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# NEW ENGLISH GRAMMAR

*SWEET*

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A NEW  
ENGLISH GRAMMAR  
LOGICAL AND HISTORICAL

BY

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PART II—SYNTAX.

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## PREFACE



THE first part of this grammar appeared in 1892. The delay in bringing out the second part is due to a variety of causes. For some years the whole of my time was given to my *Student's Dictionary of Anglo-Saxon*, and in the interval I have, among other work, made a thorough revision of my *Anglo-Saxon Reader*. And after giving so much time to promoting the study of English in this country, I felt that I could, with a good conscience, return to those wider studies in comparative philology to which I feel more and more drawn.

On the other hand, there have been so many enquiries after the Syntax that I did not like to delay it any longer. I have therefore limited its scope by confining myself to formal syntax (§ 582) and excluding what can be found in the dictionary, such as the use of prepositions, and so have been able to give all the more prominence to syntax proper, especially those branches which have hitherto been neglected, such as word-order.

It will be found by comparison with other grammars that my syntax is fairly complete from this point of view. It must be noted that there is a good deal of syntax in the

introduction to the first part, where, for instance, the analysis of sentences is fully dealt with.

Note the use of **nominal** as a common term for nouns and adjectives.

The mark † is used to indicate literary as opposed to colloquial. For the use of (;) as a stress-mark see § 1881.

HENRY SWEET.

OXFORD,  
*July 11, 1898.*

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## SYNTAX

### WORD-ORDER.

#### Form.

**1759.** As regards the relative order of two words, we distinguish between **pre-position** and **post-position**. Thus pre-adjunct or pre-adjective position means that the adjunct-word precedes its head-word, or that the adjective precedes its noun. We may call such an adjective a 'pre-adjective,' or, more definitely, a 'noun-preceding adjective'; so also we can define the noun as an 'adjective-following noun.'

In groups or sentences composed of more than two words we distinguish **front-**, **mid-**, and **end-position**, the last two being included under **non-initial** position. Thus a verb at the end of a sentence is said to have end-position: such a verb may be called an 'end-verb.' If such a verb were put at the beginning of the sentence, it would be called a 'front-shifted' verb.

Position may be to some extent accidental. Thus the end-verb order in such a sentence as *it rains* is merely the result of the shortness of the sentence, so that it is a case only of what may be called 'negative' end-verb position.

We also have to distinguish between **joined** and **broken** (1860), and between **parallel** and **cross** (1865) order. For tag-order see § 1774.

**1760.** We have lastly to distinguish between **fixed** and **free** order. Some languages are freer in their order than others. Very free order is possible only in inflected languages. Conversely, absolutely fixed order occurs only in languages devoid of inflection. Even in one and the same language some kinds of words may have freer order than others: this is the case with the English adverbs. Hence in most languages there is a distinction between **normal** (regular) and **exceptional** order. This distinction is, of course, most marked in highly inflectional languages.

Even in languages whose order is comparatively fixed there are many devices for evading the restrictions of the normal order.

### General Principles.

**1761.** The divergencies between the word-orders of different languages, and the inconsistencies in the word-order of one and the same language, are the result of the conflict of various general principles.

**1762.** From a strictly logical point of view we should expect connective words always to come between the words they connect—we should expect prepositions always to precede the word they govern, relative words as conjunctions always to have the front position in the sentences they introduce, and so on. We should further expect subject + predicate order. In a less degree, we should expect post-adjunct order to prevail—we should expect assumptive adjectives to follow their nouns. But, as a matter of fact, none of these general principles are carried out universally in language.

**1763.** The most frequent deviation from purely logical principles is the pre-adjunct order adjective + noun. This order was probably originally emphatic (**1765**). From a practical point of view the main distinction between the pre-adjunct order *big black dogs* and the post-adjunct order

\**dogs big black* is that the former is suspensive—it makes us expect something to complete the sentence—and hence is more connective than the post-adjunct order, and binds adjunct and head-word more closely together. The looser post-adjunct order is, on the other hand, naturally used in apposition, even by languages which otherwise prefer pre-adjunct order.

1764. As negation generally reverses the meaning of its head-word, it is most convenient practically to let it precede its head-word, so that the hearer's mind may be fully prepared for the reversal of meaning. Hence languages which otherwise have the order verb + adverb may have the order negation-word + verb, as in the Old-English *ne cume gē* (1807).

#### *Emphasis.*

1765. The most general way of making a word prominent is by putting it before the others—if possible, at the beginning of the sentence. Thus in Latin the normal order in such sentences as 'Caesar conquered the Gauls' is to put the verb at the end (*Caesar Gallōs dēvīcīt*), but if the sentence were meant to imply that Caesar conquered the Gauls and not some other people, the word expressing the logically prominent idea 'Gauls' would have front-position (*Gallōs Caesar dēvīcīt*).

1766. But there is another more general principle of position-emphasis—that of making a word conspicuous by putting it in *any* abnormal—that is, unexpected—position. Thus a word whose normal position is front or mid may be made emphatic by end-position, as in the Latin sentence *aliud iter habēmus nūllum* 'we have no other road,' where 'none' has emphatic end-position. Emphatic end-position is suspensive (1763).

#### CONVENIENCE.

1767. It is evident that emphatic order often leads to inconvenience, as in the last example, where we have the

double inconvenience of the separation of *nūllum* from its head-word—broken order—and of suspensiveness, the meaning of the three first words being completely reversed by *nūllum*.

**1768.** But a purely logical order may also lead to inconvenience. Thus, as we have seen (**1763**), pre-adjunct order has certain advantages over the more logical post-adjunct order, especially in negation (**1764**), while in other cases post-adjunct order may be more convenient. Indeed, the best results are often obtained by a concurrent use of both, as we see in the English order subject-adjunct + subject + verb + verb-adjunct, which is the result of the striving to avoid the suspensive end-verb order.

**1769.** In the Latin sentence last quoted broken order and suspensiveness work together. But in some cases broken order is a means of avoiding suspensiveness, as in *good men and true*, where the inconsistent use of pre- and post-adjunct order in the same word-group diminishes the suspensiveness of the consistently pre-adjunct order in *good and true men*.

#### GRAMMATICAL ORDER.

**1770.** We see, then, that in languages which have both a normal and an exceptional order, the latter is due to a variety of causes, the most important of which is emphasis. In such languages the normal order is **grammatical** (syntactic), serving to show the grammatical relation between words. The fewer the inflections, the more important this function becomes, but even highly inflected languages observe general principles of syntactic order, however freely they may disregard them in special cases.

**1771.** An order which is exceptional in one period may become normal in another period. Thus the pre-adjunct order of Old and Modern English was probably originally emphatic (**1765**). In Old and Modern English as well as in most other languages interrogative words generally have

front-order, as in *where is he?* compared with *he is there*; this order, again, was probably at first only emphatic. The front-shifting of the verb in interrogative sentences (*will he?* compared with *he will*) was also probably at first simply the result of emphasizing the predicate, as also the front-shifting of the verb in imperative sentences (*come ye!*).

#### GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF ENGLISH ORDER AND ITS CHANGES.

**1772.** What appears to be the original Arian word-order is preserved in the early Sanskrit prose.

**1773.** In a normal Arian declarative sentence the subject is followed by its modifier the verb, but otherwise pre-adjunct order prevails; thus genitives and adjectives precede their nouns, and adverbs, accusatives etc. precede their verbs, the result being that the verb comes at the end of the sentence, as it continued to do in Latin (1765).

The same pre-adjunct order prevails in Arian compounds (1546), which shows that this order must be very old in Arian.

**1774.** In careless speech it often happens that a speaker finishes a sentence grammatically, and then adds one or more words as an after-thought, to complete the meaning or define it more clearly. Such *tag-sentences* are frequent in Arian, so that a verb which would otherwise have end-position loses it, just as in English we may say *he came, John* instead of *he, John, came = John came*.

**1775.** As these tagged sentences were generally longer than the normal end-verb sentences, and as it was found inconvenient to put the verb at the end of long sentences generally, whether tagged or not, a tendency might easily develop to give up end-verb order altogether except in short, familiar sentences. Accordingly, we can observe in the separate Arian languages a gradual retraction of the verb-position towards the subject-word; thus, already in Old Greek the verb is generally put immediately after its subject-

word, the verb being thus followed, instead of preceded, by its own modifiers, just as in Modern English—*Caesar conquered the Gauls*.

**1776.** Verb-position in Old-English tends to follow the same general principles as in Modern German. In independent declarative sentences, such as the one just given, the order is the same as in Modern English; but in dependent sentences the verb has end-position: *\*when Caesar the Gauls conquered had*. In other words, the original Arian word-order was preserved in dependent sentences because they are generally shorter and more compact than independent ones, till at last end-verb order came to be the grammatical mark of dependence.

**1777.** But, as we see from the last example, this end-verb order may often lead to illogical and clumsy collocations. And when a more convenient order had already established itself in independent sentences, it was natural to extend the order of these to the dependent sentences as well, the result being the Modern English order *when Caesar had conquered the Gauls* parallel to *Caesar had conquered the Gauls*.

**1778.** Old-English, having a considerable number of inflections, was able to preserve a good deal of the freedom of Arian word-order, being in this respect intermediate between Latin and Modern German.

**1779.** In Middle and Modern English we observe the same gradual restriction of the older freedom as in German and the other Modern Germanic languages. But while in Modern German the Parent Germanic order was, so to say, fossilized, English agrees with Swedish and Danish in developing a more natural and logical order, characterized especially by the prevalence of mid-verb position.

In the following details of English word-order, principles which are common to Old and Modern English are, as

a general rule, treated only from the Modern English point of view.

### Adjectives.

**1780.** Assumptive adjective-words precede their head-words: *young man, running water, settled weather, many men, three men, my house, the earth.*

**1781.** But post-order is frequent in Old-English with quantitative adjectives: *Sumorsæte ealle* 'all the people of Somerset' | *his suna twōgen* 'his two sons' | *hīe bûtū* 'both of them' (the two armies) | *wæter ġenōg*, where Modern English has both orders—*enough (of) water, water enough*, the latter being less emphatic. In Old-English also the postposition of these adjectives seems to be the result of their want of emphasis. But in the Modern English †*soldiers three* the numeral has full stress.

**1782.** In Modern English postposition is regular in the case of cardinal numerals used as ordinals: *chapter ten* [but *the tenth chapter*], *page three, number three, latitude 39°, in the year 1000*. This usage seems to be due to French influence.

**1783.** Also with participles used as adjectives: *the day following* [*the following day*], *the time being, the money required* [*the required money*]. This order is, of course, the result of these words being still felt to be half verbs.

**1784.** In Old-English postposition is frequent in exclamations, as in *Hrōþgār lēofa!* 'dear Hroþgar!' *brōþor mīn!* † 'brother mine!'

**1785.** *God ælmihtig* 'God almighty' seems to be an imitation of the Latin order (*Deus omnipotens*).

So also the Modern English, *the body politic, the States-General, heirs male* seem due to French influence.

**1786.** *the* + adjectives follows proper names in such groups as *Edward the First, William the Silent*, parallel to *William the Conqueror* (1801). We find the same

construction in Old-English—*Ælfstān se blēria* ‘*Ælfstān the bald.*’

**1787.** In such collocations as *novels proper and novels improper* the postposition is emphatic. In the colloquial *whisky hot* the adjective is tagged on because it has the complex meaning ‘made hot by the addition of boiling water.’

**1788.** Postposition is often necessary in the case of assumptive groups: *in a manner the most picturesque | a man wise in his own conceit | names well known in literature.* But groups precede when pre-order involves no awkwardness of construction, especially when the group is felt to be equivalent to a single word, as in *he plays a not very conspicuous part in the story*, or when the group may be regarded as a compound, as in *the now declining day, his already wearied horse.*

#### MORE THAN ONE ADJECTIVE.

**1789.** When a noun has more than one modifier, the general principle is that the one most closely connected with it in meaning comes next to it, as in *the three wise men*, where *wise men* is equivalent to the single word *sages*. Qualifiers come before such groups, the one that is the most special in meaning (*three*) coming next to it. Hence there is a gradation of increasing specialization from the beginning to the end of such a group (*the, three, wise*). In this example only one of the modifiers is attributive. In a series of attributive modifiers the same principle is generally observed, as in *a tall black man* = *a tall negro*. In *bright blue sky* = *brightly blue sky* the position of the first adjective is partly due to its being logically a modifier of the second one.

**1790.** But very frequent collocations such as *old man, young man* (= *youth*) have become so fixed that no other adjective, even if more special in meaning, is allowed to



come between the two words: *a conceited young man*. Hence we cannot make *old sage* into \**old wise man*.

1791. When the modifiers are about equally balanced, the order may vary, as in *the two first weeks, the first two weeks*, and the Old-English *on þāem ōþrum þrim dagum* compared with the Modern English *in the course of the three following days*.

1792. We have seen that when the articles are associated with another noun-modifier they normally precede the latter: but in some constructions they come immediately before the noun. The definite article does so when associated with certain general adjectives of quality: *all the books, all the corn, half the day, treble the quantity, both the armies*. Old English sometimes has the same construction (*ealne þone dæg*), although it generally prefers postposition (*þæt folc eall, þā bēc ealle, þā hergas bēgen* (1781)). Old-English also has the construction adjective + genitive, as in *manige* (or *fela*) *þāra manna* 'many of the men.' In Modern English we feel *all the day* to be equivalent to *the whole of the day*.

1793. The indefinite article has the same position in combination with *half*—*half an hour* [but *a half loaf*]  
—and in other combinations: *many a man, many a one, not a moment to lose, †the knight did bear no less a pack*. Also in combination with intensitive adjective-pronouns: *what a pity! | I never knew such a man!* These words naturally precede the *a* + noun through being emphatic. In such constructions as *so long a time, as good a man as any, too good a man* the order is the result of avoiding the awkward collocations \**a so long time*, etc.

1794. The construction with possessive pronouns is analogous: *my old friend*, but *all my time, half their time, both his eyes*.

1795. We also have mid-possessive order in *†good my liege!*

## Genitives.

**1796.** Genitives always precede their nouns in Modern English, which is also the normal Old-English position: *þæs cyninges brōbor* 'the king's brother,' *on Godes naman* 'in the name of God.' The more intimate the connexion, the more fixed this order is; hence it is absolutely fixed in semi-compounds such as *Engla-land* 'land of the Angles, England.'

**1797.** But in Old-English post-genitives are also frequent, especially in combination with quantitative words and groups, as in *manige þāra sēlestena cyninges begna* 'many of the best king's thanes,' where the last two words form a semi-compound, *micel dæl þāra burgwara* 'a considerable portion of the citizens.' Also in combination with preposition-groups, as in *on nēawiste þære byrig* 'in the neighbourhood of the city,' *on twā healfa þære īe* 'on both sides of the river'; here it is the result of avoiding such constructions as *on þære byrig nēawiste*, where there is separation of the elements of the preposition-group, although such constructions do occur.

## Modifying Nouns.

**1798.** In Old-English modifying nouns follow their head-word, as in *Ælfred cyning* 'king Alfred,' *Ēadgār æpeling* 'prince Edgar,' except when the modifier is emphatic, as in *mitel þæs folces ofer sē ā-drāfdon, būton þām cyninge Ælfrede* '(the Danes) drove many of the people over the sea, except the king, Alfred.' It is to be observed that in *Ælfred cyning* the adjunct-noun is subordinated to the proper name not only in position but also in stress.

**1799.** In Modern English the modifier comes first: *king Alfred, Mr. Smith, Dr. Tanner, Farmer Hughes, Brother Jonathan, Friend Mill*. This change of order seems to be due simply to the analogy of the pre-position of adjectives and other noun-modifiers, the adjunct-noun keeping,

however, its weak stress (*-king Alfred*), which would be impossible in Old-English.

**1800.** The articles may precede the adjunct-noun exceptionally in *a Mr. Smith* etc., and regularly in such collocations as *the angel Gabriel, the emperor Maximilian*; so also possessives, as in *my friend Smith*.

**1801.** But when the adjunct-noun has a strongly specializing function, it follows its head-word in Modern as well as Old English, being preceded by the definite article, as in *William the Conqueror, John the Baptist* compared with *the angel Gabriel*, there being only one 'Baptist,' while there are supposed to be many angels. In *Mr. Smith the bookseller* we have both positions of adjunct-nouns. In *I, John Smith, he* (the speaker) *said* . . the post-position is inevitable; so also in *Edward, Prince of Wales* compared with *Prince Edward*.

### Pronouns.

The position of pronouns has been incidentally dealt with under that of nouns and adjectives.

**1802.** The Old-English postposition of quantitative adjectives (1781) is still preserved in combination with pronouns: *are they all gone? | we thank you both | the awkwardness of our* (or *us*) *both addressing the same lady*. But these words necessarily precede possessives, except in constructions such as that in the last example: *both his eyes, †to frustrate both their hopes*.

**1803.** Adjectives modifying indefinite noun-pronouns follow them, as in *something bad, anything good* [compared with *any good thing*], *nothing remarkable*; similarly in *anything else*. If the adjective precedes, they become pure nouns: *in her manner there was an indefinite something*.

**1804.** *myself* etc. follow noun-pronouns in the same way: *he himself says so*. Broken order is more emphatic: *I will see about it myself*.

## Verbs.

**1805.** As regards the position of the verb in the sentence, it is to be observed that some subordinate words—conjunctions and adverbs—always take precedence, such as *and* and the Old-English *ne* ‘not.’ Hence in sentences beginning with *and* or *ne* + verb, the verb is practically initial.

## VERB + SUBJECT.

**1806.** (a) In **interrogative** sentences (**1771**): *are you ready?* | *where is he?*

(b) In **imperative** sentences, where, however, the pronoun is generally omitted. In Old-English it is added regularly in negative sentences, where the verb necessarily precedes the pronoun through being attracted by the *ne* (**1807**): *ne bēo gē bitere!* ‘be (ye) not bitter!’ The postposition of the pronoun in positive sentences, as in *cume gē!* for the more usual *cumap!* ‘come (ye)!’, seems to be due partly to the analogy of the negative construction, partly to the feeling that the pronoun is a tag. When the pronoun is added in Modern English, it follows the verb in negative sentences—*do not (you) do that!*—while in positive sentences it generally precedes the verb in the spoken language: *(you) let that dog alone!* | *never (you) mind!*

Pre-verb order occurs already in Old-English: *þu sōþlice cȳþ bīne gēsihþe!* ‘do thou make known thy vision!’

(c) In non-imperative sentences expressing wish or command: *may I be hanged!* | *perish India!* In *so be it!* the verb is attracted by the *so* (**1810**). This inversion is avoided in the case of transitive verbs because of the ambiguity that would arise: *God forbid!* | *God save the Queen!* Both orders are also found in Old-English. These sentences evidently follow the analogy of imperative sentences.

(d) In sentences of condition *nāre* [= *ne wære*] *sƿo gāstlice gēlācnung* 'were it not for the spiritual meaning' | *were Richard mine, his power were mine* | *were he my brother* = 'even if he were my brother.'

So also in sentences of alternative hypothesis : *wyle hē, nyle* [= *ne wile*] *hē* 'whether he will or not, willy-nilly.'

#### AFTER FRONT WORDS.

1807. In Old-English certain adverbs draw the verb after them, so that it precedes its subject. This is always the case with *ne*, as in *ne mæg ic ƿæt dōn* 'I cannot do that' compared with *ic mæg ƿæt dōn*.

1808. Generally also with such adverbs as *þā* 'then,' *þær* 'there,' which serve to connect the sentence they introduce with what precedes : *þā fēng Ælfred tō rīce* 'then Alfred succeeded to the throne' | *and þær wearƿ se cyning ofslægen* 'and there the king was killed' | *and ƿæs ymb twēgen mōnaþ gēfeahƿt se cyning wiƿ þone hƿere* 'and two months after that the king fought with the (Danish) army.'

1809. The connective force of this order is shown by its occasional occurrence after the conjunction *and* : *and ƿæt is þƿeah swīƿe clūdiġ* ; *and licgaƿ wilde mōras wiƿ ēastan* 'and it (the country) is very rocky ; and wild moors lie eastwards (of it).'

1810. But even in Old-English there are many exceptions, and Modern English generally has the normal order subject + verb, although inversion still occurs even in the spoken language : *nor do I* | *so do I* | *now comes the amusing part of the story*.

1811. Verb-inversion is sometimes caused by a preceding dependent clause both in Old-English and Modern literary English : *not as the world gives, give I unto you*. Here also it is evidently connective.

1812. Verb-inversion in appended or parenthetical clauses of statement is also connective : *yes, said the boy* | *yes, said*

*he, I will* | *what, said he, do you want?* With † *quoth he*, whose verb is used only in this construction, the order is invariable, but with other verbs pre-subject order also occurs: *my son, my son! he cried, they have murdered him!* So also in Old-English *hē cwæþ* is used in the appended as well as the front-position instead of *cwæþ hē*.

In vulgar English the inversion occurs also in front clauses: *says he, what do you want?*

1813. In Modern literary English connective verb-inversion is frequent in dependent sentences as well: *Death itself is not so painful as is this sudden horror* | *Ruppin, where lies the greater part of the regiment* | *a cottage in which lived the widow of a former curate* | *what were his thoughts I cannot tell*. This is a complete reversal of Old-English tendencies (1776).

1814. Another kind of verb-inversion is that caused by emphatic or exceptional front-position of other classes of words. This is frequent with adverbs and adverb-groups, as in the following examples, where the inversion is obligatory: *scarcely had I sat down, when . .* | *not till then did I . .* | *to such straits were they reduced that . .* Examples with other parts of speech are: *enclosed is a letter* | *the greater their power, the greater seems their revenge* | † *high sparks of honour in thee have I found*. Here also the inversion is often obligatory; such a construction as *\*enclosed a letter is* would make the *is* too emphatic (1766). In other cases the inversion is exceptional, as in *how foolish was I!* where *was*=(wəz), not (woz), which would make the sentence into a question. Even in Old-English front order does not necessarily cause inversion unless connectiveness is implied at the same time.

1815. In such phrases as *here is your hat!* | *there goes the richest man in England!*, compared with *here he is!* | *there he goes!*, the inversion is fixed, because the adverb is felt to be a substitute for a subject-word, *here is your hat* being equivalent to *this is your hat*. This construction is especially

frequent with the weak *there*: *there is no more bread* | *there lived a man*.

1816. In the formal, elliptical style of public notices the verb is put first for emphasis in such phrases as *died on the 14th*. Similarly in periphrastic tenses, with omission of the verb: *to be sold, a desirable family residence*.

1817. Otherwise front verbs occur only in poetry: *smiled then, well pleased, the aged man* (Scott). With a verb which is wholly, or partly, transitive, as in *shook all the hollow caves*, this construction is liable to cause ambiguity.

#### MODIFIER + VERB.

1818. A verb regularly follows instead of preceding its modifier when that modifier is a relative or conjunctive word, as in *you are the man whom I want* | *I know where he is*.

1819. Verbs also regularly follow exclamatory words: *how he boasts!* | *what a strong man he is!*

The original Arian post-verb order is also preserved in some cases in Old-English in independent as well as dependent sentences (1776).

1820. Thus pronouns generally precede the verb, as in *hē hine gēfēng* 'he took him prisoner,' *hīe begēaton welan and ūs lāfdon* 'they acquired wealth and left (it) to us,' compared with *hē gēfēng þone cynīng*. So also with adverbs: *hē þā swā dyde* 'he then did so,' *hīe þær wunodon* 'they dwelt there.' These words have evidently kept their original position through being unemphatic. This order is only poetical in Modern English: *the serpent me beguiled*.

1821. Even full nouns occasionally have the same position, as in *hē þær sige nam* 'he gained the victory there.' Here—as also to some extent in the preceding examples—the two words form a sort of compound, *sige .nam* being parallel to *bī-standan*, *-hine gēfēng* to *be'cuman* (740). This order is especially frequent in sentences introduced by *and*: *þā ridon hīe bider . . . and þone æþeling on þære byrig mēttan*. If the

second sentence came first in a group of sentences, the end-verb order would be impossible, as being too abrupt. But even in the earliest Old-English verbs of weak meaning such as 'have' and 'be' always follow the Modern order, keeping as close as possible to their subjects, as in *hæfde sige* 'had the victory,' compared with *sige nam | hē wæs twelf niht mid þām cyninge, and hē hine miclum and his gefēran mid fēo weorþode* 'he was twelve days with the king, and he honoured him and his companion greatly with money.'

**1822.** We still preserve post-verb order in *†me thinks* through the analogy of *I think*.

#### SEVERAL VERB-MODIFIERS.

**1823.** Datives precede accusatives: *hē gesealde his brēþer healf his rīce* 'he gave his brother half his kingdom.' So also in Modern English a datival noun or pronoun precedes an accusative noun, as in *he showed me his pictures* [in Old-English a dative pronoun precedes the verb, § 1820]; but if both are pronouns, the accusative pronoun precedes: *give it me!* [Old-English: *sele mē hit!*].

**1824.** Object-complements naturally follow the object-word: *they made him king | to call people bad names | to paint a house white | [†his crimes make guilty all his sons]*. So also if the complement is a verbal: *I saw him come | I want him to come | I saw him coming | I saw it done | excuse me interrupting you*.

#### Verbals and Periphrastic Verbs.

**1825.** Verbals are followed by their modifiers in the same way as the verbs they are formed from: *(we saw him) giving a beggar some money*.

For the 'split infinitive' see § 1864.

**1826.** In Old-English a finite verb in combination with verbals has the same freedom of position as a simple verb,



being generally put at the end of a dependent sentence: *þā hē geseah þæt hē ofēr-wunnen bēon wolde* 'when he saw that he was going to be conquered.' In independent sentences the tendency is to put the verbal at the end: *þā ōþre wæron hungre ā-cwolen* 'the others had died of hunger' | *manige cūþon Englisc gewrit ā-rædan* 'many could read English writing.' It is to be noticed that in such sentences as *hīe hæfdon þone cyning ofslægenne* (later: *ofslægen*) 'they had killed the king' the verbal comes after the noun because it originally stood in apposition to it. In Old-English end-verb order in independent sentences is frequent in periphrastic forms composed of participles and 'have' or 'be,' but only in joined-on sentences in accordance with § 1822: *and hīe þā ymb þā gatufeohtende wæron oppæt . .* 'and they fought round the gates until . .'

**1827.** In Modern English, on the other hand, there is a tendency to make the elements of a periphrastic form into a compact group, whose modifiers follow it in the same way as they follow a simple verb: *I-shall-have-written my letter*. But many adverbs are freely inserted: *I do not know* | *I have never seen it*.

**1828.** In Modern English the elements of a periphrastic form follow each other in a fixed order, which is rarely departed from even in poetry: *a strong tyrant who invaded has our land* (Spenser). But emphatic front-position of the infinitive is not unfrequent: *†for die I shall!*

**1829.** The order of the verbals in periphrastic verb-forms is the natural result of their development. The finite periphrastic verb shows the following orders:—

auxil. +	{	pres. partic. (+ pret. partic.)
		infīn. + { pret. partic. { pres. partic. (+ pret. partic.)
		+ pret. partic.
		pres. partic. + pret. partic.
		pret. partic. + pres. partic. (+ pret. partic.)

**1830.** It will be observed that the infinitive occurs only

as the first of a group of verbals, the other places being filled up exclusively by participles, which may also take the place of the infinitive itself.

**1831.** The periphrastic infinitives always begin with the supine; they have the same forms as the finite verb as far as their verbal-elements are concerned.

**1832.** The periphrastic (present) participle and gerund has only the order pres. partic. + pret. partic. in common with the finite forms; it has in addition the following forms:—

pres. partic. + pret. partic. +  $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{pres. partic. (+ pret. partic.)} \\ \text{pret. partic.} \end{array} \right.$

All periphrastic participles begin with pres. partic. + pret. partic.

### Adverbs.

**1833.** Adverbs modify so many different parts of speech—besides modifying groups and sentences—that their position varies greatly. They show, indeed, almost the last remains of normal free order in Modern English.

For dependent adverbs see § 1858.

### ADVERBS + NOMINALS OR ADVERBS.

**1834.** In accordance with general principles, adverbs precede adjectives, adverbs, and adverb-groups: *very quick, not so, quite in-the-wrong*. So also adverb-groups precede under the same circumstances: *not-at-all sorry, not-at-all in-the-wrong*.

**1835.** The adverb *enough*, like the adjective *enough*, can either precede or follow its head-word in the earlier Modern as well as Old English, but in the present English it can only follow: *good enough, quickly enough*. In Old-English it may follow adjectives, as in *swēlē genōg* 'sweet enough,' but generally precedes adverbs, as in *genōg georne witan* 'know well enough, know quite well.'

**1836.** An adverb immediately preceding a noun is in-

distinguishable from an adjective, as in *the then state of affairs*. But an adverb before a group-noun—even if the group consists only of article + noun—still remains an adverb, although, of course, it approaches in meaning to an adjective, as in *quite the gentleman, not at all a lady, fully master of the subject*.

1837. In some constructions adverbs follow their nouns, standing to them in a kind of loose apposition, as in *the man there* = 'the man standing there' or 'the man who is there,' *one more* = 'one in addition.' The connexion is still looser in such constructions as *to permeate space generally*.

#### VERB + ADVERB.

1838. In accordance with general principles adverbs and adverb-groups generally follow verbs: *come in* | *let us go now* | *I-shall-have-finished in-a-few-minutes*.

1839. *not* always follows a simple verb, but with periphrastic forms and verbals it has the same position as verb-preceding adverbs, that is, it follows immediately after the auxiliary instead of coming at the end of the periphrastic form—as in *I shall not go* [*the will want not our help*], *do not go!* compared with *I will not* | *†go not!*—and precedes supines and other verbals, as in *to be or not to be, that is the question* | *not knowing what else to do, I came home*.

1840. If the verb has other modifiers more intimately connected with it, these precede the verb-following adverb; this is especially the case if the other modifiers are logical predicates (*I am ready now*), or objects, as in *ask him again!*

1841. All adverbs—whatever their position may be in other cases—necessarily follow interrogative verbs; but, as a general rule, they do not follow the verb itself, but the accompanying pronoun: *is he here?* | *is he never ready in time?* If the verb is periphrastic, the adverb comes at the end of the group: *shall we go now?* But *not* comes immediately after either the verb itself—in which case there

is always contraction in the spoken language—or the accompanying pronoun, in which case there is no contraction: *is not* (iznt) *he here?* | *is he not here?* | *shall not* (ʃaant) *we go now?* | *shall we not go now?* The second order is preferred in writing, except in reproductions of colloquial speech, where the contracted forms are generally written (*isn't*, *shan't*). The second order occurs only occasionally in speech.

**1842.** In a succession of adverbs and adverb-groups those most intimately connected with the verb precede: *come up at once!* | *we went to school together* | *I want to look about me a little.*

**1843.** When a verb is followed by an object-word and an adverb, the order of these is sometimes doubtful, as in *I have brought back your umbrella* or *I have brought your umbrella back*. In such a sentence as *bring in some more coals!* the adverb generally precedes. But the general tendency is to put the object first; in some cases, indeed, no other order is allowable, as in *let him in!* | *I have left my umbrella behind*. The reason appears to be that the adverb might be mistaken for a preposition, if put before the noun-word.

**1844.** If several adverbs follow without being specially connected with the verb, time-adverbs generally come first: *he has altered a good deal lately* | *we expect him home again to-morrow*, where, however, *again* seems to be specially associated with the verb, forming with it a kind of compound. If *again* is detached by end-position, it becomes emphatic, as in *to get back to civilization again* compared with *to get back again to civilization*. So also in *he is there still* compared with *he is still there*.

**1845.** When one of two modifiers is a lengthy group, the shorter verb-modifier is often allowed to precede even if it would otherwise follow, as in *he heard again the language of his nursery* [*he heard it again*], *I met him last night at*

a party at Mrs. Carter's [*I met him there last night*]. In such cases it is felt that the heavier modifier will easier bear separation from the verb.

#### ADVERB + VERB.

**1846.** An adverb which precedes a simple verb also precedes the supine and other verbals—*misfortunes never come single* | *I hope never to see his face again* | *the thought of never seeing him again*—and follow auxiliaries and the unemphatic *is*: *I have never spoken to him* | *I should never have thought of that* | *he is never ready in time*. But if these verbs are emphatic or detached, the adverb precedes them: *he never 'is ready in time!* | *I never have spoken to him, and hope I never shall*.

Weak *have* (not auxiliary) and the link-verbs take the adverb before them: *he never has any money* | *he never gets ready in time*. Note that \**he has never* would in speech be contracted (*hijz nevə*), which would suggest *he is*.

**1847.** When an adverb is put before instead of after a verb, it ceases to modify the verb exclusively, but modifies also the whole group of words connected with the verb, as in *I certainly think so* compared with *I think so certainly* (364) | *I hardly think we want a fire* compared with *to think hardly of a person*, where the change of position completely changes the meaning of the adverb. So also *gladly* in *I gladly acceded to his request* means 'I was glad to (accede to . .)', while in *I acceded to his request gladly* it means simply 'with gladness.' So also if we made *he generally failed to explain his meaning* into *he failed to explain his meaning generally*, the adverb would modify *explain* only, and the meaning would be 'he succeeded only partially in explaining his meaning.' Other examples are: *Wednesday came, and luckily it was a fine day*, where *luckily* = 'it was lucky that . . ' | *I cannot begin my work again when I have once been interrupted* compared with *interrupted once*.

1848. Another result of this is that a verb-preceding adverb is often vaguer in meaning than a verb-following one. Thus while the end-adverb in *I understand you perfectly* has its literal meaning, it tends to become a mere expletive in such sentences as *I perfectly appreciate the delicacy of your position*. So also in the last example of the preceding paragraph.

1849. As the pre-adverb order tends to distribute the meaning of the adverb (1847), it sometimes has the same effect as front-order often has (1854), that is, it tends to give it a dependent meaning, so that it seems to refer back to what precedes. This is clearly seen in many adverbs of time, which, when they precede their verbs, suggest the idea of sequence as opposed to that of an isolated event, as in *I now proceed to explain* . . compared with *I proceed to explain now*, where *now* means 'at the present moment.' So also in *he afterwards became a schoolmaster* | *we then went on to Rome*, where *then* is parallel in meaning to the initial connective adverb-group in *the next day we* . . [contrast: *he came on Monday, and went away again the next day*].

1850. Adverbs are often put before instead of after participles in periphrastic forms as if the participle were an adjective, as in *he has been very kindly treated* instead of the normal *he has been treated very kindly* | *it is very well done* [*he will do it very well*].

1851. The adverb *never* always precedes its verb: *never mind!* So also the synonymous *hardly ever*: *I hardly ever see him now*. Several other adverbs of time also show a strong preference for pre-order, especially the corresponding *always*: *he always dines at the same place* [*he dines there constantly*], *I often see him at the theatre* | *it rarely happens that* . . With all of these post- or end- order is much less frequent.

1852. The pre-order of the intensitive *quite* (*I quite agree with you*) seems to be fixed.

1853. We have lastly to note the illogical pre-order of *only* in such sentences as *I only want sixpence* = *I want only sixpence*

or *I want sixpence only*. The hesitation between these last two orders was probably the reason for preferring pre-order, which was of course originally emphatic, *I want only sixpence* implying 'all I want is—I want nothing more than—sixpence.'

#### FRONT ADVERBS.

1854. Front-adverb position often suggests the idea of dependence on what precedes, as in *the next day we went on to Rome* (1849). So also in *here he stopped short in his speech* | *they used to be quite common, and now they are quite rare*. This order is not emphatic; in fact, if we wished to make the *now* of the last sentence emphatic, we should put it at the end: *they are quite rare now*.

1855. But in some cases front-position seems to express—or at any rate to accompany—emphasis on an adverb, and in *now we are off at last!* compared with *I am going now* [*I am going now* with a different kind of emphasis from that of the first sentence], *certainly I think so* | *of course I shall* [*he said it of course without thinking*], *after all, it does not matter!* The front-order in *here we are!* *there he goes!* seems also to be emphatic.

#### Sentence-words.

1856. Sentence-words and sentence-groups used as vocatives and imperatives are very free as regards their position in the sentence, front-position being generally emphatic, as in *sir, you are mistaken!* compared with *yes, sir!* | *please do it again!* compared with *half a cup, please!* | *thank you, I would rather not!* compared with *no, thank you*. But in *yes, please*, the *please* may be emphatic, because, as *yes* is also a sentence-word, *please* itself may be regarded as beginning—or rather, constituting—a new sentence.

1857. Interjections are generally emphatic, and therefore prefer front-order.

### Conjunctions and Dependent Adverbs.

**1858.** Conjunctions, being connective words, naturally come at the beginning of the sentence they join on.

**1859.** When a pure conjunction and a half-conjunction or sentence-adverb come together, the conjunction naturally precedes in most cases—always in the case of such conjunctions as *and*, *but*, which never occur except initially: *but*, *nevertheless*, . . . With some conjunctions the order is indifferent: *if*, *on the other hand*, . . . | *on the other hand*, *if* . .

### Broken Order.

**1860.** Broken order is very frequent in Old-English. When two or more co-ordinate words ought to precede a word which they jointly modify or are modified by, there is a tendency to avoid suspensiveness by putting only one of them before this word, and letting the others follow in tag-order: *swīpe micle mēras fersce* ‘very large fresh-water lakes’ | *Cynewulf benam Sigebryht his rīces and Westseaxna wītan* ‘Cynewulf and the West-Saxon senators deprived Sigebryht of his kingdom’ | *gesæt þæt land and gedælde* ‘occupied the country and divided it’ | *hēt ġewyrtan āne burg þær on nēawiste and ġemannian* ‘ordered a fort to be built and garrisoned in the neighbourhood.’ Of course, if the whole group is very short, or if the two words are closely connected in meaning, or if one of them is of subordinate force, there is no break: *and hē him feoh and feorh ġebēad* ‘he offered them money and their lives’ | *ān beren fell* ‘one bear’s skin.’

**1861.** In some cases Old-English broken order is the result of the second word being in apposition, as if it were tagged on by a relative sentence: *hē hæfde tamra dēora unbeohtra siex hund* ‘he had six hundred tame reindeer unsold.’ In such cases the tag-order is preserved in Modern English as well.

**1862.** Old-English makes a free use of broken order in



other cases as well. In such a sentence as *þā cyningas þe þone anweald hæfdon þæs folces on þām dagum* 'the kings who had the rule of the people in those days' the break between *anweald* and its genitive is to avoid making *hæfdon* too emphatic. In *þæt hira ne mihte nān tō ōþrum* 'so that none of them could come to the others' it is the result of the front-position of *hira*, which is put immediately before the verb because it is logically equivalent to 'they.' The end-position of verbs and verbals often causes broken order, as in *bā ōþre wæron hungre ācwolene* 'the others had died of hunger.'

**1863.** Modern English is much more tolerant of suspensiveness, and the logical spirit of the language makes it averse to broken order. The Old-English order adjective + noun + adjective survives only in such isolated phrases as *good men and true*. Breaks caused by emphatic end or front order, such as *bars and bolts we have none | of fuel they had plenty*, belong only to the literary language.

**1864.** But there is one kind of break which is unknown in Old-English, and is mainly of Modern English growth — the so-called 'split-infinitive' — that is, the supine with a word or words coming between the *to* and the verbal, as in *it is necessary to clearly understand this point* instead of the more usual *it is necessary to understand this point clearly*.

### Cross-order.

**1865.** When two word-groups or sentences of similar construction follow each other, they may, in a language which has free order, be either in **parallel** order (anaphora) or **cross** order (chiasmus). Thus in Latin we have parallel order in *aliō locō, aliō tempore* 'in another place, at another time,' cross-order in *multōs dēfendī laesī nēmīnem* 'I have defended many, injured none.'

**1866.** Cross-order occurs in Old-English, as in *þæt land is eall wēste, būtan on fēawum stōwum styccemǣlum wiciap Finnas, on huntope on wintra, and on sumera on fiscope be*

*pāre sē* 'the country is all desert, except that in a few places Fins dwell piecemeal, (being engaged) in hunting in winter and fishing by the sea in summer.' Here it is the result of *on sumera* being attracted by the similar group *on wintra*. This probably is the origin of the construction, although in higher stages of development it was used for emphasis and rhetorical effect.

### Front-order.

1867. As we have seen, front-order is normal in the case of conjunctions and other particles (1858), of interrogative and exclamatory words (1771), and of verbs in interrogative sentences (1806). In some of these cases the front-order is emphatic, in others connective. We have also considered more exceptional cases of front-verb order (1811 foll.) and front-adverb order (1854). Other exceptional cases of front-order are:—

1868. Front predicative adjectives: *thoughtless he may be, but not vicious* | *victorious indeed they were, but at what a cost* ! These are purely literary examples. But this order occurs also as a vulgarism in such phrases as *right you are* !

1869. Front object-word: *this he owed partly to his father*.

1870. Front object-complement: *enclosed you will find a letter*. Compare *enclosed is a letter* and the other examples in which front-order is accompanied by verb-inversion (1814).

The front adjective in such sentences as *big as he is, I know a still bigger man* | *black as he has been painted, he is far worse in reality* is the necessary result of their grammatical structure.

For the front-order in *of fuel they had plenty*, see §§ 1863, 1871.

### Group-order.

1871. Preposition-groups normally follow their head-words. Such inversions as † *of Corinth king* on the analogy of genitive + noun are rare even in poetry. But preposition-groups often take emphatic front-position in

prose as well as poetry: *of fuel they had plenty | of cowardice he has never been accused*; and with verb-inversion: *| of a noble race was he | to such straits was I reduced*. Such constructions as *three sons, of whom all died young* are blendings of . . *all of whom died young* and . . *who all died young*.

#### VERBAL-GROUPS.

1872. The position of verbal-groups in the sentence is quite free: *hearing you were in want of a secretary, I have come to tell you of one | well, this being now settled, let us go on to something else | they would not let him go home, it being a stormy night*.

#### Sentences.

1873. In groups of sentences we can observe the same distinction between post-adjunct and pre-adjunct order as in groups of words (1871).

1874. Independent sentences follow post-adjunct order. Indeed, no other order would be possible with most of them, such as copulative and adversative sentences.

1875. Dependent sentences, on the other hand, often follow pre-adjunct order, especially temporal, hypothetical, and causal sentences (466): *when he came, I was not at home | if I can, I will do it | as I saw it was no use arguing, I said no more*. The reverse order is nearly always allowable: *I was at home when he came | I will do it if I can*. The general principle is, of course, to put in front the sentence which is most emphatic or most closely connected with what precedes. But in some cases the order is fixed, especially when there is a difference of meaning. Thus causal clauses introduced by *as* always precede, for, if they followed the head-sentence, they would be understood as clauses of comparison (*do as you please!*). This seems to show that with dependent sentences the pre-adjunct order is the normal one.

1876. Front-position of conjunctive and relative clauses is sometimes regular, as in *what you say is true*, sometimes exceptional and rhetorical, as in *what he wants I do not know*.

### Elliptical Order.

1877. In the elliptical language used in titles of books, headings of chapters, indexes, etc. there are many deviations from the order of the ordinary language. Thus in an index to a book of history we should find the French Revolution given as *Revolution*, *The French* in the strictly logical order, while the order in *William the Conqueror*, being already logical, is retained. So also with proper names the more important surname would come first: *Mill*, *John Stuart*.

1878. This elliptical style also has an emphatic order different from that of the ordinary language, as in *Waterloo*, *Battle of*.

1879. In some cases this elliptical order has passed into common speech, as when we say *nine thirty* instead of *half-past nine*.

1880. Another kind of elliptical order is preserved in such phrases as *it costs five shillings a pound* | *I paid twopence each for them* | *do you mean last Monday, or Monday week?* | *He lives at six, Queen's Road*.

### SENTENCE-STRESS.

1881. In addition to the three degrees of stress already distinguished (659), we now require a fourth—**extra stress**, marked (;).

1882. The general principle of sentence-stress is to put strong stress on those words which are prominent in any way, and to give weak stress to those which are subordinate to them (736, 880).

1883. Hence the general tendency is to give strong stress

to full words, weak stress to form-words. But if a full word becomes subordinate in meaning, it can take weaker stress (*a :piece of bread*). Conversely, if a word which is usually subordinate is made emphatic or becomes logically prominent, it can receive strong stress.

**1884.** In connected speech all words that express new ideas are more or less emphatic, and therefore take strong stress; while words that express ideas that are already familiar or can be taken for granted, are unemphatic and have a weaker stress: *a German :came to London . . the :German left :London, and :went to Liverpool*.

**1885.** In such a sentence as *-I :got wet* the first word is understood from the context, and the second is a mere connecting word, so that the stress necessarily falls on *wet* by what may be called 'negative emphasis.' But in *look how ;wet I am!* there is increased stress on *wet*, which gives it the meaning 'very wet'; this is positive emphasis or **emphatic stress**. If the word *very* is put in, there is no necessity for emphatic stress: *you are 'very' wet*.

**1886.** The example just given is one of what may be called **intensive stress**. Another example is *you will catch your ;death of cold*. Intensive stress is often emotional, expressing excitement: *;what, do not you know? | what on ;earth is the matter? | ;good ;heavens, gentlemen!*

**1887.** A less emotional form of intensive stress is that which expresses the idea 'even': *enough to make a ;saint swear!* [no extra stress in *enough to make even a saint swear*] | *I would not have it at a ;gift | I did not do it: I never should have ;thought of such a thing*.

**1888.** Another form is that which expresses **antithesis**: *he did not remember your name. how could he ;help remembering it, when he hears it twenty times a day? | we shall be too late, after all. I ;told you so | you have made a great mistake. I ;know I have*. In the first example the antithesis is between not remembering and the impossibility of

not remembering ; the other two imply the antithesis ‘ you tell me this as something new, but I told you—I knew about it—before.’ In all these examples the extra stress might be accompanied by the compound-rise tone (1951), which would suggest the emotional element of peevishness or impatience. The second might be accompanied by the compound fall (1952), with a different shade of meaning. In such an example as the following, the extra stress seems to be necessarily accompanied by the compound rise: *can he do it? he ;says he can.*

1889. In the above examples the extra stress adds something to the meaning, but in some cases the extra stress falls on words which are already intensive, without modifying their meaning, as in *I ;quite agree with you*, where the substitution of ordinary strong stress would not alter the meaning. In fact, it is logically impossible to add anything to the force of such words as *quite, all, always, never*. But this kind of stress may suggest something emotional, as in *I will ;very soon show you what I mean*, where it may imply threat. The practice of giving extra stress indiscriminately to all intensive words is a common fault, especially among women.

1890. When two or more words are **contrasted**, either they receive extra stress or the stress of the repeated word is diminished: *some English people have ;light :hair, some have ;dark :hair | the town :mouse and the country :mouse*. So also in counting, such numerals as *‘thirteen, ‘fourteen, ‘fifteen* have the stress on the first syllable, while when isolated they have even stress *‘thir-teen*, etc. (922). We may call this ‘**contrasting stress**.’

1891. **Modifying stress** is similar: *the earth is round. it is not ;quite round, but a little flattened.*

1892. The completion of a series is marked by what may be called **climax-stress**: *one, two, three, and a ;way! | here and there and ;everywhere | the days of the week are Sunday, Monday . . ;Saturday.*

1893. In such a sentence as *shall we smoke a ;pipe together?* compared with *shall we smoke a pipe?* the extra stress is not the result of emphasis, but of the following weak-stressed word, the effect of the increased stress being to bind the two words together more closely, as in *good:natured man* compared with *good:natured* (929). We can call this **grouping stress**. Other examples are: *I am going to ;call on him* [*I am going to 'call on some 'friends*] | *one gets ;used to things* | *a room with the ,windows shut* | *I forgot to wind my ;watch up* [. . . *wind up my watch*] | *I did nothing ;wrong, -did I?*

1894. So also **formulae** and traditional phrases are bound together by one word in them having a predominant stress: *the house that ;Jack built* | *all is well that ;ends well* | *this day ;week* | *cut and come a;gain*. The general tendency in such combinations is to stress the modifying word.

1895. If a naturally weak-stressed connective word is separated from the words which would otherwise follow it by an inserted group or clause, it receives strong **break-stress**: *he 'is, physically speaking, a failure* | *a man 'who, if he had the chance, would do great things* | *'if, as is most probable, . . . | 'but, said he, . . .*

1896. There are some formal connecting words, such as *be*, which have little or no meaning in themselves, and are therefore incapable of independent emphasis. Hence a strong—that is, in this case, an extra strong—stress on such words is felt to be equivalent to emphasizing the whole sentence: *what ;are you doing?* | *what ;does he know about it?* | *you are late. I ;am rather late* | *he will be angry. ;let him be angry!* We may call this **distributed stress**. The positive emphatic non-interrogative forms of the verb (2169) always have distributed stress: *I ;did say so*.

The contrasting stress in *man never ;is, but always to ;be blest* applies logically not to the verb itself but to its distinctions of tense: as such verbs as *is* have a meaning of their own from

this point of view, strong stress on them is not necessarily distributed.

The strong—not extra strong—stress in such sentences as *what is it?* is only negative, being the result of the subordination of *what* (1915).

1897. As **even** stress tends to balance words against one another (898), it is the rule in combinations of adjectives (both assumptive and predicative) with nouns, and of adverbs of marked meaning with other words: *·three ·big ·dogs | I am ·quite ·ready | it rains hard*. This is especially the case with negative words: *I think not [I think -so] | I cannot go* (·kaant ·gou) *·now* compared with *I -can go*.

1898. But negative words sometimes have weak stress, as in *have you heard whether the house is insured or -not?*, where the *not* is not stressed because it is logically superfluous [but: *you will have to do it whether you like it or ·not*], and in some cases where it forms a sort of compound with an intensive word: *the voyage is certainly -not a long one*. So also in *I would rather -not go*. But when *not* precedes such words it takes the stress: *not -very well | not :quite ready | it is not -yet time*.

So also such contractions as (kaant, wount) presuppose *can-not, will-not*.

1899. When sentence-words and sentence-groups stand in the unemphatic end-position, they undergo **enclitic stress-weakening**: *are you going ;home, :John?* [*John, are you going ·home?*] *yes, -sir | some bread, -please! | it is late, -isn't -it?* [*·isn't it ·late?*]

1900. If **three** strong-stressed words come together—especially in immediate succession, but also with intervening weak-stressed words—the stress of the middle word is often reduced, especially if it is a monosyllable, as in *English :plum-·pudding* compared with *·plum·pudding | five :minutes to nine* [*·five minutes*] | *a great :big man | a heavy :round stone | a little :more room | all :day long | two :pound ten | a hard :day's*



*work*. But this happens only when the middle word can be regarded as subordinate to the preceding word or as being specially connected with it, not when they are all of equal weight and independence, as in *a* *thick* *gold* *chain* | *it is very hot in here with that big fire* | *ten years ago*.

Hence also the distinction that might be made between *he failed completely to explain his meaning* and *he failed completely to explain his meaning*. In the former the adverb modifies *failed*; in the latter it modifies *explain*, with which it is felt to form one stress-group.

1901. Rapid speech is unfavourable to even stress. If two even-stressed syllables come together at the end of a sentence, there is a tendency in rapid speech to throw the stress forward, so that such a word as *Chi'nese* becomes *:Chi'nese*, unless there is some special reason for throwing the stress on to the first syllable.

1902. In the colloquial combination *nice and* + adjective—where the *nice* is practically a vague 'very'—the second adjective takes the principal stress: *the roads are :nice and dry*. Compare *:cup and saucer* (928).

1903. Combinations of verbs of full meaning with other words may have even stress: *to change one's mind* | *it rains hard* | *he came running*.

1904. But when a verb is intimately connected with its object-word or object-complement etc., so as to form a kind of compound with it, the stress of the verb is often subordinated to that of its modifier: *to light a fire* | *open the door* ! | *to run a race* | *to feel too full*.

But *shall we have the fire :lighted?* by grouping-stress.

1905. So also when a verb is followed by a preposition-group with which it is intimately connected: *to go for a walk* | *to fly into a passion* | *to cut it in two*. Similarly in such combinations as *go -out hunting*. But the verb may also take the stress: *he stood behind the door*.

**1906.** When a verb is intimately connected with another verb or verbal, it tends to subordinate its stress, especially in the combination verb + *and* + verb: *shall I :go and look for him ?* | *come and try!* | *I heard him 'go* | *did you see him 'start ?* | *we have come to 'stay.*

**1907.** But in the combination verb + adverb there is often even stress, even when the two are intimately connected: *to 'lie 'down on the 'sofa* | *dressed up like a Turk* | *put it down!* | *my watch has not been wound up* [*wind -up a watch, § 1900*]. Note the distinction between *to carry about* and *to cry -about*.

**1908.** In some cases, however, the adverb has the stress: *to see him 'off* [but *to 'go 'off*] | *to run a'way*. Such sentences as *'come in!* may also be pronounced *:come in!* to express impatience.

When the adverb is followed by a preposition-group, the adverb necessarily takes grouping-stress: *to kick 'out at him* | *when do you get 'up in the morning?*

**1909.** **Prepositions** of definite and marked meaning may have full stress, as in *be'hind the 'door* | *since then* | *he is a'bout 'my 'height* | *without light we cannot distinguish colours*, while those of indefinite and abstract meaning, such as *at*, *of*, *on*, are generally subordinated to other words, as in *-at the door* | *in life* compared with *'through 'life* | *-from 'under the 'table*. Hence a preposition may have different stress according to its meaning, as in *-under an obligation* compared with *'under 'age*.

**1910.** But in combination with pronouns all prepositions may take the chief stress, as in *-will you :go with -him ?* compared with *-will you go -with that man ?* | *:run 'after -him*, with grouping-stress. Even *of* may take the stress, as in *:what 'of -it!*, where it is preceded by a word of subordinate stress.

**1911.** If, however, a strongly stressed word precedes, the preposition loses its stress as well as the pronoun: *I will think -of -it* | *do not talk about it!*

**1912.** In some cases differences of stress—which are often further accompanied by changes of sound—give rise to **doublets** with special divergencies of meaning and function. The rules which follow are of course liable to be crossed by the general principles of emphasis already laid down.

**1913.** **this** and **that** generally have strong stress both as nouns and as adjectives: *'this shows -that . . | is that you ? | these young men.* But if the demonstrative meaning is not strong, they may have medium stress, as in *:this book has not had its leaves cut* compared with *'this book is one of those I want.* So also when they are used as nouns in the sense of 'it' without any special demonstrative meaning: *I saw :that (or -that) quite clearly.*

The adverb (ʒæt) has of course only weak stress. So also the relative pronoun (ʒæt).

**1914.** So also the corresponding adverbs **here** and **there** generally have strong stress: *here is your money ! | there he goes ! | come here !* But in the case of these words also, weakened demonstrative meaning is accompanied by weakening of stress, as in *did you read as far as page ten ? we left off -there* compared with *we left off 'there*, which would imply pointing to the place. After verbs their stress is often weakened: *I saw him -there yesterday | the sooner we get -there the better !*

In all the above cases *there* keeps the sound (ʒeə): the weak (ʒær) has of course only weak stress.

**1915.** The interrogative **what** and **which** have weak or medium stress when used as nouns, strong stress when used as adjectives, as in *'which boy did it ? | at what time ?* compared with *-which is it ? | -what is the time ?* The interrogative **who** is used only as a noun, and has weak stress: *-who is -it ? what* and *which* when used as adjectives have strong

stress in all their other functions: *submit with what grace he can* | *which philosopher* (relative).

The exclamation *what!* has strong stress, as might be expected.

**1916. Interrogative adverbs** have weak or medium stress: *where does he live?* | *when did he come?* | *why did he do it?*

**1917.** But in repeated questions all these interrogative words take extra stress: *what did you say his name was?* | *where does he live?*

**1918. Relative noun-pronouns** and adverbs have weak stress: *a man -who could do great things* | *the place where he lives*. When used as **conjunctions** these words also have weak stress: *I know -who he is* | *doesn't he know -where to look for it?* (note that this sentence is negative in form but not in meaning) | *I see how it is done*. But if the preceding clause has a negative meaning, they have extra strong stress: *I do not know who he is* | *I have not the slightest idea what he means* | *he will not know where to look for it* | *I cannot think how it is done*.

**1919. enough** has strong stress except when it follows the word it modifies: *enough bread*, *enough of this* but *bread -enough*, *good -enough*.

**1920. some** with strong stress is a quantitative word: *with some difficulty* | *some people think so*. In the partitive meaning 'a little' it is weakened into (səm) with weak stress: *-some water* | *-some more bread*.

**1921.** The weak forms of the **auxiliaries** occur only before the nucleus (120) and—in the case of *be*—before the predicate: compare *I shall* (ʃl) *go* with *I think I shall* (-ʃæl) | *he is* (hiɪz) *a good fellow* with *what a good fellow he is* (-iz)! In other constructions they often have strong stress, especially *be*: and *who is -he?* | *I wonder -where -he is* | *-is -he ready?* *I expect he is*.

**1922.** *have* = 'must,' *-have* (hæv, æv) = 'cause, have,' the weak (hæv, əv) being used only as an auxiliary, and occasionally in the sense of 'possess': *you will have to -have* (hæv) *your hair cut | to -have a party | he -has a cold.*

**1923.** *must* has strong stress, except in such phrases as *you -must* (məs) *know that . . .*, where it is almost unmeaning. Note that compulsion is expressed by strong stress—*I must say I agree with him in that opinion*—logical necessity by extra stress: *you ;must :know what I mean!*

**1924.** The weak-stressed auxiliaries are all capable of receiving emphatic stress: *they said nothing. why ;should they have said anything ? | I ;should like you to see it ! | why ;will you persist in denying it ? | we ;can but try.*

### Intonation.

**1925.** The tones have both an emotional and a logical significance.

The **level** tone is plaintive—especially the high level tone—and suggests the idea of suspensiveness. The level tone is not much used in English, where it has much the same function as the rising tone.

The **rising** tone is associated with cheerfulness, animation, surprise, expectation, hesitation, and suggests suspensiveness, incompleteness, and question.

The **falling** tone is the natural expression of dogmatism, resolution, command, and suggests the ideas of completion, finality, certainty, and of answer as opposed to question.

For the compound tones see § 1950 foll.

**1926.** Hence declarative sentences normally end with a falling tone, the preceding portions of the sentence being uttered with rising or level tones to show that the meaning is not yet complete. Thus *you are quite'* or *you are quite* makes us expect some word or words ending in a falling tone to complete the meaning: *you are quite right*!. If, on the other hand, the predicate comes first, it is uttered with a rising tone

to show that the subject is being waited for to complete the sentence: *great' is Diana of the Ephesians^*.

**1927.** Hence also general **interrogative** sentences have a rising, special interrogative sentences a falling tone (**503, 4**): *is he heré' ? | where is he^ ?* But special interrogative sentences have a rising tone—together with extra stress on the interrogative word (**1917**)—when the question is a repeated one: *what is his namé'—what did you say his name was' ?*

For the intonation of alternative questions—as in *is he an Oxford or a Cambridge man ?*—see § **505**.

**1928.** When the hearer of a statement repeats the whole or part of it, he utters it with a rising tone, to show that he is expecting confirmation: *my name is Smith^*. *Smith': then you are the man I am looking for^*.

**1929.** **Surprise** or indignation is expressed in a single word by a long rise, as in *what' ?*, in groups and sentences by a fall, exclamative sentences (**502**) being regarded as emphatic affirmative ones: *good heavens^ ! | how well he looks^ !*

**1930.** **Command** is, of course, expressed by a fall.

**1931.** But statements and commands are often uttered with a rising instead of a falling tone to mark them as questionable or hesitating: *is it finé' ? yes', it is pretty finé'* [compare *yes^, it looks quite settled^*].

**1932.** The idea of question thus implied is often used to suggest that of appeal or remonstrance: *I have done all I can' = 'I have done all I can, haven't I ?' | I wish you would let me alone'*. So also *all right'* may imply 'why don't you start?' or 'we are waiting for you to start.'

**1933.** The rising tone also serves to soften a contradiction, as in *your friend is late. it is not late': it is only three o'clock^*, a command, whether direct, as in *don't forget to post that letter'*, or implied, as in *now you'll remember what I have said'*, or a refusal, as in *will you have another cup of tea ? no', thank you'*.

**1934.** Lastly, the rising tone often serves merely to give

a general character of cheerfulness or geniality to what is said: *well', good bye'*; *hope to see you again soon'*.

1935. But the falling tone can be used in all the examples given in the last three paragraphs, and would, indeed, be preferred by many speakers, especially those who wish to show a firm and decided character.

1936. The brevity and imperativeness of special interrogative sentences such as *what is his name'* is often avoided by substituting a longer general interrogative form: *can you tell me what his name is'*

1937. If a general interrogative sentence is uttered with a falling instead of a rising tone, it expresses command or impatience: *will you do as you are told'* | ; *are you ready'* ? In such cases the auxiliary often takes emphatic stress (1896).

1938. When a negative interrogative sentence is used rhetorically to express affirmation, it necessarily takes the falling tone: *isn't it wonderful'* | | *he is very egotistical. yes, isn't he'* |

1939. Sentence-intonation is generally continuous, abrupt transitions from rising to falling tone and vice-versa being avoided as much as possible.

1940. In such a sentence as *it is fine, frosty weather'* the falling tone begins, not on the last syllable, but on the preceding stressed one, the fall being continued downward through the last syllable. If an enclitic word such as *sir* were added, the fall would still begin on the first syllable of *weather*, and would be continued through the enclitic. So also in *it will be fine'* *to-morrow, I hope.* In the same way all other modifiers of the predicate are subordinated to it in tone, even if they have full stress: *he is the most obstinate child'* *I have ever had to deal with.*

1941. If a complete sentence has a full-stressed tag added, the tag is uttered with a separate fall of its own, instead of merely continuing the preceding one: *he is stupid'*, *very'* *stupid.* Here the voice, after reaching a low pitch at the end

of the first fall, leaps up and begins a fresh fall. Even if the original sentence is not quite finished, it may have separate falling stress in such examples as *he is a tall^, a very tall^ gentleman.*

**1942.** Enclitic additions to a complete rising-tone sentence simply continue the rise: *are you ready', gentlemen? | will you make a little room', please sir?*

**1943.** The following are examples of independent rises: *gentlemen', are you ready'? | are you ready'—all' of you?*

**1944.** When two or more clauses are intimately connected, there is no tone-break till the end of the whole group: *tell us who your new friend^ is! | it would be better if you were to do^ it yourself.* So also in such combinations as *more haste', worse speed^.* This is of course still more necessary when there is contraction, or in extended sentences (**486**, 8). In sequences (**482**)—where there is no formal connexion—each sentence keeps its own independent tone—whether rising or falling—unless a rising tone is required to show the connexion more clearly, as in *I am sorry I could not come before'; I had to finish writing a letter^.*

**1945.** When the first clause introduces a statement etc., it takes rising tone if it is grammatically unfinished: *he said' he did not care^ | the difficulty 'is', how are we to get back^?* Otherwise it takes the falling tone: *what he said was this^ . . | he speaks somewhat in this way^ . .*

**1946.** Inserted or parenthetic groups or clauses (**467**) naturally have rising tones: *he is a man who', if he chose', might do great things^.*

**1947.** But, on the principle of the continuity of stress, if the whole group shows a marked falling tendency, the inserted words follow it.

**1948.** If the appended or inserted words have a marked meaning of their own dependent on their intonation, that intonation is kept, which often results in **broken** intonation: *which will you have', tea' or coffee^?* When a tag keeps its



independent intonation (together with its full stress), it is either emphatic, or else is felt as detached—as if it were added with hesitation: *which will you have? tea, please* [*tea, -please*] | *there is the bell again: it is Frederick, of course, isn't it? I will call to-morrow, if I can* [*. to-morrow, if I-can*].

1949. Broken intonation is, of course, less frequent in the case of insertion, as insertions are generally not emphatic: † *but thou, if thou shouldest never see my face again, pray for my soul!*

1950. In the compound tones the second element determines the general meaning of the whole tone, and the first element only modifies this general meaning. These tones are always accompanied by extra stress, because of their emphatic meaning.

1951. The **compound rise** expresses doubt of some implied statement, so that it expresses distrust, caution, warning: ♪ *I will not try it; ♪ you may | take ♪ care! if you ♪ do it, it will be at your own ♪ risk*. Hence it is used in cautious contradiction: *but for all ♪ that, he is an exception*′. Also in contradiction or modification of the speaker's own statements: *I am sure he will come again: at least I ♪ think he will*′. In its more logical uses it expresses contrast or exception: *I am what the world calls a woman-hater; what ♪ I call a philosopher | the dinner was very good, wasn't it? the ♪ wine was bad*′. It sometimes has an intensive meaning. It sometimes contradicts the meaning of the word it falls on: *was it raining when you came in? ♪ rather!* [*rather*′ would imply 'only a little'].

1952. In the **compound fall** the relations between the two elements are reversed. This tone hints at a doubt, and disposes of it by a dogmatic assertion. Hence it expresses contempt or sarcasm: ♪ *I can do it*′. ♪ *you!* It also expresses remonstrance, contradiction, contrast, not cautiously,

as the compound rise does, but confidently and dogmatically : *what', are you going already' ? you have only just ^ come ! | Sunday isn't the day' ; it is ^ Monday ! | you say you are sure of finishing it' ; but ^ when will you finish it' ?—that is the question^*. Sometimes the dogmatic element disappears, and the intonation has simply an emphatic effect, with perhaps a trace of impatience or contempt : *you ought to have done something to prevent it. what could I ^ do ? | shall we have time' ? ^ oh, yes.*

## NOUNS.

### Gender.

**1953.** In Modern English the only gender-concord of nouns is with some of the personal pronouns ; and accordingly, the only general test of noun-gender is its association with *he, she, it*.

**1954.** Modern English has lost all traces of the grammatical genders of Old-English. Nevertheless, the genders are not entirely natural.

**1955.** Words denoting the young of men and animals without implying any special sex are often neuter—less frequently however in the case of human beings : *a simple child . . what should it know of death ? | the other twin fell with its face in a furze-bush.*

**1956.** *it* is sometimes applied to human beings to express contempt : *what a silly fellow it is !*

**1957.** Names of animals when used without any personal feeling towards individual animals are generally neuter. The lower the animal in the scale, the more exclusively the neuter is used.

**1958.** But in the spoken language there is a tendency to give a personal gender to the higher animals without regard to the sex of the individual animal. Thus *dog, horse, fish,*

*canary* are generally masculine, *cat*, *hare*, *parrot* are generally feminine.

**1959.** Names of things are often personified in colloquial speech. Such words as *ship*, *boat*, *balloon*, *steam-engine* and names of machines are made feminine, especially by those who are constantly employed with such things, but also—especially in the case of words for ships and boats—by the majority of speakers, although it is always allowable to use the neuter. This personification seems to have arisen from a fanciful comparison with *wife*.

**1960.** The names of smaller objects are made masculine, such as *watch*, *pipe* (to smoke with). Some words, such as *kite* (the plaything), may be either masculine or feminine. But this kind of personification is less general than the former, and is left more to the caprice of the speaker.

**1961.** It is to be observed that in the spoken language only artificial objects are personified. It probably began with such words as *ship*, denoting objects capable of independent movement, and therefore apparently alive.

**1962.** In the literary language we have a totally different kind of personification. That this literary personification is due partly to Latin influence is shown by the fact that it makes *moon* feminine and *sun* masculine in direct opposition to Old-English usage. But the usage of modern poets, though partly founded on Latin and French traditions, is mainly independent, and the same word may have different personal genders assigned to it by different writers, while another writer may, even in poetry, keep it in the neuter gender.

**1963.** The general principle is to give the masculine gender to words suggesting such ideas as strength, fierceness, terror, while the feminine gender is associated with the opposite ideas of gentleness, delicacy, beauty, together with fertility. Thus *sun*, *summer*, *time*, *winter*, *death*, *rage*, *war* are masculine, and *moon*, *spring* (the season), *dawn*, *mercy*, *peace*, *earth* are feminine.

**1964.** The predominance of the feminine gender in Latin abstract nouns has made the feminine the abstract gender in Modern English also, even where there are otherwise no specially feminine associations, as in *truth, justice, silence*.

**1965.** In Latin most names of countries are feminine. Hence in Modern English not only poets but also newspaper-writers make such words as *Asia, Britain, France, Germany* feminine.

### Number.

#### SINGULAR INDIVIDUAL NOUN = COLLECTIVE NOUN.

**1966.** By the analogy of the old unchanged plurals such as *sheep*, a large number of names of animals have come to be used in a collective sense without any plural inflection, as in *how many fish have you caught? two salmon and three trout*. The grammatical difference between *three trout* and *three sheep* is that *trout* is formally singular, while *sheep* is, or may be, formally a plural, for there is a plural *trouts*, although it is not much used.

**1967.** This usage is confined to the names of wild animals. Thus *fowl* if used collectively must be put in the plural, as in *to keep fowls* = *to keep poultry*, where the individual plural *fowls* is logically equivalent to the collective singular *poultry*, while *wildfowl* is regularly used as a collective without any inflection: *to shoot wildfowl*. So also *duck* in *to shoot duck* would imply that they were wild ducks.

The occasional use of the collective *chicken* for *chickens* (*to keep chicken*) seems to be the result of the ending *-en* having been regarded as a plural inflection; whence also the new singular *chick*.

**1968.** It is also to be observed that these collective singulars are used only when the animals are hunted because of their usefulness to man, or are taken in considerable numbers, but not when they are killed only in self-defence or

as vermin. Hence the strict adherence to this construction in the case of fish-names [not, however, with *eel*, *lobster* and some others], while the word *fish* itself, being more vague, is often used in the plural, as in *to catch three fishes*. But if *fish* is used in the special sense of *salmon*, the singular form is necessary: *he killed three big fish*.

1969. Hence, again, while this usage is freely extended to unfamiliar foreign animals, as in *a few antelope(s)*, *herds of buffalo(es)* and *giraffe(s)*, *to hunt pig* (implying wild boars), it is never used with such words as *lion*, *wolf*, *badger*, *weasel*; but it is admissible with *bear*, because this animal is hunted for its flesh.

1970. The use of a singular individual noun in a collective sense is also found in other classes of words: *the cannon(s) were firing shot and shell—rings were used as a substitute for coin(s) | written in blank verse(s)* [but *to write Latin verses*]. In the last two examples the singular seems to be the result of the analogy of the collective nouns *cash* (or *currency*), *prose* (*prose and verse*). Other examples are: *small craft* = 'small ships,' *horse and foot* = 'cavalry and infantry,' *a fleet of twenty sail*, where *sail* = 'ships.' These differ from the former in using the noun in a special sense as well as collectively; hence they cannot take the plural inflection without returning to their original meaning, as in *twenty sails* compared with *twenty sail*.

1971. In all the above examples the noun has a distinct individuality. But when we talk of *the hair of the head*, we do not think of each individual hair, but rather regard *hair* as a material noun, like *iron*, so that we really have two distinct words, (a) the material noun *hair* with no plural of its own (*two heads of hair*), and (b) the individual noun *hair* 'filament of hair' with plural *hairs*: *she has more hair* (collective) *than wit, and more faults than hairs* (Shakespeare). So also in *to plant maple(s)* and *forests of pine* the singular seems to express the idea of a mass of trees. We have the same fluctuation in *to*

*make brick(s) and tiles | coals are (or coal is) cheaper than wood.* So also in *fruit and cakes*, the plural *fruits* (*fruits of the earth*) suggesting the idea of various kinds of fruit rather than that of a mass or plateful of fruit.

#### COLLECTIVE NOUNS WITH PLURAL CONSTRUCTIONS.

**1972.** Collective nouns can always be regarded as logically equivalent to plurals of individual nouns, and hence are often ungrammatically associated with words that imply plurality: *twenty people, these vermin, many cattle, a few cavalry, the clergy took their seats, two or three counsel who were never in any cause* (Dickens). We also find singular constructions: *much cattle, much people* (Bible).

**1973.** There is often hesitation in joining such words to numerals. This is especially the case when there are distinct individual nouns by the side of the collective ones (*clergyman* by the side of *clergy*), as in *twenty clergy walking in procession*; here the collective is preferred because it implies that it was not a fortuitous assemblage of *clergymen*, but that they walked in the procession through being members of one organization.

**1974.** The inconvenience of not having an individual noun corresponding to such collectives as *cattle* and *game* has led to the use of *head of* . . . , as in *a head of cattle, twenty head of game*, where *head* is the unchanged plural of measure.

The old collective *folk* (Old-English neuter *folc* 'nation') was at first used in the plural only in the sense of peoples—that is 'nations'—but in Modern English *folks* came to be used in the sense of persons, as in *the old folk(s) at home, folk(s) say*. The word is now almost obsolete.

#### CHANGES OF MEANING IN PLURAL.

**1975.** Some classes of words are rarely used in the plural unless they at the same time undergo some change of meaning.

**1976. Proper names** can be used in the plural in their literal meaning only when they have been applied to more than one individual (*the Tarquins*), although they can always have a plural when used figuratively: *the Drydens of the present day*.

**1977. Material nouns** in their literal meaning are used in the plural to denote difference of kind or quality: *French wines*. But they are also used in the plural with change of meaning to imply individual nouns denoting some definite object, as in *the leads of a house* meaning 'sheets of lead,' *irons* meaning 'fetters of iron.' So also *colours* = 'flag' implies a combination of different colours. In such expressions as *sands* = 'sandy beach,' *the waters of the Nile*, *the dews of heaven* there is no suggestion of definite parts, and the plural seems to suggest indefinite extension or repetition.

**1978. Abstract nouns** are not often used in the plural in their literal meaning, although, of course, there is nothing to prevent them from being so used when necessary: *a man of abilities*, *a thousand pities*. But they often undergo changes of meaning when so used, as in *pay respects*, *do the honours*, *in good spirits*. They sometimes even become concrete, as in *spirits of wine*, *forces* = 'army,' *effects*, *sweepings* = 'result of sweeping, what is swept up,' *filings*.

#### USED ONLY IN THE PLURAL.

**1979.** The meaning of some words makes them more used in the plural than in the singular. Such a word as *twins*, indeed, hardly admits of a singular, although we do not scruple to use *twin* in the sense of 'one of a pair of twins.'

**1980.** There are other words which are used in the plural to imply that they are made up of a pair of parts, such as *scissors*, *bellows*, *spectacles* (also called *glasses*). These words never drop the plural inflection. The resulting difficulties are evaded by the paraphrase *pair of* . . . : *a pair of bellows*,

*two pairs of spectacles*. When such plurals imply more than two component parts, as in *gallows*, this periphrasis cannot be used.

**1981.** Besides those plurals which cannot drop the plural inflection without losing their distinctive meaning, such as *leads* and *spectacles*, there are many words used only in the plural, without having any corresponding word in the singular, such as *hustings*, *sessions*, *mathematics*, *phonetics* and the other words in *-ics*, some of which, however, are now occasionally used in the singular form, such as *metric(s)*, *lecturer on diplomatic*.

**1982.** Most of these plurals are—occasionally at least—used in singular constructions. Even with pair-plurals we find such constructions as *a silver scissors*. The use of the indefinite article is quite common with the other words: *a gallows*, *a hustings*. So also we can say *phonetics is* . . as well as *phonetics are* . .

**1983.** So also some of these words can be used in definite plural constructions: *two gallows*, *two hustings*.

**1984.** In some cases when a plural noun has singular meaning it is converted into a singular noun. The test of complete conversion is that it can take a fresh plural inflection: *two sixpences*. In such examples as *what is the news?* | *to take much pains* there is only half conversion.

For apparent plurals see § 998 a.

### Cases.

#### COMMON CASE.

**1985.** The common case is used to express the **subject**, the **direct** and **indirect object**, and the **vocative** relation: *John!*, *that man gave your brother a book*. In Old-English the first two nouns in this sentence would be in the nominative, the third in the dative, the fourth in the accusative. In



combination with prepositions it represents historically the Old-English accusative, dative, instrumental, or genitive, and has in Modern English a neutral function, being regarded neither as a direct nor an indirect object, but rather as standing in a non-subject relation, or—more definitely—as being converted into an adverb.

*Common case = direct object.*

**1986.** Besides its purely accusative function, the common case is used to express

**direction :** *they went the same way.*

**space :** *three inches long, one storey high.*

**adverbial relations :** *he would be satisfied one way or another.*

**1987.** It also has in the spoken language a purely adjectival function: *it is no use | you would not think those two children were exactly the same age | what colour shall I paint your door ? [compare paint it white] | water the colour of pea-soup.* This construction apparently began through dropping a preposition, for we can still say in the above examples *of no use, of the same age, with what colour.* It may then have been extended to other constructions, such as *he looks his age.*

*Common case = indirect object.*

**1988.** The dative is extensively used in Old-English not only in company with accusatives after verbs of giving, etc., but also with intransitive verbs, not only verbs of addressing—as in *hē him andwyrde* ‘he answered him’—but also of benefiting, helping, injuring and other personal relations, as in *mannum dērian* ‘to injure men.’

**1989.** In Modern English the accusative and dative have been merged into one case, and so the dative after originally intransitive verbs has become indistinguishable from the old accusative, and has come to be felt as a direct rather than

an indirect object, as in *he answered him, he answered the question.*

**1990.** In fact, in Modern English the common case cannot be recognized as an indirect object unless accompanied by another common case serving as a direct object, from which it is distinguished solely by position (**1823**), so that the relation is always liable to become ambiguous when it is not accompanied by an accusative word, or when removed from its normal position. In such cases the 'prepositional dative' with *to* is substituted, as in *I will write to him about it* compared with *I will write him a letter* | *to the devout believer the Church promised pardons* instead of *the Church promised the devout believer pardons.*

**1991.** But in many cases the context enables us to recognize an isolated or displaced common case as an indirect object on purely logical, not formal, grounds, as in the archaic *woe is me!* | *me, poor man, my library was dukedom large enough* (Shakespeare). The unmistakably dative function of the pronoun in *I will write you* is probably the cause of this construction—which occurs throughout the Modern English period—being avoided by many who would not object to it if it were possible to regard it as a direct object.

**1992.** So also the common case after adjectives and adverbs of nearness and likeness—which is a direct descendant of an Old-English dative—is still felt rather as an indirect than as a direct object, as shown by the frequent substitution of the prepositional dative: *he sat near the fire* [Old-English: *nēah þām fyre*] | *to wear flannel next the skin* [Old-English: *nīehst þære hýde*] | *unlike one another* compared with *come nearer to the fire!* | *I sat next (to) him at dinner* | *like to* or *unto* . .

**1993.** But, on the other hand, the adjectives and adverbs of nearness are felt to be almost or quite identical with prepositions, *near the fire, next him* having the same meaning as *by the fire, beside him* (or *by his side*), and this conception

may be extended to *like*, although here there is no analogous preposition.

1994. Even when two common-case words come together, the construction is sometimes doubtful.

Thus in Old-English, verbs of teaching originally took two accusatives, as in *hē lārde hine cræftas* 'he taught him arts.' In Modern English we can isolate the first object-word (*he taught him*), which therefore ought to be regarded as a direct object; but, on the other hand, such transpositions as *†to him my tale I teach* (Coleridge) show that we regard it as an indirect object—at least, when associated with another object-word. That this feeling is historically correct is shown by the fact that in the later Old-English a dative of the person is generally substituted for the original accusative: *hē lārde him cræftas*. In *he struck him a blow* | *he struck the desk a blow* we do not feel the first object-word to be dative, as we would in *he gave him a blow*, but rather as a direct object followed by what in inflected languages would be a cognate accusative. In such constructions as *it will last him his life-time* | *to stare one in the face* the dative character of the first object-word is more marked, because neither of the verbs is transitive, as in the two preceding examples.

1995. It is to be observed that many verbs take *to* just as they might take any other preposition, not as a substitute for the dative. Thus the *to* in *speak to* is derived from the Old-English construction *hē cwæp tō him*, *hē spræc tō him* contrasted with the dative in *hē him andwyrde*. But it was of course through the analogy of such constructions that *to* came to be used as a substitute for the older dative. The non-dative is distinguished from the dative *to* by its never allowing the substitution of the common case.

#### GENITIVE.

1996. In Old-English any noun could be made into an adjunct-word by being put in the genitive; but in Modern

English the genitive is restricted mainly to nouns denoting living beings, its place being otherwise taken by the 'prepositional genitive,' formed by the preposition *of*, as in *at the foot of a mountain* compared with *a man's foot*.

**1997.** The introduction of the prepositional genitive was no doubt prepared by such Old-English constructions as *þā mēnn of Lundenbyrig fetodon þā scīpu* 'the men of (coming from) London fetched the ships.'

**1998.** In Old-English the genitive was also used, like an accusative, to denote the object of a verb such as *gēmunan* 'remember,' *giernan* 'desire,' often with an accompanying accusative or dative of the person: *him wæs of-togen æltes fōdan* 'they were deprived of all food.' This survives only in the form of constructions with the prepositional genitive (*think of, deprive of*), which may however in these instances have developed independently of Old-English traditions.

**1999.** The non-personal genitive is still frequent with nouns of **time**, as in *a day's journey, a minute's notice, one week's pay*, and of **space**, as in *he arrived at his journey's end, a spear's length*, and in a few isolated constructions such as *the sun's rays, the waters' meet*, which almost constitute compounds. Otherwise only in the higher style: *Albion's sons, an empire's dust, music's voice*.

**2000.** The use of the personal genitive itself is limited. Thus the genitive in combination with transitive phenomenon-words is generally used only subjectively, not objectively—that is, *a mother's love, a father's care* imply that the love and care proceed from the parents, not that they are the objects of it. The objective relation is expressed by the prepositional genitive, as in *the love of God* compared with *God's love*.

**2001.** In many instances both genitives may be used, the prepositional genitive being sometimes preferred in order to avoid awkward or ambiguous collocations, especially when a genitive-group is preceded by other modifiers.

**2002.** When adjective + noun is preceded by general adjectives, the latter necessarily modify, not the adjective, but the noun—or, rather, the whole group. But if genitive + noun is preceded by general adjectives, the latter are necessarily associated with the genitive rather than the head-noun, as in *the king's son* = *the son of the king* compared with *the royal youth*.

**2003.** Of course, if the genitive is so closely associated with the head-noun as to form a sort of compound with it (**893**), then the modifier is associated with the head-word or the whole group, as in *two lady's-maids, a lawyer's clerk, that butcher's shop* (:ðæt butʃəz ʃop). In the last example the *that* may be associated with the genitive, but in this case the stress is thrown on to it: (ðæt :butʃəz ʃop).

**2004.** It is also to be noted that the genitive seems to be less freely used in the plural than in the singular, because the genitive plural is indistinguishable in most words from the common plural; thus *the meeting of the lovers* is clearer than *the lovers' meeting*.

**2005.** The use of the two forms is sometimes a matter of emphasis. Thus the answer to the question *is he of good family?* might be *he is the son of a baronet*, while if the baronet had just been mentioned, we should speak of his son as *the baronet's (eldest) son*.

**2006.** But there are many cases in which only the genitive is admissible. Thus in such a sentence as *where is John's hat?* we could no more substitute *of John* than we could substitute *of me* for *my*.

**2007.** Genitives can be used absolutely without any prop-word: *he neglects his own business to look after other people's*.

**2008.** Hence has arisen the elliptical genitive, which requires some such word as 'house' to be supplied, not from the context—which would give simply an absolute genitive—

but from the sense: *at the baker's (shop) | to dine at Brookes's (club)*.

**2009.** The **predicative** use of the (absolute) genitive is hardly colloquial: *his purse and his heart were everybody's, and his friends' as much as his own | Heaven's is the quarrel!*

**2010.** The **pleonastic** genitive, as in *he is a friend of my brother's*, is generally partitive = 'one of the friends of my brother'; *he is a friend of my brother* would imply 'he is friendly towards my brother.' But the construction is extended to non-partitive instances, as in *this fortune of my poor sister's is old Radford's object*. The main reason for keeping it up is to avoid the prepositional genitive of personal nouns. This applies still more to the parallel construction *a friend of mine* (2114).

## ARTICLES.

**2011.** The definite and indefinite articles are both mark-words—they single out an individual (229). Hence they are most used with concrete class-nouns. The **absence** of the articles thus becomes a distinguishing feature of other classes of nouns, such as proper names. The absence of the articles has also more purely grammatical functions, as when it is used to mark the vocative relation. We may of course reverse the statement by saying that the **presence** of the articles has the negative function of showing that the word is not a proper name or a vocative.

**2012.** It follows from the definition of proper names and material nouns that they are from a strictly logical point of view incapable of being used in the plural. Hence the mere fact of a noun being used in the plural is enough, as a general rule, to stamp it as a class-noun; so that, if a noun in the plural has not the definite article, we naturally assume it to be the plural of an undefined class-noun—that is, a

class-noun accompanied by the indefinite article. Hence a noun in the plural without any article corresponds grammatically to a noun in the singular with an indefinite article, not to a noun without an article: *men* is the plural not of *man* but of *a man*.

### Definite Article.

For its position—*the whole day, all the day*—see § 1792.

2013. In Old-English the definite article *se* still has also the function of a demonstrative, and in Modern English its neuter *þæt* has become the purely demonstrative *that*, which is now completely disassociated from the article.

### REFERRING BACK.

2014. In its purely grammatical function the definite article is put before a noun to show that the idea expressed by the noun has been already stated, and to refer back to that statement. If, on the other hand, the idea is new, the noun expressing it is accompanied by the indefinite article. Thus in the fable of the wolf and the dog, the two animals are introduced at first as *a wolf, a dog*, and are then spoken of as *the wolf, the dog*: *one night a wolf fell in with a dog. the wolf was all skin and bones, while the dog was as fat as he could be.*

2015. The noun referred to is not necessarily marked by the indefinite article; thus *the men* may refer to *some men* or *three men*. The noun referred to may also be a different word altogether; thus *the man* may refer to *your friend* or to a proper name.

2016. In some cases the noun referred to—especially if it is a material noun or a proper name—may be without any assumptive: *when earth is washed into a river by the rain, the earth sinks to the bottom of the river and becomes mud.* It is to be noted that the meaning of the material noun is in

this instance not modified in any way by the article, as it is in such a sentence as *the earth is round*.

2017. In Old-English the repetition of a proper name may be marked in the same way: *hē wolde ā-drāfan ānne æþeling, sē wæs Cyneheard hāten, and se Cyneheard wæs þæs Sige-bryhtes brōþor* 'he wished to expel a noble who was called Cyneheard, and (this) Cyneheard was the brother of (the above-mentioned) Sigebyrht.' In Modern English we have given up this usage, probably because of the ambiguity that would arise from such collocations as *the baker (the Baker)*—a more serious ambiguity than that which arises from the use of the definite article with material nouns (*the earth*). Hence if we wish expressly to mark the repetition of a proper name, we use some other demonstrative, or insert some adjective (*this, the above-mentioned*).

2018. When used for back-reference, the definite article requires another (preceding) sentence to complete the meaning. In all the following usages it is merely a word-modifier.

#### IDENTIFYING.

2019. In the sentences given in § 2016 *the* in *the river* has only the grammatical function of referring back to *a river*, which, so far from denoting one particular river, practically expresses the idea 'river in general.' But when London people talk of *the river*, meaning 'the most important river near us,' the definite article identifies the river almost as unmistakably as the proper name *Thames* does. So also *the king, the lord-mayor, the street* may imply a proper name. Similarly, *the door, the window* implying the door or window of the room the speaker is in or is thinking of, and *the horses* means 'our two or more horses.'

2020. In *have they a father? no, the father is dead, but the mother is alive* the definite article does not refer back to the preceding *a father*, but is purely identifying, being equivalent to 'their.' In some cases the definite article may be regarded



as a direct substitute for a possessive pronoun: *these animals have the tail tipped with hair* | *shall I take a little off the beard, sir?* (said by a hair-cutter).

**2021.** With collective plurals such as *birds, trees, stars* the definite article has almost a demonstrative meaning. Without the article such a plural as *birds* expresses the idea of 'birds in general,' while *the birds* implies 'the birds around us or near us,' as in *the birds are singing* | *the stars are bright to-night* compared with *birds do not sing in the winter* | *stars shine by night*.

**2022.** Although we use the indefinite article in such phrases as *a story about a wolf and a dog*, we substitute the definite article in the title of the story—*the wolf and the dog*—meaning 'the well-known story' or 'the story you are about to hear.'

**2023.** The presence of another modifier need not affect the meaning of the identifying article. Thus *the old horse* may mean 'our single old horse.' In this case the adjective is purely descriptive. But this collocation may also imply that the speaker has two horses, and that he adds *old* to show which of the two he means (32). So also in *the front door, the hall door, the man who was here yesterday*. In this case, therefore, the article and the adjective share the function of identifying between them, while in the meaning first given it is the article alone that identifies.

**2024.** If we define *the queen, the river* as *the reigning queen, the nearest river*, the article becomes superfluous as an identifier, for there can be only one queen at a time, and only one river can be nearest. So also in *the emperor Napoleon, the first month of the year, the same man*. In such cases the article is added on the analogy of cases where the other modifier identifies only partially.

**2025.** But the article is by no means grammatically superfluous in these last examples: although it is not required as an identifier, it still has the negative function of showing

that its nouns have not those meanings which are associated with the absence of the definite article.

#### ABSOLUTELY DEFINING.

**2026.** In the examples last given the article has only a limited sphere of identification. Thus it is only to those who live near the Thames that *the river* means that special river; in other places 'the river' may be the Severn, the Rhine, the Nile.

**2027.** But in some cases the identifying article makes the noun into what is practically a proper name, as is further indicated in writing by the use of capitals: *the Lord, the Scriptures, the Flood, the City* (that part of London so called), *the Holy Ghost*. The following are still more marked examples, in which the group becomes a full proper name: *the Victory* (name of a ship), *the Cape of Good Hope*.

#### CLASS- AND COLLECTIVE.

**2028.** In the following examples the definite article is used with a single class-noun to suggest the idea of belonging to or representing a class: *he looks quite the [or a] gentleman | to play the fool = to behave like a fool | the man in the street = 'the average human being' | the lion is the king of beasts*. As we see, the definite article when used in this way has so little distinctive meaning that the indefinite article may be substituted for it with hardly any change of meaning. But, nevertheless, the definite article is more emphatic. It emphasizes a quality (*the gentleman*), or makes the individuals of a class more prominent: *the man, the lion* make us think of individual men and lions. In fact, the word *king* makes it impossible for us to think of more than one lion, although we know that the statement is meant to apply (figuratively) to lions in general.

Such phrases as *play the fool* may have been originally theatrical = 'play the part of the fool.'

**2029.** In some cases the idea of collectivity predominates over that of individuality, as in †*lord of the fowl and the brute*.

**2030.** With collective nouns and plurals the definite article emphasizes the idea of collectiveness, suggesting that of ‘the whole body of . . .’ as in *the nobility and gentry* | *the dissenters and catholics* | *the Russians do not like the Germans*.

### UNIQUE ARTICLE.

**2031.** When the definite article is used with nouns expressing persons or things which are unique in themselves, it has of course only a negative function:—

(a) *the Messiah, the Devil* [*a devil* in a different sense], *the Bible*. Some of these are almost proper nouns.

(b) *the sun, the moon*.

(c) *the earth, built on the rock, the sea, the sky* [*a bit of blue sky*], *the air*; *the north* [*to steer north, the wind is north*]. Some of these are also material nouns, and the definite article is peculiarly distinctive in the case of such words as *the earth* compared with *earth* = ‘mould.’ †*earth* = *the earth* is by the analogy of *heaven*: *heaven and earth rejoiced*. For *on earth* see § 2063.

In the examples under (b) and (c) the article seems also to have a demonstrative force: *the sun* = ‘the sun we see,’ *the earth* = ‘this earth.’

In these cases it also expresses the idea of extension or universality—especially when there is a corresponding material word—and hence that of collectiveness, though in a different way from its use in the examples in the last section.

(d) *which way is the wind?* | *the rain fell and the wind blew* | *the dew fell* | *the tide is coming in*. We can also use the indefinite article in such phrases as *there is a strong wind* | *there is a heavy dew*. These nouns can also be used without any article in a more abstract sense, as if they were material nouns: *rain comes from the clouds*.

**2032.** *they came on the Sunday and went away on the*

*Monday* has much the same meaning as *they came on a Sunday and went away on the Monday*, although in the former the first *the* seems to suggest the idea of 'the Sunday which was agreed upon' or something similar. The second *the* in both examples refers back in a peculiar way to the preceding *Sunday*, implying 'the immediately following.'

#### WITH ABSTRACT NOUNS.

**2033.** The definite article is often used pleonastically with names of diseases; *to have the scarlet fever* | *I have got the rheumatism very bad* compared with *to catch cold*, *to die of consumption*. The article might be omitted in the first two examples as well. The indefinite article may also be used in some cases (*I have got a bad cold—a fresh cold*) to suggest the idea of an isolated case. The definite article, on the other hand, has a generalizing meaning, often implying that there is an epidemic (*the cholera*, *the influenza*).

**2034.** The definite article in *tell the truth*, on the other hand, suggests the idea of 'the true details of the present case.'

#### WITH PROPER NAMES.

**2035.** The article in such collocations as *the other Smith*, meaning 'the other man whose name is Smith,' requires no comment.

**2036.** The collective article in *the Germans* has been already considered (2030). It is similarly used with the plural of family names, as in *the Smiths*, meaning 'the Smith family.'

**2037.** Sometimes the definite article is added to proper names without affecting their meaning or function in any way—oftener with geographical than with personal names: *the Thames* [†*father Thames*], *the Atlantic*, *the Crimea*; *the Douglas*. We have an instinctive feeling that *the Thames* is short for *the river Thames*, although in Old-English *Temes* is

used without any article. The definite article is regularly added to plural proper names, where it is collective: *the (West) Indies, the Orkneys, the Alps, the Grampians; the Percies, the Gracchi*.

This use of the definite article is the direct opposite of its use to make an ordinary noun into the equivalent of a proper name (2027).

#### WITH ABSOLUTE ADJECTIVES.

**2038.** In Old-English the definite article is more freely used than in Modern English in a class- and collective sense and with abstract nouns, as in *se mann* 'man (in general),' *þā gōðan mēnn* 'good men (in general).' In Old-English *þā gōðan* by itself is used in the same sense, whence the Modern English *the good* compared with *good men*.

**2039.** In such constructions as *I will do the best I can | the true and the beautiful* the article is necessary to show that *best, true* are nouns and not adjectives or adverbs. So also in *the Pacific (ocean)*.

**2040.** Although we do not use any article with proper names denoting languages—*to learn French, to translate from German into English*—we use the definite article in such phrases as *a book translated from the German*, where the article seems to suggest 'the German original.'

#### Indefinite Article.

For the position of the indefinite article see § 1793.

**2041.** In Old-English the numeral *ān* 'one' is used both as a noun and an adjective in the vague sense of 'a certain (one),' *sum* 'some' being used in the same way: *sum mann* or *ān mann* 'a certain man.' As *ān* in such collocations is less emphatic than *sum*, its meaning is often weakened till it has the function of the indefinite article, which, however, is often not expressed at all, especially in the earlier period.

**2042.** Although in Modern English *one* and *a* have

diverged so much through phonetic change that we no longer feel any connexion between them, we still use *a* in its original numerical sense in such phrases as *a foot deep*, *not a word*, *in a minute*, in all of which we could substitute the slightly more emphatic *one* without change of meaning. This is the result of confusion between strong *on* and weak *an* in Middle English before they had been completely isolated from one other. As the indefinite article always implies oneness, it is often doubtful whether a definite numerical meaning ought to be assigned to it. Thus in *seven days make a week* we could substitute *one*, but as there is no special contrast implied between *one week* and *two weeks*, etc., it is safer to regard the numerical meaning as negative or secondary.

The indefinite article proper has two distinct functions:—

**2043.** The **introductory** article singles out the idea expressed by its noun, and makes us expect further information about it: *once upon a time there was a king | they sailed on till they came to an island*. It may be made more emphatic by adding *certain*: *a certain friend of mine | † a certain man went up to Jerusalem*.

**2044.** The **absolute** article does not single out, and has the purely indefinite sense of ‘any.’ In it the numerical meaning is reduced to a minimum; it simply picks out an individual at random to serve as the representative of a class: *a poet’s eye | the earth is like a ball | a hill is the opposite of a valley*. A noun accompanied by this article may be put in the plural without change of meaning: *hills are the opposite of valleys*.

**2045.** In this last example *a hill* has plural *hills* (2012). But if the indefinite article distinctly implies oneness, the plural must be accompanied by some numerative word. In the absence of such words as *three*, *many*, *few*, the vague words *some* or *any* are used: *they sailed on till they came to some islands (or a group of islands) | did they see any islands?* It will be observed that *some* in this usage has something of the

defining force of the introducing article ; thus *I have brought you some flowers* implies 'the flowers I have in my hand,' while the bare plural in *he is always bringing us flowers* implies 'flowers in general.'

**2046.** The distributive use is a special development of the numerical: *it costs two shillings a pound*, where *a* = 'each.' The definite article is also used: *two shillings the pound*.

**2047.** The indefinite article in combination with **abstract** nouns has a very vague meaning, and hence can sometimes be omitted or have the definite article substituted for it, as in *to catch (a) cold*, in *a (or the) state of vapour*.

**2048.** Verbs of **naming** can sometimes take the name-noun either with or without the indefinite article, the noun in the latter case being a sentence-word: *orange is the colour of the fruit called (an) orange*. The article could not be so well omitted in *a piece of land with water all round it is called an island*.

### Articles omitted.

**2049.** The absence of the articles is the distinguishing mark of **proper names**, such as *John, Baker, Mr. Smith* compared with *the baker, a smith*.

**2050.** The articles are sometimes omitted from class-nouns which, without being fully converted into proper names, are regarded as such: *Scripture* or *Holy Writ says* [but *the Bible*]. *Smith the baker* may be spoken of not only as *Mr. Smith*, but also as *Mr. baker*, the name of the trade being used as a kind of proper name. So also a cook may be spoken of as *cook* as well as *the cook*.

**2051.** Also from some names of unique objects which are not otherwise regarded as proper names: *God* [but *the God of mercy, the god of war*], *heaven, hell, paradise*.

**2052.** The absence of the articles is also the mark of **material nouns**, as in *made of glass* compared with *a glass of wine*.

**2053.** The omission of the articles from such words as *father, mamma, uncle (John)* is the result of the analogy of proper names and of the frequent use of these words as vocatives (**2056**).

**2054.** The omission from such words as *parliament, government* may also be the result of the analogy of proper names, or of personification.

**2055.** The articles are often omitted from names of meals, as in *is breakfast ready?* | *dinner will be ready soon* compared with *I had a heavy breakfast* | *they gave a dinner in his honour*.

**2056.** From a grammatical point of view the omission of the articles is the mark of the **vocative** relation, as in *father!*, *baker!*, *Baker!* As we see, this usage levels the distinction between class-nouns and proper names.

**2057.** Some **exclamations** follow the analogy of the vocative, as in *good God!*, *poor fellow!* [but *what a shame!*, *the fool!*].

**2058.** The omission of the article in the **literal** use of words, as in *how do you spell receive?* | *if is a conjunction*, is necessary.

For the omission of the articles in the plural of undefined nouns see § **2012**.

**2059.** Nouns qualified by a **genitive** do not take the articles (except when the combination is felt as a compound), evidently because the preceding genitive is felt to define them enough by itself, as in *men's hearts*, *the-man's name* compared with *the hearts of men*, *the name of the man*.

**2060.** There is a tendency to use nouns predicatively and in apposition without any article on the analogy of adjectives: *he became king* [but *he is a lawyer*], *he turned dissenter* | *Alfred, king of England*. So also complementary nouns, as in *they made him prisoner*.

**2061.** The absence of the articles is in most cases a tradition of a time when they were more sparingly used, and



ultimately of a time—in Parent Germanic—when there were no articles at all.

**2062.** Hence in some cases the articles are omitted entirely through tradition and habit, against the general tendencies of the language, but of course only in special stereotyped phrases and imitations of them, which were preserved from change by their great frequency or development of special meanings.

**2063.** Thus the articles are omitted in many preposition-groups: *on (dry) land, at Christmas, in early spring, in town, come to dinner, up stairs, out of doors* contrasted with *in the country, on the river*.

**2064.** So also in many combinations of verb + direct object: *to leave school, to take root, to send word, to keep open house* compared with *to send a message, to keep a school*.

**2065.** In some cases, on the other hand, Modern English has deliberately discarded the definite article.

**2066.** Thus in Old-English it was extended, as in Modern French and German, to **abstract** nouns, such words as 'wisdom' keeping it even when personified: *sēo Ġescēad-wisnes*. In Modern English they are treated like material nouns, such words as *wisdom, truth, mercy, victory* taking articles only when used in some special meaning.

**2067.** The use of such nouns as *man, woman* without an article to express the idea of 'man or woman in general' in such a sentence as *man is weaker than (the) animals* is also of later growth, for in Old-English the definite article would be used: *se mann is wācra þonne þā nielenu*.

## ADJECTIVES.

### Absolute.

**2068.** When two assumptive adjectives are joined to one noun, the three generally follow in immediate succession, as in *your poor old father*. But the first may be detached from

the others, often by a conjunction (*good and bad men, fair or foul means*), sometimes by a longer break: *never do by foul, what can be accomplished by fair means*.

**2069.** In the above examples the first adjective is merely detached from a noun which follows it. If the second adjective is separated from the noun by being put after it, giving the order adjective + noun . . + adjective, it is no longer merely detached, it is absolute: *it is not just that new rules should destroy the authority of the old* (Dryden). In such cases the prop-word *one* is generally added in the present English—the *old ones*. In writing we often repeat the noun, to avoid the colloquial *one*—*the old rules*. Sometimes the colloquial association may be destroyed by transposition, as in *many of these rooms had doors which led into the one adjacent*.

### Free.

**2070.** The use of free adjectives is much restricted in the present English.

**2071.** In *good!* the adjective is used as a sentence-word, that is, it is nearly converted into an interjection.

**2072.** So also in the literary language an adjective may be used in the vocative relation: *cruel, dost thou forsake us ? | go forth, beloved of Heaven!*

**2073.** Otherwise a free adjective must be preceded by *the*: *the good* = 'good people,' 'what is good.'

**2074.** In the personal sense this form is used now only in plural constructions such as *the good are happy | the mighty have fallen | the English and the French*. Formerly it was used freely in singular constructions also, as in *none but the brave deserves the fair* (Dryden). The few survivals of this usage, such as *the betrothed, the deceased*, have been converted into nouns: *the deceased's relatives* or *the relatives of the deceased*.

**2075.** The *the* is occasionally dropped in the plural con-

struction—especially when there are other qualifiers—by the analogy of the construction with nouns, but only in the literary language: *older and abler passed you by* (Gray) | *ten righteous would have saved a city once* (Cowper).

**2076.** *the* + adjective in the singular neuter sense is used not only in such phrases as *the good and the beautiful*, but also in colloquial phrases such as *to do the needful*, *to answer in the affirmative*.

**2077.** It is occasionally used with names of languages, as in *to translate from the French* (2040).

**2078.** Free adjectives often occur in combination with possessive pronouns, and in singular constructions; but in most cases where this construction is still preserved the adjective is more or less converted into a noun: †*bid my sweet prepare to chide* | †*this distant fair* | *her betrothed*. In the first two *one* could be added. This construction is especially frequent with comparatives: *he is my elder, my junior* | *his superior*. *my dear!* is a sentence-group.

**2079.** In the above examples the adjective is in the singular. In plural constructions *-s* is added—that is, the adjective is converted into a noun: *our betters, his superiors, my dears!*

**2080.** Most of those which are in colloquial use can also take *-s* in the genitive singular: *his superior's orders*.

### Comparison.

**2081.** In Modern English there is a tendency to use the superlative instead of the comparative. In the spoken language we always naturally speak of *the shortest of two roads, the biggest of the two*, although we use the comparative in careful speech and in writing. But in such a sentence as *they are a bad pair; but she is the worst of the two* we could not substitute the comparative without weakening the force of the comparison, *she is the worse of the two* being equivalent

to *she is rather the worse* (or *worst*) *of the two*, where the comparative may be used even in colloquial speech. It is therefore probable that the superlative was at first used to strengthen the force of the comparative, implying 'very much more.' In such a sentence as *he came in first of the two* the superlative can hardly be avoided.

**2082.** In all the above instances the formal distinction between comparative and superlative is superfluous, because the number of objects to be compared is shown by the *two*. But in such a construction as *the younger Miss Pecksniff* = 'the younger of the two Miss Pecksniffs' a careful speaker would keep the comparative, because the superlative would admit the possibility of there being more than two Miss Pecksniffs, although a careless speaker would not hesitate to employ it.

**2083.** In some traditional phrases the comparative is used instead of the superlative : *the latter end, the latter day, utter contempt*.

#### COMPARISON OF *old*.

**2084.** Of the two comparisons of *old*, the irregular (original) forms *elder, eldest* have the more limited range—being used chiefly to distinguish members of the same family—and the more abstract meaning, for they imply that the distinctions of age are made not for their own sake but as a means of discrimination and identification. The new-formations *older, oldest*, on the other hand, which keep the vowel of their positive unchanged, directly call forth the ideas of 'age' or 'long duration.' Thus in *the eldest son of his oldest friend*, the son may be a young boy, and the word *eldest* makes us think of a connected series or gradation; while *oldest* deals with a shifting group of isolated individuals, and makes us think more or less of the characteristics of old age or long duration.

**2085.** The irregular comparison, in fact, makes *old* into a mere qualifier—we might almost say a mark-word—*the*

*eldest son* being almost equivalent to a proper name. We can express the difference in other words by saying that *elder* is practically not the comparative of *old*, but the opposite of *younger*.

**2086.** Hence the irregular forms are used only assumptively—the *eldest son*, an *elder son*, *her three eldest daughters*—not predicatively, except with the definite article in such constructions as *he is the elder of the two brothers* | *she is the eldest of the family*, where the logical predicate is not *elder*, *eldest*, but an understood noun of relationship.

**2087.** If no *the* precedes, the regular forms alone can be used as predicates: *he is five years older* | *he is much older than his brother* | *my elder brother is five years older than I am*—*than me*.

**2088.** But with the definite article we can say *she is about four years the elder* = . . . *the elder of the two sisters* instead of the more usual *she is about four years older*. The use of the irregular forms in such cases has probably been kept up by the analogy of the constructions given in § 2086.

In *he is five years my elder* the adjective is felt to be a noun, not merely an absolute adjective.

**2089.** Even the assumptive use of irregular forms is limited. Thus they could not be used in such sentences as the following: *John is not my eldest brother*; *I have another older brother* = . . . *I have another brother who is older than John*. Here *older* does not state differences of age with reference to a fixed, absolute series of brothers, but picks out two brothers, and compares them as if they were strangers. Hence the practical rule that the regular comparison is necessary whenever the comparison is, or can be, defined by a group or sentence introduced by *than*.

**2090.** The irregular comparison is not restricted to family relations, but may be employed with reference to other personal relations, especially those of a more permanent

character which imply gradations of rank or authority. Thus in *the elder of the two ladies* the irregular comparative does not necessarily imply that the ladies are sisters, or even mother and daughter; they may be friends living together, or merely travelling companions. So also *the elder boys are expected to take care of the younger ones* might be said of schoolboys as well as brothers. The superlative *eldest* is rare in this use.

**2091.** With names of animals we can speak of *the elder of the two sheepdogs*, implying a pair of dogs that are employed together. When applied to animals the irregular comparisons seem not only not to imply relationship, but almost to exclude it.

**2092.** In all the examples given in the last two paragraphs the regular comparison may also be employed, although in some cases it might be taken to involve a slight change of meaning by emphasizing the idea of old age.

**2093.** The irregular comparisons may be applied to other than personal nouns, if the noun suggests personal relations: *the elder generation* | *the elder branches of the family*. Here, again, the regular comparisons may be substituted with hardly any change of meaning.

**2094.** In such cases as the following the irregular comparison is rather literary or archaic than colloquial: *our elder writers* | *the elder inhabitants* | *the elder school of English verse*. It need hardly be said that as the irregular comparisons were originally the only ones, and as the regular ones came into use only slowly, the irregular comparisons were in the earlier stages of Modern English used in many of the constructions where we now use only the regular ones.

## PRONOUNS.

## Personal.

**2095.** *we* is used instead of *I* as a 'pronoun (or plural) of majesty' to mark the supreme authority of kings, queens, reigning dukes and other persons at the head of a state. We see the beginnings of this usage in the Old-English laws, where the king speaks of himself as *ic*, and then goes on to say *wē be bēodaþ . . .* 'we command . . .,' the *wē* being meant to include the *witan* or councillors.

**2096.** *we* is also used instead of *I*—though less frequently now than formerly—by the author of a book in addressing his readers in order to avoid the egotism of a singular pronoun. This 'plural of modesty' is found already in Old-English. It arose probably from using *we* in the indefinite sense of 'myself and the other authorities on the subject.' This usage occurs also in colloquial language, as when a boy says *give us some!* meaning 'give me some!'

## INDEFINITE PERSONAL PRONOUN.

**2097.** In Modern English the place of the indefinite personal pronoun *man* has been taken by *one*, but in the spoken language we prefer to use the personal pronoun *you*, and occasionally *we*: *the right bank of a river is on your right side when you stand with your face to its source | when people laugh, we know they are pleased.* But these two pronouns can be used only when the context allows us to take them more or less in their literal meaning; thus for the author of a book abruptly to address his readers as *you* would be uncolloquial as well as unliterary. They are, of course, also avoided in

cases where taking them in their literal meaning would involve some great change of meaning.

**2098.** In many cases where the first and second persons are excluded by the context, the third person plural may be used: *they say we shall have a hard winter*. Here neither *you, we* nor *one* could be used without changing the meaning; *one* would imply 'people are in the habit of saying that . . '

#### PLEONASTIC.

**2099.** The pleonastic insertion of a pronoun after a noun in the subject-relation—*John he says*—occurs only as a vulgarism in the present spoken English, or as the occasional result of hesitation or carelessness, but is frequent in the literary language, where it suggests picturesqueness or quaintness: *his coat it was all of the greenwood hue | a frog he would a-wooing go*.

**2100.** A pronoun may also be made pleonastic by tagging on the equivalent noun. This is frequent in the spoken as well as the literary language: *he was a wonderful man, that uncle of yours | tit ceased, the melancholy sound*.

For the pleonastic pronoun with the imperative see § 1806.

#### GENDER.

**2101.** In such a sentence as *let every man or woman do as he or she likes* the group *he-or-she* is used as a sort of compound to supply the want of a personal pronoun of the common gender in the singular corresponding to the plural *they*. This difficulty is evaded in various ways.

One is by using *he* only, leaving the application of the statement to women as well as men to be taken for granted.

In the spoken language the difficulty is got over by the use of the genderless plural *they*: *let every one do just what they like | if any one comes, tell them to wait | a person cannot help their birth*.



## PREPOSITIONAL GENITIVE.

**2102.** The prepositional genitive (*of me*) is generally used instead of the possessive (*my*) in the objective (2000) meaning: *I cannot bear the sight of him—of it | I will change my* (subjective genitive) *treatment of him.*

**2103.** Its subjective use in *not for the life of me!* is probably due to the analogy of *it will be the death—the ruin—of him*, where it is—or may be—felt to be objective.

**2104.** Its occasional threatening or contemptuous use in such phrases as *I will break the neck of you!* seems to be due to the influence of those dialects which distinguish between *the man's head* and *the head of a beast.*

## Possessive Pronouns.

**2105.** The possessive pronouns are used not only subjectively but also objectively, as in *they told me her history* = 'what was told of her' not 'what was told by her.' But if the noun is associated in meaning with a transitive verb, the prepositional genitive is used, such constructions as *his murderer* = 'the man who murdered him' being now exceptional.

**2106.** Possessives are sometimes used as antecedents to relative pronouns, as in *†nor better was their lot who fled.* But this construction hardly occurs in the spoken language, which either avoids the relative construction or else substitutes the prepositional genitive: *the lot of those who fled.*

**2107.** Although the possessive pronouns no more necessarily imply possession than the genitive case does, yet it is one of their most important functions to do so. If the idea of possession is excluded by the context—so that there is no possible ambiguity—they are freely used to express a variety of relations, as in *his fear of his master*, where the

relation implied by both possessives is the exact opposite of that of subjective possession.

**2108.** But in such sentences as *he fought three duels, and killed his man each time* | *that boy has just broken his fourth window this week* the freer use of the possessive is felt as a licence, because at first sight we should assume *his man* to mean 'his servant,' and *his window* to mean 'his own window,' although the context suffices to suggest the freer meaning. In the first sentence *his adversary* would be quite normal, because the word *adversary* does not suggest in any way the idea of possession.

**2109.** In some cases possessives are little more than reference-words, and we are often at liberty to use either a possessive or the definite article (cp. *the beard*, § 2020). Thus we may speak of the subject of a narrative or discussion as *our hero* as well as *the hero*, or, more familiarly, as *our young friend*.

**2110.** The possessive *your* [not *thy*] is also used like *our* in the preceding examples. But while *our* suggests the idea of taking under one's protection or patronage—which may degenerate into good-natured contempt—*your* generally suggests antagonism to what is brought forward by the person implied by the *you*, this antagonism often taking the form of dislike or contempt, sometimes simply of indifference, implying 'say what you will,' 'these examples will do as well as any others': *a smile—not one of your unmeaning wooden grins—but a real . . . smile* | *I would teach these nineteen the special rules, as your punto, your reverso, your . . .* (Ben Jonson). Hence it is often used to show that the speaker is talking in a humorous or sportive vein.

**2111.** The use of *my Lord*, *my Lady* in the vocative relation has led to these combinations becoming fixed that they are freely used in the third person without any suggestion of address, as in *my Lord and my Lady quarrelled, and abused each other*, where *my Lord* = *Lord A*. This

usage seems to have arisen from the desire to avoid confusion with *Lord (God)!*, *the Lord*.

#### POSSESSIVES WITH GENERAL ADJECTIVES.

**2112.** Possessives can take before them the same general adjectives of quantity which can also precede the articles, such as *all*, *both*, *half*: *all my time*, *both his eyes*, *half his time* [but also *half of his time*].

**2113.** The other general adjectives follow the possessives: *his whole time*, *my three friends*, *†her every word a wasp*.

**2114.** In most cases possessives when used assumptively cannot take before them a general adjective without the change of construction seen in *a friend of his*, *he is no friend of mine*, *three friends of mine*. In all these instances the construction has a partitive meaning: *a friend of his* = 'a friend from among his friends.' But there is a difference between the purely partitive *three of my friends* and the vaguer *three friends of mine*, which does not—as the preceding example does—necessarily imply that the speaker has more than three friends; although, on the other hand, it does not definitely limit them to three, as in *my three friends*, where *three* is equivalent to a descriptive adjective.

**2115.** In the earlier Modern English possessives may be preceded by the demonstratives *this* and *that*; but in the present English such constructions as *this our friendship*, *these my children* occur only in the higher literary style, the colloquial language using the periphrastic constructions—*this friendship of ours*—by the analogy of the partitive constructions described above.

#### EMPHATIC POSSESSIVES.

**2116.** The emphatic possessives are—like the unemphatic ones—used both assumptively (*his own house*) and absolutely: *his house is his own*.

They are also used as nouns: *he knows how to hold his own*.

**2117.** They take the prepositional construction in all cases in which the unemphatic possessives do, as in *he gave it to a friend of his own* | *he has no house of his own* compared with *all his own houses are* . .

**2118.** As *own* is never used except in combination with possessives (or genitives) we cannot say in English \**he has own money* = 'he has private means' in an indefinite sense, as we could in German. Hence, as the prepositional possessive is in itself indefinite (**2114**), we always use it in such cases as *he has money of his own* compared with the definite *he has the control of his own money*.

### Interrogative Pronouns.

**2119.** In Old-English the neuter *hwæt* is always used (conjunctively as well as relatively) instead of *hwā* when there is an accompanying pronoun to show that persons are meant: *hwæt sind gē?* 'who are ye?' | *hē nyste hwæt hīe wæron* 'he did not know who they were,' that is, 'he did not know what their nationality was.' In Modern English we always use *who* of persons as an identifying pronoun, restricting *what* to the descriptive meaning: *what is man?* | *what is he—is he a lawyer?* compared with *who is he?* *he is the new curate*.

**2120.** *which* has a selective meaning: it assumes a group, and asks for an individual of that group, whence its partitive construction with *of*, as in *which is it to be?* | *which is the shortest way?* | *which of these three will you have?*

**2121.** The use of *what* in questions expressing surprise—*what?* and in rhetorical questions—*what right have you to interfere?*—has led to an extended use of it in Modern English as an intensitive word, and in exclamative sentences: *what (bad) manners!* *what a (wonderful) man!* | *what an eye he has!*

**2122.** In Old-English *hwæt* has the indefinite sense of 'something.' This survives only in the phrase *I will tell you*

*what*, which is often expanded into *I will tell you what it is*, the shorter phrase being regarded as an elliptical form of the longer one. This meaning survives partially in the correlative adverbial *what with . . what with*.

### Relative Pronouns.

**2123.** In the spoken language relative pronouns are generally—not always—omitted in clauses dependent on a word in the direct-object relation: *the man I saw yesterday* | *the book you told me of*. In writing we generally put in a relative pronoun: *the man whom* (or *that*) *I saw* | *the book of which you told me*.

**2124.** The omission of a relative in the subject-relation is quite exceptional in the present spoken English, but was frequent in the earlier Modern English. In *who is that just rang?* it is omitted in order to avoid the repetition involved in *who is that who . . , who is that that . .* In *it is not the fine coat makes the fine gentleman* we feel that the omission of the relative is the result of confusion with the corresponding positive statement *the fine coat makes the fine gentleman*.

**2125.** The oldest relative pronoun is *that*. It can refer to persons as well as things, but its use is limited in other respects. Like *who*, it is used only as a noun, not as an adjective.

**2126.** It always stands at the head of its clause, and cannot have a preposition before it. Thus in such literary sentences as *the book of which you told me* | *the letter to which you refer* the change of *which* into *that* would necessitate putting the preposition at the end of the clause: *the book that you told me of*. This last construction is sometimes used in writing as a mean between the stiff construction with *which* and the purely colloquial with omitted *that* (*the book you told me of*). But even in colloquial speech the construction with preposition + *which* cannot always be avoided, as in *observe the dignity with which*

*he rises!*, where we could not say *the dignity he rises with*, which would, indeed, be unintelligible.

**2127.** It is important to observe that *that* is always very closely connected with its antecedent both logically and formally, and is never used when there is anything like a pause between the relative clause and the principal clause. Hence it is never used as a progressive relative.

**2128.** As it is always pronounced with a weak vowel (ðæt), it cannot take stress, and hence cannot be followed by a pause. Thus we could not substitute *it* for *who* in *he is a man who, if . .*

**2129.** *that* was formerly used with an antecedent *that*, as in *that thou hadst seen that that this knight and I have seen!* (Shakespeare). We now use the condensed relative *in* such constructions: *I wish you had seen what we have seen.*

**2130.** *who* is, of course, used only as a noun. It is used mainly in reference to living beings, especially human beings. It is occasionally used of the higher animals. In Early Modern English it is sometimes applied to things, but generally with implied personification: *a gentle flood who . .* (Shakespeare).

**2131.** But the possessive *whose* is still applied to lifeless things, though with a certain hesitation, and only to avoid the longer *of which*. In the spoken language we avoid such constructions as *a tree whose shade . .* as much as possible.

**2132.** *which* differs from *that* and *who* in being used both as an adjective as well as a noun. As a noun it now refers only to lifeless things. In early Modern English it was freely applied to persons as well, and this usage lasted into the preceding century. As *which* is the only relative adjective, it is in this function necessarily applied to living as well as lifeless objects.

In early Modern English *which* often takes *the* before it:

*the cities in the which Lot dwelt* (Bible) | *she hath received your letter, for the which she thanks you a thousand times* (Shakespeare). As this usage is against all analogy, it is probable that it is an imitation of the French *lequel*.

In some cases there is a certain amount of fluctuation in the use of the different relative pronouns.

2133. We have seen that only *which* can be used as an adjective. Also that only *who* and *which* can be used as progressive noun-relatives.

2134. As adjective relatives and progressive relatives are not natural to colloquial speech, *which* hardly ever occurs in the spoken language except when it has a sentence for its antecedent (217), which, again, is not a frequent construction in the spoken language.

2135. Hence the only two relatives in general colloquial use are *that* and *who*.

2136. The present spoken English shows a reaction against the earlier colloquial tendency to favour *that*. The general tendency now is to substitute *who* for *that* when persons are referred to, *that* taking the place of the lost *which*.

2137. This tendency in favour of *who* is clearly seen in many relative clauses which, although not fully progressive, are more descriptive than defining; in such sentences we generally use *who* in preference to *that*, as in *dinner-time then came again, to the especial delight of the two children, who felt rather empty* | *he had been well thrashed by a gentleman who did not approve of his trespassing on his grounds*, while in parallel sentences dealing with things we can always substitute *that* for *which*: *the brook ran into a series of fishponds, which (or that) looked very old, for their sides were shaggy with reeds, and . . .* | *the earth is a big ball that is always spinning round like a top*.

2138. In the above examples the *who* individualizes and singles out the person it refers to. But if the relative describes the person denoted by its antecedent only by including him

in a class, then *that* is obligatory: *Newton was one of the greatest men that ever lived | he is a man that will never get on in the world.* In the first example the relative clause has so little descriptive force that it might be omitted without sensible loss to the meaning of the whole. With the second example compare *is that the man who is getting on so well at the bar?*, where the relative is directly descriptive, and does not merely include the man in a class. In such examples as the following we may use either *that* or *who*, according as we wish to show that we are thinking of the persons collectively or individually: *when the boat came near the shore, they thought they recognized one of the convicts that were in her | they give prizes to the boys that have the best manners.*

**2139.** Hence in those cases in which we can employ either *that* or *who* with only a slight shade of difference of meaning, the latter is more polite, as emphasizing the fact that we are speaking of living beings and that we respect their individuality: *those (members) who are in favour of this resolution will please hold up their hands | I cannot understand how any one who has once taken an interest in education can ever lose it.*

**2140.** Hence also the combination *he that* is now obsolete in the spoken language, being preserved only in traditional phrases such as *he that fights and runs away may live to fight another day.* We now employ some such construction as *a man who . . .*, or, if absolutely necessary, *a man that.*

**2141.** Although a relative in the direct-object relation is generally omitted, there are cases where this would lead to obscurity or awkwardness; in such cases the spoken language seems always to use *that*, evidently in order to avoid the 'ungrammatical' *who* = *whom*: *Mrs. Carnaby was helped out of the trap; . . . then the children were lifted out by the mother; and then the nurse, an awkward, plain girl that nobody helped, tumbled out by herself.* Here the *that* ought to imply that the nurse as a general rule was not helped out by any one,



whereas the meaning is that she was not helped out by certain definite individuals on a certain definite occasion.

**2142.** In the written language the fluctuation between the relatives is of course much greater, because of the greater variety of constructions, and the necessity of putting in relatives where they are omitted in natural speech, so that the writer has no linguistic instinct to guide him.

## NUMERALS.

**2143.** Cardinals are used instead of ordinals in some constructions: *in the year 1800, in 1800 | he lives at (number) 12, High Street.*

**2144.** Numerals are used in a variety of elliptical constructions, such as *a man of thirty (years of age), a carriage-and-five (horses), at ten (o'clock) | the tenth (day) of May, the fifth (part) of . . .*, whence has developed the noun *fifth* in *four-fifths*.

Although we feel *cut in two* to be elliptical, the Old-English *on twā tō'dǣlan* shows that it cannot be a shortening of *on twēgen dēlas*, and hence is historically not the result of ellipse.

## VERBS.

### Number.

**2145.** Concord requires that a verb should agree in number with its subject. This principle is always adhered to when the subject is a single word of unmistakable singular or plural meaning as well as form; but when the meaning is in conflict with the number, logical considerations generally prevail over grammatical, so that subject and verb are in different numbers.

**2146.** Collective nouns (compare § 1972) in the singular are frequently joined to plural verbs whenever the statement is meant to apply to the separate individuals, while a singular verb implies that the speaker is not thinking of the individuals, but rather of the whole collective body. Thus we can say either *the public is . . .* or *the public are . . .*, *the Council (the Board) is* or *are of opinion that . . .* Both numbers may even occur in the same sentence, as in *the people is one, and they have (all) one language.*

**2147.** Conversely, subjects in the plural which suggest ideas of singularity may take singular verbs, as in *forty yards is too much* | *thirty yards is a good distance.*

**2148.** Special difficulties arise when the subject consists not of a single noun-word, but of a group of words.

**2149.** Thus, although two or more nouns joined by *and*, or standing in a copulative relation without any conjunction, ought grammatically to have their verb in the plural, there are many cases where the plural would be logically impossible, or at least unnatural, as with such groups as *a needle and thread*, *the peace and good order of society*, where the combination expresses one idea.

**2150.** So also, on the other hand, two or more nouns joined by *or* or *nor* do not necessarily take a verb in the singular unless they stand in a strong alternative relation to one another; while two words standing logically in a strong alternative or adversative relation to one another take a singular verb whatever their purely grammatical relations may be: *nor heaven nor earth have been at peace to-night* (Shakespeare) = *heaven and earth have not . . .* | *my poverty, and not my will, consents* (Shakespeare).

**2151.** When an additional subject is tagged on, there is a tendency to make the number of the verb depend exclusively on the preceding subject-word, as in † *the earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof.*

**2152.** Hence the distinction we instinctively make between *the captain was taken prisoner with three of his men* and the ungrammatical *the captain with three of his men were taken prisoner*.

**2153.** When a verb is followed by more than one subject—not by tagging, but by regular grammatical inversion—it often agrees in number with the nearest one, especially in earlier Modern English: *where is Lysander and sweet Hermia?* (Shakespeare).

**2154.** Anomalies sometimes arise through referring the verb not to its subject, but to some word connected with the subject, as in *the opinion of several eminent lawyers were in his favour*, which is at the same time a case of attraction | *that is one of the most valuable books that has appeared in any language*, where the prominence of the logical subject *one*, together with the want of any mark of plurality in *that*, causes the plurality of *books* to be overlooked.

### Person.

**2155.** In the older Arian languages the persons of verbs were so clearly shown by their inflections that a verb could stand alone without any subject-word, either noun or pronoun, and the pronouns were added only when emphatic.

**2156.** In Old-English, where the endings were less distinct—there being, for instance, no distinction of persons in the plural of any verb—the personal pronouns were regularly added whenever the person of the verb was not shown grammatically by some other word, and their omission is exceptional.

**2157.** But Old-English still shows traces of the older usage in the regular omission of the pronouns in explanatory supplementary sentences closely connected with the preceding sentence: *þā fōr hē norþryhte be þām lande: lēt him ealne-  
weg þæt wēste land on þæt stēorbord* ‘then he sailed direct

north along the land, keeping the uninhabited country on the starboard all the time' | *hie hine þā bismorlice ācwealdon : of-torfodon mid bānum and mid hrīpera hēafdum* 'then they killed him ignominiously by pelting him with bones and heads of oxen.' In this construction the verb always has connective front-position (1809).

**2158.** In the imperative, where the distinction is not required, the primitive omission of the pronouns is still kept up, their addition being still emphatic (1806).

**2159.** In careless speech the pronouns are often omitted when the context is clear, and in all persons: *he will not have any help: (he) says he can do it all himself | where has he gone to? (I) don't know. (you) don't know, don't you?*

**2160.** When a verb refers to two or more pronouns of different persons, there is difficulty in determining what ought to be the person of the verb, as in *either you or I am* or *are in the wrong*. It would seem most natural to make the verb agree with the nearest pronoun. But *am wrong* sounds unnatural, because it seems expressly to exclude the *you*. On the other hand *are wrong* seems to suggest the idea of the third rather than the second person plural. But as it does not exclude the second person plural, it is preferred to *am*. We should not hesitate to employ it in a conjunctive collocation such as *you and I are one*. In the disjunctive *either he or I is in the wrong* we prefer the third person singular.

**2161.** But we avoid such difficulties as much as possible by using some verb which does not distinguish persons: *either you or I must be in the wrong*.

**2162.** Early Modern English has similar difficulties in some relative clauses. Thus the Prayer Book has *thou art the God that doeth wonders* against the Bible's *doest*. In the Present English we use the third person: *are you the man that has the key?*

**Tenses.**

2163. The following paradigm gives a general view of the tense-distinctions of the Present English verb.

ACTIVE.		PASSIVE.
<i>Indicative.</i>		
<i>Present</i>	I see	I am seen
<i>Def. pres.</i>	I am seeing	I am being seen
<i>Preterite</i>	I saw	I was seen
<i>Def. pret.</i>	I was seeing	I was being seen
<i>Perfect</i>	I have seen	I have been seen
<i>Def. perf.</i>	I have been seeing	I have been being seen
<i>Pluperfect</i>	I had seen	I had been seen
<i>Def. plup.</i>	I had been seeing	I had been being seen
<i>Future</i>	I shall see	I shall be seen
<i>Def. fut.</i>	I shall be seeing	I shall be being seen
<i>Future preterite</i>	I should see	I should be seen
<i>Def. fut. pret.</i>	I should be seeing	I should be being seen
<i>Future perfect</i>	I shall have seen	I shall have been seen
<i>Def. fut. perf.</i>	I shall have been seeing	I shall have been being seen
<i>Conditional.</i>		
<i>Present</i>	I should see	I should be seen
<i>Def. pres.</i>	I should be seeing	I should be being seen
<i>Preterite</i>	I should have seen	I should have been seen
<i>Def. pret.</i>	I should have been seeing	I should have been being seen
<i>Imperative.</i>		
<i>Present</i>	see !	be seen !

*Supine (Infinitive).*

<i>Present</i>	to see	to be seen
<i>Def. pres.</i>	to be seeing	to be being seen
<i>Perfect</i>	to have seen	to have been seen
<i>Def. perf.</i>	to have been seeing	to have been being seen

*Participle.*

<i>Present</i>	seeing	being seen
<i>Preterite</i>	—	seen
<i>Perfect</i>	having seen	having been seen
<i>Def. perf.</i>	having been seeing	having been being seen

2164. Some of the longer forms—especially in the passive—seldom or never occur.

## HAVE-FORMS.

2165. In the periphrastic tenses formed with *have* the preterite participle is generally indeclinable in Old-English, but in the earlier period it is often put in the accusative, as in *pā hē hīe of-slægene hæfde* ‘when he had killed them,’ *hīe hæfdon hira cyning āworpenne* ‘they had deposed their king,’ showing that it was originally regarded as an adjective in apposition to the noun-word governed by *have*—‘they had their king in a state of being deposed.’

2166. It is evident that these forms were at first used only with transitive verbs. Accordingly, in Old-English the corresponding forms of intransitive verbs are generally formed with *be*: *hē is hider cumen* ‘he has come here’ | *hīe wæron āfarene* ‘they had departed.’ Here the participle always agrees with the noun-word with which it is connected. It must, of course, be taken in an active sense—‘he is in a state of having come.’

2167. But when the origin of the have-forms had been

forgotten, they were gradually extended to intransitive verbs as well, especially when stress was laid on the idea of independent action, as in *hīe hæfdon gegān* 'they (had) marched.' Even *weorþan* 'become' takes *have* in the special impersonal construction *hū hine hæfde geworden wiþ hīe* 'how he had fared with her.'

**2168.** In Modern English the use of *have* has been extended to all verbs, although we still use *be* in some cases to imply a state or result rather than an action: *is he gone?* [*he has gone on a journey*] | *when he awoke, the boys of the village were gathered round him.* In such constructions we feel the participles to be equivalent to adjectives. Hence the colloquial construction *I am done* = *I have done* 'I have finished,' on the analogy of *I am ready*.

#### DO-FORMS.

**2169.** The simple forms of the finite verb—(indefinite) present, preterite, and imperative—have special emphatic and interrogative forms compounded with *do*:—

	<i>Unemphatic.</i>	<i>Emphatic.</i>	<i>Interrogative.</i>
<i>Present</i>	I see	I ;do see	-do I see
<i>Preterite</i>	I saw	I ;did see	-did I see
<i>Imperative</i>	see!	;do see!	—

**2170.** The remaining emphatic forms are made simply by putting an emphatic stress on the auxiliary (of course in its strong form); the interrogative forms by transposing the pronoun and auxiliary.

**2171.** As all the interrogative forms can also be made emphatic, we have in all eight forms. It will be enough to give those of the indefinite present and future as examples:—

<i>Affirmative</i>	I see	I shall see
<i>Affirm. emphatic</i>	I ;do see	I ;shall see
<i>Negative</i>	I don't see	I shan't see
<i>Neg. emph.</i>	I ;don't see	I ;shan't see

<i>Affirm. interrogative</i>	do I see	shall I see
<i>Affirm. interr. emph.</i>	;do I see	;shall I see
<i>Negative interr.</i>	don't I see	shan't I see
<i>Neg. interr. emph.</i>	;don't I see	;shan't I see

**2172.** The first beginnings of the auxiliary use of *do* can be traced back to Old-English. In Old-English the use of *do* as a substitute for a preceding verb is fully developed, as in *Crīst wēox swā-swā oþre cild dōþ* 'Christ grew as other children do.' Allied to this is its peculiar anticipative use in such sentences as *se mōna dēþ ægþer, ge wiext ge wanap* 'the moon does both: both waxes and wanes,' where the omission of the personal pronoun is quite regular, the second clause being complementary or explanatory (**2157**). From this half-auxiliary use was developed the full auxiliary use with the second verb in the infinitive, which is however still very rare in Old-English: *swā dōþ nū þā þēostru wip'standan . .* 'so now does darkness resist . .' This change of construction was probably due to the analogy of the construction of the other auxiliaries with the infinitive.

**2173.** A similar anticipative use of *do* in imperative sentences is found in Transition and Early Middle English: *dō, gā and ne synga þū nāfre mā* 'go and sin no more' | *dō, seie hwui!* 'say why!' It is very doubtful whether this has any connexion with the Modern emphatic imperative.

**2174.** The other anticipative construction soon died out in Middle English without leaving any traces in Modern English, while the *do*+infinitive construction extended more and more, especially towards the end of the Middle English period. By the beginning of the Modern period it had become an integral part of the language.

**2175.** But even in the Modern period the *do*-forms had not at first any distinctive meaning, and were used promiscuously with the simple forms, according as caprice, convenience, and clearness of construction, or euphony suggested.



2176. The auxiliary *do* was from the beginning capable of taking strong stress when emphatic, just like any other auxiliary. Hence Early Modern English was able to distinguish four forms: the simple (*I see*), which might be either emphatic or unemphatic, the periphrastic unemphatic (*I -do see*), and the same emphatic (*I ;do see*).

2177. By the middle of the sixteenth century the natural tendency to regard the longer (periphrastic) forms as essentially more emphatic than the shorter (simple) forms had begun to prepare the way for the disuse of the unemphatic periphrastic forms, so that *I ;do see* came to be regarded as the direct emphatic form of the simple unemphatic *I see*.

2178. In the Present English the emphatic forms have extra stress on the auxiliary, to which that of the nucleus is subordinated, while in the unemphatic negative forms the auxiliary and the nucleus have—or may have—equal stress: *it 'doesn't 'matter! it ;does matter!* But of course the negative forms may be emphatic also: *he ought not to have told him of it. he ;didn't tell him!*

2179. As already remarked (1896), the emphasis of these emphatic forms is always generalizing; that is, such a form as *I do see* does not emphasize anything in the meaning of *see* itself, but implies some general antithesis such as that between assertion and denial, the real and the unreal, present and past time, so that *I do see* implies 'I see as a fact,' 'I see now,' etc.

2180. If antithesis is the result of contrasting the special meaning of a full verb with that of some other word, then the emphatic stress necessarily falls on the nucleus in the periphrastic forms, as *did he ;ride? I thought he walked.* In Early Modern English this is also possible with affirmative *do*-forms, as in *for otherwise they -do pervert the faculties of the mind, and not prepare them.* This usage lasted longest with verbs of requesting—*I do entreat you*—and asserting—

*I do assure you*—but is now almost extinct in the spoken language.

**2181.** The use of the *do*-periphrasis in questions was no doubt prompted by the desire to avoid the inconvenience of the old verb-inversion, especially the detaching of the verb from its object (*see you it?*) and the placing of the subject in what ought to be the object-position (*catch dogs mice?*), while the periphrastic forms *do you see it?* | *do dogs catch mice?* show practically no divergence from the order in the corresponding affirmative sentences.

**2182.** That this was the real reason for the general adoption of the periphrastic forms in questions is shown by the fact that it is never used in those interrogative sentences which have the same order as affirmative sentences, that is, in special interrogative sentences beginning with an interrogative pronoun in the nominative, as in *who broke that window?* | *what brought you here?*, or with an interrogative word or word-group qualifying the subject, as in *which boy broke the window?* | *how many people came?*

**2183.** The occasional colloquial use of the simple interrogative form in such phrases as *what say you?* | *what think you?* is partly archaic, partly due to the influence of the dialects.

**2184.** As might be expected, the *do*-forms are equally obligatory in other cases of verb-inversion (1814), most of which, however, do not occur in the spoken language: *did Nature act with full consciousness, these imperfect formations were inexplicable* | *no sooner did Boxer hear the gun than he jumped up with a howl* | *so high did political animosities run that . .*

**2185.** For the reasons given in § 2181 inverted transitive verbs always take the periphrastic form, even in constructions in which transitive verbs keep the simple form, either always, as in the colloquial *here comes . .*, *down fell . .*, *now comes . .*, or occasionally, as in the more literary *thus stood matters* |

*with the new life came new purpose*, with which compare *then did I commit myself to the one physician of the soul* | *thus did the editor see himself*. All these last constructions are purely literary.

But transitive verbs are inverted in parenthetical sentences such as *says he* because there is no subject.

**2186.** The use of *do* in the negative forms of the verb does not, as in the interrogative forms, make the expression clearer or more convenient. It is therefore probably a development of the emphatic use, all negative constructions being essentially emphatic, because the negation reverses the meaning. The analogy of the negative constructions of the other auxiliaries must also have helped to bring them into general use and fix their form.

**2187.** But many verbs in very frequent use in negative constructions, such as *know*, *doubt*, *care*, still kept the simple negative form long after it had been elsewhere lost, and we still keep it in stereotyped adverbial or parenthetical phrases such as *I know not how*, *I doubt not*, *if I mistake not*.

In such phrases as *I hope not*, *I think not* the *not* does not negative the verb.

**2188.** As a general rule, *do* is, like other auxiliaries, used only with verbs of full meaning. It would, indeed, be impossible to introduce it into such combinations as *can he come?*, because *can* has not an infinitive.

**2189.** *be* and *have* do not take *do* in interrogative and negative forms even when not used as auxiliaries: *is he ready?* | *has he any money?* But they take it in the negative imperative, as in *do not be afraid!* = the literary *be not afraid!*

**2190.** But as *have* is a transitive verb (**2181**), there is a greater tendency to use the periphrastic forms with it than with *be*. Thus we can say either *what sort of a passage did you have?* or *what sort of a passage had you?*

**2191.** But in British-English we avoid the American-

English periphrasis in *he does not have to work* by the use of the construction *he has not got to work*, although we feel instinctively that the strong meaning of the *have* in this case justifies the American construction.

**2192.** The negative form of *let us go!* is *do not let us go!* with an anomalous heaping of auxiliaries. The literary form is, of course, *let us not go!* | *let us not be selfish!*

**2193.** *do*, like the other auxiliaries, is used absolutely. In some cases the absolute corresponds with the full conjoint use, as in *you said so yourself! did I?* | *did you tell him?* *no, I did not* compared with *did I say so?* | *I did not tell him.*

**2194.** But the imperative and affirmative absolute *do* does not show anything of the emphatic meaning of the corresponding full forms; thus *shall I ask him?* *do!* | *did you tell him?* *yes, I did* correspond in meaning to the simple *ask him!* | *I told him.*

**2195.** These absolute forms are, in fact, remains of the earlier unemphatic affirmative *do*-forms, which have been preserved by the habit of repeating the auxiliary of the preceding sentence, the sequence *did you tell him?* *yes, I did* being mainly kept up by the analogy of such sequences as *will you tell him?* *yes, I will.*

#### WILL AND SHALL.

**2196.** In the future (present and preterite) the first person is formed with *shall*, the others with *will*:—

Singular	1	<i>I shall see</i>	<i>I should see</i>
	2	<i>you will see</i>	<i>you would see</i>
	3	<i>he will see</i>	<i>he would see</i>
Plural	1	<i>we shall see</i>	<i>we should see</i>
	2	<i>you will see</i>	<i>you would see</i>
	3	<i>they will see</i>	<i>they would see</i>

Examples: *I suppose you will not wait later than six.* *no,*

*I certainly shall not* | *we were afraid we should be late* | *I knew how it would turn out.*

2197. The same rules apply also—but with important exceptions—to the conditional: *I should like a glass of water.* *would not you rather have a cup of tea?*

2198. As regards the origin of these forms, it is to be observed that in Old-English the future is generally expressed by the present, as in the other Old Germanic languages. But the auxiliaries *will* and *shall* are used to express not only futurity combined with the ideas of wish and compulsion respectively, but also, in some instances, pure futurity: *ic wāt þæt þis folc miċlum blissian wile mīnes dēaþes* ‘I know that this nation will rejoice greatly at my death’ | *hīe wēndon þæt hīe stolden mære onfōn* ‘they expected to receive more.’

In Old-English the combination of the preterites *would* and *should* with infinitives is frequently used like the modern conditional as substitutes for the preterite subjunctive.

2199. In Middle English *shall* and *will* + infinitive are used as pure futures, *shall* being at first much more frequent than *will*. *will* afterwards came into more general use, till at last in many dialects—such as the Scotch—it has completely banished *shall*.

2200. In Southern English, on the other hand, the originally unmeaning fluctuation between *will* and *shall* has gradually developed into a fixed system of complicated rules, which speakers of the other dialects have great difficulty in mastering.

2201. The present use of *will* and *shall* seems to be the result of the desire to keep the original meanings of these verbs as much as possible in the background. It is evident that in the first person ‘I must do it to-morrow’ suggests the idea of futurity less ambiguously and more abstractly than ‘I wish . . .,’ because a mere expression of wish on the part of a speaker does not necessarily imply any expectation of its fulfilment; while his own statement of obligation or

compulsion involves his belief that it will be carried out. In the other persons everything is reversed. As we know the wishes of others only by uncertain inference, we do not generally say 'you wish . . .' or 'he wishes . . .', but prefer to put the statement in a less direct form: 'I suppose you intend to . .' Hence the bare unqualified statement *you will go* hardly suggests the idea of volition at all, and so is excellently adapted to express pure futurity.

**2202.** We will now consider the exceptions to these general rules:—

(a) Unemphatic *will* and *shall* can be used in all persons to express the idea of futurity combined with those of wish or necessity respectively: *I will come as soon as I can* | *you shall see what I am going to do!* The emphatic *I ;will do it* expresses obstinacy, the emphatic *I ;shall do it* expresses determination, as if the speaker meant to imply that his will was so strong as to become a purely objective force. The two may be combined: *I ;shall and ;will do it. what ;shall I do!* expresses helplessness or perplexity.

(b) Such combinations as *you and I, we two, we three, we all* take *will* instead of *shall*: *we shall get there first*, but *I expect you and I will get there first* | *we two will be able to manage it quite well* | *I shall dream about those dogs to-night, I am sure I shall. so shall I. so we all will.* If we put the *all* of the last example after the verb, the *shall* must be restored: *so shall we all.* The explanation of this anomaly is that *you* and the other words added to the *we* divert the attention from the first person and make the idea of the second person prominent enough to suggest the more frequent *will*.

(c) In direct questions *shall* is used instead of *will* in the second person, as in *shall you be there?* compared with *you will be there, I suppose?* It is evident that our ignorance of the will of others (2201) makes it perfectly natural for us to ask questions about it, so that *will you be there to-night?* is

easily taken in its literal sense 'do you intend . . ?,' and hence *shall* is substituted. Such questions must be direct: there would be no motive in asking questions of B about C's will; hence the substitution of *shall* would be quite out of place in the third person (*will he be there to-night?*). In enclitic questions—which, it must be remembered, are questions in form only, not in meaning—a preceding *would* is always repeated, or, in other words, the enclitic auxiliary is attracted by the preceding dependent auxiliary: *you will do it yourself, will you?* | *you would think so, wouldn't you?*

(d) In dependent sentences of doubt *shall* is used in all persons, as in *if he should come while I am out, tell him to wait* compared with *I wish he would come*, because the idea of doubt neutralizes that of compulsion. In the spoken language this usage is preserved only in the conditional form, but in the literary language it occurs in the future, where the spoken language always has the present: *if he shall call while I am out, ask him to wait* = the colloquial *if he calls . .* | *whoever shall compare the country round Rome with the country round Edinburgh, will be able to form some judgement as to the tendency of Papal dominion*, where *whoever shall compare . .* = 'if any one compares . .' Note in this last example the contrast between the *shall* of the sub-clause and the normal *will* of the principal clause.

(e) In such a sentence as *he says he hopes I will be there* compared with *I told him I should be there* the person of 'I' is regarded from the point of view of 'he,' as if the sentence were in the form *he said 'I hope you (or he) will be there.'* So also in (*he said*) *he was afraid we would not (be able to) come*. In both of these instances *shall* (*should*) is admissible, and would probably be substituted by many on second thoughts, but the construction with *will* is the genuinely colloquial one.

(f) In (*he says*) *he wishes we would not keep the door open* compared with *you seemed very anxious that we should go the*

*would* is obligatory because the *will* here denotes repetition or habit, as in *he will—would—sit for hours doing nothing*. This *will* is hardly ever used in the first person, but if so used (*he says I will sit for hours doing nothing*), it would necessarily be kept unchanged, for *I shall* would suggest the idea of compulsion or futurity so strongly as to obscure entirely that of habit.

#### DEFINITE TENSES.

**2203.** The periphrastic forms corresponding to the Modern English *is writing, was writing* are in frequent use in Old-English, but are only vaguely differentiated from the simple forms.

**2204.** They were no doubt originally formed on the analogy of the combination of the verb ‘be’ with adjectives, so that such a paraphrase as *hīe wæron blissiende* ‘they were rejoicing’ was felt to be intermediate between *hīe blissodon* ‘they rejoiced’ and *hīe wæron bliþe* ‘they were glad.’

**2205.** The most fundamental distinction between the simple and periphrastic forms in Old-English appears to be that the latter are associated with the idea of incompleteness, as in *þā-þā hē sprecende wæs* ‘while he was speaking’ compared with *þā-þā hē spræc*, which may have the meaning ‘was speaking,’ but may also have that of ‘spoke,’ or even ‘had spoken.’

**2206.** The natural result of this is that the periphrastic forms occur very often in constructions which involve the idea of continuity or progression. But that this idea is only a secondary one is shown by those instances in which the context excludes the idea of duration, as when the periphrase is accompanied by the adverb *sōna* ‘immediately,’ as in *þā sōna on anġinne þæs ġefeohtes wæs se munt Garganus biġigende mid ormætre cwacunge*.

**2207.** In this example, as in many others, the context suggests—or at least admits—an inchoative meaning: ‘then



immediately at the beginning of the battle Mount Garganus began to tremble with excessive quaking.'

**2208.** The analogy of the adjective construction (**2204**) would make us expect to find the periphrastic forms used mainly to express rest, and passive rather than active phenomena. But, on the contrary, they are especially favoured by verbs of motion and fighting—*wæs winnende*, *wæron feohtende*—either with or without the idea of continuity.

**2209.** Here the periphrastic forms seem to be used mainly to make the narrative more vivid and picturesque, so that they have come to have what we may call a 'descriptive' force.

**2210.** In many cases they appear to have a purely stylistic function, being introduced merely to round off a period, and to avoid abruptness.

**2211.** In Modern—as in Old—English the definite tenses always imply incompleteness; thus *he is writing a letter* implies that the letter is not finished. This is still more marked in the perfect, as in *what have you been doing all day?* compared with *what have you done to-day?*, which really means 'what have you completed to-day?'

**2212.** They also always imply a certain duration: they are no longer used as point or inchoative tenses, as they sometimes are in Old-English.

**2213.** But the expression of duration is not their primary function in Modern any more than in Old English. Nor can they be used to express unlimited duration or repetition: this is expressed by the indefinite tenses, as in *the moon shines at night* | *he goes to Germany once a year*.

**2214.** The characteristic of these tenses is that they use duration to define the time of a point-tense, as in *when he came, I was writing a letter*. Here the action of writing is supposed to be going on before the point of time indicated by *came*, and to continue after it, the amount of the further

duration of the action backwards and forwards being indifferent.

**2215.** A definite tense therefore often makes us expect a clause containing a verb in the corresponding indefinite tense to indicate the point of time which the definite tense serves to define, as in *I shall be writing when he comes* [= *when he shall come*], unless the clause precedes, as in *when he came, I was writing*.

**2216.** But in the present the definite tense does not require or admit of any accompanying point-tense, for the definite present is, in the nature of things, self-defining: *I am writing a letter* means 'I am writing a letter at the present moment (of your coming).' So also with the definite perfect: *I have been writing a letter*.

**2217.** Hence we may say that the definite present and perfect are absolute tenses, while the definite preterite and future are relative tenses, because they make us expect another clause. This clause may of course take the form of an independent sentence, if the connexion is clear: *we were expecting you yesterday; why didn't you come?* Or the point-tense may be inferred from the context—sometimes only in a very vague way, as in *I was coughing all night long*, which is almost as absolute as *I coughed all night long*. Here it will be observed that *I was coughing* differs from *I coughed* mainly in emphasizing the idea of duration.

**2218.** There are some verbs which occur only in the indefinite tenses. This is especially the case with verbs which express feelings, physical and mental perceptions etc., such as *feel, like, think*: *I feel ill* | *he likes being here* | *I think so*. But as soon as the element of volition or action becomes prominent, the definite tenses re-assert their rights: compare *it hurts* with *he is hurting him*; *he doesn't see it* with *he is seeing the sights*; *I hear a noise* with *I am hearing lectures*. This seems to be a tradition of the Old-English descriptive use of these tenses (**2209**).

**2219.** The tense defined by a definite tense may itself be in the definite form: *all the while I was writing there was some noise or other going on: the children were having their music-lessons, and the baby was crying next door.* Here the definite tenses imply that the writing and the noises were all simultaneous.

**2220.** But when the connexion between the two sentences as regards time is not specially intimate or important, we prefer to put only one verb in the definite form, as in *she stood in an impatient silence while she was thus being talked over*, where *she was standing*, although strictly correct, would lay too much stress on the logically subordinate idea of 'standing.' So also in *as he walked home, his heart danced within him* there is no special connexion of cause and effect between the two clauses.

**2221.** When such words as *always*, *constantly* are added to a definite tense, it necessarily loses its definiteness of meaning as regards distinctions of time: *she is a good woman: she is always going to church; she is always doing things for poor people.* So also in the preterite and future: *your mother was a good woman: she was always going . . | she will grow up to be a good woman: she will always be going . .* The main use of the definite form in such collocations is to make the statement absolute; thus *he is always complaining | he was grumbling all the time we were there* can stand by themselves, while the corresponding indefinite forms make us expect something to define the time or show that repetition is implied: *he always grumbles when he is at home.*

**2222.** When a definite tense is used in a context implying repetition, the definite tense does not share in this meaning (for repetition is expressed by indefinite tenses, § 2213), but keeps its own; thus *his temper only failed him when he was being nursed* means 'on each occasion when he was being nursed'—that is, the definite tense applies to each of the repeated phenomena singly.

## TENSES IN DETAIL.

## Present.

**2223.** The indefinite present is a neutral tense (289), implying that a statement is of general application, and holds good for all time (*the sun rises in the east*), or that an action or phenomenon is habitual, as in *he gets up at six regularly every morning* | *I always get it at the same shop*, or recurrent, as in *he goes to Germany twice a year* | *whenever she sees him, she begins to laugh*.

**2224.** If the actual present is meant, the definite form is used : *he is getting up now* | *where are you going* ?

**2225.** The definite present is also used as a neutral present to show that continuity and not repetition is meant (2213). Thus if in such a sentence as *the earth is a ball that is always turning round, and at the same time it moves round the sun in a circle* we substituted *turns*, we should have to answer the question 'when does it always turn ?'

**2226.** For the use of the indefinite *moves* in the last clause see § 2220. But here we cannot say that the idea of revolving round the sun is either subordinate to or not closely associated with that of revolving on its own axis. It seems that the shorter indefinite form is used because the context makes the meaning 'is moving' quite clear. Similarly in *the wind is rising: look how the smoke blows sideways!* Here we might use the definite form *is blowing*. The indefinite form seems to suggest 'smoke always blows sideways when the wind rises.'

**2227.** The vagueness of the indefinite present makes it possible to use it in constructions where we should expect a non-present tense. Thus instead of saying *I (have) heard that you made a speech yesterday*, we might say *I hear you made a speech yesterday*, implying 'various people told me so and others will probably tell me so afterwards.' Both construc-

tions would be naturally followed by the question *who told you so?*

**2228.** Statements in narratives can be looked at from the point of view either of the narrator or the hearer; hence the present in such constructions as *Gibbon tells us in his History that . . . | what is the story about? it is about a young man who goes to London and makes his fortune.* In the last example the present is extended from the act of narration to what is narrated. This is the germs of the 'historical present,' used to give greater vividness to a narrative: *he mounts the scaffold . . . the executioners approach.* The fully developed historical present seems to be due to Old French and Latin influence.

**2229.** In describing the subject of a picture or piece of sculpture—which appeals directly to the eye—the definite as well as the indefinite present can be used: *it is a representation of a lady. she is lying on a couch. at the side of the couch sits a woman as in grief.* The definite form could not be used in stating the contents of a book, the plot of a story etc. Observe also that we can say *it is a picture of a lady lying on a couch*, while we should have to use a separate clause in *it is a story of a lady who . . .*

**2230.** In such a construction as *the moon halts opposite to the window at which I sit—I write* the indefinite present is used to show that the speaker is making a statement which will not reach those for whom it is intended till it has come to refer to the past. The definite present might also be used, but would imply a hearer present at the time, or else that the narrator is, as it were, speaking to himself, not to others.

**2231.** The indefinite present is regularly used instead of the future in clauses dependent on a sentence which contains a verb in the future, as in *if it is fine, I will come early*, although the written language often substitutes the future (**2202 d**). The present is also used instead of the future in some independent sentences. In *does the moon shine to-night?*

futurity is only indirectly implied by continuity or repetition, the sense being 'is to-night one of the nights on which the moon shines?' The full future meaning of the present in independent sentences is most frequent when futurity is clearly indicated by such a word as *to-morrow*: *to-morrow is bank holiday* [this falls, at the same time, under the same head as the preceding example] | *he starts for the Continent to-night*. In *I bet you anything I'll do it!* futurity is not marked in the principal clause because of the necessity of keeping *will* in the subordinate clause to indicate the combination of will with futurity.

**2232.** The definite present is also used in a future sense, but only in combination with verbs of motion: *where are you going for your holiday this autumn?* | *I am going home to-morrow: it is (2231) my mother's birthday* | *is anyone coming to dinner?* = *shall we have any guests to dinner?* It is evident that *where are you going?*—that is, 'where are you setting out for at this moment?'—implies 'what place will you arrive at?' Hence, *while are you going to church?* is present if addressed to one who is just starting, it is necessarily future in *are you going to church to-day?*

### Preterite.

**2233.** The preterite is used in the sense of the neutral present in clauses dependent on a sentence whose verb is in the preterite: *people used to think the earth was flat* | *I think I once heard you say you liked it*.

**2234.** In some cases it is used almost as the equivalent of a full present: *I have (got) a headache*. *I thought you were not looking well* | *I hardly ever see him now*. *I thought he was an intimate friend of yours*. *oh no!* In these examples *thought* may be taken in the sense of 'I thought when I first saw you just now . . .', 'I thought, until you told me the contrary, that . . .', but it has really a present meaning—I

*thought you were not looking well* = 'yes, you don't look well' —and the preterite is used simply to avoid the suggestion of contradiction; for *I think he is an intimate friend of yours* would imply 'I think so in spite of what you say,' while the preterite implies that the belief is already a thing of the past.

**2235.** The preterite is used in many cases where we might substitute the perfect with but slight change of meaning (275). Other examples are: *who took my book?* | *I had hardly any breakfast, but I do not feel at all hungry.*

**2236.** It can be used in the same way as a substitute for the pluperfect: *one morning when they woke up, they saw a ship at anchor in the bay* | *the donkey never stopped till he came to a tent of gypsies.* Indeed the pluperfect could not be used in either of the examples, the two events being regarded as a simple sequence: 'they woke up, and then they saw . . '

**2237.** The definite preterite is sometimes equivalent to an indefinite preterite with duration implied (2217).

**2238.** It is sometimes equivalent to the definite perfect: *I am afraid we have kept you waiting. oh no, not at all: we were looking at these photographs.* Here *we were looking* refers to an implied *while we were waiting for you*, and so is equivalent to *we have been looking.*

**2239.** It follows from § 2232 that the definite preterite of some verbs is used in the sense of the future preterite: *one day he told his housekeeper that four gentlemen were coming to dinner.*

### Perfect.

**2240.** The perfect, being intermediate between the present and the preterite, is sometimes used in constructions where we might expect one or other of these tenses.

**2241.** It is equivalent to the present in *I have got a cold* = 'I have caught a cold,' 'I have a cold.' In *I have brought back the book you lent me; that is why I have called* we could

not substitute the present for the last perfect. In a letter we should say *I enclose a receipt | I herewith return the book which you lent me* because at the time of writing they have not yet been received.

**2242.** The perfect is often used instead of the preterite to express something which, although already detached from the present, is connected with the present in thought: *thank you for the trouble you have taken | you have not tied it tight enough: it is sure to come undone again | waiter! there is something wrong in the bill: you have made this sixpence into six shillings.* But in the last two the connexion with the present is shown to some extent by the accompanying sentences.

**2243.** The perfect is used instead of the future perfect in clauses dependent on a sentence with a verb in the future, as in *by the time you have washed and dressed, breakfast will be ready*, and in other cases where the future meaning is clear from the context: *when will you come again? as soon as I have finished my work | I bet you half-a-crown that before nightfall I have seen him!*

**2244.** The definite perfect (and pluperfect) emphasizes the idea of duration up to the present moment (**2211**).

**2245.** But as the element of duration is not essential to the definite tenses, it often implies something that has happened immediately before the present time, either a succession of detached events, as in *where have you been meeting her?* [compare: *have you met her lately?*], or merely a single event: *his bruised face and torn clothes showed that he had been fighting = had just been fighting | I hear you have been getting into mischief again.* But the last may also imply repetition.

**2246.** But this usage generally requires that the verb itself implies—or at least admits of—the idea of duration. Thus in *I have just received a letter from him* we cannot substitute the definite form. But we can say *I have been receiving letters from him*, which necessarily implies repetition.



**Pluperfect.**

**2247.** We have seen (**2236**) that the pluperfect is often expressed by the preterite. Conversely the pluperfect is sometimes used where the preterite would do as well: *he had (got) a cold* | *I did not think we had been so near Scotland* | *he told them he had gone for a little walk, and saw a donkey.* . In the second example the pluperfect is more graphic than the preterite, as heightening the surprise by the reminder that it was too late to take advantage of the knowledge. In the last example the pluperfect is justified by the fact that the going for a walk preceded seeing the donkey, and it is used here because the seeing the donkey is the really important event, to which the pluperfect makes it subordinate. In *before breakfast they had settled the whole thing* the pluperfect, if taken literally, makes the exaggerated statement that at a point of time before breakfast the thing had been settled, whereas all that is necessarily meant is that it had been settled at breakfast—that is, that they settled it before breakfast.

**2248.** The definite pluperfect is parallel to the definite perfect (**2244**).

**Future.**

For the use of the present instead of the future see § **2231**.

**2249.** The future is sometimes used instead of the present in such phrases as *this will be the Tower of London, I suppose?* = *I suppose this is the . . .*, meaning, of course, ‘this will turn out on investigation to be . . .’ This usage appears to be dialectal (Scotch).

**2250.** The definite future has its normal meaning in the following example: *I shall not be at home much next summer: I shall be travelling about on the Continent most of the time* parallel to the definite present in *he is not at home now: he is travelling about on the Continent*.

**2251.** But it has often peculiar shades of meaning of its

own : it generally gives the impression that the future event is the result of causes with which the speakers have nothing to do ; and hence is often used to make the expression of futurity more abstract, and especially to do away with any associations with the special meanings of the auxiliaries. Thus even in the preceding example, *I shall travel* may be taken to imply that the travelling will be the result of a resolution already formed, while *I shall be travelling* predicts it as a purely objective phenomenon. So also *I suppose you will be going back to England soon* means 'you will probably go back to England soon in the natural course of events.' Hence it often implies that the future action is the natural result of something in the character of the person of whom it is predicted : *and now I know you will be saying you cannot afford it !* | *I expect some fine day he will be making off with the money.*

### Preterite Future.

2252. The following are examples : *it was settled that we should meet next morning at the same place* | *I knew how it would turn out.*

Of the definite form : *I knew that as soon as my father got to Switzerland, he would be wanting to push on to Italy.*

### Perfect Future.

2253. The following are examples : *by this time to-morrow I shall have crossed the Channel* | *he wants you to post a letter; he will have finished it by the time you are ready.*

2254. Of the definite form : *I shall have been writing for six hours without stopping by the time you come back.*

### Immediate Future (going to . .).

2255. In English we have an immediate future (284), formed with the definite tenses of *go* and the supine, as in *I am afraid it is going to rain* = ' . . it is about to rain,' ' . . it is on the point of raining,' compared with *I am afraid it will*

*rain to-morrow.* Other examples are: *what are you going to do now?* *I am going to call on some ladies: will you come too?* Sometimes it implies a less degree of immediateness: *I am going to call on him soon: I shall call on him as soon as I can—in a few days.* The immediate future might be used in the last sentence as well.

**2256.** This form is perhaps sometimes used—like the definite future (**2251**)—to avoid the special associations of *will* and *shall*. It certainly serves that purpose in the last example but one.

**2257.** It is sometimes used not to disguise, but merely to soften down the idea of will or compulsion: *well, if you are not going to have any more wine, we may as well go into the garden—you are sure you will not have any more wine?* Here *will* might imply an accusation of obstinacy.

**2258.** The above examples are all of the present immediate. There is also a preterite: *what were you going to do when I came in?* *I was going to take a walk.* There do not seem to be any other tenses in actual use.

### Moods.

#### SUBJUNCTIVE.

**2259.** In Old-English the subjunctive mood is in full use as a thought-mood (**298**), very much as in Modern German. Thus it is regularly used in indirect narration: *hīe cwædon þæt hē wære gōd cyning* 'they said that he was a good king.' But when the indirect statement is perfectly certain in itself, and not merely accepted on the authority of the speaker, it is put in the indicative: *nū wē willaþ sēcgan þæt wē fūse sind ūrne eard tō sēcanne* 'now we wish to say that we are starting to seek our country' = 'we have come to take leave.' In this sentence 'say' has practically hardly any meaning, the whole sentence being equivalent to *wē sind fūse* . . ., so that the subjunctive would be too emphatic: it

would seem to imply that the speakers wished to hint that their statement was false.

**2260.** Such exceptions as this helped the natural tendency to get rid of superfluous distinctions (307), which, again, was helped by the Late West-Saxon levelling of the distinction between subjunctive and indicative in the preterite plural of all verbs (1188).

**2261.** Hence in Middle English the subjunctive was soon disused in many constructions—first of all in indirect narration; and in the present English it is practically extinct as a living form, surviving only in a few isolated constructions.

**2262.** Thus we still keep it in some independent sentences of wish and command: *God save the Queen ! | God bless you ! | bless me ! | so be it then !*

**2263.** The phrase *woe betide* . . expresses not wish, but fear of the future, in such a construction as *woe betide us if we are late !*

**2264.** The only subjunctive form that is in regular colloquial use is the preterite *were*. It is used in dependent sentences, chiefly in clauses of rejected condition (305): *if it were possible, I would do it | I would not do it if I were you.*

**2265.** Also in clauses of hypothetical comparison: *he is always talking about honesty, as if he were the only honest man in the world.* Here, again, it implies rejection of the statement.

**2266.** Lastly, it is used after verbs of wishing to imply rejected fulfilment—*I wish I were at home*—as opposed to open fulfilment, as in *I wish to go home*, the first example implying ‘I am not at home now.’ So also in *she says she wishes she were dead | would that I were free !*

**2267.** The same implication of rejection is inherent in the other colloquial uses of *were*: *it is time we were gone—off.*

**2268.** In the colloquial language of the last century there was a tendency to substitute *was* for *were*, even in clauses of rejection.

**2269.** In Early Modern English the subjunctive was still in colloquial use in many constructions where it is now obsolete.

**2270.** In the present literary language the subjunctive is rapidly falling into disuse—except, of course, in those constructions where it is obligatory in the spoken language.

**2271.** It is otherwise obligatory in the written language only in cases of verb-inversion in conditional and concessive clauses, not only in such as *were he my brother* . . . = ‘even if he were . . .,’ but also such examples as *were it scroll or were it book, into it, knight, thou must not look* (Scott) | *come what may, I will stand by him!* The last may perhaps be still used colloquially.

**2272.** Otherwise the subjunctive is little used in ordinary literature except in the case of *be*, and that in most cases only in combination with *if*. But even within these limits the usage varies greatly. Those who have been trained in the use of the subjunctive by Latin prose composition and by familiarity with its use in the earlier English literature would instinctively avoid it in sentences which are only slightly hypothetical, or hypothetical in form only, such as *if there is a thunderstorm some way off, we see the lightning some time before we hear the thunder* = ‘when there is . . .,’ especially in familiar expressions such as *she is thirty, if she is a day*. Such writers would, on the other hand, at least try to use it consistently in such constructions as *if it be necessary—which I very much doubt* . . . Some of them will occasionally use it with other verbs than *be*, as in *if he please one, he will offend the others*, and in other constructions than those with *if*, not only in constructions similar in meaning to those with *if*, such as *you are in your sphere, humble though it be* | *they will not do it unless he bid them*, but also in other reminiscences of the earlier freedom:—

**2273.** *I pray thee that thou assert my innocence* | *look that he hide no weapon* | *see that there be no traitors in your camp!* |

*he feels if the axe be sharp | I know not whether it be true or not | the tree will wither long before it fall | wait till he come!*

**2274.** In the above examples the spoken language simply substitutes the indicative. In other constructions it substitutes a periphrastic form. Thus in the following it requires the conditional: *it is better he die = it is better he should die | I tremble lest he be discovered | to do so were unnecessary.* In the following it uses the permissive: *give me leave that I may turn the key, that no man enter = . . so that no one may come in | to act that each to-morrow find us farther than to-day | lest justice depart out of the land = so that justice may not depart . .*

**2275.** But the general literary tendency seems to be to use *be* and *is* sporadically and almost at random after *if*, the uncolloquial subjunctive being regarded simply as a mark of the higher style, which is therefore unconsciously dropped in the more familiar passages.

**2276.** The artificial subjunctive is particularly objectionable when the mechanical substitution of *were* for *was* after *if* leads to confusion between open and rejected condition, as when *were* is substituted for *was* in such sentences as *if he was there, I did not see him.* In the natural spoken language the indicative would always be kept here, even if the doubtfulness of the hypothesis were made as prominent as possible by distributed stress (1896)—*if he ;was there . . if he were there* ought, of course, to imply 'he is not there,' and must then be followed by the present conditional (2280), so that the sequence of tenses in *if he were there, I did not see him* makes nonsense.

#### CONDITIONAL.

**2277.** The present conditional has the same form as the preterite future, and the preterite conditional has the same form as the perfect future. The two tenses of the conditional have also definite tenses, like the parallel forms of the future.

**2278.** The main practical distinction between the preterite future and the conditional is, of course, that the latter is dependent on a preterite, so that if that preterite is changed into a present, the *would* of the preterite future necessarily becomes *will*: *he said he would come—he says he will come. he would come* when used as a conditional can, on the other hand, be associated with a present.

**2279.** Under 'conditional' we include all combinations of *would* and *should* with infinitives which are not clearly futures, even when their functions are not really conditional. But as they all agree in being moods rather than tenses, the absolute practical necessity of separating the mood- from the tense-functions of these periphrases makes it all the more desirable to avoid further subdivision.

**2280.** The most important function of the conditional is in sentences of rejected condition. These have a tense-mood (301) in the hypothetical clause, and a conditional in the consequence-clause, the logical present being expressed by the present conditional (with the preterite indicative—subjunctive in the case of *were*—in the hypothetical clause), the logical preterite by the preterite conditional (with the pluperfect indicative in the hypothetical clause):—

Logical present: *if I were you, I would not do it | he would tell me if he knew—but he does not know anything about it | I should like to try if I were not afraid | if he were travelling on the Continent, he would not be seeing the sights in London.* In *if he knew it, I do not know what he would do* the consequence-clause is not *I do not know*, but is contained in the clause dependent on this one = *he would do I know not what.*

Logical preterite: *if we had started in proper time, we should have been there by this time | it would have been better if you had written first, to find out whether he was at home or not.*

**2281.** The conditional is here a substitute for the original subjunctive, which was still preserved in Early Modern

English; thus the Old-English *gif þū wære hēr, nære mīn brōþor dēad* appears in the Bible as *if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died*. We see from this example that it was the ambiguity of the consequence-clauses which led to the general use of the conditional, the germs of which may be found in Old-English itself. The original subjunctive construction is still used in the higher literature wherever it can be done without ambiguity, especially, of course, in the case of *were*: *it were a pity* . . . But even in the highest literary style such a construction as *\*he told me if he knew* would be impossible.

**2282.** But the archaism is still necessarily preserved—in colloquial as well as literary English—in the case of those anomalous verbs which have no infinitives, and consequently no conditionals: *he could do it if he liked* = *he would be able to do* . . . | *if we had started in proper time, we might have been there by this time*.

**2283.** In many cases the present conditional does not imply rejection of the hypothesis, but simply shifts its consequences into the future, as in *if we missed the train, we should have to wait an hour at the station*, which means *if we miss the train—which I hope we shall not—we shall have to wait* . . . The only way of definitely rejecting the hypothesis is by putting the pluperfect in the hypothetical clause: *if we had missed the train, we should (now) have to wait an hour*. Here we have a case in which a pluperfect in the one clause is accompanied by a present instead of a preterite conditional in the other, because the action or state denoted by the verb in the conditional is not yet completed; compare *if we had missed the train, it would have been rather awkward (at the time when we missed it)*.

**2284.** We see from this example that hypothetical non-continuous phenomena require the pluperfect to show distinctly that they are unreal. It is indeed difficult to think of them in the present at all: it is at any rate more important



for us to know whether or not we *have* caught a train than to realize that we are engaged in trying to catch it at the present moment.

**2285.** The consequence-clause of conditional sentences is often used absolutely with a variety of meanings. It is so used to express a modest wish, request, or question, some such hypothetical clause as 'if it were possible,' 'if you will allow me—give me' being understood: *I should like a glass of water. wouldn't you rather have a cup of tea? | he says he would like to go for a walk. I should like to go too.*

**2286.** In some phrases this construction has come to express indignant assertion—at first, probably, ironically: *I should (rather) think not!*

**2287.** In some cases the absolute clause has almost a future meaning: (*I think*) *you would like it (if you were to try it).* (*I am sure*) *I should like it—it would suit me exactly | I am going to call on some ladies: will you come too? (I have no doubt) they would be very happy to make your acquaintance.*

**2288.** The absolute conditional—which, of course, does not imply rejection of any kind—is necessarily kept unchanged in preterite constructions as regards tense, but with a tendency to substitute *should* for *would*: *he said he should (or would) like to go for a walk | he said he was sure he should like it.* But *would* must be kept in *I said I was sure he would like it.*

**2289.** In a preterite context the absolute conditional sometimes expresses what is to be expected, what happens as a matter of course: *men began with ready-made tools. they would soon learn how to cut and scrape with a sharp piece of flint, and make holes with a sharp tooth.*

**2290.** The absolute conditional is sometimes used as a cautiously expressed or ironical present: *in short you must know very well that Mr. and Mrs. Boffin are just absolute perfection. truly it would seem that we are required to think so.* We can also use *it should seem* in the same sense.

**2291.** In some hypothetical clauses the conditional form is used to express indefinite futurity, as in *if he should call while I am out, tell him to wait* | *if you should happen to see him, tell him to expect me this evening about eight*, the same form being used in a preterite context as well: *she said, if he should call while she was out, I was to tell him to wait*. Here the conditional is used not in the consequence-clause, as in sentences of rejected condition, but in the hypothetical clause. If the conditional is used in both clauses, the general character of the hypothesis is determined by the hypothetical clause; that is, the whole sentence implies hypothetical futurity, not rejected hypothesis: *if he should see me, he would know me* = *if by chance he sees me, he will recognize me*.

**2292.** In such a phrase as *you should not make personal remarks* the preterite *should* is substituted for the present *shall* in order to soften down the imperativeness of *you shall not make* . . . Here there is no conditional meaning; the *should* keeps its original meaning, and is not even an auxiliary.

**2293.** In the following examples we can also observe the original meaning of *shall*, but softened down so that the *shall* becomes a pure auxiliary: *why should you suspect him?* | *is there anyone with him?* *no*; *who should there be?* | *as I went down the street, who should I meet but our friend himself!* We can still see the influence of the original meaning in the first example ('what obliges you to suspect me?'), further softened down in the second, till in the last *should meet* becomes simply a periphrastic preterite.

**2294.** It will be observed that all these examples are interrogative in form only. In the following we have a similar vague use of the periphrasis in declarative sentences: *it seems odd (that) we should meet here* | *it is strange they should have met in the very same place*.

**2295.** In the following examples we can again observe clearly the original meaning of *shall*: *it is not fair that*

*I should suffer for other people's misconduct | it is quite right that he should bear the expense.*

2296. But in the following parallel construction the original meaning of the auxiliary is quite obscured: *I am sorry to think (that) a son of mine should behave so badly at other people's houses—should have behaved so badly (on that occasion).*

#### COMPULSIVE (is to . .).

2297. This periphrasis primarily expresses necessity and obligation: *when am I to come again? | do not forget that you are to be there exactly at five.* So also in the passive: *you know what is to be done | the doctor says he is not to be worried.*

2298. The passive form is also used to express possibility: *where is it to be found? | he is not to be found anywhere.*

2299. In a hypothetical clause the preterite *was to . .* does not, as the simple preterite would do, imply rejection of the hypothesis so much as its remoteness or improbability, as in *what should we do if it were to rain* = 'if it by chance comes on to rain.' So also compare *if I were to see more of him, I could speak to him about it* with *if I saw more of him . .* While the second implies 'I do not see much of him,' the first implies 'I may see more of him in the future.'

2300. There is also a peculiar traditional use of this form in the phrase *that is to say*: *he was very eccentric, that is to say, he did odd things that made people laugh.*

#### PERMISSIVE (may).

2301. The verb *may* in its full meaning implies possibility as the result of the absence of external hindrance, especially through the interference of others, whence its frequent meaning of 'have permission,' 'be allowed to'; while *can*

implies possibility as the result of something in the subject of the statement, such as strength, capacity, or knowledge: *may I climb that tree? yes: you may, if you can.*

**2302.** In the above example *may* is a full verb; but in many cases the combination *may* or *might* + infinitive is used as a true mood having much the same function as the old subjunctive.

**2303.** Thus the present permissive is used in independent sentences to express wish: *may you succeed! | may it please your Grace to hear me!* In this construction there is now always verb-inversion, which is not always the case in Early Modern English. This construction is not much used in the third person (singular), because the simple subjunctive is here distinctive enough (**2262**)—(*may*) *God bless you!*

**2304.** The combination *may* + infinitive is sometimes used as a kind of future: *this place is not safe: the roof may come down any day. it is safe enough for the present: the roof may not come down yet.* It will be observed that in the negative construction of the last sentence the original meaning of *may* is almost lost—*may not come down* here = ‘will probably not come down.’ In itself it might, of course, also mean ‘is not allowed to come down.’

**2305.** In the same way the combination *might* + infinitive in independent sentences is used to soften a request by making it more indirect, as in *might I ask . . ? | might I be allowed to ask . . ?* = ‘may I ask . . ?’ Here *may* is still a full verb. Compare the parallel use of *should* (**2285**).

**2306.** In dependent sentences the permissive is used to imply various degrees of impossibility and uncertainty.

**2307.** In the following concessive sentences the indicative forms may be substituted without much change of meaning, and yet the original full meaning of the *may* is still felt: *although it may seem incredible, it is nevertheless true | incredible as it may seem, there is no provision for the teaching of phonetics | whatever the reason may be, the fact remains | whatever his*

*former conduct may have been, his circumstances should exempt him from censure now.*

**2308.** In the following object-clauses *may* keeps much of its original meaning, and cannot be omitted: *I beg that I may not be interrupted | oh that I might recall him from the grave!*

**2309.** In the following object-clauses the indicative may be substituted without much change of meaning: *I hope it may be so | they were afraid—they thought he might have been carried off by gypsies = they were afraid he had been carried off.*

**2310.** The use of the permissive is especially important in clauses of result and purpose: *let the dog loose that he may have a run | we let the dog loose that he might have a run | let us hide the brandy for fear he may drink it all up | we put the milk on the shelf for fear the cat might get at it | speak, (so) that I may hear you!* In the present spoken language we can no longer substitute the indicative or subjunctive—such constructions as *lest he drink* are literary and archaic.

**2311.** In the preterite we can substitute *should* for *might*: *for fear he should drink it all up.* Here *should* suggests the idea of the result being in itself inevitable, or as probable, while *might* suggests it only as a possibility. It is to be observed that even in the literary language the periphrastic forms must be used in the preterite: we cannot write *\*lest he drank*.

### Voice (Active and Passive).

**2312.** The definite active forms are occasionally used in a passive sense: *that house has been building a long time | there is an answer waiting = ‘ . . . being waited for.’* This is the result of the Modern English gerunds having originally been abstract nouns (1257), which, of course, are neutral as regards the distinctions of voice.

**2313.** In Old-English only transitive verbs could be used in the passive. Verbs which governed any other case than

the accusative could not be put into the passive. Thus there is no passive form corresponding to *hē þancode hire* 'he thanked her.' But as soon as the distinction between dative and accusative was lost, it was inevitable that from the active *he thanked her* should be formed the passive *she was thanked*. To us, *thank* is as much a transitive verb as *praise*. But we still hesitate over and try to evade such passive constructions as *she was given a watch* | *he was granted an audience* because we still feel that *she* and *he* are in the dative, not the accusative relation.

### Infinitive and Supine.

**2314.** Of the large number of verbs which take the infinitive in Old-English the greater number are now followed by the supine.

**2315.** The substitution of the supine for the infinitive began in Old-English itself. Thus the supine of purpose, as in *hīe cōmon þæt land tō scēawienne* 'they came to spy out the land,' gradually supplanted the older infinitive with many verbs of desiring, intending, attempting, etc., so that while such a verb as *willan* 'will' continued—as it still does in Modern English—to take the infinitive only, other verbs of similar meaning, such as *wilnian* 'desire,' together with such verbs as *on'ginnan* 'undertake, begin,' began to take the supine as well as the infinitive. In Middle and Modern English the gradual loss of the inflections of the infinitive contributed further to extend the use of the more distinct supine.

**2316.** In Modern English the auxiliary verbs always take the infinitive. So also do most of the defective and analogous verbs, such as *can*, *must*, *dare* [but *I dared him to do it*]. But *need* has both infinitive and supine, and *ought* has only the supine. *have* takes the infinitive not only when an auxiliary, but also in its other transitive uses (*what would you have him*

do?'), but takes the supine in the sense of 'must': *you will have to do it*.

**2317.** The full verbs that take the infinitive are mostly verbs of feeling and perception, such as *feel* (*I felt my heart beat*), *see* (*I saw him go out*), *hear*, *find* (*find pleasure end in pain*). But many verbs of this kind take the supine: *I perceived him to be* . .

**2318.** The three verbs *bid* (now obsolete in the spoken language), *make* (*we made him come in*), *let* still keep the infinitive, while the others of similar meaning have the supine.

**2319.** The infinitive is also kept after the groups *had better*, *had* (now *would*) *rather*: *we had better go home now*. *I would rather stay a little longer*.

**2320.** It is to be observed that the supine is regularly used after passive verbs—including those which in the active take the infinitive: *he was heard to say* . . | *he was made to come* [but *it need not be seen*].

**2321.** The infinitive is sometimes used absolutely: *what, not know me!* | *why not go there yourself?* | *why complain?* But as the infinitive has no distinctive form of its own, it is a question whether we do not rather feel it to be the mere neutral verb-base in such constructions. We feel the vagueness of the form still more in such groups as *cough-no-more lozenges*, where the verb may also be felt to be an imperative.

**2322.** In *rather than*—*sooner than* *yield* *he resolved to die* the infinitive is not absolute, but is dependent on the following verb, the *to* of the supine being omitted on the analogy of such constructions as *he would rather die than yield*.

**2323.** The supine is used absolutely in the subject-relation: *to be good is to be happy* | *it is pleasant to see oneself in print*.

**2324.** It is also used elliptically: *but how to get in!* (*that is the question*). Hence it is so used in adverbial phrases: *to tell the truth, I do not know much about it* | *to be sure (it is)!* = 'certainly.'

**2325.** In Old-English the supine is used in a passive sense

to express what must be or ought to be done: *pā ping pe tō dōnne sind* 'the things which are to be done.' We still keep up this passival use in the phrase *a house to let*; but as we cannot do this with other verbs, we have to use the passive form in such constructions as *this house is to be let or sold*, whence there is a tendency to say *a house to be let*. Originally these passival uses were probably simply ambiguous: *tō dōnne* meant indifferently 'for some one to do' or 'to be done by some one.'

### Gerund.

**2326.** When the supine is substituted for the gerund in the subject-relation, it seems to bring out more strongly the attributes of phenomenality—action and quickness; thus *to see is to believe* means 'seeing is immediately followed by believing,' while *seeing is believing* means 'seeing as a general rule is followed by belief.' We could hardly substitute the gerund for the infinitive in *to know him is to love him* without weakening the sense—still less in *to be or not to be, that is the question*. In *there is no getting rid of him* the gerund must be used because the supine cannot take such an adjunct as *no*.

**2327.** Some verbs, such as *like*, *prefer*, can take either the supine or the gerund in the object-relation. Here, again, the general difference between *I like to get up early* and *I like getting up early* seems to be that the latter implies duration and habit. But it is often difficult to see any distinction.

**2328.** In the combination possessive + gerund, as in *I do not like his coming here so often*, the oblique case may be substituted for the possessive, so that the gerund becomes a present participle: *I do not like him coming here so often*. The difference—if any—appears to be that in the former construction the logical emphasis is on the possessive, in the latter on the verb. But there seems also to be a tendency to give up the latter construction altogether, as if it were a mere variation of *I do not like him to come here so often*. In



the following examples we could hardly alter the possessives: *in honour of its being Christmas day | when metal came into use, men were able to make their knives much longer, without their being afraid of their breaking.* In the last sentence the *their* could be omitted, but not changed into *them*.

**2329.** So also the genitive in *who told you of your wife's being there?* may be made into the common case—*of your wife being there.* In such constructions as *I cannot accept the notion of school-life affecting the poet to this extent* the common case is preferred to the genitive.

**2330.** Although the *ing*-form after the objective or common case is formally a participle, we certainly do not feel that *coming* in *I do not like him coming here* modifies *him* in the same way as it does in *I saw him coming*: *coming* in the former sentence is, in fact, a half-gerund.

**2331.** As we have seen, we recognize the gerund element in the former sentence by our instinctive tendency to regard *him coming* as a substitute for *his coming*. It is important to note that the absence of a distinction between common case and genitive in the plural often makes it impossible in the spoken language to distinguish between gerund and half-gerund, as in *to prevent the ladies leaving us, I generally ordered the table to be removed* (Goldsmith), where the purely orthographic alteration of *ladies* into *ladies'* would make *leaving* into a full gerund.

**2332.** But *leaving* in this sentence could also be made into a full gerund by making it into *from leaving*. In *pardon me blushing* we could in the same way either change *me* into *my* or insert *for*.

**2333.** Indeed, there seems little doubt that the colloquial half-gerunds in such causal constructions as *she caught cold sitting on the damp grass | he tears his clothes climbing trees* have arisen through dropping a preposition.

**2334.** The half-gerund in these last two examples can easily be made into a full participle by a mere change of

order, though the result will be a very stilted literary form—*she, sitting (or having sat) on the damp grass, caught cold.*

**2335.** In several of the other half-gerund constructions the participle can be substituted by a change of construction. Thus *I enjoy being here* suggests *I feel enjoyment while being here.*

**2336.** The constructions which most resist this change are those which also allow the substitution of a possessive or genitive for the preceding objective or common case, for the change of *I do not like him coming here* into *I do not like him when coming here*—*when he comes here* involves a distinct change of meaning.

### Participles.

#### PRESENT.

**2337.** The present participle is sometimes used in a passive sense in some definite tenses (2312).

**2338.** Allied to this is the peculiar use of the adjective participle in *falling sickness* = 'illness in which the patient falls,' *dying day*, *parting glass*, *waking vision*. That the first element is really a participle is shown by the even stress, and also by the Old-High-German *vallandiu suht*; if it were a noun, as in *dining-table*, *sleeping-apartment*, there would be uneven stress (900).

**2339.** When the present participle is added to an intransitive verb, it is logically partly in a kind of apposition to the verb, and at the same time qualifies the subject: *he came running* = 'he ran up' | *the fog came pouring in at the window* | *I cannot go on doing nothing*. In the first two examples *came* is so subordinated in meaning to the participle that it is felt almost as an auxiliary. This is often still more the case when the participle is joined to a verb of rest, as in *he lay sleeping* compared with *he was sleeping* | *he stood looking on*.

**2340.** When it is added to a direct-object word, it is associated sometimes more closely with the preceding transitive verb, as in *I saw him coming up the road*, sometimes rather with the object-word, as in *I have kept you waiting*.

**2341.** The difference between *I saw him coming* and *I saw him come* is that the former is more descriptive, the latter more a statement of a bare fact.

**2342.** In the preceding constructions the participle is run on to the words it modifies without a break. In the following constructions there is generally a more or less distinct pause or change of intonation, the result of which is that the participle or participle-group is felt to be equivalent to a dependent clause.

**2343.** When equivalent to a relative clause, such a group may be regarded simply as a post-adjective-group (1788), so that in such a sentence as *here are my letters announcing my intention to start* a pause after *letters*, though allowable, is not necessary.

**2344.** Such groups may be used to modify sentences in various ways, which are often difficult to define exactly. Thus in *she, dying, gave it me* the participle is evidently equivalent to a temporal clause, while in *seeing a crowd, I stopped* the group can be expanded into *when I saw . .* or *because I saw . .*, although the causal meaning is not so clear as in *not having received an answer, I wrote again*.

**2345.** This vagueness is, of course, one of the reasons why this construction is often preferred to that with a dependent clause, especially in the literary language. Compare composition (1560).

**2346.** On the other hand, these participle-groups, through having the same function as dependent sentences, have come to adopt some of the grammatical peculiarities of the latter.

**2347.** Thus they can take conjunctions whenever clearness seems to make it desirable, as in *Mac Ian, while putting on his clothes and calling to his servants to bring some refreshment*

*for his visitors, was shot through the head | I wrote a similar epitaph for my wife, though still living compared with do good, hoping for nothing.*

**2348.** A participle-group introduced by a conjunction no longer requires to be placed next to the word it modifies, as in the preceding examples, but may be detached from it: † *nor ever did. I love thee less, though mourning for thy wickedness.*

**2349.** The groups we have hitherto been considering all modify some definite word, but there are others which are, logically speaking, complete sentences, having their own subject and predicate. When grammatically disconnected from any one word in the accompanying sentence, they modify that sentence as a whole, as in † *we sitting, as I said, the cock crew loud = while we were sitting, . . | soon afterwards the truth revealed itself, the real criminal confessing the crime.*

**2350.** This absolute construction is found already in Old-English, in which it appears, however, not as a nominative, but as a dative absolute (*ūs sittendum*), being an imitation of the Latin ablative absolute. In Middle English we have an oblique absolute, which is due rather to the influence of the Old-French accusative absolute than to any tradition of the Old-English construction. It lasted into the Modern period (*us sitting*), where it was kept up mainly by the vague analogy of the Latin ablative absolute. The change of *us sitting* into *we sitting*—which began already in Middle English—was of course the inevitable result of the desire of getting rid of the oblique forms in their anomalous position at the head of a logical sentence.

**2351.** The absolute participle-construction is not only uncolloquial, but is by many felt to be un-English, and to be avoided in writing as well.

**2352.** The logical subject of such a group is sometimes repeated in the accompanying sentence in the form of a pronoun, as in *our guest offering his assistance, he was*

*accepted among the number*; or a pronoun in the group may refer to a noun in the sentence: *neither could he suspect that he had missed his way, it being so broad and plain.*

**2353.** By the analogy of the absolute construction, participle-groups without a logical subject are sometimes used absolutely. This harsh construction is quite a mannerism with some writers, such as Richard Jefferies, as in the two following examples, taken from a single page: *crossing to the other side of the bridge, and looking over, the current had scooped away the sand . . .* = 'when I had crossed . . . I found that the current . . .' | *carefully looking over that side again, the moorhen who had been out rushed back.* In the last example it is only the context that tells us it was not the moorhen who looked over the side of the bridge, but the author himself.

**2354.** This is an extreme development of constructions such as *besides, being rebels, all their acts are illegal*, where the group is an adjunct to the pronoun implied by the possessive.

**2355.** The omission of the logical subject is natural enough in adverbial phrases: *talking of subscriptions, here is one to which your lordship may affix your name* | *my father had, generally speaking, his temper under complete control.* In the first example *talking of* is evidently a shortening of *while we are talking of*. Such phrases may be worn down till the participle becomes a preposition such as *concerning*.

#### PRETERITE.

**2356.** The preterite participle is sometimes used in an active sense, as in *a learned man*. The Old-English form was *gelæred*, literally 'taught,' being a translation of the Latin *doctus*; when *læran* became obsolete, the participle of *learn* was substituted, necessarily in the sense of 'having learnt.' Other examples are *drunk(en)*, *mistaken*, the obsolete *drawn* in *why are you drawn?* = 'why have you drawn your sword?', which, like *learned*, are, logically,

perfect participles. In the obsolete *well spoken* = 'eloquent,' 'plausible,' *spoken* is equivalent to an indefinite present participle. The preterite participle of intransitive verbs has an active sense in periphrastic forms such as *he is gone*.

**2357.** The preterite participle is also used in constructions analogous to *falling sickness* (2338), as in the vulgar *in all my born days I never saw such a rascal*, where *born days* = 'time since I was born, life-time.'

**2358.** The preterite participle after intransitive verbs stands in the same relation to verb and subject as the present participle does under similar circumstances, as in *he sat buried in thought*; but the predicative function of the preterite participle is much more marked than that of the present, especially when the verb is weakened to a mere link-verb: *to stand convicted* | *to get married* | *to become distinguished* | *to be known*.

**2359.** It is added to a direct-object word in the same way as the present participle: *I saw it done* | *I saw it being done* | *I will see it done* = *I will have it done* | *he declared himself satisfied* | *do you not wish him gone?* In the last example the participle has an active sense.

**2360.** The preterite participle may be added to a predicative noun: *that is a good thing done* parallel to *I saw a good thing done* (2359). Here the participle is connected in thought directly with the preceding verb—'I saw the doing of a good thing.' The similar addition of the participle to a subject-word is only literary: *a Deity believed is joy begun* = 'the belief in a Deity is the beginning of joy.'

**2361.** After a preposition-group it generally has quite a different function, as in *people often fight without any mischief done* (Sheridan). Here *done* is felt to be a substitute for *being done*—which would, indeed, be the more general form of expression—so that it is really a kind of half-gerund (2330). So also in *they set him free without his ransom paid* (Shakespeare).

**2362.** But in some cases the participle remains a pure adjective after a preposition-group, as in †*fortune is famous for her numbers slain*.

**2363.** A group headed by a preterite participle when equivalent to a relative clause is generally run on without pause, as in *a life wasted in the vain pursuit of pleasure*, though a pause is also admissible, as in *I am the sister of one Claudio, condemned to lose his head*.

**2364.** A variety of other relations are expressed by joining on (with a pause) a preterite-participle group: *once seen, it can never be forgotten* | *planned merely, 'tis a common felony; accomplished, an immortal undertaking* | *which, testified or not, does verily remain the fact*.

**2365.** Here, again, the relation may be made clearer by conjunctions: *when once seen* | *if planned merely* | *whether testified or not* | *if deceived, I have been my own dupe*.

**2366.** There is an absolute preterite particle, as in *this done, find the councillor!* | *which said, he sat down*, but its use is more limited than that of the absolute present participle. It is very little used with pronouns in the subject-relation (*us dispossessed, he once passed*), because a preterite participle after a nominative is generally not distinguishable from a finite preterite.

**2367.** The following examples contain constructions parallel to present-participle ones: †*thus repulsed, our final hope is flat despair* (2352) | *thus saying, he took up his hat . . . when gone, we all regarded each other for some minutes with some confusion* (2353).





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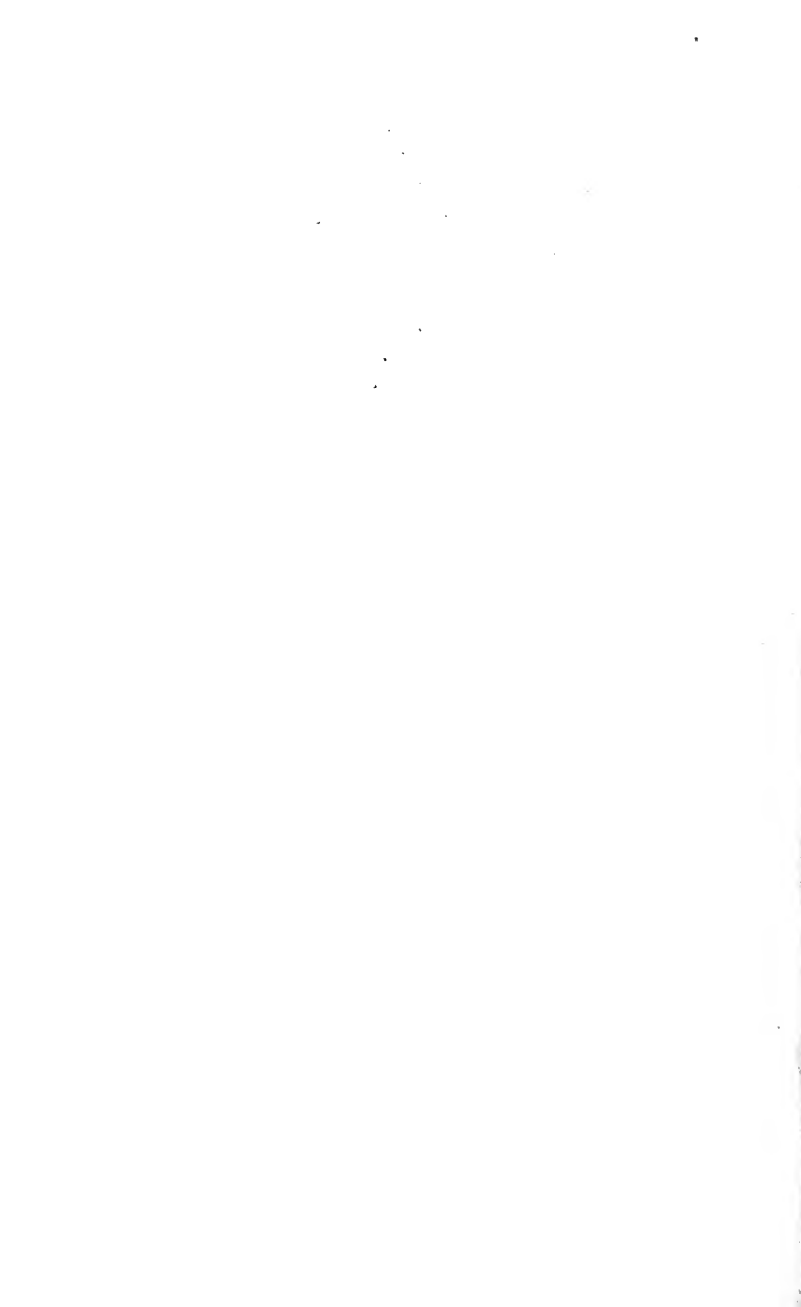
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