idioms.

Hail, in the question, "Where do you *hail* from?" is a provincialism.

Heap, heaps. "A *heap* of friends" and "It did me *heaps* of good" illustrate a vulgar colloquialism. See **Lot, lots.**

Home. The adverb *home* should be used only with verbs of motion: "He came *home*," but not "He is *home*."

Hung, hanged. *Hanged* is the accepted form for "put to death on the gallows."

If. It is best not to use *if* for *whether* in substantive clauses; as, *e.g.*, "I do not know *if* he will come."

Immigrate. See **Emigrate.**

In, into. *In* denotes position, state, rest; *into* implies motion; *e.g.*, "I went *into* the house." "I remained *in* my room all the forenoon."

Individual should not be used as a synonym for *person*.

In our midst, in their midst. "The phrase has long been condemned," says Professor Newcomer, "but is well established." Professor A. S. Hill says: "Careful writers avoid *in our midst, in their midst*; but no one hesitates to write 'on our account,' 'in my absence,' 'to their credit,' 'for my sake,' 'in his defence.'"

Kind of, sort of (sometimes *kinder, sorter*), are vulgar provincial substitutes for *somewhat*; as, *e.g.*, "I'm *kind of* tired," "His appeal sounded *sort of* pathetic."

Kind of a, sort of a. The indefinite article should be omitted before the noun. Not "What *kind of a* house is it?" but "What *kind of* house is it?"

Lady, according to the Standard Dictionary, signifies "a refined or well-bred woman, or one of superior social position, and is used as a correlative of *gentleman*. Its use as indicating mere distinction of sex is a sheer vulgarism."

Last and **latest** are not synonymous. "This book is his *latest*, but I hope it will not be his *last*."

Later on. Omit *on*.

Leave, let. Leave, in the sense of *let*, *permit*, or *allow*, is a provincialism. Not "He *left* me go," but "He *let* me go."

Leave alone and **let alone** are by no means synonymous.

Less, fewer. *Less* refers to amount or bulk; *fewer* to number; as, *e.g.*, "He received *less* encouragement and had *fewer* opportunities than his brothers."

Lie, lay. *Lie* is intransitive. Its principal parts are *lie*, *lay*, *lain*. *Lay* is transitive. Its principal parts are *lay*, *laid*, *laid*. The forms of *lay* are often confused with those of *lie*. The following are incorrect: "He *laid* down and went to sleep." "We found him *laying* under a tree." See page 192.

Like should not be used as a conjunction, in the sense of *as*. It is incorrect to say, "Do this *like* I do it."

Likely. It is best to avoid the use of *likely* as an adverb; not "It will *likely* rain to-day," but "It is *likely* to rain to-day."

Likely, liable. *Liable* is correctly used to refer to an unpleasant or an unfavorable possibility. It should not be used as equivalent to *likely*, which refers to any kind of probability. *Liable* is used incorrectly in "Our team is *liable* to win the next three games."

Limited means "confined within limits," *restricted*. It is improperly used for *small*.

Loan should not be used as a verb in the sense of *lend*.

Locate should not be used intransitively in the sense of *settle*.

Lot, lots, in "We had *lots* of fun," "He did a *lot* of good," "He has *lots* of friends," is a "slipshod colloquialism for a *great deal* or a *great many*."

Mad, in the sense of *vexed* or *angry*, is colloquial.

Most, in the sense of *almost*, is a very common impropriety. Do not say, "It happens *most* every day."

Myself should not be used as a subject nominative instead of *I*, as in the sentence, "Here Robert, Jennie, and *myself* used to play."

Nice strictly means *delicate*, *discriminating*. "It is improperly used

to express every kind and degree of admired or appreciated quality, as 'a *nice* time,' 'a *nice* horse,' 'a *nice* man,' 'a *nice* sermon.'"

None. The use of the pronoun *none* in the plural has been often condemned, but without sufficient reason. It is correct to say, "*None* of my friends were present," "*None* of these things move me."

No use. Not "It is *no use*," but "It is *of no use*."

O, oh. "Distinguish between the sign of the vocative and the emotional interjection, writing *O* for the former, and *oh* for the latter."

Observance, observation. Note the difference in meaning: "The *observation* of the stars led, in the past, to many religious *observances*."

Off of. In the sentence "He got *off of* the train," the use of the redundant *of* is improper.

One. Many writers insist that when the indefinite pronoun *one* is used, it should not be followed up with *he*, *his*, and *him*, but should be retained throughout the passage. In many cases, however, the constant repetition of *one* is awkward and monotonous, and the pronouns *he*, *his*, and *him* are to be preferred.

Ones. The plural *ones* may be used.

One's self is better than *oneself*.

Onto. "It is difficult to regard this form with favor, but there can be no question that it is steadily gaining ground. For the present, a writer will do well to ask himself, in every case, whether *upon* (or at any rate *on to*) will not serve his purpose equally well."

Out should not be used as a preposition; not "He walked slowly *out* the room," but "He walked slowly *out of* the room."

Outclassed, generally used in the passive in the sense of "surpassed in skill or quality," is a comparatively recent newspaper invention, not in recognized good use.

Overly is vulgar and colloquial.

Pants (from *pantaloons*) is a vulgarism for *trousers*. "*Gents* wear *pants*."

Partake does not mean to *eat*. It properly means "to have a part or share, in common with others."

Party, used to refer to a particular person, as in "an old *party* of my acquaintance," is a vulgarism.

Per is a Latin preposition, and should be used only with Latin words. Such expressions as "*per* year," "*per* dozen," "*per* hundred," "*per* express," are not in good use.

Phenomena is the plural of *phenomenon*.

Phone is an inelegant abbreviation of *telephone*.

Photo, for *photograph*, is not in good use.

Plenty is not an adjective, but a noun. *Plentiful* is the proper adjective form. It is incorrect to say, "Apples are *plenty* this year."

Portion, part. *Portion* should not be used loosely as a synonym for *part*. *Part* is a general term, signifying "that which is less than the whole." *Portion* is more specific, and carries with it the suggestion of allotment or assignment; as, *e.g.*, "Father, give me the *portion* of goods that falleth to me."

Posted, in the sense of *well informed*, is a common impropriety.

Previous to. *Previous* is an adjective and should not be used adverbially. *Before* is usually better than *previously to*.

Proven is hardly in good use. *Proved* is far better.

Providing and **providing that** should not be used as conjunctions equivalent to *provided* and *provided that*.

Quite. "The word," says Professor Newcomer, "should be kept to its strict meaning of *wholly*; as, 'You are *quite* right,' 'The man is *quite* dead.' In the sense of *very*, as 'The man is *quite* sick,' the word has much authority and the weight of almost universal colloquial usage, but if it be allowed in this sense, the word almost entirely loses its value, since it is often impossible to tell just what the word does mean in a given case."

Raise, rear. Children are *reared*, not *raised*. One may *raise* cattle or tobacco.

Raise, rise. *Raise* is transitive. Its principal parts are *raise*, *raisea*, *raised*. *Rise* is intransitive. Its principal parts are *rise*, *rose*, *risen*. *Raise* should not be used intransitively for *rise*, as in "Then the water began to *raise* in the siphon" See page 192.

Rarely ever was no doubt originally *rarely if ever*. *Rarely* is sufficient.

Real is vulgarly used as an adverb: "He was *real* kind to me."

Recipe, receipt. "A *recipe* for fruit-cake." "He gave me a *receipt* for the money." The distinction is worth preserving.

Referee, as a verb, is not in good use. *Referee* is a noun.

Relative, relation. *Relatives* is far better than *relations*.

Remember of. *Of* should not be used with *remember*, as in the sentence, "I cannot *remember of* any other instance."

Residence is a poor synonym for *dwelling-house*.

Retire means to *withdraw*. It is vulgarly supposed to be a polite euphemism for *go to bed*.

Rig is colloquial and provincial for *horse and carriage*.

Right away is a common colloquialism for *at once* or *immediately*.

Right here, right now, etc., are generally condemned as objectionable Americanisms.

Seldom or ever was no doubt originally *seldom or never* or *seldom if ever*. *Seldom* is sufficient.

Sit, set. *Sit* is usually intransitive. Its principal parts are *sit*, *sat*, *sat*. *Set* is usually transitive. Its principal parts are *set*, *set*, *set*. The forms of one verb are often confused with those of the other. See page 192.

So should not be used as an intensive word, equivalent to *very*, as in "I am *so* glad to see you," "I am *so* tired this evening," "He was *so* kind to me."

Some should not be used adverbially for *somewhat*, *a little*. It is incorrect to say, "It rained *some* yesterday," "The invalid is *some* better to-day."

Some place should not be used adverbially for *somewhere*; as, *e.g.*, "He is here to-day; to-morrow he is *some place* else."

Splendid. "Never use *splendid* unless actual splendor is implied." It is impossible to "have a *splendid* time." See **Elegant**.

Stop, stay. Do not say, "I *stopped* last night at the Clarendon House." To *stop* means to cease moving. "'How long will you *stop?*' is as unreasonable a question as 'How long will you *start?*'" *Stay* can generally be used where *stop* is improperly used. The verb *sojourn* is coming into use in sentences like the following: "We are *sojourning* at the Cliff House." This useful word is commended by the Standard Dictionary.

Strata is the plural of *stratum*.

Subsequent to. The adjective *subsequent* should not be used adverbially. *After* is better than *subsequently to*. See **Previous**.

Such a is often inelegantly used before an attributive adjective and a noun, as in "*such a* small house," "*such a* large man," instead of "*so* small a house," "*so* large a man."

Sundown and **sunup** are poor, provincial substitutes for *sunset* and *sunrise*.

Talented, though often condemned, has won its way into good use.

Team does not mean *a horse and carriage*. A team consists of

"two or more animals working together." We may speak of "a *team* of horses," "a *team* of oxen," "a baseball *team*," "a football *team*," etc.

Than whom is in good use. It is, however, both awkward and unnecessary.

That far, that much, etc. *That* should not be used adverbially. Say "*so* far," "*so* much," etc.

This far, this much, etc. *This* should not be used adverbially. *Thus* is the proper adverb: "*thus* far," "*thus* much," etc.

Those kind (or **sort**). Write *this* kind (or sort). See page 186.

Through. "Inelegant for *done, finished*."

Toward, towards. Both forms are correct. "Toward is the older, and in general the more euphonious form."

Transpire means to *become known*, generally "through unnoticed channels"; "to exhale, as it were, into publicity through invisible pores." *Transpire* does not mean to *happen*. "The events which have *transpired* in the Crimea" has been called, by John Stuart Mill, "a vile specimen of bad English." Newspapers have given wide currency to this impropriety.

Try and is often improperly used for *try to;* as, *e.g.*, "*Try and* finish this to-day."

Two first, two last. *First two* and *last two* are better.

Verbal is frequently misused for *oral*. "*Verbal* means *in words* (written or spoken); *oral* means *by word of mouth*."

Very is sometimes inelegantly used as a modifier of the past participle; as, *e.g.*, "I was *very* provoked," "I was *very* disappointed." Good Use has, however, approved of "*very* tired." *Very* may be used with any past participle that has become an adjective.

Vocation. See **Avocation.**

Whether or no, though often condemned, is a good English idiom.

With. See **By**.

Without, as a conjunction equivalent to *unless*, is "now rarely used by good writers and speakers."

Young ladies. *Young women* is the proper correlative of *young men*. See **Lady.**

Yours, etc., at the end of a letter, shows scant courtesy.

APPENDIX E

ADDITIONAL THEME-SUBJECTS

THE student who has difficulty in finding a suitable theme-subject may, it is hoped, receive some help or suggestion from the following lists. The subjects here set down have been roughly classified for the convenience of those who are trying to find something to write about. These subjects have at least this merit: they have all been tested by actual use. Yet they have not been given for the purpose of furnishing the student with ready-made subjects and titles. The value of these lists, of course, lies chiefly in the fact that they are likely to suggest to the average student some subjects coming within the range of his interest, experience, and ability.

I. NARRATION

1. A Midnight Sleigh-ride.
2. Seeking for Hidden Treasure.
3. My Experience with a Ghost.
4. How I Came near Drowning.
5. How a Cheap Trip Became Costly.
6. My School Life up to the Present Time.
7. The First Money I ever Earned.
8. A Battle with a Rattlesnake.
9. Our Snowball Fight.
10. A Watermelon Party.
11. The Home-coming of a Soldier Boy.
12. An Amusing Experience at a Picnic.
13. A Bicycle Race.
14. A Practical Joke and What Came of it.
15. Locking the Teacher in.
16. Shut in by the Great Blizzard.
17. A Campaign Lie.
18. A Moonlight Ride on a Canal-boat.
19. A Timely Discovery.

20. How I Secured Dinner While out Camping.
21. A Race against Time.
22. An Afternoon's Outing.
23. The Night after the Victorious Game.
24. "White Caps."
25. How a Boy was Rescued from Drowning.
26. A Moment of Suspense.
27. A False Alarm.
28. Lost in the Mountains.
29. "Getting his Money's Worth."
30. A Runaway Bicycle.
31. A Lonely Ride.
32. An Experience with a Vicious Horse.
33. A Mysterious Occurrence.
34. Cutting down a Bee Tree.
35. How I Caught an Opossum.
36. The Bravest Deed I ever Saw.
37. My First Ocean Voyage.
38. Caught in a Storm.
39. A Short Sketch of my Life.
40. My Fish Story.
41. A Runaway Accident.
42. My First Knife.
43. An Afternoon at Buffalo Bill's Show.
44. An Encounter with a Mad Dog.
45. When the Army Worms Crossed our Farm.
46. My First Pair of Skates.
47. A Day's Routine in a Large City Hospital.
48. A Midnight Tramp.
49. Commencement Week in —— School.
50. A Lively Serenade.
51. My Trip down the Susquehanna on a Timber Raft.
52. A Ride on a Locomotive.
53. The Inauguration of Governor ——.
54. A Day in the Legislature.
55. An Experience in an Ice Jam.
56. An Interesting Railroad Wreck.
57. An Evening at a Camp-meeting.
58. The Story of a Runaway Boy.
59. A Fight at a Moonshiner's Still.
60. A Rough Ride on Lake Erie.
61. An Incident of the Game.
62. My First Trip to the Seashore.
63. How I Explored a Cave.
64. A Day's Duck-hunting on the —— River.
65. A Rescue.
66. An Exciting Bear Hunt.
67. Our Class Picnic.
68. The First and Only Time I was Arrested.
69. A Hunting Accident.
70. Incidents of my Bicycle Trip.
71. An Old Woman's First Ride on the Cars.
72. How I Shot a Deer.
73. My First Evening at the Theatre.
74. Our Straw-ride.
75. How the Fourth of July was Celebrated at ——.
76. A Coon Hunt.
77. My First Trip on my New Bicycle.

78. A Bear in the School.
79. The Only Railroad Accident I ever Saw.
80. Locking the Teacher out.
81. My Adventure with a Wild-cat.
82. The Boys' Brigade in Camp.
83. A Short Mutiny.
84. My First "Century Run."
85. An Embarrassing Situation.
86. A Street-car Accident.
87. Hunting a Bee Tree.
88. Lost in a Snow-storm.
89. How the Town of —— was Named.
90. A Narrow Escape.

II. DESCRIPTION

1. Some Old Landmarks.
2. An Abandoned Farm.
3. The Most Beautiful Spot I Know.
4. A Strange Freak of Nature.
5. A Suburban Railway Station.
6. An Old Grist-mill.
7. Some of our Neighbors.
8. The Interior of our House.
9. Waiting for the Train.
10. The Rag-man.
11. A Memorial Monument.
12. A New England Kitchen.
13. A Description of my Town.
14. A Gypsy Camp.
15. The Appearance of the Coke Ovens at Night.
16. An Old Ice-house.
17. A Railroad Section Gang at Work.
18. The Iron-ore Banks at ——.
19. The Waterfall at ——.
20. An Old Farmhouse.
21. The —— Athletic Field.
22. The Chemical Laboratory at ——.
23. The Interior of —— Factory.
24. A Remarkable Medicine Pedler.
25. A Snow-slide on a Mountain.
26. The Standard Oil Company's Pumping Station at ——.
27. A Strange Dinner Party.
28. The Steel Pier at Atlantic City.
29. The Weeping Willow that I Pass Daily.
30. The Free-hand Drawing Room.
31. The Cellar of a Hardware Store.
32. A —— County Farmhouse.
33. The "Horseshoe Curve" near Altoona.
34. A Snow Blockade.
35. The Cabin in the Gap.
36. A Fire on the Mountains.
37. The Gymnasium at —— College.
38. A Scene in the Anthracite Coal Regions.
39. A Large Country Dinner Party.
40. The Ash-man's Horse.
41. Niagara Falls from Prospect Point.

42. A Country Store.
43. The Waiting Room at ——.
44. The Big Spring at ——.
45. A Log Cabin One Hundred and Fifty Years Old.
46. A Weary Wanderer.
47. The Engine Room of an Ocean Steamship.
48. A Scene at the Football Game.
49. In the Orchard.
50. A Fruit-stand.
51. A Peculiar Character.
52. A Scene from the Window of my Room.
53. At a Quaker Meeting.
54. My Fighting Rooster.
55. A Country Festival.
56. What I Saw on a Dutch Sailing Vessel.
57. My Friend Matt the Pauper.
58. An Abandoned Mine.
59. After the Fire.
60. A Backwoods Debating Society.
61. My Morning Walk.
62. A Storm at Sea.
63. A Street in a Mining Town.
64. An Ice-cave near Lock Haven.
65. A Horse and his Rider.
66. The Office of a Country Editor.
67. A Southern Plantation.
68. The Chautauqua Assembly Grounds.
69. The Hermit of ——.
70. Some Curious Customs of the Dunkards.
71. The Reservoir at ——.
72. A Deserted Cabin in the Mountains.
73. The Interior of —— Church.
74. Charley the Miser.
75. The Board Walk at Atlantic City.
76. Scenes around a Barnyard on a Rainy Day.
77. A View from the Top of —— Mountain.
78. A Comical Couple.
79. The Old Swimming Hole.
80. A Favorite Resort.
81. A Negro Village.
82. A Strange Optical Illusion.
83. In the Track of the Storm.
84. Sights from the Elevated Railroad Cars.
85. Historic Spots of my Native County.
86. Some Curious People I have Known.
87. A Country Band on Parade.
88. A Scene along the Susquehanna.
89. The Front of the College Campus.
90. A Group of Farmers at the Circus.

III. DESCRIPTION AND NARRATION COMBINED

1. At the Town Pump.
2. A Visit to the County Jail.
3. What I Saw at the State Capitol.
4. In a Large Department Store.
5. A Night in the Woods.
6. A Trip through an Anthracite Coal Mine.

7. At the Circus.
8. A Coroner's Inquest Which I Attended.
9. A Trip around the Gorge at Niagara Falls.
10. What I Saw at an Electric Lighting Plant.
11. My Visit to the Waldorf-Astoria.
12. A Day at the —— Exposition.
13. Climbing a Mountain.
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19. A Literary Pilgrimage.
20. A Rainy Day in a Country Hotel.
21. My Visit to a Glass Factory.
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42. An Old-fashioned Christmas at Grandfather's.
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44. My First Visit to a Law Court.
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49. My First Night in the City.
50. Tearing down an Old House.
51. The Most Delightful Ride I ever Had.
52. A Ramble over the Battle-field at ——.
53. A Rainy Day in a Garret.
54. My Visit to Washington.
55. What I Saw at West Point.
56. In a Lumber Camp.
57. A Day in Congress.
58. At the County Fair.
59. My First Day at College.
60. In the Patent Office at Washington.

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2. What a Public Library would Do for my Native Town.
3. How to Use a Dictionary.
4. The Point of View in Descriptive Writing.
5. My Favorite Studies.
6. The Beginner at Golf.
7. The Hungarians of the Coke Region.
8. How to Furnish a Room at College.
9. Advertising, — an Art.
10. My Ideal of a Home.
11. The Use of College Slang.
12. The Advantages of Intercollegiate Games.
13. Negro Life in my Town.
14. A Typical Country School.
15. A Criticism of my Early Education.
16. The Pleasures of Life in a Dormitory.
17. Social Life at —— College.
18. Some Impressions Left upon Me by my Former Teachers.
19. The Value of Lawn Tennis as an Exercise.
20. The Principal Wild Flowers of my County.
21. The Outlook for Athletics at —— College (or —— School).
22. Why it is Worth While to Study Latin.
23. A Typical Coke Town.
24. The American Joke.
25. The Good Uses of Football.
26. The Student's Need of Recreation.
27. The Oyster Beds of Chesapeake Bay.
28. The Stage Beauty.
29. A Typical Flower Botanically Considered.
30. Some of the Dangers of Imperialism.
31. A Threshing-machine at Work.
32. The Location of my Native Town.
33. The Calorimeter at the Experiment Station.
34. The Political Editorials in the —— *Times*.
35. The Chief Uses of Electricity.
36. Some Objections to Football as a College Game.
37. My Favorite Author.
38. What —— College Needs Most.
39. The Electrical Power-plant at Niagara Falls.
40. The Polacks in the Anthracite Coal Region.
41. The Classical Course in —— School.
42. The Advantages of College Fraternities.
43. Some Useful Applications of the X-Rays.

44. Basket-ball, — an Ideal College Game.
45. The Uses of the Bicycle.
46. How I have Planned this Week's Work.
47. The Moral Standards of Students.
48. Decline in the Popularity of the Bicycle.
49. Different Ways of Looking at a Book.
50. Some Peculiar Superstitions.
51. The Water Supply of ——.
52. Some Hints for the Beginner at Football.
53. The Hard Side of a Farmer's Life.
54. The Hard Side of a ——'s Life.
55. The Newspaper as an Agent in Forming Public Opinion.
56. What shall be Done with the English Sparrow?
57. The Spirit of Modern Strikes.
58. The Advantages of Holidays and Vacations to College Men.
59. Characteristics of a College Town.
60. What I Know about Farming.
61. How to Take Notes.
62. The Advantage of Being well Prepared for College.
63. The Value of Scientific Studies.
64. Indoor Athletic Exercise.
65. Some Objections to Fraternities.
66. What I Think of Hazing.
67. Some Hints to those Learning to Ride a Bicycle.
68. What a New High School would Do for my Town.
69. Some Weak Points in the Public Schools of ——.
70. Life in a Dormitory.
71. Let us Protect the Song Birds.
72. What is True Americanism?
73. The Advantages of a College Education.
74. How I Write my Weekly Themes.
75. The Dialect Peculiarities of my Native Region.
76. Why Some Students Fail in their College Work.
77. The Honor System in College Examinations.
78. Life in a College Town.
79. Mathematics in Engineering Education.
80. The Advantages of Military Drill in College.
81. A Substitute for Examinations.
82. Honesty in College Work.
83. Requisites of Success in Athletics.
84. The Effects of Compulsory Gymnasium Drill.
85. Why I Determined to Have a College Education.
86. Why it is Worth While to Study Literature.
87. The Best Equipment for Successful Theme-writing.
88. The Social Side of College Life.
89. True College Spirit.
90. The Value of General Reading to the College Student.

V. THE EXPOSITION OF SPECIAL PROCESSES

1. How to Repair a Bicycle Tire.
2. How Maple Sugar is Made.
3. The Construction of a Dynamo.
4. How Anthracite Coal is Mined.
5. The Making of Woolen Blankets.
6. How Charcoal is Burnt.
7. The Process of Making Coke.
8. How Iron is Cast.
9. How to Make Soap.
10. My Method of Making Fudge.
11. How Rails are Laid on a Railroad.
12. How to Make an Electric Battery.
13. The Construction of a Water-wheel.
14. How to Catch Pickerel with a Trolling Line.
15. The Care and Management of a Steam Boiler.
16. How a Carriage is Built.
17. The Process of Making Pig-iron.
18. How Wrapping paper is Made.
19. The Construction of Storm-sewers.
20. How Shingles are Made.
21. How to Carry a Gun.
22. Directions for Making a Canvas Canoe.
23. How the Stone Arch of a Bridge is Built.
24. The Drilling of an Oil-well.
25. How an Ordinary Table is Made.
26. Sailing an Ice-yacht.
27. How Slate is Quarried.
28. How a Grain Elevator is Used.
29. The Creamery Method of Making Butter.
30. How Carpet is Woven.
31. How to Make an Herbarium.
32. The Process of Making Fire-bricks.
33. How Tobacco is Cultivated and Cured.
34. The Washing of Iron Ore.
35. How Portland Cement is Made.
36. The Erection of an Upright Tubular Boiler.
37. How to Treat a Horse.
38. How a Wreck is Cleared up.
39. The Manufacture of Plate Glass.
40. How Ropes are Made.
41. The Stack Method of Burning Lime.
42. How to Plaster a House.
43. Directions for Planting a Peach Orchard.
44. How Cheese is Made.
45. The Preparation of Dynamite for Market.
46. How Fishermen Use the Seine.
47. The Best Method of Learning to Swim.
48. The Quarrying of Sand.
49. How Tiles are Made.
50. How a New Railroad is Laid out.

51. The Manufacture of Brooms.
52. How a Barn is Raised.
53. The Process of Making Apple Butter.
54. How Electroplating is Done.
55. The Preparation and Weaving of Asbestos.
56. How a Bicycle Frame is Made.
57. The Burning of Lime in Kilns.
58. How Sheep are Shorn.
59. How Cider is Made.
60. The Removal of Snow from Railroad Tracks.
61. How a Street is Paved with Asphalt.
62. The Process of Rolling Iron.
63. How Window-glass is Made.
64. Shooting an Oil-well.
65. Directions for Making a Horseshoe Magnet.
66. How Logs are Cut and Sawed.
67. The Building of a "Sky-scraper."
68. How Shot is Made.
69. The Making of Condensed Milk.
70. How Bituminous Coal is Mined.
71. Dredging for Oysters.
72. The Process of Making Steel.
73. The Manufacture of Ice.
74. How Varnish is Made.
75. How a Silo is Filled.
76. The American Method of Excavating a Tunnel.
77. How to Make a Bob-sled.
78. Directions for Developing a Photographic Plate.
79. How Ordinary Bricks are Made.
80. My Method of Collecting Fossils.
81. How Money is Coined.
82. The Washing and Dyeing of Wool.
83. How a Pin is Made.
84. The Best Way to Plant a Tree.
85. What I Saw in a Cigar Factory.
86. The Manufacture of Paper from Wood Pulp.
87. Directions for Making a Blue-print.
88. The Best Way to Clean a Rifle.
89. How Horseshoes are Made.
90. The Tanning of Sole-leather.

VI. PERSONAL EXPERIENCES AND MISCELLANEOUS SUBJECTS

1. My First Experience as a Witness in Court.
2. Twenty Degrees below Zero.
3. Fishing for Pickerel through the Ice.
4. An Absent-minded Man.
5. My Room-mate's Note-book.
6. A Bicycle Race with a Storm.
7. My Experience with an Automobile.

8. A Cold Place to Spend the Night.
9. A Visit to a Cotton Mill.
10. Some Interesting Things in the —— Museum.
11. Some Improvements in my Home Town.
12. The Freshman Gymnastic Drill.
13. How I shall Spend my Vacation.
14. Learning the Machinist's Trade.
15. My Experience in Trying to keep a Diary.
16. The —— Reservoir.
17. An Afternoon in a Library.
18. My First Horseback Ride.
19. My Summer on a Farm.
20. Watching the Circus Parade.
21. Hiving a Swarm of Bees.
22. How I Spend my Sundays.
23. Taking the Class Picture.
24. A Summer's Experience as a Railroad Track-hand.
25. My Experience as a Travelling Salesman.
26. Learning to Ride a Bicycle.
27. Two Weeks in a Hospital.
28. Making a Collection of Birds' Eggs.
29. My First Hour of Military Drill.
30. My Experience as a Gardener.
31. The Teachers' Institute at ——.
32. Working in a Sawmill.
33. My Most Successful Business Enterprise.
34. The First Night of my Christmas Vacation.
35. Some Amusing Mistakes in my Classes.
36. Capturing and Taming a Chipmunk.
37. My Experience as a Messenger Boy.
38. My First Ride in a Sail-boat.
39. The Boys' Brigade in Camp.
40. An Hour on a Toboggan Slide.
41. Trolling for Bluefish.
42. A Mennonite Wedding.
43. Some Advantages of Velox Paper.
44. A Day's Nutting.
45. Hunting for a Job.
46. A Homesick Boy at College.
47. Decorating the Opera House for Commencement.
48. My Experience as a Reformer.
49. A Visit to the Menagerie.
50. How I Saw the Boat Race.
51. A Coal Miner's Daily Life.
52. A Runaway Street Car.
53. My Experience as a Bookkeeper.
54. A Hunt for Pheasants.
55. Crabbing at the Seashore.
56. A Visit to the Carlisle Indian School.
57. How Mail is Caught by a Moving Train.
58. My Experience as a Cook.
59. The Musical Organizations at —— College.
60. My First Attempt to Make a Speech.

61. A Rainy Day at College.
62. Trapping Musk-rats.
63. My Vacation Experience as a Hotel Waiter.
64. —— College Ten Years from now.
65. Learning to be a Telegraph Operator.
66. An Epidemic in my Native Town.
67. My Experience as a Salesman in a —— Store.
68. Some Interesting Things in a Machine Shop.
69. A Colony of Italians.
70. Some American Antiquities.
71. My Last Hunting Trip.
72. My Experience as a National Guardsman.
73. My First Rafting Experience.
74. Taking a Picture by Flash-light.
75. A Country Literary Society.
76. In the Track of the Cyclone.
77. My Apprenticeship in a Printing Office.
78. My First Mountain Climb.
79. Going through the Locks in a Rowboat.
80. Trapping Rabbits.
81. The Books I Like Best.
82. Hallowe'en in the Country.
83. My Favorite Trout Stream.
84. My Experience as a Street-car Conductor.
85. Lost in a Mine.
86. Exploring the Slums.
87. Fighting a Forest Fire.
88. My Experience with a Run-away Team.
89. The Stingiest Man I Know.
90. A Unique Method of Making Money.
91. Some Country Superstitions.
92. My Experience in Amateur Photography.
93. A Dangerous Practical Joke.
94. Finding a Lodging.
95. A Trip with the Glee Club.
96. Threshing Day on the Farm.
97. My First Day as a Country School-teacher.
98. My Experience as a News-boy.
99. My First Impressions of —— College (or —— School).
100. Some Signs of Coming Examinations.

VII. ARGUMENTATION[1]

1. Strikes are justifiable.

2. An eight-hour working day should be adopted in the United States by federal law.

3. Prohibition is the most effective means of checking the evils of intemperance.

[1] These propositions, which may be used as subjects for briefs, debates, and argumentative themes, have been compiled from various sources.

4. All international disputes should be settled by a permanent court of arbitration.

5. Military tactics should be taught in the public schools.

6. The boycott is a legitimate means of securing concessions from employers.

7. Cremation is better than burial in the earth as a means of disposing of the dead.

8. A young man should choose his profession before he takes his college course.

9. Anti-trust laws are desirable.

10. The United States should own and operate all railroads.

11. The "honor system" should prevail in all high school (or college) examinations.

12. Congress should enact stricter immigration laws.

13. A high protective tariff maintains the high rate of wages in the United States.

14. Attendance at school should be compulsory to the age of fifteen.

15. —— College should cease to admit students on certificate.

16. Labor unions are detrimental to the industrial welfare of the United States.

17. Three-fourths of a jury should be competent to convict or acquit in all criminal cases.

18. A three years' course of study in college should be sufficient for a bachelor's degree in arts or science.

19. Freshmen should be excluded from participation in intercollegiate athletic contests.

20. The people of the Southern states are justified in their efforts to disfranchise the negro.

21. United States Senators should he elected by direct popular vote.

22. Libraries, museums, and art galleries should be open all day on Sunday.

23. All the studies pursued during the last two years at college should be elective.

24. It is better for a college to be situated in a city that has a population of at least twenty thousand than in a smaller town.

25. All men holding public office should be prohibited by law from accepting passes from railroad companies.

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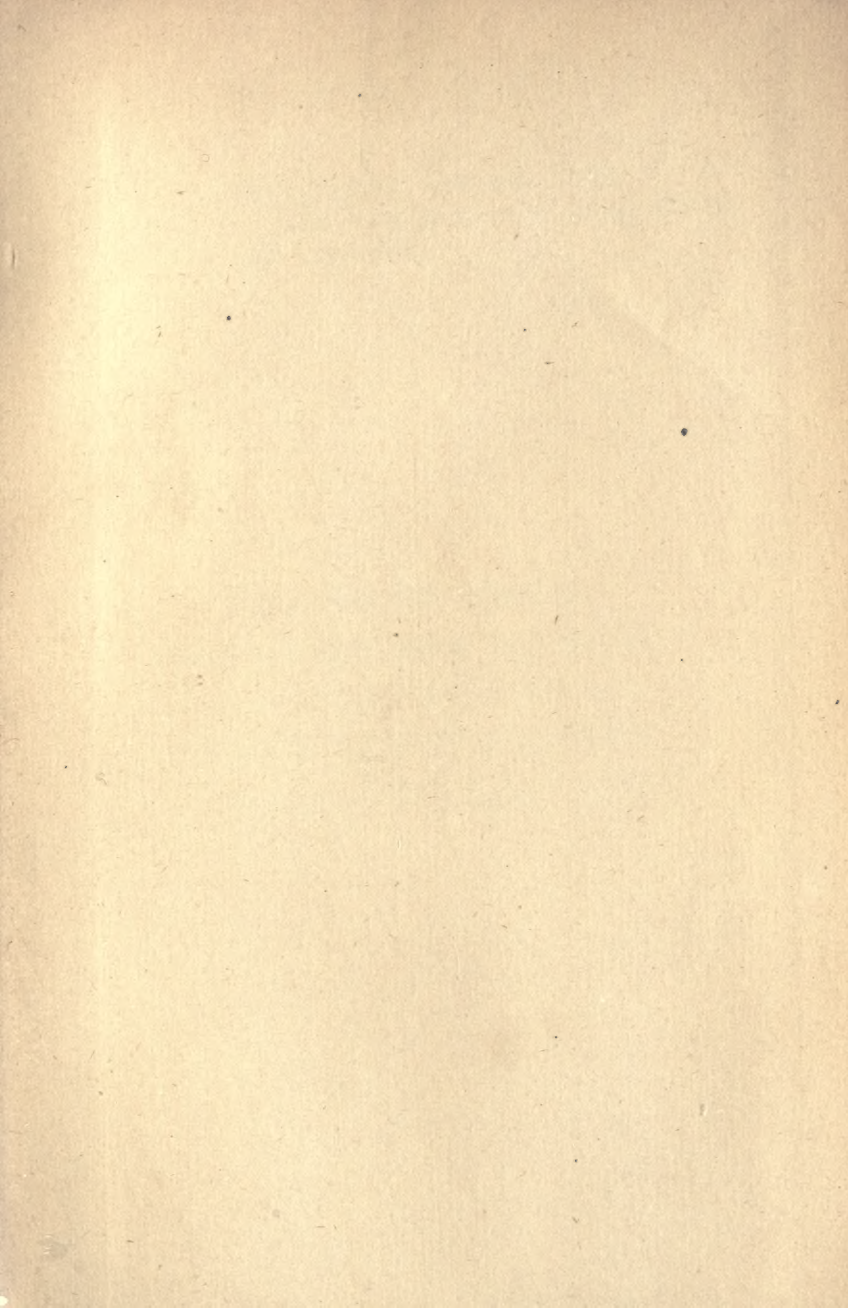

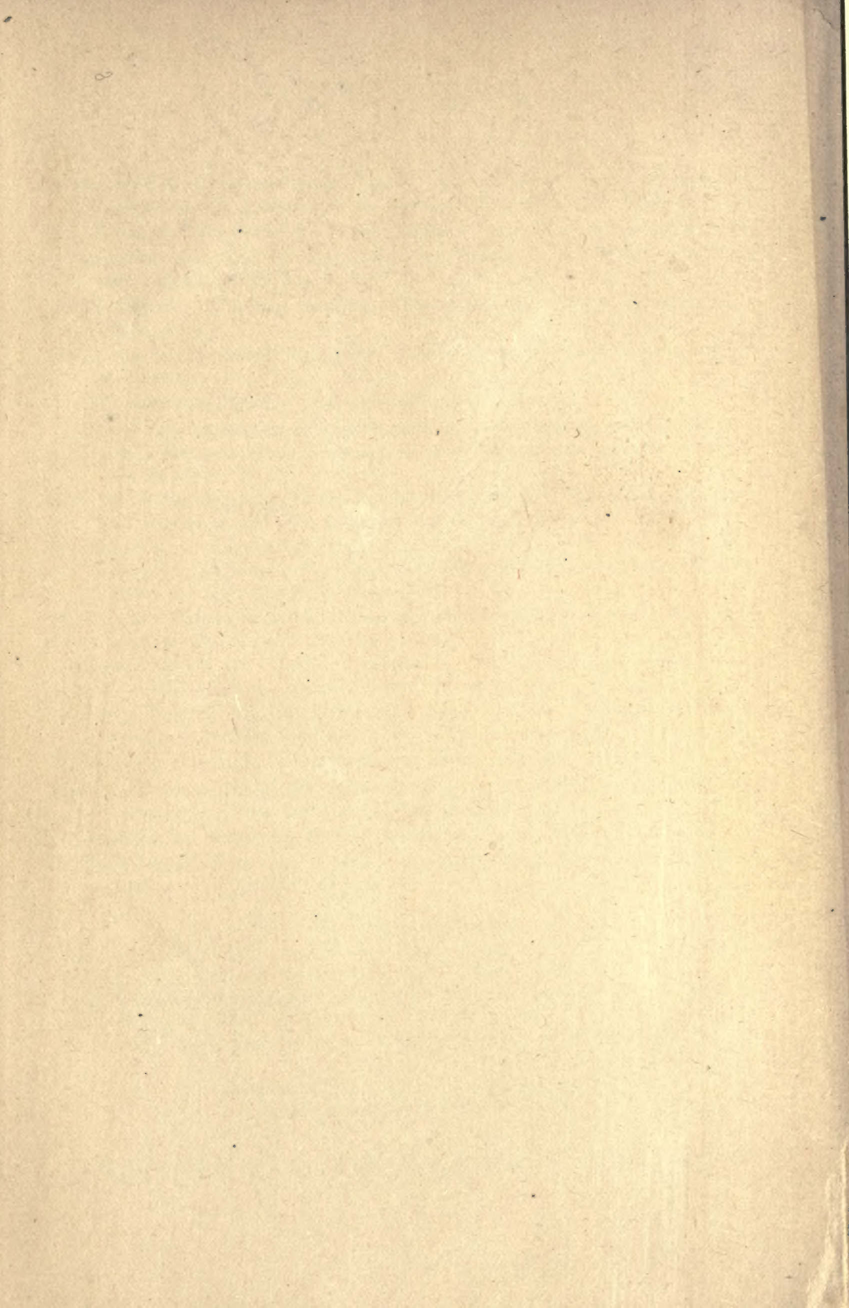

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