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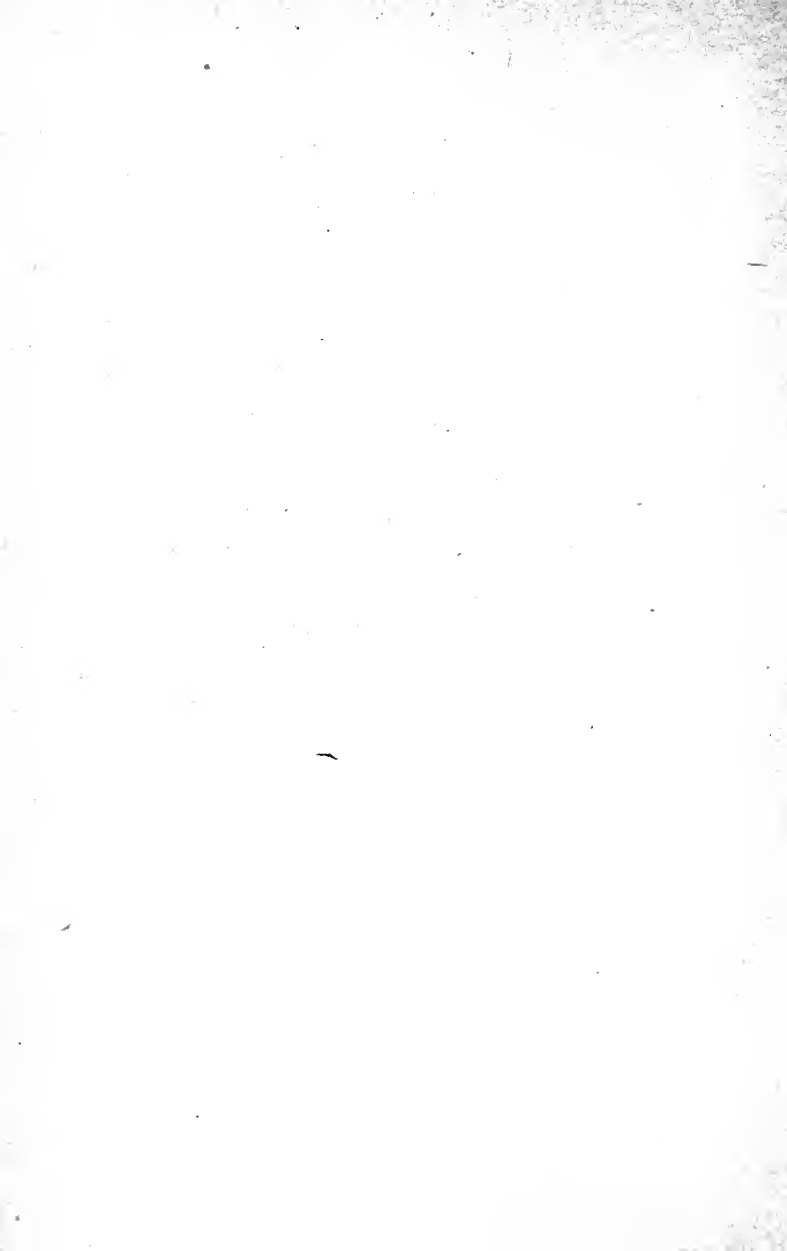
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# RHETORIC

AND

## THE STUDY OF LITERATURE

BY

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## PREFACE

Views in regard to what the course in English should be are changing year by year, an encouraging sign of growth. Three fundamental ideas seem to be winning wide acceptance. They are as follows: First, emphasis during the earlier years of the secondary school course should fall on practice in expression through the medium of simple, interesting, carefully graded exercises, with rhetorical theory well in the background; during the later years this practice should be continued, the tasks in composition less frequent but calling for longer, maturer effort, and something of rhetorical theory should be placed before the pupils. Second, the course in literature during the earlier years should be exceedingly simple, designed to break up careless reading habits and lead gradually to an appreciation of better things; during the junior and senior years the study of literature should become more and more systematic, not only acquainting the pupil with a few choice masterpieces but fixing in his mind methods of study, supplying him with the vocabulary necessary for intelligent discussion of books, and familiarizing him with the greatest names in English literature, so that after school days are over he may be equipped to continue his reading along profitable lines and in an intelligent way. Third, as the course progresses, practice in composition and practice in literary criticism should, within reasonable bounds, be correlated, this to be managed in part through the study of rhetoric.

This volume, designed for use in the last two years of the secondary school course, contains such textbook matter as I think is needed to carry out these three ideas in an economical way: a brief review of rhetoric, including a little vocabulary of terms commonly employed in talking about books; a general classification and discussion of the various literary forms—fiction, drama, essay, etc.—together with suggestions both general and specific concerning how these forms may be studied; a summary by periods of English literature, containing what I think is the minimum that the pupil should know upon graduation—such information as an intelligent man or woman surely ought to possess. I have not hesitated to include, in revised form, some matter that has already appeared in an earlier manual; but the exercises and questions, which form a considerable part of the whole, are new—new and yet old, for little has gone into this book that has not been tried out repeatedly in class room. Indeed I have neither the courage nor the inclination to put forth in textbook form anything experimental.

This volume should not go forth without some acknowledgment of indebtedness. Many authorities were consulted during the preparation of the summary of English literature; yet the nature of the summary is such—merely a statement of established facts and accepted estimates—that seldom has it seemed necessary to refer specifically to sources of information familiar to most students. I owe much to fellow teachers who, as critics, have made many helpful suggestions; and I am especially indebted to Miss Elizabeth Peck, who has shared with me the burden of correcting proof.

A. M. H.

# CONTENTS

## *PART I*

### RHETORIC

CHAPTER	PAGE
I THE STUDY OF RHETORIC . . . . .	3
II PURITY . . . . .	6
III CLEARNESS . . . . .	16
IV FORCE . . . . .	37
V BEAUTY . . . . .	60
VI STYLE . . . . .	69
VII NARRATION . . . . .	75
VIII DESCRIPTION . . . . .	83
IX EXPOSITION . . . . .	92
X ARGUMENT . . . . .	105

## *PART II*

### THE STUDY OF LITERATURE

XI READING . . . . .	127
XII LITERATURE DEFINED . . . . .	136
XIII KINDS OF LITERATURE: POETRY AND PROSE . . . . .	141
XIV VARIETIES OF PROSE . . . . .	144
XV VARIETIES OF POETRY . . . . .	150
XVI THE STUDY OF PROSE FICTION . . . . .	157
XVII THE STUDY OF DRAMA . . . . .	169
XVIII THE STUDY OF ESSAYS . . . . .	186
XIX THE STUDY OF POETRY . . . . .	194

## PART III

## A BRIEF SUMMARY OF ENGLISH LITERATURE

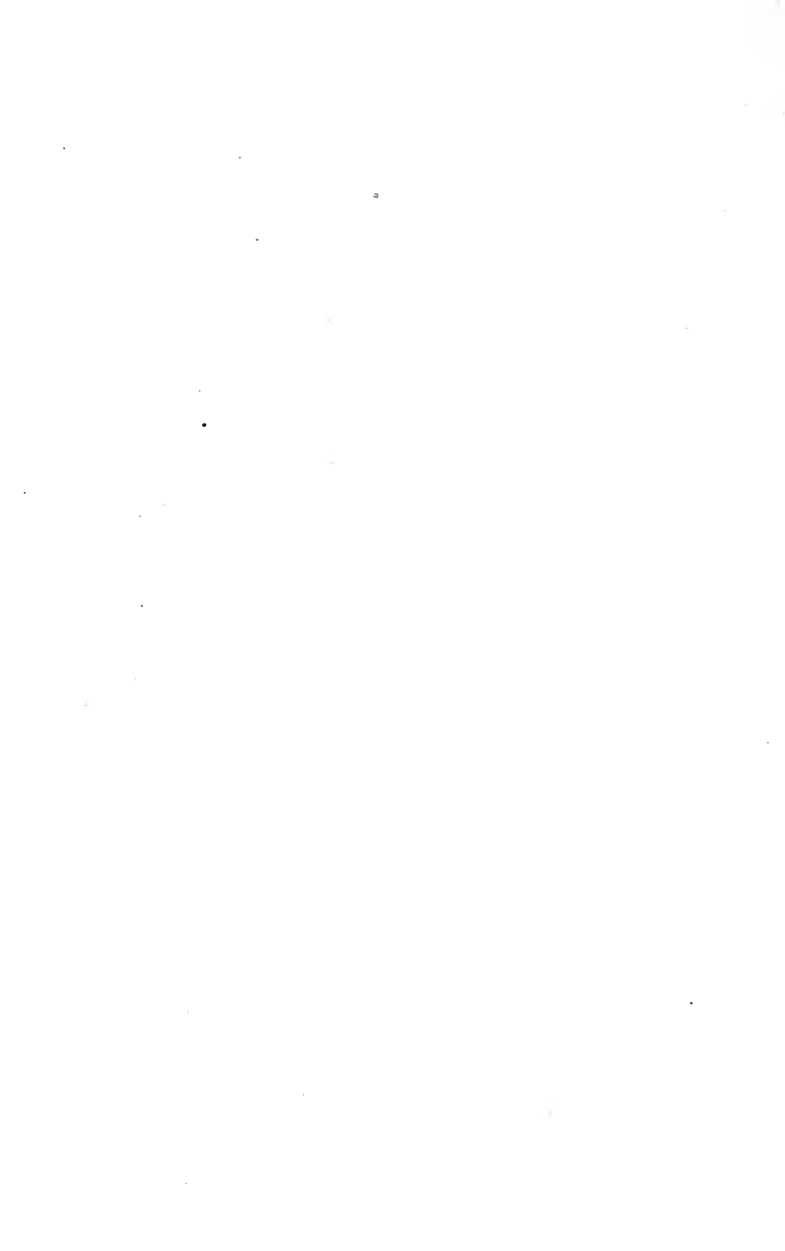
CHAPTER	PAGE
INTRODUCTORY . . . . .	237
XX OLD ENGLISH OR ANGLO-SAXON PERIOD (650-1066)	239
XXI NORMAN-ENGLISH PERIOD (1066-1340) . . . . .	245
XXII CHAUCER'S PERIOD (1340-1400) . . . . .	251
XXIII CAXTON'S PERIOD (1400-1500) . . . . .	257
XXIV PRE-ELIZABETHAN PERIOD (1500-1564) . . . . .	261
XXV THE ELIZABETHAN PERIOD (1564-1625) . . . . .	266
XXVI THE PURITAN AND CAVALIER PERIOD (1625-1660)	276
XXVII RESTORATION PERIOD (1660-1700) . . . . .	282
XXVIII QUEEN ANNE PERIOD (1700-1744) . . . . .	285
XXIX THE AGE OF JOHNSON (1744-1789) . . . . .	290
XXX WORDSWORTH-SCOTT ERA (1789-1832) . . . . .	299
XXXI VICTORIAN ERA (1832-1900) . . . . .	308

## APPENDIX

A RULES OF PUNCTUATION . . . . .	319
B FIGURES OF SPEECH . . . . .	327
C VERSIFICATION . . . . .	334
D THEMES FOR ESSAYS AND ORATIONS . . . . .	346
E A SPECIMEN BRIEF . . . . .	356
F QUESTIONS ON TYPICAL MASTERPIECES . . . . .	360
George Eliot's <i>Silas Marner</i> . . . . .	360
The De Coverley Papers . . . . .	365
Macaulay's Samuel Johnson . . . . .	375
Scott's <i>Lady of the Lake</i> . . . . .	384
Goldsmith's <i>Deserted Village</i> . . . . .	389
Milton's <i>L'Allegro</i> . . . . .	394
Milton's <i>Il Penseroso</i> . . . . .	397
Shakespeare's <i>Macbeth</i> . . . . .	399
INDEX . . . . .	409



**PART I**  
**RHETORIC**



CHAPTER I  
THE STUDY OF RHETORIC

What is rhetoric? Briefly, it is the oldest and greatest of all arts, the art of communicating by means of language. A manual which points out the qualities to be desired in oral and written expression and offers suggestions in regard to how these qualities may be gained is called a rhetoric. Hundreds of such manuals have been written. The earliest take us back to the days of the ancient Greeks; indeed the term rhetoric is derived from *rhetor*, a name which the Greeks applied to the professional orator and likewise to one who wrote speeches for others to deliver.

**Rhetoric defined**

In a very elementary way we study rhetoric from our cradle days, through consciously or unconsciously observing how those about us make their words effective and patterning our own speech accordingly. As we become readers, we note, for the most part unwittingly, the ways of written expression and adopt such of them as appeal to us. By this natural, direct, but haphazard method many have achieved no mean degree of skill. Shakespeare, in all probability, never studied rhetoric in any other way; he simply observed and practiced till he had mastered the art. But to the average person there comes a time when he feels the need of a friendly guide to advise him what to observe, what to strive after and what to avoid when speaking or writing. He feels the need of a little theory to steady and direct him in his efforts to improve his powers of expression.

**Why study rhetoric?**

Rhetorics are designed to furnish such guidance. Their service is a limited one, however, for of course no amount of faithful textbook study ever in itself resulted in a brilliant conversationalist, or a novelist like Thackeray, or a fascinating essayist like Lamb. It cannot supply natural ability or personal charm, nor is it a substitute for independent study of models and faithful practice long continued. It is but a staff, or at best a walking companion, not a coach-and-four.

Though but a staff, it is one not to be thought of lightly. There are those, it is true, who regard rhetorical study as harmful, feeling that it checks spontaneity. But we need not share their fears. Undoubtedly it does in some cases produce temporarily an element of uncomfortable self-consciousness, an awkwardness such as children experience when their parents try to break them of unfortunate ways of holding knife and fork; or such as older people feel when, after a year or two of self-instruction in golf, they at last are sensible enough to take a few lessons from a competent teacher. While ridding themselves of bad habits and acquiring correct form, they appear to be losing the little skill that they once fancied they possessed. "No great author," states Alfred Hennequin in his useful little book *The Art of Playwriting*, "was ever hurt by the study of the principles of rhetoric, and no small author ever achieved success without such study."

The study of any art calls into use a number of technical terms. The art of communication by means of language is so very complex that its technical vocabulary is of necessity large; and since rhetoric has been an object of careful study for centuries, during which few authorities have employed pre-

**Textbook a staff only**

**Rhetorical study and spontaneity**

**Plan and purpose of Part I**

cisely the same set of terms, not a little confusion has arisen. Out of this chaos of conflicting terminology have been selected five important words, more or less technical, for careful explanation: *purity*, *clearness*, *force*, *beauty*, *style*. These terms will serve as focus points for a very simple survey of the rhetorical field, undertaken with a two-fold purpose in mind: first, the ordinary one of gaining better powers of expression; second, the less commonly recognized purpose of opening the way for a more intelligent enjoyment of great masterpieces of rhetorical art.

## CHAPTER II

### PURITY

What is meant by Purity? It is but another name for good usage or correctness. First of all, it has to do with words considered singly. It sends us to the dictionary, where we learn what words belong to the language, what each word means, and how it is spelled and pronounced. Employing words not in the language, using words incorrectly as to their meaning, misspelling and mispronouncing words, all are violations of purity. So too is the use of terms which, though found in the dictionary, are coarse, or for any good reason are not employed by those whom we look up to as masters of English.

Purity is concerned not only with words considered singly but with word groups. It sends us to our textbook in grammar. All grammatical errors, whether mistakes in forms (the changes, for example, made to indicate number, gender, case, and tense) or violations of what are known as the rules of syntax (such as that the verb agrees with its subject in person and number), are opposed to purity.

Ability to use pure English cannot be acquired, however, through studying a textbook in grammar and through faithfully consulting a dictionary. For every language has its idioms—words, phrases, and even entire sentences, employed in peculiar ways—which foreigners master with great difficulty. In a country like ours, where many national-

ities are represented, sentences often may be heard which, considered individually, are good English and correctly used so far as grammar and dictionary are concerned, yet the things said are not said in the English way; the language is unidiomatic. Faulty speech of this character falls not alone from the lips of foreigners imperfectly acquainted with our language; unfortunately the ignorant and the careless even of American birth adopt wrong expressions frequently heard, and fall into un-English ways of speech. Moreover in so large a country it is inevitable that localities widely separated should differ somewhat in speech. Certain words and phrases commonly heard in the South are not used elsewhere. New England has her provincialisms; so, too, has the West. Thus it happens that many even of the better educated offend against purity without being conscious of it, through imitating that which they hear and suppose to be correct. The use of idioms common to the whole language is to be desired, for they impart a distinct flavor or individuality. But the use of expressions which belong merely to a section of country leads to confusion.

Everyone, then, should own a good dictionary and use it. Everyone, popular opinion to the contrary notwithstanding, should own a good textbook in grammar **Masterpieces** and master it from cover to cover. But **trustworthy** there is no third corresponding book of **guides** idioms, no authoritative volume adequately calling attention to the scores upon scores of unidiomatic or provincial blemishes; and even though such a volume were issued, it would have to be rewritten yearly, for new blights appear day by day. Fortunately, however, everyone has access to good books, and in good books the purest English is found. If we would learn to speak and write correctly, if we wish to weed from our speech that which

is undesirable, we shall do well to read at least a few masterpieces over and over again. In this way we absorb, gradually and almost unconsciously, not only the thought but the phrasing of thought, and learn to distinguish between English that is pure and English that is corrupt.

But unfortunately the main trouble lies in the fact that, to many, purity seems of little consequence. They employ *aint, he don't, there was three*, etc., and sprinkle their talk with slang, as if it were prudish and un-American to do otherwise.

Purity a mark  
of self-respect

Careful speech is, it must be admitted with shame, becoming more and more un-American, as one soon realizes if he visits other English-speaking countries, where language is used with far greater care. Yet there still remain a commendable number who respect and guard the national tongue as they guard national institutions. They are not prudes but a self-respecting aristocracy who look upon purity as the first essential in oral and written composition. Even those who are most careless must admit that purity is the foundation upon which the art of expression rests.

Here is a little vocabulary of terms which cluster about the idea of correctness and good use:

- I Pure, chaste, correct, idiomatic,  
grammatical.
- II Barbarous, provincial, colloquial,  
slangy, archaic, obsolete, corrupt,  
vulgar.

Most of these words are familiar. Barbarism is a general term, seldom employed, applied to all errors in the use of words, but more particularly to the use of



foreign words and idioms. A provincialism is a peculiarity of speech found in some one locality. Colloquialisms are forms employed in daily conversation as opposed to purer language found in good books. A word is archaic if it belongs to a former period and is now seldom used, obsolete if it has passed entirely out of use. If the meaning of any other term is not apparent, a dictionary should be consulted.

EXERCISES \*

1 The words below are taken mainly from a booklet entitled *Better Say*, issued by the publishers of the *Standard Dictionary*, and from lists found in *The Enlarged Practice-Book*. Study their pronunciation, consulting a dictionary when necessary.

acclimate	amenable	athletic	chasm
address	American	audience	clique
adult	applicable	auxiliary	column
adverse -	Arab	bicycle	condolence
aëronaut	architect	biography	creek
aëroplane	arraign	bouquet	cruel
aged	aspirant	brethren	culinary
alias	asthma	brusque	daunt
alternative	athlete	calf	deficit
despair	elm	finance	hearth
despicable	eloquent	foreigner	height
desultory	envelop	gape	heinous
dew	explicable	genuine	helm
discourse	exquisite	gondola	herculean
drama	extol	government	history
due	fiancé	grievous	hoist
duty	figure	grimace	homage
eleven	finale	harass	hundred

\* Some of the exercises, it will be noted, are too long for single assignments.

hygiene	Italian	mischievous	precedent
hypotenuse	joust	mountainous	predicament
idea	just	nape	presentiment
incomparable	lamentable	national	pretty
inexplicable	launch	often	produce
inquiry	laundress	pageant	professor
interested	literature	poem	rather
intrigue	maintenance	poignant	realization
irreparable	memory	potato	really
recess	sacrilege	tedious	vagary
recluse	salmon	Tuesday	vaudeville
recognize	salve	tiny	vehement
resource	status	tremendous	villain
retail	strength	truth	viscount
rhythm	student	truths	waft
roily	stupid	tune	wary
route	suave	tutor	yacht
ruse	swallow	usually	zoölogy

**2** Since poor spelling is frequently due to faulty pronunciation, make a spelling test of the words found in exercise **1**.

**3** Incredible as it may appear, the following words are commonly misspelled by high school pupils. Why not master them once for all? It will profit little to memorize blindly; study each word carefully to see why it is troublesome. Note prefixes and suffixes.

accidentally	agrecable	article	balance
account	all right	artistically	barbarous
acknowledge	already	ascertain	believe
acquaint	among	audience	benefit
across	anonymous	author	Britain
adjacent	apparatus	autos	business
affairs	around	awful	chauffeur

chestnutting	creak	dilapidated	equipped
clothes	cries	disappear	etc.
college	definitely	dreamt	exaggeration
coming	description	dries	extraordinary
comparatively	despise	drowned	familiar
condemning	develop	emerge	fascinate
control	difference	enemies	fiery
finally	humorous	interrupt	led
following	imitate	irritable	lightning
forehead	immediately	its	lose
gas	immense	judgment	lovable
goddess	impel	kindergarten	magazine
grease	incidentally	laboratory	majestic
height	intelligible	leaves	meant
miscellaneous	obliging	parliament	probably
mischievous	obstacle	pennant	professor
misspell	occasionally	planned	salary
mysterious	occurred	possess	screech
myth	odor	precedent	secretary
neither	oneself	preceding	seems
ninetieth	opportunity	privilege	seize
separate	stationery	tendency	visible
sergeant	studying	together	waive
siege	successful	tragedy	wherever
similar	sulphur	tries	wholly
slippery	superb	twelfth	whose
somersault	surprise	until	wondrous
speech	syllable	vertical	writer

4 Open your dictionary at random and explain every mark and abbreviation used on the page before you.

5 Prepare talks on any four or five words in the following list, getting all your information from an unabridged dictionary. Make the talks as exhaustive as possible, touching upon spelling, syllabification, pronunciation,

classification as parts of speech, meanings, derivation, synonyms and antonyms if given.

precocious	bicycle	school	aëroplane
kodak	lace	curfew	vacation
courage	disaster	delinquent	crafty
naughty	maudlin	tennis	pester
anarchy	base-ball	monologue	trout
phaeton	miniature	insult	ballot
cinch	abandon	labyrinth	herald
minstrel	yacht	ponder	primrose
tantalize	roly-poly	remorse	belfry
bedlam	umbrella	brace	carriage

6 Write a composition, perhaps four hundred words long, to which you can give one of the following titles:

What the dictionary tells                      How to use a dictionary  
Half an hour with the dictionary

7 Here are a few specimens of bad English such as is shamefully common even among high school graduates. If you find among them expressions you sometimes employ, determine to eliminate them absolutely from your speech. You can ill afford to go through life bearing the marks of illiteracy.

1. John cannot find his cap; I presume he's left it some place.
2. Let's go somewheres else.
3. He said he was to a party the night before and so neglected his lessons.
4. I want you to stay right to home.
5. The fence was that high you could not vault it.
6. Some one must of told.
7. Let's leave the dog go.
8. He relates about how he went fishing.
9. One of the girls suggested to cut the line.
10. The people look smaller than what they really are.
11. No sooner had he spoke when the audience began to applaud.
12. The following have been elected into the Glee Club.

13. The three of them set out for Boston.
14. Ten miles, did you say? Is that all the farther it is?
15. She was determined on having her own way.
16. Everything I tried to do seemed like it was my hardest task.
17. I took the car, as I thought I would enjoy the ride.
18. I just started to run when the gong sounded.
19. I worked all morning and played all afternoon.
20. Of him I will write at the best of my ability.
21. He did pretty good for a new beginner.
22. He went to the woods in search for a pole.
23. Henry said he wished he brought a stove.
24. He eludes from the policeman's grasp and slipped away.
25. I know a remedy equally as good.
26. She attended a business college, but she did not take a position from there.
27. When one is at the theatre, he or she will note many things of interest.
28. How do I feel? Pretty good, thank you.
29. He walks like he was tired.
30. I think probably it might have been father.
31. The cause of much evil is due to the abandoned writings of men of wit.
32. I am fond of sports and football.
33. Soon we saw three boys who we recognized as them.
34. I do not know who the picture was painted by.
35. Soon we reached a place where there was fewer trees.
36. Here comes four or five girls.
37. It was all one could do to keep themselves on the seat.
38. I could not make head or tail of it.
39. I left undone many things I would like to have done.
40. If it wasn't for hurting his feelings, I'd do it gladly.
41. She was one of those dreamy sort of children.
42. Don't the red light look pretty?
43. In the rear of the house is barns.
44. There was from ten to fifteen courses.
45. This accounts for Banquo being up late.
46. If one has ability, they should use their talents.
47. Looking off to the west is the ocean, now red with the sinking sun.

48. She was well built, medium height, blue eyes, and beautiful hair.

49. The rest of the ride was uneventful, reaching New Orleans at ten.

50. It is painful to hear his talk, being not unlike a dry sermon.

51. The building was too small, so a right and left wing were added.

52. There was a crowd of ragged people who, whenever they picked up a book, it turned into a garment.

53. On entering the hall, everything was decorated with yellow and black.

54. The last, but by no means not the least, was Peter.

55. Macaulay's style of writing is graphic.

56. As a general rule he is punctual.

57. If I had have known, I should have been prepared.

58. I'd as leave go as stay.

59. You might of guessed.

60. He said you was absent.

61. I would of thought he would of telephoned.

62. We hadn't ought to of left him alone.

63. If he had have cared to, he could have gone.

64. You had ought to of seen him!

65. Will I need an overcoat?

66. Let's you and I stay behind.

67. He learned me how to skate.

68. Have either of the boats returned?

69. Each of the men were told what to do.

70. Everyone must look out for hisself.

71. Whom shall I say called?

72. I did not think he would go that far.

73. What hotel does he stop at?

74. I can't go no farther.

75. It is as large, if not larger, than the others.

76. I don't care which boat you take, for they are both alike.

77. I reckon he's going fishing.

78. John, mother, and myself made up the party.

79. A foul, he said, is when the ball goes to the right of the first base line or to the left of the third base line.

80. This is good, but I like the other equally as well.

81. Wave your arms like I do.

82. The life here is very different than I expected.
83. It was on the third of June when the boat was launched.
84. I got the book off Tom.
85. I did not notice him, as my eyes were turned aside.
86. We had no wood or coal with which to build a fire.
87. He took the glove from Henry and hid it on him.
88. Aint it cold!
89. When the conjunctions are omitted, a comma should be placed between each word.
90. The furnace fire went out on me.

## CHAPTER III

### CLEARNESS

Clearness is a term so familiar that it does not need defining; nor should it be necessary to dwell on the importance of making whatever one has to say **Clearness** easy to understand. The reminder cannot come too often, however, that to convey even a simple message with absolute accuracy is such a difficult matter that seldom do we succeed in saying precisely what we mean.

Clearness depends on four things: first, mastery of subject; second, ability to plan; third, skill in the selection of words and the construction of sentences and paragraphs; fourth, skill in the employment of a few simple devices. **Four sources**

That mastery of subject is essential is quite evident; for of course one cannot give what he does not possess, cannot impart to others that which he himself does not know perfectly. We may have **Mastery of subject** found through unpleasant experience that a half-mastered proposition in geometry leads to a hazy demonstration; or that it is safer to trust to compass, when traversing a strange country, than to follow the directions of a guide who is not quite sure of the trail. On the other hand, one would be right in concluding that the remarkable clearness of Macaulay's essay on Samuel Johnson is due in large measure to the fact that Macaulay was at home in the London of Johnson's day almost as truly as in the London of his own century. He knew his



field. With equal certainty we may attribute the obscurity in the typical school composition to the fact that the young, too commonly unwilling to write on simple, homely topics growing out of their familiar experience, select subjects lying beyond the range of their intimate knowledge. Moreover it is difficult to realize that one may be deeply interested in certain things and have a grasp of them sufficient for most purposes, without knowing them well enough to impart his knowledge to others.

Mastery of subject, though of first importance, does not bring us quite to the threshold of expression; for before the message is entrusted to words, whether it be through song or story or plain statement of fact, there must be careful planning. The writer when about to compose is like a traveler preparing for a journey. The traveler must decide where to go and how to make the journey, how long to stay in this place, how long in that, and what he would best try to see and do, that the purpose for which the journey is taken may be accomplished. Or we may compare the writer to a builder who, before setting his laborers at work, decides what manner of structure he will erect, how large it shall be, how constructed, how divided into rooms and what shall be the plan of each room, that all may serve the purpose for which the structure is intended. That is to say, the trained writer, before penning a sentence, will have his entire message pretty well mapped out in his mind, its ending as well as its beginning, and the intervening parts all in their proper sequence and proportion—mapped out so clearly that when he has written, the reader will readily see that the composition follows a definite route or plan or pattern. If the character of the subject is such that the plan followed is necessarily complicated, the writer may find it necessary to outline it in an introductory sen-

tence or two, and perhaps refer to it now and then as the composition proceeds. It even may be necessary, when the composition proper is completed, to summarize all that has been said, in this way again presenting an outline of the whole.

A more technical way of stating the substance of the preceding paragraph would be to say that every composition should be planned with the principles of unity, mass, and coherence in mind. Coherence is but another name for proper arrangement or sequence. Mass is but another name for emphasis properly placed. Unity, a term difficult to define, demands that the composition conform to some design or pattern or plan. The idea of unity really includes the idea of mass and coherence; for a composition the parts of which are out of their proper places, or out of proportion through careless massing, cannot be the product of a perfectly conceived, unified plan.

Ability to conceive plans—to inventory the material available, select what is needed for the purpose at hand, and hit upon the most effective way of presenting the material selected, is exceedingly rare; and rarer still is the ability, a plan having been decided on, to hold this plan in mind while composing. It is so likely to slip away at an unguarded moment, other plans intruding. We forget momentarily the goal towards which we are striving; we hurry over important matters or dwell too long on the unimportant, with the result that the finished product is incoherent, poorly proportioned, un-unified. Ability to invent plans and to hold them in mind, though rare, can be cultivated through constant practice in making topical outlines on paper, the same matter being outlined in several different

**Unity, mass,  
coherence**

**Ability  
to plan**

**How  
cultivated**

ways with a view to discovering which is best, and through brief oral compositions given without notes. The making of topical analyses of well constructed masterpieces is also helpful, especially if it be done carefully and with a view to discovering how closely the principles of unity, mass, and coherence are followed by skilled writers.

This brings us to the third source of clearness: care in selecting words and in constructing sentences and paragraphs.

First of all, clearness calls for purity. A word mispronounced or misspelled may be understood, yet there is always the possibility that it may not be; a word misused as to its meaning is like a guideboard so askew that the traveler may miss his way. Second, clearness calls for familiar words.

*Peregrinations* is a good term, found in the dictionary; but *travels* is a safer one to employ, since everyone knows its meaning.

Third, clearness calls for precise words—terms which neatly fit the meaning intended. The careless too often employ whatever comes first to mind; skilled writers weigh words, rejecting many, it may be, before hitting upon the ones precisely serving their purpose. They take advantage of the fact that our language, above all others, is rich in synonyms—word-groups the members of which convey nearly, and yet not quite, the same meaning, the shades of difference making it possible to express with nicety the meaning intended.

If we pass now from single words to sentences, it may be said again that clearness calls for purity. An ungrammatical sentence is like a window the panes of which are so far from clean or so marred by imperfections that they obscure the view

Clearness

through

verbal purity

Through

familiar

words

Through

precise words

Grammatical

purity

and at the same time distract attention. Not only should each sentence be strictly grammatical, but so carefully constructed that phrase follows phrase in easily perceived order, with no gaps to bridge, no unnecessary words obstructing the way. Modifiers should be so placed that it will be easy to see what they modify; pronouns should have clearly defined antecedents. Punctuation marks should be employed with great care, for they are the most useful of all guides, except perhaps that little group of introductory and transitional words which make the neat, smooth joints between ideas—joints that characterize skilled sentence carpentry.

A sentence is but a little composition, and as such obeys the principles of unity, coherence, and mass; and so too does the paragraph, which is but a collection of sentences bound together coherently through unity of purpose. It is in the paragraph that we see most clearly the effectiveness of introductory words and phrases which lead from sentence to sentence. In the paragraph, perhaps more clearly than in whole compositions, do we note the advantage of careful structure. There are many moulds in which paragraphs may be cast; but for clearness the best plan, perhaps, is that which calls for a first sentence that is topical, plainly announcing what the paragraph is about and suggesting the sequence to be followed.

Of the many special devices to which one may resort in an effort to gain clearness, the four we shall consider are so simple that they are employed almost instinctively even by children. The first is mere restatement, or expressing the same idea in slightly different words. Those who employ this device recognize that what is perfectly clear to the writer

may not prove clear to the reader; and since the reader is not present to say *I do not understand*, it is safer to employ restatement freely, assuming that some one of several ways of putting a thing will be understood. This device is especially helpful where the message is intended not for any one reader but for many, and where, accordingly, the chances of being misunderstood are greater.

Quite as simple is a second device, the multiplying of particulars. Young writers are given to making statements that are broad and too general to convey clear impressions. *We are having a fine time*, the boy writes home from his camp in the woods; but unless this general statement is followed by many particulars, his letter fails to convey what he intends. For *a fine time* may mean one thing to the boy and quite a different thing to his mother. In other words, we sometimes fail to furnish the reader's imagination sufficient material out of which to build; consequently there arises in the reader's mind something quite unlike that which was intended, or it may be that the reader's mind will refuse altogether to build, and the words are wasted.

A third way of gaining clearness is by means of examples, a device particularly helpful in exposition and argument. Here, for instance, is a praiseworthy essay in which a school girl considers what studies have proved most helpful to her. In an early paragraph the general statement is made that Latin has proved a great aid to her in getting all her other lessons. But this general statement is not left unsupported; it is followed by example after example showing how Latin has helped her in the study of French and English and the sciences. The illustrations were needed for perfect clearness.

**Multiplying  
particulars**

**Examples**

The devices mentioned in the two preceding paragraphs are essentially the same, and very closely akin is the fourth and last that we shall consider—the employment of comparisons which reveal now points of similarity, now points of dissimilarity or contrast. *This unfamiliar thing which I am trying to make clear to you*, the writer says in substance, *is in at least one respect like this other thing with which you are perfectly familiar*. Or, employing contrast, he may say, *This with which you are unfamiliar is the opposite of this other thing with which you are so familiar*. Thus by comparing the unknown to the known, correct images are made to rise in the reader's mind.

The substance of the preceding paragraphs may be summarized as follows: Clearness is gained in four ways:

**Summary** first, through complete mastery of the subject at hand; second, through planning the message so carefully that the reader will readily see it as a whole made up of parts, will readily perceive the relation of part to part, and will notice the important features standing out in high relief; third, through choosing words that are pure, familiar, precise, and through care in constructing sentences and paragraphs in accordance with the principles of unity, mass, and coherence; fourth, through the familiar devices of restatement, of multiplying details, of illustrating by means of examples, and of employing comparisons which establish points of similarity or contrast.

The adjective *clear* is the center of a large group of related words commonly employed in criticism. The more familiar of these are found in the following groups:

- I Clear, lucid, plain, photographic.
- II Simple, precise, exact, explicit, detailed.

III Orderly, methodical, systematic,  
connected, coherent, complete.

IV Vague, ambiguous, turbid, misty,  
muddy.

V Incoherent, disjointed, confused.

VI Abstruse, intricate, complicated.

### EXERCISES

1 \* Punctuate the following, supplying capitals where they are needed:

1. The white people have no right to take the land from the Indians because they had it first it is theirs.

2. I had three chairs in my house one for solitude two for friendship three for society.

3. The old word *roly-poly* has acquired in the course of its history the following meanings a rascal a game a dance a pudding and finally a plump infant.

4. Every time a new word is added to the language either by borrowing composition or derivation it is due of course to the action conscious or unconscious of some one person.

5. In later years my mother looking at me almost reproachfully would sometimes say oh you were such a pretty boy whence I had no difficulty in concluding that I had not fulfilled my early promise in the matter of looks.

6. What do you want sir said the old gentleman crossly I want fire and shelter and theres your great fire blazing crackling and dancing on the walls with nobody to feel it let me in I say I only want to warm myself.

7. I did not read books the first summer I hoed beans.

8. Justice as exhibited by the course of things in general arose out of the fact that I the victor had a black eye while he the vanquished had none so that I got into disgrace and he did not.

9. To speak critically I never received more than one or two letters in my life I wrote this some years ago that were worth the postage.

10. In Shakespeares plays partly owing to their immense

\* Rules for punctuation will be found in the Appendix.

popularity but quite as much to his unequalled sense for language more new words are found than in almost all the rest of the English poets put together for not only is our speech full of phrases from his plays but a very large number of our most expressive words are first found in them.

11. When public bodies are to be addressed on momentous occasions declares Webster when great interests are at stake and strong passions excited nothing is valuable in speech further than it is connected with high intelligence and moral endowment clearness force and earnestness are the qualities which produce conviction true eloquence indeed does not consist in speech it cannot be brought from afar labor and learning may toil for it but they will toil in vain words and phrases may be marshalled in every way, but they cannot compass it it must exist in the man in the subject in the occasion.

12. This means of word making through onomatopœia is illustrated by the old story of the foreigner in China who sitting down to a covered dish inquired quack-quack and was promptly answered bow-bow from his Chinese attendant.

13. I came to this city said the speaker to see him and laying his hand upon Irvings shoulder here he sits.

14. In an old house dismal dark and dusty lived a miser meager old chairs and tables of spare and bony make were arranged in grim array against the gloomy walls presses grown lank in guarding the treasures they enclose and tottering as though from constant fear and dread of thieves shrunk up in dark corners a tall grim clock with long lean hands and famished face ticked in cautious whispers and when it struck the time it rattled as if it were pinched with hunger.

15. There is in this city a gentleman who at the reception of one of my books I well remember it was Old Curiosity Shop wrote to me in England a letter so generous so affectionate and so manly that if I had written the book under every circumstance of disappointment of discouragement and difficulty instead of the reverse I should have found in the receipt of that letter my best and most happy reward.

16. Two things preoccupied him as he went the aspect of the gallows at Mont Faucon in the bright windy phase of the night's existence for one and for another the look of the dead man with his bald head and garland of red curls.



17. The congregation was composed of the neighboring people of rank who sat in pews sumptuously lined and cushioned furnished with richly gilded prayer books and decorated with their arms upon the pew doors of the villagers and peasantry who filled the back seats and a small gallery beside the organ and of the poor of the parish who were ranged on benches in the aisles.

2 To test further your understanding of the rules, justify the punctuation in the specimen paragraphs found in the fourteenth exercise. No doubt you will in some cases think, and with good reason, that the punctuation is incorrect.

3 Crabb's *English Synonyms* or some similar compilation is a great aid to one who wishes to express himself with clearness and precision. If, for example, we think of employing the word *sarcasm* but are not sure that the term conveys the desired meaning, we may turn to Crabb, who tells us first that the word is associated with three others—*ridicule, satire, irony*. *Ridicule*, he explains, has simple laughter in it and is employed in matters of a trifling nature; *satire* has a mixture of ill-nature or severity and is employed either in personal or grave matters; *irony* is disguised satire, the ironist seeming to praise that which he really means to condemn; *sarcasm* is biting or nipping satire. All save the last, he says by way of final definition, may be successfully and properly employed to expose folly and vice; but sarcasm, which is the indulgence of personal resentment, is never justifiable. Even without such a helpful guide, one may do much toward training himself to distinguish between nice shades of meaning. By way of practice, explain how each synonym in the groups which follow should be used. Consult the dictionary when necessary, but not until you have thought independently.

Good-nature, good-humor	Error, mistake, blunder
Idle, lazy, indolent	Bent, curved, crooked, awry
Stagger, reel, totter	Shine, glitter, glare, sparkle, radiate
Gape, stare, gaze	Task, work, toil, drudgery, labor
Noise, cry, outcry, clamor	Border, edge, rim, brink, mar- gin, verge
Step, stride, glide, stalk	Verbal, vocal, oral
Daring, bold, brave, fearless	Suffocate, stifle, smother, choke
Drag, draw, haul, pull, pluck, tug	Demolish, raze, dismantle, de- stroy, consume, waste
Hollow, empty	Band, company, crew, gang, crowd
Prelude, preface, introduction	Breeze, gale, blast, gust, storm, tempest, hurricane, tornado
Custom, habit	Distress, anxiety, anguish, agony
Excel, surpass, exceed, trans- cend, outdo	Feast, banquet, carousal, en- tertainment, treat
Endeavor, aim, strive, struggle	Show, play, performance
Turn, bend, twist, distort, wring, wrest, wrench	Beg, beseech, solicit, entreat, supplicate, implore, crave
Overflow, inundate, deluge	Address, speech, harangue, oration
Hint, suggest, intimate, insinu- ate, allude, imply	Commonly, generally, fre- quently, usually
Flat, level, even, smooth, plain	Rare, scarce, singular
Hesitate, falter, stammer, stut- ter	
Jealous, envious, suspicious	
Babble, chatter, chat, prattle, prate	
Game, sport, play	
Excursion, tour, trip, expedi- tion, ramble, jaunt	

4 The above groups contain merely such synonyms as are often confused; they are not complete. Add synonyms to each.

5 Find synonyms, as many as you can, for each of the following adjectives:

strong	youthful	clever	sad
big	fragile	bad	old
saucy	little	careless	happy
mysterious	rustic	pleasant	queer

6 Find synonyms for the following verbs:

push	tease	retard	hate
irritate	answer	ask	help
throw	blame	hit	lift
sing	shake	tip	get

7 Explain the shades of meaning represented by the synonyms found in performing the fifth and sixth tasks.

8 An antonym is the opposite of a synonym; that is, a word directly opposed to another in meaning. In Fernald's *English Synonyms and Antonyms* we find immediately under *generous*, for example, the synonyms *bountiful, chivalrous, disinterested, free, free-handed, free-hearted, liberal, magnanimous, munificent, noble, open-handed, open-hearted*. Following an explanation of these terms comes a list of antonyms: *avaricious, close, covetous, greedy, ignoble, illiberal, mean, miserly, niggardly, parsimonious, penurious, petty, rapacious, stingy*. Find as many antonyms as you can for each of the following:

honest	justice	large	misfortune
neat	perfect	plentiful	polite
rest	tasteful	veracity	hide
grief	fierce	eager	beautiful

9 Since one way of gaining clearness in writing compositions is through adhering closely to some one main purpose, allied with which may be two or three subordinate purposes, write a few sentences in which you state clearly what you would wish to accomplish if you were dealing with one of the following topics:

High school athletics. The play of fashion in our school. Courtesy at home and abroad. The school building. Why go West? School spirit. The Spanish Armada.

**10** Let the members of the class unite in an attempt to discover the best plan for building an essay on some appropriate topic—perhaps one from the list above, the main thing to be kept in mind being the desirability of so planning that the completed essay will have a sequence easy for the reader to follow. Each member having made an outline independently, let a few of the better outlines be placed on the blackboard, that the class as a whole may determine which plan is best and how it may be improved. Whatever topic is selected, let the main purpose of the essay be decided before the outlines are made.

**11** Write a concluding paragraph summarizing a composition which you may imagine you have written on one of the following topics:

The uses to which coal is put. Advice to one training for track athletics. Why one should take an active part in politics. How to get strong. Hints for the amateur photographer. How not to become popular. The ideal senior. Why I prefer —— as a place of residence. Common sense in wearing apparel. The advantages and the disadvantages of the telephone. Why I intend to be an —— . Why I admire —— . Advice to a young debater.

**12** Write an introductory paragraph designed to sketch in advance the plan you would adopt in dealing with one of the following propositions:

Suffrage should be extended to women. United States senators should be elected by popular vote. The maximum speed of ocean liners should be fixed by law. Every state should maintain a university. All railways should be owned by the government. There should be a United States law forbidding tips. The South offers the young man greater opportunities than New England. The Tropics will become the vacation ground of the future. Every secondary school should maintain a dramatic club. Conversational ability is more to be desired than orator-

ical skill. A literary club offers more to the average girl than a debating club. Slang is justifiable.

**13** Make a topical outline of one of the selections the titles of which are found in the list given below. Here are a few suggestions: 1. Not every essay is built on the conventional plan of Introduction, Body or Discussion, Conclusion. 2. Do not employ too many main topics or headings. By taking a bird's-eye view, it may be that you will find that the facts or ideas cluster about two or three points only. 3. Distinguish carefully between main and subordinate topics, placing the latter below and a little to the right of the former. 4. Do not be influenced too much by paragraphing. 5. Use phrases or clauses, rather than complete sentences, for topic headings.

The Country Church (*Sketch Book*), Washington Irving.

The Stage Coach (*Sketch Book*), Washington Irving.

Christmas Day (*Sketch Book*), Washington Irving.

Moll White (No. 117 of the *Spectator*), Joseph Addison.

Labor and Exercise (No. 115 of the *Spectator*), Joseph Addison.

The Club (No. 2 of the *Spectator*), Richard Steele.

The Portrait Gallery (No. 109 of the *Spectator*), Richard Steele.

Will Wimble (No. 108 of the *Spectator*), Joseph Addison.

Sir Roger and the Gipsies (No. 130 of the *Spectator*), Joseph Addison.

A Visit to Westminster Abbey (No. 329 of the *Spectator*), Joseph Addison.

The Tragedies of the Nests, John Burroughs.

Bird Enemies, John Burroughs.

Modern Gallantry, Charles Lamb.

On a Piece of Chalk, Thomas Huxley.

The Threefold Destiny, Nathaniel Hawthorne.

David Swan, Nathaniel Hawthorne.

Chapter I of *The Oregon Trail*, Francis Parkman.

*Self-Cultivation in English*, George Herbert Palmer.

An editorial of some length from the daily newspaper.

A recent magazine article.

A chapter from a high school textbook.

A sermon or an address recently heard.

**14** Here are paragraphs which will repay careful study. Each, in one or more ways, illustrates means by which clearness is gained.

Find (a) a directive paragraph designed to let the reader know in advance the general plan of what is to follow; (b) a transitional paragraph, informing the reader that one part of the essay is finished and another part is now to be begun; (c) a summarizing paragraph calling to mind what has gone before; (d) a paragraph beginning with a topical sentence which clearly indicates what the paragraph is to be about; (e) a paragraph in which phrases are introduced to help the reader keep track of passing time; (f) a paragraph in which phrases are introduced to help the reader keep track of changing position; (g) a paragraph in which vividness is gained through contrast; (h) a paragraph in which clearness is flashed through apt comparison; (i) several paragraphs in which clearness is gained through including many details enabling the imagination to form a picture; (j) a paragraph designed to indicate at the outset the limits beyond which the writer does not mean to stray; (k) a paragraph both clear and forceful because a sequence that leads from the less to the more important is followed; (l) a paragraph the opening sentence of which contains a question designed to fix the reader's attention on the one thing the paragraph is intended to accomplish; (m) a paragraph beginning with a general statement that is followed by specific items; (n) a paragraph in which clearness is gained by stating several times nearly the same idea; (o) paragraphs in which vividness is gained through the careful use of adjectives.

This exercise should furnish material for at least three assignments.

1. Thus far naturalists have gone in the description of this animal; what follows is the result of my own observation upon that species of the insect called a house spider. I perceived about four years ago a large spider in one corner of my room, making its web; and though the maid frequently leveled her fatal broom against the labors of the little animal, I had the good fortune then to prevent its destruction; and I may say it more than paid me by the entertainment it afforded.—GOLDSMITH

2. I shall speak to the question strictly as a matter of *right*, for it is a proposition in its nature so perfectly distinct from the *expediency* of the tax, that it must necessarily be taken separate, if there is any true logic in the world; but of the expediency or in expediency I will say nothing. It will be time enough to speak upon that subject when it comes to be a question.—MANSFIELD

3. At any rate "make people learn to read, write, and cipher," say a good many; and the advice is undoubtedly sensible as far as it goes. But, as it happened to me in former days, those who, in despair of getting anything better, advocate this measure, are met with an objection that it is very like making a child practice the use of a knife, fork, and spoon, without giving it a particle of meat. I really don't know what reply is to be made to such an objection.—HUXLEY

4. House Wren (*Troglodytes aedon*): Upper parts brown, mottled with darker; underparts brownish or grayish, mottled with darker; breast usually darker than either throat or belly. Beak slender, pale; feet pale; tail about as long as the outstretched legs. Bird less than two-thirds the length of a sparrow. Sexes similar.—WILLCOX

5. Sprightly, fearless, and impudent little creatures [house wrens], apt to show bad temper when they fancy themselves aggrieved by cats or people, or anything else that is big or unpleasant to them; they quarrel a good deal, and are particularly spiteful towards martins and swallows, whose homes they often invade and occupy.—CONES

6. Then, Sir, from these six capital sources—of descent, of form of government, of religion in the northern provinces, of manners in the southern, of education, of the remoteness of

situation from the first mover of government—from all these causes a fierce spirit of liberty has sprung up. It has grown with the growth of the people in your colonies, and increased with the increase of their wealth; a spirit that unhappily meeting with an exercise of power in England, which, however lawful, is not reconcilable to any ideas of liberty, much less with theirs, has kindled this flame that is ready to consume us.—BURKE

7. The wave that came upon me again buried me at once twenty or thirty feet deep in its own body; and I could feel myself carried with a mighty force and swiftness toward the shore, a very great way; but I held my breath, and assisted myself to swim still forward with all my might. I was ready to burst with holding my breath, when, as I felt myself rising up, so to my immediate relief I found my head and hands shoot out above the surface of the water; and tho it was not two seconds of the time that I could keep myself so, yet it relieved me greatly, gave me breath and new courage. I was covered again with water a good while, but not so long but I held it out; and finding the water had spent itself, and began to return, I struck forward against the return of the waves, and felt ground again with my feet. I stood still a few moments to recover breath, and till the water went from me, and then took to my heels and ran with what strength I had farther towards the shore. But neither would this deliver me from the fury of the sea, which came pouring in after me again; and twice more I was lifted up by the waves and carried forward as before, the shore being very flat.—DEFOE

8. After a diligent inquiry, I can discern four principal causes of the ruin of Rome, which continued to operate in a period of more than a thousand years. I. The injuries of time and nature. II. The hostile attacks of the Barbarians and Christians. III. The use and abuse of the materials. And IV. The domestic quarrels of the Romans. [The following paragraphs deal with these four causes.]—GIBBON

9. He planted himself full in the middle of the apartment, opposite to the table at which Lucy was seated, on whom, as if she had been alone in the chamber, he bent his eyes with a mingled expression of deep grief and deliberate indignation. His dark-colored riding cloak, displaced from one shoulder, hung around one side of his person in the ample folds of the Spanish mantle. The rest of his rich dress was travel-soiled, and deranged



by hard riding. He had a sword by his side, and pistols in his belt. His slouched hat, which he had not yet removed, at entrance, gave an additional gloom to his dark features, which, wasted by sorrow and marked by the ghastly look communicated by long illness, added to a countenance naturally somewhat stern and wild a fierce and even savage expression. The matted and disheveled locks of hair which escaped from under his hat, together with his fixt and immovable posture, made his head more resemble that of a marble bust than that of a living man. He said not a single word, and there was a deep silence in the company for more than two minutes.—SCOTT

10. The death of a king in those days came near to a break-up of all civil society. Till a new king was chosen and crowned, there was no longer a power in the land to protect or to chastise. All bonds were loosed; all public authority was in abeyance; each man had to look to his own as he best might. No sooner was the breath out of William's body than the great company which had watched around him during the night was scattered hither and thither. The great men mounted their horses and rode with all speed to their own homes, to guard their houses and goods against the outburst of lawlessness which was sure to break forth now that the land had no longer a ruler. Their servants and followers, seeing their lords gone and deeming that there was no longer any fear of punishment, began to make spoil of the royal chamber. Weapons, clothes, vessels, the royal bed and its furniture, were carried off, and for a whole day the body of the Conqueror lay well-nigh bare on the floor of the room in which he died.—FREEMAN

11. No persons could at first glance have seemed less evenly matched than the two antagonists. Tetraides, tho no taller than Lydon, weighed considerably more; the natural size of his muscles was increased, to the eyes of the vulgar, by masses of solid flesh; for, as it was a notion that the contest of the cestus fared easiest with him who was plumpest, Tetraides had encouraged to the utmost his hereditary predisposition to the portly. His shoulders were vast, and his lower limbs thick-set, double-jointed, and slightly curved outward, in that formation which takes so much from beauty to give so largely to strength. But Lydon, except that he was slender even almost to meagerness, was beautifully and delicately proportioned; and the skilful

might have perceived that with much less compass of muscle than his foe, that which he had was more seasoned—iron and compact. In proportion, too, as he wanted flesh, he was likely to possess activity; and a haughty smile on his resolute face, which strongly contrasted with the solid heaviness of his enemy's, gave assurance to those who beheld it and united their hope to their pity; so that despite the disparity of their seeming strength, the cry of the multitude was nearly as loud for Lydon as for Tetraides.—BULWER LYTTON

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

13. Refined policy ever has been the parent of confusion, and ever will be so, as long as the world endures. Plain good intention, which is as easily discovered at the first view as fraud is surely detected at last, is, let me say, of no mean force in the government of mankind. Genuine simplicity of heart is a healing and cementing principle.—BURKE

14. After the long procession of sheep and goats and dogs and men and women and children, come horses loaded with cloths and poles for tents, kitchen utensils, and the rest of the younglings of the flock. A little after sunrise I see well-fed donkeys, in coverings of red cloth, driven over the bridge to be milked for invalids. Maid-servants, bareheaded, with huge, high-carved combs in their hair, waiters of coffee-houses carrying the morning cup of coffee or chocolate to their customers, bakers' boys with a dozen loaves on a board balanced on their heads, milkmen with rush baskets filled with flasks of milk are crossing the

streets in all directions. A little later the bell of the small chapel opposite to my window rings furiously for a quarter of an hour, and then I hear mass chanted in a deep strong nasal tone. As the day advances, the English, in white hats and white pantaloons, come out of their lodgings, accompanied sometimes by their hale and square-built spouses, and saunter stiffly along the Arno, or take their way to the public galleries and museums. Their massive, clean, and brightly polished carriages also begin to rattle through the streets, setting out on excursions to some part of the environs of Florence—to Fiesole, to the Pratolino, to the Bello Sguardo, to the Poggio Imperiale.—BRYANT

15. And what effect has this splendor on those who pass beneath it? You may walk from sunrise to sunset, to and fro, before the gateway of St. Mark's, and you will not see an eye lifted to it, nor a countenance brightened by it. Priest and layman, soldier and civilian, rich and poor, pass by it regardlessly. Up to the very recesses of the porches, the meanest tradesmen of the city push their counters; nay, the foundations of its pillars are themselves the seats, not "of them that sell doves" for sacrifice, but of the venders of toys and caricatures. Round the whole square in front of the church there is almost a continuous line of cafés, where the idle Venetians of the middle classes lounge and read empty journals; in its center the Austrian bands play during the time of vespers, their martial music jarring with the organ notes—the march drowning the miserere and the sullen crowd thickening round them—a crowd which if it had its will would stiletto every soldier that pipes to it. And in the recesses of the porches, all day long, knots of men of the lowest classes, unemployed and listless, lie basking in the sun like lizards; and unregarded children—every heavy glance of their young eyes full of desperation and stony depravity and their throats hoarse with cursing—gamble and fight and snarl and sleep, hour after hour, clashing their bruised *centesimi* upon the marble ledges of the church porch. And the images of Christ and his angels look down upon it continually.—RUSKIN

16. After dinner we adjourned to the drawing-room, which served also for study and library. Against the wall on one side was a long writing-table, with drawers, surmounted by a small cabinet of polished wood, with folding drawers richly studded with brass ornaments, within which Scott kept his most valuable

papers. Above the cabinet, in a kind of niche, was a complete corselet of glittering steel, with a closed helmet, and flanked by gauntlets and battle-axes. Around were hung trophies and relics of various kinds: a scimitar of Tipu Sahib; a Highland broadsword from Flodden field; a pair of Rippon spurs from Bannockburn; and above all, a gun which had belonged to Rob Roy, and bore his initials, R. M. C., an object of peculiar interest to me at the time, as it was understood Scott was actually engaged in printing a novel founded on the story of that famous outlaw.—IRVING

17. That man, I think, has had a liberal education, who has been so trained in youth that his body is the ever ready servant of his will, and does with ease and pleasure all the work that, as a mechanism, it is capable of; whose intellect is a clear, cold, logic engine, with all its parts of equal strength, and in smooth working order, ready, like a steam engine, to be turned to any kind of work, and spin the gossamers as well as forge the anchors of the mind; whose mind is stored with a knowledge of the great and fundamental truths of Nature and of the laws of her operations; one who, no stunted ascetic, is full of life and fire, but whose passions are trained to come to heel by a vigorous will, the servant of a tender conscience; who has learned to love all beauty, whether of Nature or of art, to hate all vileness, and to respect others as himself.—HUXLEY

## CHAPTER IV

### FORCE

By force or forcefulness is meant that quality which impels attention and makes what is said take hold. *I understand*, we say if all is clear; *I am interested*, or *I am moved*, if all is forceful.

**Definition**

Clearness satisfies what is loosely called the intellect or the understanding; force stirs the emotions. In one respect the name selected for this quality is somewhat misleading; for it commonly suggests only that which is vigorous and virile, whereas its broad range includes the idea of gentleness, reserve, calm dignity, in short whatever appeals to the emotions. For force is as varied in the realm of expression as in the world of nature, where the tornado which uproots trees and levels buildings is no better example than the gentle rains and the warmth of the sun which turn the brown fields green in springtime.

**Gentleness  
as well as  
vigor**

What is the secret of force? Since emotions are of many kinds and since the ways in which they may be quickened are many, it is evident that a complete answer to this question cannot be given.

**General  
sources**

We know, it is true, that force depends in a measure on wise choice of subject matter, some things being naturally more interesting than others and therefore more likely to stir the emotions. It is equally apparent that vigor and richness of character are essential, the words of great writers and great orators moving us because these writers and orators are keen thinkers. forceful people

who are by nature deeply emotional or gifted with imaginative powers. And quite as obvious is a third truth; namely, that forcefulness depends not alone on wise choice of subject matter and on vigor and richness of character but on skill in the use of language, or ability to "put things" effectively. In some, this ability seems heaven-sent, a natural gift not to be hoped for by everybody; in others, it is a comfort to believe, such ability is solely the result of painstaking effort and long practice.

Perhaps the most helpful thing that can be said on the subject is that force comes mainly through attention to clearness—is indeed but clearness of a larger, higher kind. All that is contained in the preceding chapter might appropriately be repeated at this point, especially what is said of the advantage of supplying an abundance of particulars and of substituting specific words for those which are vague and general. For emotions can be stirred only through the imagination, and the imagination must be given sufficient material out of which to construct mind-pictures.

So important is this point that it will bear still further illustration. *Building* is a general term, applicable to many different kinds of structures; it calls to mind no very definite picture. *Dwelling* is more specific; the imagination can do something with it. But there are many buildings, widely different in appearance, which properly may be called dwellings; the picture is therefore still vague. If for *dwelling* we substitute *cottage*, the impression becomes somewhat clearer. Add but an adjective or two—*thatched*, *rose-embowered*—and from the words *a thatched cottage, rose-embowered*, the imagination can construct a fairly complete picture. *We camped under some trees* is a hazy statement

**Clearness a  
main source**

**Specific  
details**

compared with *We camped under three tall pines*. The little word *yellow* is not wasted when Stevenson writes

In winter I get up at night  
And dress by yellow candle-light.

Irving might have written, of the attendant who conducted him about the birthplace of Shakespeare, *The house is shown by an old lady*. This is what he did write: *The house is shown by a garrulous old lady with a frosty red face lighted up by a cold blue, anxious eye, and garnished with artificial locks of flaxen hair curling from under an exceedingly dirty cap*.

“The mind of man,” it has been truly said, “is peopled, like some silent city, with a sleeping company of reminiscences, associations, impressions, attitudes, **Connotative emotions, to be awakened into fierce activity or suggestive words** at the touch of words.” Words differ widely in their power to waken the “silent city” of the mind; some are very feeble, others truly enchanting. The secret of the enchanting word frequently lies in its power to point out somewhat specifically that which is at hand and at the same time subtly suggest much that may be more or less remote in time or space. Highly suggestive words of such double power are called, technically, connotative. Professor Wendell cites as examples *daybreak* and *cockcrow*, which primarily denote early morning, and secondarily suggest the sights and sounds of coming day.

*A bow-shot* from her bower-eaves  
He rode between the barley-sheaves,

run the lines in *The Lady of Shalott*, *bow-shot* suggesting far more than a given number of yards. Shakespeare makes Hamlet swear *By these pickers and stealers*. We assume that he means *By these fingers of mine*; but the

words also suggest that fingers sometimes do petty thievery. Macaulay writes, *Of about a hundred and sixty nobles who walked in the procession on the first day [of the trial of Hastings] sixty had been laid in their family vaults.* He might have written merely that *sixty had died*; but he desired not only to state the bare fact that so many had died, we may believe, but to suggest the ceremonious funeral pageant.

Clearness through supplying an abundance of particulars, specific details, subtle suggestions, out of which the imagination may easily construct mind-pictures: this, surely, is necessary in forceful expression. Writers and speakers must be most lavish in bestowing material, counting no cost in the number of words used, furnishing freely the strongest, most suggestive words at their command. Large returns call for large investments. And yet a second source of forcefulness is, beyond question, brevity, which calls not for prodigality but for reasonable economy. Elaborate introductions, the rehearsal of needless details, painstaking explanation of that which needs no explanation, the flat proclaiming of old truths, digressions, saying practically the same thing over and over, going round and round about instead of taking an obviously shorter route, going on and on though the end of the narrative has been reached, employing ten feeble words where one or two would suffice—how common such failings are and how tiresome, exasperating! Here is the poet Dryden's familiar rule:

Gently make haste, of labor not afraid;  
A hundred times consider what you've said;  
Polish, repolish, every color lay,  
And sometimes add, but oftener take away.

Though parts of this rule may be of questionable value,



the last line contains sound advice. Force comes through eliminating useless statements, useless words; through substituting hints and suggestions for wordy details; through taking short cuts across the fields instead of following the long, dusty highway. It comes through confining attention to that which is essential.

Adherence to the two principles of clearness and brevity; the one calling for an almost prodigal profusion of material, the other as loudly calling for rigid economy in confining and directing attention, will go a long way towards producing force. Of the many special devices which we use instinctively without counsel from textbooks, the simplest, and perhaps the most effective, is plain repetition. How natural it is, in time of disappointment, to say not merely *Too bad*, but *Too bad, too bad, too bad!* We read that when David heard of his son's death he *was much moved, and went up to the chamber over the gate, and wept; and as he went, thus he said: O my son Absalom! my son, my son Absalom! would God I had died for thee. O Absalom, my son, my son!* Repetition skilfully disguised is seen in the following lines:

Where the love-lorn nightingale  
Nightly to thee her sad song mourneth well.

*Love-lorn, sad, mourneth*, all suggest grief, and the repetition of the syllable *night* in *nightingale* and *nightly* faintly conveys the idea of unremitting sorrow. In prose and in poetry, we find that the vigorous writer batters away at the door of our emotions, delivering blow after blow at nearly the same spot, till admission is gained. He repeats his thought in this form and that, now expanding it into a simile or allegory, now condensing it into a metaphor; he flashes it forth in epigram, or exalts it by means of hyperbole, or

Repetition

Figures of  
speech

even echoes the sense in onomatopœia as in the fine lines

Unknown, and like esteemed, and the dull swain  
Treads on it daily with his clouted shoon,

where we seem to hear the heavy, careless tread of the rude swain crushing flowers the worth of which is to him all unknown. \* Simile, metaphor, allegory, epigram, hyperbole, onomatopœia, all are frequently but subtle repetition devices, ways of emphasizing, *driving home*, impressions. They are almost as common in daily, unguarded speech as in the works of the great writers.

Nearly as simple as repetition is the device known as contrast. Black is placed against white that the blackness may receive emphasis. Beauty and ugliness are ranged side by side; virtue and vice are brought together, the one setting off the other. Contrast often calls for what is termed a balanced sentence; that is, a sentence in which one part is set over against—balances—another part, as in

To err is human; to forgive, divine,

where *to err* balances *to forgive*, and *human* balances *divine*.

We see it in the following sentence from Macaulay's *Life*

*of Johnson: In the child the physical, intellectual, and moral peculiarities which afterwards distinguished the man were plainly discernible:*

**Balanced sentences** *great muscular strength accompanied by much awkwardness and many infirmities; great quickness of parts, with a morbid propensity to sloth and procrastination; a kind and generous heart, with a gloomy and irritable temper.* In the first illustration the balance runs through the entire sentence; in the second, it is found in the phrases separated by the semico-

\* For the meaning of these terms see the section in the Appendix which deals with Figures.

lons. It may extend through an entire paragraph, the first half balancing the rest. Whole compositions, even, may be planned with this device in mind, the full contrast remaining incomplete, it may be, till the last word is written.

A third device is known as climax, an arrangement by which interest is made to increase step by step, the more important or the more interesting following the less important or less interesting, till an impressive close is reached. Curiosity first having been aroused, that which is needed to gratify the curiosity is withheld, and still withheld, till at last a revelation, often somewhat unexpected in character, is granted. Plays and novels, as we all know, are commonly but a series of climaxes, each satisfying the curiosity in part, only to arouse it again and in still greater degree, the intensity of interest rising, and rising, and still rising, till the end is reached. Paragraphs are sometimes built on the climax plan. Notice the following from Macaulay's essay on Milton:

The advocates of Charles, like the advocates of other malefactors against whom overwhelming evidence is produced, generally decline all controversy about facts, and content themselves with calling testimony to character. He had so many private virtues! And had James the Second no private virtues? Was Oliver Cromwell, his bitterest enemies themselves being judges, destitute of private virtues? And what, after all, are the virtues ascribed to Charles? A religious zeal, not more sincere than that of his son, and fully as weak and narrow-minded, and a few of the ordinary household decencies, which half the tombstones in England claim for those who lie beneath them. A good father! A good husband! Ample apologies indeed for fifteen years of persecution, tyranny, and falsehood!

Notice too the strong climax effect in the following words which Macbeth addresses to the witches:

I conjure you, by that which you profess  
 Howe'er you come to know it, answer me.  
 Though you untie the winds and let them fight  
 Against the churches; though the yesty waves  
 Confound and swallow navigation up;  
 Though bladed corn be lodged and trees blown down;  
 Though palaces and pyramids do slope  
 Their heads to their foundation; though the treasure  
 Of nature's germins tumble all together,  
 Even till destruction sicken, answer me  
 To what I ask you.

Sentences constructed on the climax plan, the meaning held in suspense till the end, are called periodic. The sentence just written is an example in that

**Periodic sentences** there is an element of suspense which is not removed till the last word, *periodic*, appears. So too is the following:

Had he not resembled  
 My father as he slept, I had done't.

In a well-constructed climax there is not only suspense but an element of surprise. Surprise is often produced by means of contrast, the bringing together of opposites. Even in a loose sentence, as one is called which is neither periodic nor balanced, there is frequently a mild element of surprise, and a consequent focusing of attention, through the unusual position of words or phrases; for whatever is out of its natural position attracts notice. In the sentence *For his sake empires had risen, and flourished, and decayed*, the phrase *For his sake* is more conspicuous than it would be if placed, where grammatically it belongs, after *decayed*. *Right bitter was the agony* is more forceful than *The agony was right bitter*; at least we may say that through inverting the sentence

**Suspense and surprise**

**Unusual sentence arrangement**

the poet makes *Right bitter* leap out at the reader—much as does the first word in the line

Yelled on the view the opening pack.

Sentences periodic or balanced in construction, sentences in which some unusual order is followed, are effective not only in that they focus attention on whatever demands emphasis, but in that they contribute variety. Monotony in sentence structure is as tiresome as monotony in voice, or the absence of facial expression. Long sentences, short; interrogative, declarative, exclamatory; periodic, loose, balanced—all appear in animated conversation and in vigorous writing, though seldom are all these forms to be found in a single paragraph, as is the case in the passage quoted from Macaulay.

Variety

But the devices by which force is gained are too numerous and too subtle to permit of complete enumeration. Instinctively, when deeply moved and anxious to share our emotions with others, we substitute direct discourse for indirect, the historical present for the past; we personify the inanimate, we resort to exaggeration. We move others through humor, through pathos, through ridicule and irony. We resort to a score of petty devices in our attempt to arouse that "sleeping company" with which the mind of man is peopled. Yet how frequently we find that far more effective than all dramatic devices is plain simplicity! Theatrical ways may fascinate at times; yet a quiet earnestness, born of sincerity, is far more effective in the long run.

Simplicity and earnestness

The substance of the preceding paragraphs may be summarized as follows: Force, or forcefulness, is that quality which impels attention through stirring the emotions. In general, it may be said, force depends on wise choice of subject matter,

Summary

natural vigor and richness of character, and skill in presentation of subject matter. In particular, it is the product of (1) clearness through profusion of details, through the employment of specific words rather than general, and through the employment of connotative or suggestive words; (2) brevity; (3) a wise employment of repetition, contrast, climax, and unusual order; (4) variety in sentence structure; (5) plain simplicity, earnestness. Or the substance of the paragraphs may be represented by the following outline:

### FORCE

- I Definition: That quality which impels attention through stirring the emotions
- II Sources
  - A In general
    - A wise choice of subject matter
    - Vigor and richness of character
    - Skill in presentation of subject matter
  - B In particular
    - Clearness
      - Through profusion of particulars
      - Through specific words
      - Through suggestive or connotative words
    - Brevity
    - Special devices
      - Repetition
      - Contrast
      - Climax
      - Unusual order
    - Variety
    - Plain simplicity and earnestness

Below is given a vocabulary, loosely grouped, more or less intimately associated with *force*. Some terms are but

synonyms; others name forceful moods and temperaments; still others, skill in the craft of expression; and a few, the effect of forceful expression upon listener and reader. If any should prove unfamiliar, consult a good dictionary.

- I Forceful, strong, vigorous, robust, virile.
- II Judicial, thoughtful, sane, critical, meditative, keen, shrewd.
- III Earnest, fervid, impulsive, impetuous.
- IV Animated, lively, vivacious, spirited.
- V Clever, witty, humorous, felicitous, happy, droll, brilliant.
- VI Brief, concise, compressed, condensed, terse, pithy, epigrammatical.
- VII Detailed, minute, particular, concrete.
- VIII Easy, fluent, rapid, swift, tripping, sprightly, brisk, surging.
- IX Lifelike, truthful, graphic, vivid, pictorial.
- X Moving, affecting, pathetic, touching, thrilling, tragic, dramatic.
- XI Amusing, ludicrous, comical, farcical, burlesque.
- XII Weak, languid, puerile, effeminate.
- XIII Tame, flat, tiresome, dull, dry, tedious, monotonous, commonplace, hackneyed, trite.
- XIV Clumsy, crude, awkward, careless, bungling, lumbering, slovenly, stiff.
- XV Verbose, redundant, diffuse, rambling, straggling, circuitous, discursive, digressive, long-winded.
- XVI Trashy, flippant, frivolous, petty, trivial, sensational, extravagant, silly, absurd.
- XVII Declamatory, ranting, rhetorical, pompous, high-flown, gushing.

## EXERCISES

1 Macaulay, having written that Samuel Johnson sometimes "regaled a friend with a plain dinner," adds, characteristically, "—veal pie, or a leg of lamb and spinach, and a rice pudding." One secret of his power as an essayist lies in the great pains he takes to supply the reader with graphic details. Develop one of the following sentences into a paragraph of some length, with a view to supplying the details necessary before the reader can form in his mind a satisfactory picture. Be careful not to go beyond the bounds prescribed by the topical sentence; that is, be careful to preserve unity.

1. With this remark he suddenly threw back the desk-lid, and what a sight met his eyes!

2. Before putting away the suit for the winter, she thought it best to examine the pockets.

3. Mary now opened the lunch basket. (Tell graphically of the contents as they appeared to the hungry picnickers.)

4. It was an extremely busy thoroughfare.

5. In the back yard were three trees.

6. At that instant Pete knocked out what proved to be a three-bagger. (Describe the excitement.)

7. The boy was, unquestionably, very nervous. (How did he show it?)

8. He had been told to keep himself tidy; but by the time the guests had arrived, you should have seen him!

9. Johnny decided to crawl under. (Under the circus tent, a fence enclosing ball-grounds, or what you please; but describe his facial expression, his actions, and perhaps his emotions.)

10. Reposing under the shed was an old wagon.

11. His table manners were exasperating.

12. He knew he had been a naughty dog, and he showed it.

13. He looked every inch a captain.

14. It was a pleasure to see with what skill the carpenter used his tools.

15. With the ball barely a foot from the goal line, the whistle blew and the game was over.



16. He knew automobiles from tire to the most obscure part in the intricate engine.

**2** Beginning abruptly, describe in a single paragraph one of the following:

1. The actions of a cat on seeing a bird.
2. The facial expression, actions, and possibly the disgruntled remarks, of a small boy on viewing the breakfast table.
3. The appearance of one who has been caught in a shower.
4. The actions of an urchin stealing an apple.
5. A pair of old shoes.
6. Emotions on hearing the rising bell.
7. The appearance of a defeated football captain.
8. The facial expression of a boy perplexed by a problem.
9. The facial expression or actions of a carpenter upon discovering that he has sawed his board in the wrong place.
10. The facial expression and actions of a housekeeper upon remembering that she put a cake into a hot oven over an hour before.

**3** Write a paragraph meriting one of the titles found below. Exert yourself to the utmost to convey vivid impressions. You may imagine the emotions your own or another's; you may imagine whatever circumstances you please; you may employ narration, description,—whatever form you please. The one thing needful is that you cause the reader to experience through your words the emotions lying behind the title. Begin abruptly; use the present tense.

Cold. Hot. Dry. Dusty. Windy. Damp. Twilight. Gloom. Darkness. Silence. Turmoil. Clamor. Slow motion. Rapid Motion. Monotony. Alone. Deserted. Idleness. Sleepy. Midnight. Struggle. Dazzling light. Exhaustion. Grief. Despair. Hunger. Fear. Horror. Remorse. Toil. Intense joy. Bewilderment. Suspense. Creeping time. Vast space.

**4** Describe, in not more than sixty words each, any three of the following, selecting your adjectives with great care:

a building, a person, a piece of furniture, a lower animal (cow, dog, rabbit), a bit of landscape, a hat, a hand, a countenance, a tree, a garden, a room, the song of a bird.

5 Determine what is the strongest argument that can be advanced on either side of any proposition found in the twelfth exercise under Clearness; then support this argument in as vigorous a manner as you can.

6 Not only clearness but force often depends on ability to select appropriate adjectives. Here are the synonyms for *brave* found in Marsh's *Thesaurus*. Study them, then make a list of all the words you can think of which express the opposite idea.

Adventurous, audacious, aweless, bold, chivalrous, confident, courageous, daring, dashing, dauntless, determined, dogged, doughty, dreadless, enterprising, fearless, fierce, firm, gallant, hardy, heroic, indomitable, intrepid, lion-hearted, lion-like, manful, mettlesome, plucky, pugnacious, reassured, resolute, savage, self-reliant, soldierly, spirited, spiritfuf, stout, unabashed, unalarmed, unappalled, unapprehensive, unawed, unblenched, undaunted, undismayed, undreadful, unfeared, unshrinking, valiant, valorous, venturesome, venturous.

7 Think of more graphic substitutes, single words or phrases, for the following expressions:

Went slowly, replied, struck, laughed, departed, showed astonishment, assented, advanced, disappeared.

8 Think of an appropriate verb, with or without an accompanying phrase, to express the sound made by each of the following:

A galloping horse, the wind among trees, boiling water, the hinges of a door, a heavy wagon on stony pavement, a train of cars, a locomotive whistle, a distant cannon, a locust, a fly caught in a web, bees in a tulip tree, waves on a beach, a chain dragged along a road, a boy who does not lift his feet, a lawn-mower.

9 \* Here are brief selections illustrating a few of the many forms of forcefulness. Examine each with great care, reading it many times to see if you can discover why it appeals to you. Work independently, at first; then let the members of the class coöperate, comparing the results of individual investigation; finally, perhaps the instructor will add his estimate. The outline on page 46 may suggest a way of systematizing the work, and the following questions may prove suggestive:

Is the nature of the subject matter such as to appeal strongly to our interest? Is forcefulness traceable to the vigor and richness of the writer's character—the depth of his thought, the vividness of his imagination, his sincerity, his sense of humor, his wit, his sensitiveness to pathos, his winsome personality? What do you note in regard to the diction? Are the words precise, specific, picturesque, connotative, sonorous? What of the sentences—unusually long, unusually short, varied in length, frequently periodic or balanced, unusual in their structure, compact, broken, frequently interrogative or exclamatory? Is the paragraph structure noticeable? What figures and dramatic devices are common—simile, metaphor, personification, metonymy; suspense, surprise, antithesis, repetition? Is there a profusion of specific detail? Finally, try to condense into one or two sentences the leading characteristics of the paragraph.

1. If I were an American, as I am an Englishman, while a foreign troop was landed in my country, I never would lay down my arms—never—never—never!—WILLIAM PITT
- × 2. For my part, although the honorable gentlemen who made this motion, and some other gentlemen, have been, more than once, in the course of the debate, severely reprehended for calling it a wicked and accursed war, I am persuaded, and would affirm,

\* This exercise, it is needless to say, should furnish material for a number of recitations.

that it was a most accursed, wicked, barbarous, cruel, unnatural, unjust, and diabolical war.—WILLIAM PITT

3. They tell us, sir, that we are weak—unable to cope with so formidable an adversary. But when shall we be stronger? Will it be next week, or the next year? Will it be when we are totally disarmed, and when a British guard shall be stationed in every house? Shall we gather strength by irresolution and inaction? Shall we acquire the means of effectual resistance by lying supinely on our backs and hugging the delusive phantom of hope, until our enemies shall have bound us hand and foot?—PATRICK HENRY

4. “Heads, heads, take care of your heads,” cried the loquacious stranger, as they came out under the low archway which in those days formed the entrance to the coach-yard. “Terrible place—dangerous work—other day—five children—mother—tall lady, eating sandwiches—forgot the arch—crash—knock—children look round—mother’s head off—sandwich in her hand—no mouth to put it in—head of a family off—shocking, shocking.”—DICKENS

5. Life is a narrow vale between the cold and barren peaks of two eternities. We strive in vain to look beyond the heights. We cry aloud, and the only answer is the echo of our wailing cry. From the voiceless lips of the unreplying dead there comes no word; but in the night of death hope sees a star, and listening love can hear the rustle of a wing.—INGERSOLL

6. It is therefore death alone that can suddenly make man to know himself. He tells the proud and insolent that they are but objects, and humbles them at the instant, makes them cry, complain, and repent, yea, even to hate their fore-passed happiness. He takes the account of the rich, and proves him a beggar, a naked beggar, which hath interest in nothing but in the gravel that fills his mouth. He holds a glass before the eyes of the most beautiful, and makes them see therein their deformity and rottenness, and they acknowledge it.—RALEIGH

7. Of a sudden the guns on the slope roared out a message of warning. A splintering sound had begun in the woods. It swelled with amazing speed to a profound clamor that involved the earth in noises. The splitting crashes swept along the lines until an interminable roar was developed. To those in the midst of it, it became a din fitted to the universe. It was the whirring

and thumping of gigantic machinery, complications among the smaller stars. They were incapable of hearing more.—STEPHEN CRANE

8. “But, Mr. Speaker, we have a *right* to tax America. O inestimable right! O wonderful, transcendent right! the assertion of which has cost this country thirteen provinces, six islands, one hundred thousand lives, and seventy millions of money. O invaluable right! for the sake of which we have sacrificed our rank among nations, our importance abroad, and our happiness at home. O right more dear to us than existence, which has already cost us so much, and which seems likely to cost us our all. Infatuated man! miserable and undone country! not to know that the claim of right, without the power of enforcing it, is nugatory and idle. We have a *right* to tax America, the noble lord tells us, therefore we *ought* to tax America. This is the profound logic which comprises the whole chain of his reasoning.—BURKE

9. Laugh and mock if you will at the worship of stone idols; but mark ye this, ye breakers of images, that in one regard the stone idol bears awful semblance of Deity—unchangefulness in the midst of changes—the same seeming will and intent for ever and ever inexorable! Upon ancient dynasties of Ethiopian and Egyptian kings—upon Greek and Roman, upon Arab and Ottoman conquerors—upon Napoleon dreaming of an Eastern empire—upon battle and pestilence—upon the ceaseless misery of the Egyptian race—upon keen-eyed travelers—Herodotus yesterday, and Warburton today—upon all and more this unworldly Sphinx has watched, and watched like a Providence with the same earnest eyes, and the same sad, tranquil mien. And we, we shall die, and Islam will wither away, and the Englishman straining far over to hold his loved India, will plant a firm foot on the banks of the Nile, and sit in the seats of the Faithful, and still that sleepless rock will lie watching and watching the works of the new busy race, with those same sad earnest eyes, and the same tranquil mien everlasting. You dare not mock at the Sphinx!—KINGLAKE

10. A great chapter of the history of the world is written in the chalk. Few passages in the history of man can be supported by such an overwhelming mass of direct and indirect evidence as that which testifies to the truth of the fragment of the history

of the globe which I hope to enable you to read with your own eyes tonight. Let me add that few chapters of human history have a more profound significance for ourselves. I weigh my words well when I assert that the man who should know the true history of the bit of chalk which every carpenter carries about in his breeches pocket, tho ignorant of all other history, is likely, if he will think his knowledge out to its ultimate results, to have a truer and therefore a better conception of this wonderful universe, and of man's relation to it, than the most learned student who is deep-read in the records of humanity and ignorant of those of Nature.—HUXLEY

11. I know one who, when she is happy, reads *Nicholas Nickleby*; when she is unhappy, reads *Nicholas Nickleby*; when she is tired, reads *Nicholas Nickleby*; when she is in bed, reads *Nicholas Nickleby*; when she has nothing to do, reads *Nicholas Nickleby*; and when she has finished the book, reads *Nicholas Nickleby* over again.—THACKERAY

12. One could bear a little with Oliver Cromwell, tho, contrary to his oath of fidelity to the Parliament, contrary to his duty to the public, contrary to the respect he owed that venerable body from whom he received his authority, he usurped the government. His merit was so extraordinary that our judgments, our passions, might be blinded by it. He made his way to empire by the most illustrious actions; he had under his command an army that had made him conqueror, and a people that had made him their general. But as for Richard Cromwell, his son, who is he? What are his titles? We have seen that he had a sword by his side; but did he ever draw it? And what is of more importance in this case, is he fit to get obedience from a mighty nation, who could never make a footman obey him? Yet we must recognize this man as our king, under the style of protector!—a man without birth, without courage, without conduct! For my part, I declare, sir, it shall never be said that I made such a man my master!—VANE

13. For the pure clean wit of a sweet young babe is like the newest wax, most able to receive the best and fairest printing; and like a new bright silver dish never occupied, to receive and keep clean any good thing that is put into it.—ASCHAM

14. Sir, this alarming discontent is not the growth of a day, or of a year. If there be any symptoms by which it is possible

to distinguish the chronic disease of the body politic from its passing inflammations, all those symptoms exist in the present case. The taint has been gradually becoming more extensive and more malignant, through the whole lifetime of two generations. We have tried anodynes. We have tried cruel operations. What are we now trying? Who flatters himself that he can turn this feeling back? Does there remain any argument which escaped the comprehensive intellect of Mr. Burke, or the subtlety of Mr. Windham? Does there remain any species of coercion which was not tried by Mr. Pitt and by Lord Londonderry? We have had laws. We have had blood. New treasons have been created. The Press has been shackled. The Habeas Corpus Act has been suspended. Public meetings have been prohibited. The event has proved that these expedients were mere palliatives. The evil remains. It is more formidable than ever. What is to be done?—MACAULAY

15. Studies serve for delight, for ornament, and for ability. Their chief use for delight is in privateness and retiring; for ornament is in discourse; and for ability is in the judgment and disposition of business. For expert men can execute, and perhaps judge of particulars, one by one; but the general counsels, and the plots and marshalling of affairs, come best from those that are learned. To spend too much time in studies is sloth, to use them too much for ornament is affectation, to make judgment only by their rules is the humor of a scholar. They perfect nature, and are perfected by experience. For natural abilities are like natural plants, that need pruning by study; and studies themselves do give forth directions too much at large, except they be bounded in by experience. Crafty men contemn studies, simple men admire them, and wise men use them; for they teach not their own use, but that is wisdom without them and above them, won by observation.—LORD BACON

16. A Poor Relation—is the most irrelevant thing in nature,—a piece of impertinent correspondency,—an odious approximation,—a haunting conscience,—a preposterous shadow, lengthening in the noontide of our prosperity, an unwelcome remembrancer,—a perpetually recurring mortification,—a drain on your purse,—a more intolerable dun upon your pride,—a drawback upon success,—a rebuke to your rising,—a stain in your blood,—a blot on your 'scutcheon,—a rent in your garment,—

a death's head at your banquet,—Agathocles' pot,—a Mordecai in your gate,—a Lazarus at your door,—a lion in your path,—a frog in your chamber,—a fly in your ointment,—a mote in your eye,—a triumph to your enemy, an apology to your friends,—the one thing not needful,—the hail in harvest,—the ounce of sour in a pound of sweet.—LAMB

17. But, I think, the noblest sea that Turner has ever painted, and, if so, the noblest certainly ever painted by man, is that of the *Slave Ship*, the chief Academy picture of the exhibition of 1840. It is a sunset on the Atlantic after prolonged storm; but the storm is partially lulled, and the torn and streaming rain-clouds are moving in scarlet lines to lose themselves in the hollow of night. The whole surface of the sea included in the picture is divided into two ridges of enormous swell, not high, nor local, but a low, broad heaving of the whole ocean, like the lifting of its bosom by deep-drawn breath after the torture of the storm. Between these two ridges, the fire of the sunset falls along the trough of the sea, dyeing it with an awful but glorious light, the intense and lurid splendor which burns like gold and bathes like blood. Along this fiery path and valley, the tossing waves by which the swell of the sea is restlessly divided, lift themselves in dark, indefinite, fantastic forms, each casting a faint and ghostly shadow behind it along the illumined foam. They do not rise everywhere, but three or four together in wild groups, fitfully and furiously, as the under strength of the swell compels or permits them; leaving between them treacherous spaces of level and whirling water, now lighted with green and lamp-like fire, now flashing back the gold of the declining sun, now fearfully dyed from above with the indistinguishable images of the burning clouds, which fall upon them in flakes of crimson and scarlet, and give to the reckless waves the added motion of their own fiery flying. Purple and blue, the lurid shadows of the hollow breakers are cast upon the mist of the night, which gathers cold and low, advancing like the shadow of death upon the guilty\* ship as it labors amidst the lightning of the sea, its thin masts written upon the sky in lines of blood, girded with condemnation in that fearful hue which signs the sky with horror, and mixes its flaming flood with the sunlight,—and cast

\* She is a slaver, throwing her slaves overboard. The near sea is encumbered with corpses.—(RUSKIN'S NOTE)



far along the desolate heave of the sepulchral waves, incarnadines the multitudinous sea.—RUSKIN

X 18. Two powerful nations have been vitally affected by natural calamities. The former of these calamities was inevitable by human prudence, and uncontrollable by human skill; the latter was to be foreseen at any distance by the most ignorant, and to be avoided by the most wary. I mean in the first the Plague of the Athenians; in the second the starvation of the French. The first happened under the administration of a man transcendently brave; a man cautious, temperate, eloquent, prompt, sagacious, above all that ever guided the councils and animated the energies of a state; the second under a soldier of fortune, expert and enthusiastic; but often deficient in moral courage, not seldom in personal; rude, insolent, rash, rapacious; valuing but one human life among the myriads at his disposal, and that one far from the worthiest, in the estimation of an honester and a saner mind.—LANDOR

19. The work of the Lombard was to give hardihood and system to the enervated body and enfeebled mind of Christendom; that of the Arab was to punish idolatry, and to proclaim the spirituality of worship. The Lombard covered every church which he built with the sculptured representations of bodily exercises—hunting and war. The Arab banished all imagination of creature form from his temples, and proclaimed from their minarets, "There is no god but God." Opposite in their character and mission, alike in their magnificence of energy, they came from the North and from the South, the glacier torrent and the lava stream; they met and contended over the wreck of the Roman empire; and the very center of the struggle, the point of pause of both, the dead water of the opposite eddies charged with embayed fragments of the Roman wreck, is Venice.

20. Beyond those troops of ordered arches there rises a vision out of the earth, and all the great square seems to have opened from it in a kind of awe, that we may see it far away; a multitude of pillars and white domes, clustering into a long low pyramid of colored light; a treasure heap, it seems, partly of gold and partly of opal and mother-of-pearl, hollowed beneath into five great vaulted porches, ceiled with fair mosaic and beset with sculpture of alabaster, clear as amber and delicate as ivory—sculpture fantastic and involved, of palm-leaves and lilies, and grapes and

pomegranates, and birds clinging and fluttering among the branches, all twined together into an endless network of buds and plumes; and in the midst of it the solemn forms of angels, sceptered, and robed to the feet, and leaning to each other across the gates, their figures indistinct among the gleaming of the golden ground through the leaves beside them—interrupted and dim, like the morning light as it faded back among the branches of Eden when first its gates were angel-guarded long ago.—RUSKIN

21. Two men I honor, and no third. First, the toilworn Craftsman that with earth-made implement laboriously conquers the Earth, and makes her man's. Venerable to me is the hard Hand; crooked, coarse; wherein notwithstanding lies a cunning virtue, indefeasibly royal, as of the Scepter of this Planet. Venerable too is the rugged face, all weather-tanned, besoiled, with its rude intelligence; if it is the face of a man living manlike. O, but the more venerable for thy rudeness, and even because we must pity as well as love thee! Hardly-entreated Brother! For us was thy back so bent, for us were thy straight limbs and fingers so deformed; thou wert our Conscript, on whom the lot fell, and fighting our battle wert so marred. For in thee too lay a god-created Form, but it was not to be unfolded; encrusted must it stand with the thick adhesions and defacements of labor; and thy body, like thy soul, was not to know freedom. Yet toil on, toil on: *thou* art in thy duty, be out of it who may; thou toilest for the altogether indispensable, for daily bread.

22. A second man I honor, and still more highly: Him who is seen toiling for the spiritually indispensable; not daily bread, but bread of Life. Is not he too in his duty, endeavoring towards inward Harmony; revealing this, by act or by word? Through all his outward endeavors, be they high or low? Highest of all, when his outward and his inward endeavor are one: when we can call him Artist; not earthly Craftsman only, but inspired Thinker, who with heaven-made Implement conquers Heaven for us! If the poor and humble toil that we have Food, must not the high and glorious toil for him in return, that he have Light, have Guidance, Freedom, Immortality?—These two, in all their degree, I honor: all else is chaff and dust, which let the wind blow whither it listeth.—CARLYLE

23. The splendid naves of St. Albans, Westminster, Canter-

bury, Winchester, York, Salisbury, rise heavenward; the towers of Ely reach the skies; the west front of Lincoln, adorned with marvellous carvings, rears itself on the hill above the town; Petersborough opens its wide bays, deep as the portals of French churches; Durham, a heavy and massive pile built by knight-bishops, overlooks the valley of the Wear, and seems a divine fortress, a castle erected for God.—JUSSERAND

**10** With one or two possible exceptions, the illustrative paragraphs found in exercise **14** under Clearness are not only clear but forceful. Study them as you have studied the selections above.

**11** Come to class prepared to read and talk about brief selections, taken from whatever source you please, which have appealed to you strongly.

NOTE.—For the study of figures of speech and dramatic devices in general, see Appendix.

## CHAPTER V

### BEAUTY

A word employed loosely in daily speech sometimes gains a more precise meaning when set apart for technical use; but this is hardly true of beauty, the name chosen for the finest and rarest of all literary qualities. It is vague in that it has, like force, an unusually broad range of application. Tennyson's *Tears, idle tears* is called beautiful; but so too are many poems differing from this little song as widely as a Greek temple differs from the field flower. It is vague, too, in that what seems beautiful to one may please another but mildly or not at all. Hardly, then, shall we succeed in defining with exactness this subtle quality; we can but say that it is pleasure-giving, that its appeal is preëminently through the emotions, that it is forcefulness refined and elevated. Better than any set definition will be a searching of our own natures with a view to discovering what, in the few masterpieces of literature that cultured minds have pretty generally agreed in calling beautiful, brings us a pleasure so fine and rare that we are not satisfied with applying to it the term force.

No mistake will be made in affirming first of all that there can be no beauty without sincerity. We do not like pretence. There are those who weep when they are not sad and laugh when they are not gay—tricksters who manufacture sentiment; there are cowards who employ words to conceal feeling, or to cover poverty of thought or emotion by what

**Vagueness of the term**

**Sincerity requisite**

is called fine writing. Their compositions may possess a degree of force, but they can not rise to the high level of beauty. Preferable are the plain words of plain people, if they but reflect honest natures. A friendly letter which rings true, even though from an illiterate woodsman, claims higher rank than the shams of brilliant writers.

A second essential is refinement, or a high degree of aesthetic and moral excellence. Speech may be forceful though it reflect coarseness and ill-breeding, a dull sense of propriety, lack of deference, **Refinement** lack of self-restraint, and much else that offends the sensitive nature. Beauty implies good taste and native refinement. And speech may be forceful yet immoral. Playwrights, novelists, poets even, may use their genius unworthily to stir the lower passions. They sometimes pander to our sensual natures. So clever, so witty, so fascinating are they, oftentimes, that we are for the moment blind to the fact that no amount of cleverness can sweeten into beauty whatever lures to lower levels. Beauty is pleasure-giving, but pleasure should be unreprouvable, free from taint. The truly great poets, to whom we turn instinctively for examples of beauty, are moral. We value them, in part at least, because they lift us out of the petty and commonplace, out of that which is unworthily low.

A third element contributing to beauty is truth, the product of keen perception aided by sympathy. "This author," we sometimes say, "is evidently **Truth** sincere, refined, moral, and he expresses himself with commendable force; but I cannot believe that he has found the truth." Perhaps his failure is due to immaturity. "A young man will be wiser by and by." Or it may be attributed to narrow experience; he has wrongly concluded that all the wide world is like the little valley where he dwells. Prejudice, from

which no one is wholly free, may have distorted his vision. There are many, many reasons why those who are sincere and who have high motives fail to interpret correctly the varied emotions—love, joy, hate, grief, indignation, etc.—which make up the round of human experience. We may be able to say of their words *How forceful*; we cannot say *How true!* “No pleasure,” declares a Latin poet, “is comparable to standing upon the vantage ground of truth and viewing the errors, the wanderings, the mists and tempests below.” Few pleasures are greater, it may be added, than that derived from the words of one who has gained this vantage ground, has penetrated the mists amid which we dwell, and with sympathetically keen perception reveals us to ourselves.

But sincerity, refinement, and truth, though characteristic of beauty, are not peculiarly literary qualities. They are found in the poems of Wordsworth, and yet they may be as truly characteristic of our next door neighbor, whose powers of communication through language are little better than commonplace. Beauty in literature becomes beauty through artistic expression.

We read with the eye, yet the main approach to our emotions is through the ear. One essential of fine expression is melody. Words must be made to sing. The poet is called singer. If his lines lack melody, they are not poetry. Shakespeare’s *Macbeth* has been called “a tempest set to music.” But prose writers too must be musicians. Strong, beautiful prose is not metrical, yet it is rhythmical. The sensitive ear detects in it a cadence by no means accidental. We may feel sure that much effort has been expended in avoiding unpleasant monotony of sounds, irritating repetition, harsh combinations of consonants, and what-

ever else may offend the ear. One reason why the King James version of the Bible is preferred by many to all other versions is that it is beautifully melodious. Yet it is in poetry, we need not say, that the charm of melody is greatest. It is a dull ear which is not captivated by Coleridge's

In Xanadu did Kubla Khan  
A stately pleasure dome decree,

and fails to catch the melody in Tennyson's little poem the first stanza of which runs as follows:

Where Claribel low-lieth  
The breezes pause and die,  
Letting the rose-leaves fall;  
But the solemn oak-tree sigheth,  
Thick-leaved, ambrosial,  
With ancient melody  
Of an inward agony,  
Where Claribel low-lieth.

We can imagine that one unacquainted with the English tongue might derive pleasure from the mere sound of such lines,—indeed from any masterpiece, prose or poetry, characterized by easy, varied, sustained melody.

Closely akin to this first essential is harmony. By harmony is meant an appropriate correspondence between cadence and rhythm on the one hand and the character and spirit of what is expressed on the other hand. Harmony The happy swing of wedding song ill fits the funeral march. Indignation cannot be expressed trippingly. "Avenge O Lord thy slaughtered saints," sings Milton in one poem; "Grate on their scannel pipes of wretched straw" in a second; "Come, and trip it as ye go" in a third. In each line sound is wedded to sense. But the term harmony may be employed in still another way. Just as colors or sounds may be combined

inharmoniously, so thoughts may be intermingled incongruously. Some little item, it may be but an inappropriate figure of speech, or a coarse word where all else is refined, is enough to jar our sensibilities, which demand that everything shall be "in keeping." An illustration of such a discord is found in one of Wordsworth's poems, otherwise beautiful, *She was a phantom of delight*. Note the second line in this concluding stanza:

And now I see with eye serene  
The very pulse of the machine:  
A being breathing thoughtful breath,  
A traveller between life and death;  
The reason firm, the temperate will,  
Endurance, foresight, strength, and skill;  
A perfect Woman, nobly planned,  
To warn, to comfort, and command;  
And yet a Spirit still, and bright  
With something of angelic light.

To compare perfect womanhood to a machine is to sin against harmony.

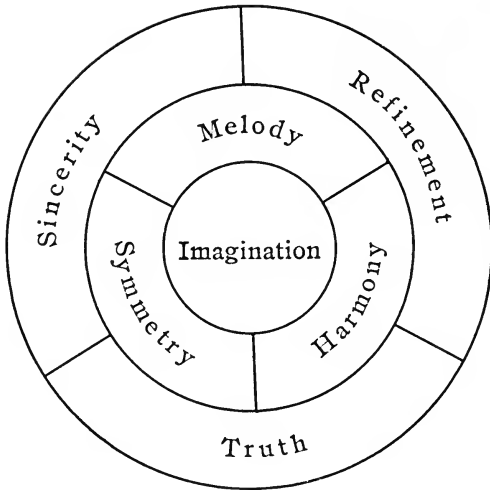
A third essential is symmetry, the result of a fine sense of proportion and proper arrangement. When nothing foreign intrudes, when nothing needed is wanting, when part is nicely proportioned to part and all combines to make up a unified whole, then symmetry is perfect. But how rarely do we find it! For true sense of proportion, artistic intuition, is possessed by but few. When the ungifted attempt to express themselves, that which is in mind fails to crystalize symmetrically; it comes forth misshapen, un-unified, incoherent, and with emphasis unskilfully placed. Beauty, that is to say, calls for design or pattern. The design of story or play or essay or lyric may be very simple; but pattern or scheme of some kind is highly essential.



Sincerity, refinement, truth; melody, harmony, symmetry; what more can we think of which contributes to our pleasure when reading acknowledged masterpieces? The very heart of the matter is reached in the word **Imagination**. Through sympathetic imagination the writer puts himself in the place of others, sharing understandingly the emotions of his fellow men, and is able to picture humanity truthfully. Through constructive imagination the story-teller builds up his plot out of incidents which may never have happened, yet so real, so true to life are they, that all seems natural. Through creative imagination characters are called into being so like to real people that we follow their acts and words, and enter into their fancied emotions, with the keenest interest—laugh with them, weep with them, rejoice over their successes and share sympathetically their reverses. It is through imagination too, of the inventive kind, that new similes and metaphors are discovered, new ways of stating familiar truths, new melodies and harmonies. All writers of note are explorers in the wide realm of words, successful whenever they discover what is new. Their gifts are denied to most of us, yet we take the keenest pleasure in their triumph, whether it be a great story like that of Hamlet, or the effective use of a connotative word.

But beauty, after all, is too subtle for analysis. No enumeration of contributing elements, such as we have attempted, can satisfy. There are nameless qualities, nameless combinations of qualities, which escape us, until we are almost ready to adopt the old belief that beauty is but another name for "divine fire." **Nameless qualities**

Perhaps the following diagram will serve to fix in mind the substance of this chapter:



The lists found below of terms related to beauty are by no means complete, and some, perhaps, belong quite as properly to clearness or force; for purity, clearness, and force contribute to beauty, and all four qualities shade into each other. There are no well defined dividing lines.

**Terminology**

- I Sincere, natural, genuine, artless, spontaneous, naive.
- II Grave, serious, candid, conscientious, frank, sympathetic.
- III Temperate, dignified, noble, stately, magnificent, grand, heroic, exalted, imposing, impassioned, sustained, eloquent, sublime.
- IV Musical, melodious, harmonious, rhythmical, smooth, sonorous, sweet, tuneful, lilting.

- V Airy, dainty, delicate, graceful, elegant, finished, refined, courtly, polished, chaste.
- VI Inharmonious, discordant, clashing, jingling.
- VII Coarse, blunt, low, vulgar, sensual, voluptuous.
- VIII Elaborate, flowery, embroidered, flashy, gaudy, showy, tawdry.
- IX Biting, cynical, fawning, waspish.

## EXERCISES

1 Many of the selections found in the exercises accompanying the chapters on Clearness and Force are, wholly or in part, examples of the beautiful. Find them, and try to discover, in regard to each passage, wherein its beauty lies.

2 Bring to class brief selections, preferably prose, which seem to you to be unusually beautiful. Defend your choice.

3 Find passages of great beauty in the Old Testament.

4 Do you think it possible for one to write prose deserving the epithet beautiful, by conscious imitation of the works of great writers? Is it a good plan, when writing, to interlard brief passages from the poets? Is there danger in trying to write beautiful prose—that is, should we leave beauty for the poets to express? Is it correct to say that nothing which is untrue can be beautiful? In your estimation, which is the most important element contributing to beauty: the outward dress of thought (what is commonly called style); the thought, fancy, or feeling expressed; the character and personality of the writer?

5 Study the following quotations, each of which casts a ray of light on beauty. Which of them, if any, do you fail to understand?

Loveliness

Needs not the foreign aid of ornament,  
But is, when unadorn'd, adorn'd the most.—THOMSON

Thoughtless of beauty, she was beauty's self.—THOMSON

The beautiful rests on the foundations of the necessary.  
—EMERSON

Plain truth needs no flowers of speech.—HORACE

The perfection of art is to conceal art.—QUINTILIAN

True beauty is never divorced from utility.—QUINTILIAN

Beauty is truth, truth beauty.—KEATS

NOTE.—Beauty is best studied, perhaps, in connection with poetry. For additional exercises, see Chapter xix.

## CHAPTER VI

### STYLE

The steel pen in common use today was unknown to the ancients, the nearest approach to it being a bone or metal instrument, in shape resembling a sharpened pencil, with which the scribe wrote on tablets thinly coated with wax. This instrument was called a stylus, and from stylus is derived the modern word style. It is well to keep this derivation in mind, together with the pleasing fiction suggested by it; namely, that authors differ one from another because no two employ the same pen.

**Derivation of the word**

The meaning of the word as applied to articles of wearing apparel, or furniture, or architecture is not at all difficult to comprehend; we employ the expression freely and in its proper sense. When employed as a rhetorical term, its meaning is not so clear-cut; it may convey a number of different impressions, owing to certain misconceptions. Perhaps the most common misconception is that only authors of note possess style. But since style means almost the same thing as manner or individuality, it follows that everyone possesses it, the school-boy as truly as the great Shakespeare. It is discernible in conversation, in familiar letters, in school compositions, as well as in the prose and poetry of the masters; for everyone possesses something of individuality and this individuality is manifest whenever he speaks or writes. One may not have a good style, and through imitation of others, or through suppression

**A misconception**

due to shame or reserve, may for a time conceal his real nature—disguise himself; yet style of some sort, genuine or artificial, he continues to have.

A second misconception is that style is something external, to be put on as one puts on a garment, and to be changed at will much as we slip from a blue suit to a gray; that it has to do merely with the manner of expression, or the skill with which words are employed. This idea of style as the garment of thought is directly opposed to a famous and generally accepted definition which states that *style is the man himself*. By this is meant that all of the man—his mind, his heart, his spirit, no less than his literary skill—goes toward the making of his style.

From this conception come two very wholesome truths. Milton expresses one of these when he asserts that a man must be a poem before he can write one, a thought also conveyed in the familiar adage, *The stream cannot rise higher than the fountain source*. Words, whether written or spoken, reveal but what we are; sooner or later the good and the bad in us, the strength and the weakness, come to the light. The second truth, closely allied to the one just stated, is that one cannot become a great writer through “catching the trick” from others—through imitating the externals of style. Studying the art of others is doubtless profitable in some measure, since it enables us to correct faults and discover effective ways of expression. Intimate acquaintance with the works of the masters is helpful in so far as it supplies the mind with noble thoughts and stimulates the emotions, just as character is formed through association with those who are refined. But servile imitation of the manners of others is as artificial in composition as in society. Putting on a soldier’s uniform and spicing one’s

speech with a few military terms will not make one a brave warrior.

Nationality is one of the larger factors contributing to style. For each nation has its peculiar conceptions of right and wrong, conceptions of what is beautiful and what is ugly, ideals traceable to its history and its environment. If all German literature could be condensed into a single volume, all French literature into a second, all English into a third, and so on throughout the realm of letters, it would be found that though these volumes contained much in common, yet each would differ from the others not alone in language but in subject matter, in thought and temperament and art. Racial traits, that is to say, and national ideals, are reflected in literature. One reason why English literature is at once difficult and exceedingly interesting to study is that the English are not only a mixed people, the combined product of several races, but from time to time they have been strongly influenced by other nations.

**Nationality  
in style**

Style is also a matter of time influence. Nations grow, and as they develop from age to age, their literatures change. The literature of King Alfred's day differs from that of Chaucer's generation, and the works of Chaucer differ from those of Shakespeare and Milton. The Queen Anne writers are in a class by themselves, possessing marked characteristics; and so too are the writers of Queen Victoria's day. No author, not even one so great as Shakespeare, is wholly uninfluenced by the times in which he lives. Each individual is in part the product of the race to which he belongs and in part the product of his day and generation. From these influences he cannot wholly escape; they are betrayed in his words, oral and written.

**Time element  
in style**

Style is the product not only of race or nationality and of time, but of strong personal influence. We know how it is in school life—how a single strong **Schools** personality, a popular boy of vigorous character, will sway his mates till they, through conscious or unconscious imitation, become in some ways like him. So in literature a writer often becomes the center of a "school" of authors, all influenced strongly by their leader. Just as English and French and Italian are used to describe national styles, and such terms as Queen Anne, Elizabethan, and Victorian to describe the style common to a given age in a nation's life, so the adjectives Wordsworthian and Byronic and Hawthornesque are employed to describe works written by Wordsworth or Byron or Hawthorne or their followers.

And yet, powerful though these larger influences are, and for the most part unescapable, we all retain a considerable degree of individuality. Ancestry, **Individuality** home life, natural surroundings, associates, **strongest** education, occupation—how different are the **factor** forces, some of our own choosing, some far beyond our control, that shape us. No two individuals can be alike. The surest evidence of strong character is ability to retain individuality regardless of conditions which tend to destroy it. The great secret of good style rests in a willingness to express *ourselves*, to be *ourselves* whenever we speak or write. This does not mean that we should neglect opportunities for improvement lest through much study or through taking great pains in composition we lose our individuality; for even genius needs cultivation or it grows rank and ungainly. It means, rather, that timidity and servile imitation are fatal to effective expression.

Purity, clearness, force, and beauty are the fundamental qualities of good style. Attention has been called to the



fact that these four terms, especially the last two, are so broad in their application that they are not convenient to use in characterizing masterpieces. More convenient, because specific, are the terms which in earlier chapters are grouped about clearness, force, and beauty. They form, however, but a small fraction of the vocabulary of criticism, which contains literally thousands of terms. For the most part they are not purely technical, but such as are employed commonly in talking about men and women. Not a few focus attention upon the effect produced upon reader or listener. *Fascinating, bewildering, inspiring, and thrilling* are examples of this sort. Others are concerned with the art of composition, such as *graphic, dramatic, melodious*. A very large number are devoted to the author's individuality, as *keen, dignified, eccentric, cheerful*.

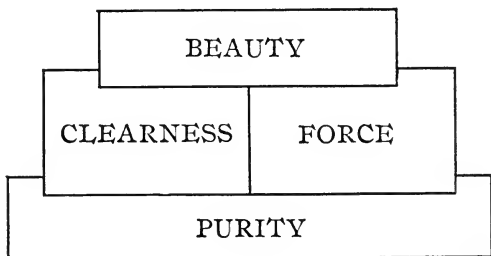
**Fundamental  
qualities**

It is not advisable to memorize lists of critical terms; as a rule the difficulty lies in discovering what, in a given masterpiece, produces its charm and what perchance may displease us, rather than in finding terms to express our likes and dislikes. There is a certain advantage, however, in having a few lists of terms convenient for ready reference, partly because precisely the right adjective will not always come to mind when desired, and partly because the young student needs to be impressed, as he is likely to be if he examines the lists with care, with the thought that since books are but men and women revealed through their words, we require, when talking about masterpieces, few terms not found in the vocabulary of common, daily life. Literature at its best is not technical and complex but very simple, and such should be the terms we employ when talking about it.

**Non-technical  
terms best**

The diagram below is designed not only to fix in memory

the fundamental qualities of style, but to show the interdependence of these qualities. Purity is represented as the broad foundation of the higher qualities. Clearness and Force are placed side by side because usually found together. One hesitates to declare that either is more important than the other. But Beauty, though dependent on all the lower qualities—based upon them, surely deserves to stand highest.



## CHAPTER VII

### NARRATION

The technical name for all connected communication of thought by means of words—all composition, that is, whether oral or written—is discourse. There are four forms of discourse: narration, de-  
**Definition**  
scription, exposition, and argument. The first of these is the story-telling form. It includes all compositions which give, in orderly fashion, the particulars of an event or a series of events. The brief accounts we give one another of our happenings from day to day are narratives; so too are the news items furnished by the daily papers. Biographies, histories, and books of travel are made up largely of narration; and anecdotes, short stories, novels, and plays are conspicuous examples.

In the chapters on purity, clearness, force, and beauty we have considered a number of ways in which compositions may be made effective, with but little regard to whether these compositions are  
**Purpose of this chapter**  
narration or some other form of discourse.

Later chapters have something to say about the art of composition as found in such important literary forms of narration as prose fiction and drama. The purpose of this chapter is to bring together a few practical suggestions in regard to the more common, simpler forms of narrations such as all of us employ day by day.

*First suggestion: Do not waste time in unnecessary preliminaries.* Notice the word *unnecessary*. Usually some account of when and where the incidents occur is desirable,

some explanation of attending circumstances; but such preliminaries should be brief. For example, if the purpose of a narrative is to tell how you caught a trout, it is unquestionably unwise to devote merely the last of six paragraphs to the actual struggle between you and the fish. What happens is the important thing to be told, and the most interesting thing; therefore get through with preliminary explanation as quickly as possible.

**Unnecessary  
preliminaries**

*Second suggestion: Follow a chronological sequence; that is, tell of the incidents in the order of their occurrence.* This

**Following  
chronological  
order** is sometimes a difficult matter, especially when many things have happened in quick succession, or apparently "all at once."

Moreover the memory is treacherous and the mind does not always keep things arranged in their proper sequence. Finally, through excitement, or embarrassment, or haste, the narrator becomes "all mixed up," or incoherent. It is hardly necessary to add that a good way to avoid incoherency when writing a narrative is first to make out a topical plan and then study it carefully to see if each item is in its proper place.

*Third suggestion: Make the narrative complete, omitting no essential detail.* This refers not only to incidents but

**Making  
narrative  
complete** to explanations. What happened may have made a deep impression on the narrator's mind; he was present, it may be, and saw it

all—perhaps was one of the actors. Yet he may not realize how much must be explained in order that others may have sufficient material out of which to construct mind-pictures, or images. He does not realize that he must be eyes, ears, and all the other senses for those to whom he tells his story. That this third suggestion is needed is well proved by the fact that often when told of an accident,

for example, we repeatedly interrupt the informant with questions—questions asked because our minds, busily employed trying to form correct pictures of what happened, find that they lack sufficient material. It is an excellent plan, therefore, when writing a narrative, to pause frequently and ask, Am I giving a sufficient number of particulars? Will my readers *real-ize* this series of incidents and see plainly what occurred?

*Fourth suggestion: Do not bring in irrelevant matter.* In other words, preserve unity. How long it takes the unskilled yet loquacious narrator to tell of some simple occurrence! He digresses; he imparts unnecessary information; he combines two or three stories, it may be, unable to keep in mind the one important task before him. A narrative should move with reasonable rapidity and directness, whether it be a simple item of news or a long romance.

**Excluding  
irrelevant  
matter**

*Fifth suggestion: Try to keep up the suspense.* Keep something back, if possible, that the reader or listener may be led on and on, ever expecting something new, till a climax, with its attendant moment of surprise and its gratification of curiosity, has been reached. At first thought, this precept may seem more appropriate for writers of fiction than for those whose main purpose is to picture events faithfully; yet a little practice will show that even in reporting the common incidents of every-day life it is possible to give our narratives something of dramatic structure.

**Climax order  
preferable**

*Sixth suggestion: For vividness, introduce dialogue when possible.* We like to hear others talk. *What did he say?* is a question we are all fond of asking.

**Dialogue**

We prefer novels in which there are many pages of dialogue; for dialogue makes the narrative seem real, brings us nearer to the characters. And since what

is said receives coloring from the manner in which it is said, the skilled narrator does not neglect to slip in here and there little phrases indicating tone of voice, facial expression, gestures—whatever reveals the emotions and the character of those whose conversation he is reporting. After all, our interest in most narratives lies quite as much in what they reveal of human emotion as in the things that happen—the *plot*, as it is called in storytelling.

*Seventh suggestion: Stop when the end of the narrative proper is reached.* Do not go on retelling; when the last important particular has been made clear, **Abrupt ending** the task is done, and nothing is to be gained by tarrying.

### EXERCISES

1 Relate orally some incident or series of incidents from history, limiting the account to five or ten minutes. Lead up to the narrative proper through clear, brief explanation of attending circumstances. Here are a few suggestive titles:

The battle at Thermopylæ. The sack of Rome by Alaric. The Children's Crusade. The defeat of the Spanish Armada. The first voyage of Columbus. Wat Tyler's Rebellion. The battle of Bannockburn. The battle of Bunker Hill. The winter at Valley Forge. The capture of Ticonderoga. An incident of the Civil war. An incident in the war with Spain. An incident in the Russo-Japanese war.

2 Relate orally some incident or series of incidents from the history of your state; or better still, give a brief chapter from the early history of your town; or best of all, give some interesting bit of unrecorded history having to do with your neighborhood. Try to make the narrative complete, well proportioned, clear. Limit the account to five or ten minutes.

**3** Relate, orally or in writing, an incident or series of incidents from your family history—an oft told true tale concerning your early ancestors, or concerning your father or mother, or concerning yourself. Enliven the narrative, if you can, by introducing dialogue.

**4** In the same manner relate, orally or in writing, an incident from your school life—some event, perhaps, which at the time seemed of great moment and stirred you deeply, though now you can smile at it or at least view it calmly. Try to be graphic; tell not only what happened, but what emotions the actors experienced. Here are a few suggestive titles:

Because I lost my temper. How one thing led to another. A triumph. Shielding a culprit. All due to a misunderstanding. An undeserved punishment. Pulling a victory out of defeat. Pride had a fall. A bitter disappointment. The fire drill. Why I was unprepared. A fair catch.

**5** Find and bring to class a good piece of newspaper reporting. Be prepared to read it and point out its commendable qualities.

**6** Find and bring to class a poor piece of newspaper reporting. Be prepared to read it and point out its deficiencies.

**7** Prepare carefully a criticism of the news department of the school journal. Bear in mind that a critic should point out the good as well as the bad, and to be helpful should make specific suggestions leading to betterment.

**8** Write, as if for publication in a newspaper or a school journal, an account of some athletic contest, or a meeting of a school club, or an incident of still wider interest. Consider carefully what the public will care to be told and

in what order the items should be presented. Limit the account to one-third of a newspaper column.

**9** Condense the foregoing account to about one hundred words, trying to retain all essentials.'

**10** Come to class prepared to retell one of the best short stories you have read during the past three months, and to point out what are to you the attractive features. Try to select a narrative that is appropriate for classroom.

**11** Give, orally, a condensed account of a play that you have witnessed recently, confining yourself somewhat closely to the bare plot.

**12** Write a summary by scenes of one act of a play read in school. Employ the present tense.

**13** Come to class prepared to read two or three pages of spirited narrative from a standard novel. Preface the reading with such explanation of circumstances as may be necessary.

**14** Write a letter to a classmate who, you may imagine, is recovering from an illness, telling all that happened in school yesterday, making the account as complete as you can without including such matters as the classmate's imagination can picture well enough without the aid of your letter. That is, tell him all that you think he will care to know.

**15** Write a letter, this time to a studious classmate, telling minutely all that was done in some one of yesterday's recitations.

**16** Write a letter to your parents, who you may imagine are away from home, telling of some important happening, real or imaginary. Here are suggestive titles:



Unexpected company. Trouble with the plumbing. Losing and finding the dog. Trouble with the neighbor's children. A scare. A book agent. A church entertainment. A stroke of business. An agreeable surprise. The maid has left; no notice given.

**17** Imagining that something of great importance has happened during the absence of your parents, (a) compose a telegram reporting it, (b) write a letter giving details, (c) repeat the conversation (imaginary) which grew out of it on your parents' return.

**18** Imagining that a boy has got into trouble at school, give (a) the boy's account of it as reported to his mother, (b) the teacher's account of it as given to her principal, (c) the mother's account as given to a neighbor. ' "

**19** Write a long paragraph beginning *Last Saturday was one of my busiest days*. Take particular pains to make skilful transitions, introducing phrases and clauses to help the reader in keeping track of passing time.

**20** Make a topical plan of an account of a vacation trip, indicating in some way the approximate number of words to be devoted to each topic.

**21** Write an account of some party or entertainment, introducing here and there bits of rapid description and snatches of conversation.

**22** Report in writing a dialogue—a real one—repeating as accurately as you can the words spoken.

**23** Report in writing either the same dialogue or another, introducing little phrases devoted to facial expression, gestures, tone of voice, etc.

**24** Invent a dialogue which shall reveal indirectly the character of each speaker.

**25** Invent a dialogue which imparts, indirectly, information concerning place, time, the weather, the appearance of each speaker, etc.

**26** Write a short story to which you can give the title *A scrap of brown paper*. Show that the innocent scrap caused one happening, this a second, the second a third, and so on till a climax, pathetic or humorous, was reached. For the scrap of paper you may substitute any other little object, or a chance word, or a little error in judgment, or a moment of forgetfulness.

**27** Invent a story giving the mind-workings of a small boy, a thief, a pupil, or a tramp. Try to show how one thought led to another and finally to action which culminated in comedy or tragedy.

**28** Describe as vividly as you can a purely imaginary contest. Let it be between two swimmers, between a trout and a fisherman, two golfers, an even temper and a ruffled temper, or what you please. The one thing essential is that you make the reader feel the struggle, experience the sensations of the contestants.

**29** Give an absolutely accurate account of some incident, preferably an accident that you have witnessed, using the care that you would feel necessary were you facing a jury, with the fate of a human being hanging on your words.

## CHAPTER VIII

### DESCRIPTION

Description is commonly defined as the picture-giving, image-making form of discourse, and is often likened to painting and sculpture. A little thought, however, will serve to show that the writer of description has a wider range than either painter or sculptor, for he may record impressions made by all five of the senses. Of the four forms of discourse, description is perhaps the least independent; commonly it is but the handmaiden of other forms. That it is of great assistance in narration is attested by the fact that we speak, quite properly, of describing a ball game or a yacht race, so necessary are word-pictures to any satisfactory account. In later chapters we shall see that it is of value in exposition and argument.

Description is an exceedingly difficult form of discourse to write. In the first place, careful observers are rare; the senses are not trained to do accurate work. Because the five sense-messengers bring to us but vague, inaccurate impressions, it is impossible for us to impart clear-cut information to others. Even those who are skilled observers experience difficulty in finding terms to express their impressions. What words, for example, can be found to describe the taste of a strawberry, or the perfume of a rose, or the roar of breakers, or the disposition of our next door neighbor? Moreover, it requires rare judgment to determine, oftentimes, what a description should include and in what order the various

**Definition**

**Why description is difficult**

items should be presented. But more profitable than a long enumeration of attending difficulties will be a few practical suggestions such as common experience shows are of service to young writers.

*First suggestion: Remember that you have not one, nor two, but five senses.* Train them—all of them. Train the

**Employing all five senses** memory to retain sense-impressions of all kinds. When you write, do not tell merely what the eye has seen.

*Second suggestion: Exercise economy.* Readers are inclined to slight descriptive passages, frequently omitting them altogether. Be brief, then. *What can*

**Exercising economy** *I omit* is as pertinent a question as *How much have I to tell.* Of all the ways of economizing, two stand out conspicuously.

First, determine with great care what is distinctive in that which is to be described, the few points which make it different from others of its kind. This matter once decided, all else may be with safety excluded from consideration and energy directed toward bringing out clearly the salient characteristics. In picturing a building, for example, one need not tell everything about it; a few items may suffice to distinguish it from other buildings.

Second, choose words that convey, quickly, vivid impressions—picture-words.

Wee, sleekit, cowr'in, tim'rous beastie,

runs the first line of Burns's *To a Mouse*—five words only, yet how satisfactory the picture. Macaulay describes

**Choosing descriptive words** Mrs. Thrale as “one of those clever, kind-hearted, engaging, vain, pert young women, who are perpetually doing or saying what is not exactly right, but who, do or say what they

may, are always agreeable." This characterization is clear and brief, and the brevity is due in large measure to Macaulay's skill in selecting words. Adjectives and adverbs are, by reputation, particularly useful in description; yet such words as *toddle*, *whimper*, and *drawl* suggest that verbs too may be graphic, certainly more effective than *lovely*, *nice*, *fine*, and *grand*, adjectives so broad that they convey no very definite meaning.

*Third suggestion: Follow some plan.* Description is so varied in kind that an attempt to enumerate all the plans by following which unity, coherence, and proper emphasis may be sought would be vain. Here, however, are a few hints:

**A plan**

First, unity is often to be gained—and brevity too—by keeping in mind a definite purpose and making each item contribute to it. Thus the items become centered like the spokes in a wheel.

**A definite purpose**

Dickens follows this method in describing St. Antoine, a section of Paris near the old Bastille. As we read paragraph after paragraph, we realize that desperate poverty is the hub to the descriptive wheel; nothing is introduced save that which points to this one thing.

Second, confusion is avoided and order gained, oftentimes, through relating all to one point of view—a plan suggesting not a wheel so much as an opened fan. A valley gives one set of impressions to the observer who stands on the bank of a

**One point of view**

stream winding through it, a very different set of impressions to the observer who looks down from the brow of a hill. Mix these two sets of impressions and the result is a confused picture. This the inexperienced writer sometimes forgets, especially when describing from memory. But if, in picturing a landscape, for example, the writer adopts a single point of view and makes it known, the

picture becomes unified. At times, it is true, the nature of the task is such as to call for a succession of viewpoints; but in such case clearness may still be maintained through notifying the reader of each change in the position of the observer.

Third, it is well to begin a description with a general outline sketch, or a brief picture of the whole, following this with details; just as in drawing a map we begin with boundary lines and afterwards put in mountains, rivers, and lakes. In describing a room, for example, it is well to begin with a sentence or two giving a general idea of its appearance, or that which one notices at first glance as the door opens, and then proceed with details. What order to follow in presenting details is not a matter for hard and fast rules, yet order of some kind is in every case desirable. Sometimes the chronological order seems best, the items being recorded in the order in which they have been noted. Sometimes it is best to proceed from left to right, or from that which is low to that which is higher, or from that which is near to that which is more remote. Not infrequently it is well to begin with the most prominent feature and relate all else to it. Whatever the plan adopted, the skilled writer marks his transitions with care, guiding the reader by means of such index expressions as *close at hand*, *a little beyond this*, and *turning now to the right*. He is careful, moreover, to give prominence to that which deserves emphasis, subordinating less important features, and omitting altogether whatever is irrelevant to his purpose.

*Fourth suggestion: Unless scientific accuracy is called for, let personality color your descriptions; make them better than mere photographs.* A post-card picture of the ruins of Melrose Abbey may be less satisfying than a letter from &

friend who has recently visited the ruins and tries to tell you how they impressed him. Stevenson's eyes were no better than many another person's; yet **Giving** we read his descriptive passages with great **sway to** pleasure because there is so much of Steven- **personality** son in them. It is personality, individuality, that furnishes charm to most discourse save such as is employed for purely practical ends. Do not, then, when writing description, hold the emotions in check. Give the picture, and with it give something of yourself.

*Fifth suggestion: Stop skipping descriptive passages when reading.* Study them with great care. Try to discriminate between the good and the bad. Try to discover for yourself why it is that Ruskin **Studying** succeeds so well in all his descriptions, **models** whether his subject be a bird's feather or a great cathedral. A little independent investigation of this sort will bring greater returns than memorizing the pages of a textbook. And having studied, practice.

### EXERCISES

It would not be a difficult matter to invent hundreds of tasks in description, each differing from the others in some slight respect. The following, selected mainly because they have been tried in classroom, are not grouped strictly in the order of their difficulty; it has seemed best to let the individual instructor determine what shall be experimented with first.

**1** Examine closely some article now in your possession to see what are its distinguishing marks; then write such an advertisement as you would publish were the article lost.

**2** Write a brief description of some person whom you know very well, imagining that he is a fugitive from justice.

Remember that to casual observers many people look alike and that false arrest is disagreeable.

**3** Imagining that you are an agent in whose hands a piece of property has been placed, write a letter to a prospective customer picturing the property. Let the description be systematic, conveying a general impression first.

**4** Describe some machine or contrivance in such a way as to impart a clear impression. Employ comparisons if necessary.

**5** Describe in a general way the plan of some park or village or locality, in bird's-eye view fashion mapping it out. Employ comparison; make careful transitions.

**6** Imagining that you have lost a ring or a knife while on a ramble, write a note to a friend asking him to find it for you. Describe minutely the place where you think the article may be found.

**7** Describe the course of a stream, or of a trail through the woods, or of a country road with which you are very familiar.

**8** Describe in not more than sixty words the exterior of some familiar building as seen from one viewpoint, conveying as correct an impression as you can. Watch your sentence structure.

**9** Describe the same building in as many words as you please and from as many viewpoints as may be necessary, emphasizing only such things as are characteristic. Try beginning with the more obvious matters, creating in the reader's mind a general picture; then fill in details. Close with the impression made by the building as a whole.



**10** Invent a plan for some interior—a hunting camp for instance, or the cabin of a sloop, or a boy's workshop, or a store—setting forth your plan so clearly that the listener or reader will see what you picture.

**11** Describe an interior, real or imaginary, striving not only to give a clear picture but to convey vividly some one impression, as vast space, splendor, shabbiness, quaintness, perfect order, disorder, weirdness, gloom, poverty, or snugness.

**12** Describe one of the following interiors, conveying not only a correct impression of size, but the arrangement of objects within the room: a workshop, a gymnasium, a parlor car, a waiting room, a church, a store.

**13** Write a brief nature sketch, not over two hundred words, emphasizing what the eyes see, especially color.

**14** Write a brief nature sketch giving the impressions registered by at least two of the senses.

**15** Write a description of an extended view such as may be had from a hilltop or a tower.

**16** Write a description of some view as it appears at different times of day or at different seasons of the year.

**17** Sit before a window for ten minutes, recording accurately all that the eye sees.

**18** Write a moving-picture description, the result of observations from a car window, or from a canoe drifting downstream, or from the deck of a ferryboat.

**19** Write a description giving the setting for some scene remembered from a novel or a play.

**20** Invent a setting appropriate for some action of your own imagining—a contest, a disaster, a festival, a crime.

**21** Make a list of all the things you would wish to mention were you describing one of the following, and tell what you would wish particularly to emphasize:

A campaign parade, a room in a factory, a department store, a public library, a prairie, a fruit orchard, a country lane, a city wharf, a harbor, a circus tent just before the performance begins, a lunch room at recess, a booth at a fair, a mining camp, a kitchen the day before Thanksgiving, the stage of a theater, an athletic field, a city street, a plantation. Make a brief topical plan for such a description, indicating in some way the proportionate space to be given each topic.

**22** Describe a tableau such as a snap shot might reveal at a critical moment in some comedy or tragedy that you have witnessed or in which you have had a part. Do not use over two hundred words.

**23** Give a clear picture of a store window, emphasizing the impression made by the display.

**24** Give a series of descriptions of the same store window as it appears to several pairs of eyes.

**25** Playing the spectator, watch a group of children, noting not only what they do and say, but facial expression, tone of voice, gestures, etc. Record your observations.

**26** Watch carefully for ten minutes any animal—a dog, an ant, a butterfly; then record your observations.

**27** Study carefully for ten minutes some small object—a leaf, a flower, a bird's feather, a tuft of moss; then record your sense impressions.

**28** Try to describe in single sentences four or five of your intimate friends.

**29** Describe in detail a countenance.

**30** Describe a person in the act of doing something characteristic—a cobbler at his bench, a fisherman mending his net, an auctioneer selling his goods, a blacksmith at his forge.

**31** Remembering that character is revealed in many ways—through countenance, voice, gait, conversation, employment, etc., give as clear an impression as you can of any individual, real or imagined. Use as many forms of discourse as you please, the one thing essential being that the portrait shall be true to life.

**32** Bring out the characteristics of a group of people through their conversation, introducing here and there little phrases revealing facial expression and gestures and tone of voice.

**33** Describe accurately the weather of the past two or three days.

**34** Describe a "spell" of weather, emphasizing cold, wet, windiness, sultriness, heat, continual change, or drought.

**35** Give from accurate observation a description of daybreak or nightfall.

**36** Bring to class good specimens of description found in books or magazines, and be prepared to tell what you see in them to admire.

## CHAPTER IX

### EXPOSITION

Exposition is another name for explanation. In some of its forms it differs little from narration, the distinction lying in the fact that, as a rule, the subject matter of narration is particular. For example, a composition telling how a certain guide, on a certain occasion, built a camp fire would be classed as narration; a composition giving general directions for building camp fires would be classed as exposition. Fortunately this nice distinction is not one that the writer must keep constantly in mind.

Exposition is perhaps the most practical of all forms of discourse and the form most often employed from day to day. It plays an important part in education. Most textbooks are mainly expository. Recitations are largely but explanations. In the English class the pupil employs exposition when giving the meaning of words, phrases, and sentences, or pointing out the leading characteristics of an author's style, or telling why he thinks a certain passage beautiful. In the history recitation when a pupil explains some great event by showing the causes that led up to it, and in the science recitation when he classifies the leading varieties of plant life, or tells how coal is formed, the account is expository. Exposition is employed almost as freely after school-days are over, by the overseer instructing his men, the merchant setting forth the merits of his wares, the minister expounding his text, the lawyer interpreting

statutes. It is safe to say that by far the greater part of daily conversation is but one kind or another of this form of discourse.

Since exposition is in such common use and of such practical value, it is well to consider with unusual care the processes employed in imparting information and explaining meanings. Entire textbooks are devoted to this important matter, so much is there to be said; the purpose of this manual is such that the subject must be dealt with very briefly and simply.

Ways of  
explaining

*First, we explain through defining.* This is the method employed when a single word or phrase blocks the way to a clear understanding. Frequently it calls but for the substitution of a synonym better known. The term *agile* is explained through substituting for it the synonym *nimble* or *brisk*. Sometimes we define by naming two or three distinguishing characteristics, a method which might be used in conveying one's ideas in regard to the meaning of the term *gentleman*. This calls for greater skill than merely substituting a synonym, since it is not always a simple matter to determine what characteristic marks are most essential and what ones are of minor importance. Two ways of defining often found together are known as the methods of exclusion and inclusion. Burke begins one of his paragraphs with the statement *The proposition is peace*. Fearing that *peace* may mean one thing to some and another thing to others, he proceeds to enumerate a number of kinds of peace that are not included in his idea. *I do not mean this kind*, he says in substance, *nor this, nor this*, thus excluding all that does not belong to his conception of peace. Defining by inclusion is the reverse of this; it consists in enumerating, item by item, all that the term under con-

Defining

sideration includes, till the entire field is covered, nothing omitted. Thus defining by exclusion and inclusion is but a method of determining boundaries. It is like drawing a circle and saying (by way of exclusion) *This and this and this, which lie beyond the circumference, are not mine*; then (by way of inclusion) *This and this and this, in fact all things lying within the circle, belong to me*.

*Second, we explain by means of comparison.* Some comparisons call attention to similarities. *It works like a lawnmower*, the inventor may say in explaining his new machine. Other comparisons establish marked contrasts. If, for example, it is desired to make clear what is meant by school spirit, one might proceed to picture the opposite of school spirit, dwelling upon this opposite idea till every feature is distinct, then say that the exact contrary of this which has been pictured represents the true idea. But frequently comparison takes the form of drawing nice distinctions between two things likely to be thought of as equivalent or identical. If we are discussing *courage*, we may place beside this term the nearly identical term *daring* and show wherein the two terms are similar in meaning and wherein they differ. Whatever form comparison takes, whether that of similitude, contrast, or nice discrimination, it will be noted that it is but a form of definition.

*Third, we explain by means of illustration.* The dictionary employs this method when, following the definition of a word, it gives a sentence in which the word is so employed as to reveal its proper use. An expository composition on automobile accidents might well contain specific instances illustrating various kinds of accidents. It is hardly necessary to add that illustrations of a somewhat different kind, namely pen drawings, play an important part in the

**Comparison**

**Illustration  
and example**

explanatory matter of many textbooks. Illustration, like comparison, is really a form of definition.

*Fourth, we explain through restatement.* Determined that nothing shall be misunderstood, the careful writer repeats his statements over and over again, each time varying the language or approaching the point of difficulty from a slightly different angle. He recognizes that what is simple to him may be very perplexing to others, and that he may not succeed, the first time he tries, in making himself understood; so by restatement after restatement, ever keeping in mind the barrier of difficulty, he gradually clears the way to comprehension.

*Fifth, we explain through analyzing wholes into their parts and showing the relationship of these parts.* This is the method pursued in displaying information in all fields of human knowledge. It is the plan followed in textbooks, though imperfectly, by the school-boy in writing his first expository composition. In exposition we expose—display, spread out—before the reader all that the subject at hand includes. We analyze it, or separate it, into component parts, as a machinist takes to pieces a machine. We classify the parts, grouping those that are naturally associated. We show the relationship of part to part—just as the machinist, having taken to pieces a machine and shown each part separately, proceeds to reassemble wheels, axles, pins, etc., to show how all goes together to make up the whole. Taking to pieces, examining parts separately and pointing out the relationship of part to part, and finally reassembling the parts: this is the main business of most expository writing.

Keeping these five methods in mind, let us now consider ways of making expository writing effective.

**Restatement**

**Analysis,  
classification,  
and synthesis**

**General  
suggestions**

*First suggestion: Before beginning to write, acquire accurate information.* This point has received attention in an earlier chapter, but it is so important that it will bear repeating. Superficial, second-hand information, perhaps acquired through hastily reading a single magazine article, will not suffice; the subject must be known through and through before there can be clear, effective exposition.

**Acquiring  
information**

*Second suggestion: Before beginning to write, set boundaries beyond which you will not go.* Limit the field to a mere corner of the whole, if need be. Keep well within the boundaries of what you know with reasonable completeness. Indeed it is often expedient to tell but a small part of all that one knows, for one must consider the time at his disposal. He must also consider those to whom he is writing and gauge his exposition to meet their interest and mental capacity. How much will my readers care to be told? What will interest them? What are they capable of understanding? These are questions one should ask before beginning any composition; they are especially pertinent when the composition is to be expository.

**Limiting  
the field**

*Third suggestion: Determine the possible divisions of the subject within the prescribed boundaries.* A business-like way often recommended for doing this is to secure slips of paper and record on each a topic as it occurs to the mind, continuing the process till the field appears to be well covered. With these slips spread out before one, a little study will serve to show whether all are necessary, whether some do not so overlap that they may be to advantage combined, and—this is important—whether some essential topic has not been overlooked. It is a good plan to arrange the slips by grouping those which bear upon the same idea.

**Mapping  
the field**



*Fourth suggestion: Determine with care which of the three or four topics finally selected call for special emphasis.* Fix in mind, roughly, the space to be allotted each division of the subject, being generous towards whatever is of exceptional importance or calls for unusual care because of its difficulty. Save not only time and space but energy for whatever is likely to confuse the reader.

**What to  
emphasize**

*Fifth suggestion: Determine what will be the best order of presentation.* Theme-organization is important in all forms of discourse, but especially so in exposition where clearness is a prime requisite, and where it is not always possible to discover a time sequence or a place sequence as in narration and description. There are scores of plans, no doubt, but the following are the most common:

**Order of  
presentation**

1. Proceed from that which is simple, easily understood, to that which is more difficult to comprehend. All exposition is but going from the known to the unknown; hence this plan is surely logical.

2. Begin with an outline, a general survey, or a broad classification, then fill in the details, approaching the heart of the matter by degrees. Such a plan resembles a series of circles one within the other.

3. Begin with details, making each as clear as possible, at length assembling the parts into a unified whole—just as a guide, having shown the ruins of a castle from this point of view and that, finally leads the tourist to some commanding eminence from which the ruins as a whole may be seen.

5 Begin with that which must be understood at the outset before that which lies beyond can be made comprehensible. Many an expository stronghold has at its entrance a door which must be unlocked or battered down before the

investigator can explore the interior room by room. The door may be but a term that needs defining; it may be a matter of far greater difficulty, perchance a theory that needs expounding.

6. Go from cause to effect or from effect to cause. An expository theme on school compositions, for example, might begin by explaining ways in which compositions are prepared for, then proceed to show the results, good and bad, of various kinds of preparation. Or it might begin with an account of various grades of composition, then show how merit and lack of merit are easily accounted for by different methods of preparation.

Whatever scheme of organizing material is adopted, it is hardly necessary to suggest that it is well to write with a topical outline at hand—such an outline, for example, as is found summarizing the chapter on Force—lest in the close attention required in giving adequate expression to thought, the main course of the exposition be lost sight of.

*Sixth suggestion: Provided it can be done without loss in clearness, use freely whatever devices seem likely to aid in capturing and holding attention.* Purely scientific exposition, it is true, is addressed solely to the understanding, not to the emotions; theoretically, therefore, it demands clearness and nothing more. But exposition, as it is employed day by day, seldom is purely scientific; commonly it is merely what may be termed popular, addressed to those not over-eager to receive information. Their interest must be aroused, and held; otherwise, words are wasted. If you feel inclined to do so, begin with an anecdote, provided the anecdote throws light directly on the matter to be explained. Introduce description, if it will be of definite service. Follow a climax sequence, if it can be done without

**Topical  
outline**

**Capturing  
and holding  
attention**

sacrificing clearness. Resort to extended comparison, if by so doing an aid to the memory is provided without twisting the truth.

*Seventh suggestion: Use simple language.* Avoid technical terms. If an unusual word is called for, explain its meaning. Write and rewrite, with each revision trying to simplify. Put yourself in the place of your dullest reader; think what in your explanation might prove puzzling to him, then endeavor to make the way a little easier for him to follow. Writing exposition is like a game in which the one thing sought is to make what is clear to you equally clear to others. No game calls for greater patience and painstaking.

### EXERCISES

A number of the exercises found in the chapters on Purity, Clearness, and Force provide drill in exposition. The same is true of many of the exercises in Part II; and the questions on masterpieces, found in the Appendix, in most instances call for expository answers. The tasks here given are but a few out of a large number that are familiar to most instructors.

1 Give full directions for making some article brought to your mind by the list found below. At the outset, decide upon some simple plan like the following: *Materials and tools necessary—first step—second step—last step.* Consider, too, what cautions you should give, what possible mistakes you should warn against. That is, try to make your explanation practical, that others may profit by your experience. Employ pen drawings or black-board illustrations, if by so doing you can gain clearness.

A work box. A bead chain. A waterwheel. A surface gauge. A toy glider. A workbench. A book bag. A bird house. A

megaphone. A clothes hanger. A toy. A stand for plants. A shanty. A canoe. A garment. A useful Christmas gift. A camp bed. An omelet. An attractive calendar. Ribbon flowers. Any article you have made in the domestic science or manual training department.

## 2 Give directions for doing one of the following things:

Finding a small town in a large atlas. Finding what a public library contains on a given subject. Putting on a collar and necktie. Determining the number of yards of carpeting required to cover a given floor space. Fitting up a boy's workshop. Erecting a telephone pole. Taking down a condemned church spire. Marking out a tennis court or a base ball diamond. Pruning a grape vine. Training a dog. Decorating place-cards. Framing pictures in passe-partout. Mending a ripped glove. Decorating china. Washing delicate fabrics. Using a check-book. Packing a trunk. Caring for a canary.

3 After visiting a mill or factory, explain how some article is manufactured. If the process of manufacture is long and intricate, confine your account to two or three important steps. Be as graphic as possible, trying hard to make others see what you have seen. Remember that one way of gaining clearness is through comparison, things unfamiliar being likened to those which everyone knows about. Avoid technical terms.

4 Give an expository talk from three to ten minutes long on a topic suggested by the list below, following some such plan as this: *What purpose the device serves—how it looks—how it is constructed—how it works.* In preparing for the talk, consider carefully what in your explanation is likely to prove difficult to understand, then try to think of ways in which the explanation may be made simple.

A thermometer. A vacuum cleaner. A chafing dish equipment. A blacksmith's forge. A percolator coffee pot. A fire extinguisher. A storage battery. An egg beater. A grindstone.

A derrick. A telephone receiver. A fireless cooker. A cream separator. A storage battery. A suction pump. A turbine waterwheel. A bread-mixer.

5 Write a composition on good manners under conditions suggested by some one of the phrases found below. Bear in mind that in impressing on others the beauty of courtesy it is well to be courteous.

At the table. During recitation. While shopping. On the athletic field. While attending church. In letter-writing. When telephoning. At the theater. In the school lunch room. On the street. In camp. While reading to one's self. In a public conveyance. While visiting. Toward children.

6 Explain, in writing, the difference between any two things found coupled below. This task, apparently simple, is really very difficult. We all know a door when we see one, and we know what a gate is; yet when asked to define the difference between the two we are likely to make ludicrous mistakes. Be careful to frame sensible answers. Do not consult the dictionary.

A door and a gate. Walking and running. Baggage and freight. Fame and reputation. Opponent and competitor. A plant and an animal. A real and a virtual image. Snow and hail. Fog and clouds. A slipper and a shoe. A brad and a tack. A fly and a beetle. A hammer and a mallet. A check and a draft. A bolt and a screw. Poetry and prose. A show and an entertainment.

7 Tell orally what you consider the best way of doing one of the following:

Preparing for a recitation in ————. Writing a composition. Preparing for an athletic contest. Financing an athletic association. Getting pupils to write for the school paper. Arousing school spirit. Preparing for examination. Keeping one's temper. Winning popularity.

8 Write a composition setting forth what you consider the essential characteristics—the ideal qualities, that is—of one of the following:

A base ball captain. An editor-in-chief of a school paper. The president of a debating club. The business manager of an athletic association. The captain of a crew. A leader among girls. A leader among boys. A successful business man. A policeman. A machinist. A fisherman. A president. A book-keeper. An Arctic explorer. A leader of a gymnasium class. A farmer. A hostess. A physician. A teacher. A chum. A travelling companion.

9 In a carefully thought-out composition, employing any form of discourse that will serve your purpose, picture your ideals as suggested by one of the topics found below. Take particular pains to organize what you have to say, and employ whatever devices may occur to you for making your ideals seem attractive to others.

A luncheon. A novel. A play. A kitchen. A good position. A water craft. An athletic field. A place of residence. A vacation retreat. A street gown. A banquet. A good time.

10 Give a full account of some experiment that you have performed or witnessed in the physics or chemistry laboratory. Follow such a plan as this: *Purpose of the experiment—the apparatus—what was done with the apparatus—the phenomena observed.*

11 Make a topical plan for a fifteen minute informal talk, which you may imagine that you are to give to your classmates, on one of the topics found below. Keep in mind the audience for whom the talk is designed, and also the time limit.

Plains, plateaus, and deserts. Caves. Ocean currents. Life at the ocean bottom. Glaciers. The human head. The lungs. The spinal column. The usefulness of birds. The life of a bee.

Tree enemies. Fish and their ways. A central power station. A blast furnace. The manufacture of steel. How our building is ventilated. Mirrors and lenses. Levers and pulleys. A modern steamship. A boys' camp. Juvenile courts. Whistler. Helen Keller. Nature as seen in the works of ————. The characteristics of ————'s style. Figures of speech. Versification.

**12** Explain in whatever way seems most forceful what is meant by one of the following, considering with great care what devices will be most serviceable in driving home the essential ideas. Resort to narration or description, if by so doing you can gain clearness and force. Give illustrations, real or fancied.

Homesickness. Thrift. Good-heartedness. An amiable disposition. Winsomeness. Jealousy. Pluck. Conceit. Extravagance. Envy. An easy-going fellow. A grind. A tease. A cheeky fellow. A blunt fellow. Spunk. Honor.

**13** Explain as clearly and as briefly as you can what each of the following proverbs means:

The best mirror is an old friend. Vice makes virtue shine. The greater the man, the greater the crime. The crutch of Time does more than the club of Hercules. Learning makes a man fit company for himself. A cat may look at a king. The worst wheel of the cart creaks loudest. The gods bring thread for a web begun. Stretch not your arm farther than your sleeve will go. Mock not a cobbler for his black thumbs.

**14** Show the meaning of each of the following by expanding it into a simile. The first, for example, may be expanded thus: Just as still water runs deep, so men who do but little talking may be deep thinkers.

Still water runs deep. A rolling stone gathers no moss. Thick grass is easier mowed than thin. Beauty is a blossom. A good name keeps its luster in the dark. Straight trees have crooked roots. The empty vessel makes the loudest sound. A fine diamond may be ill set.

**15** Make clear one of the following proverbs by means of an anecdote, a short story, or a personal experience:

It never rains but it pours. A stout heart breaks ill luck. He who scatters thorns, let him never go barefoot. Forecast is better than hard work. The wine always tastes of the cask.

**16** Selecting one of the following adages, show its force through varied illustration of its application:

In a calm sea, every man is a pilot. Honor and ease are seldom bedfellows. Much wants more and loses all. A good name is better than riches. The hand that gives, gathers. Black will take no other color. A word spoken is an arrow let fly. All are not thieves that the dogs bark at.

**17** Use one of the adages already given, as a text for a moral essay of some length. Try not only to make clear the meaning of the adage but to make the force of the proverb deeply felt. Plan carefully.

**18** Write a review of some book recently read. Since this is an extremely difficult task, it may be well to lead up to it through class discussion. Here are questions to consider: What is the purpose of a book review? What are the main things to be told about any book? What should be told first? What should be told last? What are some of the evils to guard against? These and kindred questions having been considered, it will be well for the class, working together, to make a topical plan.

**19** Write a brief summary of a lecture or a sermon that you have listened to recently.

**20** Write a character sketch, selecting for a subject a person whom you know very well. First consider what traits are prominent in this person, then try to think how these traits are revealed.

**21** Try again exercises **9**, **10**, and **11** in the chapter on Clearness.



## CHAPTER X

### ARGUMENT

Discourse employed to establish the truth or falsity of propositions is called argument. Because argument and exposition are commonly found together, the two terms are often confused; yet the difference between them is easily defined. The purpose of exposition is simply to explain; the purpose of argument is not only to explain but to prove. An essay setting forth various methods of learning to sing is expository; an essay designed to show convincingly that some one method of learning to sing is best is argumentative.

**Definition**

How do we prove things? What are the methods commonly employed in establishing truth and falsity? Turning to the better known rhetorics, the average reader is not a little bewildered by the answers given to this simple question. He gains the impression that argumentation is an exceedingly perplexing topic. And so it is; yet the elementary processes of reasoning, employed by everyone many times a day, are so simple that there is no extreme difficulty in comprehending them.

**Ways of proving**

*First, we seek to prove things by means of direct evidence or testimony.* "I saw him do it; therefore I know it was done," we say, using our own eyes as witnesses. Or, "Mr. Brown and Mr. Smith, whom I trust, declare that they saw him do it; therefore I am confident that it was done," we explain, calling to aid the testimony of others. Frequently the fact in question can be established only through expert testimony.

**Direct evidence or testimony**

“The builder assures me that the house can be erected for ten thousand dollars; therefore I believe that it can.” And sometimes we appeal to a recognized authority, as is seen in the statements “I know that the word is correctly spelled, for I have looked it up in the dictionary;” “I know that the date of the Norman Conquest is 1066, for here is the statement in a reliable history;” “I am sure that I am right, for the government statistics fully support my contention.” In all the cases cited, facts are established through direct testimony, expert or otherwise, the testimony in several instances being found in books that are considered authoritative.

*Second, we seek to prove, indirectly, through the method of comparison and example.* That is, the case at hand is

**Comparison and example** compared with similar cases all the facts concerning which are, apparently, well established; then an inference is drawn. A young man, for instance, may reason that since two or three of his friends have succeeded in working their way through college, he too should be able to work his way through. In his *Speech on Conciliation* Burke supports the contention that the American Colonies should be treated by the home government in a certain way by showing that this method of treatment has already been found beneficial in four other nearly parallel cases. Many times it is possible so to multiply examples that general laws are established. It having been observed a great many times that plants die when deprived of moisture, the law is established that moisture is necessary to all plant life. And hence it follows that a particular plant, for example a geranium, will die if deprived of moisture. Less certainly we reason that since every child we have ever known was fond of sweets, all children are fond of them, and therefore little Mary must be fond of them too.

*Third, we seek to prove through establishing antecedent probability.* Will the grocer deliver his parcels before twelve? The order was telephoned at the usual hour. The grocer promised to deliver the goods before noon. Heretofore he has kept his promises. It would be to his disadvantage to disappoint a good customer. It is not a busy season of the year; the clerk has plenty of time. The streets are not blocked. Everything seems to point to the conclusion that the parcels will arrive at the proper hour; there is a strong antecedent probability that they will.

**Antecedent  
probability**

This method of reasoning is employed not only in determining what is likely to happen, but in determining what in the past caused a given effect. That is, it is employed not only in reasoning from cause to effect but from effect back to cause. Thus a teacher, finding his class poorly prepared to recite, and recalling that, the evening before, there was a celebration of a football victory, may conclude that the poor recitation was due—probably due—to the fact that the boys took part in the fun and did not study. There is an antecedent probability in favor of his assumption.

*Fourth, we seek to prove by means of what is called argument from sign.* "It is raining—I can hear it," one may say; or "Henry has hurt his ankle, for he is limping."

It is this form that plays an important part in court trials. No one may have seen a certain crime committed; yet it may be possible, through pointing to this sign and that, to establish beyond reasonable doubt that there has been a criminal act.

**Argument  
from sign**

Thus it is seen that, in their simpler forms, the four ways of proving things are not difficult to understand; each represents a trail very familiar to all minds. Perplexity arises only when two or more of these simple methods of

reasoning are combined, and when several interdependent propositions call for a chain of reasoning. Then the mind may become confused indeed. Yet it is important that we should train ourselves, if not to construct intricate arguments, at least to follow them, and to detect courses of reasoning that are weak or worthless. Let us consider with unusual care some of the pitfalls of argument, beginning with direct evidence, which, a little thought will show, must be employed to some extent no matter what form of proof is used.

*Direct evidence.* First, the fact or facts in question may not be vouched for by a sufficient number of witnesses.

**Direct  
evidence**

In matters of importance, we do not always care to accept the testimony of merely one or two. Second, the witnesses, though numerous, may be incompetent—self-deceived, blinded by prejudice, dishonest, or for some other reason untrustworthy. Third, the facts testified to may be in themselves preposterous, contrary to common sense, and therefore not to be accepted no matter how well they are apparently substantiated by evidence. Fourth, even if most of the facts in a given case are well established, some one fact of vital importance, though at first thought to be trivial, may be entirely without proof.

Thus in weighing evidence it is necessary to ask the following questions: (1) Are the facts vouched for by a sufficient number of witnesses? (2) Are the witnesses trustworthy? (3) Are the facts testified to believable? (4) Have all the facts been established by proof?

*Argument through comparison and example.* First, the cases cited as parallel may, upon close examination, prove to be alike in unimportant, irrelevant particulars only; the relevant points of similarity may be outweighed by points of dis-

**Comparison  
and example**

similarity, and the analogy therefore imperfect. Second, where examples are cited to prove a general law or rule, the examples may be too few in number. Third, examples may have been intentionally or unintentionally omitted which point to the contrary of the rule in question.

It is well then to ask, when weighing this form of argument, (1) Are the cases cited as parallel really and pertinently so? (2) Are the examples cited in proof that a rule or law exists sufficiently numerous? (3) Might not other examples be cited pointing to the contrary of the rule in question?

*Argument through antecedent probability.* First, some of the contributing causes may have been overlooked. Second, even though all the contributing causes have been considered, careful thought may show that they are insufficient to warrant the inference that they will produce the effect anticipated. Third, it may be that the contributing causes might produce a different effect from that in question. Fourth, in reasoning from effect back to cause, the cause inferred may be found upon examination not to exist, or if existent, to be insufficient, or even such as to lead to an effect different from the one under consideration. This last is a confusing statement, no doubt, yet it becomes clear when we revert to an earlier illustration—that of the poor recitation accounted for by a football jubilee. The instructor may have been mistaken; there was no celebration the night before, it was postponed. Even had there been one, it might have proved insufficient to interfere with study. Finally, though perhaps this is possible rather than probable, the fun might have so cleared the brains that they worked better when at last the lessons were studied.

Antecedent  
probability

These, then, are some of the questions worth asking

concerning antecedent probability: (1) Have any contributing causes been overlooked? (2) Are the assumed contributing causes sufficient to produce the effect anticipated? (3) Might not these causes produce some different effect? (4) In reasoning from effect back to cause, is it indisputable that the assumed cause existed? (5) Is the assumed cause sufficient, or might it not contribute to some other effect? (6) Is there not some other explanation that is more plausible?

*Argument from sign.* First, it may be that not all the signs have been considered; evidence may have been, intentionally or unintentionally, withheld.

**Argument  
from sign**

Second, the signs may have been wrongly interpreted; other inferences are possible.

Third, the signs reported may be too few to warrant any inference. Thus in challenging this form of argument we ask, (1) Have all the signs been reported? (2) Have the signs been interpreted rightly—is there no other inference possible? (3) Are there signs enough to warrant any inference?

*In general.* Careful scrutiny may show that though the reasoning, so far as it goes, is sound, some one little link necessary to the chain is missing, some assertion has been made for which no proof has

**Fallacies  
in general**

been advanced. Finally, and this is often

the case, it may be discovered that the entire argument is wide of the mark; it does not establish quite the proposition in question but one easily mistaken for it. For example, instead of proving that a small college offers better advantages to the average student than a large college, a line of argument may but prove that the small college is better for a particular type of student.

The foregoing exposition of the forms of proof and the fallacies commonly found in connection with them is ex-

ceedingly brief and elementary; fuller treatment of the subject may be found in such manuals as Baker's *Principles of Argumentation*, Alden's *Art of Debate*, and Foster's *Essentials of Exposition and Argument*. Equally brief and elementary must be the advice offered in regard to writing argumentative compositions.

*First, study the proposition to see precisely what task it imposes.* Without such study, one is likely to fall into the error of attempting to prove more than is necessary. Matters which at first seem relevant and of greatest importance may, after all, lie beyond the province of this particular discussion. Other matters, though relevant, may belong to that neutral ground found in every controversy—ground over which flies the flag of truce. It is a waste of time to construct elaborate argument to prove points which those whom we wish to convince are willing to grant without argument. In short, narrow the task to its strictest limits. "This, and this only, must be proved," the writer should be able to say, before setting about his task.

**Studying the proposition**

*Second, think out a plan—a provisional or temporary plan.* Here are some of the questions arising in this second step. What lines of proof are possible? What evidence might be offered that would carry conviction? Where must attack be guarded against? What points must be supported with greatest care and earnestness? What, in brief, is the best way of accomplishing the task at hand? Eventually this provisional plan may be discarded for a better one, but for many reasons it is well to do this preliminary thinking and to do it independently.

**Adopting a provisional plan**

*Third, study the subject out of which the proposition grows.* Usually there are facts to be ascertained, authorities to be consulted. Others have discussed the same problem;

what views have they expressed and what lines of proof have they considered effective? Study both sides of the question. And during this period of investigation, keep clearly in mind the two steps previously mentioned. Confine research to the one task at hand; test the provisional plan at every step, holding to it somewhat stubbornly, yet yielding when fully convinced that a better has been discovered.

**Studying  
the subject**

*Fourth, construct a final plan.* Presumably the study of the subject will have imparted light. New lines of proof may have been discovered, old lines shown to be weak. Probably, too, ideas have come concerning what will be the most effective order in which to present arguments, a matter of great importance.

**Constructing  
a final plan**

Generally speaking, we convince others that our views are right by leading their minds along practically the same path we ourselves have followed, stopping now and then to warn against alluring side-paths which lead to false conclusions, or to show that what seems an obstacle is but a shadow. First, then, the question should be explained with a view to pointing out precisely what is to be proved. Next it is well to indicate in a general way the lines of proof to be employed, that the argument may be followed the more readily. Yet it is not always wise to reveal everything at the outset, especially when addressing those who are prejudiced; there are even times when it is best to omit entirely this preliminary outlining of the intended course.

**Introduction**

The question clearly explained and the general plan of proof to be followed briefly outlined, time should be taken to present the pertinent facts. That is, such information should be given as the reader must possess before he can



be expected to see the force of the argument to be advanced. Presenting pertinent facts—all of them—and explaining their significance in a systematic, discriminating manner, though commonly considered a preliminary step, is not seldom the most vital part of an argumentative speech or essay. That this is true, any one may see by studying such a masterpiece as Burke's *Speech on Conciliation*. Moreover common experience teaches that it is true—true since people disagree mainly because all are not equally well informed, and are not equally gifted in their powers of interpreting facts and seeing their significance. Hence a careful statement of facts is almost always necessary.

**Statement  
of facts**

Finally, the various lines of proof should be presented, in whatever order seems best for the occasion. It may be necessary to begin with a proof that is reasonably strong, for attention must be captured at once if at all; but when it is possible to do so and hold attention from the outset, it is best to use the climax order, the most telling argument being reserved till the last. As to when possible objections should be met, there can be no hard and fast rule save this general one: meet them as soon as it is suspected that they are interfering with the reception of the proof, sometimes even anticipating them, giving them no chance to become deeply rooted. That is, at all times keep the way clear to a right conclusion. If the argument is long and intricate, review the steps from time to time, and close with a careful summary.

**Argument**

*Fifth, pay careful attention to verbal expression.* A well planned argument may prove ineffectual because improperly phrased. Weak or awkward sentences, rambling or ambiguous statements, feeble repetition,—whatever detracts because crude or

**Language**

delays because difficult to understand, mars the effect of even the most carefully thought-out argument.

Here are a number of final cautions: 1. Remembering that he who affirms must prove, accept the burden of proof if your task requires it. If your task does not require it, do not assume the burden. 2. Remember that saying a thing twenty times over does not make it true. An assertion remains an assertion and nothing more till its truth or falsity has been proved. 3. Do not rest content with a single line of proof if several lines are available. On the other hand, remember that one point driven home through forceful illustration or through varied restatement is far better than many points weakly enforced. 4. Remember that bare statistics seldom take hold; to be effective they must be interpreted, translated into pictures that appeal to the emotions. 5. Study not only the question but those for whom the argument is intended. How can they be reached? What arguments will appeal to them? What must be avoided lest offense be given needlessly? How can the emotions be stirred? Think of yourself as a commander, not one who is planning a campaign on paper against an imaginary foe, but one who is actually attacking a stronghold, that can be taken only through the strictest economy of ammunition and through shrewdly directing fire against weak points here and there in the defense. 6. Remember that dignity, earnestness, courtesy, and plain honesty are far better weapons than ridicule, cheap jocularities, indeed than all attempts to be facetious. Shrewd one must be, not only thinking clearly but adapting the argument to the occasion and to those addressed, appealing not only to reason but to the emotions; yet it should never be forgotten that an unmistakable desire

to be fair is, in the long run, worth twenty "tricks of the trade."

NOTE.—In the Appendix may be found a specimen brief.

## EXERCISES

1 Much of this world's misery is due to the fact that the average person is so untrained in logic that he is swept along day after day by cleverly disguised fallacies—fallacies which, when stripped of their disguise, seem but laughable. Probably there is not a chain of reasoning to be found in the list below that has not figured hundreds of times even in matters where much was at stake. Point out in each instance why the proof is unsatisfactory. Make this a task in careful, logical exposition.

1. It must be true, for every one says so.
2. My friend's friend's friend says it is so; therefore it must be so.
3. It must be true, for I read it in a book.
4. You should hear my grandfather tell of the cold weather of his boyhood days. Our winters must be growing milder.
5. "Pooh! pooh!" repeated the goldfish as he gently bumped his nose here and there against his little glass jar; "say what they will, the world is a very small world,—some three times my length at most!"
6. It is a wonderfully rich mine; the broker who sold me stock in it says so.
7. The first witness says the prisoner was with him in Boston; the second witness says he saw the prisoner that day in Los Angeles. Therefore either the prisoner was in two places at the same time, or else there are two of him.
8. As the mercury fell, the air grew colder; therefore the colder temperature was caused by the falling mercury.
9. The night I occupied room thirteen, war broke out in China; therefore thirteen is an unlucky number.
10. As the dervish added one more straw to the load, the camel crumpled up; therefore a single straw broke the camel's back.

11. After taking one bottle of your remedy, I feel as well as ever; therefore I recommend it most confidently to all.

12. Great oaks from little acorns grow; therefore if I plant an acorn, it will grow into a great oak.

13. All boys torment cats; therefore the new neighbor's boy will torment my cat.

14. "A bad beginning makes a good ending," remarked the man as he viewed the wreck of his new machine; "therefore a good ending to my journey is assured."

15. It is a stupid book; I have been unable to get beyond the first chapter.

16. How ignorant Chaucer must have been; just see how he spells the commonest words!

17. All the lobsters I have ever seen were red; therefore all lobsters are red.

18. Never again shall I trust a blue-eyed man; this is the third one to deceive me.

19. Father does it, so it is all right for me to do.

20. Johnson, when a boy, read what he pleased; if I read what I please, I shall be great like Johnson.

21. Ever so many have made money through buying stocks on margin; therefore if I buy stocks I shall become wealthy.

22. There goes the doctor; someone is ill.

23. Mother advised me not to wear my thin dress, lest I take cold. I wore it, but took no cold. Therefore I know best.

24. If he were innocent, he would willingly tell all that he knows about the crime.

25. His hat and coat were found on the river bank; therefore the insurance company should pay his wife the face of the policy.

26. I feel just as well as I did ten years ago—better, in fact; I shall live forever.

2 If one would be fair-minded, he must learn to look at both sides of every question. Good statesmanship as well as good business management is in large measure simply a matter of weighing carefully all advantages and disadvantages—the ins and outs—of each proposed move. Write down and number all the advantages and disadvantages associated with one of the items found below, arranging them in the order of their importance to you.

Compare the two lists and reach a conclusion. Prepare to present the entire matter orally to the class. Employ concrete illustrations if you can.

- |                                      |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| 1. Owning a dog.                     | 13. Having an emotional temperment.                |
| 2. Being the youngest in the family. | 14. Giving prizes for scholarship.                 |
| 3. Being a millionaire.              | 15. Employing the card system in keeping accounts. |
| 4. Being popular.                    | 16. Having Saturday as a school holiday.           |
| 5. Being fond of reading.            | 17. Fireplaces.                                    |
| 6. Living in the city.               | 18. Wireless telegraphy.                           |
| 7. Living in the country.            | 19. Owning a telephone.                            |
| 8. Being good natured.               | 20. Free textbooks.                                |
| 9. Owning an automobile.             | 21. Saving one's allowance.                        |
| 10. Attending a small college.       |  |
| 11. Attending a private school.      |  |
| 12. Paying by check.                 |  |

3 Come to class prepared to discuss informally any three of the following questions, in each case defending your views by argument. Lest some of your thoughts slip away, it will be well to bring with you brief notes.

1. When writing a composition, is it best to imagine that you are addressing some particular person or group of persons?
2. When writing a composition, is it well to keep in mind a model?
3. To what extent is it wise to make use of quotations?
4. What are the advantages and the disadvantages of illustrations in story books?
5. What are the advantages and what are the disadvantages of writing in the first person when telling a story?
6. In telling a story, is it well to begin with a description of the scene of the action and a brief account of the actors?
7. In drama, the dramatist never appears. When telling a story in the third person, should the novelist ever speak directly to his readers?
8. Which is the strongest force in story-telling—pathos, humor, adventure, or love?
9. What are the essentials of a good story?
10. What are the essentials of a good play?

4 Bring to class a brief but carefully considered answer to one of the following questions. Be prepared to defend your answer by argument and to refute all objections that may be raised.

1. Is it right to buy a paper from a newsgirl under twelve years of age?

2. Should high school students twenty-one years or more old be permitted to take part in interscholastic contests?

3. Ought one pupil to report another whom he has seen cheating in examination?

4. In a club debate is it right for one to defend a proposition against his convictions?

5. Is it right to "study together"?

6. Is it right for a runner to "cut" second base if he can do so without being observed by the umpire?

7. An article submitted for publication in the school paper is discovered to be copied from an old magazine. What should the editors do about it? If the imposture is not discovered till after the article is published, what should be done?

8. After a series of defeats due in part to a number of accidents, the school football team cancels its engagement to play with the team in X—. It does so remembering that under similar circumstances the team from X— once canceled a game at the last moment. The manager in X— writes that the game has been advertised; to cancel it will disappoint many, leave the team crippled financially, and will be considered highly discourteous. Probably because irritated, he is far from polite. What ought the manager of the crippled team to do?

9. Is it right to get help when doing an original problem in geometry?

10. Is it right to pick fruit from branches overhanging the highway?

11. Is it right to play ball on Sunday?

12. John, while cruising, finds a rowboat adrift. It will soon be dashed against the rocks and destroyed. He secures it and proceeds on his cruise without turning back to find the owner. Later on, he loses the boat. Has John done right?

13. Did Portia do right in rescuing Antonio from the clutches of Shylock by means of a mere quibble?

14. A collector of old china asks a housekeeper to set a price on a certain pitcher. Upon her saying that she does not care to sell it, he offers five dollars for it. She bought it at the country store for thirty-five cents. Is it right for her to accept his offer?

5 Come to class prepared to discuss two or three of the following, these to be selected by the instructor:

1. To what extent, if any, is slang permissible?
2. Should girls study chemistry and physics?
3. Should football be played in secondary schools?
4. Is sarcasm ever permissible?
5. Are interscholastic debates a good thing?
6. Should gentlemen invariably give up their seats to ladies, when public conveyances are crowded?
7. To what extent is it wise to buy books when one has access to a good library?
8. Why is it wise to own one's books, even though the town furnishes free textbooks?
9. What should be done with the money earned by a school paper?
10. Which of our athletic games will remain popular during the next ten years?
11. Who are looked up to in the high school world?
12. Which exerts greater power, editor or orator?
13. Does poetry decline as civilization advances?
14. A, for sufficient consideration, agrees to convey to B a lot of land with house, but before the contract can be carried out the house burns down. What are the rights of the parties?

6 Outline briefly the course you would take in proving, by direct evidence or an appeal to authority, each of the following:

1. Plymouth was settled in 1620.
2. Our city needs (or does not need) a new high school building.
3. The Titanic disaster was due to negligence.
4. The South is rapidly regaining her old-time prosperity.
5. Our school building is adequately protected against fire.
6. In our school, athletics do not interfere with good scholarship.
7. The trend of migration is ever westward.

8. Our city improves year by year.
9. Electric lines tend to develop rural districts.
10. The high cost of living is due to —.

**7** Select one of the following propositions and defend it by argument from analogy or example:

1. Appearances are often deceptive.
2. Uneasy rests the head that wears a crown.
3. A country's strength lies in its peasantry.
4. Sleeping in the open air will improve my health.
5. A skilled coach is necessary for success in athletics.
6. A soft answer turneth away wrath.
7. It pays to advertise.
8. The extravagance of the rich adds to the suffering of the poor.
9. The honor system would succeed in our school.
10. It is possible for one of humble origin to rise to high position.

**8** Select one of the following propositions and try to establish it by means of argument from antecedent probability. Be careful to leave no assertion unsupported.

1. Our school will be fifty percent larger ten years hence.
2. Our team will win in the coming contest.
3. Flying-machines will in time be commonly used as a means of public conveyance.
4. The parcel post will prove a success.
5. All colleges will eventually admit by certificate.
6. Camping out will grow in popularity.
7. Woman's suffrage will soon be adopted by every state.
8. England will never again go to war against the United States.
9. The present good times are due to —.
10. The reason so many fail to complete their high school course is —.
11. Disastrous spring freshets are due to improper protection of watersheds.
12. The tone of public morals is being lowered by the stage.



13. American travelers are responsible for the unfavorable impression of America held by foreign nations.

14. Country property will continue to increase in value.

9 Describe a room—if possible, one you have actually seen; then let your classmates determine the character of the person who occupies the room.

10 Describe a person—his build, his gait, his dress, his facial expression; then let your classmates determine his profession and character.

11 Examine a picture, one suggesting a story; then guess out, from the hints furnished, the entire story.

12 Make up a chain of circumstantial evidence pointing to a crime, purposely leaving out one link; then let your classmates discover the link.

13 Make up a case for a mock trial depending wholly on circumstantial evidence; then let the class decide whether the case gives approximately even chances for conviction and acquittal.

14 Write down three arguments supporting the affirmative and three supporting the negative of any one of the following propositions, arranging the arguments in climax order. In stating an argument, use this form: *Vivisection should be prohibited by law, for* [Here should follow the reason advanced].

1. Vivisection should be prohibited by law.

2. Children should not be taught to believe in the Santa Claus myth.

3. Except for the purpose of destroying harmful animals or for the purpose of obtaining necessary food, hunting is morally wrong.

15 Selecting some one of the points recorded in exercise 14, give it such verbal expression as will make it

appeal strongly to the emotions. Employ narration or description if it seems best, forget all about formal argument addressed solely to the intellect; direct your energy to the one purpose of making the argument stir the feelings.

**16** Come to class prepared to discuss informally some proposition previously agreed upon, perhaps one from the list found below. Whenever an argument has been stated clearly, the instructor may think best to write it in condensed form on the blackboard, afterwards drawing a line through it, should it be fairly refuted. At the close of the period the class will decide whether the affirmative or the negative has received the better support.

1. For the average person, tennis is a better game than golf.
2. Managing a school paper furnishes a more valuable training than managing an athletic association.
3. Military tactics should be taught in public high schools.
4. Two half-holidays in the school week would be better than one whole holiday.
5. The public should have free access to the book shelves in our public library.
6. For the average young man, a small college like Amherst or Williams is better than a large institution like Harvard or Chicago University.
7. The country is a better place for a college than is a city.
8. An editorship of a school paper affords more valuable training than does membership in a school debating club.
9. *Silas Marner* is a greater piece of fiction than *The Vicar of Wakefield*.

**17** Let some one be appointed to prepare a fifteen minute defense of a proposition agreed upon by the class. Let the remaining members prepare to overthrow this defense. The first speaker should be given five minutes at the close of the hour for rebuttal; that is, for answering the arguments brought up against him.

**18** The instructor may see fit to appoint four speakers, two to support the affirmative and two the negative of one of the following propositions, the assignments being made at least a week in advance of the debate.

1. Each state should support a college free to all residents of the state.
2. All young men should be taught the use of firearms.
3. Works of art should be admitted to this country free of duty.
4. Capital punishment should be abolished.
5. United States senators should be elected by direct vote of the people.
6. The use of all kinds of explosives on July Fourth should be prohibited.
7. Laws should be passed prohibiting the carrying of freight by electric cars through public highways.

**19** Let each member of the class prepare a written, eight hundred word defense of a proposition selected from the following list:

1. Permanent copyright should be granted by the United States.
2. Political cartoons should be prohibited by law.
3. Comic illustrations now found in our daily papers are a menace to public morals.
4. Our school should have an athletic field.
5. Our school should support a crew.
6. Public libraries and art galleries should be open on Sundays.
7. Monday would be better than Saturday for a school holiday.
8. Prose fiction exerts a greater influence today than drama.
9. Dogs possess intelligence.
10. A sailing craft affords greater pleasure than a power boat.
11. The English conception of what constitutes true sport is nobler than the American conception.
12. The recently proposed spelling reform is worthy of support.
13. The girls of our school should give financial support to the athletic association.
14. The dramatist performs a more difficult task than the actor.

15. Football is a brutal sport.
16. School journalism is not worth while.
17. Honesty is still the best policy.
18. Our school should take part in interscholastic debates.
19. Commercial prosperity tends to lower moral standards.
20. Public libraries should contain none but standard works.

**PART II**  
**THE STUDY OF LITERATURE**

2000  
2001

2002  
2003

2004  
2005

2006  
2007

## CHAPTER XI

### READING

There was a time, long centuries ago, when it was no uncommon thing for a person to go through life without ever learning to read. Books there were, some of them very beautiful, skilfully penned and "illuminated" in the scriptoria (writing-rooms) of monasteries; but the choicest of these were for kings and queens and nobles, and a very few volumes sufficed for even a royal library. Among the common people, the place of books was supplied, though imperfectly, by fireside tales, spirited ballads, the romantic songs of the minstrel, and the miscellaneous chat of friars, peddlers, and other wayfarers.

That was before the days of Caxton, England's earliest printer. Since then the world has seen many marvels, but nothing more truly wonderful than the rapid increase in number of those who can read, the amazing quantity of matter that comes daily from the press, and the ease with which even the poorest may provide himself with the best that is printed. A few pennies will buy almost any classic, and there are free libraries everywhere. Thousands of new books every year, a multitude of magazines good and bad, newspapers without number,—what a vast quantity of print it all makes, and how mighty its influence! It is true beyond question, though how seldom we give it a thought, that the happiness and usefulness of the average person depend quite as much on the attitude he takes towards this great influence as upon any other single

**Before the  
days of  
printing**

**What printing  
has done**

factor. The purpose of this chapter is to review some of the benefits to be derived from reading and some of the attendant dangers, and to make a few suggestions in regard to forming safe reading habits.

The most obvious of all benefits is pleasure—pure pleasure entirely free from any idea of improvement. We turn to books and magazines for much the same reason that we join a merry crowd, or engage in sports, or tramp through the woods. It is a common way of having a good time. Amusement, entertainment, recreation—these form one of the many missions of literature. It seeks out those who are bound by hard circumstances and makes them forget their misfortunes. The poor forget their poverty and roam through palaces of luxury; the physically weak follow giants up mountain sides; the timid feel at home in the presence of kings and queens. It seeks out the vigorous and fortunate too, bringing pleasure to all. Viewed in this light alone, what a world-wide calamity it would be should all books, through wicked magic, be destroyed.

But there are higher benefits. How dependent we are upon books for facts and ideas. Little should we know were we forced to rely solely on our own senses and the reports of the comparatively few people one can meet in a single lifetime. How little thinking, of a truly independent kind, is done by the average individual. We all have ideas which we call our own, but for the most part they are merely ours by adoption; they come, directly or indirectly, from books. And this leads naturally to a sober reflection: he who reads little is apt to live a little life. His range of information is so narrow, his stock of ideas so meager, that he is poorly equipped to do great things. He can hardly hope to keep pace with those who are “well read.”

**Benefits:  
pleasure**

**Facts and  
ideas**



Above facts and ideas are universal truths and lofty ideals, which form the essence of all good literature. *Silas Marner* is more than an entertaining story; shining through the narrative are certain great life-truths. As we read the tragic story of Macbeth's downfall, or of Lancelot's guilty love for the faithless Queen, or of how Sidney Carton gave up his life to save Charles Darnay, we are conscious of a moral influence. Heroes and heroines are but conceptions of ideal manhood and womanhood. Consciously or unconsciously we imitate them and try to live up to their standards of courage and unselfishness. Reading a good book has been the turning-point in many a life.

**Truths and  
ideals**

Through reading comes power of many kinds, but notably the power to think. Following a line of thought through page after page calls for mental effort, and by exercise of this nature the mind grows alert. Each book mastered makes the next one easier to master; and ability to think books through leads to ability to think where books are not concerned. Moreover thought arouses thought. Reading "sets us thinking," not uncommonly about many things only remotely suggested by the printed page; and we learn to apply to our own special problems the methods of thought that we have observed in books. For there are effectual ways of thinking just as there are effectual ways of doing everything else, and these ways must be learned.

**Power to  
think**

With power to think is developed power to appreciate. Literature is a form of art; it deals with "beautiful thought and beautiful feeling beautifully expressed."

But taste is largely a matter of training. There are childhood years when nothing sounds quite so sweet as the street piano; and many individuals, through lack of training, never learn to prefer

**Power to  
appreciate**

anything better. It is the same with reading. Childhood preferences follow some through life; the higher forms of literature bring no pleasure, for their beauty is not perceived. Such individuals are inclined to scoff at those who profess to gain pleasure from poetry; but it is merely a case of the blind deriding those whose vision is clear. Nothing is more real than the enjoyment which comes to the few who through years of faithful reading have developed their sense of appreciation. Nor is this enjoyment confined to the reading of books. Literature is but a mirror. When we turn from the printed page to the real world, we are better able to perceive truth and beauty which to many lie forever hidden.

Finally, there comes power of expression. Each good book mastered adds to the vocabulary a few terms. Unconsciously we acquire a phraseology the result of centuries of experimenting on the part of masters striving after effective expression. Our crudities slowly disappear. We learn through example how to hold to logical or dramatic sequence, how to approach a subject from different angles, how to win attention and keep it.

Pure, temporary pleasure; an abundant store of facts and ideas; the broadening and refining influence of lofty ideals and universal truths; power to think, power to appreciate, power to express: these are benefits to be derived from reading. But there are attendant dangers so serious that they deserve careful consideration.

First, it is possible to waste, through reading, time and energy which might better be spent in other ways. Life is short. Intemperate indulgence in reading is as deplorable as other forms of gluttony.

**Power to  
express**

**Benefits  
summarized**

**Dangers:  
waste of  
time**

Second,—and very important,—intemperate reading, if long continued, impairs the memory. It cannot be otherwise. This is particularly true of omnivorous fiction reading where vast quantities of nearly valueless matter are taken into the mind only to be quickly dismissed and forgotten. A memory thus trained to let go soon loses its retaining powers, and things really worth while slip away with the unimportant. There are few more serious handicaps, no matter what one's life work may be, than an untrustworthy memory.

**Memory  
impaired**

Third, superficial reading, the eye hurrying from page to page and skipping whatever promises to be the least bit uninteresting, impairs the power to think. The mind forms the habit of twisting and dodging and delaying instead of meeting problems squarely and clinging to them until they are mastered. The intellect becomes flabby; it shirks and evades. It loses stamina.

**Thinking  
power  
impaired**

Fourth, and most pathetic, certain varieties of reading degrade the character. There are all kinds of books as there are all kinds of people. The average modern novel is fairly clean, but many are degrading in their influence. It is possible so to feed the passions on trashy fiction as to gain an entirely wrong idea of what is best worth while in life. Reading then becomes the worst form of intemperance.

**Character  
impaired**

Here are a few final suggestions, growing out of the discussion in the preceding paragraphs on the benefits and dangers of reading:

**General  
suggestions**

1. Keep good company. Choose your books as you choose your friends, and treat them as courteously.
2. Form the habit of reading a book a month—one that is really worth while.

3. Vary your reading. Do not become a slave to prose fiction; try history, biography, science. Whether at first you like it or not, read poetry—a few lines every day.

4. Read aloud whenever you can. This is beneficial for at least three reasons. First, it tends to break up the habit of reading carelessly. Second, the charm of poetry, and the same is true of the best prose, lies partly in the melody. This may be lost in silent reading. Third, words pronounced cling in the memory; if merely glanced at, they make little impression. We should be familiar not only with the meanings of words but with their sounds.

5. Keep a record of what you read. A book finished, jot down briefly in your journal what it is about, what you have found commendable in it and what you have found to dislike.

6. Own a few books, the very best editions you can afford to buy. They make good companions.

Volumes might be filled with the wise things that have been said about books and reading. Here are a few well-known passages which may serve to enforce **Appreciations** or supplement the few ideas that have been presented in this meager chapter:

Books are the best things, well used; abused, among the worst.—EMERSON

No book can be so good as to be profitable when negligently read.—SENECA

No good book, or good thing of any sort, shows its best face at once.—CARLYLE

Books are the great legacies that a great genius leaves to mankind, which are delivered down from generation to generation as presents to the posterity of those who are yet unborn.—ADDISON

I have even gained the most profit, and the most pleasure also, from the books which have made me think the most; and when the difficulties have once been overcome, these are the books which have struck the deepest root, not only in my memory and understanding, but in my affections.—J. C. AND A. W. HARE

If time is precious, no book that will not improve by repeated readings deserves to be read at all.—CARLYLE

God be thanked for books. They are the voices of the distant and the dead, and make us heirs of the spiritual life of past ages. Books are the true levelers. They give to all, who will faithfully use them, the society, the spiritual presence, of the best and the greatest of our race. No matter how poor I am, no matter though the prosperous of my own time will not enter my obscure dwelling. If the sacred writers will enter and take up their abode under my roof, if Milton will cross my threshold to sing to me of Paradise, and Shakespeare to open to me the worlds of imagination and the workings of the human heart, and Franklin to enrich me with his practical wisdom, I shall not pine for want of intellectual companionship, and I may become a cultivated man though excluded from what is called the best society, in the place where I live.—CHANNING

— if you read ten pages of a good book, letter by letter,— that is to say with real accuracy,—you are for evermore in some measure an educated person. The entire difference between education and non-education (as regards the merely intellectual part of it) consists in this accuracy.—RUSKIN

READING	{	I Benefits	{	Pleasure
				A store of facts and ideas
				An equipment of truths and ideals
				Gain in ability to think
				Gain in ability to appreciate
				Gain in ability to express
		II Dangers	{	Loss of time and energy
				Impairment of memory
				Impairment of ability to think
				Impairment of character
		III A Few Sug- gestions	{	Keep good company.
				Read a book a month.
				Vary your reading.
				Read aloud.
				Keep a record.
				Own a few books.

## QUESTIONS

1 What is your favorite kind of literature? What is the most interesting book you have ever read? What book have you been reading recently? Can you name a book from which you have surely received permanent benefit? Can you think of a book from which one might receive injury?

2 If you were about to be cast away on an island from which there was no prospect of return for ten years, what five books would you wish to take with you? If a benefactor were to offer to supply to each pupil in school five books, what would be your choice? Can you name two or three good books that would prove interesting to a boy of fifteen interested in manual training?

3 What are your favorite magazines and newspapers? In reading periodicals, what do you omit and what do you select? Should newspapers be read thoroughly? Will you suggest five or six periodicals appropriate for a school reading room? If the benefactor mentioned above should decide to send two periodicals to each pupil, which two would you recommend?

4 If a girl intends to be a musician, should she stop reading altogether, read widely, or specialize? Should a boy who intends to be a civil engineer read poetry? Of what value are histories to those who intend to take part in public affairs? What kind of literature should one read who intends to be a clerk or a factory laborer? What rule can you suggest in regard to how much time should be devoted to contemporary literature and how much to masterpieces of earlier times?

5 How many books do you own? Do you take books from the public library? Do you think public libraries

should contain, in the department of pure literature, acknowledged masterpieces only? What percentage of the fund for new books should a public library spend for fiction? Are reading circles a good thing, or are they a bore? Would it be better if books were not so cheap and libraries were not free? Are free textbooks an unmixed blessing?

6 What benefits not mentioned in this chapter can you think of? What injuries? What suggestions in regard to reading habits? Bring to class tributes to books, obtained from a dictionary of familiar quotations or from some other source.

## CHAPTER XII

### LITERATURE DEFINED

Let it be supposed that a building is to be erected in which shall be brought together all English literature—not everything written in English, but the choicer productions to which the term literature is applied in its narrower, higher sense. What should such a collection include?

No question could arise over the plays of Shakespeare, or Milton's poems, or the novels of Dickens and Thackeray.

**What is pure literature?** Scores of writers would be accepted without hesitation. On the other hand, tons upon tons of printed matter—books, pamphlets, newspapers, and what not—all excellent in a way, would be promptly rejected. Manifestly a textbook in algebra deserves no place in such a collection, nor an almanac, nor a treatise on the manufacture of steel. Most works in science and history belong elsewhere. Sooner or later, however, vexing questions would arise; for the dividing line between mere books and pure literature is a vague one. Very convenient would be a serviceable definition of literature which might be applied in doubtful cases as the carpenter applies his foot rule to a stick of timber to see if it will answer his purpose.

Of the scores of definitions that have been penned, none is quite satisfactory; the thing to be defined is far too

**Definitions in general** varied in character and too subtle in its nature to be bounded by a single sentence. To define literature is like trying to define beauty, or pleasure, or sorrow. Let us examine a few def-



initions, however, for each may suggest lines of profitable thought.

Emerson calls literature "*a record of the best thought.*" Much that enters the mind, these six short words suggest, is necessarily commonplace, petty, not worth preserving. The mission of literature is to sift and winnow and garner. Men die, cities become ruins, nations fade into obscurity; thought—the best thought—endures, preserved in the written or printed page, for the poetry and the prose of a nation form the truest and most lasting record of the best that its men and women have achieved. The durability of literature and its high character are, perhaps, the leading ideas suggested by Emerson's definition. It reminds us that a good library is like a chest containing priceless heirlooms, fortunately not the hoarded possession of some proud family, but a legacy to all who appreciate their value.

**Emerson's  
definition**

So brief a definition cannot well be complete; it suggests much that is true, but does not include the entire truth. Let us examine a definition of slightly greater length, by Stopford Brooke. In the estimation of this eminent scholar, literature is made up of "*the written thoughts and feelings of intellectual men and women, arranged in a way that gives pleasure to the reader.*" Here are at last two new ideas, suggested by the words *feelings* and *pleasure*. *Thought*, as used by Emerson and Brooke, suggests the mind of man, which considers and judges intellectually. *Feelings* is a warmer word suggesting the heart, seat of the emotions—love, hate, fear, ambition, reverence, etc. Most of us are far less willing to share with others our heart emotions than we are to share the judgments of the intellect. Our feelings are so personal, so

**Brooke's  
definition**

**First idea**

private, that instinctively we veil them. Yet the great writer, far from concealing his emotions, puts his very heart into his work, thus exposing to all readers that which makes up the most precious element of his individuality. Hence it follows that anyone who will but learn to read may become intimately acquainted with the intellectual men and women of all times. Let his station in life be what it will, the door stands wide open for him; he may become an aristocrat, associating intimately with great souls and sharing their finest emotions.

Passing now to the word *pleasure*, we are reminded that thought and feeling to endure must be properly expressed.

**Second idea** Literature worthy of the name is a fine art, not the product of bunglers. Our pleasure in reading is due but in part to the thoughts and feelings revealed; it is in no small degree due to the artistic skill displayed in expressing these thoughts and feelings. A very simple idea, or an emotion which all have felt, becomes beautiful when beautifully phrased. This pleasure derived from the skill with which authors clothe their thought increases with maturing years, if we are wise enough to make companions of great writers. In time we grow impatient of what is termed cheap literature, where little or no skill is displayed, and impatient of our own ways of crude expression.

Here is a third definition, by Henry Morley. Literature comprises "*all books—and they are but few—where moral truth and human passion are touched with a certain largeness, sanity, and attractiveness of form.*" This is less clear than the others and calls for careful study. Reading it over and over and thinking it through and through as one must where much is condensed into a few words, we at length discover two important ideas. The first is that it is the mission of lit-

**Morley's  
definition**

erature to elevate and inspire through bringing the reader face to face with the great moral truths of life. The masters reveal not only their own emotions but the emotions—the passions—of all humanity; they unveil not alone their own hearts but the heart of the world—yours, mine, every man's. They help us to understand ourselves and to look with truer, more sympathetic eyes upon the various complex emotions which make up the real history of the world.

**First idea**

The second idea, a simpler one, emphasizes the limited field of pure literature. Much that is written has little to do with moral truth or with human passions.

**Second idea**

It is not concerned with joys and sorrows. Many books serve merely to impart knowledge. They interest but a limited number and for a limited time. Moral truth and human passion, the same thousands of years ago as they are today, are of permanent interest to all because they concern all. These only are the raw materials out of which poems and plays and romances are made.

Finally, here is a long, detailed, scientific definition from the *Standard Dictionary*, less attractive than the ones already considered, yet not without merit.

**A dictionary definition**

No explanation follows it, that the student may have the pleasure of accepting the challenge offered by its difficulty, and may master it step by step, seeking for ideas which are not emphasized in the briefer definitions. "*Belonging to the sphere of high art and embodying thought that is power-giving, or inspiring and elevating, rather than knowledge-giving (excluding thus all purely scientific writings); catholic, or of interest to man as man (excluding writings that are merely technical, or for a class, trade, or profession, or the like, only); esthetic in its tone and style (excluding writings violating the principles*

*of good taste); and shaped by the creative imagination, or power of artistic construction (excluding all writings that are shapeless and without organic unity)."*

With these four definitions well in mind, perhaps some will think the library building, as imagination may have

**New concep-  
tions**

pictured it at the beginning of this chapter, unnecessarily large, but none too stately.

Better still, it may be that through following the lines of thought suggested by these definitions, our respect for the great masters whose works are far more than mere books has been increased, and we shall be less likely to grow vain over our own feeble compositions.

## CHAPTER XIII

### KINDS OF LITERATURE: POETRY AND PROSE

There are four kinds of composition: narration, description, exposition, and argument. Since literature is but composition, it may be said that there are four kinds of literature. But should we wish to arrange the books for which, in the preceding chapter, our imagination provided a building, it would, manifestly, be impossible to group them under these heads, since the four forms of discourse are seldom found separate but rather in combination, all of them sometimes appearing in a single paragraph. Of the many possible systems, the simplest classification would be one dividing the books into two broad groups, poetry and prose; yet even this simple scheme might present some difficulties. What is poetry? How does it differ from prose?

**Prose and  
poetry**

Perhaps *rhyme* is the first word to arise in the mind of one attempting to answer these questions. Prose does not rhyme; most poetry does, though much that Shakespeare and Milton and the lesser poets have written is rhymeless. On the other hand mere rhyme cannot make poetry, for there are the senseless jingles which every child makes—jingles and nothing more.

**Rhyme**

Next to suggest itself is, it may be, *rhythm*. Each line beats out a little tune produced by the recurrence of stressed syllables separated by syllables unstressed. Good prose, it is true, contains something of rhythmical swing, but the swing is not metrical; that is, it does not conform to established rules.

**Rhythm**

That there are such rules, hard and fast, we see as we turn the leaves of such a collection as the *Oxford Book of English Verse*. The poet neatly fits his words to a mould, as it were. His stanzas are made to pattern, each line containing a definite number of stressed syllables and all the rhymes coming in their proper places according to a pre-conceived plan.

In the third place we note, if the ear be sensitive, a *sound-harmony*. The words are so chosen and arranged that succeeding sounds harmonize, like colors skilfully blended. This too is found in prose; at least the skilled writer of prose is careful to avoid disagreeable sound combinations. But poetry is preëminently harmonious. Carlyle calls it "musical thought." It is song. In earlier times it was intended to be sung, the voice, often accompanied by some instrument, interpreting the feeling and bringing out the melody. Since the invention of printing and the rapid growth of the reading habit, poetry enters the mind not through the ear alone but through the eye. Nevertheless it sings its way in; for as the eye runs from word to word on the printed page, imagination, or memory, helps us to catch the intended harmonies. We cannot think the words without, in imagination, hearing them.

Since poetry is melody, it follows that the vocabulary of poetry cannot be quite the vocabulary of prose. There are words too harsh for the poet, and words of so many syllables that they defy all metrical arrangement. Melody aside, how many words there are which are too coarse and commonplace in what they suggest to be of service. They are not beautiful. Yet we shall try in vain to say which words are poetical and which are not; we can but wonder at the great masters' skill in selecting that which in sound and suggestion is appro-

appropriate for their purposes. We know merely that some words, as the poets employ them, are magical—pleasing the ear, exciting the imagination, and stirring the emotions.

But language, in verse or prose, is merely a vehicle. Great as may be the pleasure derived from beautiful, melodious words, and from the nicety with which the poet shapes his message to fit approved metrical patterns, the message thus beautifully expressed is, after all, the essential thing. Instinctively we look upon the poet not merely as one who has discovered the hidden charm of language, but as one preëminently a lover of the beautiful and possessing the power to see it where common eyes perceive it not. He is emotionally sensitive, looking deep into the heart of man with a sympathy and an understanding which enables him to discover the great truths of life.

**Message  
of poetry**

But volumes have been written in a vain attempt to define the essentials of poetry. The preceding paragraphs are designed merely to lead up to a definition which, though unsatisfactory, as most definitions must be, is simple and suggestive: *Poetry is beautiful thought, feeling, or action, beautifully expressed in melodious, usually metrical, language.* Of all the rooms in the stately building imagined in the preceding chapter, surely the best should be reserved for poetry, "the most delightful and perfect form of utterance that human words can reach."

**Definition  
of poetry**

## CHAPTER XIV

### VARIETIES OF PROSE

“The most influential books, and the truest in their influence,” Stevenson once declared, “are works of fiction.”

**Fiction** He might have added that story-telling is the oldest of all forms of literature, and that it out-bulks all others. Indeed so abundant is the supply of late years that, to keep up with it, one would have to read several volumes every day.

By fiction, as the term is commonly employed, is meant all forms of prose story-telling (save drama) in which there is an element of make-believe, the incidents and characters being in some degree imaginary. The simplest classification would mention but two varieties, the *short story* and what is conveniently termed the *novel*. Such a simple classification is all, perhaps, that the general reader requires; yet it does not meet with the approval of scholars, who insist that among the so-called novels are many which should be termed *romances*. Since romance is a term frequently used in talking about books, it is well to understand its meaning.

Properly speaking, the novel is a prose story of some length in which the incidents, though they may never have happened, are at least within the range of probability—might have happened. The characters, though imagined, are not unlike the real people whom we meet every day, not necessarily more remarkable or interesting. In short, the novelist strives to mirror or picture, *realistically*, life as it is in the

**Novel and  
romance**



world of his day. The romance, on the other hand, may contain an element of improbability if not of actual impossibility, though the reader may be so charmed that he fails to observe the unreality. The world as the romancer pictures it is ideal rather than real; it is as we should like to have it, perhaps, not as experience teaches us that it actually is. In most romances marvels abound. Adventure, unusual occurrences, and love-making are given unnatural prominence. The virtues of heroes and the vices of villains are extraordinary. *David Copperfield* is a novel, *Ivanhoe* a romance; for the former strives to picture ordinary life as it was at the time when Dickens wrote, while the latter not only leads the reader to times remote and therefore misty, but presents marvellous incidents and idealized personages.

Although this distinction between the idealistic and romantic on the one hand and the realistic on the other hand is readily seen in extreme types, the dividing line is after all a shadowy one, hard to establish. Many novels contain romantic elements, and romancers employ realism, greatly to the confusion of scholars bent upon establishing hard and fast systems of classification. It is probable that readers will continue to speak of all longer fictitious narratives as novels, and that they will seldom be misunderstood.

Closely related to fiction is the second great story-telling form of literature, the *drama*. Since few plays are printed, we are apt to underestimate the quantity of dramatic literature produced since Shakespeare's day, and its importance as well. Could its influence for good or bad be measured, we might find that drama approaches in power the novel.

The simplest classification of plays is the familiar one which groups them under the two heads *comedy* and *trag-*

Dividing line  
shadowy

Drama

*edy.* By comedy is meant a play that is light, amusing, and has a happy ending. In its purest form it mirrors life truly, as does the novel. Tragedy is less easily defined. The dictionary definition runs somewhat as follows: a play depicting a serious action in which ordinarily the leading character is by some passion or limitation brought to a catastrophe. Shakespeare's *Macbeth* furnishes a familiar example. The story of Macbeth's rise and fall provides action that is serious. His one great passion, ambition, forces him inevitably on through crime after crime to a fatal catastrophe.

These two terms are so broad that still others are needed in talking about plays. We speak of *light comedy*, meaning a drama in which the humor is refined and the language natural; of *low comedy* when the humor is broad and farcical. A *farce* is a play the sole purpose of which is merriment. The characters are exaggerated, and the situations as funny as can be conceived, the main idea being to supply occasion for laughter. After witnessing a farce, one is more apt to remember comic situations than characters. *Musical comedy* is, as the name suggests, comedy in which music is an important feature. A play in which comedy and tragedy are combined, the ending normally a happy one, is sometimes termed *tragi-comedy*. Many of our modern plays are *melodramas*. Melodrama bears somewhat the same relationship to tragedy that the romance does to the novel. At its worst, it is a cheap, sensational play, full of hair-breadth escapes and harrowing scenes designed to thrill audiences of low intelligence. As is the case with the farce, one is apt to remember situations rather than characters. Of late there seems to be a growing tendency to class as melodrama many of the

**Comedy and  
tragedy**

**Kinds of  
plays**

better serious plays which fail to reach the high level of pure tragedy. Still other terms might be mentioned, for there are at least a score which are employed, or have at some time been employed, in classifying plays; but they are not of present importance.

A third division of prose literature, very large indeed and with boundaries not so clearly defined as those of fiction and drama, is made up of *essays*.

What is an essay? First, it is, normally, a variety of prose literature. Second, it is a short composition, designed to be read in half an hour, an hour, or at most an evening. We speak of a volume of essays, not of a volume containing an essay. Third, the essay is comparatively simple, and direct; it is somewhat of the nature of a lecture or an informal talk, the writer meeting his readers informally, not addressing them through the medium of a drama or a novel. Fiction and drama are, after all, artificial forms, governed by rules of construction; the essayist, addressing his readers directly, is hampered by no rules save those of common sense which bid one first have something worth saying and then say it clearly and in an agreeable manner. Finally, the word essay contains the idea of trial or incompleteness as opposed to that which is final and exhaustive. For example, an essay on trees would not contain all that could be said on the subject; it might contain merely a little of what the essayist knew about trees, and this little put forth experimentally, afterwards perhaps to be given deeper thought and possibly expanded into a book of many pages. Most magazine articles, other than fiction, are essays. Editorials are short essays.

**The essay  
defined**

To speak in detail of all the kinds of essays would take many pages. One familiar type is found in Irving's *Sketch Book*, in which the author tells with delightful informality

of his travels abroad, and pictures different phases of English life, weaving into his narrative not a little of reflection and sentiment. Another variety is seen in the *Spectator Papers* of Addison and Steele. Many of these papers are satirical; that is, they point out the petty follies of the day and through showing the evils to which these follies may lead, gently reprove those at fault and recommend wholesome reforms. Bacon, the philosopher, wrote very brief essays, closely compacted, each sentence containing a thought strikingly expressed, as if he had jotted down ideas from time to time and at last assembled them. He writes on such topics as truth, riches, death. Most delightful of all essayists is Charles Lamb, who wrote informally on whist, roast pig, old china, old plays, and his sister Mary. Reading one of his *Essays of Elia* is like listening to delightful after-dinner talk. Longer, more formal, and logically constructed are the essays of Macaulay on literary and historical subjects. His essay on Milton contains over one hundred pages of average size, quite a book in itself; whereas a typical essay by Lamb is about ten pages long, and a number of Bacon's essays do not exceed two or three pages each.

Fiction, drama, and essay are the three higher forms of prose, but there are many provinces which border the realms of pure literature. First, perhaps, come *biography*, *autobiography*, and the related fields of *letters* and *diaries*. Second comes *history*, associated with which are *travel* and *exploration*. Third may be mentioned works of *science* and *philosophy*, a few of which are truly masterpieces. Finally, *oratory* should be included; for though sermons and speeches are designed but for an occasion, not for all time, and when printed they lose something of their force because com-

**Kinds of essays**

**Minor forms of prose**

posed to be listened to, not to be read, our literature is so rich in powerful oratory that it would be wrong to neglect it. Yet works belonging to any one of these outlying provinces we should need to examine closely before giving them a place in our library of pure literature.

VARIETIES OF PROSE	Fiction	{	The short story	
		{	The novel	•
		{	The romance	
	Drama	{	Comedy	
{		Farce		
{		Tragi-comedy		
{		Melodrama		
{		Tragedy		
Essay				
Minor Forms	{	Biography, Autobiography, Diaries,		
		Letters		
		History, Travel, Exploration		
		Science, Philosophy		
		Oratory		

## CHAPTER XV

### VARIETIES OF POETRY

Most poems fall readily into one of four classes: Narrative (including dramatic and non-dramatic forms), Lyrical, Descriptive, and Didactic or Reflective.

In poetic drama, as in prose, are found *comedy* and *tragedy*, and such allied forms as *farce*, *tragi-comedy*, and *melodrama*. These call for no further explanation;

**Varieties  
of drama**

but a word is necessary, perhaps, in regard to masks (sometimes spelled *masques*)

and closet drama. The *mask*, Italian in origin, made its appearance in England during the reign of

**The mask**

Elizabeth and was for a time exceedingly popular with the cultured rich. Songs, intricate dances,

and elaborate scenic effects were essential features, in many cases the dramatic element being of comparatively slight importance. The masks were not given at public

playhouses, but at court and in castle halls, no expense being spared to make the spectacle gorgeous. The parts

were taken by amateurs from among the nobility, who impersonated mythical or allegorical characters, which

were as essential to mask as were the musical numbers, the dancing, and the scenic display. The most prolific

of mask-producers was Ben Jonson; but Milton's *Comus*, presented at Ludlow castle before the Earl of Bridgewater,

then President of Wales, is the best of all the dramas cast in this highly artificial form. *Closet drama*

**Closet drama**

is a name applied to poems dramatic in form, but unfit for successful stage presentation. To this class belong dramas in verse which were intended to be

read, not witnessed, as Shelley's *Prometheus Unbound* and Byron's *Manfred*. But the term is also applied to dramas which, though written for stage presentation, have proved less effective when acted than when read as we read other forms of story-telling verse. Hence we may include in this small class the dramas of Tennyson, Browning, and even some of the plays of Shakespeare.

Non-dramatic narrative poetry is as varied in kind as prose fiction, but we shall consider merely the tale, the ballad, the romance, and the epic. The *tale* corresponds in a general way to the short story, though commonly much simpler and briefer. Longfellow's *Tales of a Wayside Inn* and Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* are familiar examples. An interesting variety is the *monologue*, closely related to the drama. The words all come from the lips of one person, yet the narrative is so given that the reader readily imagines the presence and replies of other characters to whom the words are spoken. Something of the effect of monologue may be gained by listening to one who is using the telephone, and trying to imagine what the person at the other end of the wire is saying. Many of what Browning has called his *dramatic lyrics* are monologue tales.

Some of the most fascinating tales in all English literature are found in the form of *ballads*, which, as the name suggests, were originally short tales intended to be sung. In the eighteenth century when there was a revival of interest in earlier times, the ballads which had been composed and sung throughout England during the Middle Ages were collected and excited great interest because of their simplicity and wonderful dramatic power. They have received loving study ever since. Not a few of our modern poets have imitated these ancient models; but Coleridge's *Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, best

of these modern attempts, though a great poem, is inferior as a ballad to such originals as *Sir Patrick Spens*, or *A Geste of Robyn Hode*.

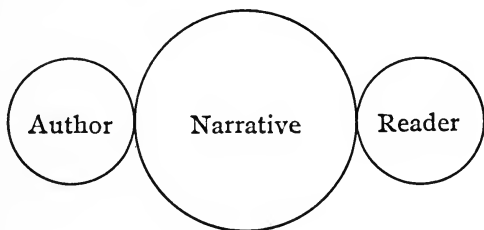
The term *romance*, or *metrical romance*, also carries the scholar back to the Middle Ages, to a very large group of extremely long poems recounting the deeds of such half-mythical heroes as King Charlemagne and King Arthur, poems many of which were brought to England by Norman minstrels and sung by them in castle halls. But to the average reader the term suggests long poems of more modern times, notably those of Scott and Byron. The characteristics of this modern type, as found in such admirable examples as *Marmion* and *Lady of the Lake*, are similar to those mentioned in connection with prose romance: abundance of adventure and love and sentiment, the incidents taking place in regions of romantic beauty.

The term *epic* is used in two senses. First, it is employed as a general name to cover all forms of narrative poetry except drama. But it is used more commonly to name that kind of narrative poetry of which Homer's *Iliad* is the noblest example. Of the many definitions, the following is among the simplest: "A poem celebrating in stately verse the real or mythical achievements of great personages, heroes, or demigods." It is always long and dignified. In English literature we find but one poem truly deserving the name epic, Milton's *Paradise Lost*.

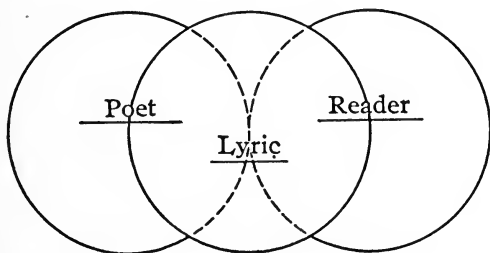
In direct contrast to the story-telling forms of poetry thus far considered is the *lyric*, the nature of which it is quite necessary that the student understand clearly. We may read all of Shakespeare's plays without becoming a whit the wiser concerning the dramatist's personal joys and sorrows. Scott's *Lady of the Lake* acquaints the reader with Ellen Douglas, Rod-



erick Dhu, James FitzJames, and other personages real or imaginary, but not, save through inference, with Sir Walter. The story-teller, whether dramatist or romancer, stands apart from, or back of, his narrative, as may be represented by these three circles:



“Do not think of me,” he seems to request; “watch the characters in the little fiction world that I have imagined, and listen to what *they* have to say.” The lyric poet, on the other hand, aims to reveal the very depths of his heart, sharing without restraint his innermost emotions—an attitude which may be represented thus:



The purest form of lyric is *song*; indeed the word is derived from lyre, the name of an instrument used for musical accompaniment. Normally, song is an outburst of feeling of joy or grief, of patriotism, or reverence, or

mere conviviality. But the term lyric is applied to any short poem which "turns on some single thought, feeling, or situation." For example, the poet hears a nightingale sing. The song fills him with emotion which he records in a lyric. Or he opens by chance Chapman's translation of Homer's epic and reads for the first time the grand story of the *Iliad*. Later he records in a few lines his emotions upon discovering this new-old world of beauty. Milton, brooding over his blindness, yielding to a mood of despair at his helplessness, is suddenly struck with a great truth which brings him comfort, and he writes a little lyric of fourteen lines setting forth this truth, that all who are afflicted in like manner may share the consolation that has come to him.

One of the best collections of English lyrics is Palgrave's *Golden Treasury of Songs and Lyrics*, a copy of which every one should own. In this wonderful treasury are found many varieties. There is the *ballad*, which though properly classed with narrative poetry, is sometimes so touched with the tender emotion of the narrator that it becomes truly lyrical. The *elegy*, commonly defined as a "meditative poem of sorrowful theme, usually lamenting the dead," is well represented by Milton's *Lycidas* and Gray's *Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard*. The *ode*, also meditative, differs from other forms in that its structure is complicated or irregular, and the feeling expressed more exalted. Wordsworth's *Ode to Duty* serves as an example. Many of the best lyrics are written in *sonnet* form—fourteen iambic pentameter lines with a definite rhyming scheme. This was a favorite form with Spenser, Shakespeare, Milton, and Wordsworth.

The varieties of poetry considered thus far are the prin-

cipal ones. Descriptive and didactic or reflective verse are considered minor varieties, partly, no doubt, because they are most commonly found in connection with other forms. And yet English literature is exceptionally rich in poems which paint the beauties of nature in all her moods, and picture in ideal colors the simple joys and the virtues of rural life—poetry quiet and reflective in character. Fine bits of nature description are found in Thomson's *Seasons* and Cowper's *Task*, eighteenth century poems now little read. More familiar to modern readers is Burns's *The Cotter's Saturday Night*, which pictures the simple life of the Scottish peasantry, and Whittier's *Snow-Bound*. Byron and Scott paint scenes of romantic beauty. Our greatest nature poet, however, is Wordsworth, to whom nature in her quieter moods made a strong appeal; but it is not so much the pictures in his poems as it is the thoughts or reflections prompted by his love for nature that have made him great. Were we to make a collection of the very best descriptions to be found in all English literature, we should find it necessary to take lines from nearly every poet of prominence, beginning with that unknown singer who composed *Beowulf* far back in Anglo-Saxon days, and ending with Tennyson and Browning.

Two terms related to description are pastoral and idyl. *Pastoral* (from the Latin *pastor*, meaning shepherd) is a name applied to any poem picturing the life of shepherds, or indeed any phase of rural life. The finest of all pastorals are Milton's *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso*. An *idyl* (also spelled idyll) is defined in Webster's dictionary as "a little picture in verse, or kind of short descriptive poem, as one dealing with pastoral or rural life." But it is also applied to longer poems, narrative as well as descriptive, in which the picture

Descriptive  
and didactic  
poetry

The pastoral  
and the idyl

element is prominent, as in Tennyson's *Idylls of the King*.

*Didactic* poetry, as its name implies, has for its main purpose instruction. We feel at once, when the poet turns teacher or preacher, that he encroaches upon the province of the prose writer; yet we do not mind the short didactic passages found nearly everywhere in English poetry—a line or two only, pointing a moral or giving terse expression to some notable thought. There have even been a few poets, notably Dryden and Pope, who have succeeded through wit and cleverness in making attractive purely didactic poems of some length. Pope's *Essay on Criticism*, a sort of rhymed treatise on rhetoric, is a good example. Sometimes didactic poetry takes the form of satire, the purpose of which is to reform through ridicule. Yet brilliant as are a number of the long, satirical poems of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, we can but say of them that though they are excellent of their kind, it is a kind which lies remote from the center of true poetry.

VARIETIES OF POETRY	}	Dramatic	{	Comedy
				Tragedy
				Tragi-comedy
				Mask
				Closet Drama
		Non-dramatic or Epic	{	Tale
				Monologue or Dramatic Lyric
				Ballad
				Metrical Romance
				Epic
		Lyric	{	Song
				Ballad
				Sonnet
				Elegy
				Ode
		Descriptive	{	(Including pastorals and idylls)
		Didactic		(Including reflective and expository verse, and satire)

## CHAPTER XVI

### THE STUDY OF PROSE FICTION

For purposes of study, the novel, or indeed any piece of prose fiction, may be thought of as made up of certain necessary elements. First, there must be a *plot*; something must happen, otherwise no story. Second, there must be one or more *characters*. Third, there must be what is called the *setting*; that is to say, what happens must happen somewhere, sometime, somehow. Fourth, no matter how simple the tale, there is pretty sure to be a discoverable *central thought*, or ideal, or purpose, which serves in a way to unify the whole. Fifth, the story must be told by somebody, in language of his own choosing, in a way peculiarly his own. That is, there must be an author whose *skill as a craftsman* and whose *personality* are revealed in the narrative. Plot, characters, setting, central truth, the author's skill and personality: these are the five elements to be considered in the study of any piece of fiction.

**The five  
elements**

By plot is meant, loosely speaking, the skeleton of the complete narrative, or the important incidents without which there would be no story. Usually it can be stated in a few sentences. There are not many absolutely different plots—perhaps fifteen or twenty in all literature; yet there are so many thousands of ways of varying these fifteen or twenty that no two stories are alike. The essential characteristics of story-plots can be made clear through a number of simple illustrations.

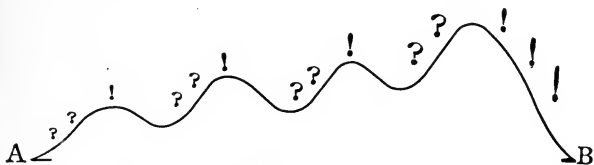
**The plot**

First, one is reminded of a chain. Link follows link, each of no value save as all combine to make up a whole, designed to serve some preconceived purpose.

**Plot similitudes** A plot is sometimes defined simply as a chain of incidents. Second, the plot may be likened to a series of blocks so placed in line, as we have often seen children arrange them, that when the first is pushed over, down go the second, the third, and all the rest. Thousands of stories are but variations of the old adage: For lack of a nail the shoe was lost; for lack of a shoe the steed was lost; for lack of a steed the rider was lost; for lack of a rider the kingdom was lost. Story-telling of this sort is but playing the game of consequences. Third, we may liken many a plot to a number of threads of different color which cross and recross in ever increasing perplexity till finally they become so entangled that the eye which endeavors to follow some one bright thread becomes more and more bewildered, till at length all is in a twinkling cunningly and quickly disentangled.

Fourth, there is the familiar comparison of a stream, inevitably flowing downward, though not with uniform speed. At times, its current flows swiftly; at times, perhaps in some quiet woodland, it loiters as if attracted by beautiful surroundings and forgetful of the great sea towards which it is journeying. At times it meanders through green meadows, or industriously turns the wheel of some useful mill; but the banks grow wider and wider, the waters ever deeper, till at last the broad river is reached. Finally we may illustrate the nature of a typical plot by means of the following diagram. The reader is like a traveler who stands at the foot of the mountain A B, mildly interested to know what lies beyond it. As he climbs the first gentle slope, curiosity gradually increases (indicated by the small

question marks) till he reaches a lowly summit the onward view from which brings a degree of pleasurable surprise



(indicated by the small exclamation point) and gratifies his curiosity in some measure, though not entirely; for straightway new questions in regard to what lies beyond are awakened and he climbs with growing interest to a higher point and still a higher, each new vantage ground revealing a little, but not enough. At last, his interest now at an intense pitch, he gains the topmost pinnacle whence all lies revealed.

The characteristics suggested by the five foregoing illustrations, and still others to be mentioned, are reflected in the terminology employed in talking about plots. First in this little vocabulary come *Plot terminology* *climax* and certain related terms. Climax is defined in many ways. It is another name for turning-point, say some, thus calling attention to the fact that every story pictures a struggle—a good man contending with a bad man; inherited weakness, moral or physical, contending with the desire to accomplish some great and good thing; love contending with various almost insurmountable obstacles, etc. The moment at which the battle turns and the contest is decided, that is the climax. Others define it as the moment when, the threads of narrative having reached a point of supreme *entanglement*, the *dénouement* (from a French word meaning to *untie*) sets in and we have the final unraveling of the mystery. One

writer cleverly characterizes it as the point where the "beginning begins to end and the end begins to begin," and also as "the place where the consequences set in." Popularly it is known as the point of greatest interest, where all mystery is cleared away, no element of curiosity remaining ungratified. It should be borne in mind, however, that most stories have a number of climaxes, that is, a number of *dramatic moments* or *situations*, as they are called, when the reader's interest is greatly quickened. A lively story, indeed, is a series of such minor climaxes leading with ever increasing interest up to the grand climax near or at the end—a crisis which in case of tragedy becomes a *catastrophe* (from a Greek verb meaning to overturn.)

Although every incident in a story plays its part in building the complete narrative, not all incidents serve directly to advance the action of the story. **Plot incidents** This is suggested in the illustration which likens the plot to a stream. Many are introduced mainly with a view to simply getting the reader and the characters better acquainted. These are sometimes called *character incidents* to distinguish them from *plot incidents* which actually drive the story onward. Others serve but to acquaint the reader with conditions which should be known that later action may be understood. In all of Scott's historical romances there are incidents of this kind which acquaint the reader with the customs of the times with which the romances deal. They add vividness, help the reader to understand and appreciate the main incidents, and commonly furnish relief from the more exciting crises. An incident or group of incidents of this sort, growing out of a story yet separable from it, is sometimes called an *episode*. The bursting of the wine cask in *A Tale of Two Cities* is an episode. To distinguish between



a plot incident and an episode or character incident often calls for nice discrimination.

The term *sub-plot* or *minor plot* is self-explanatory. Intertwined with the main narrative, where hero and heroine principally are concerned, often will be found minor narratives, perhaps having to do with butler and maid. A novel by Dickens sometimes suggests a community of stories nicely interlaced or interrelated, brought into unity by some one series of incidents more commanding than all the rest. Life itself, which the novelist tries to mirror, is thus complex, each individual at one time, it may be, playing the rôle of hero in one chain of incidents, the rôle of villain in a second, and subordinate rôles in many others.

Without a plot there can be no story; without characters there can be no plot. A slight acquaintance with fiction suffices to show that novels differ widely in respect to the number of characters introduced. Eight or ten is perhaps the average, though in a novel by Dickens or Thackeray one may meet with five times as many, usually belonging to two more or less distinctly defined groups, a principal and a subordinate. The characters in the principal group are as necessary as the plot itself; the subordinates serve a variety of purposes. Some contribute humor, reminding us of Shakespeare's jesters. Uncle Venner, a minor character in *House of the Seven Gables*, serves as Hawthorne's mouthpiece for bits of homely philosophy—as if the author, knowing full well that to talk directly to his readers over the heads of his characters would be as great a blunder as for the dramatist to appear on the stage, had disguised himself as a ragged philosopher and thus become a legitimate part of the story he is telling. Characters are brought in to convey necessary information, to supply parts of the story which

lie back of the beginning, and other parts which, though essential, are of too little dramatic interest to be handled in detail. They give reminiscences, they gossip about their superiors, and the eavesdropping reader gathers the drift of events from their conversation. Sometimes they are introduced for no other apparent reason than to convey the impression of numbers so necessary to make the narrative lifelike, as is the case with the characters in *Silas Marner* who are seen at the Rainbow Inn.

But it would take many pages to enumerate all the purposes served by minor characters. Enough has been said to suggest that fiction-reading becomes more intelligent and pleasurable as we learn to detect these hidden purposes; learn to observe the economy of some authors, the lavish generosity of others who delight in bringing character after character into being; and to estimate in some measure an author's power by the range of his creations, the number of different types he has the ability to handle. There is keen pleasure too in watching an author's method of handling his characters. What is his way of bringing them into the story? How does he reveal their personality—through their words, through their deeds, through reports from other characters, or directly by peering into their minds and hearts and informing the reader what thoughts and motives lie hidden there? Does he describe their outward appearance? Does he make them develop morally, undergoing change as the story progresses, or do they remain the same throughout? Does he succeed in making them always act "in character"—that is, are the kings always kingly, boys always boyish, etc.? How, finally, does he dismiss his characters? These points and many others command the attention and the pleasurable interest of the trained reader.

The study of characters

That the invention of character is a far more difficult matter than mere plot invention is attested by the fact that in all literature there are but few really noble and immortal characters drawn so true to life that they seem real men and women whom, should they appear at our door, we should readily recognize. Cheap fiction swarms with "stock" or conventionalized creatures, mere dummies, not creations at all.

Character-  
invention rare

Under setting is sometimes included not only descriptive passages but all explanatory matter introduced to make the action clearer. Explanation is less pleasing than exciting incident, and readers have a way of skipping descriptive paragraphs; therefore many writers confine themselves very closely to incidents and deftly weave into the narrative the little description and explanation absolutely necessary, leaving much to the imagination. But let us consider a few of the many purposes served by descriptive passages.

Setting

First, it need not be said, some sort of picture of the place where the action occurs is almost always desirable, merely as an aid to the imagination; and if the action depends in any way on the nature of the place, or on weather conditions, it becomes actually necessary. For example, the storm which in the thrilling sea-tale calls forth the hero's quick wit and daring must be painted in all its fury. Second, a quiet descriptive passage forms a pleasing relief, oftentimes, after pages of exciting incident. It is poor art to keep the reader's nerves too long at high tension. Third, description may be made to intensify dramatic effect, either through contrast or harmony. For example, the author may first paint an early morning village scene, the sun just peeping above the hills, smoke rising calmly from

Purpose of  
description

chimneys here and there, the milkman going his rounds. Then, the reader's mind filled with this peaceful quiet, the author throws open the door of the cottage from whose chimney no smoke arises and reveals evidence of an awful crime. As for nature in harmony with action, everyone knows that in fiction-land wedding days are invariably free from tempests. It would be a mean author who should create a pair of newly plighted lovers and not give them a flowery lane down which to wander. All through *House of the Seven Gables* there are little descriptive passages which so reflect the changing mood of the story that even were the plot incidents removed, one might easily guess the dramatic variations of the narrative. Perhaps such use of description is more poetic than natural, yet in the hands of a master it becomes very effective. Finally, there are novelists who dare halt their narrative from time to time and give extended passages of detailed description not absolutely essential to the story. They do so, it may be, because their purpose is not solely to tell a story but to acquaint the reader with the rare beauties of some region, much as the writer of historical fiction includes in his narrative incidents which picture long-ago times though they serve but indirectly to advance the story.

That every piece of fiction contains a clearly definable central truth serving as a pivotal point is hardly demonstrable. Many narratives are thus unified; some are not, though most if not all are somewhat unified by a controlling idea or motive. Hawthorne's stories are little sermons in fiction form, each driving home with wonderful force some great moral truth, easily discoverable. Dickens fashioned stories designed to picture great abuses so glaringly that reforms would follow; that is to say, he wrote with a definite purpose in mind. No small part of modern fiction

is made up of problem novels, each of which has, as a central motive, the desire to suggest an answer to some vexing social question. Perhaps the strongest statement that should be made is that every novelist writes with a motive. Frequently it is but the praiseworthy desire to entertain; sometimes it is a desire to impart information in pleasing manner or to point the way to reform, or to emphasize a great moral truth.

As we grow older and more familiar with plots, familiar too with the thousand and one well-worn devices by which authors strive to make their stories salable, our pleasure in current fiction by little known authors grows less keen, and we find ourselves returning inevitably to such masterpieces as those produced by Scott, Dickens, Thackeray, and George Eliot. These half-forgotten stories we read and reread, not alone because the narratives are so great that they never lose their attraction, but because we are homesick for the authors themselves. No one can write for many years, inventing scenes, inventing incidents, without putting very nearly his entire self into his books. There lie exposed his ideas, his fondest fancies and dreams, his conceptions of what is noble and of what is low and mean. Peculiar ways of looking at things, even little tricks of expression which are distinctly his own, all are there. In a word, it is the charm of the author's fully revealed personality that draws us like a magnet, and we find such pleasures as old friends experience when they meet after years of separation.

Author's  
personality

This element of personality which enters into every great novel is, we grow to think, a very essential thing after all, not to be neglected in any masterpiece. Study the plot, the characters, the setting. Try to determine what is the central truth or underlying motive which vitalizes

the story. But above all, try to find the author; seek for him "between the lines." If he is noble, make him your friend and treat him as such. A good book once read, do not put it aside for all time; take it from the shelf now and then, not perhaps for a complete reading, but for the purpose of spending an hour or two with an old acquaintance who is something more and better than a mere story-teller.

Here, finally, are a few questions which may prove helpful to those who are fond of fiction and would like to add to their enjoyment by learning how to read with a somewhat more critical eye:

**General questions**

**PLOT**

Plot made up of many incidents, or few? One plot only, or a main plot plus one or more subordinate ones? Incidents arranged in natural, chronological sequence, or arranged in inverted order for dramatic effect? Incidents taken from real life, invented but probable, barely possible, or impossible? Incidents involving physical action, or inner (moral) struggle? Plot stereotyped—that is, following well-beaten trails, or original? Quiet or thrilling? All the incidents necessary? Any used to reveal character? Any used to supply information or to afford relief from the strain accompanying tragic scenes? Incidents mainly comic, or pathetic? Is the climax strong? What incident forms the climax? Does accident play an important part in the disentanglement? Is the plot the most essential element in the story? Which of the following adjectives best describe the plot: simple, commonplace, trivial, quiet, stereotyped, feeble, amateurish, interesting, clever, dramatic, thrilling, melodramatic, romantic, highly imaginative, ingenious, long-drawn-out?

**CHARACTERS**

Many or few? Different types, or only two or three? One group only, or a principal group plus one or more subordinate groups? Natural, idealized, caricatured, or conventional? Commonplace, or interesting? How brought into the story,

how dismissed? What purpose do the subordinate characters serve? How does the reader become acquainted with the characters—by what they do, what they say, what others say about them, the effect they produce on others, or by what the author says about them directly—peeping into their minds and letting the reader know what motives lie hidden there? Are any of them tagged—that is, recognizable by some peculiarity of speech, etc.? Do they always act in character? Do they show wide acquaintance, on the author's part, with men and women? Do they show that the author understands human nature? Does the author regard them with affection? Is there an out-and-out hero or heroine and a pronounced villain? Are the characters more interesting than the plot? Where is the author at his best, in plot construction or in character delineation? Which of the characters do you see most clearly?

#### SETTING

Does the story begin immediately with action, or with preliminary pages explaining the time, place, and attending circumstances? Does the author, upon introducing a character, give a detailed portrait, or is the portrait given in bits adroitly inserted? Are nature descriptions frequent and lengthy? Do they seem unnecessary—not closely related to the plot? Are the descriptions natural or idealized? Real or imagined? Is description introduced for its own artistic beauty, to help the reader to visualize, to intensify some dramatic effect, or to relieve tension? Is there much weather in the story? Are the descriptions in contrast to the mood of the story or in harmony with it? Do the nature descriptions ever hint at the trend the story is to take? Do the descriptions form an important element in the story? Is the author as good at description as at character delineation or at plot construction? What in externals impresses him most deeply? .

#### THE CENTRAL TRUTH OR CONTROLLING PURPOSE

What is the theme of the story? The most important truth? Is the story told to enforce some truth? Does the truth appear to grow naturally out of the narrative? Does the story contain too much teaching or moralizing? If the story has a moral, is

it self-evident, or baldly stated at the close? Do you agree with the author in all his views?

#### THE AUTHOR

Is he sincere? thoughtful? emotional? of artistic temperament? Is his range of experience wide or narrow? Does he understand human nature? Is he sympathetic? Are his ideals high? What seems to you the most attractive elements in his personality? What in his art as a novelist do you most admire?

NOTE.—See Appendix for questions on *Silas Marner*.



## CHAPTER XVII

### THE STUDY OF DRAMA

*here*  
A recent theatre program not only names the playwright and gives the cast (the assignment of parts to the actors) but tells by whom the production is staged, who directs the music, who painted the scenery, who should receive credit for the mechanical and electrical effects, who provided the properties (stage requisites other than costumes and scenery), who is technical supervisor, and even who designed the gowns and costumes and who made the shoes. This long list of items serves well to illustrate that plays are not meant to be read but to be witnessed, and that the proper place for the study of the drama is the theatre.

**Proper place  
for study**

But serious difficulties lie in the way. Comparatively few of us live in large towns or cities where there are good theatres; and those who are city-dwellers find that really good plays are presented none too often, and that certain dramas well worth studying are never staged. The great majority, therefore, must content themselves with reading at home; and since relatively little of modern drama is available in book form, in many cases this must mean reading Shakespeare only. The purpose of this chapter is to offer simple suggestions in regard to how plays, Shakespeare's in particular, may be read to advantage.

**Difficulties  
in the way**

These suggestions focus in the three words **Three steps** playgoer, play-actor, and playwright. Briefly, they amount to but this: First, imagine yourself a playgoer;

second, imagine yourself an actor; third, imagine yourself a playwright. They form a climax of increasing difficulty.

The average playgoer is no close student of dramatic art. He is an enviable pleasure-seeker, most fortunate

The play-  
goer

if, as the orchestra ceases, the lights in the auditorium fade away, and the great curtain slowly rises, he can forget absolutely that he is in a theatre, forget footlights, forget paint and powder and canvas trees, forget all the conventions of the stage—such as that every room has but three sides and a slanting floor—and become, as it were, an eavesdropping spirit privileged to witness scene after scene, apparently real, though picturing a life somewhat fuller of laughter and tears than that in which he actually lives, and moving at a swifter rate, with all the humdrum strangely eliminated. In a word, he yields himself completely to the magic and is swept away in imagination, sharing the emotions represented by those on the stage, much as the little child shares the emotions of Little Red Ridinghood, though safely held in a mother's lap. The play over, he continues to think of the action as something real and of the actors as people whom he might meet were his lot a different one.

The first duty of the student who is not privileged to attend the theatre is the pleasurable one of gaining, so far

Visualizing  
a play

as he can, the kind of impressions received by average theatre-goers. Before him lies the printed page, and as he reads, slowly yet not too critically, he tries to get the story, through imagination visualizing, or making real, each scene and character. Although pleasurable, this is nevertheless something of a task, involving a mental effort uncalled for on the part of those who witness plays. It is necessary to shut the eyes, now and then, and try to imagine the natural setting of this scene and that—the courtroom where Portia

makes her plea, the banquet hall, scene of Macbeth's first royal banquet, the forest of Arden where Rosalind and lovesick Orlando meet. One must imagine, too, how each character is dressed, and with what voice and bodily action the words are spoken. What is Macbeth's appearance as he cries

Lay on, Macduff,  
And damn'd be him that first cries, 'Hold, enough!'

and what is the manner of fighting which follows? How are the weird sisters attired in the first scene of *Macbeth*, and what witch-like actions accompany their uncanny words? With questions such as these, the imagination is ever kept on the alert; without imagination, play-reading is a dull performance, like listening to conversation too intricate to follow, or gazing at a scene partly obscured by fog. Doubtless one reason why plays are so seldom printed is that comparatively few readers are willing to exercise their imagination sufficiently to gain real pleasure merely from the dramatist's words.

The second step in drama study is far more difficult. It calls for a much closer reading than the first, somewhat superficial survey; for now the reader must look upon the play through the eyes of actor and stage manager, whose duty it is to interpret the dramatist's words, supply suitable action, and provide for this action appropriate stage arrangement, so that, without conscious effort, playgoers may get all that the playwright's imagination has invented. Of the thousands who throng our theatres, how few ever stop to think of the weeks of labor—the close study of lines, the memorizing of parts, the planning of stage effects, the rehearsals—which lie between the composing and the final production of even a light comedy. What we see in a modern

presentation of one of Shakespeare's plays is the composite result of careful, loving study on the part of many generations of great actors. Without some degree of study of the kind bestowed by actor and stage manager, one cannot hope to fully understand and appreciate any play.

It is excellent practice, therefore, to make a plan of the stage as it should be arranged for each scene of the play that is being studied, accompanying it with notes explaining in detail what properties are needed, what scenery, where the characters should enter and where depart, and how they should be grouped at critical moments. *Macbeth* presents many interesting problems in stage arrangement. In the banquet scene, for example, where shall the table be placed and where the Queen's throne? Where shall Banquo's stool be placed? Where should the Murderer appear, and where Banquo's ghost?

Costuming, too, offers an attractive line of study. How many costumes will Lady Macbeth need, and what should they be? Macbeth is a Scotchman; should he be dressed as a Highland chief? What would be an appropriate costume for the Murderer? for the Porter? Dress oftentimes betrays character, it must be remembered. Yet it should not be overlooked that what is true of stage-settings in general is true of costumes; they can be made to attract too much attention, thus weakening the effect of words and actions.

Words and actions, after all, call for the closest study; and so much of our reading is done hurriedly, with a view to gaining general impressions rather than exact meanings, that it is difficult to force ourselves to be thorough, as we must be in studying Shakespeare. "Shakespeare is no primer"; the thought does not always lie on the surface. Many a line

Stage

arrangement

Costuming

Interpretation

challenges our best powers. And Shakespeare's language is not quite modern. He employs not a few words now obsolete, and others which, though still in common use, have lost their original force or meaning. Moreover he lived at a time when people took delight in language feats, in startling effects obtainable through nice skill in tossing words about and through clever sentence-twists. His English is not, therefore, straightforward; many a sentence needs disentangling. Moreover, he wrote not for publication but for the stage—for oral reproduction to be helped out by facial expression and action; hence, as has been pointed out more than once, his sentences are often a series of cross-cuts, sometimes even ungrammatical, such as we use in rapid conversation. Coming from the mouth of an actor, they are clear enough; when received from the printed page, they are frequently troublesome. Finally, he wrote not for posterity but for Londoners of his own day, and therefore made allusions to passing events long since forgotten. Only by studying the comments of scholars who have devoted years to patient investigation can we hope to understand certain passages which presented no difficulty whatever to the apprentices who crowded the Globe theatre in Shakespeare's day.

Even when every passage is reasonably clear, there remains the difficult yet delightful task of determining how each sentence should be spoken, with what **The actor** volume and tone and modulation of voice, attended by what facial expression and what action, all of which calls for a close study of each character. For example, consider a single passage in the second scene of the second act of *Macbeth*. The King has been murdered. Macbeth, dazed and remorseful, his imagination still picturing the dreadful deed he has done, stands before his wife. After a few scraps of hurried conversation, she no-

tices that he bears in his hands the bloody daggers which should have been left by the side of the grooms whom she has drugged and upon whom the guilt is to be placed. In alarm she bids him return them and smear the sleepers with blood. Then follows—

*Macbeth.* I'll go no more.  
I am afraid to think what I have done;  
Look on't again I dare not.

*Lady Macbeth.* Infirm of purpose!  
Give me the daggers: the sleeping and the dead  
Are but as pictures; 'tis the eye of childhood  
That fears a painted devil. If he do bleed,  
I'll gild the faces of the grooms withal;  
For it must seem their guilt. (Exit)

How should the words *Give me the daggers* be spoken? Should the stress be upon *Give* or *me*? Are they words of anger, scorn, or determination? Does she snatch the daggers, or take them calmly, or as if it required all the strength of will she can muster? Would you have her leave the stage hurriedly, or with faltering step? And how should Macbeth act at this critical moment? Is he shamed, relieved, or too dazed to know what is happening?

Few are the scenes in any great play which do not contain little problems like the above, and the thought is inevitable that one cannot study the drama successfully without constant experiment in oral reading; and that most effective of all is the memorizing of parts and the presenting, before a small audience, of a few simple scenes. A single trial of this sort will do far more towards training the appreciation than will many weeks of silent study.

Playgoer, actor, playwright—we must in some measure identify ourselves with all three, if we wish to thoroughly understand and appreciate any drama. The first two steps in this three-fold scheme we have considered; the third,

most fundamental of all and to many the most interesting, remains. It consists in trying to think out, or imagine, how this or that play was made—where the plot came from; how the raw materials were worked over, the available sorted out from much that was unsuitable, and reshaped to fit the dramatist's purpose; what laws of construction were followed in the writing of scenes and acts. In short it consists in an attempt to learn something of the art of playwriting through following, so far as it is discoverable, the trail of the dramatist.

The play-  
wright

Study of this kind very soon reveals how different is the task of the dramatist from that which confronts the writer of novels. For plays must be acted on a stage commonly not over seventy feet wide by forty deep, the parts taken by a limited number of actors, before an audience which will remain but little over two hours. Such a story as Stevenson tells in *The Wreckers*, for example, or Scott in *Ivanhoe*, or Hugo in *Les Misérables* cannot well be limited to a space seventy by forty, nor told satisfactorily in two hours. Modern ingenuity recognizes few things as impossible, yet sea-fights, earthquakes, floods, forest fires, and much else that the novelist handles readily, lie beyond the range of satisfactory stage presentation. The novelist may transport his readers from continent to continent, from pole to pole; the dramatist must content himself with but few scenes. The novelist deals with individuals who may take their time in reading his pages, skipping at will dull passages, or putting the book aside when interest wanes. The dramatist deals with large companies of individuals, differing widely in their tastes, the attention of all of whom must be captured at the outset and held through the performance by means of a series of incidents that keep curi-

The play-  
wright's  
limitations

osity ever alert to observe what will happen next. Finally, we are too apt to forget that the story of the play must be one in which deep emotions can be expressed mainly by words, facial expression, and gesture; and that nearly all the action must take place before the eyes of the spectators.

The dramatist, then, is hampered by troublesome limitations. Although he no longer observes the old "unities" of time, place, and action, which prescribed that the time represented as elapsing should not exceed a period of twenty-four hours, the scene remain unchanged, and the action be single rather than a number of stories interlaced, still he is far less free than other story-tellers. As, through study, we become familiar with the restrictions to which his art is subject, the difficulties of play-writing become more evident and our appreciation of good plays increases accordingly.

From what has been said it is obvious that the success of the dramatist lies in no small degree in his ability to recognize appropriate matter. Shakespeare left no record of his method of play-making; yet his works have received so much study that the sources of most of his plots are now known, and it is very interesting to observe how this great master selected his raw materials and changed them magically into great plays. School editions of his *Macbeth* include the pages from Holinshed's *Chronicle* with which he must have been familiar, enabling us to trace the changes the bald narrative underwent as he adapted it to stage requirements. A few passages in the play follow Holinshed almost word for word. But we note that he has selected incidents rather than appropriated the entire narrative, that he has brought together events which in reality were remote in time, has shifted action from this place to that, brought into promi-

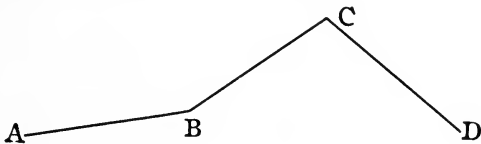


nence individuals belonging historically to the background, transferred or bestowed traits of character at will, indeed taken the many liberties necessary in order to make of the historical record a dramatic unity. In *Merchant of Venice* we find him intertwining three stories so cunningly that they seem but one. *As You Like It* is but an adaptation of a popular Elizabethan romance. Rarely, if ever, did he invent an entire plot outright; his genius found exercise in selecting, reshaping, rearranging material at hand and expressing all in noble verse.

But studying sources and comparing raw materials with finished products, though interesting and profitable, is merely preliminary to studying plot construction in detail. Much that has been said in the chapter on the novel applies here

Plot  
construction

as well. A play, like most novels, is made up of incidents arising because of a struggle of some kind—a struggle which becomes more and more tense, climax following climax, till a turning-point or grand climax is reached; then the action drives on, still a series of dramatic moments, to its close, which in tragedy is called a catastrophe. Plays differ in structure-plan, as do novels, but the following diagram is often used to illustrate the common features :



A B, called the *introduction*, covers the earlier scenes which serve principally to acquaint us with the preliminaries—what happened prior to the beginning of the main action of the play, or the attending circumstances. Somewhere near the beginning is a point B, not always easily discoverable,

where we find what is called the *inciting force*, which definitely begins the conflict between the opposing forces.

**Plot terminology** C represents the *grand climax*. A C is called the *rising action*, the *entanglement*, or the *complication*; C D is called the *falling action* or the *resolution*. D, in tragedy, represents the *catastrophe*. The diagram would convey a better impression, perhaps, if the lines B C and C D were jagged, suggesting a series of dramatic moments rather than a smooth running story.

Here are seven of the more important points to note in studying a given plot: 1. *The manner in which introductory matter is handled*. The novelist may devote an entire chapter to preliminaries, for he has plenty of time in which to tell his story; or he may plunge into the midst of his narrative, win attention through some exciting incident, then "double back" to the real beginning and explain whatever is necessary. But in drama every minute is precious; the story cannot, ordinarily, be made to double on itself; and the restless audience must be captured at the outset. Getting a play well started, therefore, calls for great skill. The explanation of the circumstances out of which the action of the play grows must be as brief as possible, much being left to be inferred, and that which cannot be inferred introduced not all at once, but inserted here and there throughout the first act as it is needed. It is excellent practice to run through a first act and pick out all that is purely explanatory.

2. *Method of introducing characters and of getting them off the stage*. Usually, before an important character appears, he is talked about by the minor characters, that interest in him may be aroused and that he may be recognized when he makes his entrance. The witches, in the first scene of

**Entrances and exits**

Macbeth, announce that they are planning to meet Macbeth very soon, and the audience wonders who he can be. In the second scene we are told more about him—of his valor in the battle which is still raging, and the King announces new honors to be conferred upon him. When therefore he at last appears, it is not as a stranger but as a hero whom the spectators are anxious to see. Moreover, seldom is it artistic to introduce all the leading characters at once, lest confusion result and lest the interest be divided. It is more effective to scatter the thrills which should be caused at first sight of important personages. And great care too is shown by the skilled playwright in clearing the stage of characters when they are no longer needed. The actor who has spoken his lines cannot simply walk off; the audience must be told why he is going, and the reason must be plausible.

3. *The ingenuity of the playwright in inventing a complication.* It is not an easy task to invent circumstance after circumstance leading to situations more and more complex, introducing force after force pulling the hero this way and that till the entanglement seems beyond all straightening out. Plays have been written for so many centuries that the more obvious ways of complication are well known. It is therefore a difficult matter to avoid old trails, or so to redress old schemes of entanglement that they have an appearance of novelty. It is an interesting problem, though frequently difficult, especially when several stories are intertwined, to pick out all the complicating elements and determine whether they are old or new.

The complication

4. *The skilful employment of scenes for contrast, for relief, or to foreshadow coming events.* A tragic moment seems the more tragic if it follows one in lighter mood; wickedness stands out more vividly against a background of in-

nocence. There must be breathing spells too; for an uninterrupted series of thrills may become exhausting. These

**Contrasting, foreshadowing** are recognized principles in all forms of story-telling; and so is a third which prohibits violent surprise. A degree of surprise there must be, it is true, and without suspense interest cannot be held; yet it is a common practice to foreshadow dramatic moments, thereby preparing for what is coming.

5. *Ingenuity in constructing the grand climax.* Every scene has its element of suspense and surprise; every act is in structure a little play by itself, with **The climax** tragic moments rising in interest to a supreme moment near or at the end. But one of the most trying tests of a playwright's power is his ability to invent a supreme situation, novel, inevitable because of what has gone before, in a way combining or focusing all the dramatic crises of earlier scenes—a trying situation where for an instant the fate of the hero hangs in balance. It is the final “tying of the knot,” without which a play fails to be a play.

6. *Skill in handling the resolution or falling action.* It is not always an easy matter to sustain interest as a play **The resolution** nears its close. The skilled playwright “unravels his knot” rapidly, climax following climax in quick succession, the suspense strongly maintained till the final revelation is made—a conclusion growing naturally out of all that had gone before, satisfying “poetic justice,” and gratifying fully the curiosity first aroused in the opening scenes.

7. *Skill in adapting the play to stage requirements.* Al- **Stage requirements** though a matter of great practical importance, this topic cannot be treated in detail. It will suffice, perhaps, to observe that there are many incidents inappropriate for stage representa-

tion, that time is required for shifting scenery and for changing costumes—matters too often overlooked by inexperienced writers.

Difficult as it is to invent a good plot, it requires greater genius to create people to do and say the things that the plot calls for. A considerable part of the time bestowed by the student upon Shakespeare's plays is devoted, very properly, to his characters. Here are a few points to observe:

**Study of  
characters**

1. *Whether the play calls for careful delineation of character.* In some cases, notably in light comedy and farce, characters may be of secondary importance.

The real interest centers in clever situations sure to be remembered long after characters are forgotten. Other plays present quite the reverse: a series of incidents of little moment in themselves and quickly forgotten, yet serving to throw a strong light upon some central figure, a character never to be forgotten. In great plays, both these elements are present.

**Character  
delineation**

2. *Number and range of characters.* There are dramatists who, though authors of many plays, have created few characters. Of two or three types they may be masters; beyond this limited field their art fails them. In marked contrast is Shakespeare, whose creations range from kings to beggars and knaves, from decrepit age to youth, no two characters alike, a vast company most of whom seem as real to us as the people we meet daily, so strongly are they individualized. And among them are many heroic minds, and strong, attractive personalities. At the conclusion of a modern play, we sometimes feel that though the hours have passed pleasantly, the characters whose words we have listened to are, after all, rather ordinary and weak. There are weak and commonplace figures in Shakespeare's

**Number and  
range of  
characters**

stage world, but most of them are strongly imagined, and every play contains a few characters whom we recognize as being of no common mould. They are notable specimens of humanity.

3. *Whether the characters are true to life, always acting consistently, or mere puppets—stock, conventional figures.*

**Reality of characters**

A very little play-going is sufficient to convince one that perhaps the majority of characters in modern drama are but stock figures—conventional heroes and heroines and villains, conventional butlers and maids, conventional dowagers, conventional uncles from India, whom we quickly recognize as each makes his entrance and proceeds with time-worn “business,” for all the world like similar characters in story-books. And there are inconsistent characters whose words and actions, as the play proceeds, do not ring true to their individualities as set forth in the earlier part of the play. They lead us to suppose that the dramatist has not imaged them clearly in his mind, or that he is not sufficiently observant of human nature to know how a given disposition acts under this condition and that. Or perhaps all is due to indolence; for truthful portrayals call for hard thinking.

4. *Whether the characters develop as a result of the complex influences set forth in the play.* The Shylock whom Portia

**Development of characters**

outwits is a different man from the cunning money-lender who furnished Antonio with three thousand ducats. How wonderful, yet how consistent, is the change in Macbeth as he is pushed from crime to crime after killing Duncan! But there are plays where no change in character is noticeable, and others in which the changes are so sudden or inexplicable that they run counter to truth. They fail to convince.

5. *Whether the dialogue is natural.* In modern drama an attempt is made to make characters talk naturally, as people do off the stage. Even soliloquy and "asides" are in disfavor because unnatural. **The dialogue**

On the other hand it is true, as someone has remarked, that "No person in real life would talk as Shakespeare or any other great dramatist makes them [characters] talk." It is well to think of these two opposing views when studying plays, noting whether each dramatist considered holds strictly to realism or allows himself some degree of latitude.

Here are a few questions such as are commonly used in classroom. They are given with the thought that they may prove convenient to those who wish to test in a general way the thoroughness with which a drama has been read. **General questions**

### Plot

*here*  
Where did the dramatist find it? Is it made up of one story or of several? If of several, are all neatly intertwined, or does each story stand out so independently that interest is divided? Is the story quiet, or full of thrilling incidents? Does it stir the emotions deeply? If you were preparing an illustrated edition of the play, what scenes would you select for pictorial representation? Does the play picture real life or ideal life? Is everything in it probable or merely possible? Does the play represent a conflict between two characters, one good and the other bad? Is it the story of a downfall due to moral weakness? Does the action grow out of a misunderstanding? Are the characters represented as driven inevitably to disaster through the workings of a fate or destiny beyond their control? Does accident or chance play an important part?

Is there much to be explained concerning what happened previous to the moment at which the story opens? Is the explanatory matter introduced all at once, or a little at a time as needed? Is anything left to be implied? Can you determine the moment at which the "inciting force" becomes active? Locate the climax. Does the play move rapidly? Is the entanglement

preceding the climax extremely complicated? Is the disentanglement following the climax rapid? Were you able to guess in advance any parts of the story? Is the ending satisfactory from the standpoint of justice? Find, if you can, (a) a scene mainly explanatory, (b) an incident which does not occur on the stage but is reported by a character, (c) an apparently unnecessary scene, (d) two scenes which might be united or transposed, (e) a scene introduced for relief between tragic moments, (f) a quiet scene serving as background to a tragic moment, (g) a scene serving mainly to bring out traits of character, (h) a scene foreshadowing an event which otherwise would cause too great surprise. Justify the division of the play into acts, showing that each act possesses unity and accomplishes a definite purpose. Try to condense each scene into a sentence or two; afterwards, try to condense each act in a similar way; then attempt to state the entire plot in not more than two hundred words.

#### CHARACTERS

Many or few? Noble or commonplace? Many different types or few? Conventional, real, or ideal? An out-and-out villain? hero? heroine? Any character serving mainly as fun-maker? as foil to some other character? Any belonging merely to the background? Any unnecessary? Which ones should be classed as principal and which as subordinate? How many call for great acting?

How are the characters introduced? Are they recognizable by their dress, by tricks of speech or manner, or by strongly marked individuality? Is character revealed by what the individual does, by what he says, or by the impression he makes on others? Do the characters always act consistently and from sufficient motives? Do they change as the action proceeds, or are they the same when the curtain falls as when the action of the play begins? Are there many long speeches, or is the dialogue rapid? Are "asides" common? Is there much soliloquy? Do all the characters speak in a natural way, or do all talk alike and have a "splendid manner of saying things"? What is the dramatist's method of getting his characters off the stage?

Make a special study of some one character, picking out all the passages in the play where he is in any way concerned. Try to put yourself in his place and imagine his emotions at each crisis,



his facial expression, and his actions. Determine, if you can, the following: (a) his age, (b) his personal appearance, including dress, (c) his leading qualities, (d) his prevailing motive, (e) the purpose he serves in the dramatist's plan.

### SETTING

How many different scenes or stage-settings does the play require? Does the play call for elaborate scenery? Pick out all passages from which the natural background may be inferred? Is a mood of nature, either harmonious or discordant, anywhere used to heighten the dramatic effect? Give careful directions for the preparation of the stage for some important scene. Find one or more passages determining the time of the play. Find passages which establish the duration of the play. Find instances of time deception; that is, instances where the dramatist disguises the fact that there are long intervals between the incidents represented.

### CENTRAL TRUTH, ETC.

Has the play a clearly defined central truth which can be stated in a single sentence? If so, do you think the dramatist began with this truth and built his play around it? Or did he begin with an attractive plot, and as he developed it, did the moral assert itself inevitably? Do you find noble utterances throughout the play—notable passages which the memory cherishes because of their deep meaning? Do you finish the play with the feeling that you have been entertained merely, or that you have had new light thrown on some vexing social problem, or have been given higher ideals, or have been brought face to face with some solemn truth?

Must the play be witnessed to be appreciated, or is its literary charm such that the play may be read as one reads a novel? Is the language simple? vigorous? imaginative? Are there many noble passages? Where is the dramatist greatest, in plot invention, character creation, in his command of language, or in his realizing sense of the great truths of life?

NOTE.—See Appendix for questions on *Macbeth*.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### THE STUDY OF ESSAYS

The charm of the essay lies in its simplicity, directness, and informality. The playwright and the novelist are forbidden by the stern rules of their art to enter the little mimic worlds which they create; we become acquainted with them, if at all, indirectly and through inference. Poetry is, in a sense, artificial; for the poet must follow the rules of rhyme and meter, both foreign to natural speech. Moreover the poet at times becomes so wrapt in his subject, so absorbed in the single desire to give perfect expression to his thought, that he seems almost indifferent to readers, a characteristic which has led one able critic to observe that though we *hear* an oration, we seem merely to *overhear* the words of the poet. But the essayist, employing approximately the informal language of every-day speech, his free expression unhampered by any story-telling requirement or by any rules of versification, addresses his readers directly and often intimately, meeting them face to face, as it were. The voice, the facial expression, and the occasional gesture alone are lacking to make his words as real as those of fireside conversation or table chat.

It is because the essay is thus simple and direct that it is a most profitable form to study. Through such study is acquired the ability to get quickly and thoroughly the substance of such prose as makes up the larger part of all that we read from day to day in newspapers, magazines, and books;

and through observing models more practical than those furnished by poetry and fiction we catch something of the essayist's power of clear and forceful expression. "Whoever," once declared Johnson, "wishes to attain an English style familiar but not coarse, and elegant but not ostentatious, must give his days and nights to the volumes of Addison." And Edward Everett, obviously with this counsel in mind, has said, "If anyone wishes to study a style which possesses the characteristic beauties of Addison, its ease, simplicity, and elegance, with greater accuracy, point, and spirit, let him give his days and nights to the volumes of Irving." This is sound advice, though Addison and Irving are but two among many whose works may be read with profit.

Essays differ so widely in their character that there can be no one scheme of study that is better than all others; but experience has shown that the following is a reasonably good working plan applicable in most cases:

**How to study  
an essay**

*First read the essay somewhat rapidly, with a view to gaining a general idea of what the essay is about and discovering the author's purpose.* Rapid reading of any sort has its value in that it trains the mind to gather information quickly and make sweep-

**Determining  
purpose**

ing surveys calculated to discover the general plan or drift of a work. But its greatest value, in the present instance, is the training it affords in discovering underlying purpose, a necessary step to take at the threshold of all literary study; for surely the worth of a thing cannot be properly estimated before its purpose is apparent. But the essayist's purpose is sometimes hidden. Titles may be vague or misleading. There is very little crockery, for example, in Lamb's *Old China*. Nor can one feel sure even after reading an essay hurriedly from beginning to end that he sees

will. At least we may say that its subject matter cannot be estimated and appraised as we inventory an essay by Bacon or Macaulay.

*Third, study the essay from the art standpoint, making yourself familiar with the writer's craft.* First there is the

**Structure** matter of structure or organization, which is best studied through making topical outlines and trying to determine why this particular arrangement or that is so effective. Some essays, it is true, cannot be thus outlined. Bacon's idea of an essay, for example, was that it should be merely a collection of thoughts on some one topic, not necessarily arranged in logical sequence but clustered like grapes. Many of Addison's essays are so constructed that ingenuity is wasted in an attempt to force them into any conventional introduction-body-conclusion mould. The charm of Lamb's essays lies in part in their conversational inconsequentiality. There are essays, however, that can be analyzed structurally, and all essays of note, even Lamb's, have a discoverable design of some sort, a method of growth which can be described, even though it cannot be represented in outline.

Having studied the structure of the essay as a whole, noting particularly the beginning, the ending, the order in

**Paragraph structure** which items are presented, and the manner in which transitions are made, turn to the paragraphs and study them in the same way.

There must be at least a score of paragraph designs in common use, and each author has a few favorite patterns. Finally study the sentences, noticing the kinds employed, with a view to discovering what is characteristic.

A second line of investigation leads to a study of

**The language** words. Is the language simple? Are the words chosen for their vigor, or for their suggestive quality? Do the words flow smoothly, or

does the author seem to hurl them at the reader? How does the author's use of words differ from your own?

A third line of study concerns all the many devices by which authors make their work attractive—devices for gaining clearness, force, and beauty, in short everything not already mentioned which

**Devices**

comes under the head of literary craftsmanship. The use of the more common figures, such as simile, metaphor, and personification, contrast, suspense, and climax, and many other devices, to point out which would rob the student of the joy of discovery, should be noted.

*Fourth, study the author's personality as revealed in his work.* No matter how clever a craftsman he may be, it is, after all, the writer's individuality which gives life to his words and makes them worth

**The author's  
personality**

reading. The kind of subject that he selects, his attitude toward it, his way of treating it, all reveal his character. The essay, as has been stated, is a very intimate form of expression; we can, if we will, approach very close to the mind and the heart of Addison and Irving and Lamb and Ruskin and others of their class. We should be able, upon completing an essay, to say, "I am better acquainted with the author, not only with his workmanship as a literary artist, but with his temperament and character as an individual. I know a little better what he likes and what he dislikes, what appeals to his fancy, and how his mind works. I have learned to note his manner of expressing himself, characteristic ways of which he may have been wholly or in part unconscious, yet sufficient to distinguish him from all other writers."

The purpose the essay is intended to serve, what the author has to say, his craftsmanship as displayed in his manner of expression, and his personality as revealed through purpose, subject matter,

**General  
questions**

and craftsmanship: these are what we seek when reading an essay in scholarly fashion. Such study involves finding answers to questions like those which follow:

#### PURPOSE

What is the author's purpose in writing—to teach, preach, reform, entertain, or what? Has he a hidden purpose other than the apparent one? Has he a definite goal toward which he would lead the reader by the most direct route, or is he but a saunterer, a gypsy rambler?

#### SUBJECT MATTER

Is the subject matter heavy with thought? Is it made up of many facts? Is it full of fancies? Is it mere chatter? Whatever it may be, is it worthy of ink and paper? Does some one thought or fact or fancy stand out conspicuously, perhaps giving the essay unity? Can you give, in condensed form, the substance of the essay, preserving the sequence adopted by the author? Can you state, in two or three sentences, what gives the essay value, so far as subject matter is concerned? Do you agree with the author in all his views?

#### CRAFTSMANSHIP

Has the essay a well defined plan, or is it merely a rambling affair, inconsequential? If the former, can you display it by means of a topical outline; if the latter, can you define it in two or three terse sentences? Does the logical structure, or the lack of it, contribute to the ease and pleasure of reading? What have you noted in regard to the author's manner of building and joining paragraphs? Is he given to making long sentences? short? simple? involved? dramatic? periodic? balanced? Is he careful to employ transitional phrases, or inclined to omit connectives? Are his sentences smooth-flowing? clear cut and precise? What have you noted in regard to the words employed? Does the vocabulary cover a wide range? Does it seem bookish? Is he fond of unusual words? words suggesting color and sound? Is he attracted by the melody of words? Does he prefer terms conveying precise meanings? Are adjectives plentiful or few? Does he enjoy playing with language, or does he look upon it merely as a practical tool?

Has the author many dramatic devices for gaining or holding attention? Does he employ many figures? Is he fond of climax and contrast? Does he indulge in humor, irony, paradox? Has he epigrammatic power? Does he try to surprise the reader? tantalize him? dazzle him? Is he too fond of displaying his craft, or does he prefer plain statement? Is he most intent on conveying his thought without loss, or upon giving his thought artistic expression? Have you learned anything, through studying the essay, in regard to literary craft—anything that you can employ in your own writing?

#### THE AUTHOR'S PERSONALITY

Judging solely by what the essay reveals, what kind of man is the author? Is he a deep thinker? Is he a castle builder? Has he strong likes and dislikes? What are his prevailing moods? Would he make a good neighbor? an agreeable companion? Do you envy him? Has he traits which you do not admire? Is he a reading man? a man of affairs? Is the charm of the essay in the thought it contains, in the manner in which the thought is expressed, in the author's personality, or in all three?

NOTE.—See Appendix for questions on the *De Coverley papers* and Macaulay's *Life of Samuel Johnson*.

## CHAPTER XIX

### THE STUDY OF POETRY

Poetry, which Coleridge has called "the blossom and fragrance of all human knowledge, human thought, human passions, emotions, language," is, notwithstanding the high place it holds in the realm of letters, least read today of all forms of literature. For proof of this statement we need not turn to the testimony of booksellers and librarians; it is sufficient to note that popular magazines, which survive only through furnishing what the public is willing to buy, print almost no verse. Had we living poets of such rare excellence as Scott, Byron, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Shelley, and Keats, whose works appeared in the earlier half of the nineteenth century, no doubt they would command readers. But these are lacking. We have no Tennyson, no Browning. None have arisen to fill the places left vacant by Bryant, Poe, Longfellow, Whittier, Emerson, Lowell, and Holmes. Our successful authors are writers of fiction, or busy in the fields of history, science, and allied subjects. More and more the demand is for books that may be read for practical purposes, or for mere entertainment and recreation such as are provided by novels and short stories.

The present dearth of great poets explains but in part, however, why poetry-reading is so generally neglected. In some measure, no doubt, the neglect is traceable to the fact that to read poetry as it should be read takes more time and a greater mental effort than most are willing to bestow.

Poetry  
difficult  
to read



How easily, by way of contrast, does the playgoer receive his pleasure! The actors who interpret with voice and gesture the dramatist's every word do nearly all the real work required, and much of the little that remains is attended to by the scene-painter. Playgoing is, or can be made, as lazy a form of recreation as attending a ball game. Novel reading is almost as easy, so clever have our story writers become in the questionable art of so constructing narratives that they cause the reader no fatigue and next to no intellectual exertion.

Very different is the case with poetry-reading. It takes two to make a poem—a poet and a trained, appreciative reader. Or, expressing the idea in another way, the poet's words do not become a poem to me until I have made them mine, and they do not become mine until I have done that which they invite me to do: the thinking, the imagining, the feeling. Even masters like Shakespeare and Milton, whose genius seems heaven-sent, passed through an apprenticeship stage. In much the same manner is it necessary that those who would learn to read poetry with full appreciation submit patiently to disciplinary training.

Training  
necessary

The best way, perhaps, to gain a clear notion of how poetry should be read will be to review certain of its characteristics, taking them up in somewhat the same order that the young reader is likely to be impressed by them.

Characteris-  
tics of poetry

1. *The poet often employs unusual sentence-structure.* A predicate sometimes precedes its subject, modifiers appear out of their natural places, and relatives are widely separated from their antecedents. Note, for example, the opening lines of one of Drummond's sonnets:

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**Characteris-  
tics of poetry**

1. *The poet often employs unusual sentence-structure.* A predicate sometimes precedes its subject, modifiers appear out of their natural places, and relatives are widely separated from their antecedents. Note, for example, the opening lines of one of Drummond's sonnets:

**Unusual  
sentence-  
structure**

Of this fair volume which we World do name  
 If we the sheets and leaves could turn with care,  
 Of Him who it corrects, and did it frame,  
 We clear might read the art and wisdom rare

Although this is not extremely difficult to understand, yet the meaning is somewhat clearer when the sentence is changed to a natural prose sequence thus: *If we could turn with care the sheets and leaves of this fair volume which we do call World, we might read clear the rare art and wisdom of Him who corrects it and did frame it.* But frequently the poet's practice of twisting sentences about is a source of no little trouble. The words do not surrender their meaning without a siege on the part of the reader, who prefers to hurry on as he may when reading ordinary prose. In his impatience he may feel that the poet is purposely obscure, not realizing that unusual sentence arrangement is oftentimes necessary for rhyme and meter, for melody, variety, and emphasis. With practice, however, the difficulty of transposing grows less and less, and increasing pleasure is gained through noting how, by this slight change and that, a passage has been given strength and beauty.

2. *The poet's vocabulary contains unusual words, and also familiar words employed in unusual senses.* This is not strange. Through constant effort to find **Unusual words** terms that express nice shades of thought or feeling and at the same time provide a desired melody, poets not only acquire large vocabularies but become acquainted with the less familiar meanings of common words. It is estimated that Wordsworth, though he believed that the language of poetry should be that of everyday life, employed about 20,000 distinct meanings, a very large number compared with the vocabulary of the average individual. Illustrations of a characteristic so common are

hardly necessary, yet let us note a few examples. Milton speaks of "the rathe primrose," where the prose writer would say the *early* primrose; and of "Meadows trim with daisies pied," employing *pied* rather than the more familiar *variegated*, which contained too many syllables and did not supply the melody that his line needed. A pathetic little lullaby of long ago begins "Come, little babe, come silly soul." *Silly* seems a highly inappropriate term till we learn that one of its earlier meanings is *innocent*. The poet chose it, we may imagine, not alone because it contained the desired number of syllables, but because his ear told him that the soft sound of *l* was appropriate for lullaby music. In the *Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, occurs the expression "silly buckets." Here, plainly, there is no thought of innocence but rather of uselessness. The entire crew, save one poor soul, are dead; how useless are the buckets! Although as a rule it requires but a moment's thought to see what each word means, yet there are cases not a few where it is necessary to linger and still linger, considering with great care the appropriateness of all possible meanings, lest the right significance of a term be lost.

3. *The poet exercises great economy, expressing much in a few words.* A simple illustration of this is the elliptical sentence, or one that is shortened by the omission of words. The pronoun *he* is needed Compactness to make clear the line *Who steals my purse steals trash*, and *like* must be supplied twice in *She moves a goddess, and she looks a queen*. Economy is strikingly shown in the wisdom with which, oftentimes, all save bare essentials are excluded. Note the abrupt beginning of Coleridge's *Rime*:

It is an ancient Mariner,  
And he stoppeth one of three.  
"By thy long gray beard and glittering eye,  
Now wherefore stopp'st thou me?"

“The Bridegroom’s doors are opened wide,  
 And I am next of kin;  
 The guests are met, the feast is set;  
 May’st hear the merry din.”

Stoppeth one of three? Who are they? A novelist might explain in detail, but the poet’s instinct bids him let the reader gather, from the dialogue that follows, the little it is necessary to know. And how brief is his description of the central figure: *ancient Mariner, long gray beard, glittering eye*; a little later, *skinny hand*; and finally, *long, lank, brown*. These twelve words are all that the poem provides and ten of these come indirectly, through the lips of the Wedding Guest. Yet they suffice; the portrait is essentially complete. The *Rime*, it is true, is an imitation of the mediæval ballad, a form of story-telling poetry in which little save bare narrative is given; yet this same power to select merely the essentials is quite as marked in the following bit of description from another of Coleridge’s poems:

Beneath yon birch with silver bark  
 And boughs so pendulous and fair,  
 The brook falls scattered down the rock,  
 And all is mossy there.

Would twenty additional items make the picture clearer? And since it is characteristic of the poet to furnish only that which is needed, does it not follow that poetry must be read with a slowness and an attentiveness not often called for by prose, lest something essential be overlooked?

Frequently economy is exercised through a wise use of descriptive adjectives, or image-making epithets, as in the following lines from Goldsmith’s *Deserted Village*:

How often have I paused on every charm,  
 The *sheltered* cot, the *cultivated* farm,

The *never-failing* brook, the *busy* mill,  
 The *decent* church that topt the neighboring hill,  
 The hawthorn bush, with seats beneath the shade,  
 For *talking* age and *whispering* lovers made!

The magical suggestive or connotative power in words like the seven italicized cannot be fully appreciated till one has tried to replace each with another that will bring to mind a picture equally complete and appropriate.

Many a poem is but a "collection of hints." "Take these," the poet seems to say; "let your imagination play about them. They are sufficient to transmit all that I would have them, if you will but dwell upon them and not hurry along."

Necessity of  
reading slowly

But the young reader too often hurries along none the less, so powerful is the habit of making haste, acquired through years of fiction-skimming. Consequently he loses, often unconsciously, much that the poet has offered.

4. *Poetry abounds in pictures.* It arouses thought and emotion by appealing, through imagination, to the senses. "Listen, feel, taste, smell, but above all, open your eyes and see," the words seem to say to the imagination. There are pictures everywhere, some half-hidden in a single cunning word, others given with minute detail. They flash upon us, or they slowly dawn. The poet loves them; they are the language of his thought. He will not say *about seven-forty-five*, but

Poetry  
sensuous

Nigh upon that hour  
 When the lone hern forgets his melancholy,  
 Lets down his other leg, and stretching dreams  
 Of goodly supper in the distant pool.

He will not say "Along toward night they came to a woods with a pond in the midst of it," but—

So till the dusk that follow'd evensong  
 Rode on the two, reviler and reviled;

Then after one long slope was mounted, saw,  
 Bowl-shaped, thro' tops of many thousand pines  
 A gloomy-gladed hollow slowly sink  
 To westward—in the depths whereof a mere,  
 Round as the red eye of an eagle-owl,  
 Under the half-dead sunset glared.

Ability to read poetry is in large measure merely ability to look at the words which blacken the white page and see rise through them the pictures born in the poet's brain.

5. *Poetry abounds in figures of speech.* It is a mistake to think of simile, metaphor, personification, hyperbole, and the other figures as mere ornaments and frills. They impart beauty and richness, it is true, beyond what we expect in common prose. But they serve very practical ends, marvellously aiding the poet to convey quickly and perfectly, usually through the medium of pictures, his sensations and emotions. What a wonderfully vivid picture is that which Shakespeare gives us of the murdered king, and how much of its vividness is due to figurative language:

Here lay Duncan,  
 His silver skin laced with his golden blood;  
 And his gash'd stabs look'd like a breach in nature  
 For ruin's wasteful entrance.

This is far more than a vivid scene; the lines convey—and how swiftly—the awfulness of the crime. Later in the play, Macbeth's first great crime having led to a second, a third, and many more, till the entire kingdom has turned against its lord, occurs this brief yet wonderfully expressive metaphor:

Now does he feel  
 His secret murders *sticking on his hands*.

All of Shakespeare's plays are crowded with such figures, adding beauty and clearness, furnishing thousands of supplementary pictures, yet contributing an element of



magical swiftness. Sometimes we find in poetry a suggestion of what everyone has experienced, the great difficulty of conveying an impression of our joys and sorrows, which prompts us to exclaim, "I cannot express it; the words will not come!" Shelley, struggling to make us feel the beauty of the skylark's song, finally abandons direct statement and resorts to simile after simile.

What thou art we know not;

What is most like thee?

From rainbow clouds there flow not

Drops so bright to see

As from thy presence showers a rain of melody;—

Like a poet hidden

In the light of thought,

Singing hymns unbidden,

Till the world is wrought

To sympathy with hopes and fears it heeded not:

Like a high-born maiden

In a palace tower,

Soothing her love-laden

Soul in secret hour

With music sweet as love, which overflows her bower:

Like a glow-worm golden

In a dell of dew,

Scattering un beholden

Its ærial hue

Among the flowers and grass, which screen it from the view:

Like a rose embower'd

In its own green leaves,

By warm winds deflower'd,

Till the scent it gives

Makes faint with too much sweet these heavy-winged thieves:

Sound of vernal showers

On the twinkling grass,

Rain-awaken'd flowers,

All that ever was

Joyous, and clear, and fresh, thy music doth surpass.

But figurative language, though its mission is to contribute clearness, force, and beauty, enabling the poet to

**Figures** express much in little and move swiftly  
**sometimes** along, sometimes mystifies young readers.  
**mystifying** Their minds are not quick enough to see instantly the force of a swift metaphor, nor sensitive enough to catch the beauty of appropriate simile. They endeavor to read verse as rapidly as they read prose—try to keep up with the poet, and let so much slip by that often they miss the very best that a poem contains. They have not formed the habit of lingering over beauty-haunted lines, of trying to visualize or *real-ize* each simile picture, of yielding to the invitation presented by many a word to let the imagination wander down this attractive by-path and that.

6. *In poetry the thought is sometimes hidden.* It is veiled, revealed but in dim twilight as if too solemnly beautiful for midday brightness. Or the poet may feel that a little obscurity, a little blinding of the reader, a bit of bewildering labyrinth, heightens the final joy of discovery. "I contain a great truth," one poem seems to say; "look closely, if you would find me." "I too contain a great and beautiful thought," says a second; "but it is veiled, not to be boldly expressed. Read me—let my lines haunt you for a day, a week, a year, and little by little the beauty of the thought will reveal itself." Note this little poem by Tennyson:

**Hidden  
thought**

#### THE FLOWER

Once in a golden hour  
 I cast to earth a seed.  
 Up there came a flower,  
 The people said a weed.  
 To and fro they went  
 Thro' my garden-bower,  
 And muttered discontent,  
 Cursed me and my flower.

Then it grew so tall  
 It wore a crown of light,  
 But thieves from o'er the wall  
 Stole the seed by night;

Sow'd it far and wide  
 By every town and tower,  
 Till all the people cried,  
 'Splendid is the flower.'

Read my little fable;  
 He that runs may read.  
 Most can raise the flowers now,  
 For all have got the seed.

And some are pretty enough,  
 And some are poor indeed;  
 And now again the people  
 Call it but a weed.

The truth which lies hidden in this little fable is not difficult to discover, though its applications are many. But how much more keenly it is felt when given this concrete, storified setting than it would be were it baldly stated in abstract prose. Not so easily discoverable is the thought in the following sonnet by Wordsworth:

Methought I saw the footsteps of a throne  
 Which mists and vapours from mine eyes did shroud—  
 Nor view of who might sit thereon allowed;  
 But all the steps and ground about were strown  
 With sights the ruefullest that flesh and bone  
 Ever put on; a miserable crowd,  
 Sick, hale, old, young, who cried before that cloud,  
 "Thou art our king, O Death! to thee we groan."  
 Those steps I clomb; the mists before me gave  
 Smooth way; and I beheld the face of one  
 Sleeping alone within a mossy cave,  
 With her face up to heaven; that seemed to have  
 Pleasing remembrance of a thought foregone;  
 A lovely Beauty in a summer grave!

7. *Poetry is song.* Poe calls it "the rhythmical creation of beauty." "Sing us," the poet's words seem to say. "I cannot sing," the gentle reader may reply. "Then you can never fully possess us," the words rejoin; "for our beauty is hidden in melody, and those who cannot sing may never reach it!" It is indeed a misfortune that the poet cannot go with his verses, singing them as tradition asserts that the blind Homer sang of Helen of Troy and the wanderings of Ulysses, and as the minstrels of mediæval Europe sang of Beowulf and Roland and King Arthur. The time may come when phonographs will be furnished with records enabling us to listen to the voices of poets, or of readers so skilled that they can reveal the rhythmical beauty of our noblest poems. But even though lacking these aids, the earnest student, no matter how deficient in ear and voice he may judge himself, need not despair; for a measure of success will come through patient endeavor. It is simply a matter of reading, reading, and rereading, aloud when possible, each time striving to bring out a little more of the melody—experimenting as you would were you learning to play an instrumental selection containing none of the customary marks which show where pedals should be used, where the time should be quickened, where retarded, the crescendos and diminuendos without which the rarest music becomes expressionless.

**A study plan** In view of these characteristics, the study of almost any poem may proceed along the following lines:

1. *Read the entire poem slowly, but not critically.*

**Gaining a general impression** The purpose of this first reading is merely to gain a general impression of what the poem is about. It is like ascending an eminence to discover the general course of a

stream and learn toward what larger body its waters are hastening.

2. *Read a second time, more slowly, with a view to making clear whatever was not fully understood in the first superficial reading.* This may call for the reconstruction of a few twisted sentences; the supplying of words omitted from elliptical sentences; a close study of individual words that are strange or appear to hold meanings other than the ordinary ones; the consulting of various handbooks to discover the meaning of allusions not understood. Some poems call for very little study of this kind; the reader can say, as soon as he has run through them for the first time, "All is clear; I understand each word, each sentence." But much of our best poetry, particularly that which takes us back a few centuries, is exceedingly difficult, so difficult that we can hardly do without the notes found in connection with editions specially prepared for use in school.

Studying to understand

3. *Read a third time, still more slowly and with all the senses alert, trying to visualize and make real all that the poem pictures.* This calls into play the imagination, and for those whose imagination is not strong, or who have had little training in this particular kind of exercise, it is difficult work. It involves closing the eyes and asking such questions as these: Am I seeing in clear detail, as if I were an eye witness, what is happening—this tournament, this trial scene, this merry frolic? The hero, central figure in the action,—were I an artist, could I paint him to the author's satisfaction? Do I see the lonely forest, the village green, the crowded city street, or whatever it may be that the lines before me strive to picture?

Visualizing

Such sympathetic exercise of the imagination means far more than merely drifting down the main broad stream of

a poem; it involves tarrying by this little island and that, pointing into quiet coves, and exploring whatever tributaries challenge our fancy. By islands and tributaries are meant memory-haunted, picture-bringing epithets; metaphors at first glance hard and practical yet revealing, when dwelt upon, wonderful beauty; similes that startle and charm through suggesting unsuspected similarities between things remote from one another;—all figurative expressions which for the moment bear us far away as we are sometimes transported by the glimpse of a face in the crowd, the sound of a voice, or even by a half-forgotten fragrance. And since the senses are but five pathways leading to the emotions, this third reading should be an emotional one in which we strive to share with the poet his feelings as he lays them bare directly or through the men and women his art has created. We must lose, for the time being, our own identity and become now Marmion, now Queen Guinevere, now Shylock, now the poet himself, sympathetically identifying ourselves with each, even to a greater degree than the actor identifies himself with the character whom he impersonates.

4. *Ponder the thought.* The purpose of many a short poem is solely to set forth in attractive form some great truth. It is the nucleus, the one thing essential, often clearly expressed in an unforgettable line, more often veiled or but hinted at. Sometimes we find not one, but a community of related truths; and in a long poem there may be, in addition to some one central truth, many others not closely related—lines of wisdom standing boldly forth, kernels of thought hidden away in pregnant words, such as we should expect of the poet no matter what his theme may be, for poets are truth-revealers. It is the mission of poetry to make men

**Imagination  
necessary**

**Pondering  
the thought**

think. To find the thought, then, and having found, to ponder it, is an important step in the study of all poetry.

5. *Study the poet's art.* We may not believe, with Professor Scott, that an essential difference between prose and poetry is that the former is "expression for communication's sake," the latter "communication for expression's sake,"

Studying the  
poet's art

yet we cannot but feel that the charm of poetry is largely due to skilful expression; and there is pleasure and profit in studying a poem with a view to discovering by what art-devices this passage and that is made attractive. This is a line of study more appropriate for older readers, it is true, yet there are many little things which young readers may train themselves to observe. They can master the mechanics of the simpler forms of versification and accustom themselves to note the skill with which poets abide by set rules, and how by departing now and then from these rules they enhance the beauty of their lines. They can study poem-structure, often an element of charm, just as they study essay-structure. They can note the use of contrast, suspense, and other devices common in all forms of literature. They can study the poet's use of figurative language. They can train themselves to pick out and admire well chosen words and phrases happily turned. Yet it is an endless quest, this search for secret sources of the poet's power, to be pursued year after year as one journeys deeper and deeper into the realm of poesy, and because endless, most attractive. Before the reader always lies the possible joy of some fresh discovery.

6. *Finally, read the poem aloud, many times, earnestly endeavoring to give each line its intended melody, at the same time striving to bring out the shades of thought and feeling.* This exercise is very sure to

Reading aloud

have a double effect. In the first place, it lays bare unexpected beauties—the fine adjustment of rhythm to thought and feeling, the subtlety of suggestion oftentimes conveyed by the mere sound of words, and many a grace all unperceived till brought out by the voice. In the second place, it would be strange if this attempt to interpret orally did not convince the reader that, notwithstanding faithful study, many things have been overlooked; there are still parts imperfectly understood, parts not clearly visualized and emotionally felt.

Poetry assumes so many forms that it is difficult, if not impossible, to invent a set of questions universally appropriate. Many of the questions found at the close of the chapters on fiction, drama, and the essay apply reasonably well to poems that are cast in story-telling, dramatic, or essay form. Here are a few additional ones:

**General questions**

FIRST IMPRESSIONS, ETC.

What kind of poetry—dramatic, lyric, etc.—is this? Is the structure simple? What, in general, is the purpose of the poem? Did you gain, from your first reading, a favorable impression? What new impressions did you get from more careful study?

LANGUAGE, ALLUSIONS, ETC.

What have you noticed in regard to the language employed? Is it simple, like that of every-day speech? Are there many bookish words? archaic or obsolete expressions? words employed in unusual senses? Is ellipsis common? Are many of the sentences twisted out of their natural grammatical order? Are there many connotative (subtly suggestive) words? Can you find words evidently chosen because their sound suggests the sense? Does the poet express much in few words—is he epigrammatic, or are his lines thin? Is the language highly figurative? Does any one kind of figure predominate? Are the figures hackneyed, conventional, or fresh? Are many of them derived from nature? from reading? For what purpose, in the main, are they employed?



Are there many allusions to history or to literature? Compare this poem with some other, as regards language, etc.

#### THE APPEAL TO THE SENSES

What have you noticed in regard to the appeal that the poem makes to the senses? Are the poet's pictures given in detail, or merely "flashed"? Pick out, if you can find them, a few words or phrases suggesting color and a few suggesting sound. Compare with some other poem in regard to sense appeal.

#### THE THOUGHT

Is it a thoughtful poem, appealing mainly to the intellect, or is its appeal to the emotions? If thoughtful, does some one thought dominate all? Is the thought difficult to grasp? Is it clearly expressed, or veiled? Does some one line contain the central idea? Do you recall any other poem in which the same thought appears?

#### THE POET'S ART

Is the poem melodious? Pick out a few of the more musical lines. Have you noticed any devices by which the poet imparts melody? What is the scheme of versification? Is the poet a skilled versifier? What dramatic devices have you noted? Finally, what in the author's skill as a craftsman do you admire most?

#### THE AUTHOR'S PERSONALITY

Does the poem reveal personality? Is the poet optimistic? pessimistic? thoughtful? religious? sentimental? emotional? sympathetic? playful? If none of these adjectives apply, what others can you suggest? Is he a close student of human nature? a reader? a scholar? fond of nature? What in his personality is most attractive? What other poet do you like better, and why?

NOTE.—See Appendix for questions on *The Lady of the Lake*, *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso*, and *Elegy in a Country Churchyard*.

#### EXERCISES: VERSIFICATION \*

1 Mark the scansion of the following lines, separating the feet by means of dividing lines and placing the accent

\* In the Appendix will be found a section devoted to versification.

mark over the stressed syllables. Give each line its proper metrical name.

1. The lone and level sands stretch far away.
2. She walks in beauty, like the night.
3. Trust no Future, howe'er pleasant!
4. I die, I faint, I fail!
5. The City's voice itself is soft like Solitude's.
6. I must finish my journey alone.
7. 'Tis but as ivy-leaves around the ruin'd turret wreath.
8. Where the heart is, let the brain lie also.
9. Take her up tenderly.
10. With the dew on his brow and the rust on his mail.
11. Purple gauzes, golden hazes, liquid mazes.

2 Mark the scansion of the following lines. Place a caret ( ^ ) wherever a foot seems defective because lacking an unaccented syllable, and indicate by means of an ^ where you think syllables should be run together. In describing a line, remember that the prevailing foot—the foot occurring most frequently—determines the name of the line.

1. Gather ye rose-buds while ye may,  
Old Time is still a-flying.
2. The sea grows stormy, the little ones moan.
3. When shall we three meet again  
In thunder, lightning, or in rain?
4. Flow gently, sweet Afton, among thy green braes;  
Flow gently, I'll sing thee a song in thy praise.
5. Down, down, down!  
Down to the depths of the sea!
6. To ivy-crownéd Bacchus bore.
7. Glamis thou art, and Cawdor, and shalt be  
What thou art promised. Yet do I fear thy nature;  
It is too full o' the milk of human kindness  
To catch the nearest way.

8. Break, break, break  
On thy cold gray stones, O Sea.
9. This is the forest primeval; but where are the hearts that  
beneath it  
Leaped like a roe, when he hears in the woodland the voice  
of the huntsman?
10.                                   till a rout of saucy boys  
Brake on us at our books, and marred our peace,  
Masked like our maids, blustering I know not what  
Of insolence and love.

**3** Which of the following rhymes are good, which imperfect yet allowable, and which unquestionably bad?

Shade, glade; blood, wood; appearance, year hence; stept, wept; death, illumineth; story, hoary; rude, wood; rock thee, mock thee; fled, dread; untwistable, Christabel; figure, bigger; wild, child; dizziness, business; ranunculus, Tommy-make-room-for-your-Uncle us; seeming, dreaming; shower, dower; tune, moon; dumb, lyceum; knight, night; gusht, dust; daughter, slaughter; wishes, kisses; come, sung; rafter, laughter; ladies, babies; religion, pigeon; river, ever; philosopher, loss of her; rely, cry; Lucifer, news of her; thine, entwine; wind, find; robin, sobbing; heaven, given.

**4** Make a list of all the rhymes to be found in five consecutive pages of Byron's poetry; then study these rhymes with a view to discovering characteristics. Do the same with Coleridge, Scott, or Browning.

**5** Let the members of the class compete to see who can in five minutes think of the greatest number of words rhyming with a word to be announced by the instructor.

**6** Note the questionable rhymes in the following passages. Then, lest the impression be gained that technically perfect rhyme alone is found in poetry admitted good, study five pages from some great poet, with this one thing in mind.

- (a) A charming place beneath the grates,  
For roasting chestnuts and potatoes.
- (b) Some ask'd me where the rubies grew;  
And nothing did I say,  
But with my fingers pointed to  
The lips of Julia.
- (c) Everywhere, be it dry or wet,  
And market-night in the Haymarket.
- (d) Here lies our sovereign lord the king,  
Whose word no man relied on;  
Who never said a foolish thing,  
And never did a wise one.

7 Mark the scansion of the following, and describe each stanza:

- So nigh is grandeur to our dust,  
So near is God to man,  
When Duty whispers low, *Thou must*,  
The Youth replies, *I can*.  
—EMERSON
- In the spring a fuller crimson comes upon the robin's  
breast;  
In the spring the wanton lapwing gets himself another  
crest;  
In the spring a livelier iris changes on the burnish'd dove;  
In the spring a young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts  
of love.  
—TENNYSON
- Like the swell of some sweet tune,  
Morning rises into noon,  
May glides onward into June.  
—LONGFELLOW
- Then I cast loose my buffcoat, each holster let fall,  
Shook off both my jack-boots, let go belt and all,  
Stood up in the stirrups, leaned, patted his ear,  
Called my Roland his pet-name, my horse without peer;  
Clapped my hands, laughed and sang, any noise, bad or  
good  
Till at length into Aix Roland galloped and stood.  
—BROWNING

5. What heroes from the woodland sprung,  
 When, through the fresh-awakened land,  
 The thrilling cry of freedom rung,  
 And to the work of warfare strung  
 The yeoman's iron hand!  
 —BRYANT
6. She walks in beauty, like the night  
 Of cloudless climes and starry skies;  
 And all that's best of dark and bright  
 Meet in her aspect and her eyes:  
 Thus mellow'd to that tender light  
 Which heaven to gaudy day denies.  
 —BYRON
7. In a far country that I cannot name  
 And on a year long ages past away,  
 A King there dwelt, in rest and ease and fame,  
 And richer than the Emperor is today:  
 The very thought of what this man might say  
 From dusk to dawn kept many a lord awake;  
 For fear of him did many a great man quake.  
 —WILLIAM MORRIS
8. A casement high and triple-arch'd there was  
 All garlanded with carven imageries  
 Of fruits, and flowers, and bunches of knot-grass,  
 And diamonded with panes of quaint device,  
 Innumerable of stains and splendid dyes,  
 As are the tiger-moth's deep-damask'd wings;  
 And in the midst, 'mong thousand heraldries,  
 And twilight saints, and dim emblazonings,  
 A shielded scutcheon blush'd with blood of queens and kings.  
 —KEATS
9. What is a sonnet? 'Tis a pearly shell  
 That murmurs of the far-off murmuring sea,  
 A precious jewel carved most curiously;  
 It is a little picture painted well.  
 What is a sonnet? 'Tis the tear that fell  
 From a great poet's hidden ecstasy;  
 A two-edged sword, a star, a song—ah me!  
 Sometimes a heavy tolling funeral bell.

This was the flame that shook with Dante's breath,  
 The solemn organ whereon Milton played,  
 And the clear glass where Shakespeare's shadow falls:  
 A sea that is—beware who ventureth!  
 For like a fiord the narrow floor is laid  
 Deep as mid-ocean to sheer mountain walls.\*

—R. W. GILDER

10. Blow, blow, thou winter wind,  
 Thou art not so unkind  
 As man's ingratitude;  
 Thy tooth is not so keen  
 Because thou art not seen,  
 Although thy breath be rude.

Heigh ho! sing heigh ho! unto the green holly.  
 Most friendship is feigning, most loving mere folly;  
 Then, heigh ho! the holly!  
 This life is most jolly.

—SHAKESPEARE

11. Fair Daffodils, we weep to see  
 You haste away so soon;  
 As yet the early risen Sun  
 Has not attained his noon.  
 Stay, stay,  
 Until the hasting day  
 Has run  
 But to the even-song;  
 And having pray'd together, we  
 Will go with you along.

—HERRICK

8 Find, in any volume by a standard poet—Longfellow, Tennyson, Browning, or Wordsworth for example—five different stanza forms.

9 Find, wherever you can, examples of five different kinds of four line stanzas.

10 Opening any volume of poetry, try to discover why some lines are indented, others not.

11 Here are passages to study. Point out examples of onomatopœia, and determine where it is employed most

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successfully. Point out lines in which the poet appears to be seeking melody by repetition of some letter or sound; that is, point out examples of alliteration. Find lines in which the vowels form harmonious sequence. Find passages in which the *swing* of the lines suggests the sense.

1. The sound must seem an echo of the sense:  
Soft is the strain when Zephyr gently blows,  
And the smooth stream in smoother numbers flows;  
But when loud surges lash the sounding shore,  
When Ajax strives some rock's vast weight to throw,  
The line too labors, and the words move slow.  
Not so, when swift Camilla scours the plain,  
Flies o'er th' unbending corn, and skims along the main.  
—POPE
2. A woman weeping for her murdered mate  
Was cared as much for as a summer shower.  
—TENNYSON
3. And ever, against eating cares,  
Lap me in soft Lydian airs  
Married to immortal verse.  
—MILTON
4. And on the tawny sands and shelves  
Trip the pert fairies and the dapper elves. —MILTON
5. While the great organ almost burst his pipes,  
Groaning for power, and rolling thro' the court  
A long melodious thunder. —TENNYSON
6. There is a gentle nymph not far from hence,  
That with moist curb sways the smooth Severn stream.  
—MILTON
7. Hear the sledges with the bells,  
Silver bells!  
What a world of merriment their melody foretells!  
How they tinkle, tinkle, tinkle,  
In the icy air of night!  
While the stars, that over sprinkle  
All the heavens, seem to twinkle  
With a crystalline delight

Keeping time, time, time,  
 In a sort of Runic rhyme,  
 To the tintinnabulation that so musically wells—  
 From the bells, bells, bells, bells,  
 Bells, bells, bells—  
 From the jingling and the tingling of the bells.

—POE

8. Sweet bird, that shunn'st the noise of folly,  
 Most musical, most melancholy! —MILTON
9. She was pinched and pulled, she said,  
 And he, by Friar's lantern led,  
 Tells how the drudging goblin sweat  
 To earn his cream bowl duly set,  
 When in one night, ere glimpse of morn,  
 His shadowy flail hath threshed the corn  
 That ten day-laborers could not end;  
 Then lies him down, the lubber fiend,  
 And, stretched out all thè chimney's length,  
 Basks at the fire his hairy strength,  
 And crop-full out of door he flings  
 Ere the first cock his matin rings.  
 Thus done the tales, to bed they creep,  
 By whispering winds soon lulled asleep. —MILTON
10. The long low dune and lazy plunging sea. —TENNYSON
11. Her low firm voice and tender government. —TENNYSON
12. The broad ambrosial aisles of lofty lime  
 Made noise with bees and breeze from end to end. —TENNYSON
13. Now, while they spake, I saw my father's face  
 Grow long and troubled, like a rising moon,  
 Inflamed with wrath; he started on his feet,  
 Tore the king's letter, snowed it down, and rent  
 The wonder of the loom thro' warp and woof  
 From skirt to skirt; and at the last he sware



That he would send a hundred thousand men,  
 And bring her in a whirlwind; then he chewed  
 The thrice-turned cud of wrath, and cooked his spleen,  
 Communing with his captains of the war.

—TENNYSON

14. All day within the dreamy house,  
 The doors upon their hinges creak'd;  
 The blue fly sung in the pane; the mouse  
 Behind the mouldering wainscot shriek'd  
 Or from the crevice peer'd about.
15. There comes across the waves' tumultuous roar  
 The wolf's long howl from Oonalaska's shore.  
 —CAMPBELL
16. Blow, blow, blow, set the wild echoes flying—  
 Answer, echoes, answer, dying, dying, dying.  
 —TENNYSON
17. Clang battle axe, and flash brand! Let the King reign.  
 —TENNYSON
18. Now fades the glimmering landscape on the sight,  
 And all the air a solemn stillness holds,  
 Save where the beetle wheels his droning flight,  
 And drowsy tinklings lull the distant folds. —GRAY
19. Sonorous metal breathing martial sound. —MILTON
20. O Swallow, Swallow, flying, flying South,  
 Fly to her, and fall upon her gilded eaves,  
 And tell her, tell her what I tell to thee. —TENNYSON
21. O Tite tute Tati tibi tanta tyranne tulisti.
22. Row, vassals, row, for the pride of the Highlands!  
 Stretch to your oars, for the ever-green Pine!  
 O, that the rosebud that graces yon islands  
 Were wreathed in a garland around him to twine!  
 O that some seedling gem,  
 Worthy such noble stem,

Honor'd and bless'd in their shadow might grow!  
 Loud should Clan-Alpine then  
 Ring from her deepmost glen,  
 "Roderigh, Vich Alpine dhu, ho! ierroe!" —SCOTT

## EXERCISES: FIGURES OF SPEECH \*

1 Here are similes to study. In each case name the two things compared, the point of resemblance, and the word used to denote likeness. Which similes present pictures? Which, if any, suggest stories? Which take you to nature? to books? Which, if any, seem commonplace? Consider in each case whether the comparison is appropriate. One of the quotations has been called "the most majestic simile in modern poetry"; can you find it? What figures other than simile do you discover?

1. Burns Marmion's swarthy cheek like fire. —SCOTT
2. I wandered lonely as a cloud  
 That floats on high o'er vales and hills.—WORDSWORTH
3. Words are like leaves; and where they most abound  
 Much fruit of sense beneath is rarely found. —POPE
4. I fear thee, ancient Mariner!  
 I fear thy skinny hand!  
 And thou art long, and lank, and brown,  
 As is the ribbed sea-sand. —COLERIDGE
5. It [the Nile] flows through old, hush Egypt and its sands  
 Like some grave mighty thought, threading a stream.  
 —HUNT
6. Between two worlds life hovers like a star,  
 Twixt night and morn, upon the horizon's verge.  
 —BYRON

\* In the Appendix will be found a section devoted to figures of speech.

7. In broad daylight, and at noon,  
 Yesterday I saw the moon  
 Sailing high, but faint and white,  
 As a schoolboy's paper kite. —LONGFELLOW

8.   and the women sung  
 Between the rougher voices of the men,  
 Like linnets in the pauses of the wind. —TENNYSON

9.   if I but wave this wand,  
 Your nerves are all chain'd up in alabaster,  
 And you a statue, or as Daphne was,  
 Root-bound, that fled Apollo. —MILTON

10. And fast through the midnight dark and drear,  
 Through the whistling sleet and snow,  
 Like a sheeted ghost the vessel swept  
 Tow'rds the reef of Norman's Woe. —LONGFELLOW

11. Life, like a dome of many-colored glass,  
 Stains the white radiance of eternity. —SHELLEY

12. Thus Satan, talking to his nearest mate,  
 With head uplift above the wave, and eyes  
 That sparkling blazed; his other parts besides  
 Prone on the flood, extended long and large,  
 Lay floating many a rood, in bulk as huge  
 As whom the fables name of monstrous size,  
 Titanian or Earth-born, that warred on Jove,  
 Briareos or Typhon, whom the den  
 By ancient Tarsus held, or that sea-beast  
 Leviathan, which God of all his works  
 Created hugest that swim the ocean-stream.  
 Him, haply slumbering on the Norway foam,  
 The pilot of some small, night-foundered skiff,  
 Deeming some island, oft, as seamen tell,  
 With fixed anchor in his scaly rind,  
 Moors by his side under the lea, while night  
 Invests the sea, and wished morn delays. —MILTON

13. But Beauty, like the fair Hesperian tree  
 Laden with blooming gold, had need the guard  
 Of dragon watch with unenchanted eye,  
 To save her blossoms and defend her fruit  
 From the rash hand of bold Incontinence. —MILTON
14. The princes applaud with a furious joy;  
 And the King seized a flambeau with zeal to destroy.  
 Thais led the way  
 To light him to his prey,  
 And like another Helen, fired another Troy! —DRYDEN

2 Study the following examples of metaphor and personification, in each case naming the two things compared. Expand each metaphor, if possible, into a simile. Which suggest pictures? Do any suggest stories? Which do you like best? What figures other than metaphor and personification do you discover?

1. We fail!  
 But screw your courage to the sticking-place,  
 And we'll not fail. —SHAKESPEARE
2. Give me three days to melt her fancy. —TENNYSON
3. The panting City cried to the Sea,  
 "I am faint with heat,—oh breathe on me!"  
 —LONGFELLOW
4. and betwixt them blossomed up  
 From out a common vein of memory  
 Sweet household talk. —TENNYSON
5. Fear at my heart, as at a cup,  
 My life-blood seemed to sip!  
 —COLERIDGE
6. I heard the trailing garments of the Night  
 Sweep through her marble halls!  
 I saw her sable skirts all fringed with light  
 From the celestial walls. —LONGFELLOW

7. Their hands and faces were all badged with blood.  
—SHAKESPEARE
8. Sir, I was courteous, every phrase well-oiled.  
—TENNYSON
9.                               those linen cheeks of thine  
Are counsellors to fear.                               —SHAKESPEARE
10. St. Agnes' Eve—Ah, bitter chill it was!                               —KEATS
11. Red Battle stamped his foot, and nations felt the shock.  
—BYRON
12. And peace went with them one and all,  
    And each calm pillow spread;  
But guilt was my grim chamberlain,  
    That lighted me to bed;  
And drew my midnight curtains round  
    With fingers bloody red!                               —HOOD
13. Day hath put on his jacket, and around  
His burning bosom buttoned it with stars.  
Here will I lay me on the velvet grass,  
That is like a padding to earth's meagre ribs,  
And hold communion with the things about me.  
Ah me! how lovely is the golden braid  
That binds the skirt of night's descending robe!  
The thin leaves, quivering on their silken threads,  
Do make a music like to rustling satin,  
As the light breezes smooth their downy nap.

—HOLMES

**3** Here are examples of many kinds of figures and rhetorical devices employed to gain clearness, force, and beauty. Name each figure or device, and consider carefully whether it is effective.

1. Sand-strewn caverns, cool and deep,  
Where the winds are all asleep; . . .  
Where great whales come sailing by,  
Sail and sail, with unshut eye,  
Round the world for ever and aye.                               —ARNOLD

2. Methought I heard a voice cry "Sleep no more!  
Macbeth does murder sleep,—the innocent sleep,  
Sleep that knits up the ravell'd sleeve of care,  
The death of each day's life, sore labor's bath,  
Balm of hurt minds, great nature's second course,  
Chief nourisher in life's feast." —SHAKESPEARE
3. Oh, thou art fairer than the evening air,  
Clad in the beauty of a thousand stars.  
—MARLOWE
4. I will kill thee a hundred and fifty ways.  
—SHAKESPEARE
5. Full fifty thousand muskets bright  
Led by old warriors trained in fight. —CROKER
6. O for a beaker full of the warm South. —KEATS
7. God made the country, and man made the town.  
—COWPER
8. Like the leaves of the forest when summer is green,  
That host with their banners at sunset were seen;  
Like the leaves of the forest when autumn has blown,  
That host on the morrow lay withered and strown.  
—BYRON
9. Full many a glorious morning have I seen  
Flatter the mountain-top with sovereign eye.  
—SHAKESPEARE
10. Thus march'd the chief, tremendous as a god;  
Grimly he smiled; earth trembled as he strode. —POPE
11. A thousand years their cloudy wings expand  
Around me. —BYRON
12. Was this the face that launched a thousand ships  
And burnt the topless towers of Ilium?—  
Sweet Helen, make me immortal with a kiss.  
—MARLOWE
13. Wee, modest, crimson-tippèd flow'r,  
Thou's met me in an evil hour;

For I maun crush amang the stoure  
 Thy slender stem.

To spare thee now is past my pow'r,  
 Thou bonnie gem.

—BURNS

14. Hark! a shout—a crash—a groan.

—ARNOLD

15. Stand! the ground's your own, my braves!

Will you give it up to slaves?

Will you look for greener graves?

Hope ye mercy still?

What's the mercy despots feel?

Hear it in that battle-peal!

Read it in yon bristling steel!

Ask it—ye who will.

—PIERPONT

16. Some lie before the churchyard stone,

And some before the speaker.

—PRAED

17. The king amidst the mournful circle rose;

Down his wan cheek a briny torrent flows.

—POPE

18. Half a league, half a league,

Half a league onward,

All in the valley of Death

Rode the six hundred.

—TENNYSON

19. Fair laughs the moon, and soft the zephyr blows,

While proudly riding o'er the azure realm,

In gallant trim the gilded vessel goes,

Youth at the prow, and Pleasure at the helm;

Regardless of the sweeping whirlwind's sway,

That, hush'd in grim repose, expects his evening prey.

—GRAY

20. Here while the courtier glitters in brocade,

There the pale artist plies the sickly trade;

Here where the proud their long-drawn pomp display,

There the black gibbet glooms beside the way.

—GOLDSMITH

21. What has the gray-hair'd prisoner done?  
 Has murder stained his hands with gore?  
 Not so. His crime's a fouler one—  
 God made the old man poor. —WHITTIER
22. Her little feet beneath her petticoat  
 Like little mice stole in and out,  
 As if they feared the light. —SUCKLING
23. Nay, could their numbers countervail the stars,  
 Or ever-drizzling drops of April showers,  
 Or wither'd leaves that autumn shaketh down,  
 Yet would the Soldan by his conquering power  
 So scatter and consume them in his rage  
 That not a man should live to rue their fall.  
 —MARLOWE
24. And Earl Doorm  
 Struck with a knife's haft hard against the board,  
 And call'd for flesh and wine to feed his spears.  
 —TENNYSON
25. It will have blood; they say blood will have blood.  
 —SHAKESPEARE
26. There was a sound of revelry by night,  
 And Belgium's capital had gather'd then  
 Her Beauty and her Chivalry, and bright  
 The lamps shone o'er fair women and brave men;  
 A thousand hearts beat happily; and when  
 Music arose with its voluptuous swell,  
 Soft eyes look'd love to eyes which spake again,  
 And all went merry as a wedding bell;  
 But hush! hark! a deep sound strikes like a rising knell!
- Did ye not hear it?—No; 'twas but the wind,  
 Or the car rattling o'er the stony street;  
 On with the dance! let joy be unconfined;  
 No sleep till morn, when Youth and Pleasure meet  
 To chase the glowing Hours with flying feet—  
 But hark!—that heavy sound breaks in once more,



As if the clouds its echo would repeat;  
 And nearer, clearer, deadlier than before!  
 Arm! Arm! it is—it is—the cannon's opening roar.

—BYRON

27. As some rich woman, on a winter's morn,  
 Eyes through her silken curtains the poor drudge  
 Who with numb blacken'd fingers makes her fire—  
 At cock-crow, on a starlit winter's morn,  
 When the frost flowers the whiten'd window-panes—  
 And wonders how she lives, and what the thoughts  
 Of that poor drudge may be; so Rustom eyed  
 The unknown adventurous Youth, who from afar  
 Came seeking Rustom, and defying forth  
 All the most valiant chiefs; long he perused  
 His spirited air, and wonder'd who he was. —ARNOLD

4 Study the prose passages found in the chapter on Clearness, picking out and naming the figures.

5 Do the same with the passages found in the chapter on Force.

6 Read an editorial column in the morning paper and pick out the figures. Do the same with a column from the sporting page.

7 Study two or three pages in some textbook—a history or an astronomy, for example—searching carefully for figures.

8 Burns is preëminently a song-writer. Search through four pages of his poetry for figures. The songs found in Tennyson's *The Princess* are very beautiful; search them too for figures.

9 Find, wherever you can, examples of at least four kinds of figures.

10 Here are two examples of hyperbole. Which is better, and why?

- (a) Oh maid! thou art so beauteous  
That yon bright moon is riding, all in haste,  
To gaze on thee.
- (b) I found her on the floor  
In all the storm of grief, yet beautiful,  
Pouring out tears at such a lavish rate  
That were the world on fire, they might have drown'd  
The wrath of heaven, and quenched the mighty rain.

11 If you were writing poetry, which of the following would you employ: ocean or briny deep; fish or finny tribe; blood or life's purple tide; birds or feathered race; moon or refulgent lamp of night; sun or glowing orb of day; snow or fleecy winter; sweat or briny drops; sleep or balmy blessings of the night? What other time-worn conventional equivalents for simple words can you think of?

#### EXERCISES: APPRECIATION OF POETRY

1 The beauty of a line of poetry sometimes lies hidden in an adjective or adjective phrase aptly chosen. Study the italicized expressions in the following passages, first making sure of their meaning, then trying to discover their appropriateness. Which of the epithets appeal most strongly to the imagination, bringing pictures to mind, or inviting the fancy to roam?

1. Beside yon *straggling* fence that skirts the way  
With blossom'd furze *unprofitably* gay,  
There, in his *noisy* mansion, *skilled to rule*,  
The village master taught his little school.

—GOLDSMITH

2. And all our yesterdays have lighted fools  
The way to *dusty* death.

—SHAKESPEARE

3. a harmless, *necessary* cat.

—SHAKESPEARE

4. The silver, *snarling* trumpets 'gan to chide. —KEATS
5. Mountains on whose barren breast  
The *laboring* clouds do often rest. —MILTON
6. O for a soft and gentle wind!  
I heard a fair one cry;  
But give to me a *snoring* breeze  
And white waves heaving high. —CUNNINGHAM
7. Much can they praise the trees so straight and hy,  
The *saying* pine, the cedar *proud and tall*,  
The *vine-propp* elme, the poplar *never dry*,  
The *builder* oake, *sole king of forrests all*,  
The aspine *good for staves*, the cypress *funeral*.  
—SPENSER
8. And gladly banish *squint* suspicion. —MILTON
9. Was this the face that launch'd a thousand ships  
And burnt the *topless* towers of Ilium? —MARLOWE
10. O, welcome, *pure-eyed* Faith, *whitehanded* Hope,  
*Thou hovering* Angel girt with *golden wings*. —MILTON
1. Sport that *wrinkled* Care derides,  
And Laughter *holding both his sides*. —MILTON
12. And more, to lulle him in his slumber *soft*,  
A *trickling* streame from high rock tumbling downe,  
And *ever drizzling* raine upon the loft,  
Mixt with a *murmuring* winde, much like to sowne  
Of *swarming* bees, did cast him in a swowne;  
No other noyse, nor peoples *troublous* cries,  
As still are wont t'annoy the *walled* towne,  
Might there be heard; but *carelesse* Quiet lyes,  
Wrapt in *eternall* silence far from enemys. —SPENSER
13. Thyrsis! whose artful strains have oft delayed  
The *huddling* brook to hear his madrigal. —MILTON

14. And when my name and honor shall be spread  
 As far as Boreas [the north wind] claps his *brazen* wings  
 Or fair Boötes [a constellation] sends his *cheerful* light,  
 Then shalt thou be competitor with me,  
 And sit with Tamburlaine in all his majesty.

—MARLOWE

15. Now fades the *glimmering* landscape on the sight,  
 And all the air a *solemn* stillness holds,  
 Save where the beetle wheels his *droning* flight,  
 And *drowsy* tinklings lull the distant fold.

—GRAY

16. But let my *due* feet never fail  
 To walk the *studious* cloister's pale,  
 And love the *high-embowed* roof,  
 With *antique* pillars *massy* proof,  
 And *storied* windows *richly* dight,  
 Casting a *dim* religious light.

—MILTON

17. *Rough* wind, that mournest loud  
 Grief, *too sad* for song,  
*Wild* wind, when *sullen* cloud  
 Knells all the night long;  
*Sad* storm whose tears are vain,  
*Bare* woods whose branches stain,  
*Deep* caves and *dreary* main—  
 Wail for the world's wrong!

—SHELLEY

2 Study, as directed in the preceding exercise, the quotations found in the exercises beginning on page 209.

3 Study also the quotations in the exercises beginning on page 218.

4 Rewrite the first seventeen lines in Goldsmith's *Deserted Village*, endeavoring to substitute for each adjective, participles included, another equally appropriate.

5 In one of his poems Wordsworth tells how a little blind boy, filled with desire for adventure, launches a turtle-shell and goes

hurrying down,  
 Down to the mighty sea.

In an early version of the poem, the frail craft is not a turtle-shell, but

A household tub, like one of those  
Which women use to wash their clothes.

Why did Wordsworth make this change? In another poem, a child's grave is thus described:

I've measured it from side to side,  
'Tis three feet long, and two feet wide.

In a later version we find this substitution:

Though but of compass small, and bare  
To thirsty suns and parching air.

Which is better, and why? Consider also the following, determining in each case which is the better rendering:

(a) Home they brought her warrior dead.

(b) Home they brought him, slain with spears.

(a) Ay me, ay me, the woods decay and fall.

(b) The woods decay, the woods decay, and fall.

(a) Willows whiten, aspens quiver,  
The sunbeam showers break and quiver  
In the stream that runneth ever.

(b) Willows whiten, aspens quiver;  
Little breezes dusk and shiver  
Thro' the wave that runs forever.

(a) Now, from the rock Tarpeian,  
Could the wan burghers spy  
The line of blazing villages  
Red in the midnight sky!  
The Fathers of the City  
They sat all night and day,  
For every hour some horseman came  
With tidings of dismay.

- (b) Now from the rock Tarpeian  
 Did paling terror spy  
 Long blazing lines of Roman homes  
 Made torches in the sky.  
 The Fathers of the City  
 Sat with the night and day,  
 As horsemen of the fearful hours  
 Told tidings of dismay.
- (a) Even the potter is jealous of potter, and craftsman of craftsman.
- (b) Even the potter of potter is jealous, and craftsman of craftsman.
- (a)                             There she stood,  
 About a young bird's flutter from a wood.
- (b)                             There she stood,  
 About twelve feet or twenty from a wood.
- (a) Now about twilight of that evening dim.
- (b) Now on the moth-time of that evening dim.

**6** Determine in each case which is the more melodious passage:

- (a) "We two," she said, "will seek the groves  
 Where Lady Mary is,  
 With her five handmaidens, whose names  
 Are five sweet symphonies,—  
 Cecily, Gertrude, Magdalen,  
 Margaret, and Rosalys."  
 —ROSSETTI
- (b) Bulkeley, Hunt, Willard, Hosmer, Merriam, Flint,  
 Possessed the land which rendered to their toil  
 Hay, corn, roots, hemp, flax, apples, wool, and wood.  
 —EMERSON
- (a) In distant countries I have been,  
 And yet I have not often seen  
 A healthy man, a man full grown,  
 Weep in the public roads alone.

But such a one on English ground,  
 And in the broad highway I met;  
 Along the broad highway he came,  
 His cheeks with tears were wet.  
 Sturdy he seemed, though he was sad,  
 And in his arms a lamb he had. —WORDSWORTH

(b) Behold her, single in the field,  
 Yon solitary Highland lass!  
 Reaping and singing by herself.  
 Stop here, or gently pass!  
 Alone she cuts and binds the grain,  
 And sings a melancholy strain;  
 O listen! for the vale profound  
 Is overflowing with the sound. —WORDSWORTH

7 A group of fifty or more high school seniors, invited to select the most melodious lines in Milton's *Minor Poems*, found it quite impossible to agree. Some ears were charmed by alliteration, others by liquids (l, m, n, r), and still others by a vowel sound often repeated. A few showed a fondness for sibilants (s, z, sh, etc.). Among the favorites were these two passages:

Lap me in soft Lydian airs  
 Married to immortal verse.

Dingle or bushy dell of this wild wood,  
 And every bosky bourn from side to side,  
 My daily walk and ancient neighborhood.

Try the experiment, limiting the investigation to one of the Milton poems. Or substitute Shakespeare, Tennyson, or Coleridge for Milton.

8 The same group of seniors having been asked to select phrases from Milton that were magical in their suggestive power, flashing upon the mind a picture, or inviting the fancy to build, the results showed a surprisingly wide range of preference, among the selected phrases

being the following: "the unsunned heaps of miser's treasure," "the huddling brook," "twilight meadows," "hoary Nereus," "tapestry halls," "snaky-headed Gorgon," "black usurping mists," "slumbering morn." Try the same experiment, limiting the field, however, to some one poem.

9 A third experiment consisted in selecting lines in which the sound and the movement echo the sense. Among the lines chosen were the following:

'Mongst horrid shapes and shrieks, and sights unholy!  
Basks at the fire his hairy strength.  
His orient liquor in a crystal glass.

Try the experiment, either with one of Milton's poems or with ten pages from Tennyson or Shakespeare.

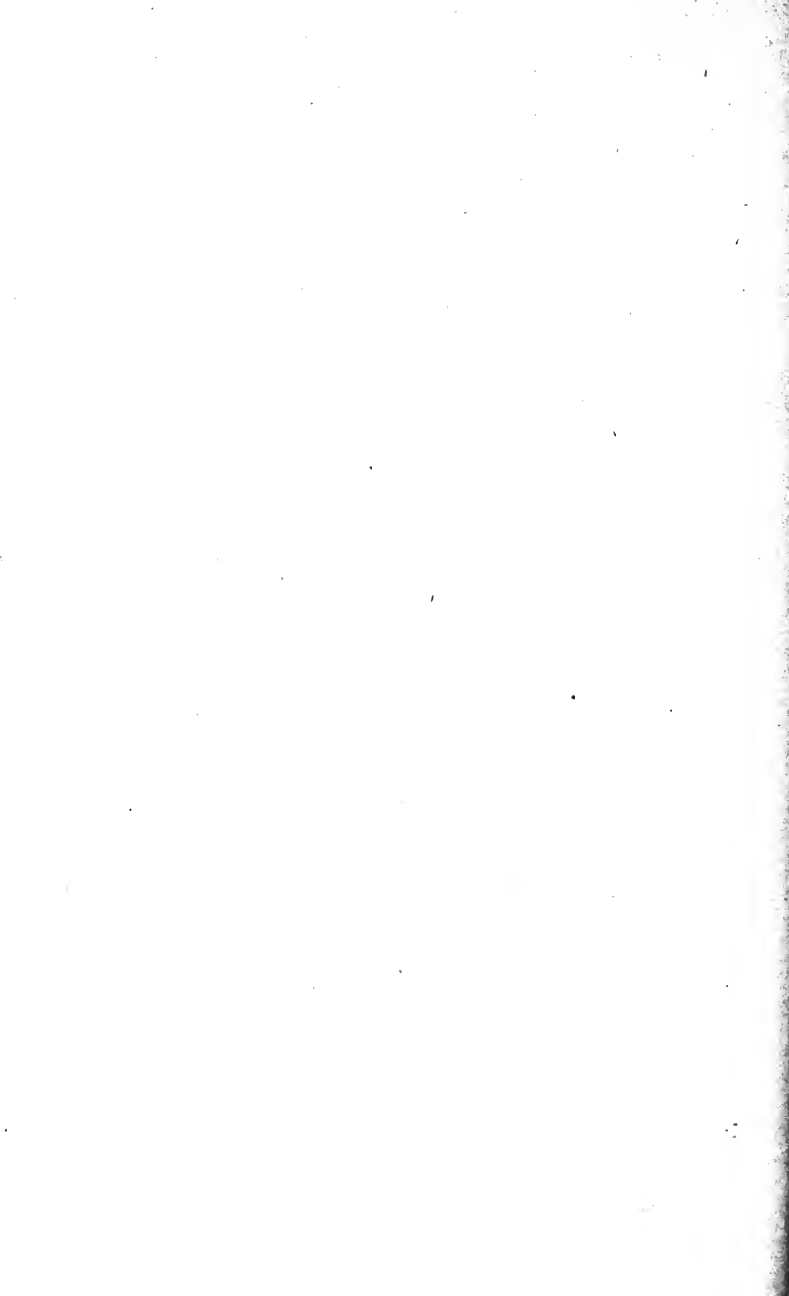
10 Poetry is sensuous; that is, it moves us by appealing, through the imagination, to the sense of hearing, the sense of sight, of touch, of taste, of smell. There are those who do not like poetry, largely because they read so hastily, or with so sluggish imagination, that they get but imperfectly the fancies that fill the poet's mind. To how many senses does each of the following passages appeal?

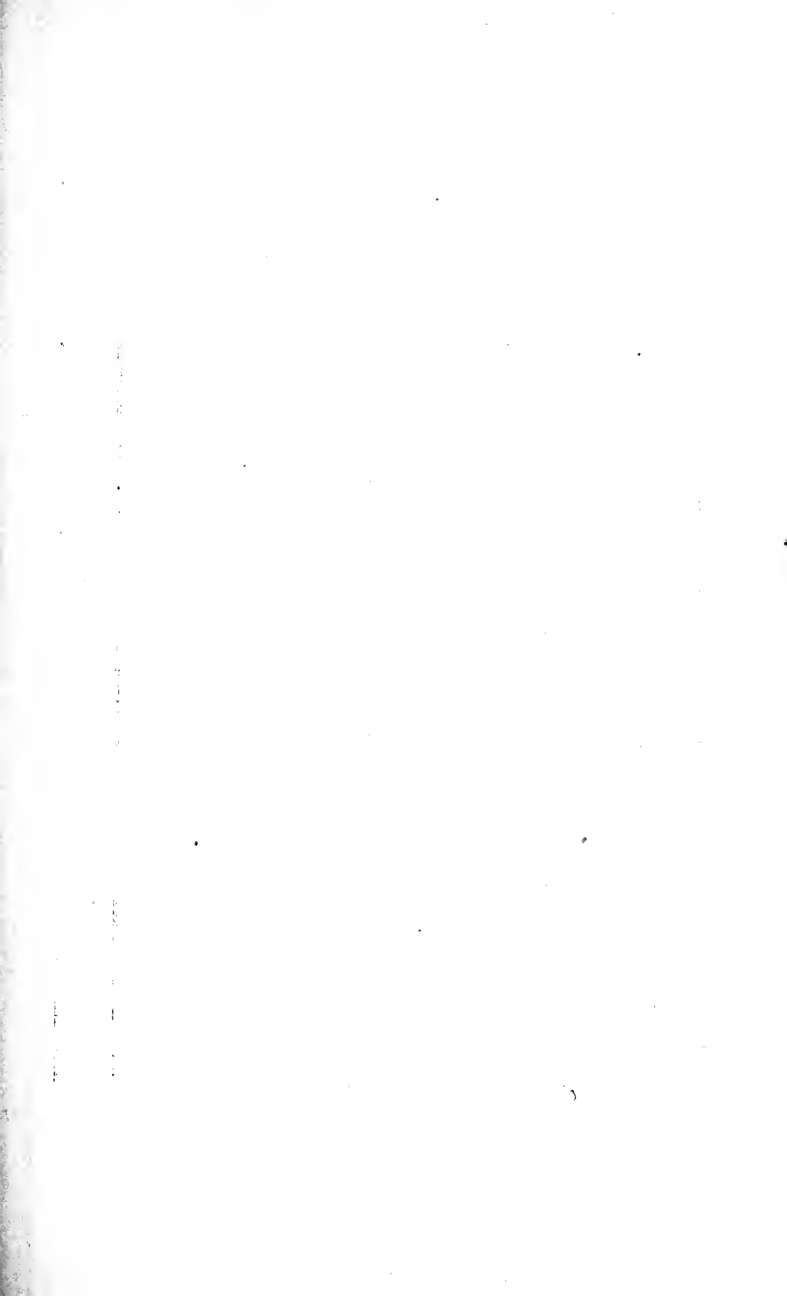
(a) Hark, hark!  
Bow-wow.  
The watch-dogs bark:  
Bow-wow.  
Hark, hark! I hear  
The strain of strutting chanticleer  
Cry Cock-a-diddle-dow! —SHAKESPEARE

(b) I find thee apt;  
And duller shouldst thou be than the fat weed  
That roots itself in ease on Lethe wharf,  
Wouldst thou not stir in this. —SHAKESPEARE



- (c) St. Agnes' Eve—Ah, bitter chill it was!  
The owl, for all his feathers, was a-cold;  
The hare limp'd trembling through the frozen grass,  
And silent was the flock in woolly fold:  
Numb were the Beadsman's fingers, while he told  
His rosary, and while his frosted breath,  
Like pious incense from a censer old,  
Seem'd taking flight for heaven, without a death,  
Past the sweet Virgin's picture, while his prayer he saith.  
—KEATS
- (d) And still she slept an azure-lidded sleep,  
In blanched linen, smooth, and lavender'd,  
While he from forth the closet brought a heap  
Of candied apple, quince, and plum, and gourd;  
With jellies soother than the creamy curd,  
And lucent syrups, tinct with cinnamon;  
Manna and dates, in argosy transferr'd  
From Fez; and spiced dainties, every one,  
From silken Samarcand to cedar'd Lebanon.  
—KEATS





Century	40 FOURTEENTH 1400	FIFTEENTH 1500	
Period	40 CHAUCER 1400	CAXTON 1500	PRI
Poets and Dramatists	<p>← CHAUCER →</p> <p>← Langland →</p>		<p>←</p> <p>←</p>
Writers of Prose Fiction		MALORY	← MORE
Essayists, etc.	← Wyclif →		← Tynda

PART III

A BRIEF SUMMARY OF ENGLISH  
LITERATURE



## INTRODUCTORY

The study of literature follows several lines. Attention may be centered, for example, on a single masterpiece considered separately, with a view to understanding it thoroughly and training the mind in literary appreciation. A little more difficult is the study of a group of masterpieces as types of various forms—the essay, the novel, the drama. A third line of study confines itself to the works of a single author, with a view to becoming familiar with his art and his personality in all the stages of development. This too is difficult, but delightful. Finally, it is profitable to study all the works, prose and poetry, of a certain group of authors—the Elizabethan, for example, or the Victorian, noting common characteristics and getting glimpses of the times as reflected in literature.

Eventually, however, need is felt of a wide survey of the entire field. The student becomes interested in literature as a growth, from the first faint beginnings down to the present day. He wishes to know when this literary form appeared, when that, and what changes they have undergone; why we find in one century mountain peaks, in another only dull tablelands of mediocrity. Even in the earlier stages of study, at least a brief historical sketch is convenient, indeed almost necessary, for intelligent study, that each masterpiece may be given its proper setting. The following summary is presented for this purpose—for those who lack the time necessary to master a complete manual. It contains the little that a high school pupil ought to know,

before graduation, about the history of English literature. The tables of authors and masterpieces are so brief that they may with profit be memorized, save for the dates, just as the student of history memorizes lists of kings. It is assumed that, besides learning the tables, the pupil will study in detail the lives of the few authors read in classroom, finding his material either in the introductory pages of school editions or in such works of reference as are provided in the school library.



## CHAPTER XX

### OLD ENGLISH OR ANGLO-SAXON PERIOD: 650-1066

<b>Author Unknown</b>	†Beowulf
Caedmon and others	†Paraphrases of Genesis, Exodus, and Daniel
Bede	Many works in Latin, including a church history of the English People
Cynewulf	†The Christ; legends of saints; riddles
King Alfred and others	The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle; translations from Latin of several standard works, including Bede's History
Various writers	Sermons and other works religious in character

**NOTE.**—Poetry is indicated by a dagger and prose fiction by a circle. The names of the greatest authors appear in heavy type.

A single shelf of no great length would hold all that has come down to us from this early period: a few manuscript books and a few loose leaves, which rare good fortune has preserved for a thousand years and more. Could these priceless relics be brought together and were we privileged to examine them, our first surprise, perhaps, would come at finding the manuscripts written in a language which, though English, is as strange as German, which it resembles. Had we the ability to read Anglo-Saxon, as early English is called, we should again be surprised to find how much of this early literature, poetry and prose, is of a religious character. But this is easily explained.

**Scanty  
remains**

**Language**

**Religious  
character**

When, in the fourth and fifth centuries, the English left their homes on the south shores of the Baltic and North seas and invaded England, pillaging, plundering, killing great numbers of the Britons whose lands they were seizing, and driving the remainder westward, they were a pagan people and such they remained till the sixth century when missionaries from Italy and Ireland wrought a great change. In a remarkably short time Christianity drove out the pagan beliefs. Monasteries rose here and there throughout the land, each monastery not only a religious but an educational center, for connected with each was a school. Some of these schools grew into what might be called colleges, whose truly great teachers attracted large numbers. In less than a century after the coming of the missionaries, the English monasteries were famous throughout western Europe, so great a zeal did the English show for religion and learning.

It is not strange, therefore, that the literature of this period, for the most part written by monks or at least by those who had received their training in the monasteries, should be religious. It is a mistake, however, to think that English literature was cradled in the monastery. The English had always been a song-loving people. They sang as they rushed into battle. Song cheered their feasts when petty tribal kings gathered their warriors about them in the mead halls. There were professional poets among them—scops they were called—who composed and chanted hero-songs. Little of this earlier “heathen” poetry has been preserved, however; for it was oral literature, passed down from singer to singer by memory alone. Yet the most interesting poem in all this period of four centuries takes us back to these pre-Christian days, though the version that we

have was made by a monk of perhaps the eighth century, who, happily for us, felt in this song of earlier times that which stirred his blood and prompted him to record it on parchment. It is a poem of over 3000 lines, unrhymed like all Anglo-Saxon poetry, called *Beowulf*.

It tells a wonderful story of how **Beowulf**, when a young man, killed in dreadful encounters two half-human monsters of the fens; and how, in his old age, he slew a huge, fire-spitting, winged dragon. The poem is well worth reading, because it is a good story well told, because it gives invaluable pictures of early English life, and because its ideals of manhood are noble.

Of the literature which was produced later, when the monasteries were so powerful in their good work, the greater part is poetry, associated with two names, **Caedmon** and **Cynewulf**, between whom, in point of time, came **Bede**, a great teacher and writer of Latin prose, whose history of the church in England, credulous yet honest and painstaking, is a valuable document. **Caedmon**, **Bede** tells us in his history, was an uneducated menial connected with a Northumbrian monastery, a mere servant who suddenly became inspired to compose and sing, not of encounters with the dark fenland demons but the wonderful stories told in the Old Testament. Scholars say that none of the three paraphrases of Genesis, Exodus, and Daniel which we have should be attributed to him; yet we know that he, and probably many another, composed such songs, long narratives which must have possessed great interest to those to whom the Bible was a new book. **Cynewulf**, living perhaps half a century later, was a Christian scop, educated at a monastery. Not all of his poems are religious, for attributed to him are many riddles in verse, a form of literature of which the early English were very fond; but

his best poems are saintly legends or deal with New Testament themes. The poems of the Cynewulf group are more polished than those of the Caedmon group, more artistic; they are farther removed from the heathen poetry of earlier times—the times when *Beowulf* and similar poems were popular.

The next name on the roll of English writers is that of King Alfred the Great, one of the noblest figures of all times, who lived in the latter half of the eighth century. Between the days of Caedmon and Cynewulf and the days of Alfred lies a dark interval of civil war among the petty kingdoms which had gradually formed out of the English tribes possessing the island, and of cruel invasions by the Danes, fierce "sea-wolves," once neighbors of the English in their old home on the continent, who destroyed monasteries, burned villages, and killed great numbers. Learning, and piety too, all but disappeared. Conditions were not greatly different from those of a few centuries before when the fierce English tribes poured in upon the more highly civilized Britons. We are concerned but indirectly with all that King Alfred did to deliver his country from this peril, restore order, and build up the nation anew; our immediate interest is with his efforts to bring back piety and learning—a great task which he accomplished but in part. In earlier times, before the Danish invasions, the monastery libraries had contained few save Latin books. Not Bede alone, but all scholars, on the Continent as well as in England, wrote and spoke Latin. The Bible was a Latin Bible. Book knowledge was locked up in a foreign tongue. It was Alfred's idea to change all this; his people should be taught in their native tongue. Gathering what scholars he could about him, he translated with their aid whatever Latin books he thought of value to his country—

Alfred the  
Great

several religious works, a standard history of the world, Bede's church history, and certain other manuals of information. Perhaps the most important composition of his reign, and one in which no doubt he had a part, was a compilation, from scant monastery records and other sources, known to us as the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*. This is a brief history of England by years, beginning with 60 B. C. For some years there are no entries; other years are represented by but a few lines, the account naturally growing fuller as it advances through the reign of Alfred. As literature it is not remarkable, though some of its prose is fairly good and occasionally one finds in it a spirited account of some notable event, the chronicler at times even abandoning prose for poetry; but this earliest of histories in the English tongue is of great value none the less.

Anglo-Saxon  
Chronicle

The literature of Alfred's day was mainly prose, as that of the earlier times was mainly poetry. Little but prose do we find from his day on through the century and a half preceding the Norman Conquest in 1066: the *Chronicle* continued, many sermons, and other works for the most part religious in character.

After Alfred's  
day

What should be our final estimate of this period? When we consider how recently the English had been but rough, plundering adventurers, without books, without schools, without even a common language,—for until long after the Norman Conquest the various sections of England had their separate dialects,—we can but feel that the literary output was most creditable. The poetry is better than the prose, but neither prose nor poetry is of high artistic merit compared with the masterpieces of later times. Of the poetry, *Beowulf*, possessing the same strong spiritual qualities that char-

Final estimate

acterize the best in all English verse, is easily most interesting; of the prose, certain passages in the *Chronicle*. All this early literature is clean, serious, full of vigor; lacking, it is true, in grace and humor, indeed rather somber, it seems to us, yet revealing a people by nature brave, fair-minded, religious, lovers of song, lovers of battle, a splendidly endowed people who improved rapidly under the sway of Christianity and Roman culture. In after centuries England came under many influences. Other races blended with the English. The language changed, customs changed; yet the essential traits of character which have made the English a great people and their literature a great literature are easily discernible in the literature of this earliest period. That is why the few time-worn manuscripts which have come down to us through a thousand years and more, constitute a priceless treasure,—priceless not because of their literary merit but because of what they tell us of the English as they were originally in their new island home.

## CHAPTER XXI

### NORMAN-ENGLISH PERIOD: 1066-1340

(From the Conquest to the birth of Chaucer)

	The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle (Cont. to 1154)
Layamon (Circ. 1200)	† Brut (a legendary history of England)
Various writers	Religious works, poetry and prose: homilies, lives of saints, Bible paraphrases, etc.
Various writers	Romances loosely translated from the French
Unknown	Songs and ballads

England, during the Anglo-Saxon period, was the home of three peoples: the Britons, the English, and the Danes. The Danes, however, soon blended with the English and we lose sight of them. The Britons, driven westward, remained a separate people, though toward the end of the period, the barriers between them and the English weakened considerably. During the Norman-English period, the island was the home of three peoples: the Britons, found principally in Wales, the Norman-French, and the English. The Welsh Britons remained pretty much in the background. We could disregard them altogether, were it not that they contributed not a little, indirectly, to English literature. We are mainly concerned, however, with the conquered English and the conquering Normans.

These Normans were a wonderful people, keen, energetic, progressive, with a great genius for organizing and

systematizing, yet fond of gaiety and splendor, and by nature cheerful and humor-loving. Their barons soon appropriated nearly all of the land and built massive castles to hold it. Grand cathedrals were built too; and hundreds of new monasteries sprang up, for the Normans were Christians. During all this period the church possessed, through its able Norman bishops and abbots, great political power. As in the earlier days of the preceding period, each monastery was in some measure a school, and towards the close of the period schools not immediately connected with the church were taking shape at Cambridge and Oxford.

When contrasted with this brilliant people, the stolid, mentally slow English seem at first glance decidedly inferior, and so they were regarded by their conquerors, who for a long time kept them in a pitiable state; yet their sterling, if not brilliant, qualities which were prominent in Beowulf of old and in wise King Alfred, gradually wrought a wonder. Little by little the abler among them climbed upward and took rank with the best in church and state. Gradually, through causes which we cannot mention here, the two peoples came closer and closer together and finally fused into one, a stronger people than England had ever before known, yet with the fine, manly traits of the Anglo-Saxons still dominating.

England, during this period, was the home of several languages. The earlier kings and their barons spoke French, and French became the accepted language of the realm. All classes save the lowest employed it—were forced to if they would get on and up in the world. It was the language of business. Children spoke it in the schools. The minstrels who went from castle to castle sang it. Those who wrote for the



pleasure of their fellow men, both Norman writers and English, employed it. But Latin was prominent too. It was the language of the Church and of learning, the book language employed by monks and scholars when they wrote, and not uncommonly when they conversed. The Englishman who would become educated must have a knowledge of it. Beneath French and Latin lay English, long despised and ridiculed by the upper classes and bidding fair to disappear altogether; yet behold a second wonder. About the time this period closes, English is again the accepted language of the realm. Some Anglo-Saxon words have disappeared, many have changed slightly, but the great bulk of old words remains. This new English is permeated, it is true, with French words, and Latin words have crept in too; yet the native speech is supremely triumphant. French disappeared. Latin as a book language lingered for a century or two, was employed somewhat by learned men even as late as Shakespeare's day, yet eventually it also slipped away.

The literature of this period falls into three groups: the Latin, the French, and the English. Latin, it should be remembered, was the book language of **The three** monks, scholars, and statesmen, English as **groups of** well as Norman. It is, someone has said, **literature** the language Macaulay would have used had he lived at the court of Henry II. In this Latin group are many religious works, most of them in prose; but more conspicuous are histories or chronicles, some recording the doings of this monastery or that, others dealing with all England and going back to legendary days. These chronicles are of great interest to the historian, but they are not English, not in the native tongue; so they, and all other works in Latin, may be disregarded.

Norman-French literature is of greater importance, for

during this period France gained a literary prominence in Western Europe similar to that which England enjoyed in the eighth century. Her greatest works were in verse. Among them were scores upon scores of extremely long poems recounting the deeds of such long-ago heroes as the French King Charlemagne, the Welsh King Arthur, and Alexander the Great. Of the hundred and more such romances which have come down to us, the best is the earliest, the *Song of Roland*, though the most popular throughout the Middle Ages were those which dealt with the half-mythical King Arthur and his Round Table knights. Besides these hero romances there were long, metrical chronicles, some of them based on the Latin chronicles. A third important group is made up of songs and ballads of love and adventure such as the minstrels sang everywhere throughout Europe. But this great volume of French literature is not English, though some of it was written in England and by men of English birth. It deserves mention solely because a considerable part of it was absorbed by English literature, much as the French language was absorbed, especially such of it as dealt with English heroes and English history. It provided models and furnished subject matter for contemporary and later writers. For centuries it was the literature which English men and women read and listened to; it not only furnished entertainment but supplied new ideas and ideals, changing the minds of Englishmen as the Norman castles and monasteries and cathedrals changed the appearance of the English country.

The literature of the period which was written in English is but a tiny stream compared with the broad rivers of Latin and French. For a century and a half following the Conquest it is hardly discernible. The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* was con-

Norman-  
French  
literature

In the English  
tongue

tinued till 1154, then gave way to chronicles and histories in Latin and French. About the year 1200, appeared what is known as Layamon's *Brut* or history. Layamon was a priest living near the border of Wales, who conceived the idea of writing a long poem telling the history of England. Borrowing freely from works in Latin and French, and adding many tales and legends of the Britons, tales which doubtless he had heard over and over again in his boyhood days, he produced a poem of over 30,000 lines. He has been called the first minstrel to celebrate King Arthur in English song, the same Arthur of whom we read in Tennyson's *Idylls of the King*.

Aside from Layamon's *Brut*, there is not much to delay us in our survey of the English writings of this period.

There is, to be sure, quite a supply of religious works, but with one or two exceptions they are of no great interest; and we find,

Layamon's  
Brut

as time goes on, many romantic poems paraphrasing the French hero-romances, showing how French romance is being absorbed just as in the *Brut* we find old Briton tales absorbed. *Guy of Warwick* and *Havelok the Dane*, English romances with English heroes, though wrought in the French manner, were great favorites, and were long cherished. Finally we can mention with pleasure a few genuinely English songs, which appear among others of less value imitated from the French. As we read these simple, heartfelt lyrics, we easily yield to a belief that, in all probability, even in darkest days of oppression, the English, as in earlier times, were singers and song-makers, and that they loved their own songs better than the more polished products of foreign minstrels.

The period may be summarized as follows: For a century and a half following the Conquest, little was written in the native tongue; from then on, much was written by Eng-

lishmen in Latin and French, but comparatively little in English and that little was largely imitative of French

**Summary** models. No great writers appeared. The period is an important one, however, for during it the language changed greatly through absorbing many French and Latin words. The long French romances brought into our literature a vast treasure of stories for future writers to retell with greater art, the choicest of these tales centering about the half-mythical Briton hero, King Arthur. Finally, through fusing with the Normans, the English became a stronger people, happily without the loss of the original sterling qualities of the Anglo-Saxons.

## CHAPTER XXII

### CHAUCER'S PERIOD: 1340-1400

John Wyclif 1324 (?)–1384 (?)	First complete translation of the Bible
William Langland 1332 (?)–1400 (?)	†Vision concerning Piers Plowman
Geoffrey Chaucer 1340–1400	The Canterbury Tales
Unknown	†Songs and ballads of the common people

Sixty years, a single lifetime, measures the extent of this period. It is therefore in marked contrast to the preceding periods, which, taken together, cover 690 years, over one-half of the span of all English literature. It may be thought of as an oasis amid the long reaches between the days when Saxon warriors were thrilled by the story of Beowulf and the days when men crowded the Globe theatre to see Shakespeare's plays.

Wyclif was not a minstrel nor a monk but an Oxford teacher and preacher whose life was one long attack against the Church. He has been called "the first champion of the Reformation," that great movement which, in later years, wrought a mighty change in England and led to the establishment of a national church independent of Rome. To his belief that the scriptures should no longer remain locked up in Latin we owe the first complete translation of the Bible into English, a translation which, in a revised version made soon after his death, found its way among all classes. Better translations, as we shall see, were made in later periods,

for Wyclif was not a great literary artist, yet in his Bible we find the best prose thus far produced in England—prose which aided greatly in establishing a national language; nor can we easily estimate the great service Wyclif rendered to literature when he made it possible, for the first time, for men and women of all classes to read or hear all of the Bible in their native tongue.

Side by side with this great reformer whose sermons and pamphlets stirred all England, posterity has placed

**Langland** a poverty-stricken dreamer-poet, William Langland, so obscure an individual that little is known about him except that his boyhood days were passed near the Welsh borders where probably he received some monastery training, and that after roaming the country for a time after the manner of a begging friar he drifted to London and there for many years earned a miserable living by chanting for the release from purgatory of the souls of dead men. His days, therefore, were spent among the poor, and from among them he looked out upon a world which seemed to him sadly out of joint: church and state corrupt; the rich tyrannizing over the poor; purity, justice, and industry rarely met with. His way of righting the world was to picture the world as he saw it, in all its corruption, and to cry out fearlessly for much needed reforms. His picture-sermon we find in a long poem, frequently added to and reshaped during thirty years, known as the *Vision Concerning Piers Plowman*. It is an allegory in the form of a dream, and to the modern reader it is in some respects as confusing and inconsistent as dreams are apt to be. But the poor people of his day understood it, recognized the truthfulness of the thinly veiled pictures of society and the sincere earnestness of the gifted poet. It moved them as the fiery pamphlets of Wyclif stirred the better educated classes.

We may think of Wyclif and Langland as the greatest of all that long, unbroken line of writers on religious themes, the earliest of whom are Caedmon, Bede, and Cynewulf. Chaucer, who towers high above them in literary skill, belongs to an entirely different class. This son of a prosperous London merchant began life as a page in the royal household, a bright, good natured lad with a sense of humor which made him, we may believe, a general favorite. All his days were spent close to that brilliant aristocracy for which Langland had little sympathy. He became an exceedingly able man, was sent abroad on embassies, held positions of trust at home, and climbed high for one not of noble birth. He was always a busy man, a tireless worker. His great passion was for books and the green fields, though it should be quickly added that he was a lover of mankind as well and looked out upon the world with keen yet friendly eyes. He seemed to know all classes from the nobility down to the poor parish priests. Much of the greed and misery that came before Langland's eyes must have been known to him, but it reached him softened somewhat by the glamor of that courtly aristocracy with which he was associated. To him, England was merry England.

Chaucer was a life-long poet. In his younger days he was under the spell of Norman minstrelsy, which is not strange; for French minstrels were still to be found at the royal court and in the homes of the nobility. The old French romances formed the popular literature of the day. Nearly all of them, during the thirteenth and fourteenth century, were turned into English verse; but Chaucer doubtless preferred them in their original form. Later he was more deeply influenced by Italian literature, which about this time reached its highest level in three world-great writers.

Chaucer

Chaucer's  
works

Chaucer's best work, however, written toward the close of his life, is thoroughly English. The *Canterbury Tales* is a collection of stories which Chaucer makes fall from the lips of a merry company of English folk journeying to Canterbury to pray at the shrine of Thomas à Becket. Chance brings them together at the Tabard Inn at Southwark, on the outskirts of London. The jolly landlord offers to accompany them as guide, and proposes that, to make the journey the pleasanter, each of the nine-and-twenty tell four tales, two on the way to Canterbury and two returning, the best story-teller to be given a supper, paid for by the rest. Chaucer lived to complete less than one-fourth the number of stories called for by this scheme, but the uncompleted work is one of our rarest masterpieces. The tales are not of equal merit; some are too broadly humorous, too coarse, to meet the approval of modern taste. But the best of them are very, very good. The poet's art is seen to greatest advantage, perhaps, in the Prologue to the *Tales*, where each pilgrim is introduced by a description so vivid that he seems like a real person; and since the company represents all classes of society, from knight, monk, and prioress down to merchant, miller, and seaman, the Prologue is like a mirror in which we see reflected the life of the times. Collections of tales were common throughout Europe, during the Middle Ages, but there are none which we would less willingly part with than that made by gentle Geoffrey Chaucer, lover of books and green fields and human nature, a born story-teller, the melody of whose verse, once caught, can never be forgotten.

A more detailed survey of this period would mention other writers—Gower, for example, a popular poet whose works are of interest because the first was written in French, the second in Latin, the third in English, showing the drift of lan-

Minor  
writers



guage development; and the unknown author of *Sir Gawaine and the Green Knight*, an Arthurian tale from Norman minstrelsy, yet so retold that it is thoroughly English. It is the best of all tales taken from the French. One of the most popular books of the day, of Continental origin but soon translated into English, was *The Voyages and Travels of Sir John Mandeville*, a most entertaining volume purporting to be designed for the enlightenment of pilgrims journeying to Holy Land, yet so full of preposterous information as "to stamp the author as a fraud or a humorist." Nor should we forget that songs and ballads continue to be made and sung by the common people.

Perhaps the most essential thing to bear in mind concerning this period is that its best literature is unmistakably English in tone. Chaucer borrowed material from Continental sources, particularly from Italy, but the setting for his *Canterbury Tales* is English, his pilgrims are English folk. Dream literature was common throughout Europe, but Langland's dream-satire is directed against English society. The Bible, in Latin, had long been in the hands of monks throughout Christendom; but Wyclif made it a part of English literature. Moreover his fearless controversial tracts and sermons suggest the grim valor of the Anglo-Saxon warrior. Norman romances in English dress were popular, but the author of *Sir Gawaine* was no servile imitator. In short the traits of character which marked the English of Beowulf's day still show strong and unimpaired after the long period of foreign rule.

A leading  
characteristic

As for the language in which this best literature is written, it too is English, not quite fixed, for it is still in a state of flux, but with nearly all the old words showing strong among the new. It is much easier to read than Anglo-Saxon, though still sufficiently strange to necessitate the

use of a glossary. Could we listen to Wyclif or Langland or Chaucer, we should understand but little that was said.

**Language changes**            Yet Chaucer's English is substantially modern, though thousands of new words have come into our language since his day and not a few have dropped out because no longer needed, or because supplanted by other and better ones.

## CHAPTER XXIII

### CAXTON'S PERIOD: 1400-1500

**Sir Thomas Malory** °Morte d'Arthur (printed 1485)  
Unknown †Popular songs and ballads  
(Caxton, England's first printer, sets up his press in 1476.)

A detailed account of this period would mention a number of poets who reached some degree of eminence in the eyes of their contemporaries; our briefer survey omits them all, for their works are seldom read today. We can but note, in passing, that the best of these poets were Scotchmen, and that all were imitators of Chaucer, whom they recognized as towering above them, the one great poet that England had produced. More genuine than the works of any of these are the simple ballads sung by the common people—*Robin Hood*, *Chevy Chase*, etc., such as have been noted in earlier periods. They will not be mentioned again, yet it should be borne in mind that they are found even as late as the eighteenth century, though diminishing in number and in favor as printed books become more common. They form a distinct literature by themselves, anonymous, undated, but worthy of the loving study bestowed upon them of late years.

Much prose was written during this period, most of it religious or theological, of slight literary value. We could easily spare it all save one priceless volume, a collection of stories gleaned from the long poem-romances of earlier periods, concerning King Arthur and his Round Table knights, written in simple, artless,

Followers of  
Chaucer

The ballads

Malory

smooth-flowing prose quite easy to understand. It is the most permanent contribution of Norman minstrelsy to English literature, and a very great one; for it is a collection of tales unsurpassed, preserving for all time the best group of stories in mediæval romance. It has been called a prose epic, since its central figure is a national hero from the half-mythical days of the early Britons.

One reason for the unproductiveness of this century may be found in the rapid decline of that feudal system which reached its highest development under the Norman-French kings—a system which placed great power in the hands of the nobles and made them an aristocracy far above the common people. They had been patrons of learning and literature, the class whom poets sought to please with their verses and from whom they hoped to receive reward. Even in Chaucer's day feudalism was tottering, though knightly deeds on the field of battle, and the gaiety of court life, furnished an outward splendor which has been compared most aptly to an Indian summer. During the fifteenth century the long war with France, and the War of the Roses which followed it, still further weakened this once powerful aristocracy, not a few noble families being practically obliterated. Meanwhile the more numerous middle class was rapidly gaining prominence, but its members could not in a day, nor in a century, give the support to literature that had once been furnished by knighthood, nor could poets at once adapt themselves to new ideals.

A second reason is found in the continued decline of the mediæval church system, highly organized and extremely powerful in earlier times, but growing weaker and weaker. Since the days of Caedmon and Bede, a large proportion of the writers, and practically all scholars, had been monks or in some way

**Decline of  
feudal system**

reached its highest development under the Norman-French kings—a system which placed great power in the hands of the nobles

**Decline of  
mediæval  
church**

powerful in earlier times, but growing weaker and weaker. Since the days of Caedmon and Bede, a large proportion of the writers,

connected with the church system. The monasteries had been centers of learning and culture. In their scriptoria (writing rooms) skilled penmen had multiplied such works as were in demand by the limited class of readers. But during the latter half of this period scholarship seems to be leaving the protecting shadow of the church, where perhaps it has lingered too long, for the rapidly developing colleges at Oxford and Cambridge. Eventually the transference will prove advantageous, resulting in broader scholarship and better literature; but the harvest is not yet.

In connection with the increasing popularity of the universities and the establishing of a number of what we should call preparatory schools, it should be noted that during the second half of this century many studious young Englishmen

**The New  
Learning**

from good families were finding their way to Italy and there coming under the influence of what is known as the New Learning, which was to become a great power in England. Italy, during this century, was the intellectual center of western Europe, as France had been in the twelfth century, and England, for a brief time, in Anglo-Saxon days. The Italians had become greatly interested in Latin literature. Latin manuscripts which had long lain neglected in monastery libraries were eagerly collected and copied by zealous scholars, fascinated by the vigor and the beauty of the old Roman writers. They became deeply interested in Greek literature too, and great numbers of manuscripts were imported from Greece, Asia Minor, and elsewhere. Greek scholars, especially after the fall of Constantinople in 1453, flocked to Italy and became teachers. Thus the ancient world of Greece and Rome was brought back to Italy; the literature of Greece and of Rome was studied and greatly admired; mediæval literature slipped out of mind. It is, then, to an Italy

carried away by its interest in Greek and Roman classics, that young Englishmen went. They too were fired with enthusiasm for this New Learning, and returning to England with copies of precious manuscripts, communicated their enthusiasm to others. The old learning of the monastic schools, so powerful throughout the Middle Ages, soon became a thing of the past.

We have named this period after England's first printer, William Caxton, who set up his press probably in 1476 and during the remaining fifteen years of his life printed over seventy books, among them Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* and Malory's *Morte d'Arthur*. He was not a great author, though the prefaces which accompany some of his publications show that he wrote unusually good English; but he deserves a prominent place in the history of English literature. For eight long centuries all books had been penned by hand; they had been a luxury for the rich. Now, at a time when schools and colleges were springing up and there was promise of a great increase in the number of readers, at a time too when the New Learning was intensely interesting scholars, from among whom there were sure to come writers, this cheaper method of book-making appears. Some authorities name 1453, the date of the fall of Constantinople, as the concluding year of the Middle Ages; others prefer 1492, the date of the discovery of America. So far as the history of English literature is concerned, we might well set aside both these dates and select 1477, the year in which the *Dictes and Sayings of the Philosophers*, the first book printed in England, came from the press of William Caxton.

## CHAPTER XXIV

### PRE-ELIZABETHAN PERIOD: 1500-1564

<p><b>Sir Thomas More</b> 1480-1535</p> <p><b>William Tyndale</b> 1485 (?) - 1536</p> <p><b>Sir Thomas Wyatt</b> 1503-1542</p> <p><b>Earl of Surrey</b> 1517 (?) - 1547 (?)</p> <p><b>Nicholas Udall</b> 1504 (?) - 1556</p> <p><b>Thomas Sackville</b> 1536-1608</p> <p><b>Thomas Norton</b> 1532-1584</p>	<p>°Utopia (first written in Latin) New Testament (translated from the Greek)</p> <p>†Poems some of which are in blank verse and sonnet form, later published in <i>Tottel's Miscellany</i></p> <p>Ralph Roister Doister (first regular comedy, acted about 1535)</p> <p>Gorboduc, or Ferrex and Porrex (first regular tragedy, 1561)</p>
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The fifteenth century produced but one book that is read nowadays, the *Morte d'Arthur*; up to the birth of Shakespeare in 1564, the sixteenth century produced but one, the *Utopia*. Sir Thomas More was one of the young men who were fortunate enough to study under the greatest of that remarkable group of scholars who, in the closing years of the fifteenth century, made Oxford famous by their teaching of Latin and Greek. He too became a great scholar, early gained prominence as a lawyer, and was eventually made Lord Chancellor; finally, because he adhered courageously to high moral principles, he gave up his life at the executioner's block, a very common ending to a life-story in those days. The *Utopia*, a small volume compared to the bulky *Morte d'Arthur*, is a great statesman-philosopher's dream of what he thought England should be. It tells

**More's  
Utopia**

of an ideal commonwealth on an imaginary island vaguely located somewhere between the coasts of South America and Africa. The account is supposed to come from a traveler who has been there and who tells in detail how the country is governed and what are the customs of the inhabitants. Some of More's ideas are so impracticable that utopian has come to mean visionary; yet not a few of his reforms have long since been carried out, and others of them begin to look less strange.

The *Utopia*, we may believe, would not have been written had the New Learning never reached England.

Wyatt and Surrey appear in our table not because they are great poets whose works we read today but because they too came under the spell of Italy. The poems of these two courtiers were not printed till after both were dead; we find them in a little collection of poems (such collections were becoming common) published by a Mr. Tottel. They deserve attention for two reasons. First, they show that the study of Italian poetry and the writing of verses in imitation of Italian models is becoming popular with the court aristocracy. Wyatt has been called the first patrician to make his mark in English poetry. Second, in this little *Miscellany* of Tottel's we find for the first time specimens of blank verse and of the sonnet, both of Italian origin,—forms which from this time on play an important part in English poetry.

Tyndale's *New Testament* was but one of many versions of the Bible in part or in whole that appeared during this period. It is the best of them all, though Tyndale the most popular was the *Great Bible*, so called because of its size and sumptuous appearance. Copies of it were placed in every church; and at times, we are told, men neglected the service to read it, so great was



the interest it aroused. But the version of the Bible with which we are familiar, and which made such a lasting impression on English literature, belongs not to this period but to the next. These earlier versions are important, however, in that they prepared the way for a better translation later on.

Perhaps the most significant of all the works mentioned in the table are *Ralph Roister Doister* and *Gorboduc*, the first regular comedy and the first regular **First regular comedy and tragedy** tragedy. They are crude affairs, particularly the latter, yet entitled to consideration because they are the forerunners of the comedies and tragedies of Shakespeare's day—the feeble beginning of regular English drama. It is not right, however, to think that English drama began at this time, for plays of a sort, highly satisfactory to those who witnessed them, were given at least five hundred years earlier.

We have noted several times how much English literature owes to the church of the Middle Ages. It should not surprise us therefore to learn that the **Miracle plays** earliest English plays were religious, were composed and acted by priests, and were given in the churches. The church service, it should be remembered, was conducted in Latin, the Bible was a Latin Bible, and few of those who attended service understood any language save their own. How natural, therefore, that in a desire to acquaint their congregations with the Scriptures, the priests should resort to acting out Bible narratives in simple fashion, and that sooner or later all the Bible stories should be presented in dramatic form, at first in Latin and finally in English.

Although the Miracle plays, as they are called, were given at first in the churches, as they increased in popularity and larger crowds were attracted to them they were

given in churchyards, and finally on village greens and at street corners. By this time, however, the Miracle plays had passed out of the hands of priests and into the hands of the labor guilds or unions. Thus not only the church but the rapidly rising merchant class have a share in the development of the drama. Each guild made a specialty of one play, and great was the rivalry among guilds.

Out of the Miracle play grew what is called the Morality. The Morality does not tell a Bible story; yet, as the name suggests, its purpose is to teach a moral lesson. Vice, Gluttony, Mercy, Justice, Death, Mankind are among the characters found, each play being a little allegory picturing the struggle of the soul in the great conflict between right and wrong.

A third early variety, the Interlude, takes us not to the great churches, nor to the guilds of the prospering middle classes, but to the homes of the nobles, the feudal aristocracy. The Interlude was hardly more than a dialogue, sometimes accompanied by music, coming between the courses at a banquet. Its purpose was simply to make folks merry.

Thus early English drama is principally of native origin; it owes not a little, however, to the New Learning. When, in the fifteenth century, the classics were being studied with such enthusiasm, what more natural than that schoolmasters should have their boys learn and present, in the schoolroom, Latin comedies, first in the original, and later in English. Latin tragedies were given too. And from presenting Latin plays how natural the step to the writing of plays patterned after Latin models. *Gorboduc*, the first regular tragedy, though its plot is based upon a British legend, is patterned after a Latin model; so too is *Ralph Roister Doister*.

Although this brief period produced so little that is of permanent value, we can see how it was preparatory in many ways to the brilliant Elizabethan period. Drama is passing through its experimental stages. Blank verse, the vehicle of Shakespeare's comedies and tragedies, and the sonnet, a form in which much of the best Elizabethan poetry is cast, are being acclimatized. The many translations of the Scripture are preparing the way for the noble King James version. We note, moreover, that scholars from the universities are entering the arena of letters, and that courtiers are winning laurels by writing verses. Literature is becoming popular at court.

**A period of  
preparation**

## CHAPTER XXV

### THE ELIZABETHAN PERIOD: 1564-1625

John Lyly 1553-1606	°Euphues
Sir Philip Sidney 1554-1586	°Arcadia, Sonnets
<b>Lord Bacon</b> 1561-1626	Essays
Scholarly divines	King James version of the Bible (1611)
<b>Edmund Spenser</b> 1552-1599	†The Færie Queene, Sonnets
George Chapman 1559 (?) -1634	†Translation of the Iliad, plays
Many courtly writers	†Songs and sonnets
<b>Christopher Marlowe</b> 1564-1593	Edward Second, Tamburlaine
<b>William Shakespeare</b> 1564-1616	Thirty-five plays, sonnets
<b>Ben Jonson</b> 1573-1637	The Alchemist, many court masques

But few times in all the world's history has any country experienced such a golden age as that which England enjoyed during the reigns of Elizabeth and James the First, commonly termed the Elizabethan Age. It is all the more wonderful because it came practically unheralded. Previous to Spenser and Shakespeare, England had produced but one great poet, Chaucer, and but two prose writers whose works are still read, Malory and More. Crude and elementary, giving little promise of better things, are the religious plays of the Middle Ages and even the early examples of regular comedy and tragedy. As for songs, the best that we have found are the ballads of the common people, simple, un-literary products. We have found no trace of the novel or the essay. Yet during the Elizabethan period England teemed with writers, and practically every form of lit-

erature that we have today was ably represented. This was the age that produced Spenser, Bacon, Shakespeare. They are the giants; yet one authority mentions over two hundred others associated with this great literary trio, and a second authority estimates that it would take from forty to fifty volumes of some size to accommodate whatever of Elizabethan drama alone has survived and is worthy of study. Practically one-fourth of the poems found in Palgrave's *Golden Treasury of Songs and Lyrics*, selected from all English literature, are songs and lyrics from Elizabethan writers.

Manifestly, where so much invites attention, a brief summary can but pick out here and there a representative name. Prose will be considered first, no attempt being made to preserve a chronological sequence.

Of all the prose written during this period, two volumes only are in common circulation today and are admittedly classics of the first order. By far the greater The Bible is what we know as the Authorized, or King James, version of the Bible, made at royal request, by forty or more scholarly divines who based their translations largely on the many versions, beginning with Tyn-dale's, which had appeared during the preceding century. Setting aside one or two revisions of quite recent times, it is the last of that long line of scriptural translations which began far back in Anglo-Saxon days when Bede, on his death bed, dictated to his fellow monks the last words of a translation from the Latin of the Gospel according to St. John. It marks the final triumphal entrance into our literature of essentially all the literature of the ancient Jewish people, produced during a period not greatly different in extent from that of our own literary history. Wonderful in its original form, admirably translated into clear, simple, melodious English at a time when our lan-

guage was most vigorous, it has become our greatest classic, the one book which more than any other has moulded national character. Its strong, beautiful prose has been a model consciously or unconsciously followed by all writers from Shakespeare's time down to the present.

The second book is a small volume containing fifty or sixty essays varying in length from two pages to ten or twelve, by a prominent lawyer of Elizabeth's day, who in King James's reign climbed high and rapidly, reached the summit of his greatness as Lord Chancellor, and then, when living in great state, the foremost judge in all England, was accused of accepting bribes, was speedily convicted, heavily fined, and driven from public life. Bacon considered his essays of slight value beside his ten or more other works, in the fields of law, history, and science, most of which he translated into Latin that they might endure through all time in what he believed to be the only permanent language; yet the volume left to its fate in English has survived all the rest. These essays deal with such topics as truth, friendship, revenge, cunning, death. Each is a compact assembly of thoughts and opinions tersely expressed in smooth, brilliant sentences, many of them so to the point that, once read, they cling to the memory. The King James Bible marks the close of a long life of scriptural translations; Bacon's little book stands at the beginning of a long line of essays reaching to the present day.

Below these two books range many other prose works in various fields. We have not ventured to include in our table Sir Walter Raleigh's *History of the World*, written during his fourteen years of imprisonment in the Tower. It begins bravely with the Creation; one hundred and fifty pages or so barely take the reader beyond the Garden of Eden;

Bacon's  
essays

Other prose  
works

and Raleigh lived to bring his colossal undertaking down only to 168 B. C. Elizabethans were fond of great undertakings. Another work of perhaps deeper interest to modern readers is what is loosely termed Hakluyt's *Voyages*. Hakluyt made it his life work to collect and edit unpublished accounts of voyages of exploration and discovery. His books were popular in Elizabethan days; we are beginning to think them interesting reading. Hooker's *Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity* is hardly a work to attract the young; yet it is, in a sense, still a standard treatise, its grave, stately style almost inexplicable when we learn that Hooker was but an obscure, diffident clergyman, almost a failure as a preacher.

The prose most widely read in Elizabeth's day, though it has long since been eclipsed, almost forgotten save by scholars, comes under the head of fiction.

Great numbers of short stories and novel-ettes, some in the original French and Italian, and many translated from these languages, found a ready sale at London bookstalls. We might mention quite a number of English writers, most of them dramatists as well, who dabbled in prose story-telling. Most eminent in this little crowd are Lyly and Sidney, the former an Oxford graduate who, when a young man, took England by storm with his *Euphues*; the second the most popular, scholarly courtier of his day, pattern of chivalric good breeding, whose *Arcadia*, written during banishment from court by Elizabeth whom he had offended, was almost equally popular when published soon after the entire nation mourned his early death.

As we turn the pages of Lyly's slender volume, we are at a loss to understand why it should have become the most popular book of the hour. The love story which furnishes the semblance of a plot is of little interest. Most of the

book, and this is equally true of its sequel published a year later, is given up to dissertations on love, religion, education, etc. That which gives it distinction is

**Lyly's  
Euphues**

not so much the subject matter as the language—alliterative, each sentence neatly balanced, simile following simile in rapid succession, a sort of poetic prose which so took the fancy that courtiers quickly adopted it, and it became a fad to talk in this same artificial, sugared English. Just as from *Utopia* came

**Sidney's  
Arcadia**

*Utopian*, so from *Euphues* came *euphuistic*. The *Arcadia* is a thick volume—equivalent to not far from 1,000 pages of the size popular today—a stupendous, loosely constructed romance in which knights and ladies, kings and queens, and shepherds and shepherdesses figure, a confusing number of them made still more confusing because so many characters go about disguised. It is full of romantic adventure, with incidents enough to supply a score of modern romances, all mirroring Sir Philip's ideals of chivalric knighthood, and written in poetic, though not euphuistic, prose, with many poems interspersed. Few have the patience to read it through; yet it is, like the *Morte d'Arthur*, a rich treasure house from which later writers have borrowed.

The greatest glory of Elizabethan literature is not its prose, however, over which we have lingered too long.

**Songs and  
lyrics**

Turning now to its poetry, we may note first of all the variety and richness of its songs and sonnets. Everybody seems to be singing. It is the fashion at court to compose lyrics. We find beautiful songs scattered through the dramas. Tottel's *Miscellany* was the first of a number of similar collections in which fugitive lyrics are preserved. Scarcely an author of note in all this period but wrote songs, a large number of them beautiful gems such as we do not meet



with today. By far the greater number of these short pieces have love as their theme. It was quite the customary thing to sing the praise of one's ladylove in a series of sonnets. Shakespeare wrote 154, some of which were addressed to a dark-haired beauty to us unknown. Sidney wrote sonnets. One of the most beautiful series is the *Amoretti* of Edmund Spenser, in which we trace the courtship which terminated in his marriage, which he celebrated in the most beautiful nuptial poem in the language.

Spenser, already mentioned as one of the three supremely great writers of the day, is the earliest of Elizabethan poets. When, a young man, just out of college, he published his *Shepherd's Calendar* (twelve Spenser pastoral poems, one for each month in the year) it was recognized at once that a great poet, the first since Chaucer, had appeared. He longed to be associated intimately with court life, but he never quite succeeded in winning the Queen's favor. His life was spent for the most part in wild, rebellious Ireland, where eventually his services won for him the forfeited manor and castle of Kilcolman. Here he began his masterpiece, *The Faerie Queene*, but half of which was finished when, years later, he died, poor and heartbroken, probably in a London tavern. This half, however, is twice as long as *Paradise Lost*. The plan of the work is as follows: Twelve knights, each personifying a manly virtue—holiness, temperance, chastity, etc.,—sent out by the Queen of Fairyland, in whom are combined all womanly virtues, during twelve months and a day meet with many adventures as they contend with knights, dragons, wizards, enchantresses, etc., typifying the temptations which try the soul. They are aided from time to time by Arthur, not yet king, in whom all manly virtues are combined. It is therefore an elaborate allegory. Like the *Arcadia*, it represents the afterglow of mediæval ro-

mance; in it, as in the *Arcadia*, the ideals of knighthood are glorified. Spenser is called the poet's poet, because of the wonderful melody and grace of his lines, and the supreme skill with which sensuous beauty and high moral purpose are blended.

Other narrative poems were produced by Elizabethans—by Shakespeare, by Marlowe—but Spenser's is the one supreme effort. Our table includes Chap-

**Translations** man's translation of the *Iliad*, partly because it still is considered one of the few notable renderings of Homer, and partly because it is the most noteworthy of an amazingly large number of translations in prose and verse, of French, Italian, Spanish, Latin, and Greek masterpieces, made by Englishmen during the sixteenth century. These renderings speak well for the ability of English scholarship and show how great an interest was taken by English readers in foreign and ancient literature.

It is hardly necessary to say that the supreme glory of the Elizabethan age is its drama, reaching in the best plays of Shakespeare a pinnacle equaled, if at all, only by the drama of the ancient Greeks.

**Drama** Literally thousands of books have been written about Elizabethan plays and playwrights; it is safe to say that as many more will be written, clear evidence of the importance, universally conceded, of this fascinating field.

The scholars tell us that even in the fifteenth century players were beginning to take the place of minstrels in the homes of noblemen, and that early in the sixteenth century roaming companies were found not only in England but throughout western Europe. They gave their rude plays where they could, in castle halls, inn yards, barns, or on village greens. Shakespeare was twelve years old before London saw her first playhouse. Yet by the end of the century, so popular

**The early theatre**

had play-going become, we can count some ten or twelve theatres, which is all the more wonderful in that the population of London could not have been over 150,000. Practically all classes attended, except the Puritans; but then as now the majority of patrons were from the middle class. Unlike the Norman minstrels, who catered to knights and ladies, Elizabethan dramatists wrote for the multitude. Each playhouse had what we should call a stock company. It is surprising to learn that two of the most popular of these companies were made up of boys. This grew out of the practice of having the boy choristers of the Chapel Royal give entertainments for court amusement.

Since of all Elizabethan dramatists Shakespeare alone is represented on the stage today, it is easy to forget that he was but one of a very large number, his genius faintly recognized by his contemporaries, though he remained comparatively inconspicuous. Among the half a dozen or so who immediately preceded him, towers Christopher Marlowe, son of a Canterbury shoemaker, educated at Cambridge, whence he drifted to London, was caught by the glare of the theatre, went the primrose way of many another college wit of his day, and died miserably at twenty-nine. Had he lived to complete his narrative poem *Hero and Leander*, and to perfect his skill as a playwright, his fame might have approached that of Shakespeare. The best of his six plays is, perhaps, *Edward II*, called "the first well conceived and solidly built English tragedy."

Of Shakespeare, little need be said, for an account of his wonderful career is found in every school edition of his plays. We recall how, the son of a none too successful tanner in an otherwise unimportant town, marrying early and unfortunately, he went to London, possibly to escape trouble growing out of

a poaching prank. Perhaps, as one tradition states, he began his London life as horse-boy at the door of a theatre. Soon he became an actor, then part owner of a theatre, and wrote, besides minor poems, at least thirty-five plays, retiring eventually to Stratford where he died at fifty-two. Of his plays, fourteen have been classed as comedies, eleven as tragedies, and ten as histories.

Among the crowd who followed Shakespeare, the acknowledged leader is "learned" Ben Jonson, whose rule among his associates was not unlike that of Samuel Johnson in the eighteenth century.

Jonson He was a physically and mentally ponderous figure, whom his contemporaries thought far more likely to gain enduring fame than Shakespeare, "Fancy's child," unlearned in Latin and Greek. Jonson patterned his dramas after Latin models which Shakespeare utterly disregarded. Of the scores of plays that he wrote, some are comedies, not like Shakespeare's airy creations, but realistic, satirical pictures of contemporary life; a few are tragedies, coldly intellectual; and some twenty or thirty are masques. The masque is an artificial form of drama, of Italian origin, for many years exceedingly popular at court and among the aristocratic rich. Music, singing, dancing, elaborate stage settings and costumes were characteristic features, the slight plot being as a rule some fable or myth. The parts were taken not by professionals but by members of the nobility, who delighted in this artificial form of amateur theatricals.

How can the depth, range, and brilliancy of Elizabethan literature be explained? The popular word to conjure with in answering this unanswerable question is Elizabethan Renaissance, the term applied to that wonderful awakening which came first to Italy and gradually spread to other countries. The new interest

in Latin and Greek, the invention of printing, the discovery of America, the equally startling discoveries in the field of science, all had a stimulating effect throughout Europe. It was a period of great prosperity and peace for England, which had suddenly become a nation second to none and felt her glory. But after all the customary explanations have been made, it should be remembered that genius comes when it will, now to the home of a shoemaker, or a tanner, or to an obscure country parsonage, and now to the royal court. Sometimes those whom she touches appear in solitary splendor, like Chaucer, sometimes in groups as in Elizabeth's day. She does not always make poets, but sometimes warriors, statesmen, artists, inventors, explorers. Had we but the wisdom to see, we might possibly find that her gifts from age to age are more evenly distributed than we are apt to fancy.

## CHAPTER XXVI

### THE PURITAN AND CAVALIER PERIOD: 1625-1660

The later dramatists 1625-1642	Many plays
Robert Herrick 1591-1674	†Corinna's Going A-Maying
Izaak Walton 1593-1683	The Complete Angler
<b>John Milton</b> 1608-1674	†Paradise Lost (1667)
Jeremy Taylor 1613-1667	Holy Living
<b>John Bunyan</b> 1628-1688	°The Pilgrim's Progress (1678-1684)

Queen Elizabeth died in 1603, thirteen years before Shakespeare, twenty-three years before Bacon, thirty-Elizabethan a seven years before Jonson, and seven years misleading before the appearance of the authorized term version of the Bible. The term Elizabethan, therefore, is misleading in that it is applied not only to those who wrote while the Queen was on the throne but to Jacobean writers as well; that is, to writers of the reign of James I. The literatures of the two reigns are thus grouped together because they have many characteristics in common.

Viewing broadly the output of the brief period now to be considered and comparing it with the Elizabethan, we note Reformation that a gradual change is taking place. The and Elizabethans were swept along by the Renaissance Renaissance, that intellectual awakening which came first to Italy upon the rediscovery of Greek and Latin literature, followed by discoveries in the realm of science which swept away many of the crude ideas which had prevailed during the Middle Ages, and a vast widening of the world through the voyages of Columbus and the later explorers. They lived moreover

in an England possessed of new glory through rapid rise to great prosperity and political prominence in which all felt that they had a part. It was a time of peace. But along with the intellectual awakening came the Reformation, a breaking away from the powerful church system which for so many centuries had bound together all western Europe with Rome as its head, and the development of the idea that there should be more freedom of thought in regard to moral and religious questions, with the Bible as a supreme guide. This moral awakening, felt strongly even in the days of Wyclif, was a great force in Elizabeth's day, though so far as literature is concerned it was subordinate to the intellectual; but in the seventeenth century it reached its climax, influencing not literature alone but the entire national life. For it is but a step from religious liberty to political freedom. England ceased to be a glorious country in which all were knit together by common sympathies. There was a great rebellion, a civil war; Charles I was beheaded; for eleven years England was a Commonwealth with the Puritans, the extremists among Protestants, in power.

This great change is reflected in the writings of the period, many of which are religious or political in character, and not seldom bitterly controversial. Yet one should guard against the impression that literature ever undergoes complete revolution in a decade or even a generation; the old is ever mingling with the new. Drama, for example, the most prominent form of expression in the preceding period, remained popular, though declining in merit, tragedy becoming more artificial and sensational, and comedy ever lighter and coarser, till 1642 when all theatres throughout the realm were closed by order of the Puritan parliament. The playhouse

**The change  
gradual**

**Decline of  
drama**

remained idle till the Puritans lost their political supremacy at the Restoration in 1660. Thus ended the most wonderful series of plays the world has ever seen, rapid in its rise and in its decline, but reaching lofty heights of excellence.

With one prominent exception, the best poetry of this period is but a continuation of that remarkable chorus of

**Lyrics** songs and lyrics which began in Elizabethan days, a chorus which dies away during the civil strife of the middle decades of the century. In Palgrave's *Golden Treasury* we find this period quite as well represented as the preceding, whether the number of songs or the number of writers be considered. It is a rare collection gleaned from plays, from popular songbooks, and from slender volumes by individual writers. Not a few of the pieces are anonymous, and most of the authors are represented by but two or three songs each. As we read the names of composers, we note that many are of brilliant Cavaliers, gentlemen followers of the Stuarts, who looked upon verse making not as a profession but as a polite accomplishment. Others are of clergymen, Catholic and Protestant, whose religious and devotional pieces form a considerable part of the whole. It is not an easy matter to characterize this body of lyrics collectively, for they are of uneven merit. It is safe to say, however, that on the whole they are less spontaneous than the Elizabethan songs, many of them showing a more conscious art, a cleverness and ingenuity, a fondness for extravagant conceits rather than deep, sincere emotion.

Herrick, who appears in the table as sole representative of this large number of song writers, was the son of a

**Herrick** London goldsmith. Soon after leaving Cambridge he took orders, and failing to receive an appointment that would keep him near the



royal court, the ambition of nearly every writer of his day, he accepted a small charge in the country where for a score of years he lived a simple bachelor life, taking religious duties none too seriously, apparently, and finding during his long exile his greatest solace in recording in verse the simple pleasures of rustic life. He is best known today, perhaps, of all the Cavalier poets.

Belonging more strictly to Puritan and Cavalier times than either the songs or the dramas, which are but survivals from Elizabethan days, is a considerable quantity of prose—sermons, his-

Prose works

tories, political and scientific tracts, etc., for the most part without the pale of pure literature, though it would be easy to select half a dozen prose writers whose works are still rated as classics. Bishop Taylor's

*Holy Living* and its companion piece *Holy Dying* are perhaps the best representatives

Taylor and  
Walton

of devotional literature; but of all the prose writers of the period save one, the securest place has been gained by Izaak Walton, a man of little education, but a book-lover, who was for many years a London shopkeeper, though the last twenty years of his long life were spent in the palace of his friend the Bishop of Winchester. He was the first to write short, informal biographical sketches; but he is better known by his *Complete Angler*, published in his sixtieth year, which remains not only the best but the only manual on the art and pleasure of fishing that is recognized as belonging unmistakably to pure literature. It is a delightful volume.

Needless to say, the greatest writer of the century is John Milton, who with Shakespeare constitutes the supreme glory of our literature. It is well to remember how closely related these two men are in point of time; Milton was eight years old when

Milton

Shakespeare died. He is often termed the last of the Elizabethans, so unmistakably do his writings reflect the influence of the Renaissance. This is true of his earlier poems, written during his seven years at Cambridge and the succeeding five years passed at Horton, his father's country seat, in a continuation of his study of Greek, Latin, Italian, and English literature. The very best of the lyric poetry mentioned in an earlier paragraph is Milton's, composed in his young manhood days. It is truly Elizabethan in spirit. Following this early period came twenty years during which Milton wrote little save prose, much of it controversial, for he became the literary champion of the Puritan cause. It was in his later years that he returned to poetry. Then it was that, blind, poor, his life for a time in danger because of the prominent part he had played during the Commonwealth, he composed his great epic *Paradise Lost*, soon followed by *Paradise Regained* and *Samson Agonistes*. In these as in his earlier works we see the influence of his close study of Greek and Latin classics, yet even more marked is the influence of the Bible. *Paradise Lost* is itself the story of Adam's fall, based upon Old Testament narrative. It marks the conclusion of that long line of sacred poetry which began with the Caedmon paraphrases. Thus it is right to say that in Milton are combined the best that the Renaissance and the Reformation brought to England.

Milton was the son of a wealthy, cultured London scrivener, a Puritan who loved music and was himself a musician of ability. He received every advantage that could come from a good Puritan home, from college education, and from travel abroad. In marked contrast is John Bunyan, the second great Puritan of the century. He was the son of a poor kettle-maker, received but little schooling, read few books,

and never looked upon literature save as a means for converting sinners. He became what we should call an evangelist, and in time a famous preacher of great influence throughout England. Many years of his life were spent in jail, for in those days dissenting preachers were considered law-breakers, and while in jail he composed many of his works. His masterpiece, *The Pilgrim's Progress*, stands alone, the greatest allegory in all English literature and, next to the Bible, the one book that has most greatly influenced the moral life of the English people.

It should be noted that *Paradise Lost* and *Pilgrim's Progress*, the only great Puritan masterpieces, belong chronologically to the next period, for they were not published till after the Restoration. **The Puritans** in 1660. As a class, the Puritans were not art-loving; to many of them music and poetry and art were vanities, or worse. Literature, save that of great genius which no unfavorable conditions can ever suppress, could not be expected from people holding such views. Yet to think that these two masterpieces are the only products of Puritanism would be as great an error as to think that Puritanism came to an abrupt end when the banished Stuarts returned to England. The political supremacy of the Puritans was brief, but their influence upon national character was lasting; and the character of a nation is sure to be reflected in its literature.

## CHAPTER XXVII

### RESTORATION PERIOD: 1660-1700

**John Dryden 1631-1700** Plays, satires, translations, critical essays; †Alexander's Feast

When Charles II and his followers returned to England after their long banishment, there was a notable rebound from the straight-laced Puritan rule of Commonwealth days. The theatres, closed since 1642, were reopened, and for the first time the French custom of permitting women to act was followed. Few of the older dramatists remained, but new playwrights straightway appeared whose clever, witty comedies picturing the follies of polite society delighted the town. We should like to believe these pictures overdrawn, so shamelessly dissolute are they; but we have only to read the diary of Samuel Pepys, a London tailor's son who rose to be secretary to the admiralty, to be convinced that fashionable London was as immoral as it was gay. This gossipy diary in which Pepys recorded, in cipher, the minutest details of his life, was intended for his eye alone. Its testimony is therefore reliable.

Many have attributed this state of affairs to the King's long stay in France. Certain it is that writers of tragedy were influenced by French models in which rhyme took the place of blank verse, and the classical unities of time, place, and action were observed. How inferior Restoration tragedy is to Elizabethan may be seen by comparing Dryden's *All for Love* with Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra*, two plays

based upon the same historic events. Although the dramatists constructed their plays after French rules, they recognized Shakespeare's genius. He was considered somewhat barbarous and antiquated, however, and a number of his plays were rewritten, the plot construction changed, the language modernized, and rhyme substituted for blank verse!

Of the non-dramatic literature of this period, it is noticeable that a large part is satirical poetry. One of the most popular books of the day was Samuel Butler's *Hudibras*, a burlesque romance ridiculing the Puritans. It was an age of criticism and satire, and poetry was made to do much of the mean work of political warfare now carried on by our newspapers. But the political wrangles of those early times when the Whig and Tory parties were newly formed are so far away from us that the long, clever, biting satires of the day are no longer read save by students.

As for prose, the Restoration period was preëminently one of prose, most of which lies without the pale of pure literature, if we except the comedies already mentioned. Sermons, histories, scientific works, and the like, we may disregard, though pieces of much less excellence have received notice in earlier periods. When in 1662 the Royal Society (for the cultivation of the natural sciences) was founded, one of its regulations urged the members to strive after clearness, directness, and conversational ease in their writings rather than after cleverness and ornamentation. Purity, clearness, combined with ease and polish, formed the ideal which chastened Restoration prose generally. No attempt was made to render it poetical, after the manner of the Elizabethans.

Satirical  
poetry

A period of  
prose pre-  
eminently

Although it was a time of unusual intellectual brilliancy, the period produced but one great writer, John Dryden, a lifelong man of letters, lacking in the creative imagination which lifts Shakespeare and Milton above their times, lacking too in moral and emotional qualities, but a man of great intellect and a master craftsman able to use his pen along many lines of composition. Twenty or more plays stand to his credit. His non-dramatic poetry fills eight hundred pages or more, closely packed, and his critical essays, most of which are found as prefaces to his plays, are models of clear, vigorous, rapid English. His best tragedies out-top all contemporary drama. He is the first great English satirist. His translation of the *Æneid* remains a standard today. His songs are perhaps the best—which is poor praise—among the inferior ones of his time. He wrote heroic verse (rhyming pentameter couplets) with greater skill than any of his contemporaries. That his works are now but seldom read is due to the fact that he was, after all, merely a craftsman, not a genius, no greater than the times for which he wrote. The whim of fortune is well illustrated by the fact that to the great body of readers he is best known today not by any of his more ambitious pieces but by *Alexander's Feast*, a song written to order for a musical society, in honor of St. Cecilia.

## CHAPTER XXVIII

### QUEEN ANNE PERIOD: 1700-1744

Daniel Defoe 1661 (?)–1731	°Robinson Crusoe
Jonathan Swift 1667–1745	°Gulliver's Travels
Richard Steele 1671–1729	The Spectator
Joseph Addison 1672–1719	The Spectator
Alexander Pope 1688–1744	†Rape of the Lock, †Transl. of the Iliad

This period extends from the death of Dryden to the death of his successor, Pope, yet it most commonly bears the name of the queen during whose brief reign (1702–1714) the important writers came into prominence. It is also called the Classical or Augustan Age, for Latin models were followed as in Dryden's day, and the authors who flourished under the Roman emperor Augustus were revered as masters. Another of its names is the Age of Prose. Of the five writers whose names appear in the table, the first four are prose writers, and not a little of Queen Anne poetry is of the satirical or didactic order, which in spirit most nearly approaches prose. Finally, it might well be called the Age of Political Controversy. Party feeling ran high, and the weapon used in political warfare was the pamphlet. Party leaders were glad to secure the services of bright young university graduates of literary ability. At no other time in England's history have men of letters been so closely connected with public affairs and never so richly rewarded for party service.

Of the four prose writers whom we are to consider, three were among the most prominent of political partisans;

Defoe, the fourth, though a most energetic and influential pamphleteer, occupied a middle position between this prominent trio and that small army of cheap hack-writers who have made Grub Street famous. The details of his life are none too certainly known. His father was a butcher. At one time Defoe was a wholesale hosier, at another time the proprietor of a brick factory. Twice he was bankrupt for large sums. For offending the Government through his political pamphlets, he was pilloried and imprisoned. Although his later years were marked by a degree of prosperity which enabled him to build a "handsome house" where he might have lived in moderate luxury, he died in lodgings, presumably hiding from persecutors who may have been the creation of a diseased mind. Defoe's ability as a pamphleteer is attested by the sale of one of his satires, which reached 80,000 copies. Because of his *Review*, a newspaper issued while he was in Newgate prison, and written entirely without assistance, he has been called the founder of English journalism. His reputation rests mainly, however, on *Robinson Crusoe*, one of seven prose fictions written towards the close of his life. It is unnecessary to say that this is a world classic, the model after which hundreds of stories of adventures have been patterned, though no one has succeeded in doing half so well as the none too scrupulous Queen Anne pamphleteer and journalist, concerning whom a contemporary writes, "The little art that he is truly master of is forging a story and imposing it on the world for truth."

The most original thinker of all the Queen Anne "wits," and the most savagely vigorous satirist in all English literature, is Jonathan Swift, who rose rapidly from comparative obscurity and poverty to commanding position among the literary politicians of his



day. Soon after leaving college he took orders. It was his ambition to win, through serving the Tory party, a bishopric; but when the coveted prize was almost within his grasp, promises were broken, and Swift received merely the deanery of St. Patrick's in Ireland. In Ireland the last thirty years of his life were, for the most part, spent. He was a bitterly disappointed man; to leave England was like going into exile. Madness finally overtook him, and this was followed by imbecility. During the last three years of his life he scarcely ever spoke a word. Able critics declare that Swift's greatest work is practically his earliest satire, *The Tale of a Tub*; but the world at large knows merely his *Gulliver's Travels*, which is, like *Robinson Crusoe*, surely a world classic. Readers fascinated by the imaginary Gulliver's account of his voyages to Lilliput, Brobdingnag, and Laputa seldom realize that the entire book is the most scathing satire on humanity ever penned. It was written some years after Swift's retirement to Ireland, his brilliant career among the coffee house wits of London a thing of the past.

Addison and Steele we associate with the rise of periodical literature. Newspapers of a sort there had been well back in the seventeenth century, but these two men were the first to popularize the periodical essay. Their *Tatler* and *Spectator* are the first and best of a series of similar short-lived periodicals which reaches through the first three-quarters of the eighteenth century. Each number of the *Spectator*, as every school boy knows, contained a single essay, conversational in style, addressed mainly to that polite circle of men who gathered daily at the coffee houses so numerous and popular in Queen Anne days, and to the card-playing, tea-drinking, frivolous ladies of gay London's drawing-rooms. Some of the essays are reviews of books and plays,

Addison  
and Steele

some are on religious themes, but most of them are light, impersonal satires aimed at the follies of the hour. They exerted a quiet influence on morals, and doubtless popularized good literature at a time when trashy French romances of interminable length were in vogue. Today they are valued partly for the accurate pictures furnished of London society as it was in the early years of the eighteenth century, partly because they are models of easy, graceful style, touched with humor. Addison and Steele were public men, deep in politics. The writing of essays occupied but little of their time. Steele became a prominent member of parliament, Addison rose from office to office till he was made Secretary of State. Aside from victories and defeats through shifting politics, their lives were not eventful. Their characters are best studied in their essays and in the unrivaled delineations found in Thackeray's *English Humorists*.

Queen Anne drama offers little of interest to the modern reader. Comedy had been shamed into a moderate degree of decency by a pamphlet written by Jeremy Collier in 1688, entitled *A Short View of the Immorality and Profaneness of the Stage*. It continued clever, polished, light, and of little merit. Tragedy still followed classical rules, was stiff and conventional, never reaching the level of Dryden's best pieces. Perhaps the most attractive dramatic work of the period is the *Beggars' Opera* by Gay, the only poet of the period who possessed the gift of song.

That Fortune makes many a strange choice when bestowing fame is often illustrated in the history of English letters, but nowhere more strikingly than in the case of Alexander Pope, the son of a London linen merchant of slender means. He received little education; indeed the poor health which followed him through life prohibited hard study. His frail body

was deformed; it is said that his condition was such that "he required to be lifted out of bed, and could not stand until he was laced into a sort of harness." Even had his health been normal, the fact that he was a Catholic would have barred him from most schools and universities, and from most of the professions. And yet, though so pitifully handicapped, at twenty-one Pope had gained his reputation and for thirty years was the recognized leader in the field of poetry. His success was due in large measure to his complete mastery of that form of verse which Dryden had popularized, the heroic couplet; it was due also to his ability to study a model and then better it. French models are to be found for most of his poems, yet it is but fair to add that his poems in turn served as patterns for many writers, European as well as English. He was not a man of original ideas, was not gifted with imagination or deep emotion; but it has been truly said that there is scarcely a belief, tradition, or ideal of his age which is not discovered lucidly set down in his poems.

One of Pope's earliest successes is a mock heroic, *The Rape of the Lock*, which tells, in the grand style of the *Iliad* or the *Æneid*, how a mischievous lord snipped a curl from the head of a court beauty while at a card party, and of the "tempest in a teapot" which followed. It is the best thing of its little kind in the language. Pope's greatest work, which finally established his fame and enabled him to live in comparative luxury the remainder of his life, is his translation of the *Iliad*, which, though "it is not Homer," has held its place ever since among similar attempts. Although by far the best of the period, Pope is not a poet of the first rank, nor is his character altogether lovely. Perhaps a liberal estimate is that which calls him "a very great man imprisoned in a little rickety body which warped and pinched certain members of his mind."

## CHAPTER XXIX

### THE AGE OF JOHNSON: 1744-1789

<b>Samuel Johnson</b> 1769-1784	Dictionary, Lives of the Poets
David Hume 1711-1776	History of England
Edward Gibbon 1737-1794	Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire
<b>Edmund Burke</b> 1729-1797	Speech on Conciliation with America
James Boswell 1740-1795	Life of Dr. Johnson
<b>Samuel Richardson</b> 1689-1761	°Clarissa Harlowe
<b>Henry Fielding</b> 1707-1754	°Amelia
<b>Laurence Sterne</b> 1713-1768	°Tristram Shandy
Tobias Smollett 1721-1771	°The Expedition of Humphrey Clinker
<b>Thomas Gray</b> 1716-1771	†Elegy in a Country Church-yard
<b>Oliver Goldsmith</b> 1728-1774	†Deserted Village, °Vicar of Wakefield, She Stoops to Conquer
William Cowper 1731-1800	†The Task
William Blake 1757-1827	†Songs of Innocence
Richard Sheridan 1751-1816	The Rivals

This period, which includes the years between the death of Pope and the outbreak of the French Revolution, is, **A period of prose pre-eminently** like the preceding era, conspicuously one of prose, and much of this prose is of a very substantial kind in which the emotions are less conspicuous than the intellect. Were we tracing the history of English thought rather than of literature in the narrower, higher sense, our table would include perhaps a score of additional names, important because they repre-

sent the best of the very solid thinking of the age. Much, for example, was written in the field of theology. Philosophy was as fashionable a study with the educated classes as the writing of sonnets had been with Elizabethan courtiers. Many great minds were busy in the field of political science and political economy. A little nearer the realm of polite letters are a number of massive histories, the first of permanent importance in English literature. Two of these are given place in the table. Finally, it may be said with confidence that at no other time, in any country, were there so many brilliant orators as are found in the remarkable group to which Chatham, Burke, Fox, and Pitt belonged. It was an age of fiery eloquence; and it might well be added, an age of rare conversational skill.

A glance at the table, however, will show at once that not all the literature was of the solid prose order. There is a good variety. What is more, as we study the lives of the principal writers, we learn that though London is still the great magnet by which all are irresistibly drawn, her monopoly is not complete. Genius is beginning to scatter. Two or three of the authors whom we have selected are Scotch, two or three are Irish. Country will soon be competing with town. A partial explanation of the change that is coming over literature is found in the remarkable changes that are taking place in England herself. Population is increasing rapidly. Manufacturing interests are developing with wonderful rapidity, bringing into prominence the towns of the north and west. A network of good roads is bringing town and country nearer each other. Along the main roads speed mail coaches; newspapers are circulating throughout the realm the intelligence which in former days was confined pretty much to the metropolis. Moreover England's colonies, particularly America, have grown into

National  
development

tremendous importance, not only furnishing markets for English goods but presenting serious problems in colonial management. Wider interests, a greater degree of intelligence, more readers and more classes of readers,—these naturally lead to a greater and more complex literary output.

Passing by the weighty prose mentioned in the first paragraph, we may say that the most important, certainly the most interesting, form that literature took was the novel. Prose fiction of a kind we have found in earlier periods—in such works as More's *Utopia*, Lyly's *Euphues*, Sidney's *Arcadia*, Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, and Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*. *Robinson Crusoe* brings us a step nearer, for the incidents in this delightful story might have happened. Strictly speaking, however, our first real novelist is Samuel Richardson, a prosperous, portly, affable London printer. How Richardson, at the age of fifty, began writing novels is interesting. Some publishers engaged him to compose a series of letters designed to form a "letter-writer" or "polite correspondence" book. It occurred to the printer in accepting this commission that he might weave into these letters a moral tale, and the result was a four volume novel in letter form telling how Pamela, a virtuous serving maid, resisted the temptations placed in her way by her wild young master, and was at length rewarded for her purity and strength of character by becoming his bride—a bride who reforms her husband. This first novel, appealing very little to the intellect and very much to the emotions, was an immediate success not only in England but throughout Europe. To us of today, accustomed to shorter, livelier, more dramatic stories, *Pamela* seems tediously long drawn out, its narrative commonplace, its morals petty and obvious.

We are surprised to learn that it was read aloud and wept over in many families, and that the author received scores of letters from tearfully sentimental readers, men as well as women. Yet Richardson's three novels are commonly acknowledged by critics to be among the greatest in British fiction. Some of his characters are drawn with such minute fidelity that they seem very real, like Sir Roger de Coverley in the *Spectator Papers*.

Among those to whom Richardson's puritanically moral *Pamela* seemed but wishy-washy twaddle was Henry Fielding. Fielding, belonging to the younger **Fielding** branch of a noble house, was no Puritan but a careless, big-hearted spendthrift, leading a merry life among London wits, frequently in debt, who had drifted into play writing. He was a humorist. Straightway the idea seized him of burlesquing Richardson's novel by writing a companion piece in which Pamela's brother Joseph, a serving man, should virtuously resist all temptations. For a time this wicked jest pleased him; but as he proceeded with the story, carrying his hero through a series of lively adventures in high life and low, the humorist became so interested in his characters that he abandoned his original purpose. The result was a somewhat rough, hearty, humorous production, with ideals of manhood and womanhood which, though not the loftiest, are free from namby-pamby. He lived to do better work; critics do not agree whether the palm belongs to him or to Richardson.

This form of literature once established, many writers adopted it, and with varying success. If we except Goldsmith, whose delightful *Vicar of Wakefield* is too well known and loved to call for comment, the best of these novelists are Smollett **Smollett and Sterne** and Sterne, the former a warm-hearted, irritable Scotchman, for many years a ship-surgeon and later a struggling

writer who barely made a living; the latter a none too saintly minister, writer of witty sermons as well as of prose fiction. Smollett's novels are coarse but humorous. In them we meet for the first time the British tar. His best novel, written during the illness which terminated in his death, is highly praised by Thackeray. Sterne's two novels, inferior to Richardson's and Fielding's, are formless, sentimental things, immoral, yet fascinating. At least one of his characters is among the best drawn in all literature.

Viewing the fiction of this period collectively, we cannot but note one thing: it is not romantic. It pictures, or strives to picture, not ideal life in an ideal country, but English contemporary life and manners as seen through the eyes not of courtiers but of people belonging to the middle class. With the exception of *The Vicar of Wakefield*, it does not furnish desirable reading for the young; for ideas concerning what scenes should be represented and what matters discussed in novels have changed since the somewhat too free and outspoken days of the eighteenth century.

Prose fiction and drama, it has often been remarked, seldom flourish side by side. Drama during the middle  
**Comedy**                      third of the century, and indeed later, was very weak, particularly tragedy. Among the writers of comedy, however, were two who are often called the best since Shakespeare. These are Goldsmith and Sheridan, whose *She Stoops to Conquer* and *The Rivals* are still popular and mirth producing. Like the novels, they picture contemporary manners.

The story of Goldsmith's life, too long to tell in this  
**Goldsmith**                      summary, is as interesting as most novels. He did more foolish things, was a failure at more things, than any other man we have considered.



He was very vain, and very improvident; but his biographers also use the words candor, generosity, simplicity, and sweetness in telling of his character. Notwithstanding his many failures, it was his lot to produce a play, a novel, and two poems which are classics. His essays are among the best of his day. Sheridan, like Goldsmith, was of Irish parentage, his father an actor, his mother a playwright and novelist. Although early pronounced an impenetrable dunce by his mother, at twenty-eight he had written six successful comedies and established his fame. At twenty-eight his literary career closed abruptly. He became a member of parliament and engaged in bitter political controversy. For a time he was manager of Drury Lane theatre. His fortune varied from great prosperity to poverty. He died deeply in debt.

Sheridan

Although the larger histories credit this period with perhaps a score of poets, with the exception of Goldsmith, Gray, and Blake they are not generally known to modern readers. It is a transitional period, in which the old is dying out slowly and the new as slowly gaining ground. By the old is meant poetry patterned after that of Dryden and Pope, coldly intellectual, following classical models, and written in heroic couplets, the favorite measure till near the close of the century. By the new is meant poetry of a mellower type, in which nature, seldom treated by Queen Anne poets save in an artificial way, is increasingly prominent. Very, very gradually the new poetry is gaining in simplicity, in emotional qualities, and in melody.

The change  
in poetry

The earliest poet to show this new vein is Thomson, the son of a Scotch clergyman, who came to London when Pope was at the height of his power, succeeded in winning patrons, and somehow

Thomson

managed to lead an easy life. His four poems, *Winter, Spring, Summer, and Autumn*, now little read, heralded

the faint beginnings of nature poetry. This same love for nature, and a turning away

from the satirical vein of the town poets, is seen in the slender volume which contains the poems of Gray, especially in his well known *Elegy*, and in Goldsmith's *The Traveller* and the *Deserted Village*. Towards the close of the century the transition from the old manner to the new is even more marked in Cowper and Blake. Many who

have laughed over Cowper's *John Gilpin* do not dream that its author was a moody

man, now gay, now suffering from the blackest melancholy deepening at times into insanity, and that finally he lost his mind altogether. He is remembered today by his *John Gilpin*, by his tender lines entitled *On the Receipt of my Mother's Picture out of Norfolk*, and by wonderful little descriptive passages scattered through an otherwise tedious poem of great length, *The Task*, in which he describes the scenes, occupations, and characters of rural life. An even more remarkable man was Blake, by pro-

fession an engraver, whose life was one of obscurity and poverty. From early child-

hood days he saw visions—of God, of “armies of angels that soar, legions of devils that lurk.” His poetry is strange and mystical, some of it too obscure for comprehension, but in his *Songs of Innocence* and *Songs of Experience* (how different the field suggested by these titles from that wherein Dryden and Pope worked!) are found some of the “simplest and sweetest, as well as some of the most powerful, short poems in the language.” Blake, it will be noted, lived well into the nineteenth century.

Three prose writers remain to be considered, Burke,

Johnson, and Boswell. The first of these DeQuincey has termed the "supreme writer of the century." Others have declared that his was the greatest mind since Shakespeare's, though Carlyle maintains that he was "a resplendent, far-sighted rhetorician, rather than a deep and earnest thinker." In a way he lies without our province, for his field was oratory; yet because his speeches have been carefully preserved and are models of forceful eloquence, it would be a blunder to omit all mention of this brilliant, earnest Irishman who came to London entirely without influence and became in a few years one of the foremost figures in English politics.

This period appropriately bears the name of Samuel Johnson, son of a bookseller in the little cathedral town of Lichfield. When a young man he came to London at a time when the literary profession was very poorly paid, for years endured bitter poverty as a hack-writer for booksellers, but gradually won his way to prominence, and for many years was the leading figure in English letters, looked up to by all contemporary writers. Most of these writers were his personal friends, and many of them, such as Burke, Goldsmith, Sheridan, and Gibbon, were members of the Club, of which Johnson was a charter member. At the meetings of this Club, Johnson was ever the leader in conversation, delivering opinions on a vast variety of subjects, some trivial, some most weighty; for he loved to talk, and his great philosophical mind found easy expression. Johnson's works include two satirical poems, an unsuccessful tragedy, a didactic novel, a dictionary of the English language, essays, and biographical sketches, nearly all of which are now forgotten. That Johnson is today the best known writer of the century is due to James Boswell, a young Scotch lawyer, member of the Club, who attached himself to the

philosopher as a dog to his master, recorded his conversation with painstaking minuteness, and finally wrote what is admitted to be the best biography of its kind ever produced. As we read this stupendous work we cannot but agree with Macaulay that Johnson was a great and good man.

## CHAPTER XXX

### WORDSWORTH-SCOTT ERA: 1789-1832

Robert Burns 1759-1796	†Songs, †The Cotter's Saturday Night
Sir Walter Scott 1771-1832	†Lady of the Lake, °The Waverley Novels
William Wordsworth 1770-1850	†The Daffodils, †Ode on Immortality
Samuel T. Coleridge 1772-1834	†Ancient Mariner
Lord Byron 1788-1824	†Childe Harold
Percy B. Shelley 1792-1822	†To a Skylark, †Prometheus Unbound
John Keats 1795-1821	†To a Nightingale, †Hyperion
Jane Austen 1775-1817	°Pride and Prejudice
Charles Lamb 1775-1834	Essays of Elia
Thomas DeQuincey 1785-1859	Confessions of an English Opium Eater

This period extends from the beginning of the French Revolution to the death of Scott. It is fittingly named after two great writers, who best represent the new tendencies in literature: Wordsworth the poet of nature, who stands but little lower than Milton; and Scott, the most prominent figure in the field of historical romance in verse and prose. This period produced no great actable drama, no epics, yet with the exception of the Elizabethan it is the most remarkable in all English literature, particularly rich in lyrical poetry, though prose fiction and the essay are prominent. It is represented by many names, far more than appear in our necessarily limited table.

A period rich  
in poetry

That the literature of this period is not only better than that of the two preceding ones but very different in character is seen at every turn, especially in poetry, and nowhere more conspicuously than in the works of Robert Burns. A poor, uneducated peasant boy, composing songs in the vernacular to fit old Scottish airs as his plow turned the furrow; but a few years later, for a brief time the lion of brilliant Edinburgh society; at thirty-seven, poor, neglected, deeply remorseful concerning his dissipated life, dying miserably in pitiful obscurity: such is the familiar story of our greatest songwriter. His simple melodies, full of tenderness and sympathy touched with humor, full of love for nature, his fellow men, his rugged country, full of hatred of sham and bigotry, have endeared him to the entire world. A greater contrast can hardly be imagined than that between the artificial, coldly intellectual lines which brought fame and riches to Pope, the commanding poet at the beginning of the century, and the tender, spontaneous songs of the unlettered peasant with which the century closes.

Burns, the lyric poet and painter of familiar scenes from country life, found his subject matter at his door. Scott's passion was for the long ago when the harp was heard in hall and bower. He lamented the disappearance of the minstrel, so prominent a figure in earlier times. His hobby during his young manhood days had been the collecting of ancient legends and ballads. At length he tried his own hand at minstrel poetry. *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*, *Marmion*, and *The Lady of the Lake*, first of some seven or eight long poems which came from his pen in rapid succession, gained an immediate popularity, so different were they from anything else that had ever appeared. The reading world was tired of satirical and philosophical poetry, and quickly cast it aside

for these new romances with their scenes of love and war and adventure in which historical personages figure as heroes and heroines. The sales were unprecedented, and Scott, the none too successful lawyer, became famous.

Although these poems still have hundreds of thousands of readers, for the world seldom wearies of gallant knights and ladies fair and all the trappings that go with chivalry, this new Scottish minstrel

**Byron**

slipped into the background when the young and beautiful Lord Byron awoke one morning to find himself famous through his romance of travel, *Childe Harold*. Childe Harold is but Lord Byron, his long poem but a record of European travels in lands recently brought into prominence through the stirring events following the French Revolution. Its descriptive passages, its stanzas in which the moody, pessimistic, yet freedom-loving poet describes his emotions upon contemplating this scene and that, so appealed to the great masses that Byron became the idol of all Europe. A man of "careless yet great poetical gifts" undoubtedly he was; his subject matter was new and his personality fascinating; but his fame has slowly declined. Scott, posterity has decided, is the sweeter, more wholesome poet. His works are not tainted with voluptuousness and scorn for accepted codes of morals as are Byron's; nor does Scott ever parade his own sorrows.

Byron's life ended nobly, for he died of fever while fighting for Greek freedom; but his young manhood days were wild and passionate, and his later life

**Wordsworth**

on the continent, where much of his time was spent, was far from faultless. Very different was the career of William Wordsworth, who lived a quiet, blameless life of plain living and high thinking. A small legacy from a friend, afterwards supplemented by other sums gained through inheritance, relieved him of all care concerning

money matters. We associate him with the beautiful lake and mountain region of northwestern England, where most of his days were passed in ideal companionship with his wife and his sister Dorothy. He was a life-long poet, for years the object of ridicule on the part of the critics, but living to be recognized as one whose works were in a way revolutionary.

The Queen Anne writers had believed that correctness and polish should be sought even at the expense of individuality. They subjected themselves to rules. Wordsworth's theory of poetry The heroic couplet was adopted as the one perfect measure, and poets employed a select vocabulary of choice words, as if the phrases of common speech were too inelegant for verse. The favorite themes were philosophical and satirical. Against all this Wordsworth rebelled. He believed no vocabulary more poetical than that of common speech, no matter more fit for the poet's use than his daily experiences and the simple objects contemplated day by day. He employed a variety of meters, including the sonnet form, which had been neglected for a century and more.

Wordsworth is our greatest nature poet. He lived with Nature, communed with her as if she were a spirit, drew from her his philosophy, if not his religion. Wordsworth a nature poet Volumes have been written on Wordsworth's nature-worship, but we do not need to read them to enjoy, and in a measure understand, the simpler of his poems in which he records his companionship with mountains, brooks, trees, flowers, birds, the peaceful lake, and the starlit skies.

Notwithstanding the fact that Wordsworth's poetry deals largely with nature and the simple life of the peasants who lived about him, he should be credited with imagination and deep thought. His



imagination is of a very different kind, however, from that which we find in Coleridge's weird poem of the supernatural, *Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, which first appeared in a little volume made up of verses written by these brother poets. Coleridge was a life-long dreamer, his career most exasperating to those who believe that even poets should support themselves and their families. Apparently he was absolutely helpless in business affairs, unable to follow a venture for any length of time. His will, never very strong, was weakened by the use of opium, first taken as a medicine. Much of his life he was dependent on others for support. And yet this indolent man, most of whose poems are but fragments of uncompleted works, was one of the greatest thinkers of his day. As a conversationalist he ranks with Johnson. His lectures on Shakespeare, saved to us through notes taken by those who listened, are among the best in that field. What poet can be named whose verses have the melody peculiar to Coleridge's best lines? The *Ancient Mariner* stands alone, the only great poem of the weirdly supernatural in the language.

Shelley and Keats, the last two poets to be considered, present a number of striking contrasts. Keats was of lowly parentage, his father a groom in a London livery stable. He was physically **Keats** frail, destined to die of consumption at twenty-six. He had little education, and was practically without influential friends. What he would have produced had his life been spared can be conjectured only; yet even amid adverse circumstances he produced a few poems which clearly entitle him to rank among the great. Keats was not a thinker; his poetry is not a vehicle for ideas, but a record of acutely felt sensations. It is sometimes affirmed that his one message is contained in his well known, though enigmatic, lines

Beauty is truth, truth beauty; that is all  
We know on earth and all we need to know.

Like Wordsworth, he was a nature poet; yet his inspiration came largely from books. He was fascinated by the music and imagery of the *Færie Queene*. Chapman's *Homer*, as he has told us in one of his most perfect poems, opened to him a whole world of unsuspected beauty, and he reveled in the romance of the Middle Ages. His longer poems retell with wonderful beauty tales from classical mythology and mediæval legend.

Shelley was of aristocratic birth, the son of a substantial gentleman as matter of fact as his son was visionary and wilful. His entire life was a series of striking incidents, from the time he was expelled from college for printing a pamphlet advocating atheism till his death by drowning at thirty. Keats did not meddle with the great problems perplexing the world in the years following the Revolution; he lived in his little world of sensuous beauty. Shelley was a violent revolutionist, in rebellion against all restraint, social, political, and religious. He saw the misery and the tyranny of the world, and threw himself into attempt after attempt to make the world better and happier, obedient to no rule save that of love. We cannot follow in detail the career of this impractical reformer, though it is one of dramatic interest. Of poetry he wrote an amazing amount, in which imagination of the highest kind is most prominent. He is perhaps the most ethereal of all our singers, his flights many of them too lofty for any save poets to follow. To common readers he is best known by his shorter pieces, such as his matchless *Ode to the West Wind* and *To a Skylark*.

These seven poets, Burns, Scott, Byron, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Keats, and Shelley, make this a remarkable era

of poetry. Prose fiction too shows a perceptible advance, reaching new heights in the works of Jane Austen and Walter Scott. While these two are the great names, it should not be forgotten that between the days of Sterne, last of the five great eighteenth century novelists, and Jane Austen, first of the five or six great novelists of the nineteenth century, there were in this comparatively new field scores of writers who had their hour of popularity, and that during the lifetime of Scott still other scores appeared. Not a few of these were women. Frances Burney's *Evelina*, a society novel popular in the days of Johnson, Burke, and Goldsmith, who were her intimate friends, still finds occasional readers. Mrs. Edgeworth's tales of Irish life and Jane Porter's *Thaddeus of Warsaw* and *The Scottish Chiefs* are not wholly forgotten; indeed the last named book is still quite popular with young readers.

Prose fiction

Frances  
Burney

"Quiet, homely, wholesome Jane Austen:" thus has been characterized by one critic the author of *Pride and Prejudice*, concerning whom Scott once declared, "That young lady has a talent for describing the involvements of feelings and characters of ordinary life which is to me the most wonderful I ever met with." Publishers were very slow in accepting her manuscripts; they doubted if her quiet, domestic tales, as free from the sensational as was her own life in a village rectory, would find many readers. But today Jane Austen is ranked with the greatest of novelists.

Jane Austen

Of Scott, it is hardly necessary to say anything, so well known are the twenty-nine historical romances which came from his pen after he realized that the popularity once his as a poet had passed to Lord Byron. This brilliant series marks the climax of

Scott

romantic historical fiction, so different in kind from eighteenth century fiction in which contemporary life is pictured.

Lamb and DeQuincey are undoubtedly the best known essayists of the period. The former was the son of a lawyer's confidential servant. He went to school with Coleridge and was his life-long friend. Very pathetic is the story of "gentle-hearted Charles," as Coleridge called him, but it cannot be told in this brief summary. He was known to many merely as a clerk in the India House; the few choice spirits who enjoyed the hospitality of the modest lodgings where he and his sister Mary lived knew him as an inveterate play-goer, a lover of old books, old furniture, and whist, nervous, emotional, generous, lovable. No author in all the realm of letters, it is safe to say, is better loved than Elia, as he signed himself when writing short essays for the *London Magazine*—essays which differ from Addison's in that they reveal the writer's personality; for he shares with the reader his likes and dislikes. He polished and rewrote, yet his essays convey the impression of unstudied conversation. Lamb's essays fill but a single volume; DeQuincey was a life-long magazine writer, whose many works cover a wide range, though he is best known by his dream literature, particularly as found in his *Confessions of an English Opium Eater*. He was a shy, eccentric, scholarly recluse, by nature affectionate, like Coleridge a marvelous talker, like Coleridge too a slave to opium. He is one of the recognized masters of English style.

As we view collectively the works of this wonderful period we readily see how different they are from those of the two preceding eras. First we note that classical models have been cast aside, and the somewhat artificial diction of eighteenth century poetry has been supplanted. Burns

uses the vernacular of Scottish peasants and Wordsworth deliberately selects the simple language of the middle classes. Second, though Queen Anne writers were more deeply interested in their own times and looked upon earlier days as somewhat barbarous, less than a century later the romantic past is fascinating poet and novelist. The ancient ballads are collected by Bishop Percy; Scott and Keats find much of their subject matter in the romance of the Middle Ages, and Lamb lives with the minor dramatists of Shakespeare's day. Third, a new prominence is given to nature. Wordsworth writes of mountains and brooks, of clouds and daffodils. The roar of the ocean rolls through Byron's poetry. Shelley sings of the skylark and Keats of the nightingale. The charm of *The Lady of the Lake* is in no small measure attributable to Scott's vivid description of romantic scenery. The town has lost its fascination. Fourth, we cannot but note a marked increase in human sympathy, tender and democratic. The artificial barriers of society and rank are being torn down; the aristocracy of letters is a thing of the past. Burns idealizes the life of the peasant; Wordsworth writes of Peter Bell and Lucy Gray. Shelley devoted his young life to the betterment of the world, and Byron, by birth an aristocrat, died for the cause of liberty. Finally, few are the writers of this period who were not deeply moved by the French Revolution; and the influence of German literature, then at its highest excellence, is seen in the trend of English thought.

## CHAPTER XXXI

### VICTORIAN ERA: 1832-1900

<p><b>Alfred, Lord Tennyson</b> 1809-1892</p> <p><b>Robert Browning</b> 1812-1889</p> <p><b>William Makepeace Thackeray</b> 1811-1863</p> <p><b>Charles Dickens</b> 1812-1870</p> <p><b>George Eliot</b> 1819-1880</p> <p><b>Robert Louis Stevenson</b> 1845- 1894</p> <p><b>Thomas Carlyle</b> 1795-1881</p> <p><b>Thomas B. Macaulay</b> 1800-1859</p> <p><b>John Ruskin</b> 1819-1900</p>	<p>†Idylls of the King, †In Memoriam</p> <p>†The Ring and the Book, †Dramatic Lyrics</p> <p>°Henry Esmond, The English Humorists</p> <p>°David Copperfield, °A Tale of Two Cities</p> <p>°Silas Marner, °The Mill on the Floss</p> <p>°Treasure Island, °The Merrymen and other Tales</p> <p>Sartor Resartus, History of the French Revolution</p> <p>Biographical Essays, History of England</p> <p>Stones of Venice</p>
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This period is difficult to summarize for two reasons. First, we are bewildered by a multitude of names. The century was one of great and rapidly increasing literary activity in all fields, especially in fiction and history and in miscellaneous prose of the periodical type; for quarterlies, monthlies, weeklies, and dailies played an important part in the intellectual life of the times. Second, the period is so adjacent to the present, we are so near to it, that it is difficult to select from the crowd of leading figures and determine with certainty the prevailing characteristics. All critics agree, however, that it was a remarkable era,

nearly the equal of the preceding one. Two great poets and a number of others of unusual power; three great novelists and half a score more whose works bid fair to live; three great essayists and a number of others nearly as great, besides many historians and scientists whose works possess a literary charm almost admitting them to the realm of belles-lettres,—this is the proud record of the Victorian era.

The most popular poet of this period was Tennyson, whose life-story is exceedingly simple: born in a Lincolnshire rectory; educated at Cambridge; from boyhood days a poet, winning recognition **Tennyson** slowly but surely; at thirty-four, the recipient of a pension; laureate at forty-one, a peer at seventy-five. The last half of his life was spent at Farringford on the Isle of Wight and at Aldworth in Sussex, quiet retreats made possible by the success of his verse. His earliest venture was a little volume in which his two brothers had a share, published when he was but eighteen. Among his latest works were a number of historical dramas. Between these two extremes came, among many other poems, *The Princess*, *The Idylls of the King*, and *In Memoriam*. The first of these is "a novel in verse" telling how the Princess Ida founds a college for women, but finally abandons her enterprise and marries one of the princes who, heedless of the warning over the gateway promising death to any man who should enter the college town, disguise themselves as maidens and are accepted as students. It is a combination of earnestness and banter dealing with "the emancipation of women," illustrating perhaps better than any of his other poems how Tennyson's works reflect the thought and spirit of his times. It also reveals his almost perfect art as a lyricist, for scattered through the narrative are some of the best songs in the language. The *Idylls* carry us back to Sir Thomas

Malory; for they are tales retold from *Morte d'Arthur* in an attempt to form an epic on the fall of the Round Table. The composition of the *Idylls* was scattered through many years; and the same is true of *In Memoriam*, a long series of poems in which the poet records the various moods of his grief caused by the death of a college friend.

Critics do not agree in their estimate of Tennyson, though all recognize him as a great artist, a master of melody, a close and sympathetic observer of nature, with wonderful pictorial powers. We could ill spare the works of one who sang so well in so many different keys. There is strength and exquisite beauty in the best of the *Idylls*, and many of his shorter pieces are faultless gems.

Browning, like Tennyson, was exclusively a poet, devoting his entire life to literature. Unlike Tennyson, he waited long for recognition. Up to the time when, at the age of thirty-four, he married Elizabeth Barrett, the leading poetess of the century, he had gained but a slender reputation, although he had written much the worth of which is now fully appreciated; and for years afterward, while these two poets were living happily in Florence, the home of their married life, he was best known as the husband of Elizabeth Barrett. Not until he published, at fifty-six, *The Ring and the Book*, did he receive a wide reading. Since then his popularity has steadily increased, many critics placing him above Tennyson.

Browning is not the finished artist that we find in Tennyson; much of his verse is exceedingly rugged and unmusical. Moreover he is unnecessarily obscure, especially in his earlier poems. The meaning of many a passage has to be puzzled out—an enjoyable process to those who admire the poet, but exasperating to those who prefer the perfect clearness of Tennyson. But Browning is a deeper thinker



than Tennyson, and his manly optimism is better than dream-like beauty. A few of his works are dramas; many of them are dramatic in character—monologues in which personages from history or old stories, or merely creatures of his own imagining, are made to talk in such a manner as to reveal their souls and incidentally tell in wonderfully condensed form a dramatic story. Browning may be said to have invented this mode of story-telling. In *The Ring and the Book*, we are given the story of a murder, first as it impresses the poet, who found in a chance-discovered book, an account of the court trial it occasioned, then as it impresses ten others immediately concerned. This telling and retelling of the same story fills more than 20,000 lines, yet the narrative gains steadily in interest, for each version throws new light on the sordid action. All Browning's poetry is stamped with vigorous personality. He was by nature brave and manly, optimistic, believing in hard work, welcoming troubles and hardships as necessary for the development of character. He hated nothing more than inactivity and indecision due to lack of energy and courage.

Of the other poets of the period, not so great as Tennyson and Browning yet worthy of mention, two were women, Mrs. Browning and Christina Rossetti. The latter belongs to a little group, among them **Minor poets** Dante Rossetti, William Morris, and Algernon Swinburne, known as the Pre-Raphaelites, who found their inspiration, as did earlier poets who shared in the Romantic Movement, in the Middle Ages.

Tennyson and Browning are great story-tellers. It was a great story-telling era, the golden age of prose fiction. By the middle of the century the yearly **Dickens,** output was nearly one hundred novels. **Thackeray,** Earliest to appear of the three world-great **George Eliot** novelists who followed Scott was Charles Dickens, whose

*Pickwick Papers* (1836-7) lifted an obscure shorthand reporter of rather lowly origin—his boyhood days were days of London poverty—into a world-wide popularity which he retained through the remainder of his life. A decade later (1847-8) appeared *Vanity Fair*, opening the gate to fame for Thackeray, a little higher in the social scale than Dickens, a little better educated, who had served apprenticeship for years as a writer of sketches for *Punch* and other magazines. Ten years later still (1858) appeared the first of George Eliot's fictions, a volume of short stories entitled *Scenes from Clerical Life*. Dickens and Thackeray were of the city; their novels teem with characters as do the streets of the London they knew so well. George Eliot—her real name before marriage was Mary Ann Evans—was the daughter of a Warwickshire land agent and surveyor. She is at her best when picturing life in the rural districts of Middle England where her earlier years were spent.

These three writers differ from Scott, the out-and-out romancer who lived in the past with kings and queens and knights and ladies. His fiction world is more romantic than real. Dickens, Thackeray, and George Eliot are realistic painters of English life and manners, mainly of their own times or the adjacent past; though Thackeray's *Henry Esmond*, by most critics called the best historical novel ever written, is a vivid picture of Queen Anne days, Dickens's *A Tale of Two Cities* a graphic account of the beginning of the French Revolution, and George Eliot's *Romola* a story of Italy in Savonarola's day. We cannot tarry to note how these three great artists differed one from another in temperament and humor, in their ways of looking upon life, and their theories of what a novel should be; it would be useless to attempt to determine which is the greatest. All three are very great, far above

any of their contemporaries, and above the novelists of the present day.

Among their contemporaries in the field of fiction many are of more than ordinary ability: Bulwer Lytton, the best known of whose historical novels is *The Last Days of Pompeii*; Captain Marryat, writer of sea tales; Anthony Trollope, whose realistic novels of clerical and political life still retain their popularity; Charles Kingsley, author of *Westward Ho!* and *Hypatia*; Charlotte Brontë, whose melodramatic *Jane Eyre* shows wonderful vitality. With all its faults, Charles Reade's *The Cloister and the Hearth* is among the best of romances aiming to acquaint the reader with Continental life in the Middle Ages; and *Tom Brown's School Days* and *Tom Brown at Oxford*, by Hughes, are among the most wholesome books ever written for boys. MacDonald, Meredith, Blackmore, and Hardy are other names which would receive marked attention in a wider survey. At present, critics are inclined to give to Stevenson a rank second only to the greatest; certainly no writer of recent years has employed language with greater charm. His *Treasure Island* bids fair to become a classic in the field of romantic adventure, and certain of his shorter tales approach in genius the masterpieces of Poe and Hawthorne. We appreciate his works the more as we become better acquainted with his biography. He was a life-long invalid, and fought his way to fame through obstacles that would have daunted a spirit less persistently brave and cheerful.

Stevenson ranks high as an essayist too, though not in the same class with Carlyle, Macaulay, and Ruskin. The first of these three sprang, like Burns, from the Scotch peasantry. His is the familiar story of the poor country boy for whom "bitter thrift"

Minor  
novelists

The essayists

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won a college education, and to whom came many years of toil and disappointment before wide recognition. Not until, in his early forties, he published his *French Revolution*, admittedly the finest history since Gibbon's, did he become widely known. His works fill many volumes. For the most part, they are not attractive to young readers, though it is safe to say that many a youth has gained inspiration from his *Heroes and Hero Worship*, which was first given to the world in the form of lectures delivered before fashionable audiences in London, the essayist's home for nearly half a century. Carlyle was a severe critic of his times, railing against the mechanical spirit, and crying out against all forms of sham in religion, government, and society. He wrote in what has been called Carlylese, so different is it from anything else in the entire range of literature, a style at times wonderfully rhythmical and eloquent, at all times suggesting intense, sincere emotion, but always rugged, vigorous, "volcanic." He throws lawlessly constructed sentences at the reader as a blindly enraged giant might hurl trees and boulders.

In marked contrast to this "seer and prophet" who looked beneath the surface of things is Macaulay, essayist, **Macaulay** historian, poet, orator, aside from the novelists the most popular writer of his day. To him success came easily; he had no early struggle with poverty. Before leaving the university he had written for minor periodicals, and at twenty-five the *Edinburgh Review* published his long essay on Milton, the first of many similar productions which this versatile man found time to write during a busy public career; for at thirty he was a member of parliament and continued to be a prominent Whig orator nearly all his life. His *Lays of Ancient Rome*, written in his early forties, was immediately popular, and his *History of England*, published some years

later, sold like a novel. We may think of him as a typical prosperous Englishman, upright, self-confident, well satisfied with the world against which Carlyle raved. He was an omnivorous reader, with a phenomenal memory. He did not think deeply, but what he saw he saw clearly, and he found no difficulty in expressing himself with clearness and vigor. His essays form a type as distinct as that exemplified in Bacon or Addison or Lamb. Many of them are book reviews, expanded beyond the length of the present day magazine article to include a biographical sketch and a critical estimate of some literary or political character. They are nearly perfect in construction, and written in a brilliant, rapid, frequently showy style which makes them agreeable reading. He deliberately planned to make his history as interesting as a novel; and so great were his graphic powers, his ability to paint scenes, that he achieved a brilliant success, though his narrative is not always trustworthy.

No doubt Macaulay did much for his times; his writings imparted information in an agreeable form, and his style, admirable for practical purposes, furnished the great masses with much needed models.

Ruskin

But he was not a great moral force; he did not inspire. This cannot be said of John Ruskin, the gifted son of a wealthy London wine merchant, who became when but a young man the leading English art critic, and later exerted wide influence as a social reformer, preaching the gospel of "useful work and faithful love and stintless charity." Through such voluminous treatises as *Modern Painters*, *Seven Lamps of Architecture*, and *Stones of Venice*, he popularized art, leading many to find beauty and inspiration in great masterpieces and in the natural world. As a social reformer he not only wrote and lectured but gave time and vast sums of money in unselfish, if not always

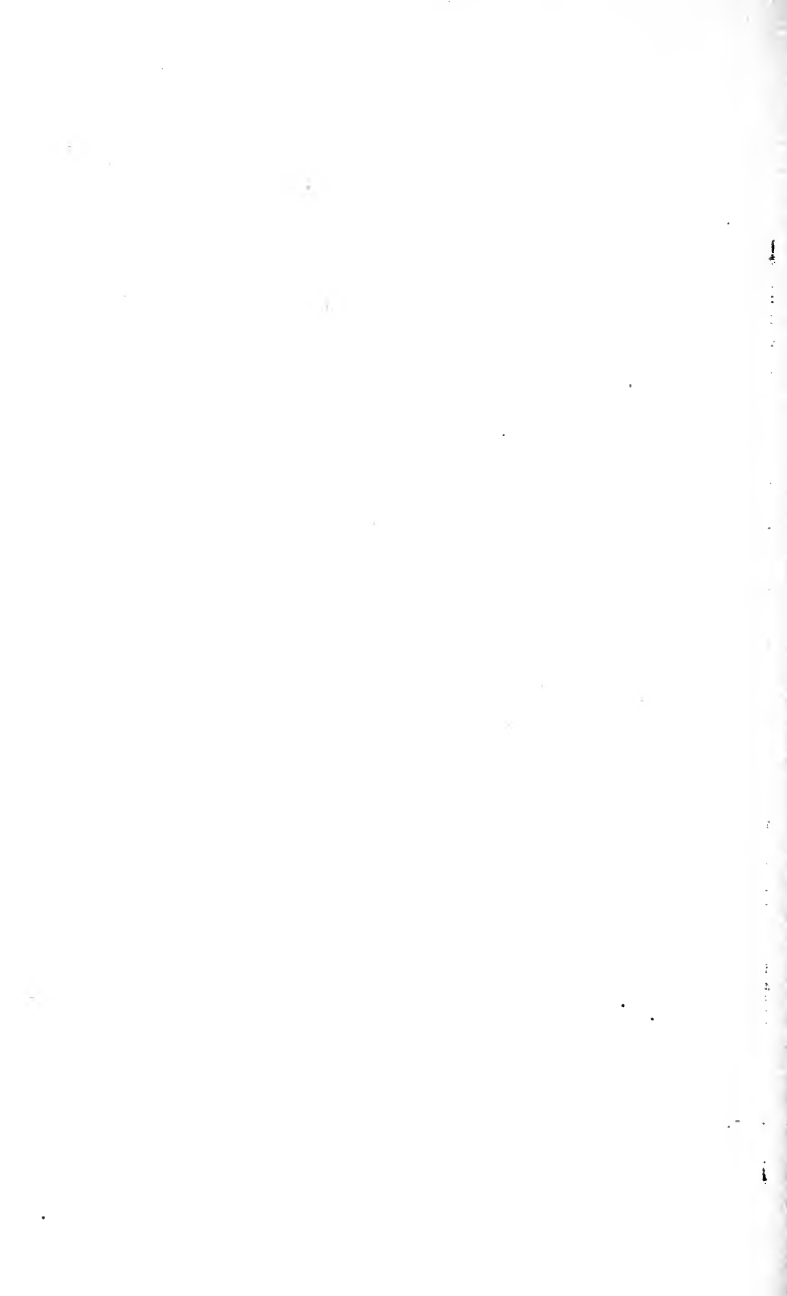
practical, attempts to better the lives of working people through various industrial schemes. Like Carlyle, he hated sham and selfishness and money-greed. Unlike Carlyle, he did not simply condemn existing circumstances but suggested ways, industrial, social, educational, for bettering circumstances. He was often ridiculed; but his reforms are beginning to look less preposterous. Ruskin's wide influence was due in part to his great earnestness and unquestioned sincerity, and to the fact that he had a message of real importance to give. In the field of pure description he is without an equal, and all that he wrote is characterized by a musical quality and richness in color which suggest the poet and the painter. He is one of the masters of English style.

Arnold the scholar, Newman the preacher, and Trevelyan the biographer are other writers of this rich period of prose. Among the historians are such well known names as Hallam, Morley, Froude, Freeman, Green, and Grote; among philosophers and scientists, Spencer, Huxley, Darwin, and Tyndall. But in the field of pure literature, Carlyle, Macaulay, and Ruskin easily hold first place.

Other prose  
writers



## APPENDIX



## A

### RULES OF PUNCTUATION

#### THE PERIOD

**1 Use the period after a complete declarative or imperative sentence.**

Be careful not to treat a phrase or a clause as if it were a complete sentence. The following, for example, is incorrectly punctuated. *We made Charles our captain. He being by far the best player.* This should read *We made Charles our captain, he being by far the best player.* Be equally careful not to run sentences together. The temptation to make this error is especially great when the second of two sentences begins with a pronoun referring to a substantive in the first. It is incorrect to write *Charles makes a good captain, he is our best player and the fellows respect him.* A period or a semicolon should take the place of the comma after *captain*.

**2 Use the period after an abbreviation.**

#### THE INTERROGATION POINT

**3 Use the interrogation point (a) at the close of a direct question, (b) in parenthesis to indicate doubt.**

#### THE EXCLAMATION POINT

**4 Use the exclamation point after interjections, exclamatory words and phrases, and sentences expressing strong emotion.**

This is not a rule to be followed blindly; judgment is necessary in determining where an exclamation point will add needed force.

## THE COMMA

**5** If the terms of a series are all in the same construction and are not joined by conjunctions, the comma should be used to separate them. If only the last two terms are joined by a conjunction, the comma should be used regardless of the connective.

The series may consist of a number of nouns all subjects of the same verb, a number of verbs having a common subject, a number of modifiers (adjectives, adverbs, phrases, or clauses) modifying the same word. It may consist of the clauses of a compound sentence, and occasionally of a number of short, closely related independent statements. The important thing to remember is that the terms separated must be in what may be called parallel construction. Here are illustrations:

Morning, afternoon, and evening slipped away.

I rose softly, slipped on my clothes, and opened the doors suddenly.

I came, I saw, I conquered.

**6** Use the comma, if necessary for clearness, to set off a dependent clause when it precedes a principal clause.

Notice that the rule has to do with clauses, not with phrases. Seldom is it necessary to set off a phrase even when it stands first in a sentence, unless the phrase is participial. Occasionally it becomes necessary to set off an introductory adverb. No rule can be framed to cover all cases, but the underlying principle is clear. When the comma is really needed to show at a glance where the dependent element leaves off and the principal element begins, it should be used. Here are illustrations:

As he was passing by, the door opened suddenly.

Being admonished, let us follow better things.

To be sure, there are exceptions to most rules.

Thus done the tales, to bed they creep.

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

**7 Use the comma, if necessary for clearness, to set off non-restrictive phrases and clauses.**

A phrase or clause is restrictive when it narrows or closely defines what it modifies; or when it picks out one thing from among several, as do the words *this* and *that*. Removing a restrictive word-group changes the meaning of the sentence in which it occurs. A non-restrictive word-group contains an additional statement, explanatory or incidental. The sentence does not change materially when a non-restrictive phrase or clause is removed. For example, in the statement *The greatest man is he who does not lose his child's heart*, the relative clause is restrictive. Remove the clause, and the sentence becomes meaningless. In the statement *Affliction, like an iron-smith, shapes as it strikes*, the phrase *like an iron-smith* is non-restrictive; the meaning is reasonably clear even when the phrase is removed. Here are further illustrations:

He *who strives* should win. (restrictive)

Bruce, *who had failed many times*, finally succeeded. (non-restrictive)

The station *which Nelson had chosen* was some fifty miles to the west of Cadiz. (restrictive)

The storm, *which by noon had spent its fury*, entirely disappeared before dusk. (non-restrictive)

**8 Use the comma to set off words or word-groups when they interrupt the thought or the grammatical order.**

This rule, necessarily vague and covering many cases, should not be followed blindly; the writer must use judgment. Some interruptions are so slight that they do not call for punctuation; others need careful attention. The interruption may be caused by words coming between subject and predicate, or between a verb and its complement. It may consist of words independent by address, a word or phrase in apposition, an absolute phrase, or an

explanatory phrase interrupting a clause. Among brief expressions often, though not always, used parenthetically are *too*, *also*, *moreover*, *indeed*, *namely*, *again*, *no doubt*, *in fact*, *in short*, *of course*, *consequently*, *for instance*, *so to speak*, *in truth*. Here are illustrations:

Most rules, to be sure, have their exceptions.

In thee, O Lord, do I put my trust.

The broken soldier, kindly bade to stay,  
Sat by the fire and talked the night away.

**9** Avoid placing the comma before *when*, *where*, *whether*, *if*, or *that*, when the word introduces an object clause. But place the comma before *and*, *but*, *for*, *or*, *nor*, *as*, or *because*, if by so doing you can make the meaning clearer.

Placing a punctuation mark of any kind between such parts of a sentence as are closely related and are in their natural order should always be avoided; hence the first section of this rule, which cautions against separating the verb from its object. The reason underlying the second section rests in the fact that some words are used now as prepositions, now as conjunctions; and in the fact that coordinate conjunctions sometimes join single words, sometimes phrases or clauses. It is therefore necessary, at times, to place a comma before a conjunction in order to show that it is not a preposition, or to show that the conjunction introduces not a single word but a clause. That is, the comma prevents the reader from hurrying on too rapidly; it shows him the relationship of that which follows to that which precedes. Notice carefully the following sentences. If the comma were omitted in the last four, the rapid reader might, for a moment, miss the meaning.

He said that all was ready.

Please ask him when we may come.

He liked none, but the first and the last of the songs pleased me exceedingly.

We ran as fast as we could, for the boat left promptly at five.

For supper we had bread and jam, and nothing else could have pleased us more.

In this room were twenty-five seats, and two long benches up in front where the children sat when reciting.

#### **10 Use the comma before a short, informal quotation.**

When but a few words are quoted, and these words form a structural part of the sentence in which they appear, the comma is unnecessary. Thus we write, correctly, This "youth to fortune and to fame unknown" was the poet Gray.

#### THE SEMICOLON

**11 Use the semicolon as if it were a large comma, to separate phrases or clauses in the same construction when they are exceptionally long, or when one or both are so broken by commas that, were not the semicolon used, the eye would not readily perceive where one phrase or clause ends and the next begins.**

Notice carefully that the word-groups separated must be in the same construction; for the semicolon should not be used to separate a principal clause from a dependent. The following sentences, though long and somewhat complicated, are clear because the semicolon shows at a glance where each term of a series ends:

There was the honest cock robin, the favorite game of stripling sportsmen, with its loud, querulous note; and the twittering blackbirds, flying in sable clouds; and the gold-winged woodpecker, with his crimson crest, his broad black gorget, and splendid plumage; and the cedarbird, with its red-tipt wings and yellow tipt tail and its little monteiro cap of feathers; and the blue jay, that noisy coxcomb, in his gay light-blue coat and white underclothes, screaming and chattering, bobbing and nodding and

bowing, and pretending to be on good terms with every songster of the grove.

If, then, the removal of the causes of this spirit of American liberty be, for the greater part, or rather entirely, impracticable; if the ideas of criminal process be inapplicable, or if inapplicable are in the highest degree inexpedient, what way remains?

**12 Use the semicolon as if it were a small period, placing it between independent statements so closely related in thought that it is undesirable to separate them with a period.**

This is a dangerous rule for young writers, for their tendency is to use the semicolon too freely. When in doubt whether a semicolon or a period is the proper point, use the period; when hesitating between a comma and a period, use the latter. Here are examples:

Burke's plan was simple, direct, sure; Lord North's was complex, indirect, and uncertain.

I am her kinsman; let me, therefore, avenge her wrong.

If fortune favors you, do not be elated; if she frowns, do not despair.

#### THE COLON

**13 Use the colon after *as follows, the following, in the following manner, thus, this, these,* and similar expressions, when they introduce quotations, enumerations, or explanations. *Namely, for instance, for example, and that is,* when introducing enumerations or explanatory matter, are almost always preceded by the semicolon and followed by the comma.**

Notice the following examples:

In the closing paragraph are found these words: "Gentlemen, let us ever remember that our interest is in concord, not conflict; and that our real eminence rests in the victories of peace, not those of war."

According to Newton, the primary colors are these: red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, and violet.



There are many shades of blue; for example, robin's-egg, turquoise, gobelin, and cyan.

#### 14 Use the colon after the salutation in letter-writing.

### QUOTATION MARKS

15 Use double quotation marks to enclose a direct quotation.

This is the general rule, related to which are a number of minor ones. These must be examined with care.

1. Be sure that the words enclosed are the exact words of the person quoted. It is wrong, for example, to write *He said "that he would come tomorrow."* Either the quotation marks should be removed or the sentence changed to read *He said, "I will come tomorrow."*

2. When a quoted sentence is interrupted by a parenthetical expression such as *said he*, two pairs of quotation marks are needed, one for each section. The first word of the second section should not begin with a capital, unless it is a proper noun or the pronoun I. Example: "*This,*" *said he, "is most fortunate."*

3. If the quotation consists of a number of sentences, all by the same person, do not place marks before and after each sentence, but simply before the first and after the last. If the quotation consists of several paragraphs, all by the same person, place marks before each one, but after the last one only.

4. Use single marks to set off a quotation within a quotation. Example: "*I think,*" *he replied, "that it was Pope who said 'To err is human.'"*

5. When reporting an extended conversation—something more than a brief anecdote, indicate by means of indention where one speaker concludes and another begins.

## THE APOSTROPHE

16 Use the apostrophe (a) to distinguish the possessive case of nouns, (b) to indicate the plurals of letters and figures, and (c) to show the omission of letters or figures.

These three uses are illustrated in the following sentence: *'Tis true. John's b's and 6's look alike.* Do not forget that the possessive forms of pronouns do not call for the apostrophe. *It's* is not the possessive form of *it*, but a contraction of *it is*. *Who's* is not the possessive form of *who*, but a contraction of *who is*.

## THE DASH

17 Use the dash to indicate a sudden change in the sense or the grammatical construction, particularly after a series the terms of which are in apposition with a word following the series.

Meanwhile Henry—but that is another story.

Dickens, Thackeray, Scott—these are my favorite novelists.

18 Use the dash, but with great caution, between short, snappy sentences, or even between single words or word-groups, to give the impression of haste or excitement.

The dash has a number of other dramatic uses, but these will not be given; for, as one manual remarks, the dash "is more misused and overused than any of the other punctuation marks."

## THE PARENTHESIS AND THE BRACKET

19 Use the parenthesis (a) to enclose figures or letters employed to mark divisions, (b) to enclose matter which does not belong strictly to the sentence.

The bracket is employed in much the same way, yet with this difference: as a rule the words enclosed in a bracket belong to an editor or reporter. In reported

speeches, for example, we may find bracketed expressions like the following: [*Loud cheers!*], [*At this point the speaker was interrupted by the member from —*].

NOTE.—For exercises in punctuation see page 23.

## B

## FIGURES OF SPEECH

Any departure from plain, ordinary expression, for the purpose of gaining a desired effect, is called a *figure of speech*. There are many kinds of figures, one investigator recognizing over two hundred varieties. But not a few of these are so common, and represent departures so slight, that they may be disregarded. The following are, without much question, the most important:

A **simile** is a definitely expressed comparison. Usually the things compared are named, the point of resemblance or dissimilarity indicated, and a word denoting comparison employed, as in the line

Red as a rose is she.

Sometimes, however, the point of resemblance or dissimilarity is not mentioned, as in the line

Her cheeks like the dawn of day.

But in every case the things compared are quite dissimilar in all respects save one. No simile is present, for example, in the assertion *James is taller than Henry*, since the comparison is between things of the same class or kind, and there is no departure from ordinary, matter-of-fact statement. Similes are an aid to clearness, for through comparisons the reader is enabled to get more completely the

thought, the fancy, the image, in the writer's mind. Moreover a good simile brings a degree of pleasurable surprise, by pointing out that things apparently not at all resembling each other possess one characteristic in common. Finally, that which a simile brings to mind is often beautiful in itself, or stirring, uplifting.

A **metaphor** is an implied comparison—a simile condensed, usually into a single word. Marullus employs metaphor when he cries out to the rabble

You blocks, you stones, you worse than senseless things!

So too does Coleridge in the line

Swiftly, swiftly flew the ship.

In each case a likeness is implied, but not fully expressed as in simile. The Roman citizens are like blocks and stones in that they are senseless, Marullus thinks; but he merely calls them blocks and stones, assuming that the point of resemblance is evident. The ship is like a bird in that it moves swiftly, as if its sails were wings. Birds are not mentioned directly but simply suggested in the word *flew*. Many similes are easily changed into metaphors; all metaphors may be changed into similes. Simile is the quieter, more deliberate form of expression; metaphor is swifter, often more startling. Our common speech is crowded with metaphors, some so worn, so "faded," that they are no longer recognized as figures. It is the basis of perhaps nine-tenths of our slang. "Jones *plowed* to second base," writes the baseball editor. "The fielding on both sides was *green, with saffron touches*." The man whose mind is not right is said to be "off his trolley"—as if he were an electric car, or to have "bats in his belfry." The son who goes wrong is a "black sheep"; whatever is disagreeable "goes against the grain," and the unexpected "beats the

Dutch." It is hardly necessary to multiply examples, nor to caution against the use of expressions which, even if not coarse or vulgar, are cheap and commonplace—second-hand wit.

**Personification** is a form of metaphor in which something inanimate—for example a tree, an animal, or a quality like patience—is treated as if it had mind and personality. Metaphors which imply that natural objects such as flowers, or forces of nature such as the winds or the ocean, are animals of lower order than man are also classed as personifications. It is a simple figure. Children use it unconsciously when talking to their playthings. Poetry is full of it, for the poet realizes that mind, heart, and soul are more interesting than inanimate rocks and trees. Notice the examples in the following passage:

O Cicero,  
I have seen tempests, when the scolding winds  
Have riv'd the knotty oaks, and I have seen  
The ambitious ocean swell and rage and foam,  
To be exalted with the threatening clouds. . . .

*Scolding, ambitious, rage, and threatening* are terms applicable to persons, not to things.

An **allegory** is an expanded metaphor taking the form of a story emphasizing a truth which the reader is left to discover. When Gareth, who wishes to go to Arthur's court and become a knight, is urged by his mother to remain at home till he is older, contenting himself with the harmless chase and a "comfortable" wife, he tells her a story. It is of a royal prince who asked for a bride; and the king, his father, set two before him.

One was fair, strong, arm'd—  
But to be won by force—and many men  
Desired her; one, good lack, no man desired.

The king declared that unless the prince won the first by force, he must wed the other,

A red-faced bride who knew herself so vile  
That evermore she long'd to hide herself.

The name of one was Fame; the name of the other, Shame. Here, then, is a comparison implied between Gareth and the royal prince. Just as the royal prince might escape hardship by accepting Shame, so Gareth might, yet not without shame, stay at home and lead a safe, comfortable life. Fame, he is trying to show his mother, comes only through hardship and daring; ease and inactivity are shameful.

Sometimes an allegory is a metaphor so fully expanded as to fill an entire volume. Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* is an example of such. It purports to be the adventures of Pilgrim on his long and perilous journey to Celestial City; yet there is a half-hidden meaning. Bunyan is but trying to show the struggles a mortal must make in purging his character of sin. The *parables* in the New Testament, short, imaginary narratives used by Christ in his preaching, are briefer allegories; so too are *fables*, in which frequently, though not always, the actors are animals or inanimate things. Yet all, whether long or short, are but metaphors, or in some cases similes, expanded into stories; all contain truths left for the reader to discover. They are impressive because stories are more interesting than plain statement, more easily remembered.

**Metonymy** is a figure in which there is a substitution or transfer of names, a thing being indicated by the name of something so intimately associated with it that the one immediately suggests the other. There are at least a score of varieties, a common form being that in which the name of a part is substituted for the name of the whole. We

speak, for example, of shop *hands*, meaning men who work in shops. Another variety is employed when sailors are called *tars*, or *salts*, tar and salt being associated with the seaman's life. Many a metonymy is so common that it goes all unnoticed. We speak of reading Dickens, though it is his books that we read, not the man. We engage *board* without stopping to think that board, through metonymy, means table, and that it is not the table but the food that is bargained for. It is a useful figure in that it often focuses attention on some one detail of a picture, intensifying the impression. To say that the general advanced with a force of bayonets conveys a more vivid picture than to say that he advanced with a force of soldiers. It is perhaps more picturesque, certainly a shade less severe, to say of a man that he is too fond of the bottle than it is to say that he is too fond of intoxicating liquor. Moreover metonymy, like metaphor, is a great time-saver, often making one word do the work of ten.

Closely related to metaphor and metonymy is what is called the **transferred epithet**. This is illustrated in the line

Where brooding Darkness spreads his jealous wings.

*Jealous*, grammatically considered, modifies *wings*, yet logically it belongs to *Darkness*. But *Darkness* shows jealousy through spreading his wings; hence the transfer. The poet speaks of the cannon's deadly roar, though the roar is not deadly at all. But since the cannon becomes deadly when it roars, the epithet is transferred from cannon to roar.

**Hyperbole** is the rhetorical name for exaggeration, when employed not for the purpose of deceiving but to make a

statement impressive. The waves ran "mountain high," declares the poet, not with the thought that his words will be taken literally, but for the purpose of stirring the imagination, which otherwise may picture waves altogether too tame. It is a noble figure when nobly employed; a tiresome, degrading one as used extravagantly by many young people and not a few of their elders, who continue to live though "tired to death," and declare that things quite ordinary are "just heavenly." There is a wide difference between the language of real, intense emotion and language that is mere gush.

**Irony** is quite as common as hyperbole. It is the name applied to words which state the opposite of what the speaker or writer intends shall be understood. When Antony is addressing the Roman rabble, he refers many times to Brutus and the other conspirators as "honorable" men. At first he seems to use the word sincerely, but as he slowly gains the confidence of his hearers, it becomes apparent that he would have them believe the conspirators quite the reverse of honorable. Like hyperbole, irony is used much too freely, thoughtlessly, in daily speech, especially the contemptuous, scornful, taunting, or sneering variety known as *sarcasm*, which cuts and stings. In short, it is a strong weapon, effective if properly employed, yet out of place save when the speaker is moved by righteous indignation or justifiable scorn.

An **Apostrophe** is a figure of speech in which inanimate objects are addressed as if they were human beings, or persons absent are addressed as if they were present. A stanza in Byron's *Childe Harold* begins

Oh Rome! my country! city of the soul!  
The orphans of the heart must turn to thee,  
Lone mother of dead empires! and control  
In their shut breasts their petty misery.



In his *Ode to Napoleon Bonaparte* occur the lines

Ill-minded man! why scourge thy kind  
Who bow'd so low the knee?

But Napoleon is not present; the words, therefore, are an apostrophe.

**Antithesis** or **Contrast** is a figure of speech in which things are brought into prominence by being placed in opposition. It is found in single sentences, as in the familiar

To err is human; to forgive, divine.

But it may extend through several sentences, an entire paragraph, or even through many paragraphs.

An **Epigram** is well defined by the *Standard Dictionary* as "a pithy or antithetical observation, as in 'The child is father of the man'." Professor Bain describes it as "an apparent contradiction in language, which by causing a temporary shock, rouses our attention to some important meaning underneath." It usually takes the form of a single brief sentence.

**Climax** is an arrangement by which the interest increases step by step, the more important or the more interesting following the less important or less interesting, till an impressive close is reached.

**Interrogation** is a figure in which an opinion is expressed, more forcefully than would be possible by direct statement, in the form of a question which expects no answer.

**Exclamation** is a figure in which sudden, deep emotion is expressed in the form of an exclamatory sentence or phrase.

NOTE.—For exercises to accompany this section see page 218.

Iambic trimeter: Heró | ic wó | manhóod

Iambic tetrameter: It háiled | the shíps | and críed | "Sail on"

Iambic pentameter: The quá | ity' | of mér | cy is' | not stráin'd

Iambic hexameter: And óft | en knóckt | his bréast, | as óne |  
that did | repént

Trochaic hexameter: Dáinty | líttle | máiden, | whítter |  
wóuld you | wánder?

Anapaestic tetrameter: With the fífe | and the hórñ | and the  
war- | beating góng

Dactylic dimeter: Cannon to | ríght of them

Thus we have convenient names for many different kinds of lines. Comparatively few of these, however, are common in English poetry.

But variety does not stop here. A succession of lines containing none but iambic feet, for example, would be as monotonously unmusical as the sounds which come from the builder's hammer. Occasionally the regularity must be broken. To avoid monotony, or to gain prominence for some particular word or syllable needing emphasis, a trochee or an anapaest may be substituted for an iambus. Loosely speaking, all kinds of feet are interchangeable. Moreover, not uncommonly an extra unaccented syllable is found at the end of a line, and occasionally just before a pronounced pause within the line. A final or an initial unaccented syllable may be missing. A line with an extra syllable at the end is called **feminine**; a line in which a final unaccented syllable is missing is called **truncated**. Notice the following:

1. Rún to | your hóu | ses, fáll | upón | your knées

2. It is' | the bríght | day thát | brings fórth | the ád | der.

3. So stránge | ly you dáz | zle my éye
4. Lílies | whítér | thán the | snów
5. Know ye the | lánd where the | cýpress and | myrtle
6. Hátéd | by óne | he loves; | bráv'd by | his bróth | er

In the first foot of the first line a trochee is substituted for an iambus. In the second example we note the added syllable at the end, making the line feminine. The fourth line is truncated. In the third, an iambus takes the place of an anapaest; in the fifth, a trochee is substituted for a dactyl. The last line contains three variations, two trochees in place of iambs, and a feminine ending.

Examples might easily be multiplied with a view to showing still other devices by means of which the poet, though bound by the laws of verse to adhere to a definite scheme, manages to keep the scheme from being too boldly apparent. For instance in many lines there is found what is known as a **cesura**, a pause coming sometimes at the end of a foot, sometimes within a foot, breaking the line into two phrases, as it were. We notice it in the line

Hátéd | by óne | he loves; || brávéd by | his bróth | er

where it occurs after the third foot; and in the line

Rún to | your hóús | es, || fáll | upón | your knées

where it interrupts the third foot. The trained ear gains not a little pleasure from the cesural pause, which the skilled poet shifts back and forth from foot to foot, thus weaving his lines together and softening the mechanical effect produced by dividing sentences into lines of a prescribed length. Yet no matter what changes are introduced, the cadence or rhythmical swing which charms the ear is never lost.

By far the most common line in English poetry is the iambic pentameter. Unrhymed iambic pentameter is called **blank verse**. It is the noblest of verse forms, most dignified, appropriate for lofty themes. It is king of all English meters. We find it in Shakespeare's plays, in Milton's *Paradise Lost*, and in Tennyson's *Idylls of the King*. It is not arranged in line-groups of equal size, but is paragraphed like prose. Some one has said that blank verse is the easiest of all forms of poetry to write, but the most difficult to write well. It is easiest because it does not call for rhyming, nor for any variation in the length of the line. It is most difficult because one who employs it must manage to make his lines attractively musical and impressive without rhyming them, without varying their length and combining them in stanza form.

Here is an example of blank verse, with the meter marked in the usual way; that is, the stressed syllables are indicated by means of the accent sign ('), and the feet are separated by means of little lines (|):

1. The <sup>q</sup>ual | <sup>i</sup>ty' | of <sup>m</sup>er | <sup>c</sup>y is' | not <sup>s</sup>tráin'd;
2. It <sup>d</sup>rop | <sup>p</sup>eth <sup>a</sup>s' | the <sup>g</sup>en' | <sup>t</sup>le <sup>r</sup>ain' | from <sup>h</sup>ea<sup>v</sup>'n
3. Up<sup>o</sup>n | the <sup>p</sup>láce | <sup>b</sup>eneáth; | it <sup>i</sup>s' | <sup>t</sup>wice <sup>b</sup>lést,
4. It <sup>b</sup>léss | <sup>e</sup>th <sup>h</sup>im' | that <sup>g</sup>ives' | and <sup>h</sup>im' | that <sup>t</sup>akes:
5. 'Tis <sup>m</sup>ight | <sup>i</sup>est <sup>i</sup>n' | the <sup>m</sup>ight | <sup>i</sup>est: <sup>i</sup>t' | <sup>b</sup>ecómes
6. The <sup>t</sup>hrón | <sup>e</sup>d <sup>m</sup>ón' | <sup>a</sup>rch <sup>b</sup>ét' | <sup>t</sup>er <sup>t</sup>hán' | his <sup>c</sup>równ;
7. His <sup>s</sup>cép | <sup>t</sup>er <sup>s</sup>hóws' | the <sup>f</sup>órcé | of <sup>t</sup>ém' | <sup>p</sup>oral <sup>p</sup>ow' | er,
8. The <sup>a</sup>t | <sup>t</sup>ribúte | <sup>t</sup>o <sup>a</sup>wé' | and <sup>m</sup>áj' | <sup>e</sup>sty,
9. Where<sup>i</sup>n | <sup>d</sup>oth <sup>s</sup>ít' | the <sup>d</sup>réad | and <sup>f</sup>éar' | of <sup>k</sup>ings,
10. But <sup>m</sup>er | <sup>c</sup>y is' | <sup>a</sup>bóve' | <sup>t</sup>his <sup>s</sup>cép | <sup>t</sup>er'd <sup>s</sup>wáy;
11. It is' | <sup>e</sup>n<sup>t</sup>hrón | <sup>e</sup>d <sup>i</sup>n' | the <sup>h</sup>ea<sup>r</sup>ts' | of <sup>k</sup>ings,

12. It is' | an at' | tribute' | to God' | himself';  
 13. And eárh | ly pówer | doth thén | show lík | est God's,  
 14. When mér | cy sea' | sons jú | tice.

Notice that each line save the last, which is incomplete, contains five accents, not all of them equally important, it is true, yet all falling upon syllables which might receive some degree of emphasis in prose; and that most of the feet are iambic, so that nearly every line contains ten syllables. There are a few exceptions. In the second line, *heav'n* must be pronounced as if it were one syllable; the second syllable is barely sounded even in prose. In the fifth line, *mightiest* is treated as if it were a word of two syllables; we seldom make three of it, even in prose. Such slurring, or running together of unimportant syllables, is common in all poetry. In the sixth line, we note the opposite device, a word ordinarily pronounced as one syllable made into two. Final *-ed* is frequently so treated. In the seventh line the fifth foot is an anapaest, unless the reader prefers to run together two syllables; and the line has a feminine ending. Or *power* may be treated as if it were one syllable, as doubtless it should be treated in the thirteenth line. Such changes as those pointed out are so common that the reader hardly notices them; the iambic swing carries him along from line to line irresistibly. It is only when we stop to analyze, that they become apparent.

Almost as simple in structure as blank verse is the **heroic couplet**—iambic pentameter lines rhymed in pairs. Like blank verse, it is not, as a rule, arranged in stanzas, but is paragraphed like prose. It is used in long narrative poems. Chaucer and Dryden and Pope employ it freely. At its best it is very good; when poorly managed, it becomes cheap and singsongy. Some one has called it the rocking-

horse measure, because the first line of each couplet seems to go up—up—up, the second down—down—down; and between couplets there is apt to be quite a pause, as if the entire poem were divided into two-line links partially independent of one another. Here is an example taken from Pope's translation of the *Iliad*:

Thus hav | ing spoke | th' illus | trious chief | of Troy  
 Stretched his | fond arms | to clasp | the love | ly boy.  
 The babe | clung cry | ing to | his nur | se's breast,  
 Scar'd at | the daz | zling helm | and nod | ding crest.  
 With se | cret pleas | ure each | fond par | ent smil'd,  
 And Hec | tor hast | ed to | relieve | his child;  
 The glit | tering ter | rors from | his brow | unbound,  
 And placed | the beaming | hel | met on | the ground,  
 Then kiss'd | the child, | and, lift | ing high | in air,  
 Thus to | the gods | preferr'd | a fa | ther's prayer:

Two lines rhyming together, as in the measure just described, are called a **couplet**, regardless of their length or the kind of foot employed. Three lines rhyming together are called a **triplet**. Triplets are usually printed in stanza form. Here are the opening lines of one of Tennyson's songs:

Oh! what | is so sweet | as a morn | ing in spring,  
 When the gale | is all fresh | ness, and larks | on the wing,  
 In clear | liquid car | ols their grat | itude sing?

I rove | o'er the hill | as it spark | les with dew,  
 And the red | flush of Phoe | bus with ec | stasy view,  
 As he breaks | thro' the east | o'er thy crags, | Benvenu!

Far more common than the triple rhyme is the four line stanza or **quatrain**. The rhymes may be in various combinations. In the first of the following quatrains, it will be noted that the first line rhymes with the last, the second with the third; in the second, the first line rhymes with

the third, the second with the fourth. The third quatrain is made up of two couplets; and in the last quatrain there is but a single rhyme, that between the second and fourth lines.

I hold | it truth | with him | who sings  
 To one | clear harp | in di | vers tones,  
 That men | may rise | on step | ping-stones  
 Of their | dead selves | to high | er things.

Once more | the gate | behind | me falls.  
 Once more | before | my face  
 I see | the moul | der'd Ab | bey-walls  
 That stand | within | the chace.

You must wake | and call | me ear | ly, call | me ear | ly,  
 moth | er dear:  
 To-mor | row 'ill be | the hap | piest time | of all | the glad |  
 New-year;  
 Of all | the glad | New-year, | mother, | the mad | dest, mer- |  
 riest day;  
 For I'm | to be Queen | o' the May, | mother, I'm | to be  
 Queen | o' the May.

It is | an an | cient Mar | iner  
 And he stop | peth one | of three.  
 "By thy long | gray beard | and glit | tering eye  
 Now where | fore stopp'st | thou me?"

By varying not only the rhyme but the length of line, the quatrain may be made to assume a great many forms, as any hymnal will show, for the quatrain is a favorite with writers of hymns.

Of the many other stanza forms, but two will be mentioned, the **Spenserian** and the **sonnet**. The former, so named because used by Spenser in his *Færie Queene*, contains nine lines, all save the last being iambic pentameters; the ninth is an iambic hexameter, or Alexandrine, as it is called. The first and third lines rhyme; the second,

fourth, fifth, and seventh; and the sixth, eighth, and ninth. Here is an example:

At length | they chaunst | to meet | upon | the way  
 An ag | ed Sire, | in long | blacke weedes | yclad,  
 His feete | all bare, | his beard | all hoar | ie gray,  
 And by | his belt | his booke | he hang | ing had.  
 Sober | he seemde, | and ve | ry sage | ly sad,  
 And to | the ground | his eyes | were low | ly bent,  
 Simple | in shew, | and void | of mal | ice bad;  
 And all | the way | he pray | ed as | he went  
 And of | ten knockt | his breast, | as one | that did | repent.

The **sonnet** is a complete poem of fourteen iambic pentameter lines, the rhyming scheme varying with different authors. Here is one of Wordsworth's best:

The World | is too | much with | us; late | and soon,  
 Getting | and spend | ing, we | lay waste | our powers;  
 Little | we see | in Na | ture that | is ours;  
 We have giv | en our hearts | away, | a sor | did boon!  
 This Sea | that bares | her bos | om to | the moon,  
 The winds | that will | be howl | ing at | all hours  
 And are | up-gath | erd now | like sleep | ing flowers,  
 For this, | for ev | ery thing, | we are out | of tune;  
 It moves | us not. | —Great God! | I'd ra | ther be  
 A Pa | gan suck | led in | a creed | outworn,—  
 So might | I, stand | ing on | this pleas | ant lea,  
 Have glimps | es that | would make | me less | forlorn;  
 Have sight | of Pro | teus ris | ing from | the sea;  
 Or hear | old Tri | ton blow | his wreath | ed horn.

A convenient way of indicating rhyming schemes is by means of letters. Thus if the first two lines of a poem rhyme, it is indicated by aa; if the first rhymes with the third and the second with the fourth, by a b a b. The rhyming scheme of the Wordsworth sonnet would therefore be represented as follows: a b b a, a b b a, c d, c d, c d; and the Spenserian stanza thus: a b b a, b c b c, c. The commas are perhaps unnecessary, but are sometimes helpful in so



grouping the rhymes that they are more easily remembered. By means of this device, and the terminology already given, it is possible to define any stanza. Thus a complete description of the quatrain beginning *It is an Ancient Mariner* would be this: It is a stanza of four iambic lines, the first and third tetrameters, the second and fourth trimeters, with the rhyming scheme a b c b.

Closely related to rhyme is the device called **alliteration**, or the regular recurrence of an initial letter or sound in the accented parts of words. Notice the following lines:

1. Elaine the fair, Elaine the lovable,  
Elaine the lily maid of Astolat
2. With prudes for proctors, dowagers for deans,  
And sweet girl-graduates in their golden hair

In the first quotation, the poet plays a little tune with the letter *l*. In the second, *p* and *d* form alliterative pairs, and *g* is three times repeated. A less noble example is found in the familiar *Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers*. It is hardly necessary to mention the cheap alliterations found in newspaper headings and in advertisements. Skilfully employed, alliteration adds materially to the charm of verse. In Anglo-Saxon poetry, it takes the place of rhyme altogether.

Associated in a way with alliteration is **onomatopoeia**, a device much simpler than its name, by means of which the sounds of words are made to suggest that which the words describe. Onomatopoeia is not always directly imitative as in the words *whiz*, *bang*, *gurgle*; usually, when employed by the skilled writer of poetry or prose, it is merely suggestive. In Tennyson's *The Northern Farmer*, a father is urging his son to marry for money, or "property". He introduces the subject in this way:

Doesn't thou 'ear my 'erse's [horse's] legs, as they canters awaay?  
Proputty, proputty, proputty—that's what I 'ears 'em saay.

The *proputty, proputty, proputty* suggests unmistakably the sound of the horse's hoofs. Though one has never studied Latin, he can hardly fail to catch the hoof-beat in the following line:

Quád ru pe | dán-te pu | trém, soni | tú quatit | úngula | cámpum.

In Browning's *Up at a Villa* occurs the line

Bang-whang-whang goes the drum, tootle-te-tootle the fife.

And here we have a more delicate degree of onomatopoeia:

I heard the ripple washing in the reeds  
And the wild water lapping on the crag.

In these illustrations, the device is easily detected, for in each case there is direct imitation, or at least the sound echoes the sense. Sometimes, however, the reader merely feels that the words are appropriate, feels that the sounds are not only in harmony with one another, but in harmony with the sense.

For convenience of reference, the technical terms of versification are here brought together:

*Accent:* The emphasis which the voice gives a syllable to show that it is of more importance than neighboring syllables.

*Rhythm:* The swing or movement imparted by the occurrence of stressed or accented syllables at regular intervals.

*Meter:* The rhythmical arrangement of words.

*Verse:* A line of poetry.

*Foot:* A group of syllables one of which is always accented; a unit of rhythm.

*Iambus:* A foot of two syllables the second of which receives the accent.

*Trochee*: A foot of two syllables the first of which receives the accent.

*Anapaest*: A foot of three syllables the last of which receives the accent.

*Dactyl*: A foot of three syllables the first of which receives the accent.

*Amphibrach*: A foot of three syllables, the second of which receives the accent.

*Monometer*: A line containing one metrical foot.

*Dimeter*: A line containing two metrical feet.

*Trimeter*: A line containing three metrical feet.

*Tetrameter*: A line containing four metrical feet.

*Pentameter*: A line containing five metrical feet.

*Hexameter*: A line containing six metrical feet.

*Heptameter*: A line containing seven metrical feet.

*Octameter*: A line containing eight metrical feet.

*Feminine Line*: A line containing an extra unaccented syllable at the end.

*Truncated Line*: A line in which a final unaccented syllable is missing.

*Rhyme*: Similarity of sound, usually found at the end of lines.

*Alliteration*: Regular occurrence of an initial letter or sound in the accented parts of words of poetry.

*Onomatopoeia*: Use of words the sounds of which suggest the sense.

*Stanza*: A group of metrically related lines; a minor division of a poem.

*Blank Verse*: Unrhymed poetry, normally iambic pentameter.

*Couplet*: Two consecutive lines, usually rhyming.

*Heroic Couplet*: Iambic pentameter lines rhymed in pairs.

*Triplet*: Three consecutive lines, usually rhyming.

*Quatrain*: A four line stanza.

*Spenserian Stanza:* Eight iambic pentameter lines followed by an iambic hexameter (Alexandrine) line, the rhyming scheme being a b a b b c b c c.

*Italian Sonnet:* A poem of fourteen iambic pentameter lines, an eight line group followed by a six line group, the rhyming scheme of the first being a b b a a b b a, of the second c d c d c d or c d e c d e.

NOTE.—For exercises to accompany this section, see page 209.

## D

### THEMES FOR ESSAYS AND ORATIONS

The following loosely classified lists of subjects appropriate for school essays and orations are from *Theme-book in English Composition*.

#### 1

The mistakes of my high school course  
 What I shall remember with greatest pleasure after graduation  
 What mechanical drawing has done for me  
 What constitutes popularity in the high school  
 Who's who in high school  
 The value of the study of English  
 High school politics  
 Getting ready for class day  
 The ideal school paper  
 The value of art training in everyday life  
 The English system of education versus the American  
 Democracy in the high school  
 A day in the commercial department  
 An hour in the laboratory  
 A study in seniors  
 How our building is heated  
 A description of the gymnasium on a gala occasion  
 A review of the latest issue of the school paper  
 A famous school

The humorous side of school life  
The ideal senior  
An hour in the studio  
The ultimate good to be derived from athletics  
The value of the study of the drama  
How our school prepares for good citizenship  
What I have received from the course in —

## 2

My bad manners  
A shelf of old books  
Summer workdays  
My very little sister's ways  
My summer reading  
Some of my relatives  
Watching the children play  
Getting up in the morning  
Looking over a chest of old toys  
The transformation of my ideals  
My friend the inventor  
Dusting my books  
What goes against my grain  
A driftwood fire  
My air castles  
Three of my friends and why I like them

## 3

October skies  
Plant tragedies that I have witnessed  
A study of leaves  
How spring comes up our way  
Harvest time in the wheat lands  
A geological expedition  
A bird episode  
Fishes and their ways  
The heavens in November  
How nature cleans house now and then  
Everyday wonders of nature  
The voices of the night  
The seashore in winter

How the blind boy knows that spring is coming  
 When the tide comes in  
 In the apple orchard  
 What I found in a tide pool  
 Between darkness and dawn  
 How our town wakes up in the morning  
 Where the cardinals grow  
 My favorite haunts  
 The wander-spirit  
 How birds prepare for the winter  
 The life of a bee  
 Watching a spider  
 The survival of the fittest in plant life  
 Along the water front  
 Bird songs  
 The Audubon Society  
 A mountain camp in winter  
 The human eye and the camera  
 John Burroughs  
 The sounds heard in ten minutes in the heart of a woods  
 The sounds heard in ten minutes at midday

## 4

Modes of travel, past and present  
 Self-hardened and air-hardened steel  
 The steam engine indicator  
 The history of photography  
 What became of a tree  
 The farm of the future  
 New York in 2000  
 A visit to a pottery  
 Modern miracles of science  
 A blast furnace  
 A lesson in forestry  
 History of a plant from germ to decay  
 A sulphur match  
 The old housekeeper and the new  
 The Carnegie Institute for Research  
 A journey in the carboniferous era  
 Waste material

Uses of compressed air  
 Modes of ventilation  
 The telepost  
 A gas engine  
 The gold beater  
 A stone arch  
 Street paving  
 Batteries  
 A steam turbine  
 The X-ray machine  
 Geissler tubes  
 A talking machine  
 The kinetoscope

## 5

My favorite picture  
 Making an art of a homely trade  
 The mission of the musician  
 Something about poetry  
 What it means to get an education in art  
 How to study a picture  
 Does our town appreciate music?  
 The musical treats of the winter just past  
 Spires and towers of our town  
 ——'s sky-line  
 —— as seen from a distance at various times  
 Quaint architecture in our town  
 A visit to a studio  
 A talk with an artist  
 Art in common things  
 What practical use a schoolgirl may make of her training in art  
 The oratorio *Messiah* described  
 My favorite composer  
 Some of our little-appreciated art treasures  
 Our music club  
 The trials of an accompanist  
 An appreciation of Whistler  
 St. Gaudens  
 Beethoven  
 Dvorak and his music  
 Sargent and his work

## 6

The Children's Crusade  
 At the court of Louis XIV  
 Old guilds, forerunners of the trade unions of today  
 The settlement of Jamestown  
 Athens and Sparta  
 A bit of early local history  
 Sightseeing in London in Elizabeth's day  
 A day at the Club with Johnson  
 The Tories of the Revolution  
 The Puritan spirit  
 Knickerbocker life in colonial days  
 Etiquette in colonial times  
 Life in the South before the war  
 A balloon trip over England in the days of William the Con-  
 queror  
 What it meant to be an Elizabethan  
 A prowl through Bede's history  
 Exploring the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle  
 Shakespeare's Cæsar and the Cæsar of history  
 The fate of Finland  
 Sir Philip Sidney  
 Beau Brummel  
 Magellan  
 Benedict Arnold  
 Daniel Boone  
 Père Marquette  
 Zenobia

## 7

This age of chivalry  
 Uncrowned kings  
 Keys  
 Dreamers  
 The poor millionaire  
 Saints (no saints—would-be saints—almost saints—saints)  
 The stone that fits in the wall will never lie by the way.  
 The little tin god called Luck  
 The playthings of grown-ups  
 Windows  
 Doors



A good word for play  
A defense of Peter Pan  
The social acrobat  
Given: a sense of humor  
Fashion plates  
"Simon says thumbs up" in society and politics  
Vegetable rights  
A good word for manual labor  
The mind is its own dwelling-place.  
Ugly ducklings (after reading Andersen's *The Ugly Duckling*)  
Courtesy at home and abroad  
Monuments  
The twentieth century knight  
Paddle your own canoe.  
The world is too much with us.  
Latter-day heroines  
The joys of the poor  
Why keep a dog?  
Not so bad as painted  
Present-day superstitions  
Playthings  
Specimen relatives  
Gifts and gift giving  
Tramps, wise and otherwise  
Beggars (of various sorts)  
"All the rage"  
Patent medicines  
The simplicity of housekeeping  
The ways of little children  
The joy of indiscriminate reading  
Waste  
The Gloucester fisherman  
A library for a castaway  
The passing of the woodshed  
A plea for simplicity  
A stitch in time  
Newspaper heroes  
Uneasy rests the head that wears a crown.  
Sources of power  
Present-day opportunity

## Tests

Business honor

Optimism, good and bad

Silent conquests

Popularity

The influence of the picture postal

Human mosquitoes

The croaker

Front yards and back yards

Reforming a tramp

Shopping with a bargain hunter

## 8

An old man's dream

The story the old house told

The story of an old book

A national exposition of the next century

The magic wand of childhood

The history of a street

An important meeting of a girls' club

Good-by, fairyland

The reflection of a mirror

The doctor of fifty years hence

A modern fairy-tale

The immigrant child's dream

A dream in the public library

## 9

George Junior republics

How criminals are made

Street arabs

Undesirable citizens

Conservation of national energies

College settlements

Juvenile courts

Woman's invasion of the business world

Is democracy degenerating?

The power of conventionality

Manual training at home

Billboards

Amusement parks  
 The New England village  
 Public calamity is a mighty leveler.  
 The Red Cross Society  
 International sports  
 The cost of municipal ugliness  
 Workshops for boys  
 Library curses  
 In Utopia  
 The business value of humor  
 Pure foods  
 The justice of the jury  
 The observance of public holidays  
 The American girl's inheritance  
 The cartoonist  
 How children are protected  
 Our debt to the immigrant  
 Shotgun civilization  
 Advertising  
 Postal reforms  
 Good citizenship from a boy's standpoint

## 10

Nature as seen in *Beowulf* and the *Canterbury Tales*  
 Old English life as seen in *Beowulf*  
 Costumes in Chaucer's day  
 Two heroes: Beowulf and Roland  
 Present-day pilgrims  
 Brutus's speech in blank verse  
 Cassius's speech in blank verse  
 Likable traits in Gareth  
 Hepzibah Pyncheon  
 National hymns  
 Scottish peasantry as seen in the poems of Burns  
 Storybook villains, cowards, heroes, or heroines  
 Greek myths  
 Homer's comparisons  
 Addison as a reformer today  
 The gift of saying things  
 A ramble with Boswell

Do we need a national theatre?  
 An expedition in the land of words  
 A perfectly satisfactory hero  
 The art of letter-writing  
 Childhood myths  
 Helen of Troy's diary  
 The theatre in 1616  
 An hour with the dictionary  
 Dogs in literature  
 How to use the library  
 Heroes: Achilles, Palamon, Ivanhoe  
*Everyman*, a morality  
 Play-tricks and conventions  
 Louisa M. Alcott  
 Samuel Johnson  
 Hans Andersen  
 Thoreau  
 Five pictures from the life of Macbeth  
 Macduff's part in *Macbeth*  
 How ——— builds an essay  
 The literary art of Macaulay  
 The songs of Scotland  
 More, an old time dreamer  
 The Cook's tale (Chaucer) retold for children  
 Stray thoughts about play-going  
 A typical work of the eighteenth century  
 Lady Macbeth  
 The art of seeing things  
 Rab and Bob, Son o' Battle  
 The historical novel  
 The works of Henty  
 Self-cultivation in English  
 National songs  
 The ideal king  
 Manhood ideals: Macbeth, Banquo, Macduff  
 Walden  
 Good magazines and bad  
 The secret of Burke's power  
 The maxims of Edmund Burke  
 Thoughts from Gray's *Elegy*

The good and the bad in Macaulay's style  
 The manufacture of plays and stories  
 My favorite author  
 Milton's unreprieved pleasures  
 My favorite play  
 Readers, old and new  
 Robinson Crusoe  
 Gentlemen of the old school: Sir Roger and Dr. Primrose  
 Goldsmith as story-teller  
 Athletic contests of long ago  
 Tragic heroes: Macbeth and Brutus  
 Æsop  
 The kingly traits of Arthur  
 Mark Twain  
 The love of nature as seen in David's psalms  
 Story children  
 Juvenile literature  
 Review of *Last of the Mohicans*, *Oregon Trail*, *Bottle Imp*, *The Great Hoggarty Diamond*, *Kenilworth*, *David Copperfield*, *Mill on the Floss*, *An Old Fashioned Girl*, *The Wide, Wide World*, *Deephaven*, *Captains Courageous*, *Waverley*, the works of J. M. Barrie

## 11

Should cartooning the president be prohibited by law?  
 Should a senator be guided by his own judgment or by the wishes of his constituents?  
 Do national expeditions pay?  
 Is Macaulay a greater writer than Burke?  
 Is the Ben Greet idea correct?  
 Should children read Mother Goose literature?  
 Is the Conciliation speech a proper classic for seniors to read?  
 Are Shakespeare's heroines satisfactory?  
 Is Jack London a nature fakir?  
 Should the Old Testament be studied in public schools?  
 Do we need an endowed newspaper?  
 Should class day be abolished?  
 For general culture, which offers the greater inducements, a classical college or a scientific school?  
 Would it be well for the debating club to devote one meeting each month to non-argumentative literary exercises?

Is the interest in high school athletics declining? If so, why?  
Should sewing be made a compulsory study for high school girls?

Should all high school boys be made to take a course in carpentry?

Which offers the greater inducements, Annapolis or West Point?

Is a general education best for one who is to be a musician?

Should modern novels be read in classroom?

Is a college course necessary for a business career?

Should the prophecy be dropped from the class day program?

Which shall it be, office or drafting room?

Which shall it be, normal school or college?

## E

### A SPECIMEN BRIEF

This specimen brief, of Lord Chatham's speech on his motion for the immediate removal of the British troops from Boston, is taken, by kind permission, from Professor Baker's *Specimens of Argumentation*. Perhaps those of high school age should not be expected to prepare elaborate briefs; yet there are times when it is convenient to have at hand a trustworthy model.

### INTRODUCTION

#### I

The present course of the Ministry suggests unfairness.

#### II

The Ministry has been guilty of unfairness, namely of misrepresentation, for

(a) Their representations that led to the passage of the measures obnoxious to the American people have been proved false, for

(1) The ministers said that these measures would overawe the Americans, but the measures have solidified the resistance of the Americans.

## III

Therefore, the troops should be immediately withdrawn from Boston.

## IV

But a hearer, in considering this attempt at justice, should remember that to try to be just to America is not necessarily to exempt her from all obedience to Great Britain

## BRIEF PROPER

## I

The removal of the troops is necessary, because

A. It will show the willingness of the English to treat amicably.

B. The resistance of the Americans was necessary because

I. The obnoxious acts of Parliament were tyrannical.

C. The means of enforcing the measures of Parliament have failed, for

I. The army of General Gage is "penned up—pining in inglorious inactivity."

II. The objection that the presence of this army in Boston is a safeguard is untrue, for

(a) It is powerless, and held in contempt.

(b) It is an irritation to the Americans.

(c) The objection that General Gage is needlessly inactive is untrue, for

(1) Any activity on his part would mean "civil and unnatural war."

D. If Parliament tries by the aid of the army to enforce its measures, the result will be bad, for

I. If Parliament were victorious, it would be over an embittered people.

II. The troops are not strong enough to resist three million united, courageous people.

III. Persecution of these men whose fathers left their homes to escape it should cease, since

(a) The objection of the Ministry that the Americans "must not be heard" is unjust, since

(1) It "lumps the innocent with the guilty."

- E. The statement that "the union in America cannot last" is untrue, for
- I. The evidence of the so-called "commercial bodies" is unreliable, for
    - (a) They do not really represent the class for whom they profess to speak,
    - (b) And they are paid agents of the Government.
    - (c) Even if they did represent the commercial class of America, their judgment would be untrustworthy, for
      - (1) Not the commercial class, but the farming class, are the strength of a nation;
      - (2) And the American farmers are unitedly arrayed for liberty.
  - II. The evidence of an authority (Dr. Franklin plainly hinted) proves that the Americans, for the sake of liberty, would endure far more than they have as yet suffered, even war and rapine.
- F. The statement that the Americans should be punished for illegal violence is untrue, for
- I. A chance for reconciliation should not be missed.
  - II. Thirty thousand in Boston should not be punished for the fault of forty or fifty.
  - III. Punishment means arousing the unappeasable wrath of the whole American people.
  - IV. Even if the English people are victorious, they cannot control the great tracts of conquered country.
  - V. The resistance should have been foreseen, for
    - (a) The spirit that resists in America is that of all English stock, that which established the essential maxim of English liberty, "No taxation without the consent of the taxed."
  - VI. The resistance will become too strong to be overcome, for
    - (a) The English Whigs will aid them, for
      - (1) The spirit that moves the Americans is that which has always belonged to the Whigs.
    - (b) The Irish will aid them, for
      - (1) They have always maintained the ideas the Americans support.
    - (c) The means to oppose this united body is weak, for



(1) A few regiments in America and 18,000 men at home must oppose three million Americans, millions of Englishmen, and all the Irish.

(2) And ministerial tricks against it will fail, for

(a) The result must inevitably be a "check-mate" for the ministers.

G. This removal of the troops must precede any other step, because

I. The fear and the resentment of the Americans must first of all be remedied;

II. While the troops remain, resentment will remain, for

(a) Any measures secured by force would be, with the army in Boston, doubly irritating.

(b) When, as is the case, force cannot be used, the mere presence of the army, though it is itself in danger, is irritating.

H. The views of Congress are moderate and reasonable.

I. It is an old maxim that the first concession comes most fitly from the superior.

J. While every policy urges withdrawal of the troops, every danger warns the English from keeping to the old course, for

I. That means foreign war, for

(a) France and Spain are watching for an advantageous chance to interfere.

II. That means domestic trouble, for

(a) The king will lose all his power.

(b) The kingdom will be utterly undone.\*

\* Note that a conclusion is not printed by itself because, as the proposition, it has been given in Introduction, III.

## F

## QUESTIONS ON TYPICAL MASTERPIECES\*

## GEORGE ELIOT'S SILAS MARNER

Having read a chapter, try to give a summary of its contents in a few sentences. Invent an appropriate title for each chapter. Before turning to the questions, try to find things to admire—thoughts beautifully expressed, or passages revealing exceptional skill in story-telling. If your copy of the book is an inexpensive one, mark passages that please you.

## CHAPTER I

How does this narrative differ from other novels that you have read in regard to the way it begins? Would it have been better to begin with lively conversation? with the Lantern Yard episode? Recall as many reasons as you can why Silas was viewed with suspicion in Raveloe. What great crisis in the life of Marner is dealt with in this chapter? Who were David and Jonathan? So far as your reading experience goes, are the most interesting stories about city life or country life? about people of high degree, or of lowly station? about young people, or those of middle age?

## CHAPTER II

Purpose? Why are the paragraphs introduced which tell how Marner helped Sally Oates? Could the passage telling of the accident to the pitcher be spared? Why is the money-counting scene placed last? Meaning of Lethean? Do you recall two similes which are used in describing Marner's life? Why do you find it necessary to read this novel so slowly?

## CHAPTER III

Note that in this chapter Marner does not appear. Do you, at this point, see any way in which he is likely to be affected

\* The questions here given may seem, in some instances, not to follow the study plans given in earlier chapters. This is due to the fact that the questions are designed to be used in daily recitation, and that seldom is it possible to read an entire masterpiece before it is taken up in classroom for detailed study.

by the state of affairs at the Red House? Why does not the author devote a chapter or two to Godfrey's unfortunate marriage, treating it in detail? Does George Eliot wish the reader to thoroughly despise Godfrey and Dunstan? What explanation is given of the social supremacy of Squire Cass? What war-time is referred to in the second paragraph? Was it necessary, in the fourth paragraph, to mention that Godfrey stood with his hands in his side-pockets? Is the brown spaniel unnecessary? Explain: "No! he would . . . rather go on sitting at the feast, and sipping the wine he loved, than," etc. What parts, if any, of this chapter do you think might be omitted to advantage? Does the story move rapidly?

#### CHAPTER IV

Pick out the events which seem to hinge upon chance. Trace the thoughts which pass through Dunstan's mind (a) up to the time he meets Bryce, (b) from the staking of the horse till Marner's cottage is reached, (c) while Dunstan is in the cottage. Have you ever read another story in which mind-workings were recorded so minutely? How could a woman like George Eliot know how men think and talk during a horse-trade? Why does the author have Dunstan take Godfrey's whip? Try to imagine what the next three chapters will contain. How will the story end? What do you admire most in this chapter?

#### CHAPTER V

Give an account, minute in detail as you can make it, of Marner's thoughts and actions as pictured in this chapter. Show that contrast and suspense are finely employed. What are the most dramatic moments thus far in the story? George Eliot was a close student of philosophy; what two general observations concerning the workings of the mind does she make in this chapter? What will be the effect on Marner's character, if his gold is not recovered?

#### CHAPTER VI

What is the purpose of this chapter? Is Rainbow an appropriate name for a tavern? How could George Eliot know how tavern frequenters talk? Give an account of (a) the dispute concerning the cow, (b) the hectoring of the deputy clerk,

(c) the minister's mistake, (d) Cliff's holiday. What is the landlord's favorite remark? Give Mr. Macey's epigram. Is George Eliot skilled in making conversation lifelike? Which requires the greater talent, the creating of characters or the inventing of plots?

#### CHAPTER VII

In what way does VI lead up to VII? What good influence befalls to work on Marner while he is at the Rainbow? Point out the pathos and the humor in this chapter.

#### CHAPTER VIII

Enumerate the several theories advanced concerning what has become of Marner's money. Why is the tinder-box introduced — solely for humor and to gratify the author's fondness for revealing the workings of the mind? Which is the better piece of work, the paragraphs dealing with the efforts of the villagers to discover the robbery, or the paragraphs which tell of Godfrey's "inward debating?" What is the meaning of "foreshadowing," as the term is used in relation to story-telling? Do you find an instance of it in this chapter?

#### CHAPTER IX

Give a clear account of the interview between father and son. Is the essay on chance, with which the chapter ends, a blemish? Does this chapter contain a dramatic situation? How many dramatic situations has the story furnished thus far?

#### CHAPTER X

Purpose? Contrast Mr. Macey and Mrs. Winthrop. Is George Eliot as skilful in delineating women as she is in delineating men? Is Aaron true to life? Why is the youngster brought into the story? Why are children characters so rarely found in fiction? What is the purpose of the dialogue with which the chapter closes?

#### CHAPTER XI

Notice that though in the first ten chapters all the acting characters, save one, are men, chapter XI is distinctly feminine. Are the delineations as truthful as those found in the Rainbow

chapter? Would it be correct to say that George Eliot excels in describing the manners of rural society? Is it the main purpose of the chapter to describe the manners of earlier times, or does the story proper advance a little? Which is the central figure of the score of characters who appear at the Red House party? What (verbatim) is George Eliot's definition of a lady? How does Nancy differ from the modern heroine? Introducing a heroine is an important matter; can you determine why the author gives the reader his first glimpse of Nancy when she is just arriving at the Red House rather than later in the evening? Is the dressing-room scene necessary? What purpose is served by the Miss Gunns? by the villagers? by Priscilla? How are we made acquainted with Nancy? Has the chapter something of climax structure? Does it leave the reader in suspense? Is George Eliot best in the chapters where many characters appear? What do you admire most in the chapter?

## CHAPTER XII

Point out the dramatic relationship between XI and XII. Would the effect be as good were the order of these two chapters reversed? Has the chapter been foreshadowed? Does the author try to arouse in the reader deep pity for the forsaken wife? Why is not the reader given a nearer view of "a barmaid's paradise of pink ribbons and gentlemen's jokes?" Point out all the little touches which show that George Eliot was a close and sympathetic observer of the ways of little children? Show that the coming of the child was a crisis in the life of Marnet. Which should you prefer to have written, this chapter or the preceding?

## CHAPTER XIII

What is the dramatic effect of having Godfrey the first to see his child? of Nancy's question to Godfrey? of Dolly Winthrop's final remark to him? of the fact that the child's eyes turn from him to the rough-faced weaver? What is your answer to the question which Godfrey asks himself in the final paragraph? Has the weather thus far introduced been essential to the story? Do you recall any instance where rain or sunshine has been introduced for dramatic effect—as if nature sympathized with the characters? How will the story end?

## CHAPTER XIV

Find specific instances of "a woman's tender tact." What is accomplished through the scene in which Mrs. Winthrop appears? Contrast the influence of the hoarded gold and the influence of Eppie. In the incident which tells how Eppie runs away, what is gained by including the item about the red-headed calf? Is the character of Eppie drawn true to life? In what other books have you found attractive children?

## CHAPTER XV

Is this chapter necessary? In what respects would the story be incomplete if it were to end at this point?

## CHAPTER XVI

What advantage is there in opening Part Second with a church scene? What is gained by introducing the donkey, the dog, and the cat? What is Mrs. Winthrop's way of justifying the result of the trial by lot? Does it satisfy you? Show that the garden symbolizes the entire story. Does the chapter contain any foreshadowing—any hint of coming events? Is Eppie as attractive as a young woman as she was as a child?

## CHAPTER XVII

Does the story advance any during this chapter? What is the chapter's purpose? Why is Nancy unwilling to adopt Eppie? Why is Godfrey unwilling to confess to Nancy? Do you recall other chapters which leave the reader in a state of suspense?

## CHAPTER XVIII

Would the announcement of the discovery at the stone-pits have been equally dramatic had it been made by another than Godfrey—for example, by Ben Winthrop to a group of villagers? Would it have been equally dramatic had the author confided to the reader, in Chapter IV, what became of Dunstan? In what ways does Nancy show nobility of character? Do you agree that "nothing is so good as it seems beforehand"? Find a number of things to admire in this chapter.

## CHAPTER XIX

What is the dramatic purpose of the conversation between Silas and Eppie, before the arrival of Godfrey? What arguments are used in the attempt to persuade Eppie to leave Silas? What is the most dramatic moment?

## CHAPTER XX

What is the purpose of the chapter? At what point in the story does Nancy appear most noble? Is she the heroine? What other characters have shown heroic qualities? Why not end the story at this point?

## CHAPTER XXI

Is this chapter necessary? Why is not Silas permitted to clear himself of the charge of theft, and to talk over with the minister the matter of trial by lots? Try to imagine the life-career of William Dane. Write a composition under the title *William Dane's Confession*.

## GENERAL QUESTIONS

Why do so many stories end on wedding days? Does the conclusion leave any important question unanswered? As you look back on the story, what in it seems most admirable? What character is most attractive? What character is best delineated? What are the most dramatic scenes? What is the most prominent underlying truth? What opinion have you formed of the author?

## THE DE COVERLEY PAPERS

## No. 1

When you read a magazine article, do you care to know the particulars concerning the author's life? Is the Spectator a purely imaginary person? In what respects is the Spectator, as pictured by Addison, one who would please readers of the better class? What advantages and what disadvantages are there in writing under an assumed name? Would it be better if all newspaper articles were signed? Are spectators as a rule better qualified to write than those actively engaged in affairs? What

is meant by a "speculative statesman?" Pick out a few words or phrases which show that our language has changed slightly since Addison's day. Write from memory an account of the *Spectator's* life, character, and purpose; or write a paragraph beginning with this sentence: In his opening paper Addison reveals not a little shrewdness.

## No. 2

What is gained, considering the purpose of the *Spectator*, through inventing a group of clubmen? Are the members wisely selected? If you were inventing a club for a similar purpose, what classes of society would you wish to have represented? Which character is sketched with greatest care? What is the meaning of *wit* and *humorist* as employed in this paper? Is it true (a) that one few of whose thoughts are drawn from business is apt to be agreeable in conversation; (b) that one familiar with the writings of the ancients is a keen observer of what occurs in the world today; (c) that it is cowardly to be backward in asserting what, because of your merit, you ought to expect? Write a two hundred word sketch of a member of a modern club, patterning after Steele.

## No. 6

Is this paper difficult to understand because the thought is profound, or because the thought is poorly expressed? Does some one idea stand out clearly? Was the paper planned with care? What, if anything, is gained by having Sir Roger speak? What is gained by concluding with the story of Spartan politeness? Explain: *abuse of the understanding, men of fine parts*. Why should none but men of fine parts be hung? What danger attends cleverness? What danger attends literary skill? Which class is the more apt to do wrong, the educated or the uneducated? Is the law on the whole successful in catching the people most dangerous to society? What constitutes true politeness? Are the charges brought by Steele against his own times applicable today? Has the paper given you much to think about?

## No. 34

Make a simple plan of this paper by giving to each paragraph an appropriate title. What hints do you find that help



you in guessing what subjects the Spectator has been writing about? What is satire? Is it well for the satirist "never to draw a faulty character which does not fit," etc.? Is it never wise for the reformer to single out a conspicuous offender and attack him openly?

## No. 37

Do you think this paper was enjoyed by the ladies who read it? Should you like to read—or write—a similar paper on the library of a lady of today? What does Addison gain by leading up to his suggestion for reform through giving an account of his imagined visit? Would the paper have been as effective had he stated his reform at the outset? Why does he include an account of Leonora's country seat? What, in brief, are A.'s ideas on reading for women? What does he condemn in Leonora's reading? Would it have been wise to follow this paper with one containing a list of one hundred good books? Point out bits of humor. Write—or imagine—a letter written by Leonora to the Spectator.

## No. 106

Notice that the Spectator takes his readers to the country during warm weather. Has this paper a definite plan, or does it simply drift along? Why are Addison's papers easier to read than Steele's? Which Sir Roger is more natural, the one we see in this paper or the one in No. 6? Which Spectator is more natural, the one in this paper or the one in No. 6; that is, which one best fits his character as delineated in the first paper? In what respects is Sir Roger a good master? Why is it so difficult nowadays to get and keep good servants? Were the instructions wise which Sir R. gave to the friend who was to select a chaplain? Do you approve of the plan whereby ministers preach sermons written by abler men?

## No. 107

Is it probable that Steele could have improved this paper by rewriting it? The beginning of an essay should be inviting; is it inviting in this case? Would it have been better to begin with the incident with which the paper concludes? Is the opening paragraph too long? Rewrite in simpler language the second paragraph. Explain: *threatened to distrain, so good an husband,*

*when a tenement falls, manumission.* Are Steele's ideas concerning the treatment of servants appropriate for today in America? If you were writing a paper on the servant problem, what are some of the suggestions you would make? What do you imagine Addison thought of this paper by Steele? Try to imagine a conversation at the Club among men who had just read the paper.

## No. 108

In what respects is Will's letter "extraordinary"? Is the character of Wimble well brought out? Have we in America a class corresponding to that to which Will belonged? Are the names of the characters in the *Spectator* well chosen? Give the meaning of the quotation which introduces the paper. Were the Latin quotations in the *Spectator* intelligible to its readers? What purpose is served by the quotations? In the original *Spectator* did the essays appear with titles?

## No. 109

At what two fashions of the hour is fun poked? Which is the better of the two tales, the tilt-yard episode or the elopement? Point out little touches which make the narrative life-like. Point out the ideal in Sir Humphrey's character. Imagine a coffee-house group reading this paper. What would they find to laugh at? Imagine Addison complimenting Steele. What literary excellencies would he think especially praiseworthy? Imagine yourself writing a similar paper on someone's relatives, whose photographs you are examining in a family album.

## No. 110

Notice how quiet, smooth-flowing, and thoughtful this essay is compared to the preceding. Try to imagine how Steele would have treated the same topic. Imagine how you would build up an essay on present-day superstitions. What, briefly, is Addison's belief concerning ghosts? What is Locke's? Lucretius's? your own? Does the story at the conclusion of the paper add much? Pick out a paragraph that you like particularly well, and be prepared to defend your preference. Try to state clearly and completely the reforms advocated in this paper.

## No. 112

Reproduce as accurately as you can the substance of the opening paragraph. Mention in detail everything that Sir Roger did to make his parish church a success. With what thought does the paper close? Do you think Addison's readers cared for this semi-religious paper? Notice the plan of the essay: a paragraph of general ideas on church-going, followed by a series of paragraphs graphically picturing church conditions in two parishes, one ideal, the other far from ideal. Try to think of other plans that A. might have followed. Is A. ever guilty of "fine writing"? Can you imagine, when reading, that he is talking to you?

## No. 113

Is the character of the widow true to life or merely a burlesque? Is Sir Roger's rambling talk natural? Do you think more highly of Sir Roger after reading the paper? Should you imagine that Steele was a bashful lover? Does this paper contain satire? Explain: *assizes, confidante, desperate scholar, votaries, Dum tacet hanc loquitur*. Is the stanza with which the paper closes appropriate? What is meant by the phrase *keeping Sir Roger in character*?

## No. 114

In studying this paper, the main task is to understand what it means. Explain: *shame of poverty*. What maxim of economy was adopted by Sir Roger's ideal ancestor? Do you understand the paragraph in which Cowley is mentioned? Which class is most to be envied, the rich, the poor, or those neither rich nor poor? Has wealth anything to do with happiness? If Addison had been writing this paper, would he have begun with the dinner party? Try to imagine how he would have concluded the paper.

## No. 115

Make a topical plan. What part of the essay do you find most novel? most interesting? best worth remembering? Which essay has the better conclusion, 115 or 114?

## No. 116

Budgell wrote this essay; can you tell, from its style, whether it was revised by Addison or by Steele? Give your reasons.

Do you agree with Pascal, or with the Spectator, in regard to hunting? Why are quotations so often found at the close of essays?

## No. 117

Explain *hovering faith*. Is the adjective *hovering* well chosen? Is hovering faith always the result of a desire to be fair, or may it result from a desire to avoid responsibility? What kind of people are apt to "jump at conclusions"? Assuming that A. sincerely wished to bring about reform, show that the opening paragraph is very appropriate. Find one or two examples that would not be considered good English today.

## No. 118

Notice that papers in which the widow is mentioned are by Steele. Is the opening paragraph a bit flowery? Do you find it difficult to imagine Sir Roger talking as Steele makes him talk? Was it not remarkable that just as Sir R. was railing against confidantes he should light upon an example of a confidante's mischief? Is the game-keeper's language natural? Which essayist, Addison or Steele, were they alive today, would make the better novelist? write the better comedy? Can you account for the fact that A.'s sentences seem so much more modern than Steele's?

## No. 119

Notice how well planned this paper is, and with what skill transitions are made. What general remarks does A. make in regard to city and country manners? In what respects does he think the country better than the city? How does he account for the coarse language of city fops? Do you agree that "good breeding shows itself most where, to an ordinary eye, it appears least"? Why today is there far less difference between the manners of city and country than in former times? What would A. have to say today about dress, conversation, manners? Could a good essay be written on slang? Are slang and profanity dying out?

## No. 122

Would the account of the day with Sir Roger be as interesting without the little sermon found in the opening paragraph? Do you accept as true the statement in the first sentence? *is*

Sir Roger's "much might be said on both sides" a case of "hovering faith"? Comment on "I suppose he is going upon the old business of the willow tree." Do you recall other sentences, in earlier papers, introduced for the same artistic purpose? Have we had other papers which end as simply as this one? Is it a good plan, when writing an essay, to make the concluding sentence bring the reader's thoughts back to the introductory sentences? Is No. 122 constructed on such a plan?

## No. 123

Notice the structure: (1) a specific example of a pampered son, (2) a few words on pampered sons in general, (3) a story suggested by the subject. What criticism can you offer concerning the story of Florio and Leonilla? Try to imagine how a modern author would tell the story. Do you think A. really means to recommend that children be exchanged? What paper makes a good companion piece to No. 123? Reparagraph the story.

## No. 125

This paper is somewhat difficult, but exceedingly good, showing A. at his best—fearless, yet writing with commendable restraint. Tell the anecdotes with which the paper begins, and note how skilfully it puts the reader into a wholesome frame of mind to receive the lecture that follows. Enumerate, as accurately as you can, all the evils resulting from extreme party spirit. Give very carefully the substance of the concluding paragraph. Can you recall any other paper in which the man Addison appears to better advantage? Is the paper one of the best from the literary standpoint? How would Steele have treated the subject? Does party spirit run high in America? Could you write a similar paper on party feeling as it appears in public schools?

## No. 126

Is A. in earnest in his recommendation that honest men of all parties unite in an association for purifying politics? Has such an association ever been formed? Notice A.'s list of political pests: furious zealots; infamous hypocrites; profligate, immoral retainers. Can you think of other political pests? Does A. succeed in making his point clearer by means of the ichneumon

and Tartar illustrations? Which is the more interesting half of the paper? Where in the paper do you find A. most earnest? May a writer forward a serious purpose by means of humor? Is there anything in this paper at which any of A.'s readers may have taken offence? Have you noted anything in any of his papers at which anyone might take offence?

## No. 130

In this paper does A. appear as reformer or as entertainer? Why does he not deal with the gypsy problem seriously as he deals with the subject of witches? Point out the bits of humor. Was the story with which the paper concludes added merely to fill up space? Is the story probable? interesting? Who is Cassandra?

## No. 131

What, if anything, is satirized in this paper? What does the paper contain that would interest A.'s readers? Perhaps the best thing in 131 is the letter with which it closes; how does it compare with Will Wimble's? In what respects is the latter characteristic of Honeycomb? Write a letter to yourself, pretending as you write that you are someone else. Try to recall every person mentioned by the Spectator during his imaginary visit to Sir Roger. Which of these people are more than commonly interesting?

## No. 132

In what respect is this paper characteristic of Steele? Should you prefer to read none but papers by Addison, or do you find relief in an occasional paper by Steele? Explain the pun in the opening paragraph. What do you learn from the paper concerning travel in Queen Anne's day? What is satirized? Stage-coaches being out of fashion, is the lesson on manners no longer appropriate? What might Steele have to say about electric cars or automobiles, were he writing today? Why was it brave to say a good word for Quakers?

## No. 174

Does Sir Roger talk "in character"? Is Sir Andrew's speech lifelike? Had A. been writing, would he have permitted Sir Andrew to make the reference to Sir Roger's portrait gallery?

Why does Steele end his paper without giving the knight opportunity to reply? What hint is given concerning the best way to aid the poor? Is Sir Andrew's method always possible? Was it uncommon in Queen Anne's day for country gentlemen to keep accounts? Is there a prejudice today against commercial interests?

## No. 269

Note that 132 appeared Aug. 1, 174 Sept. 14, 269 Jan. 8. Note too that A. is careful to recall to his readers the various characters met, months before, at Sir Roger's. Is his account of Sir R's. Christmas generosity intended to make his readers forget Steele's blunder in running down the Knight? Notice the time-marks: Eugene and Scanderbeg, the Pope's procession, etc. Do they suggest why the products of journalism seldom win a permanent place in literature? Was Baker's *Chronicle* a recent publication? Is there a hint that tea is supplanting coffee as a popular beverage? What is gained by telling precisely where the Spectator and the Knight took their walk, and by giving the name of the coffee house to which they went? In what respects is this a better paper than the preceding?

## No. 329

What is gained by letting the reader see the Abbey through the eyes of Sir Roger? Was A.'s principal purpose to reveal the goodness of the Knight's heart, or to present a true picture of the monuments? Point out all the traits of Sir R.'s character as revealed in this paper. Give an account of the morning's visit, not forgetting the Knight's comments. Shut your eyes and try to form a picture of Sir Roger in the coronation chair. In mentioning widow Trueby's waters is A. poking fun at a quack remedy, or "puffing" a remedy that he believes in? Did the *Spectator* contain advertisements?

## No. 335

In this paper A. puffs a play by his friend Phillips. Pick out every favorable criticism passed by Sir Roger. Why would favorable comment from a country squire who had not seen a play in twenty years be considered high praise? Pick out all the little items which make the account of the evening seem true

to life. Do you feel, as you read paper after paper, that Addison is growing fonder of the character he has created? Are you growing fonder of him? What have you learned about play-going in Queen Anne's time? Imagine yourself attending a play with one of your country relatives. What are some of the odd things he might do and say?

## No. 359

You have read papers by Steele and Addison in which Sir R. appears, and now comes one by Budgell. Does Budgell handle the character well? Which of the three writers is most successful in showing the lovable side of the Knight's nature? Notice the touch of realism in the phrase *playing with a cork*. Do you recall similar touches in earlier papers? Could Steele have handled the subject of Honeycomb's amours successfully? Why is Sir R. so interested in the passage from *Paradise Lost*?

## No. 383

Explain: *Temple Stairs, Spring Garden, Fox-hall, Temple Bar*. How do you account for Sir Roger's enthusiasm over war? Were not the land-owners opposed to war? Explain the reference to the fifty new churches. Is the purpose of the paper to suggest reforms, or to bring out the Knight's character? If the purpose is to call attention to reforms needed at Fox-hall, was it wise to confine the criticism to the last paragraph or two? Was it shrewder to have the criticism fall from the lips of Sir Roger than to have the Spectator speak directly and boldly? Which is the best paper, 329, 335, or 383?

## No. 517

Can you imagine why Addison put an end to Sir Roger, who must have been a popular character? Why does he invent a letter from the butler rather than from the chaplain or Capt. Sentry? Is the butler in any respects a good letter-writer? Is the letter in character? What are the essentials of a good letter? Is Biscuit an appropriate name, or does it displease you? What would be an appropriate name for the chaplain? Point out the humor in the paper. Do you note any resemblance between this paper and the last scene in a play or the final chapter of a novel?



## GENERAL QUESTIONS

The avowed purpose of the *Spectator* was to improve manners and morals by pointing out follies. How many *Spectator* reforms can you recall? What is peculiar in the method employed by the editors in bringing about reforms?

How many *Spectator* characters do you recall? Which of these stand out most distinctly? Are they agreeable people whom it would be a pleasure to meet? Are they presented as ideal people or as examples of what we should not be? Are they all types easily duplicated, or are they "odd sticks"?

How many incidents do you recall? How do these incidents, viewed collectively, differ from the incidents in a novel? Would it have been well to have the widow at last accept Sir Roger? Could Addison or Steele have written a play? a novel? a good short story? Is the character of the papers such as to call for description? Do you recall any descriptive passages?

What have you noticed in regard to Addison's and Steele's ways of constructing essays? What are some of their ways of beginning? of concluding? Are the paragraphs closely knit by means of introductory and transitional words and phrases? Is the vocabulary of the *Spectator* a simple one? Which is the more skilful writer, Addison or Steele?

What new ideas have come to you from reading the papers? What facts have you learned about Queen Anne times? On the whole, have the papers been enjoyable? What have you enjoyed most? least? What opinion have you formed of Addison and Steele as men? What do you think of Queen Anne times as compared with today? Has human nature changed much in two centuries?

## MACAULAY'S SAMUEL JOHNSON

In studying this essay it is well to bear in mind that it was written for the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, rather hastily, when Macaulay was in his fifty-sixth year—three years before his death. The numerals refer to paragraphs.

## 1

What three topics are treated in this paragraph? The account of Johnson's father contains about one hundred words. What, if anything, do you see in it to admire? Why is no men-

tion made of Johnson's mother? What, besides the house where Johnson was born, do travelers go to Lichfield to see? How do you account for the fact that the bookseller's patrons were mainly clergymen? How did the contents of Johnson's shop differ from those of the modern bookstore? How do you account for the fact that politics and religion were more closely allied in the early years of the eighteenth century than they are at present? Explain the sentence beginning *He was a zealous churchman*. Was Johnson well born for a literary career? Is the sentence beginning *In the child* an important one, in any way suggesting the statement of a proposition in geometry? Why are the details of the child's trip to London given, together with a description of the Queen? In this early account of Johnson is M. trying to prejudice you against him? Is it a good plan to turn boys loose in bookshops or libraries, or is it better to direct their reading? Is indiscriminate reading a good preparation for authorship? Is the study of the classics a good preparation for authorship? How do the books that the boy Johnson read differ in kind from the books read by the average American youth? Explain: *Attic poetry and eloquence, Augustan delicacy of taste, public schools, sixth form at Eton, restorers of learning, Petrarch*.

## 2

Explain *either university*. How does Oxford differ from an American university? Is Macrobius a well known Latin writer? Is the first sentence of this paragraph topical?

## 3

Explain: *quadrangle of Christ Church, gentleman commoner, Pope's Messiah, Virgilian*. Is there a suspicion created by such phrases as *was generally to be seen and in every meeting* that Macaulay was too fond of making sweeping statements? What is the first essential in writing biography? From what source did M. get his information concerning Johnson? Should he have acknowledged his indebtedness? Do you like Johnson better or worse after reading this paragraph?

## 4

Invent appropriate headings for the three paragraphs dealing with Johnson's college career. Point out the dramatic features in this chapter of Johnson's life.

## 5

Is it possible that in this paragraph M. represents as customary eccentricities which were but occasional? Find instances of balanced construction such as "He was sick of life; but he was afraid of death." Explain: *hypochondriac, torpid*.

## 6

Notice that M. is careful, after the preceding paragraph which refers to a period of thirty years, to let the reader know J.'s age at the time now to be considered. Enumerate Johnson's early attempts to make a living. Explain: *usher of a grammar school, ecclesiastical court*. When a young man upon leaving college tries now this occupation, now that, is it a sign of weakness?

## 7

Notice that *While leading this vagrant and miserable life*, like the first phrase in the preceding paragraph, is transitional, the rest of the sentence topical. What is gained by mentioning the Queensberrys and Lepels? Can you bring against M., as he appears in this paragraph, any charge besides misrepresentation? Was M. a married man? Find an instance of contrast. What danger attends the use of contrast to gain force?

## 8

Mrs. Porter was but forty-six when she married Johnson; how do you account for *tawdry painted grandmother*? Is it M.'s purpose in painting J.'s misfortunes—his poverty, his infirmities, and his marriage—to make Johnson's success in later years seem the more wonderful? Who was Garrick?

## 9

How do you account for the brevity of this paragraph?

## 10

What relationship does the first sentence bear to the rest of the paragraph? Why is this an important paragraph in an essay which aims to estimate Johnson's achievements? Explain the sentence beginning *Literature had ceased to flourish*. Name two or three writers prominent in the preceding generation, two

or three in the following generation, and two or three contemporaries. What Macaulayan characteristic is prominent in the sentence describing Fielding's poverty?

11

Explain *Drury Lane*.

12

Explain: *ordinaries, à la mode beef shops, sycophancy, Harleian Library*. Are the graphic details in this paragraph introduced for humorous effect? Does M. like Johnson?

13

Explain: *proceedings of either house, Lilliput, Capulets, Montagues, Sacheverell, ship money, Roundheads, Great Rebellion, member of the opposition*. How do you account for the length of this paragraph? M. was a Whig; can we trust him to estimate the worth of a Tory? Can we make a hero of Johnson after learning that he deceived his readers in the *Debates of the Senate of Lilliput*? Why is this a difficult paragraph to master?

14

What prompted J. to write *London*? Would the second sentence be as effective if it concluded with a *needy man of letters*? What is the poem about?

15

Notice the dramatic structure, suggesting a one act tragedy with a good catastrophe. The harsh word *hack* forms an appropriate ending.

16

How is the transition made from *London* to *Savage*? Make as many comments as you can on the rhetorical characteristics of the third and fourth sentences. Explain: *Covent Garden, a glass house*.

17

Explain *Grub Street*. In reviewing a work, is it best to give unfavorable criticism first?

## 18

How is the transition made from Savage to the *Dictionary*? Notice that M. tells how much J. was to receive for the *Dictionary*. He has also told how much was paid for *London*, and how much J. was left by his father. Do you like this? How much is 1,500 guineas? How much does it cost to make a dictionary nowadays? Why so much more?

## 19

What is a prospectus? Was it like Johnson, who was no sycophant, to curry favor with Chesterfield? Comment on the fifth sentence.

## 20

Which do you like better, the paragraphs dealing with *The Vanity of Human Wishes*, or the paragraphs dealing with *London*?

## 21

Why so short a paragraph?

## 22

Notice how careful M. is to see that the reader follows the time sequence. Find in earlier paragraphs time-establishing phrases like *A few days after*. Point out balanced constructions. What is the difference between blank verse and heroic verse? What is a closet drama?

## 23

Was it necessary to refer to earlier periodical literature? Do you infer from this paragraph and others that M. was a great reader with a wonderful memory?

## 24-25

Study carefully M.'s manner of building up the topic dealt with in these two paragraphs. Why is so much more space given to the essays than to the tragedy *Irene*?

## 26

Are the short sentences suggestive of sobs? Is the fifth artfully constructed? Comment on the sentence beginning *She*

*was gone.* Does the last sentence, so business-like, seem out of harmony with what precedes? Was M. a man of tender emotions? Does he know how to juggle with words and sentences?

27

Read, if you have access to it, the letter and the preface referred to. Why has the letter been termed the declaration of independence of English letters? Explain the term *patronage*.

28

Explain: *etymologist, Junius and Skinner*. Name the faults and the virtues of the *Dictionary*. Make a topical plan of all the paragraphs dealing with the *Dictionary*.

29

Explain *spunging houses*. What would be an appropriate heading for the paragraph?

30

Why is the *Idler* given less space than the *Rambler*? Is M. careful to preserve due proportions?

31

Notice the transition. What is gained by placing the word *Rasselas* last?

32

Has this paragraph too an effective conclusion—a little surprise for the reader? Who is Lydia Languish? What is *Rasselas* about? Is it prose or poetry? How many forms of literature has Johnson attempted thus far?

33

If you have read *Rasselas*, answer Macaulay's criticism. Comment on *gorged with raw steaks cut from living cows*.

34

Make a careful study of this artfully constructed paragraph.

## 35

Is the first sentence topical? Should the topical sentence always come first? What is gained by the repetition of *daily*?

## 36

Find examples of word repetition. Is it effective as here employed? Notice the force of the phrase "making *fools* of so many *philosophers*;" then find, later in the paragraph, a similar antithesis. Do you think the less of Johnson for investigating the Cock Lane Ghost? for delaying so long his edition of Shakespeare? Would it be well for our government to pension prominent men of letters? Would it be well to revive the custom of patronage, men of wealth supporting needy authors of promise?

## 37

What praise has Macaulay for the edition of Shakespeare? What censure? Do you suspect that the censure is partly unjust? Would M. make a good editor of the plays of Shakespeare? What is meant by *conjectural emendation*? Who is *Ben*? How do you account for the fact that Johnson received so many honors at this time? Explain *Royal Academy*.

## 38

How is the transition made from the edition of Shakespeare to the Club? What is M.'s explanation of Johnson's "colloquial talents"? Explain: *pompous triads*, *casuistry*. How do you account for the fact that skilled conversationalists are rarer today than in the eighteenth century? Is the Club still in existence? How do you account for the fact that so many of the great writers of Johnson's day lived in London? What is America's literary center? If a similar club of American writers were to be formed, would it exert an influence similar to that of Johnson's Club? If you wished to make a careful study of the Club, to what book would you turn?

## 39

Careful investigation reveals that most of the uncomplimentary epithets bestowed upon Boswell are undeserved. Is M.'s unfair treatment due to prejudice, to lack of correct information, or to a desire to make the friendship between John-

son and Boswell seem inexplicable? Pick out examples of the balanced sentence. Read, at random, a few pages of Boswell's *Life*, then contrast Boswell and Macaulay as biographers.

## 40

Notice the transition. Comment on the characterization of Mrs. Thrale, and try to explain the friendship between her and Johnson. What is gained by once more reminding the reader of Johnson's disagreeable eccentricities? Does the account of the friendship raise Johnson in your estimation? Should the description of the Fleet Street "establishment" have been placed in a paragraph by itself. The establishment might have been mentioned much earlier; why is it brought in at this point? Does the account increase your respect for Johnson? for Macaulay? Why does M. note that J.'s books are "falling to pieces and covered with dust"? How do you account for J.'s kindness toward the "menagerie"? In what ways is M.'s literary skill shown in this paragraph?

## 41

Notice the time guide in the opening sentence. Where are the Hebrides? What works had J. published previous to the *Journey to Western Islands*? Comment on the sentence "They published paragraphs in the newspapers, articles in the magazines, six-penny pamphlets, five shilling books."

## 42

Why did Johnson, by nature a controversialist, pay little attention to hostile critics? Explain: *sophistry*, *sarcasm*, *invective*, *apophthegm*.

## 43

Are you willing to trust Macaulay the Whig in his estimate of a Tory pamphlet? What has taken the place of pamphlets in political controversy?

## 44

Notice that in this paragraph the transitional sentence comes at the end.

## 45-9

What does M. gain by mentioning specifically the names of Johnson's literary acquaintances? From what you have



learned of J. in this essay, what traits of character did he possess, should you say, that a biographer ought to have? Why is paragraph 48 so brief? Does M. ever say *I think*, or is he always sure that he is right?

## 50

Take a few minutes to imagine what reply the wife of the "Italian fiddler" would make to this paragraph, were she alive today. If you care to know more about Mrs. Thrale, consult Boswell's *Life*. Do you recall any other scene pictured by Macaulay more pathetic than Johnson's last visit to Streatham? Was it necessary for M. to tell when and where news of J.'s death reached the Piozzis? How do you account for the fact that on her return to England Mrs. Piozzi was well received?

## 51

Which is the better written paragraph, this or the one telling of Mrs. Johnson's death? Who are entitled to burial in Westminster Abbey?

## 52

Study this paragraph carefully, and be prepared to show that it forms an admirable conclusion. Do you agree that Johnson was a great and good man?

## GENERAL QUESTIONS

Make a list of Johnson's principal works. Which of these works first brought him to public notice? Which brought him fame? Which is best known today? Which should you like to read? Are you sufficiently interested to care to read Boswell's *Life*? What scenes in Johnson's life has M. pictured most vividly? What do you admire most in Johnson's character?

In what respects is M. a good biographer, and in what respects is he open to criticism? What do you admire most in his skill as a writer? Have you had to consult the dictionary often while reading the essay, or is his vocabulary reasonably simple? Have you had difficulty at any point in grasping the meaning, due to the fact that sentences were clumsily constructed? Find an example of each of the following: (1) a transitional phrase at the beginning of a paragraph, (2) a transition at the close of a paragraph, (3) a phrase introduced to help the reader to keep the

chronological sequence, (4) a topical sentence, (5) a balanced sentence, (6) word repetition for emphasis, (7) rapid characterization, (8) a passage rendered graphic through vivid details, (9) unnecessary coarseness, (10) exaggeration, (11) unpleasant positiveness, (12) careless misstatement. What in Macaulay's skill as a writer do you envy most? What have you gained through reading the essay?

## SCOTT'S LADY OF THE LAKE

### CANTO FIRST

1. Explain the following: *Ascabart, bland, blithe, boon, cairn, Caledon, cloister, copse, errant-knight, Ferragus, filial, gauntlet, high emprise, lave, martial, matins, mere, mien, Naiad, orison, quarry, reveille, rood, snood, sylvan, target, tapestry, unwonted, whinyard.* 2. Explain the following lines: 114, 194-7, 270-3, 296-7, 309-10. 3. Would the beginning have been equally effective had Fitz-James met Ellen while he was taking a long tramp through the Trossachs? 4. Why is the chase made so furious, all the hunters, save one, outdistanced by the stag? 5. Why does the story-teller have the stag escape, the horse die? 6. Is the description of the Trossachs and Loch Katrine so carefully done that you can make a simple topical plan of it? 7. Does the description read like one written after a visit to the region? 8. Does it show familiarity with nature? 9. Would the canto have been equally effective had it begun with a description of the region? 10. Why does Scott delay describing the personal appearance of the hunter till his meeting with Ellen? 11. What hints are given that Ellen is of noble birth? that she has a lover? 12. How do you explain the mystery concerning the invisible harp that plays while Ellen sings? 13. How do you account for the knight's dream? 14. The transitions in this canto are interesting; how does the poet pass from the hunt to the description of the Trossachs, from the Trossachs to Loch Katrine, from Loch Katrine to Ellen? 15. The canto contains a number of interesting comparisons—similes and metaphors; without re-reading, try to recall to what each of the following is likened: the stag on hearing the hounds, the hunters passing through the glen, the rocky summits in the Trossachs, Loch Katrine, the mountains surrounding Katrine, the Lady of the Lake. 16. Are

these comparisons appropriate? 17. In the third stanza, how many words can you discover that were chosen, apparently, because their sound suggests the spirited scene described? 18. Note how quiet the concluding lines of the stanza are when compared with the first. Are there certain letters which have a hush sound? 19. Where else in the canto have you noted examples of onomatopoeia? 20. What in the canto have you enjoyed most? 21. What questions concerning the rest of the story are left in the reader's mind? 22. Memorize the fourteenth stanza, or some other that you like better. 23. Write a paragraph beginning with one of the following sentences: (a) The canto contains not a little that is mysterious. (b) The plan of the canto is very simple. (c) I know a lake which, like Loch Katrine, is very beautiful. (d) Fitz-James makes a very good hero.

## CANTO SECOND

1. Explain: *assuage, boding, bourgeon, foray, glozing, guerdon, henchman, Holy-Rood, homicide, meed, pibroch, reave, sable, strathspey, vindictive, votaress*. 2. Explain the following lines: 165, 200, 391-2, 540-1, 577-8, 615-22, 805-6. 3. Explain clearly (a) what claim Roderick has on Ellen's affections, (b) why she does not wish to marry Roderick, (c) why an attack from the royal forces is feared. 4. Without rereading, make a simple topical plan of the canto, employing but three or four headings. 5. Is the canto somewhat dramatic in construction, the interest increasing toward the end? 6. Is the most exciting incident at the very close of the canto? 7. What mystery in the first canto is cleared up in the second? 8. What new questions arise in the reader's mind? 9. What is the purpose of the stanzas telling of the stranger's farewell and the conversation between Ellen and Allan? 10. How is the transition made from these stanzas to the account of the home-coming of Roderick? 11. Can you think of a good reason why Scott brought Fitz-James to the Isle during the absence of Roderick? 12. What do you find to admire in the account of the approach and arrival of the chief? 13. It has been noted that in the third stanza of the first canto, the sound suggests the sense. In the Boat Song there is a successful attempt to indicate the measured swing of the rowers. Read the Song aloud, stressing the syllables in such a way as to indicate the stroke of the oars. 14. Compare the way

in which Roderick is brought into the story with the way in which Fitz-James is introduced. 15. What is gained by having Douglas and Roderick return at the same time? 16. How many rival suitors do you discover, and which do you think has the best chance of winning Ellen? 17. Is the second canto more interesting than the first? 18. What do you like best in it? 19. Do you recall an elaborate simile, many lines long? 20. Memorize the Boat Song, or some other passage that you like better. 21. Write a paragraph, using one of the following as a topical sentence: (a) The return of Roderick is in marked contrast to the return of Douglas. (b) The tune played by the pipers tells a thrilling story. (c) The three songs found in the first two cantos differ widely in character. (d) Ellen's position is most trying. 22. Try to form clear mind-pictures from what is suggested in the following lines, letting the imagination have full swing: 66-7, 141, 277-82, 592-4.

### CANTO THIRD

1. Explain: *anathema, augured, Ave Maria, Ben-Shie, brachen, chalice, compeers, coronach, correi, Druid, execration, fay, Fiery Cross, goading, imprecation, Inch-Cailliach, murky, patriarch, sage, satyr, searest, sepulchral, sequestered, snood, strath, unwonted*. 2. Explain the following lines: 135-44, 161-2, 465, 629-31. 3. Scott has his choice of all kinds of weather; why does he begin this canto with nature quiet and peaceful? 4. If you were preparing an illustrated edition of the poem, what eight scenes would you like to have pictured to go with this canto? 5. Of all the scenes, which stands out most vividly? 6. Why is Brian's history given in such detail? 7. What three curses does the priest pronounce? 8. Through what similes are the responses, made by the clansmen, emphasized? 9. Trace the symbolism of the ceremony, showing why the cross is made as it is, why it is scathed by fire and dipped in blood. 10. Why does Scott introduce the funeral scene and the wedding? 11. What similes are employed in an effort to show the speed of the runners? 12. Study the figures in the Coronach. 13. How does this canto compare with the preceding ones in interest? 14. What do you like best in it? 15. Memorize the thirteenth stanza. 16. Write a paragraph beginning with one of the following sentences: (a) Clan loyalty is well illustrated in the way all

obey the summons of the Fiery Cross. (b) The close of the canto is much quieter than the preceding stanzas. (c) Evidently one of the poet's purposes in telling the story is to picture bygone customs. (d) The first nine lines of the canto contain an unusual number of figures of speech.

## CANTO FOURTH

1. Explain: *apprehensive, augury, boune, fane, glaive, imbrue, inured, kern, pall and vair, weeds, wold*. 2. Explain the following lines: 55-6, 100-105, 110-17, 419, 468-71, 743-8, 780. 3. Describe the Taghairm ceremony. 4. Which to you is the more gruesome, the Taghairm or the ceremony connected with the preparation of the Fiery Cross? 5. Tell the story of Alice Brand, beginning *Once upon a time*. 6. Tell the story of Blanche of Devan. 7. Interpret Blanche's song (xxv). 8. The boat which bears Ellen and Fitz-James to the Isle is also called skiff, shallop, and barge. Do you recall any of Scott's favorite substitutes for the word *sword*? Why does he employ synonyms so freely? 9. The conversation between Ellen and the minstrel in the second canto serves to explain the situation; what is learned from their conversation in canto fourth? 10. What is gained by telling where the bull came from that was slain for the Taghairm? 11. What is gained by introducing Blanche of Devan? 12. What do you find to like in stanzas xxix-xxxi? 13. What is the most exciting moment in the canto? 14. Memorize the thirtieth stanza. 15. Write a paragraph beginning with one of the following sentences: (a) Allan-bane possesses a wonderful harp. (b) The minstrel is also a gifted dreamer. (c) Evidently Highland hospitality is a favorite theme with Scott. (d) It is difficult to decide at what point in the story Fitz-James is most attractive—as a hunter, as a guest at Roderick's lodge, as suitor at Ellen's cave, or as he appears in the campfire scene. (e) Among the appropriate similes in this canto are those found in the following lines: 199-203, 299-300, 544-7. (f) The Taghairm prophecy and Fitz-James's ring provide hints of how the story will end.

## CANTO FIFTH

1. Explain: *apparition, arraignment, banditti, buffet, burghers, butts, carpet knight, clemency, cognizance, cumbered, invulnerable, morrice-dancers, retribution*. 2. Explain the following

lines: 75-9, 123, 182, 443-4, 461-2, 543-4, 660, 887. 3. If you were making a plan of this canto, what three or four topics would you employ? 4. In their conversation while on the way to Coilantogle, what three charges does the knight bring against Roderick, and how are they answered? 5. Would the combat have been as exciting had there been spectators? had the combatants not been rival suitors? had Brian's prophecy been different? had Fitz-James not vowed to avenge Blanche of Devan? had Roderick not entertained his foe? 6. With which combatant does the reader sympathize? 7. Does Scott introduce the games at Stirling because the account is needed in the story, or because he wishes to show the customs of long ago? 8. Are the contests interesting and the outcome probable? 9. What is the purpose of Douglas in going to Stirling? 10. Does Fitz-James know that Douglas is Ellen's father? 11. How do you account for the knight's harsh treatment of Douglas? 12. What are the most dramatic moments in the canto? 13. What questions are uppermost in the reader's mind at its close? 14. What figures are found in the following lines: 347, 348, 390, 897-8? 15. Show that the figures in lines 188-9 and 407-10 are appropriate. 16. Do you recall anywhere in the canto a series of brief, sharp contrasts? 17. What do you like best in the canto? 18. Memorize stanzas ix-x. 19. Write a paragraph, employing one of the following as a topical sentence: (a) This canto contains good illustrations of "martial Faith and Courtesy's bright star." (b) The conversation between Roderick and Fitz-James leaves the reader with a far better impression of the former's character. (c) The games at Stirling differ in a number of respects from an athletic contest of today. (d) I see much to admire in Scott's skill as shown in the account of the combat.

### CANTO SIXTH

1. Explain: *caitiff*, *collation*, *eyry*, *fealty*, *gyve*, *jeopardy*, *leech*, *proselyte*, *refluent*, *requiem*, *tinchell*. 2. Explain the following lines: 43-4, 621-2, 704-5, 707. 3. Nearly all the characters, you have noted, come together in this canto. Tell how each happens to be in Stirling. 4. Some critics condemn the guard-room scene; does it seem objectionable to you? 5. What is gained by having Allan tell of the battle? Why have him tell it to Roderick? 7. Why have Roderick die? Would it have been

equally dramatic to have him pardoned? 8. Why not conclude with Roderick's burial or Ellen's wedding? 9. Contrast the concluding scene with the opening of canto first. 10. How do you account for the fact that the similes in the description of the battle have to do with nature in angry mood—with mountain cascades, whirlpools, earthquakes? 11. Why do so many similes take the reader to nature? 12. Of all the scenes in this canto, which will probably remain longest in your memory?

### GENERAL QUESTIONS

1. How many days are covered by the incidents of the story? 2. Does the story owe much of its interest to the fact that the setting is one of great romantic beauty? 3. What characters in the story do you admire, and for what reasons? 4. Which character seems truest to life? 5. What, on the whole, is the most beautiful description in the poem? the most exciting incident? the best song? the greatest surprise? 6. What purpose is served by the songs? 7. If you have studied versification, give the metrical plan of each song. 8. What evidence does the poem afford that Scott was fond of history? fond of nature? that he was an antiquary? that he was a gentleman? 9. Write a paragraph on one of the following topics: (a) The most brilliant scene in the poem. (b) The duties of a minstrel. (c) The battle. (d) The signet ring.

### GOLDSMITH'S THE DESERTED VILLAGE

#### LINES 1-34

What is the purpose of these lines? Is Auburn a real place or purely imaginary? Pick out twenty or more descriptive adjectives; pause after each and see how much of a picture it brings to mind. By way of seeing whether the adjectives are well chosen, try to substitute better ones, or ones equally appropriate. Pick out the five best adjectives. Find lines in which some sound, either vowel or consonantal, is pleasantly repeated. Find lines where the sounds seem to run together harmoniously, as colors are sometimes blended. What are some of the more melodious lines? What makes the last line so effective? Are all the rhymes perfect? Find ten lines in which two short syllables

are treated as one. Would the versification be better if perfectly regular?

#### LINES 35-50

Purpose? How do the pictures in this passage, taken collectively, differ from those in the preceding passage? What is the relationship between the two passages? Which do you like better? Which picture is saddest? Were you an artist, which picture would you like to paint? Find lines here and there in which sound echoes sense. What vowels are prominent in ll. 40, 42, 47, and 50? How many lines containing slurred syllables do you find in this passage? Are any of the feet trochaic? How do you scan l. 48? Are all the rhymes perfect? Is there a slight pause at the end of each line? Is the pause at the end of alternate lines more pronounced? Do the longer pauses serve to emphasize the rhyme?

#### LINES 51-56

Explain ll. 52, 53-6. Do you believe the statement made in this passage? Why cannot a peasantry be replaced? Are peasants bolder than others? Why are they, rather than the merchants, a country's pride? Are farmers more patriotic than city people?

#### LINES 57-62

How much is a rood? Express in plain prose, free from figurative language, ll. 59-62; then compare your prose with Goldsmith's lines to see whether you or the poet has employed the greater number of words. Is poetry usually more compact than prose?

#### LINES 63-74

Explain the meaning and force of *unfeeling*, *usurp*, *unwieldy*, *cumbrous*, *lawn*. Explain ll. 67-8. Is line 74 applicable to America? Which do you prefer, ll. 1-50 or ll. 51-74? Why?

#### LINES 75-82

Explain l. 76. What pictures are suggested to you by *tangling walks*? by *ruined grounds*? What figure of speech does Goldsmith employ most commonly?



## LINES 83-96

Explain: *my latest hours to crown, husband out life's taper, for pride attends us still*. How old was G. when he wrote this poem? Do you know what had been his griefs? Where and under what circumstances did he die? What do you note about the letters in l. 94? What figure of speech in ll. 93-6? Is the comparison a good one?

## LINES 97-112

Explain ll. 103-6. Is *guilty* used in its ordinary sense? Would it be well to substitute *beggars* for *famine* in l. 106? Do you like the expression *latter end*? Explain l. 108. What is the force of *bends* as here employed? Explain l. 112.

## LINES 113-36

Explain *responsive*. Is *sober* an appropriate adjective to apply to *herd*? In l. 122, is the adjective *vacant* uncomplimentary? Is loud laughter a sign of low intelligence? Meaning of *sought the shade*? Were it not for rhyme, would it be well to substitute *dame* for *thing* in l. 129? Explain ll. 133, 136. Do you find any lines, in this passage, where sound echoes sense? Where else, thus far, has Goldsmith drawn sharp contrasts? Do you like this passage better than the preceding one? What are some of the best lines? If you were an artist, what in this passage would you like to picture?

## LINES 137-62

What is a *copse*? Explain ll. 142, 146, 151, 155, 162.

## LINES 163-70

Explain ll. 164, 167-70. Is the comparison in the last three lines an appropriate one?

## LINES 171-76

Explain the force of *champion*. What is the antecedent of *his* in l. 175? Who is praised (l. 176)?

## LINES 177-92

Explain: *unaffected grace, adorned, prevailed with double sway, endearing wile*. What word should be emphasized in l. 185?

Explain with care ll. 189-192. Do you like this comparison better than the one in ll. 167-70? The fifty-five lines devoted to the preacher are grouped in four paragraphs; do you see why G. did not combine them in one paragraph? Could the paragraphs be rearranged to advantage, or is there method in their sequence? What paragraph, if any, could be spared? Do you suspect that the preacher is not imaginary? From what kind of home did Goldsmith come? Looking upon the fifty-five lines as a whole, what do you see in them to admire?

#### LINES 193-216

Explain: *unprofitably gay, boding, terms and tides presage*. In l. 198 should stress fall on *every* or on *tyrant*? Does G. wish us to think the master a scholarly man? Were the villagers fairly intelligent? Do you know anything about Goldsmith's schooldays? How does the portrait of the master compare with that of Ichabod Crane in *Legend of Sleepy Hollow*? Which is the more carefully drawn portrait, the preacher's or the master's?

#### LINES 217-36

Do the first two lines belong, logically, with the preceding paragraph? Do we commonly associate mirth with grey-beards and smiles with toil? Why, in l. 225, is imagination represented as stooping? What is Goldsmith's purpose in noting that the clock is varnished? Explain *for ornament and use*. Notice with how few words G. gives a satisfactory picture, then try to discover the secret of his art in description. Find lines in which the vowel sounds harmonize effectively.

#### LINES 237-50

To what transitory splendors does G. refer? Explain *reprieve*. Explain ll. 239-40. Why not news from the barber and tales from the farmer? In the word *careful* is there a hint that the inn-keeper has a keen eye for profits? Is there any sadder refrain than *No more*? Why are the words repeated? Of the three pictures—the preacher and his flock, the master and his pupils, and the group at the tavern—which do you like best? In what respects are all three good? How do they differ from the pictures that a camera shows?

## LINES 251-64

Explain: *native charm, gloss of art, l. 254*. What does G. mean when he says the soul adopts spontaneous joys? What is the antecedent of *they* in l. 257? Explain *toiling pleasures*. Is it true that the poor are happier than the rich? Do you think that Goldsmith's poverty made him unduly bitter towards the rich?

## LINES 265-86

What is meant by a *splendid land*? Explain carefully, using no figurative language, ll. 269-70. Is *For*, l. 284, a preposition or a conjunction? In l. 285 is *land* used in the same sense as *fields* in l. 280? Explain the force of *barren* in l. 286. Is it true that as the rich grow richer the poor grow poorer?

## LINES 287-302

Explain ll. 290, 298, 302. Note that this passage is a simile worked out in detail. Give this comparison in simpler language.

## LINES 303-308

What newly passed law is referred to?

## LINES 309-36

Explain *baneful*, l. 311. Is *artist*, l. 316, used in the sense of *painter*? What had G. in mind when writing l. 318? What is the derivation of *dome*, l. 319? There are several fine lines in this passage; find them. Scan l. 326.

## LINES 337-62

Explain *participate her pain*. Where is the Altama? Which is the better passage, ll. 309-36 or ll. 341-62? Is l. 343 in any way remarkable? Do you like l. 350? Do you find other attractive lines? Is Goldsmith proud of the fact that the people upon leaving Auburn did not go to the city?

## LINES 363-84

Explain *western main*, l. 368; *in conscious virtue brave*, l. 373; *thoughtless*, l. 381; *neglectful of her charms*, l. 377; *native walks*, l. 364. Is the scene described in this passage as graphic as the

scenes described earlier in the poem? Is this passage better than the preceding?

## LINES 385-94

Explain *insidious, florid*. What two things are compared in this passage? Is the comparison a pleasing one? Is it a justifiable one?

## LINES 395-430

What devastation is referred to in l. 395? Who make up the *melancholy band*? Name the rural virtues. Are these virtues, should you say, found only in the country? Explain ll. 407-10, 415, 416, 428. How can poetry *Redress the rigors of the inclement clime*? Is poetry a powerful force? Was poetry at low ebb in Goldsmith's day? Does poetry grow poorer as a country grows wealthier? Does the final paragraph make an appropriate ending?

## GENERAL QUESTIONS

What have you enjoyed most in the poem? If you could preserve but one paragraph, which would it be? What passages have you disliked? What, in studying the poem, has caused you most effort? Pick out five or six exceptionally good lines. Could Goldsmith have accomplished his purpose just as well in prose? What was his purpose? What devices, besides rhyme and meter, has G. employed to make his lines effective? How does the poem differ from those published today? What new ideas have you received from the poem? Is Goldsmith better at preaching or at picturing familiar scenes? Is your interest in Goldsmith such that you would enjoy reading a life of the author—Irving's, for example?

## MILTON'S L'ALLEGRO

## LINES 1-10

Explain: *L'Allegro, Melancholy, Cerberus, Stygian, Cimmerian, uncouth, low-browed*. Darkness broods over what and is jealous of what? What is gained by placing *jealous*, which characterizes Darkness, before *wings*? Why not the nightingale instead of the raven? Are the pictures suggested by these lines such as an artist could paint? Is the indistinctness a blemish? If the poem were read to one unacquainted with our language, could

he tell that the mood of these lines differs from the mood of the rest of the poem? The rest of the poem is written in smooth-flowing tetrameter; why are these lines given a different meter? What is the most melodious line? the most expulsive? What would be an appropriate heading for these lines?

## LINES 11-40

Explain: *Venus, Bacchus, Zephyr, Aurora, Hebe, the Graces; yclept, sager, breathes the spring, buxom, blithe, debonair, quips, cranks, wanton wiles, fantastic toe, crew.* Why is a second parentage for Mirth suggested? Why is Liberty made chief companion? Why is Liberty represented a mountain nymph rather than a woodland nymph or a sea nymph? Is the word *unreproved* (40) important? Pick out lines in which the sound suggests the sense. Pick out lines which flash pictures. Pick out melodious lines and try to discover the secret of their beauty. What would be an appropriate heading for this section?

## LINES 41-56

What does the colon after l. 40 indicate? Can you tell, by the punctuation, where one pleasure ends and the next begins? Where is L'Allegro when he hears the lark? What suggested a watch-tower to the poet? Who is in the tower, and what is watched for? Why is dull Night startled? What picture does *dappled dawn* bring to you? What time is denoted by *Then* (l. 45)? Meaning of *in spite of sorrow*? Who comes to the window? Contrast the sounds of the words in 49 with those in 50 and 52. What is onomatopoeia? Where is L'Allegro when listening to the horns? Where does Morn slumber latest? What picture do you get from *hoar hill*?

## LINES 57-68

Is the phrase *not unseen* important? What picture do you get from *hedgerow elms*? In which direction does L'Allegro walk? What is suggested to him by the rising sun and the clouds? Meaning of *dight*? What season of the year is it? Meaning of *tells his tale*?

## LINES 69-90

Explain: *Straight, landskip, lawns, pied, cynosure.* By *fallows* does Milton mean plowed ground? What is there in the

appearance of clouds to suggest that they labor? Where did Milton find the names Corydon, Thyrsis, etc.? Are these people, as you picture them, all of the same age? What time of year is in the poet's mind?

## LINES 91-116

What time of day is in the poet's mind? Meaning of *jocund rebecks*, *secure delight*? What picture do you get from *checkered shade*? Explain *fairy Mab* and *Friar's lantern*. In 92-3, what words need emphasizing to bring out the meaning? How many old British tales are touched upon in these lines? Explain *shadowy flail*. Pick out all the words which convey the idea that the goblin is coarse and large. Comment on 113 and 115.

## LINES 117-134

What time is intended by *then* (117)? Think of some adjective other than *towered* which might be used in bringing quickly to mind the appearance of a city. In what way does 118 resemble 115? What cities does the poet have in mind? Has he in mind the city on any particular occasion? What occasion does *high triumphs* suggest? Explain 121-4. Explain: *Hymen*, *mask*, *pageantry*. Explain: *well-trod*, *learned sock*. Why is Shakespeare rather than Jonson called *Fancy's child*? What play of Shakespeare's may Milton have had in mind? What would be an appropriate heading for these lines?

## LINES 135-152

By *ever* does Milton mean that he enjoys music at all times—derives from it his greatest pleasure? Explain *against eating cares*, *Lydian*, *Lap me*, *meeting soul*. Has Milton instrumental music or vocal in mind? *Wanton* and *heed* seem to express opposing ideas; so do *giddy* and *cunning*. How do you explain the seeming contradiction? Can you imagine a little story, from reading 142-5? Tell the story of Orpheus. Note that more lines are devoted to music than to any other pleasure. Was Milton a musician? What evidence does the poem furnish that Milton had a trained ear?

## GENERAL QUESTIONS

Do you find in Milton's list of pleasures any which are not "unreproved"? Is it a list that tallies with one you would

make out? Would his list have satisfied a courtier of his day? In what respects is it a poet's list? Is it supposed to be complete? How do you account for the great number of classical allusions? Which do you like best—(a) the opening lines addressed to Melancholy, (b) the invitation to Mirth and her companions, (c) the lines picturing an ideal day in the country, (d) the lines dealing with city pleasures, or (e) the lines dealing with music? Pick out five lines which seem to you most melodious. Pick out five which present pictures. What, finally, have you found to like in the poem?

## IL PENSEROSO

### LINES 1-10

Explain: *Il Penseroso*, *bested*, *fixed mind*, *Morpheus*, *fickle pensioners*. Are the pleasures mentioned in *L'Allegro* "vain, deluding joys"? To what in *L'Allegro* does *idle brain* correspond? What is the object of *possess*? Is *hovering* an appropriate epithet? Do you prefer these lines to the corresponding passage in *L'Allegro*?

### LINES 11-30

Explain: 13-16. Explain: *Memnon's sister*, *starred Ethiop queen*, *Vesta*, *Saturn*. Explain appropriateness of *bright-haired* and *solitary*. Comment on the appropriateness of the parentage of Melancholy. Is this the same Melancholy which Milton has called *loathed*?

### LINES 31-54

Why call Melancholy a nun? Explain: *pensive*, *demure*, and *steadfast*, and comment on the appropriateness of all the epithets applied to Melancholy. Explain: *darkest grain*, *sable stole*, *cypress lawn*, *decent shoulders*, *wonted state*, *musings gait*, *commercing*, *rapt*. Explain 41-44. Is the description of Melancholy more elaborate than that of Mirth? Name the companions of Melancholy. Can you pair them off with the companions of Mirth? Which corresponds to Liberty? In naming these companions is Milton trying to tell us the conditions necessary for the enjoyment of melancholy? If so, should we conclude that fasting is necessary? Explain 46-8; 52-4. What picture do you get from *trim gardens*? Do you prefer these lines

to those describing Mirth and her companions? How, in melody, do the two passages differ?

#### LINES 55-72

In what respect does l. 55 suggest l. 116 of *L'Allegro*? Explain: *Philomel, Cynthia, deign, plight*. Why is Night's brow rugged? Explain *accustomed oak*. Explain l. 61. Comment on the poetical quality of l. 62. Has *walk unseen* a parallel in *L'Allegro*? What in *L'Allegro* corresponds to *wandering moon*? What picture do you get from *smooth shaven green*? Is wandering an appropriate epithet to apply to the moon? Does it apply equally well to the sun? to the clouds? Can you think of other adjectives which poetically apply to the moon? Is the fancy that the moon is *led astray* far-fetched? Explain *curfew*. Why have the bell reach Il P. from across the water? What picture do you get from *wide-watered shore*? Why should curfew have a *sullen roar*? Are 75-6 onomatopoeic? How many pleasures have been mentioned thus far?

#### LINES 77-96

Explain 77, 80, 83-4. Explain *still removed*. Describe the room as it appears to your fancy. Why does Il P. mount a tower? Explain: *outwatch the Bear, Hermes, unsphere the spirit of Plato*. Do you understand 90-6?

#### LINES 97-120

Are we to imagine Il P. still in the tower? How long does he remain there? L'A. actually goes to the theatre; does Il P.? What tragedies are suggested in 97-102? Is the epithet *gorgeous* appropriate? Explain *sceptred pall*. What is the force of *sweeping*? By *later age* is the Elizabethan meant? Who is the *sad Virgin*? Musaeus? What is meant by raising Musaeus from his bower? Do 105-8 refer to poetry or to song? What author is suggested in 109-15? Make as complete a list as you can of the books mentioned in 85-120. What in *L'Allegro* parallels this passage?

#### LINES 121-154

Explain: *civil suited, Attic boy*. In what respect does 126 resemble 73-4? Explain *minute-drops*. How does this early



morning scene differ from the one in *L'Allegro*? What goddess is referred to in 132? Who is Sylvan? Give in detail the picture presented in 133. Is *monumental* an appropriate adjective? Had Milton read Book I, Canto I, stanzas 8-9 of *Faery Queen*? Why *rude axe*? Is 135 onomatopoeitic? In 140, no eye profaner than whose? Explain *honeyed thigh*. What *consort* do the waters keep? Is *dewy-feathered* an appropriate epithet? Meaning of *wave at his wings*? Is the music referred to in 150-4 purely imaginary? Explain *unseen Genius*. Have 131-54 a parallel in *L'Allegro*?

## LINES 155-76

Explain: *due feet, studious cloister's pale, embowed roof, massy proof, storied windows, dight, service high*, lines 165-6. Does Milton mean literally that in his old age he wishes to become a hermit? Does he mean that in his declining years he would study astronomy and botany? Explain 173-4. Why have ll. 167-74 no counterpart in *L'Allegro*?

## GENERAL QUESTIONS

How old was Milton when he wrote these poems? Where were they written? What kind of life had he led previous to this time? Do you think he considered his two lists of pleasures appropriate for every one? If you were making similar lists, what pleasures mentioned by Milton would you omit, and what new ones would you add? Was Milton a typical Puritan? Was he effeminate? Was the pleasure he received from nature due mainly to his imagination? to the fact that his study of the classics had furnished his mind with myths which gave to natural objects a new value? to the fact that his eye was sensitive to the beauty of color and form, his ear appreciative of melody? Which of the two poems is the better? What are your favorite passages? What besides rhyme and meter are essential to truly great poetry? What is a lyric?

## SHAKESPEARE'S MACBETH

## ACT I

Scene 1. If you were arranging a stage for this scene, how would you represent a *desert place*? How would you have the witches enter and how leave the stage? Describe their ap-

pearance and actions. Did those who witnessed the play when it was first given consider this scene serious or comic? Does the scene accomplish anything, either in starting the story or in throwing light on any of the characters? Had the rest of the play been lost, what conclusion might have been drawn in regard to the nature of the entire drama? Is the last line onomatopoeic?

Scene 2. Arrange the stage for this scene. How old is Duncan and how costumed? What impression does S. wish him to make? Purpose of scene? Did scene 1 give any idea of Macbeth's character? Had the rest of the play been lost, should you have concluded from scene 2 that Macbeth was a noble man? Why not have the battle represented on the stage? Why have the account of the battle given by two narrators instead of one? Explain lines 5, 13, 18, 19, 25-8, 37, 40, 54-5. What suggests to Ross (l. 49) that the banners flout the sky? Does l. 30 remind you in any way of scene 1, l. 10? Find examples of personification and hyperbole. What do you find to admire in the scene as a whole?

Scene 3. Would this scene be as effective if it began at once with the meeting between the witches and the generals? How old was the sailor's wife? How should l. 10 be spoken? Explain: *like a rat without a tail, shipman's card, penthouse lid, though his bark cannot be lost*. Is the drum (l. 29) designed to startle the audience? What action accompanies ll. 32-9? Describe Macbeth's dress and general appearance. What is the dramatic purpose of Macbeth's first words, *So foul and fair?* of the occasional thunder? How much time has elapsed since scene 1? Which of the two generals first sees the witches? Explain in detail how Macbeth and Banquo are impressed by the witches. Do these two know that witches are in league with Satan? Had Macbeth guiltily thought of gaining the throne even before the three hails? Is the little word *Stay* (70) of importance in revealing M.'s character? Is M. honest in calling Cawdor *prosperous*? Why should he lie to the witches? Describe the manner in which the witches vanish. Is M. sincere when he says (87) *Went it not so?* Would this scene be so effective did the audience not know of the honors awaiting Macbeth? Describe M.'s manner of receiving his new title from Ross. Is he sincere when he exclaims

*The thanz of Cawdor lives?* What is the purpose of asides and soliloquies? Were they more necessary in Shakespeare's day than at present? Why is M. (117) so tardy in thanking Ross and Angus, and why (129) does he thank them a second time? Why (127) does Shakespeare have Banquo draw Ross and Angus aside? What *suggestion* is referred to in l. 134? Is the thought the same in the two asides (143, 146-7)? To whom are ll. 153-5 addressed? If to Banquo, what is in Macbeth's mind? Had the rest of the play never been written, what would have been your opinion of M.'s character? What, viewing the scene as a whole, do you find to like? Explain: *fantastical* (53); *present grace, noble having, royal hope* (55-6). Try hard to picture ll. 58-9. Explain: *imperfect speakers* (70), *earnest* (104). Expand the metaphor in *lined* (112) into a simile. Explain the metaphor in 127-9. Explain ll. 139-42.

Scene 4. What is a flourish? Whose palace is at Forres? Is the account of Cawdor's execution necessary? What is the effect of ll. 11-12, coming as they do from the King's lips as M. enters? Is M. still dressed as in scene 3? How does he act upon hearing that Malcolm is to succeed Duncan? Is M. sincere in the statement of his motives for hastening to Inverness? Does he in this scene fully determine to murder the King? What makes the concluding line of the scene so effective? Has S. thus far made Duncan appear lovable that his murder may seem the more awful, or is it his purpose to suggest that there is a certain justice in M.'s taking the throne from a weak old king? Is a man ever guilty of a crime before he has actually committed it in deed? What do you find to like in this scene? Explain ll. 15-20, 22-7, 44, 48-9.

Scene 5. How old is Lady Macbeth? Is she tall? slender? frail? How costumed? When was M.'s letter written? For what purpose? Is Lady M. reading it for the first time? Does she read all of it aloud? Does she read slowly? pause after reading it? How much does she mean by *shalt be what thou art promised?* Was M. innocent before he met the witches? Had he and his wife thought, previous to the battle, of killing the king? Is Lady M.'s analysis of her husband's character one that should lead us to respect him? Is M. a coward? Does Lady M. yield to temptation instantly? Did Macbeth? What is gained, dramatically,

by having the messenger arrive before Macbeth? Explain Lady M.'s manner of saying *Thou'rt mad to say it* and *He brings great news*. Do you think more, or less, of Lady M. after the soliloquy beginning *Come, you spirits?* Describe the meeting of Macbeth and his wife. Explain the manner in which they begin to talk to each other. What earlier lines are suggested by *Your face, my thane, is as a book, etc.?* Had the rest of the play never been written, would you have judged both Macbeth and Lady M. guilty of murder? equally guilty?

Scene 6. What are hautboys? Has this short scene any purpose other than to inform the audience that Duncan has reached Inverness? In answering the question, bear in mind that Duncan now appears for the last time. Explain: *temple-haunting, loved mansionry, coign of vantage, We rest your hermits* (20), *purveyor* (22), *By your leave, hostess* (31).

Scene 7. Why is not the banquet scene represented on the stage? Purpose of M.'s soliloquy before the entrance of Lady M.? How many arguments against the murder do you detect in the soliloquy? Is M. a thinking man? Is his hesitation due to cowardice? What is the dramatist's purpose in showing that M. realizes the awfulness of the crime he contemplates? Why has M. left the banquet? Why has Lady M.? Has Lady M. any ground for accusing her husband of cowardice? of breaking his word? When did M. first "break" the "enterprise" to his wife? Which of Lady M.'s taunts and arguments is most effective in moving M.? Is her scorn assumed or real? Which is the more imaginative, M. or Lady M.? the quicker in wit? the more cunning? Which has the deeper moral nature? Which is the braver? Is Lady M. responsible for the king's death? Is the audience sure, at the close of the scene, that the murder will be committed? Do you respect Lady M. more, after this scene, or less? Explain in detail ll. 1-12, 17, 23, 25-8, 41-3, 44-5, 64-7, 79, 80, 81.

How much has Shakespeare accomplished in Act I? Which scene serves as an interlude between two stronger scenes? Which scene is most impressive? What lines do you like best? At what point does temptation seize M.? What incident definitely starts him on his downward career? At what point is opportunity offered for accomplishing his purpose? At what

point does he determine upon the details of the murder? Can you recall any other play in which the action is so rapid? Give the substance of each scene in a few words, employing the present tense.

## ACT II

Scene 1. Purpose of dialogue between Banquo and Fleance with which the scene opens? What opinion have you formed of Banquo? What are the *cursed thoughts* (l. 8)? Banquo's purpose in referring to the witches? Is M. sounding Banquo in ll. 22-4? Dramatic purpose of bringing M. face to face with an incorruptible man, just before the murder? Purpose of the soliloquy beginning with *Is this a dagger?* Does M. begin the soliloquy immediately on the departure of Banquo? In what tone of voice and with what facial expression are the words spoken? Are there any pauses, or do the words flow smoothly? Would you have the dagger visible to the audience? Is this the same M. who took such a bloody part in the recent battle? Does M. see his wife after the soliloquy and before the murder? What effect upon the audience has the striking of the bell? Any visible effect on M.? Describe his manner of leaving the stage. Do you think more, or less, of M. because of this soliloquy? Is his mind unsettled at the time of the murder? Why not let the audience see M. in the act of murdering the king? Explain the following lines: 4, 14, 17-19, 26-8, 44-5, 48, 51, 59-60, 61. What passage do you admire most?

Scene 2. What are the weather conditions? Purpose of presenting Lady M. alone at the beginning of the scene? Has she resorted to drink to keep down her better nature? Does an owl actually hoot? Why does S. make her say *Had he not resembled*, etc.? Describe M.'s entrance. How are the words *My husband* spoken—should they express affection, surprise, inquiry, terror? Describe M.'s condition. Does Lady M. say *A foolish thought* tauntingly? Is she alarmed at her husband's condition? In what tone does she say *Infirm of purpose?* Does she snatch the daggers? Are the lines beginning *The sleeping and the dead* spoken to M.? Describe Lady M.'s manner of leaving the stage. How does the knocking at the gate affect M.? How the audience? Are the sympathies of the audience with M.? Are yours? Is Lady M.'s contempt for her husband, as expressed in

the sentence beginning *My hands*, real or feigned? How does the knocking affect her? Explain how the two leave the stage. Are they equally guilty? Explain ll. 3, 10-11, 37-40, 62, 54-5.

Scene 3. What fancy has seized the drunken porter, and what suggested it? How does it happen that he is intoxicated? What effect does the knocking have upon the audience? If S. wrote any part of this porter scene, what sentence do you attribute to him? Is the scene introduced to break the suspense, to heighten the suspense, or to please the groundlings? Describe M.'s appearance on entering. Have the words of Lennox beginning *The night has been unruly* any purpose other than to take up time till Macduff can reach the king's chamber? Try to picture the confusion of the scene. Have we had any other like it, the stage filled with people? Describe Lady M.'s appearance on entering, and try to imagine how she carries herself throughout the scene. In the lines beginning *Had I but died*, is M. acting a part, or speaking unguardedly? Is he acting a part when he speaks the lines beginning *Who can be wise?* Is Lady M. feigning when she faints? If so, why pretend to faint at this particular moment, and why so quickly recover? Study carefully Banquo's lines beginning *Look to the lady*. What is the reason for closing the scene with the dialogue between Malcolm and Donalbain? What are the strongest lines in the scene?

Scene 4. Is this scene necessary? How much later than scene 3 is the time? What difference do you note between Macduff's character and the character of Ross? Does Macduff reveal his mind to the old man?

How much time does Act II cover? Arrange the scenes in the order of their effectiveness. Which character presents to the actor the most difficult part? In what way is the rest of the story dimly suggested in this act? Had the rest of the play been lost, what should we have concluded in regard to the moral outcome of M. and Lady M.? Has the climax been reached?

### ACT III

Scene 1. Time how much later than that of Act II? Purpose of Banquo's soliloquy? Describe minutely the dress and facial expression of the King and Queen. How do the lords and

ladies bear themselves towards the new sovereign? Is the *solemn supper* a coronation banquet? To what *indissoluble tie* does Banquo refer in l. 17? Why does M. mention to Banquo the flight of the King's sons? Does M. appear more crafty than in the preceding Act? Explain with great care every difficult line in M.'s soliloquy, and the purpose of the soliloquy as a whole. Is the proposed murder of Banquo of a lower type than the murder of Duncan? Is there any hint in the conversation with the murderers that, previous to the battle with which the play begins, M. had been a wicked man? Explain lines 4, 9, 21, 41-4, 70-1, 79-80, 90, 94, 98-100, 106, 115-17, 127, 129, 133.

Scene 2. Why does Lady M. send for her husband? Notice that both King and Queen have "terrible dreams;" which is standing the strain better? To what does *this* (35) refer? Is line 38 a hint? Is M.'s mind still "as a book" to his wife? Describe her facial expression while ll. 45-55 are spoken. Why does not the King tell her of his plan to murder Banquo? What is the purpose of this scene? Is it in any way in contrast with the preceding? Point out the wonderful lines. Explain the metaphors in 32-5, 46-50.

Scene 3. Is this scene necessary? Who is the third murderer? At what time of day is the murder committed? Why has M. been so anxious to get Banquo and Fleance out of the way?

Scene 4. Arrange the stage. Where do the characters enter? Why does Lady M. "keep her state" rather than mingle with the guests? Why does not the King "keep his state"? Would you have the stage well filled with people? Should all be elaborately costumed? Is it, at the outset, a mirthful company? Should there be music? How is it possible for the murderer to talk with M. without being seen and heard by the rest? Does Lady M. see the murderer? Is the ghost visible but to Macbeth? To what does *this* refer in *Which of you have done this?* Why does the ghost nod? Where is Lady M. when she says *Sit, worthy friends?* Explain *Are you a man?* Does M. seem to have power over the ghost? Is M.'s second "fit" worse than the first? Is the ghost addressed in whispers or in loud tones? Why does Lady M. dismiss the guests at the moment that she does? Describe the manner of the guests' departure. After all are gone, is there a long pause? Why does not the Queen rebuke the King?

Describe the physical, mental, and moral state of the King and Queen at the close of this, their first state banquet. Why does M. employ spies? What are the *strange things* that M. has *in head*? What do you admire in Lady M.'s character? Which is the more difficult part to act in this scene, M.'s or Lady M.'s? Try to imagine, and if you are courageous put into blank verse, a scene between M. and Lady M.—time, immediately before the banquet.

Scene 5. Is this scene necessary? What fault does Hecate find with the witches? with Macbeth?

Scene 6. Is this scene necessary? Practice reading; try to bring out effectively the fine irony in the speech by Lennox. Mark the scansion.

Which is the most effective of the first three Acts? In which is the action most rapid? Had the rest of the play been lost, what could be guessed in regard to what the next two Acts contained? Pick out what seem to you the most poetical passages in Act III. Summarize each scene, employing the present tense.

#### ACT IV

Scene 1. Arrange the stage. Why is the witches' brew made so loathsome? What use is to be made of it? Describe M.'s appearance and manner of entering. Had M. ever before met the witches save by accident? Describe the manner in which the apparitions appear and disappear. Are they visible to the audience? Locate Birnam wood and Dunsinane hill. Is the tone of M.'s voice the same in the lines beginning *Thou art too like the spirit of Banquo* as in the passage beginning *I conjure you by that which you profess*? Explain the device by which the witches are made to vanish. Show the dramatic value of the announcement made by Lennox. Why does M. wish to kill Macduff's wife and children? Does this scene, more than some others, need stage representation to show its effectiveness? Explain lines 83-6, 120-22, 144-8.

Scene 2. For what purpose has Ross come to Macduff's castle? Was he sent? Is the conversation between Lady Macduff and her son introduced for relief through humor, or for some other



purpose? Would the scene be as effective without the messenger? Who sent him? Why is not Lady Macduff killed on the stage? In what respects is this murder worse than the preceding ones?

Scene 3. Macduff has had little prominence in earlier scenes; what is the dramatist's purpose in now making him the central figure? What is your final impression of Malcolm? Give in detail the grounds for Malcolm's mistrust of Macduff. Name the "king becoming graces." Purpose of the lines which tell of the power of the English king to cure disease? Would the last part of this scene, where Macduff learns of the death of his wife and children, be so effective had we not read the preceding scene? What character of all that we have met in the play has the strongest motives for killing Macbeth? There are many troublesome lines in this scene; pay particular attention to the following: ll. 2-4, 14-17, 19-20, 22-4, 29-30, 32-4, 107-8, 110-11, 112-13, 165-74, 192-4, 212, 228-9.

How does Act IV compare with the preceding Acts in interest? in poetic excellence? in dramatic skill? Briefly summarize each scene, employing the present tense. What remains to be done in Act V? Do you expect to learn of new atrocities committed by Macbeth? If the remainder of the play is to picture the punishment of wrong-doers, do you think the penalty should be the same for the Queen as for the King?

## ACT V

Scene 1. Arrange the stage for this scene. Does the gentleman show affection for Lady M.? Would the scene be as effective without the presence of the doctor and the gentleman? Describe in close detail Lady M.'s actions throughout the scene? By what means may one taking the part of Lady M. convey to the audience the impression of sleep-walking? Should Lady M. be represented as actually washing her hands? writing letters? Should *Out damned spot* be spoken explosively? How long a time should the scene take? What is passing through Lady M.'s mind as she utters the following: (1) *One: two: why then, 'tis time to do it;* (2) *Hell is murky;* (3) *You mar all with this starting?* Does this scene throw new light on her character? Will she die "holily," or do you detect no signs of repentance?

Can you think of her as one who has committed crimes solely through love for her husband? Why did Shakespeare prefer to reveal Lady M.'s mind in this sleep-walking scene rather than through waking soliloquy? What other scenes in the play approach this in dramatic power?

Scene 2. Purpose of this scene? What is the most effective metaphor? Find a simile that presents a vivid picture. To what earlier scene are we carried back by the words Birnam and Dunsinane?

Scene 3. Purpose of this scene? Describe Macbeth's appearance and his mental condition. Could the first twenty lines be spared? the seven lines beginning *I have lived long enough?* the lines referring to the Queen? Does M. arouse our pity as Lady M. does in the sleep-walking scene? Has he absolute faith in the witches? Did he have in Act I? Is he *mad* or *full of valiant fury*? What was the final cause of Lady M.'s death?

Scene 4. Why is this scene necessary? What is the effect of so many short scenes?

Scene 5. What is M.'s state of mind before he hears of his wife's death? Does he show grief or indifference at the news? How do you explain lines 17-18? Explain the thought in lines 19-23. Is M. a deep thinker? Do you admire him for determining to *die with harness on our back?*

Scenes 6-7. How was the castle taken? Which should kill M., Macduff or Malcolm?

Scene 8. Is there anything of remorse in l. 5? Why not have M. killed on the stage? Purpose of ll. 35-53? Would the ending have been more impressive had M. been taken captive? if the Queen had survived him? if the King and Queen had died at the same time? if the King had taken his own life? What is Shakespeare's way of representing a battle? Why not call the play *The Macbeths?*

# INDEX

- Addison, 287  
 Alfred the Great, 242  
 allegory, 329  
 alliteration, 343, 215  
 amphibrach, 335  
 anapaest, 335  
*Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*,  
 243, 248  
 ANGLO-SAXON PERIOD,  
 239-244  
 antithesis, 333  
 antonyms, 27  
 apostrophe, 332  
 APPENDIX, 319-408  
 ARGUMENT, 105-124;  
 specimen brief, 356  
 Arnold, 316  
 Austen, 305  
 Bacon, 268  
 balanced sentence, 42  
 ballad, 151, 154, 249,  
 256  
 BEAUTY, 60-68  
 Bede, 241, 243  
*Beowulf*, 241  
*Bible, King James*, 267  
 Blackmore, 313  
 Blake, 296  
 blank verse, 338  
 brevity, 40  
 brief, specimen, 356  
 Brontë, 313  
 Browning, Elizabeth,  
 311  
 Browning, Robert, 310  
 Bulwer Lytton, 313  
 Bunyan, 280  
 Burke, 296  
 Burney, 305  
 Burns, 300  
 Butler, 283  
 Byron, 301  
 Caedmon, 241  
 Carlyle, 313  
 Caxton, 260  
 CAXTON'S PERIOD, 257-  
 260  
 cesura, 337  
 character study in  
 drama, 181; in fic-  
 tion, 161  
 Chaucer, 253  
 CHAUCER'S PERIOD,  
 251-256  
 CLEARNESS, 16-36  
 climax, 43, 77, 159,  
 180, 333  
 closet drama, 150  
 coherence, 18, 20  
 Coleridge, 302  
*Collier's Short View*,  
 288  
 comedy, 145, 150  
 composition subjects,  
 346  
 connotative words, 39  
 contrast, 42, 333  
 couplet, 340  
 Cowper, 296  
 Cynewulf, 241  
 dactyl, 335  
 Darwin, 316  
*De Coverley Papers*,  
 questions on, 365  
 Defoe, 286  
 DeQuincey, 306  
 DESCRIPTION, 83-91  
*Deserted Village*, ques-  
 tions on, 389  
 Dickens, 311  
 dictionary, exercises in  
 use of, 11  
 dimeter, 334  
 DRAMA, THE STUDY  
 OF, 169-185; varie-  
 ties of, 145, 150  
 Dryden, 284  
 Edgeworth, 305  
 elegy, 154  
 Eliot, George, 311  
 ELIZABETHAN PERIOD,  
 266-275  
 ENGLISH LITERATURE,  
 BRIEF SUMMARY OF,  
 237-316  
 epic, the, 152  
 epigram, 333  
 epithet, transferred,  
 331  
 ESSAYS, THE STUDY  
 OF, 186-193; essay  
 defined, 147; sub-  
 jects for essays, 346  
 exclamation, 333  
 EXPOSITION, 92-104  
 faulty English, 12  
 feminine line, 336  
 FICTION, THE STUDY  
 OF PROSE, 157-168  
 Fielding, 293  
 FIGURES OF SPEECH,  
 327-333; exercises,  
 218  
 FORCE, 37-59  
 Freeman, 316  
 Froude, 316  
 Gay, 288  
 Goldsmith, 294  
*Gorboduc*, 263  
 Gower, 254  
 Gray, 296  
 Green, 316  
 Grote, 316  
 Hakluyt, 269  
 Hallam, 316  
 Hardy, 313  
 harmony, 63  
 heptameter, 334  
 heroic couplet, 339  
 Herrick, 278  
 hexameter, 334  
 Hooker, 269  
 Hughes, 313  
 Huxley, 316  
 hyperbole, 331  
 iambus, 335  
 idyl, 155  
*Il Penseroso*, questions  
 on, 397  
 interludes, 264  
 interrogation, 333  
 irony, 332  
 Johnson, 297  
 JOHNSON, AGE OF, 290-  
 298  
*Johnson*, questions on  
 Macaulay's, 375  
 Jonson, 274

- Keats, 303  
Kingsley, 313
- Lady of the Lake*, questions on, 384  
*L'Allegro*, questions on, 394
- Lamb, 306  
Langland, 252  
Layamon, 249
- LITERATURE DEFINED, 136-140
- LITERATURE, KINDS OF, 141
- Lyly, 269  
lyric, 152
- Macaulay, 314  
Macaulay's *Johnson*, questions on, 375  
*Macbeth*, questions on, 399
- MacDonald, 313  
Malony, 257  
Marlowe, 273  
Marryat, 313  
mask, 150  
mass, 18, 20  
melodrama, 146, 150  
melody, 62  
Meredith, 313  
metaphor, 328, 220  
meter, 334  
metonymy, 330  
Milton, 279  
Milton's *L'Allegro*, questions on, 394  
miracle plays, 263  
monometer, 334  
moralities, 264  
Møre, 261  
Morley, 316  
Morris, 311
- NARRATION, 75-82  
New Learning, 259  
Newman, 316
- NORMAN-ENGLISH PERIOD, 245-250  
novel, 144
- octameter, 334  
ode, 154
- OLD ENGLISH PERIOD, 239-244
- onomatopoeia, 343  
oration subjects, 346
- pentameter, 334  
personification, 329
- plot in fiction, 157; in drama, 177
- POETRY, VARIETIES OF, 150-156; POETRY, THE STUDY OF, 194-233; exercises in appreciation, 226
- Pope, 288  
Porter, 305
- PRE-ELIZABETHAN PERIOD, 261-265  
pronunciation exercises, 9
- PROSE, VARIETIES OF, 144-149
- PUNCTUATION, RULES OF, 319; exercises in, 23
- PURITAN AND CAVALIER PERIOD, 276-281  
Puritans, 281  
PURITY, 6-15
- quatrain, 340
- QUEEN ANNE PERIOD, 285-289
- Raleigh, 268  
*Ralph Roister Doister*, 263  
Reade, 313
- READING, 127-135  
Reformation, 276  
Renaissance, 276  
repetition, 41
- RESTORATION PERIOD, 282-284
- RHETORIC, THE STUDY OF, 3-5  
Richardson, 292  
romance, prose, 144; metrical, 152; Norman, 248; English, 249
- Rossetti, 311  
Royal Society, 283  
Ruskin, 315
- Scott, 300, 305  
sentence, the balanced, 42; the periodic, 44; the loose, 44  
setting, 163  
Shakespeare, 273  
Shelley, 304  
Sheridan, 295  
Sidney, 270
- Silas Marner*, questions on, 360  
simile, 327  
simplicity, 45  
*Sir Gawaine and the Green Knight*, 255  
Smollett, 293  
song, 153; Elizabethan, 270  
sonnet, 341, 154  
spelling exercises, 10  
Spencer, 316  
Spenser, 271  
stanza forms, 340  
Steele, 287  
Sterne, 293  
Stevenson, 313  
story, short, 144
- STYLE, 69-74  
suspense, 44  
Swift, 286  
Swinburne, 311  
symmetry, 64  
synonyms, 25
- tale, 151  
Taylor, 279  
Tennyson, 309  
tetrameter, 334  
Thackeray, 311  
Thomson, 295  
topical outline, 29  
tragedy, 145, 150  
tragi-comedy, 146, 150  
Trevelyan, 316  
trimeter, 334  
triplet, 340  
trochee, 335  
Trollope, 313  
truncated line, 336  
Tyndale, 262  
Tyndall, 316
- unity, 18, 20
- VERSIFICATION, 334-346; exercises in, 209
- VICTORIAN ERA, 308-316
- Walton, 279  
words, connotative, 39; familiar and precise, 19
- Wordsworth, 301  
WORDSWORTH-SCOTT ERA, 299-307  
Wyatt and Surrey, 262  
Wyclif, 251







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