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SAY WHAT YOU MEAN

Everyman's Guide to Diction and Grammar

By

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Author of Don't Say It, Get It Right,
Take A Letter Please,
The Opdycke Lexicon of
Word Selection



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To

T H

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. . . and the lady shall say her mind
freely, or the blank verse shall halt for't. . . .
Hamlet (Act II Scene ii)

Hamlet is explaining that the lady may express herself without restraint, even though, by so doing, she mar the verse or take liberties with the Queen's English. He is more severe with the clowns. They may "speak no more than is set down for them." Liberty of expression is sanctioned in the one instance, license is forbidden in the other. The lady could safely be trusted with that expansive freedom of speech which, to the benefit of language development, characterized the Elizabethan day. True, there is an ulterior motive to be achieved through the lady, but this makes the injunction only the more significant. The clowns could not be so openly trusted, they must be forever playing down to the groundlings by "ad libbing" topically in the slang or vulgarism of the day.

Elizabethan expression and twentieth-century expression may appropriately be placed in parallel in respect to aliveness and fluidity and volatility. The influences that expanded and liberated the one are present, multiplied a thousandfold, in the other. And the parallel is important in both directions above indicated—breadth and betterment on the one hand, looseness and license on the other. Historians of the English tongue used to enjoy saying that the Elizabethans luckily made the language both permanently better and permanently worse. Excitement of living and progress make for vitality and creativeness of thought, and these inevitably challenge and stimulate diction and phraseology and even syntax. Live language moves and sparkles and purifies itself as result of freshets of ideas that run into and through it. There are always muddy pools and eddies to be cleared as the ideas stream along, and these are signs of life. The more alive a language is the more necessary a study of its clarifying grammar is. For grammar is the etiquette of expression—the code of its behavior in public. He who would regard its forms as fixed makes of himself a pedant; he would make and keep the language static, and thus deprive it of interest for any but the curious observer or the special student of dead tongues. He who would ignore its grammatical rules and forms, and thus ruthlessly violate them, makes of himself an illiterate and, perhaps, a vulgarian.

Etiquette, social form, charm—white tie and tails, decolletage, curtsying—all are sourced, however remotely, in sex appeal. And that "certain personal something" to which success is popularly attributed, was at one time certainly, if it is not now, identified to some extent with diction and grammar. If the pen is mightier than the sword. it is also, naturally, mightier than Cupid's dart. Perhaps this thought is always worth trying upon the younger generation by way of incentive to better expression. When the knight of old—as exquisite as bold—wished his lady to bathe in the sea, he said to her, "Abandon the witcheries of your body beautiful to the enfoldments of Neptune." When he wished to protect her from the chill night air, he said to her, "Surrender your ivory shoulder to the caresses of my cloak." Or so it has been reported. Here, to be sure, was circumlocution *in excelsis*. Here, too, was dictional and grammatical sex appeal. And this phraseological competition among knights was not without its positive benefits by way of syntactical suppleness. Chivalry then was one thing. Its unworthy descendant—"shovelry"—is today quite another. Contemporary Romeos of romance are unlikely to go in for such preciosity in addressing their "frails." Their vulgar realism probably takes the form of "Jump in, Kid" or "Dive, Baby" for the one and "Huddle it" or "Here's neckin' you" for the other; and for some—for all too many—perhaps the abrupt substitutions convey well enough, if inelegantly, the idea of recreation in the one case, of caution in the other, sans grammar or glamor, sans charm or harm.

There is little doubt that most adults could be prevailed upon to take greater care with their expression if they fully realized that speech and writing may be given appeals that are just as striking and ingratiating and seductive as are those of dress and manner and carriage, and the rest. There are both sex and sin in syntax; both divinity and deviltry in diction. And Barrie must surely have been thinking of the parts of speech a little bit when he made his beloved Maggie in *What Every Woman Knows* speak so scripturally about the quality of charm.

In a first-class magazine you may at this moment read something of this kind: "I won't lose but one." In leading newspaper columns you may at this moment read, in kind, "That's the song I scared audiences with by threatening to sing on the stage" and "She has gone to Palm Beach on account of she has a cold" and "It is one of those scenes which, after you have witnessed it, you want to tell others, who haven't seen it, about." In business literature (hotel in this instance) you may at this moment read, in kind, "Any discourtesy on

the part of waiters will be appreciated if reported to the management" and "The management will appreciate any discourtesy on the part of waiters if reported by guests" and "Guests reporting any discourtesy on the part of waiters will be appreciated." Phraseology of this sort and of the same degree of looseness is representative of the slipshod composition in every field of writing and speaking today. Whether it springs from ignorance or indifference or carelessness or (more likely) from half-baked thinking, matters little; its persistent omnipresence is or should be the chief concern. The lady would not —could not—say her mind by means of it; the clowns could say theirs by no other.

The great George Saintsbury was fond of pointing out to his students that the contagion of deterioration, especially in English usage, is as devastating as it is subtle; and he often drew the homely comparison between a house that is permitted gradually to fall into disrepair, and expression that is permitted to become more and more slovenly and slipshod and "down-at-heel" from day to day. Neglect the broken hinge today, the banging shutter tomorrow, the frozen pipe the day after, and so on, and very soon what once may have been a mansion may become a Tobacco-Road shack. Let *hain't* pass unobserved today, and it will probably become *hain't gonna* tomorrow, *hain't gonna go wid nobody* the next day, and so on, until a new low level of "communication" is established, and the speaker finds himself victimized by dictional and grammatical neglect and "disrepair." Both in his books and in his lectures Saintsbury made frequent use of the term *down-at-heel* to characterize such expression. Reminded one day by a student less bright than brazen that, as used, it constituted a mixed figure, he replied "Perhaps. But don't forget that I use it to mean mixed English."

Today any word or any combination of syllables and words, within range of propriety, that proves easy and convenient and *definite to a purpose* may be used. Such was the case, too, in Elizabethan times. Liberty of usage means just this—no less, no more. Mongrel combinations and derivations abounded then as they abound now in the language of even the most precise, practically the sole test of a term being its appropriateness and immediacy to the correct and intelligible expression of an idea. The same sort of suppleness and variability applies—applied in Elizabethan times—to the traditional rules of grammar. Grammar is and always has been in the making, that is, in the unmaking. Ease and convenience and intelligibility come first; conscientious compliance with rule comes afterward—if at all. The

split infinitive (page 131), the *which*-reference (page 148), the *like-as* distinction (page 190) are cases in point.

Everywhere and everywhen compromise is inevitable; in the use of English it is usually as welcome as it is irresistible. English words have always been haphazardly born and bred; the ancestry of few of them will bear genealogical scrutiny for the "pure strain". It behooves no one to be squeamish in regard to dictional blue blood, for the baton sinister is less of exception than of rule. Yet it does not follow, because *crayfish* is descended from *écrevisse, isinglass* from *hausenblase, diaper* from *d'Ypres, demijohn* from *Dame Jeanne* (or *Damaghán*), *Hoosier* from *"Who's there?"* (or *"Who's here?"*), *Sydney* from *St Denis* (*Denys*), *Kirkcudbright* from *Church of St Cuthbert, Mississippi* from *misachibee, Adirondacks* from *ratirontaks, Chesapeake* from *kishishwapeak, Chicago* from *she-kay-ong, Connecticut* from *quonoktacut,* and so on *ad infinitum*—it does not follow because of such accepted catch as-catch-can dictional descents as these—that one is justified in license by way of coinage and barbarism and slang, and corrupt form generally. The homeliest and lowliest of origin may, of course, beget the noblest of progeny, and the parent of genius may thus be forgiven failure to recognize his own child because of the very "distance" between the two. But the groom who, with all his senses apparently normal, insisted upon saying *Bob Stowe* for *Iago, Thursday morning* for *Desdemona,* and *Old Fellow* for *Othello,* was a sloven in pronunciation or a moron in perpetuating the "imperishable joke" or a devil-may-care illiterate, and (very likely) all three (page 296).

In view of the prodigious amount of printed matter that pours through the presses, it is sometimes said to be miraculous that so large a proportion of it makes its final appearance with diction and syntax even reasonably intact. But this is true—if and when it is true—only because printing and publishing offices carry—are obliged to carry—staffs of copy "detectives" whose sole occupation it is to whip down-at-heel copy into presentable shape. Even so, the outcome is—what it is—sometimes so bad that "there ought to be a law." For many copy "experts" so-called have been victimized by education (*infra*) or background, or both, and as a consequence unbelievable slips are permitted to get by, the average being one error each in diction and grammar and punctuation on a book page, two each on a magazine page, three each on a newspaper page of the large size. To the last-named must go the awards of merit (page 305).

Reduction of output could be the more devoutly wished if betterment of quality were certain to follow automatically. But such would not

be the case. Coherence and economy and succinctness in style are not to be certified to copy by mere excision or amputation, or both. The performance of operation upon manuscript invariably leaves telltale scars. There was not nearly so much printed matter running from the presses in the early nineteenth century as there is today; yet, in his *Essay on Style* Thomas DeQuincey felt impelled to say

> Simply to retrench one word from each sentence, one superfluous epithet, for example, would probably increase the disposable time of the public by one twelfth part, in other words, would add another month to the year, or raise any sum of volumes read from eleven to twelve hundred. A mechanic operation would effect *that* change, but, by cultivating a closer logic and more severe habits of thinking, perhaps two sentences out of each three might be pruned away, and the amount of possible publication might thus be increased in a threefold degree.

A very large part of the responsibility for present-day loose English must be placed upon our exorbitantly expensive educational systems, especially upon the theory of soft pedagogy that has prevailed since about 1900. Those pixie pedagogs who would smooth and soften the way of learning by attempting to make all subjects simple and playful and gamesome, render a great disservice to society. Many educators today apparently fear to make students face the fact that getting an education is and ought to be work—hard, isolated, concentrated application of mind *and body* to the mastery of principle, the examination of model, and the arduous try-and-try-again of practice. The vacuous theory to the effect that the child is to be—can be—"cheated into an education" has become a social boomerang of no inconsiderable consequences The cheaters cheat themselves, their charges, and the economic set-up that sustains them all.

It is more than merely significant—or should be for educators—that Surgeon General Norman T Kirk of the Global War has seen fit to comment adversely upon this signal weakness in our educational systems. "Men who as children were allowed much freedom and self-expression," said he, "are no good as soldiers. They are the first to crack under strain. The mental training of children has not kept pace with developments in medicine, nutrition, and health. We are running into the same problem that General John J Pershing ran into in the World War in that we have too many men physically fit to fight but not mentally fit to do so"

This book is for everybody who would enjoy liberty in usage and who would at the same time avoid license. But it offers no magical pre-

cesses—no pedagogical wizardry—whereby these desirable ends may be realized. It is primarily an enlargement of chapter six in *Get It Right* in which treatment of grammar is necessarily measured to broad-scale content, and is thus limited. Since the publication of *Get It Right* numerous letters have been received from all parts of the English-speaking world requesting a fuller and more detailed exposition of grammatical principle and usage, minus the involved and highly formalized terminology that usually hampers such exposition. Most of the following content constitutes a working reply to these letters, especially to those containing sentences for analysis and correction (more than 2500 faulty everyday expressions are listed and revised). The book may thus be truthfully called a dictionary of grammar in which constructive coverage of all kinds of grammatical errors is made through the medium of man-in-the-street expression. Corrective treatment of specific error comes first and foremost—live and usable models are placed on the table for dissection. After this is done—only after this is done—corrective rule or principle is set down.

Inasmuch as punctuation and spelling are so inextricably linked with precision in speech and writing, the magnifying glass has also been placed upon chapters seventeen and eighteen in *Get It Right*. But the closer range herein given these subjects in no way invalidates their treatment for general use in the former book where, again, content had to be proportioned to scale. *Say What You Mean* is, thus, a fitting sequel and supplement to *Get It Right* as well as to *Don't Say It* and, in part, to *Take a Letter Please*. It is a strategic guide in grammatical usage, with precious terms and rules of thumb kept subordinate to concrete practice.

Not that complete elimination of technical rule and terminology is possible or even desirable, though the soft pedagogs would have us believe that it is. There is fine mental training to be acquired in the learning of terms and rules peculiar to a certain field. Every good workman must learn and wants to learn to name as well as to use methodically the tools special to his job. These things, he well enough knows, are important disciplinary elements in the craftsmanship in which he takes pride. His knowledge and use of special terminology, indeed, add something to his confidence and to his stature as a craftsman—a glamor, if you please, that helps to build and maintain his occupational morale.

Suppose that *name* or *namer* be substituted for the special term *noun, substitute* for *pronoun, describer* or *limiter* for *adjective, actor* for *verb, estimator* for *adverb, relater* for *preposition, connector* for *con-*

junction, exclaimer for *interjection:* Is a student's grammatical life thereby made less difficult or harassing? Hardly: for the substituted terms will have to be learned in a completely new set of applications and associations, and this may easily prove a more trying and confusing task than the learning of new and special terms. To tell a student that he can better master a subject without bothering about its special terminology is very much like telling a chauffeur that he will be the better driver for not knowing the technical names of automobile parts.

Then, too, if the names of the parts of speech are to be "generalized out" of education in English, the names of punctuation marks must be also, and the names of diacritical marks, and the names of prose and verse forms. If simplification is to be carried to logical issue, the terms special to each and every other subject must likewise be wiped off the educational slate. *Algebra, cosine, quadratic, logarithm, ledger, vise, litmus, metaphor,* and a host of other special terms, must be eliminated, and conversational generalities must be substituted—a considerable undertaking, this, to re-word and re-phrase the entire subject matter of learning. If, in addition, the terms special to all the various avenues of human endeavor were to be pared down to the level of mere generic signification—a justifiable deduction, certainly, from the arguments of those who would make everything simple and easy—why, work would become very dull and drab indeed for those who have to do it, and language would become duller and drabber for those who have to use it and hear it and read it.

Education in grammar, as in other subjects, is organized on a going basis. The organization is not perfect—cannot be where change is forever in the offing—and the bungling that has been committed over the past many years is now at last being revealed through force of tragic circumstance. But there is so much of great moment to be corrected in the educational order right away, that to undertake any large-scale scrapping of established terms and the substitution of new ones, is, comparatively speaking, a task that must be listed in the catalog of educational trivia. Sorry, but a rose by any other name is not so sweet, especially at this late date, after the accumulated connotations of the centuries. Too much has already been built into the word *rose* to make a change now. It is, as a matter of fact, just about as special as *noun,* though it is fortunately or unfortunately better known—romantically at least. But a rose is a rose is a rose, indeed. And a noun is a noun is a noun—nothing else but, glory be!

Technical grammatical terms are, therefore, not entirely omitted from the following pages—and no apologies are made to the so-called and

self-called advanced or progressive educators. Correct usage is, if you please, a matter of grammar. There can be no blinking the fact. Treatment of usage without any special terms may be undertaken as a school or an educational political stunt but such treatment cannot be made to serve as a ready functional aid when the strategy of writing and speaking demands immediacy of recourse. The presentation here is kept as painless—as tearless—as possible consistent with the sound psychology that sane and wholesome effort and concentration are desirable and necessary in the acquisition of knowledge as in the acquisition of all other worth-whiles.

Expressional trouble begins—and ends—with the difficulties involved in using words exactly and with putting them together with syntactical precision. This implies grammar as corrective. As above indicated, this book is calculated to meet these two difficulties wherever and whenever they present themselves—at home, at the office, at school, before the microphone, in the library, in the studio It is not a textbook—method of instruction is not emphasized. But, if desirable, it may easily be adapted to school and college classrooms. The contests provided at the end of section and chapter may profitably be used to stimulate instructional competition in groups of students of all ages, particularly in special schools and clubs and occupational organizations. Of the many books in the same field this is one of the very few (if, indeed, not the only one) to interrelate diction and grammar in syntactical exposition. Inaccurate diction is more often than is generally supposed a cause of incorrect construction. Loose construction more often than is generally supposed evokes inaccurate diction. The treatment of diction itself (especially in chapter five) is devised to meet general demands only, comprehensiveness in this phase being impossible, of course, outside the unabridged dictionary. The last section in each chapter attempts to associate a little the techniques of composition with literary history and tradition.

But—say what you mean? Mean what you say? Perhaps no one ever does—or can—or wants to, always. Perhaps much would be lost to the "erratic delights of expression" if one did not sometimes say and mean more or less than is actually expressed. One might, as a matter of fact, become very schoolmarmish if he were forever holding himself to a studied effort of saying exactly what he meant or meaning precisely what he said. The entertainment value of Mrs Nickleby's dictional extravagance (page 54) and of Calvin Coolidge's cryptic dictional thrift would, indeed, be sadly missed. Your man of many words, like your man of few words, is made individual—distinguished

very often—by the doubtful virtue of the quantitative element in his diction, be it plus or minus.

All expression is approximate, and must remain so until thinking ceases to be approximate. There still seems to be, unfortunately, much more expression in practically every field than there is thinking. And this omens ill for the world's pulpwood supply, as far as expression by means of print is concerned. It is trite to observe that nobody can say what he means until his own thought is clear—and human thought does not yet show very marked progress toward a millennium of clarity. Evolutionary realization is imperceptible here, as in so many phases elsewhere, in the mere span of an average human life. But the approximation can be made closer than it now is, by the educated as well as by the uneducated. There is no dearth of words certainly.* There is no lack of suppleness or elasticity in the permissible turns of phrasing in English grammar. The imperative must therefore stand

SAY WHAT YOU → MEAN → WHAT YOU SAY

if for no reason other than to be safe and satisfactory to yourself, courteous and intelligible to others. Not until a person has proved to himself *and to others* that he is capable of saying what he means or of meaning what he says is he privileged to "play with" diction and syntax as occasion and purpose and individuality may justify for the sake of getting certain desired effects.

The following excerpt seems just here so apropos as to be unomissible:

> Many authors from their preoccupation with words have the bad habit of choosing those they use in conversation too carefully. They form their sentences with unconscious care and say neither more nor less than they mean. It makes intercourse with them somewhat formidable to persons in the upper ranks of society whose vocabulary is limited by their simple spiritual needs, and their company consequently is sought only with hesitation. No constraint of this sort was ever felt with Roy. He could talk with a dancing guardee in terms that were perfectly comprehensible to him and with a racing countess in the language of her stable boys. They said of him with enthusiasm and relief that he was not a bit like an author. No compliment pleased him better. The wise always use a number of ready-made phrases (at the moment I write "nobody's business" is the most common), popular adjectives (like "divine" or "shy-

*According to the report of the Oklahoma WPA vocabulary project, sponsored by Oklahoma University under the direction of Dr Henry D Rinsland, Professor of School Measurements at the University, the normal vocabulary of even the average eighth-grade child is 14,583 words.

making"), verbs that you only know the meaning of if you live in the right set (like "dunch"), which give ease and a homely sparkle to small talk and avoid the necessity of thought. The Americans, who are the most efficient people on the earth, have carried this device to such a height of perfection and have invented so wide a range of pithy and hackneyed phrases that they can carry on an amusing and animated conversation without giving a moment's reflection to what they are saying and so leave their minds free to consider the more important matters of big business and fornication. Roy's repertory was extensive and his scent for the word of the minute unerring, it peppered his speech, but aptly, and he used it each time with a sort of bright eagerness, as though his fertile brain had just minted it.*

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J B O

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SAY WHAT YOU MEAN

1

DON'T OVERUSE WORDS

SECTION ONE — PREFIX

If you say *Precede before me* you waste the prefix *Pre* or the word *before,* for they mean the same. *Precede me* is sufficient—and economical. If you say *Harry has been demoted down* (or *below*) you waste the prefix *de* or the word *down* (or *below*), for they mean the same. If you say *Tommy has been promoted up* (or *above)* you waste the prefix *pro* or the word *up* (or *above*), for they mean the same. *Harry has been demoted* and *Tommy has been promoted* are sufficient—and economical.

If you say *Refer back to the introduction* you waste the prefix *Re* or the word *back,* for *Re* means *back.* If you say *Repeat that remark again* you waste the prefix *Re* or the word *again,* for *Re* means *again.* If you say *Reproduce that scene anew* you waste *Re* or *anew,* for *Re* means *anew. Refer to the introduction* and *Repeat that remark* and *Reproduce that scene* are, respectively, sufficient—and economical. To repeat the meaning of any prefix immediately after it or in direct modification of the word of which it is a part, is to say more than is really meant and is, thus, to waste words.

Such repetition is justifiable only on occasion for the sake of emphasis, and on rare occasion for the sake of precision. *Please reread that sentence* implies that the sentence has been read once. *Please reread that sentence again* indicates that the sentence is to be read a third time—there was a first reading; there was a rereading; now a third (an "again") reading is asked for. But *Please reread that sentence again and again* means not necessarily four readings but, rather, many readings; it is an emphatic way of

	NO	YES
18	He *ex*ceeded *beyond* the limits	He exceeded the limits
19	His *extreme hyper*criticism annoys me	His hypercriticism annoys me
20	*Im*bibe this refreshing air *in*	Imbibe this refreshing air
21	His speech incited *toward* riot	His speech incited riot.
22	*Juxta*pose the first *next* to the third	Juxtapose the first and third
23	He *mal*treated the prisoners *badly*	He maltreated the prisoners
24	Don't *mis*spell these words *wrongly*	Don't misspell these words
25	The *mono*log was given by John *alone*	The monolog was given by John
26	There was a *multi*tude of *many* people	There was a multitude of people
27	The sun is *ob*scured *over* by a cloud	The sun is obscured by a cloud
28	I shall *out*bid *above* them all	I shall outbid them all
29	You *over*stayed *beyond* your leave	You overstayed your leave
30	Here is a *pan*acea for *all* your ills	Here is a panacea for your ills
31	The odor *per*vades *through* the house	The odor pervades the house
32	He writes under a *fictitious pseudo*nym	He writes under a pseudonym
33	Let's *se*clude ourselves *apart*	Let's seclude ourselves
34	*Sur*render yourselves *over* to me	Surrender yourselves to me
35	This figure is a *three*-sided *tri*angle	This figure is a triangle
36	She is *excessively ultra*fashionable	She is ultrafashionable

SECTION TWO — SUFFIX

If you say *We have a little kitchenette in our apartment* you waste the word *little* or the suffix *ette*. If you say *We are going to mail a small pamphlet* you waste the word *small* or the suffix *let*. If you say *I saw a minute molecule under the microscope* you waste the word *minute* or the suffix *cule*. The suffixes *ette* and *let* and *cule* convey the meaning of small, tiny, minute, slight, diminutive, or miniature. To repeat any one of these meanings in modification of words having such suffixes is to say more than is meant—to be wasteful of words. The word endings *aster, cule (cle), el, en, et* (shortened form of *ette* in some uses), *ie, isk, kin, ling, ock, y* are likewise used to denote small or diminutive, and the roots to which they are suffixed need no further modification bearing the same meaning. But note that *aster* indicates smallness

in the sense of inferior *(poetaster)*, that *en* may be a plural ending *(oxen)*, that *ette* may mean imitation *(muslinette)*, that *ling* may mean one associated with *(hireling)* or some one or something inferior *(princeling)*, that *y* may be an abstract-noun ending *(victory)*.

As in the case of prefixes, repetition of the meaning of a suffix by a modifying word may sometimes be justifiable for the sake of emphasis. The diminutive may be used to classify a small person or thing in relation to others in the same category of size. If you speak, for instance, of a short novelette you may indicate a novelette that is shorter than the average writing classified as novelette. Inasmuch as there is no positive standard of length for a novelette—since it may be, as far as mere length is concerned, a long short story or a short novel—the term *short novelette* may be not only correct but even desirable in certain connections. In the same way *This is a very small hillock indeed in comparison with the other hillocks hereabout* and *This is a little baby*, in which *small* repeats *ock* and *little* repeats *y*, may in certain circumstances be correct as classifying within a classification. But such connections or circumstances as these are rare, and diminutive endings do not as a rule require modifying re-enforcement.

Suffixes are more complex than prefixes, and are thus more misleading. They are more variable in form, in meaning, and in the changes they cause in the spelling of roots (page 476). The diminutive *ette*, it has been seen, may be *et (hatchet)*, and *cule* may be *cle (corpuscle)*. The suffixes *an* and *ain*, as in *republican* and *captain*, are one and the same. In *civil* the *il* is the same as *ile* in *docile*. The suffix *ist* may mean one skilled *(artist)*, one who practices *(moralist)*, one who supports or adheres to *(communist)*; *ment* may denote condition *(contentment)*, process *(management)*, agent or that which *(amusement)*; *ation* may indicate an act *(application)*, a state or condition *(cessation)*, a conclusion or result *(graduation)*. A suffix may make an adjective of a noun or a verb *(care* and *careful)*, an adverb of a noun or a verb *(light* and *lightly)*, a verb of an adjective or a noun *(capital* and *capitalize)*, a noun of agent of a verb or an abstract form *(claim* and *claimant)*. While this versatility may enrich expression, it may by the same token cause much confusion. To one studying English for the first time, the interpretation of root and suffix combinations may sometimes lead to ridiculous results. In a class of English for foreigners, for instance, *bullet* has been taken to mean little bull,

instead of little ball (Latin *bulla,* French *boule,* meaning ball); *hatchet* as a little hatch instead of a little ax; *headlong* as a long head instead of headforemost; *bungling* as a little bung; *inkling* as a little ink. Examinees have been known to write that *muscle* derivatively means a little muss instead of a little mouse (one of the most beautiful derivative figures of speech in the language, by the way). The word *affix* applies to either prefix or suffix.

The diminutive suffixes above mentioned are illustrative merely. While they are probably the most commonly wasted suffixes in general usage, they are by no means the only ones that make for waste through repetition. Some of the others that get themselves wastefully used in ordinary speech and writing are to be seen at work in the sentences below. Such common suffixes as *able, ful, ness, ty* offer the least trouble inasmuch as they are, as a rule, intensifying or qualifying only. The combinations *capably able, full bucketful, kind kindness, curious curiosity* may occur as illiterate usages or (less likely) as precious usages but they are uncommon in either field of expression. The suffix "loses face" in such forms as *half a cupful* and a *large armful.* And the augmentative *oon* seems to have lost its identity entirely, so that modification is the rule rather than the exception before such words as *balloon* and *saloon. Large balloon* and *small saloon* are acceptable expressions now, though literally the first means large large ball and the second small large room.

It is both logical and idiomatic to say *grow smaller,* for *grow* has the derivative meaning of become, and *become* means not only to increase but also to arrive at a state of. Similarly, the terms *good grammar, bad grammar, grammatical error* are not only idiomatic and colloquial but they are logical as well, though the purists may not agree to this. *Grammar* is an abstract term, like *life, duty, work, discipline,* and so forth, when it is used in reference to rule or principle. When you say *bad grammar,* therefore, you mean not in accordance with grammatical principle. When you say *grammatical error* you mean an error in grammar or pertaining to grammar. When *the devil quotes Scripture* you are quite right in saying that his quotation is not good Bible.

The term *greatly minimize* is, however, illogical, for *minimize* is absolute in meaning; it indicates smallest possible amount or degree, or to estimate at the lowest possible value or degree or importance. The case stands differently with *greatly decrease* and

greatly diminish, for *decrease* and *diminish* are relative in meaning, and *greatly* used before either conveys the idea of a considerable degree; *greatly decrease* therefore means a process going on in that which becomes less and less, and *greatly diminish* means a process of taking more and more away from something. Both *infinitely small* and *infinitesimally small* are tautological, and may, indeed, constitute a contradiction in terminology. *Infinitesimal* may safely be substituted for either of these terms.

A suffix is an element consisting of one or more letters or syllables added to the end of a word or root to change its meaning or function, or both. Suffixes, like prefixes, are listed and defined even in abridged dictionaries; it is unnecessary, therefore, to do more here than to list the principal suffixes in English (pages 476 to 490): *able, ac, aceous, acious, age, ain, al, an (ane), ance (ancy), ant (ent), ar, arch (archy), ard, ary, aster, ate, ation, ble, cle (cule), craft, dom, ed, ee, eer, el, en, ence (ency), eous, er, ern, ery, esce, escent, ese, esque, ess, est, et (ette), ferous, fold, form, ful, fy, gerous, gram, graph (graphy), hood, ial, ian, ible, ic (ical), ice, ics, ie, il (ile), ine (in), ing, ion, ious, ise, ish, isk, ism, ist, ite, itis, ive, ize, kin, lent, less, let, like, ling, logy, long, ly, meal, ment, monger, most, ness, ock, oon, or, ory, ose, our, ous, ple, re, red, scope (scopy), ship, sion, some, stead, ster, t, teen, th (eth), ther, tion, tor, trix, tude, ty, uous, ure, vorous, ward (wards), way (ways), wise, wright, y (ey), xion.*

CONTEST *

	NO	YES
1	Break*age* was due to an *act of* vandalism	Breakage was due to vandalism
2	The post*age fee* on the letter was twelve *cents*	The postage on the letter was twelve *cents*
3	The tonn*age total* of the load was estimated	The tonnage of the load was estimated
4	He is a *habitual* brag*gart*	He is a braggart
5	He is an *inferior* poet*aster*	He is a poetaster
6	He left the papers at the *office of* the consul*ate*	He left the papers at the consulate
7	I was nominated for the *office* of presidency	I was nominated for the presidency
8	He has the *rank of* duke*dom*	He has the rank of duke
9	They live in a *state of* serf*dom*	They live in serfdom
10	He is excellent in the *art of* arch*ery*	He is excellent in archery

* See page 8.

NO	YES
11 Harry is *more* kindli*er* than Tom	Harry is kindlier than Tom
12 She is a statu*esque-like* person	She is statuesque
13 The hos*tess* is a *lady* of great charm	The hostess has great charm
14 This is the *most* weight*iest* argument of all	This is the weightiest argument of all
15 This is *imitation* leatherette	This is leatherette
16 He has returned to a *state of* child*hood*	He is in his second childhood
17 The hero*ine* was a *woman* possessed of courage	The heroine possessed courage
18 His *condition of* dejec*tion* worries me	His dejection worries me
19 The *act of* bapt*ism* takes place today	The baptism takes place today
20 He is a *native* Jerseyi*te*	He is a Jerseyite
21 The culprit was *subjected to* catechi*zing*	The culprit was catechized
22 Look at this *insignificant* nurs*ling*	Look at this nursling
23 The *science of* bio*logy* is an important subject	Biology is an important subject
24 He did the job piece*meal a little at a time*	He did the job piecemeal
25 She possesses the *quality of* tender*ness*	She possesses tenderness
26 She developed a *state of* hat*red* toward me	She developed hatred toward
27 He is an act*or who performs* in Shaksperean plays	He is a Shaksperean actor
28 He was elected to the *office* of governor*ship*	He was elected governor
29 He displayed great *skill* at horseman*ship*	He displayed great horsemanship
30 There is no other *place* like the old home*stead*	There is no other place like home
31 She was *very* blithe*some* at the party	She was blithesome at the party
32 *To* whith*er* goeth he, I know not	Whither he goeth, I know not
33 The execu*trix* was a *woman* of ability	The executrix had ability
34 The *act of* capt*ure* was performed by John	The capture was made by John

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SECTION THREE — ROOT

If you say *He spoke well of her in his eulogy* you waste either *spoke well of* or *eulogy*, for *eu* means well and *logy* derivatively conveys the meaning of speak (word). If you say *They are taking*

a transcontinental trip across the continent you waste either *transcontinental* or *across the continent,* for *trans* means across. If you say *They made their way hazardously through an underground subterranean passage* you waste either *underground* or *subterranean,* for the one means the other. *He eulogized her* and *They are crossing the continent* and *They made their way hazardously through an underground passage* are sufficient—and economical. Sometimes, that is, whole words—prefixes, roots, suffixes—may be unnecessarily repeated—wasted. The repetition may not always be so direct or cut-and-dried as it is in the foregoing examples, but it may be definitely implied, and may therefore be just as wasteful. Such expressions, for instance, as *audible to the ear, visible to the eye, sweet to the taste, starving for food, thirsting for drink* are wasteful because of implied functional repetition of meaning. *Audible* pertains to the functioning of the ear; *visible* to that of the eye; *sweet* to that of the organs of taste. *Starve* means to crave food, and *thirst* to crave drink. It is conceivable, of course, that one may correctly speak of something as being audible to a certain type of ear, or of some one as being starved for a particular food, and so forth. But these are farfetched exceptions to the purpose here.

The so-called "blind definition" may be one in which a part of a complex word (usually the root) is repeated and the meaning of only prefix or suffix (or both) is given. *Circumnavigate,* for example, is blindly defined as act of navigating around; *peninsula* as almost *(pen)* insular; *auctioneer* as one who auctions; *refinery* as a place where refining is done; *co-operative* as tending to operate with; *misplacement* as act of wrong placing. The beginner in the study of English is not helped much by this process of definition. He is required to look up the root in each instance and thus to build his own meanings. He may know that *eer* means one who, but what does *auction* mean? He may know that *ery* means place where, but what does *refine* mean? (Page 195.)

To say that an auctioneer is one who sells under increasing price offers through bids until the highest bidder becomes the purchaser, and that a refinery is a place at which or an apparatus by which purifying, especially of metals and oil and sugar, is done, is to avoid repetition and to make meaning intelligible, even though definition itself may be more involved. To give the meaning of *co* (with) and the meaning of *ive* (tending), and to leave *operate* undefined is to omit the major part of the definition.

A prefix and a suffix used with a single root must say different things about it. If they say the same thing they may disbar or disqualify a word. A case in point is *irregardless* which is really not a word at all, though often heard and sometimes seen. The prefix *ir* is negative, as is the suffix *less*. If there were such word as *irregard* it would mean no regard, and *regardless* means no regard. *Irregardless* is thus a double negative. But in the good word *irrespective* the prefix *ir* means no or not, and the suffix *ive* means quality of or tending to; thus, the complete word means quality of having or tending to have no regard or consideration for.

Wasteful repetition of a prefix or a suffix or a root, or of all three, is sometimes called *derivative repetition*. Exact repetition of a root, as in *cooperative* and *misplacement* above, is called *verbal repetition*. But the latter term is extended to include *identical repetition* such as *The builder is building a new building* and *He is the nominee nominated by the nominating committee* and *It is said that the director said, when they said they couldn't comply, that he would resign forthwith*. The repetition of sound in a sentence—*sound repetition*—while not necessarily wasteful in the expression of an idea, may be very wasteful by way of diverting the attention of a listener. In *Proceed with your pronouncement of your proposition to the protagonists* and *Naturally an incredulous person I cannot credit your action as either credible or creditable* and *The situation on this occasion demands resignation, even abnegation, rather than elation*, prefix *(pro)*, root *(cred)*, and suffix *(tion, sion)* are respectively repeated to a degree that is freakish. While this sort of repetition may be both necessary and desirable in devising the figure of alliteration, in the prose of general communication it is wasteful and undesirable. *Make your pronouncement to the leaders* and *Naturally skeptical I cannot accept your action as either believable or worthy* and *The present situation demands submissiveness, even self-denial, rather than jubilance* are easier to hear—and to understand.

The foregoing applies especially to combinations of words that are cacophonious such as *judgments acknowledged, assembled in special sessions, excessive instances of adjudication, complex fractional and equational assignments.* "*Such* clashing of hissing sounds *is* specified *as sigmatism.*" It is, naturally, to be avoided unless you would have your hearer say to you, "I cannot understand you on account of your words!" It is preferable not to use

such words as *allusion* and *illusion, conscience* and *conscious, deceased* and *diseased, formally* and *formerly, haply* and *happily, sceptic* and *septic, respectfully* and *respectively* closely together in sentences (page 328).

A root is the basic uncompounded element in a word, without prefix or suffix or inflectional quality of any kind. It is sometimes also called the stem, sometimes the primitive; the former pertains particularly to that part of a word that remains unchanged throughout a series of inflections, and the term *primitive* is used principally in contradistinction to *derivative*. Sometimes roots (or stems or primitives) combine to form single words. When this is the case the word parts are called combining forms by Webster's *International Dictionary;* thus, *downright, manservant, outright, straightforward, trademark, waylay,* and a host of similar combinations, cannot be said to consist of a prefix and a suffix but of two primitives, each part of each word maintaining something of its concrete original meaning and yet coordinating with the other part to form a unit term. Prefixes and suffixes are subordinate to roots; combining terms are co-equal. Prefixes and suffixes function as inflections, sometimes changing one part of speech to another, as *hearty* and *heartily, man* and *manly.* They color or influence the meaning of a root in an abstract way, and do not themselves convey major or independent meaning, as *walk* and *walked, done* and *undone.* But in the word *phonograph* two Greek words are combined—*phono* and *graph*—and they cooperate, the two parts of their literal translation—*sound writing*—being equal in importance. In the trade name *Graphophone* the tables are turned—*writing sound*—but the two parts are again of equal importance, and *Grapho* is not a prefix, *phone* is not a suffix. Each is, rather, a combining form.

Inasmuch as roots are not exhaustively (if at all) included and defined in the much-used abridged dictionaries, the following list is here given for such help as it may furnish those who are interested in elementary word composition—or are puzzled by it:

STEMS OR ROOTS	MEANING	FORFIGN WORDS	ILLUSTRATIVE FNGLISH DERIVATIVES
aper, apert	open	Latin *apertus*	aperient, aperture, April
art	skill	Latin *ars*	art, artist, artistic
aud, audit	hear, listen	Latin *auditus*	audience, audit, auditor
aur	gold	Latin *aurum*	aureate, aureole, oriole (*au* = *o*)
bat	beat, hit	Latin *batuere*	batter, battle, combat

STEMS OR ROOTS	MEANING	FOREIGN WORDS	ILLUSTRATIVE ENGLISH DERIVATIVES
bit	bite	Anglo-Saxon *bita*	bait, bite, bitter
cant	sing	Latin *cantatus*	cantata, canticle, chant
capit	head	Latin *caput*	capital, capitulate, captain
ced	go, move	Latin *cedo*	cede, precede, recede
chron	time	Greek *chronos*	chronicle, chronometer
coron	crown	Latin *corona*	coronation, coroner, coronet
corpus	body	Latin *corpus*	corporal, corpuscle, incorporate
cred	believe	Latin *creditus*	credible, credit, creed
cycl	circle	Greek *kyklos*	cycle, cyclone, cyclopedia
dat	give	Latin *datus*	date, dative
dent	tooth	Latin *dens*	dentifrice, dentist, indent
di	day	Latin *dies*	dial, diary, diurnal
domin	master	Latin *dominus*	dominate, domineer, dominion
dorm	sleep	Latin *dormitus*	dormant, dormitory, dormouse
factor	agent, element	Latin *factor*	factor, factory, factotum
felic	happy	Latin *felix*	felicitate, felicity, felicitous
fer	bear, carry	Latin *fero*	fertile, prefer, transfer
fess	acknowledge	Latin *fessus*	confess, profess, profession
form	shape	Latin *forma*	formal, formative, reform
fort	strong	Latin *fortis*	effort, fortify, fortitude
gest	bear	Latin *gestus*	digest, gesture, register
gran	grain	Latin *granum*	granary, granite, granule
graph	write	Greek *grapho*	phonograph, telegraph
gross	great	Latin *grossus*	engross, grocer, grossly
hor	hour	Latin *hora*	horoscope, hour
judic	judge	Latin *judex*	judge, prejudice
lingu	tongue	Latin *lingua*	language, linguist
log	word	Greek *logos*	eulogy, logical
magn (*major*)	great	Latin *major*	majority, mayor
man	stay	Latin *mansus*	manor, manse, remain
medic	heal	Latin *medicus*	medical, medicine
mens	measure	Latin *mensus*	dimension, mensuration
metr	measure	Greek *metros*	diameter, meter
mitt	send	Latin *mitto*	commit, dismiss, remit
pan	bread	Latin *panis*	company, pantry
par	equal	Latin *par*	pair, parity, peer
pass	step	Latin *passus*	pace, pass, passage
pen	pain	Latin *pœna*	penal, punish, repent
petr	rock	Greek *petra*	petrify, petroleum, pier
philo	love	Greek *phileo*	Philadelphia, philosopher
phon	sound	Greek *phonos*	phonetic, symphony, telephone
phys	nature	Greek *physis*	physician, physiology
pict	paint	Latin *pictus*	depict, painter, picture
plac	please	Latin *placere*	complaisant, placid, pleasure
plen	full	Latin *plenus*	plenty, replenish
plum	feather	Latin *pluma*	plumage, plume
plumb	lead	Latin *plumbum*	plumber, plump

STEMS OR ROOTS	MEANING	FOREIGN WORDS	ILLUSTRATIVE ENGLISH DERIVATIVES
port	carry	Latin *portus*	portable, report
pos	put, place	Latin *positum*	deposit, position
pot	drink	Latin *potatus*	poison, potable, potion
prehend	grasp	Latin *prehensus*	apprehend, prehensile, prison
pung (*punct*)	sting	Latin *punctus*	punctual, punctuate, puncture
quadr	square, four	Latin *quadra*	quadrangle, quart, squad
quant	quantity	Latin *quantus*	quantative, quantity
quer (*quisit*)	ask	Latin *quæsitus*	inquisitive, query, question
quiet	quiet	Latin *quies*	acquit, coy, quietude, quit
radi	ray	Latin *radius*	radiant, radiation, radio
rap	seize	Latin *raptus*	rapacious, rapid, rapture
rat	think	Latin *ratus*	rate, ratify, rational
reg (*rect*)	rule	Latin *regere* (*rectus*)	rectify, regal, region
rid (*ris*)	laugh	Latin *risus*	deride, ridicule, risible
riv	stream	Latin *rivus*	derivation, rival, river
rog	ask	Latin *rogatus*	abrogate, interrogate
rupt	break	Latin *ruptus*	abrupt, corrupt, rupture
sal	salt	Latin *sal*	salad, salary, saline
sanct	holy	Latin *sanctus*	saint, sanctify, sanction
sat	enough	Latin *satis*	asset, satiety, satisfy
scend	climb	Latin *scandus*	ascend, descend, transcend
scio	know	Latin *scio*	science, scientist
scop	see, watch	Greek *skopos*	bishop, scope, telescope
scrib	write	Latin *scriptus*	description, inscribe
sec	cut	Latin *sectus*	insect, section, segment
sen	old	Latin *senex*	senate, senior, sir
serv	serve	Latin *servatus*	observe, reserve, servant
son	sound	Latin *sonus*	sonata, sound, unison
sort	lot, kind	Latin *sors*	assort, resort, sorcerer
spec	kind	Latin *species*	special, specify, specimen
sta	stand	Latin *status*	obstacle, stable, stature
stant	stand	Latin *stans*	circumstance, distant
stell	star	Latin *stella*	constellation, stellar
string (*strict*)	bind	Latin *strictus*	district, restraint, stringent
suad (*suas*)	persuade	Latin *suadere*	persuade, persuasive
surg (*surrect*)	rise	Latin *surgere*	resurrect, source, surge
tang (*tact*)	touch	Latin *tangere*	contact, contagion, tangible
teg (*tect*)	cover	Latin *tegere*	detect, tegument
tempor	time	Latin *tempus*	temporal, temporary
tend	reach	Latin *tendere*	attend, tend, tender
test	witness	Latin *testis*	contest, protestant, testify
tort	wrest	Latin *tortus*	retort, torment, torture
tract	draw	Latin *tractus*	attract, protract, tractable
trit	rub	Latin *tritus*	detriment, trite, try
trud (*trus*)	push	Latin *trudere*	intrude, intrusion
und	wave	Latin *unda*	abundant, undulate
vad (*vas*)	go	Latin *vadere*	evade, invasion
val	worthy	Latin *valere*	prevalent, valor, value

STEMS OR ROOTS	MEANING	FOREIGN WORDS	ILLUSTRATIVE ENGLISH DERIVATIVES
ven	come	Latin *ventus*	advent, convention, venture
vers (vert)	turn	Latin *versus*	perversion, verse, version
vi	road	Latin *via*	convoy, viaduct, viagraph
vic	change	Latin *vicis*	vicarious, vicissitude
vid (vis)	see	Latin *videre*	visible, vision, visit
volv	turn	Latin *volutus*	evolve, vault, volume

CONTEST *

NO	YES
1 Let me introduce my *agent who acts for me*	Let me introduce my agent
2 The boy is *ambidextrous using both hands with equal facility*	The boy is ambidextrous
3 This *amphibious* creature is able to *live both in water and on land*	This creature is amphibious
4 My *antagonists who now oppose* me will one day see the light	My antagonists will one day see the light
5 His numerous *benefactions* are *generous acts* that will long be remembered	His numerous benefactions will long be remembered
6 The preacher *bestowed his blessings* upon us in his *benediction*	The preacher pronounced the benediction
7 He is a *native Brazilian from Brazil*	He is a Brazilian
8 These *bulbous* plants grow, not from seed, but *from bulbs*	These are bulbous plants
9 He suffers from a *cardiac* ailment *of the heart*	He suffers from a cardiac ailment
10 *Eddie edited* an *edition* that *edified*	Eddie prepared an issue that uplifted
11 You turn it *clockwise like the hands of a clock*	You turn it clockwise
12 They made a *cruciform* cake *in the shape of a cross*	They made a cruciform cake
13 She *boldly dared* to face him	She dared to face him
14 This is the *depository place for storing* the merchandise	This is the depository for the merchandise
15 The *donee who received the gift* made a very happy speech	The donee made a very happy speech
16 This is a special, *double, twofold* blanket	This is a special, twofold blanket
17 That man is a *drunkard who is habitually drunk*	That man is a drunkard
18 *Wishing them much happiness* they *felicitated* the newlyweds	They felicitated the newlyweds

* See page 3.

	NO	YES
19	This is the *very same identical* thing *itself*	This is the same thing
20	They finally reached the shop of an old *fishmonger who sells fish*	They finally reached the shop of an old fishmonger
21	They *idolized* him *as if he were an idol*	They idolized him
22	She works *indefatigably* for the club *without ever tiring*	She works untiringly for the club
23	The *many-colored* evening glow was *iridescent*	The evening glow was iridescent
24	He *made it larger* by *magnifying* it	He magnified it
25	He is the *one and only monarch* of all he surveys	He is monarch of all he surveys
26	This *oaken* bucket was made *from the oak* tree that was struck by lightning	This oaken bucket was made from the tree that was struck by lightning
27	They attended the *funeral obsequies* yesterday	They attended the funeral yesterday
28	Those *omnivorous* animals eat *both flesh and vegetation*	Those animals are omnivorous
29	That figure is a *polygon having many sides*	That figure is a polygon
30	To *posterity* that *comes after* me let me say this	To posterity let me say this
31	He was saddened as he *looked back* in *retrospect*	He was saddened by retrospect
32	His writing is *Ruskinese like Ruskin's*	His writing is like Ruskin's
33	He is so *selfish* that he *thinks only of himself*	He is very selfish
34	His *half-yearly* check is due *semi-annually*	His check is due semiannually
35	We saw a *Shaksperean* play by *William Shakspere*	We saw a Shaksperean play
36	He became so *vociferous* that he *made a great outcry*	He became vociferous
37	They were *unanimously of one opinion*	They were unanimous

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SECTION FOUR — PARTICLE

If you say *Smoking anywhere in this building is forbidden, especially on the tenth floor* you waste five of the twelve words in the sentence. *Smoking in this building is forbidden* is sufficient, or should be. But if a note of emphasis is insisted upon, the word *anywhere* may be inserted—*Smoking anywhere in this building is*

forbidden. To add *especially on the tenth floor* is more or less to invite smoking on other floors, human nature being what it is. Similarly, in *We give instruction in all subjects of learning—commercial branches, English, French, Latin, mathematics, and so forth,* and in *Everybody must leave the room, including both audience and speakers* at least half of the words are wasted through needless repetition. Both sentences represent a praiseworthy attempt at emphasis, but stress of voice in speaking and typographical device in writing are preferable to mere repetition in all such instances. In the first sentence *all* is a covering word making a listing of subjects unnecessary (if, indeed, not too ambitious), and the phrase *of learning* may reasonably be taken for granted from the general import of the sentence. In the second sentence *Everybody* covers the last five words, making them superfluous even in the cause of emphasis. If a somewhat more specific reading is required, the generic and indefinite *Everybody* may be omitted —*Both audience and speakers must leave the room.*

The wasteful wordage in the foregoing illustrations—and in such others as *widow woman, sink down, swell up, shrink up, new innovation, coupled together, ascend up, descend down, without hardly, standpoint of view, write it over again, maybe he may be ill, each one at a turn at a time, consolidate (agree, blend, combine) together, approximately about, still continuing*—does not reside in the repetition of individual parts of words—prefix, suffix, root—but rather in the repetition of general meaning, in a kind of telescopic extension. It is, for this reason, sometimes called *idea repetition.* By no means is it to be assumed that any hard and fast line of distinction may be made, however, between verbal repetition (page 10) and idea repetition. Both are very often involved in the same word or words. But the former more frequently occurs as result of ignorance or carelessness in regard to word composition; the latter, as result of a tendency to use excess of words—to be talkative.

Waste in idea repetition may occur in the use of such small words —adverbs, articles, prepositions—as *a, about, at, in, of, out, up.* The idea contained in such particle may be—very often is—expressed in a word before or after it in a sentence (usually in a preceding verb). But the superfluous word may be thrown in merely as part of an idiom or colloquialism, without signifying any idea at all. Say *I ate half an apple,* not *I ate a half an apple;* say *I have about four dollars in my pocket,* not *I have in the neigh-*

borhood of four dollars in my pocket; say *Place this one behind* (not *back of,* or *in* or *at back of*) *the other;* say *Place this one inside* (not *inside of*) *the door and that one outside* (not *outside of*) *the door,* and *Keep off* (not *off of*) *the grass. Inside of* may usually be resolved into *within* for prepositional uses, as *I shall come to you within* (not *inside of*) *a week; outside of* into *without,* as *Without* (not *Outside of*) *Mary there will be five in our party.* Both *inside* and *outside* are correctly used as adverbial place terms, and the double phrases *in back of me* and *at the back of the garage* are not grammatically wrong but they are dictionally wasteful.

If you say *I unexpectedly met with John at lunch today* (or, worse, *I unexpectedly met up with John at lunch today*) you use *with* (or *up with*) wastefully, for *met* expresses all of the idea intended But note that in *I met with an accident this morning* the idiomatic case is different. Here *met with* logically constitutes the verb (though many will insist that *met* is the predicate and that *with an accident* is a modifying phrase); it means experienced or suffered. If without any difficulty whatever a single word may be substituted for such combined verb and adverb or preposition, the latter may be regarded as "absorbed" by the former. It is clear that in *We met with every intention of going to the park* the three words following *met* constitute a phrase modifying it, and that in *We met with many difficulties, with* is really a component part of the verb, *met with* meaning encountered. The latter sentence may be correctly expressed also, though not so idiomaticaly, without *with.*

If you say *Where is he at* you use *at* wastefully for *where* includes the idea of *at—whereness* is *atness.* If you say *divide up* or *deal out* or *start in,* you waste the words *up* and *out* and *in.* These little words are wasted, because they repeat meanings implied by preceding verbs. But expressional habit has "frozen" them into these and similar relationships, and they have become established colloquialisms.

One of the commonest mistakes made in connection with verbal phrases is that of using *around* after the verb *center. Around* suggests circumference; *in,* focus. If you say *The troubles of the world may all be centered around the frailty of human character* your expression is illogical; *centered* and *around* are contradictory terms. *Center* means to fix or place at a central point; *around* is its antonym in this use. The correct phrase is *center in,* though

occasionally *center at* and *center upon* may be acceptable as colloquialism. Say *The troubles of the world may all be centered in the frailty of human character.*

Idiom cannot, of course, be spared from any language (page 280). Its cozy fireside quality makes it indispensable. But it is none the less very often wasteful if not, indeed, meaningless. The word *up* has been so persistent in making a place for itself as a constituent part of a verb phrase that it has come actually to change the meaning of a verb in a special way; thus, *bring up* (rear or present), *burn up* (consume), *cast up* (throw), *draw up* (plan), *get up* (rise), *give up* (yield), *hold up* (assault or display), *jump up* (leap), *keep up* (continue), *take up* (begin or lift), *throw up* (cease or vomit) are a few only of the *up*-forms that may as well be written as solid terms (see *met with* above) as far as meaning and usage are concerned. They have come to be "twinned as horse's ear and eye."

The phrase *climb up* has been widely discussed in books on usage. The idea of *up* is contained in *climb,* for climb means ascend, and one should say *Climb the tree* rather than *Climb up the tree.* But colloquially—and very often logically—*down* is used after *climb.* If you say *Climb down the precipice* you mean that descent is to be made by an effort of grasping or clinging or holding. All dictionaries now sanction the use of *down* after *climb* to denote difficult descent; hence, *up* after *climb* may by implication be necessary for contrast. If, then, you give an order to some one to climb a wall, he may inquire of you which way you wish him to climb it, up or down! Some years ago a lexicographer recommended the use of *crawl* for *climb* in the sense of descent, but his recommendation was deservedly ignored. The best current usage restores to *climb* its rightful meaning of ascent and omits *up* after it in this sense; it justifies *down* after *climb* to denote descent (ascend down!) since the language lacks an adequate antonym (pages 342 to 347).

The sort of superfluous repetition here under discussion is sometimes abundantly illustrated in epithets. An epithet is an adjective—frequently a hyphened or otherwise "built" adjective—that is linked aptly and neatly and perhaps unusually with a noun to express a single idea in an impressive and memorable way. The epithet has been called the memoralizing figure of speech for the reason that, if worthy, it "sticks." *Swift-footed Achilles, Athelstane the Unready, Richard the Lion-hearted, Jack in the Bean-*

stalk, Tom the Piper's Son are everlasting epithets, because they have had from their initial use an ineluctable appropriateness. They do not stale. Note in these epithets that the adjective may follow its noun, that the descriptive element may not be an adjective at all but an appositive or a phrase, that they may be either affirmative or negative. It is more important to note that the good epithet contains no wasteful repetition. *Bold impudence* and *noble hero* and *shady grove* are not good epithets because they are merely repetitive and have no special "happiness" of adjustment. If, as Voltaire said, the adjective is the enemy of the noun, these latter examples are illustrative of the enmity. In the best epithet the noun is enforced and emphasized, rather than repeated, by its pairing with the adjective. Sometimes the epithet is pictorial or ornamental, as *fire-breathing hero* and *groaning board* and *soft ivory* (for flesh); sometimes it is merely additive, as *bursting buds* and *barking dogs*. Not infrequently the epithet is alliterative, as *misty moonshine* and *happy hunting*.

CONTEST *

	NO	YES
1	They may lose out in the next game	They may lose the next game
2	Put this card in between those two pages	Put this card between those two pages
3	We shall arrive at about nine p m	We shall arrive about nine p m
4	The tide is ebbing out now	The tide is ebbing now
5	The ship came alongside of the pier	The ship came alongside the pier
6	He jumped off of the ledge over again	He jumped off the ledge again
7	Warm up the tea and draw down the blinds	Warm the tea and draw the blinds
8	These cans are for waste, refuse, and rubbish	These cans are for waste matter
9	We publish all the news including both local and foreign	We publish all the news
10	For references I refer you to the enclosed reference list	For references please consult the enclosed list
11	Bill came out of the contest successfully with flying colors	Bill came out of the contest with flying colors
12	He jumped from bad to worse out of the frying pan into the fire	He jumped from bad to worse
13	Parking between these signs which mark the hotel entrance is forbidden	Parking between these signs is forbidden

* See page 3.

NO	YES
14 Smoking is permitted only in the last four seats, preferably in the last two	Smoking is permitted in the last four seats
15 He spoke frankly and directly straight from the shoulder	He spoke frankly
16 The wetness of the rain has soaked his clothing until it is saturated	The rain has soaked his clothing
17 Let us unite together in singing the religious hymn on page forty in the hymnal	Let us sing the hymn on page forty
18 Please withdraw back that remark and apologize to me	Please apologize for that remark
19 Trespassing on this property is forbidden under penalty of the law	Trespassing forbidden
20 Reduce speed to not more than thirty miles an hour on approaching the tollgate house	Reduce speed to thirty miles. Tollgate ahead
21 He has at last finally concluded that composition thesis that is required for his graduation diploma	He has finished his graduation thesis
22 That box on top of the shelf is made out of aluminum	That box on top (atop) the shelf is made of aluminum
23 Place this by the side of the bowl in back of the curtain	Place this beside the bowl behind the curtain
24 When they first started out no one knew where they were to get food for the journey at	When they started no one knew where they were to get food for the journey
25 What did you bring that book I didn't want to be read to out of up for	I don't want you to read to me from that book. Why did you bring it
26 At ten o'clock the officer made a statement affirming his opinion	At ten o'clock the officer affirmed his opinion
27 I once had occasion to visit Australia	I once visited Australia
28 At our commencement graduation exercises the speaker addressed us about the future that lies before us	Our commencement speaker discussed our future
29 We have a half an hour to wait	We have a half hour to wait

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SECTION FIVE — EXPLETIVE

If you say *We always go to Florida in the winter, don't you know* you waste the three words *don't you know.* If you say *Troubles, it is said, never come singly* you waste the three words *it is said.*

If you say *Listen: I'll go with you as far as the river. See?* you waste the first and last words in the expression.

Such extra or thrown-in or "filling" terms as *don't you know, it is said, listen, see, if one may say so, let me say, I beg to assure you, as it seems, one never knows, be that as it may, as I say, as you know, in the long run, what with this and what with that, let come what may, say what you will, I mean to say, if you see what I mean, that is to say* are in general usage called expletives. Slang terms and oaths are expletives, and practically all such expletives are hackneyed (see page 287).

Listen or *say,* used excessively and indiscriminately at the beginning of expressions, and *see* used similarly at the end, have properly come to be regarded as vulgarisms. In such expressions as *Listen to the wind* and *Listen—I think they are firing, Listen* is correct because it has a functional value in the sentence. But in *Listen—I want my overcoat* it is waste. In *Say, old man, what have you there* the first word similarly represents waste. The Britisher improves somewhat upon this kind of expression by supplying a subject for *say,* as *I say, old chap, what have you there,* and thus redeems it a bit by making it at least grammatically correct. *Do you see* or *Do you understand* put seriously at the end of a sentence now and then may, of course, be correct. But *see* used alone at the end of any and every casual remark (as above) is deservedly classed a vulgarism. The use of both *say* and *listen—Say, listen*—or of *Listen here* or *Listen now* at the beginning of an expression is, naturally, even more objectionable, if possible.

In strictly grammatical usage *expletive* means a word that has come to be regarded as a sign merely rather than a logical or meaningful term. *That,* for instance, is expletive in the introduction of a noun clause, as in *He insisted that he must go.* It is by no means imperative in such short sentences as this; *He insisted he must go* is correct, and is preferred by some authorities. Care must be exercised not to repeat the noun-clause expletive, however, when a thrown-in expression separates it from the clause proper. The second *that* is obviously superfluous in *He insisted that, since he was expected, that he must go* (pages 88 and 147).

There is expletive in such construction as *There are too many people present; it* is expletive at the opening of a sentence when it stands for a later expanded subject, as in *It is dangerous to drive so rapidly* and *It is thought that he will return this winter.* (Ex-

pletive *it* is therefore different from impersonal or idiomatic *it* which is used always as an indefinite subject without any real or specific reference, as in *It rains* and *It is late* and *It is rumored.*) Though these uses of *there* and *it* are not incorrect, they are not economical uses. *Too many people are present* and *To drive so rapidly is dangerous* are more economical and at the same time more direct. But in *Jane she couldn't go to the party* expletive *she* is wasteful, and its superfluous use in such construction is properly regarded as loose English (page 31). In general it may be said that thrown-in words and phrases "suffocate" expression, bungle and retard it, and make it tedious and diffuse. Though they may very often be construed logically and in accordance with grammatical rule, they nevertheless constitute padding or stuffing rather than the real body or substance of thought. But an occasional expletive, used unobtrusively, may like idiom (page 287) provide a familiar or "homey" quality that ingratiates.

The expletive use of *do (did)* has been deservedly condemned as a "rhythm filler" in verse, as in *The Boughs did bend, my soul did quake, To see the hole that Fox did make.* But sometimes its contribution to the memorableness of a line justifies its use. *Rejoice with them that do rejoice* illustrates perfection of rhythm, though *do* serves merely a mechanical purpose rather than an auxiliary or an emphatic one. *Rejoice with them that rejoice* is poor, indeed, by comparison, though it says the same thing more economically. The old ballads abounded in expletive *dos, dids, doths, didsts*—"Oh, where doth faithful Gelert roam"—and Tennyson copied style in *Lady Clare* with "I trow they did not part in scorn" (*I trow they parted not in scorn* would not have been "in atmosphere") as did Wordsworth more daringly in "A generous cause a victim did demand." In present-day usage this troublesome auxiliary is confined principally to negative and interrogative and emphatic verb phrases.

If you say "There is a copy of the *The New York Times* on the table" and "I have a *A Tale of Two Cities* in my trunk" you do not, strictly speaking, use *the* in the first and *a* in the second expletively. Inasmuch as *The New York Times* is the exact title of the newspaper, and *A Tale of Two Cities* is the exact title of the novel, a preceding *the* in the one instance and a preceding *a* in the other cannot be regarded as incorrect. But usage has worn precision down in these connections, and *the* and *a* are, respectively, required to do double duty—the one as definite article and as title

article, and the other as indefinite article and as title article. And so "There is a copy of *The New York Times* on the table" and "I have *A Tale of Two Cities* in my trunk" represent general use, though these expressions may seem very much like "There is chair by the window" and "I have book in my trunk."

But in foreign names and terms containing the equivalent of *the* or some other English word, the case is not the same. You are correct when you say *I am expecting the LaGuardias, the LaFetras, the LeFevres, and the LeClairs to dinner,* even though *La* and *Le* mean *the.* The foreign particles in such names have become "frozen" to their roots—have become component parts of the surnames—and their derivative meanings are buried and forgotten. The same process is recognizable in such foreign terms as *hoi polloi* and *Le Cercle Francais.* It is correct to say *I believe in the hoi polloi* and *I am a member of the Le Cercle Francais,* even though *hoi* in the one and *Le* in the other mean *the.* The preceding *the* is not expletive for the reason that these foreign expressions are "naturalized" as unit terms or names (titles), and, when used in English, are regarded as unit or single English terms or names are regarded. While there is some disagreement on these points, this exposition represents weight of authority. There is no sanction whatever for saying *I have been visiting LaGuardias* and *I wonder how hoi polloi will vote today.* And the rule applies to city names ending with the Greek *polis* which means city. *Indianapolis* derivatively means Indiana city, but *the city of Indianapolis* is a correct form even though it literally says *the city of Indiana city.*

While such shading terms as *accordingly, in addition, at the same time, however that may be, moreover, nevertheless, notwithstanding, on the other hand, that being the case, therefore* may be of incalculable value in making graceful connections and smooth transitions, they may easily be overused and become merely wasteful of time and attention. Both *and* and *moreover* are additive conjunctions; it is unnecessary to use them together—to double addition. Say *He left in a rage; moreover, he threatened revenge* rather than *He left in a rage and moreover he threatened revenge.* Both *but* and *nevertheless* are adversative or antithetical conjunctions; it is unnecessary to use them together—to double subtraction. Say *He is ill but he is going to school* rather than *He is ill but he is nevertheless going to school.* The latter form in each case may not be considered incorrect—may, indeed, be regarded as emphatic. But

the excessive use of conjunctions of the same meaning in a single clause constitutes one of the most general types of wordiness. In his *Table Talk* Samuel Taylor Coleridge said that a close reasoner and a good writer may be known by his pertinent use of connectives. It is a good exercise in expression to try to use as few connecting terms as possible. The average speaker and writer will be surprised to find how many may be omitted without sacrificing anything by way of grace and smoothness. Long stretches of clear and easy expression are possible without their aid. But their omission may sometimes work havoc with the understanding, delaying grasp and thus wasting a reader's time (pages 180, 213, and 286).

Related to this sort of conjunctive wastage is the use of *such as* at the beginning of a list or an illustration and of *and so forth* at the end. The one term covers or repeats the other. Say *She bought kitchen utensils, such as pans, kettles, openers, trays* (*and* is optional before *trays*) or *She bought kitchen utensils—pans, kettles, openers, trays, and so forth.* Do not say *She bought kitchen utensils, such as pans, kettles, openers, trays, and so forth.* The terms *and so forth, and the like, et cetera, etc, and so on, and the rest, that sort of thing* are not only very often wasteful but they are likely to indicate loose and indefinite thinking and expressional laziness. The person who uses them to excess may quite justifiably be accused of "stalling"—of resorting to such meaningless terms to cover lapses in thinking and poverty of diction.

If you write *generious* for *generous,* you insert an expletive letter *(i).* If you say *probabably* for *probably,* you insert an expletive syllable *(ab).* Such expletive letters and syllables—initial or medial or final—may result from careless ear or eye, or both. They may be "inherited" from provincial up-bringing. The everyday *atheletic* for *athletic, attacted* for *attacked, casuality* for *casualty, disastrious* for *disastrous, drownded* for *drowned, ellum* for *elm, fillum* for *film, grievious* for *grievous, hellum* for *helm, lightening* for *lightning, oncet* for *once, reality* for *realty* (pages 114 and 330) are representative. Sometimes extra letters or syllables may be affected for a purpose—sales or period imitation or poetical atmosphere—as in *adown, a-going, bedeck, burthen, gotten, methinks, shoppe, surcease, whenas, yclad, yclept* (page 231).

CONTEST *

	NO	YES
1	*Say,* I think I've lost my hat	I think I've lost my hat
2	This should be tied under here, *if you see what I mean*	This should be tied under here
3	I cannot go, *you see,* because of Jimmy's illness	I cannot go because of Jimmy's illness
4	*Well,* I've bought my ticket and I'm going	I've bought my ticket and I'm going
5	*Why, no,* I haven't been here for some time	I haven't been here for some time
6	A coward, *as the saying goes,* dies many times before his death	A coward dies may times before his death
7	*What I always say is:* Never give up	Never give up
8	*Upon my word* I never saw the man	I never saw the man
9	And then, *believe it or not,* in came John	And then—in came John
10	That sort of thing, *I mean to say,* is not done	That is not done
11	*Well, anyway,* I took the next train	I took the next train
12	*Now, I do declare!* You certainly have cheek	You certainly have cheek
13	He said he was ill; yet he *nevertheless and notwithstanding* went out in the storm	He said he was ill; yet he went out in the storm
14	*Permit me to say that* John was in no way to blame	John was in no way to blame
15	*I should like to report* this boy for using my car without permission	This boy used my car without permission
16	*I beg to be permitted to explain that* I had no idea that the house was on fire	I had no idea that the house was on fire
17	I think John is a fine chap; but *on the other hand* I can *at the same time* see his faults	I think John is a fine chap, but I can see his faults
18	I decided that, *owing to the fact* she has been ill, *that* I would give her a vacation	I decided that, inasmuch as she has been ill, I would give her a vacation
19	We have been disappointed in the showing he made in school *but* we are *however* going to send him to college	We have been disappointed in the showing he made in school, however, we are going to send him to college
20	*Listen,* Mary: I know *what with this and what with that,* you have a great deal to do; but *however*	I know you have a great deal to do, Mary, but I think you could manage to give me fifteen minutes a week

* See page 8.

NO	YES
that may be, I think you could *nevertheless* manage to give me fifteen minutes a week	
21 I asked for six pounds, *and* you must *therefore* let me have six pounds	I asked for six pounds; you must therefore let me have six pounds
22 *Listen now,* you said that, if it didn't rain, *that* you would come along	You said that, if it didn't rain, you would come along
23 They played *such* games *as* baseball, tennis, croquet, hockey, *and the like*	They played such games as baseball, tennis, croquet, and hockey
24 He says that he will not come to your party, *and* he *moreover* adds that he hates parties	He says that he will not come to your party, and he adds that he hates parties
25 They saw no improvement in sales *whereas on the other hand* they saw competition rapidly increasing	They saw no improvement in sales, on the other hand, they saw competition rapidly increasing

SECTION SIX — MODIFIER

If you say *This is the man who regularly drives my car* you probably mean simply *This is my chauffeur.* If you say *He passed the examination with satisfaction* you use two words—*with satisfaction*—where one—*satisfactorily*—would serve just as well. If you say *Our organization is going to distribute pamphlets to the stockholders* you waste words again, for *Our organization is going to circularize the stockholders* says the same thing somewhat more simply. If you say *They continued on their way* instead of *They proceeded* you use more than twice as many words as necessary.

The first sentence is condensed—made more compact—by reducing a clause to a word; the second, by reducing a prepositional phrase to a word; the third, by reducing an infinitive phrase to a simple infinitive; the fourth, by reducing a long four-word complete predicate to a simple one-word predicate. This does not mean that the few illustrations above given cover all possibilities for condensation, any more than it means that such condensation is always desirable or even important. Sometimes, indeed, the longer expression by virtue of its very length contains a rhythm or an emphasis that the condensed one does not have. *Don't steal is* shorter, for instance, than *Thou shalt not steal; Don't kill* than *Thou shalt not kill.* But the short form has nothing of the emphatic personal directness of the long form in each case.

In ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, however, *manfully* may be used for *like a man* without the slightest loss, *now* or *at present* for *at the present time, beautiful scene* for *scene that is beautiful, etc* (though never recommended) for *all that sort of thing.* These are the merest illustrations. Practice in the reduction of phrase or clause or sentence ideas to single words—in the expression of a complex of ideas by means of a single word—is second to nothing in importance for him who would perfect his speaking and writing. The Greeks called this job in expression *holophrasis,* that is, phrasing or speaking whole.

An appositive may very often be relied upon to reduce wordiness. If you say *Thomas Maris, my secretary, will copy that paper for you* instead of *Thomas Maris, who does my secretarial work, will copy that paper for you* you effect a considerable saving. You may sometimes use a gerund or a participial phrase, sometimes an infinitive phrase, to the same laudable purpose. If you say *On arriving home I found Mary ill* instead of *When I arrived home I found Mary ill* and *To do that effectively you must address the meeting* instead of *If you wish to do that effectively you must address the meeting* you economize by means of a gerund phrase in the one instance, by means of an infinitive phrase in the other.

If in DeQuincey's time (page xi) large-scale condensation of expression was regarded as desirable, how much more desirable must it be today when complexity of living has invited and mechanical devices have made possible an interminable flow and volume of both speech and writing. Inasmuch as the vast majority of people —literate as well as illiterate—err on the side of using too many words rather than too few, err, that is, through wastage rather than through economy, the tendency unfortunately is to wear words down to a mere suggestion of their original or derivative meanings and then pile others (modifiers) upon them. Emotion on the part of speakers and writers is largely responsible for this tendency. Their expression may easily be made to do justice to their intellects, but they are at a loss how to do expressional justice to their feelings. And so, they must call in adverbs of degree—*quite, so, very, too* for instance—to intensify feeling rather than to help meaning—to "manufacture" extra degrees of comparison, the three conventional degrees being insufficient to meet their extravagant emotional requirements. It is not enough to say that a thing is good; it must be *so very good* or *too awfully good* or *extraordinarily good,* and thus is a degree between the positive and the

comparative established. It cannot be merely better or worse than something else; it must be *inexpressibly better* or *abysmally worse,* and thus is a degree between the comparative and the superlative established. But the "super superlatives" are in greatest demand (see below), and such words as *beautiful, ecstatic, good, happy, marvelous, nice, wonderful* have ceased to have much meaning of their own. They have been worn down to the merest symbols of general approbation (*nice* especially), and modification of them or by means of them has come to be expected. Used alone they seem weak and anemic. True, they all admit of modification, and may all modify. It is never incorrect to intensify them logically, or to use them for such intensification. It is invariably incorrect to do so merely as result of emotional urge to over-expression.

And all of this applies to the so-called incomparables, such as the following adjectives (and their corresponding adverbs): *absolute, adequate, axiomatic, basic, boundless, chief, circular, complete, conclusive, continuous, divine, decisive, endless, entire, essential, exclusive, extreme, faultless, final, flawless, full, fundamental. ideal, immemorial, immutable, impossible, impregnable, incessant, incredible, incurable, indelible, indispensable, indomitable, insatiable, inseparable, intangible, interminable, intolerable, invariable, irreparable, irreproachable, irrevocable, main, omnipotent, omniscient, organic, perfect, perpetual, principal, round, sole, spotless, square, stationary, sufficient, supreme, typical, unanswerable, unbearable, unerring, unique, universal, unparalleled, unprecedented.* Except in rare expressional instances these words should not be modified. But in colloquial usage they are, and frequently in literary usage too. And, of course, the forefathers knew that, in a world in which nothing is or can be perfect, they might logically speak of "a more perfect union." The elements that make for completeness or perfection or uniqueness may vary in number or quality, or both, just as elements that make for badness or goodness or expertness may vary. The best speakers and writers time out of mind have used these "incomparables" with degree modification (Shakspere's *most perfect goodness,* Carlyle's *most perfect of its kind,* Milton's *divinest melancholy* are a notable few) but they have done so meaningfully and logically rather than extravagantly and emotionally.

Expansion of expression rather than condensation has thus become more or less the order of the day, and the simplest ideas get themselves enlarged, not to say belabored, with labyrinthine modifica-

tion. Hollywood, of course, leads in the delirium tremens of the superlative. It cannot say *Here is a beautiful picture* or *Here is a picture of great beauty* or yet *Here is a picture of very great beauty*. It must "shoot the vocabulary works" with *Here is a picture of such stupendously and devastatingly supreme and super-colossal beauty and significance as to be an epoch-making de luxe masterpiece of masterpieces of all time from a studio that defies the inevitable and achieves the impossible.* This blatant hubbub of words, which would say more than can possibly meet either eye or ear, deservedly defeats itself.

The period in which we live is to blame for all of this, say the exaggerators—a time in which miracles happen overnight and life itself is become theatrical paradox. Well, the Greeks had a word for it—*hyperbole*—a word by no means strong enough for this twentieth-century but it will serve. They used it to denote lying without deceiving or trying to deceive. It means exaggeration for shock rather than for mere emphasis, a distinction that may well be kept in mind by all and sundry who would speak or write to impress genuinely and permanently rather than falsely and temporarily. Contrast the above Hollywood effusion, for instance, with the biblical "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God," and with Milton's couplet from *Lycidas*

> Our tears shall seem the Irish seas,
> We, floating islands, living Hebrides.

CONTEST *

	NO	YES
1	He behaved with courtesy	He behaved courteously
2	When the sun set I departed	At sunset I departed
3	He is a student of ancient relics and remains	He is an archaeologist
4	He almost lost his breath as result of smoke	He was almost suffocated
5	I do not know what is likely to happen	I cannot prophesy
6	He signed the papers while I was out	He signed the papers in my absence
7	The advertisement that is illustrated pays best	The illustrated advertisement pays best
8	As soon as Tommy entered I withdrew	On Tommy's entrance I withdrew

* See page 3.

	NO	YES
9	The lad always wants something that some one else has	The lad is covetous
10	I had the most wonderfully and ecstatically good time at your party	I had an excellent time at your party
11	We manufacture the most mechanically and satisfyingly unique car in the world	We manufacture a good car
12	By great good luck we made the grade	Luckily we made the grade
13	She dropped her gloves without meaning to do so	She dropped her gloves unintentionally
14	He received us with great cordiality	He received us cordially
15	He played the game in a comical way	He played the game comically
16	From time to time the pupils go to the museum	Occasionally the pupils go to the museum
17	He thrust himself into the car with violence	He violently thrust himself into the car
18	He distributed gifts with free and open hand	He distributed gifts generously
19	Beyond all peradventure of doubt that boy will succeed	That boy will doubtlessly succeed
20	His account of the incident is quite beyond belief	His account of the incident is unbelievable
21	She has shown herself to be of most generous inclinations	She has shown herself to be generous
22	He is highly favored with this world's goods	He is rich
23	Jim is always ready to pick a quarrel	Jim is quarrelsome
24	He is extremely fond of himself	He is conceited
25	She is inclined to be fond of listening to her own voice	She is talkative
26	She is inclined to make a great fuss over trivial matters	She is meticulous
27	He is a person of very strange habits	He is eccentric
28	The place is located outside the town	The place is suburban
29	He did his work in a very satisfactory way	He did his work satisfactorily
30	He escaped death by the skin of his teeth	He narrowly escaped death
31	She behaved in a most unbecoming manner	She behaved unbecomingly
32	He turned the water on without stopping to think	He thoughtlessly turned the water on

	NO	YES
33	She was in a frivolous mood all day	She was frivolous all day
34	With his heart in his mouth he took the deer by its horns	Fearfully he took the deer by its horns
35	Please give the book to Mr Moore who is the tutor of my children	Please give the book to Mr Moore, my children's tutor
36	As I left the park this afternoon I saw a serious motor collision	Leaving the park this afternoon I saw a serious motor collision
37	If you would get along with people, keep your sensitiveness out of sight	To get along with people, be less sensitive.
38	That is more money than he has ever had in his life before	That is more money than he has ever had
39	He is not in his room at the present time	He is not in his room now
40	He bore the brunt of it like a hero	He bore the brunt of it heroically

SECTION SEVEN — REPEAT

If you say *Tom he went to the bank* you waste the personal pronoun *he,* for *Tom* is the subject of went and *he* is unnecessary. Any such unnecessarily used part of speech is popularly known as a repeat, and any word may fall prey to this kind of superfluous usage. The construction itself is called *illeism,* Latin *ille* meaning that, and, by indirection, third-personalism, *he-ism, it-ism, that-ism.* The term illeism also covers the affected mannerism of a writer's referring to himself by means of the third person, as in *The author has never heard of such an interpretation and he feels that it is extraordinary to say the least.* This is a strained and affected way of avoiding the vertical pronoun *I* which when overused may easily become objectionable also, but which, used with restraint, may be made to vivify and make real.

If emphasis be considered imperative in such expressions as the foregoing the reflexive form of the pronoun should be used, as *Tom himself went to the bank* or *Tom went to the bank himself.* The personal pronoun *me* is similarly unnecessary in *I am going to buy me a coat.* Say rather *I am going to buy a coat,* or, if there is any likelihood of misunderstanding, use the reflexive form again, as *I am going to buy myself a coat.* This superfluous use of the personal pronoun is a localism in many parts of the United States and all the personal pronouns are involved, as *He has built him (himself) a new house* and *She has found her (herself) a good*

seat in the orchestra and *I see you have got you (yourself) a bicycle at last* and *They bought them (themselves) an encyclopedia yesterday.* It is particularly an oral error though it sometimes occurs in writing.

In early English, especially in balladry, the repeat was generally accepted. It persists in *Now I lay me down to sleep,* and it was—and is—very often a compensating element in the construction of verse. Byron's *He who hath bent him o'er the dead* could hardly have been expressed without the repeat *him.* And as an archaic construction, illeism may add a quaintly atmospheric quality to expression. It is not today, however, satisfactory—or even correct—for practical general usage except by way of the *self* forms (page 142). Even *He took upon him the obligation* must be regarded as colloquial or provincial, for the better *He took the obligation upon himself.* The old classical or ethical dative is closely akin to this particular form of expression, as in *He plucked me ope his doublet,* in which *me* merely verifies; that is, *He plucked his doublet open for me.*

The pronoun *it* is sometimes thrust superfluously into a construction when a long expression separates a subject from its predicate, as in *That beautiful gown of hers, in spite of the fact that it was much admired, it proved far from practicable.* Here *gown* is subject of *proved,* but it has been forgotten by the time *proved* is reached owing to the long intervening clause. The sentence should, of course, read *That beautiful gown of hers, in spite of the fact that it was much admired, proved far from practicable.* The use of the compound intensive relatives is wasteful in such expressions as *Whoever he is I do not know* and *He asked me whatever to do.* The correct economical forms are *Who he is I do not know* and *He asked me what to do.* But for emphasis or for the purpose of denoting anything or everything or no matter what (or who) the *ever* suffix is, of course, correct, as in *Whoever he may be he has great presumption* and *Whatever your reason may be your action is inexcusable* and *Whichever way you turn you see a clock* (page 153).

If you say *He of all other men should be the first to thank you* you waste the adjective *other;* it is a repeat, for since all men are under consideration there can be no other man or men. *He of all men should be the first to thank you* is correct, as is also *No man should be more eager to thank you than he.* But do not say *He should*

be more eager to thank you than any other man for this statement is ambiguous—*to thank you than to thank any other man* or *to thank you than any other man should be* (page 64).

If you say *It is his usual custom to breakfast at seven,* you waste either the idea conveyed by *custom* or the idea conveyed by *usual.* Say either *He usually breakfasts at seven* or *It is his custom to breakfast at seven.* If you say *The two wounded soldiers evinced mutual concern for each other* you waste either the adjective *mutual* or the pronoun *each other* since the one term covers the other. *The two wounded soldiers evinced mutual concern* or *The two wounded soldiers evinced concern for each other* is sufficient—and economical (page 406).

Used in the sense of prominent the word *outstanding* may properly be preceded by *more* or *most, less* or *least.* But used, as it so often is, in a superlative sense, it preferably bears no sign of comparison whatever, for in this use it means top, highest, or best.

The much-used expression *solid foundation of fact* contains an implied if not a direct repetition, its context being the deciding factor. If the foundation is factual it is presumably solid, and vice versa.

If you say *This is the sort of a vacation I like* you waste the article *a.* The sentence should read *This is the sort of vacation I like.* The indefinite articles *a* and *an* should be used cautiously ~~if at all~~ before a class name. The error is commonly made after *kind of, sort of, style of, type of, class of, manner of,* and similar phrases. If you say *She is not worthy the name of a woman,* you use the word *woman* as indicative of a class rather than of an individual, and the article *a* is wrong in the modification of *woman.* Besides, *a* and *an* really mean *one;* substitute *one* for either in such usage as is here illustrated, and see how absurd the sentence becomes—*This is the type of one car I like* and *This is the style of one dress I bought* (page 82).

If you say *She is excellent in all the subjects* you waste the article *the.* The word *subjects* in this sentence is used indefinitely, and the article *the* points out definitely (it is called the *definite* article); hence, the two words are contradictory in function. But if *subjects* is made definite by modification, *the* is correctly used before it, as in *She is excellent in all the subjects taught in Miss Bolton's school.*

Note that *the* is preferably no longer used before *most, need, present* in such expressions as *Most of his misplays were due to nervousness* and *I found myself sadly in need of money* and *At present I am well supplied.* But *He is ill at the present time,* though wasteful, is correct, as are also *We are in the greatest possible need of funds* and *Of the five boys Bill is the most responsible,* additional modification justifying the use of the article. The article should not be used before *most* followed by modification indicating number or quantity You say *Most of the five acres were wooded,* not *The most of the five acres were wooded.* But *most* used alone is absolute; preceded by *the,* relative; thus, you say, respectively, *What I now want most is my diploma* and *I do not know which I like the most—Latin, French, Spanish,* or *Italian.*

Initial *The* and the third *the* are wasted and incorrect in *The washing the windows and the scrubbing the floors were done before noon.* Preceded by *the,* the *-ing* forms should be followed by phrase modification—*The washing of the windows and the scrubbing of the floors were done before noon* This sentence is correct, and *washing* and *scrubbing* are called verbal nouns, that is, they have more of noun nature than of verb nature. Not preceded by *the,* these forms take *windows* and *floors* respectively as objects, and have more of verb nature than of noun nature—*Washing the windows and scrubbing the floors were done before noon.* This sentence is correct, and *washing* and *scrubbing* are called gerunds.

Passive forms are frequently wasteful. They are, of course, imperative to the expression of ideas, and no straining or awkwardness should be permitted in an effort to avoid them. But active forms, in addition to being more vivid, are usually more economical than passive. In *Your parcel was marked special and was mailed by me* the passive voice is in all probability unnecessary and it is both wasteful and clumsy. *I marked your parcel special and mailed it* is much more facile as result of economy (page 178).

If you say *I haven't got a cent to my name* you make of *got* a repeater. *Got* is wasted when it repeats the idea of *have,* but it is not wasted when it denotes *secured* or *obtained,* as in *I haven't yet got the record.*

If you say *We should like to have you see our rabbits* you waste *to have.* *We should like you to see our rabbits* is all that is necessary. *Have* is wasted also in *If you had not have done that all would*

now be well; the complete predicate of the conditional clause is *had done, have,* the present form of *had,* being no part of the time indicated. There is no such verb form as *had have* (page 170).

If you say *He cannot help but feel that he is to blame* you waste *help* or *but.* Say either *He cannot but feel that he is to blame* or *He cannot help feeling that he is to blame* (page 184). If you say *Please help share this burden with me* you again waste *help* for the idea of helping is implied in *share. Please share this burden with me* is sufficient and economical.

If you say *I shall see you later on* and *This is a more preferable book* and *That long run has weakened him down* you waste, respectively, the adverbs *on* and *more* and *down On* is implicit in *later; more,* in *preferable; down,* in *weak. I shall see you later* and *This is a preferable book* and *That long run has weakened him* are not wasteful and they are sufficient (page 16). The same sort of waste resides in such everyday phrases as *actual fact, all alone, along about, but only one, definite decision,* the first word in each being covered by what follows it.

If you say *I haven't no pencil* you waste either *n't (not)* or *no;* one is a repeat of the other. Moreover, in doubling the negative in such expression as this, you say the opposite of what you mean. The *not* in *haven't* cancels the *no* modifying *pencil,* and what you really say is *I have a pencil;* whereas, what you mean is *I have no pencil* or *I haven't a pencil.* If you say *I hadn't barely time to catch the train* and *There isn't hardly time left for the game* and *I don't scarcely know that man* you waste the negative *n't (not)* in each expression and, as in the above sentence, you fail to say what you mean. The phrase *barely time,* for instance, denotes a little —however little—time but *n't (not)* denotes no time; the sentence is thus contradictory. Such adverbs as *barely, hardly, only, scarcely* imply almost not. Say either *There isn't time left for the game* or *There is hardly time left for the game,* the former being completely negative and the latter almost negative. There are subtle distinctions to be made in the use of the so-called double negative, the examples above with their exposition pertaining merely to the more general violations of this particular idiom. The double negative in *These facts were not unknown to me* does not convey quite the same sort of positive as is conveyed by *These facts were known by me.* Greater reserve of awareness is probably expressed in the former as heard by most educated people.

Two negatives may, of course, be used in a single statement provided they modify different words, as in *I did not say that John is not coming* in which the first *not* modifies *say* and the second modifies *is coming*. And in much correct expression two negatives may properly be used in modifying the same word; thus, in *not unlikely, not infrequent, not without regret, not uncommonly,* and like phrases, negation is not only doubled but affirmation may thus be emphasized. It is not at all uncommon for a person to repeat *no* or *never* or some other negative word or phrase for the sake of emphasis, and such repetition is a legitimate device for emphasis inasmuch as it invariably enforces the negative.

Similarly, in such expressions as *We can't go with you, not even tomorrow* and *We can't go with you, neither today nor tomorrow* and *We shall never go, not for anything in the world,* the repeated negative brings a desired emphasis to bear. And grammatically these expressions may be made correct by supplying a new subject and predicate after the comma in each instance, as *We can't go; we can't go even tomorrow.* Verbs of negative signification, such as *prevent, hinder, prohibit, refuse,* used in a main clause, were once frequently followed by a negative clause, as *I forbid that you must come here no more.* This is called the paratactic (placing-beside) negative. It does not, under analysis, yield *I forbid you to stay away,* but, instead, *I doubly forbid you to come here any more.* This quirk of style has happily almost disappeared.

Closely akin to the double negative and the almost negative form of expression, is that which begins with a positive or additive note and ends with a negative or subtractive one. Much of the humor of a popular song many years ago—*Yes, we have no bananas* —resided in this contradictory quality. It was not incorrect but it was incongruous. The *Yes* promised a sale or whetted an appetite but the *no* abruptly canceled. Similarly, *I also have no hat* and *He too is not going* and *She enthusiastically declines his offers* begin with promise and end with cancelation. The words *also* and *too* and *enthusiastically* add and build and assure; the words *no* and *not* and *declines* take away. In humorous expression this sort of yes-and-no has a place; in serious expression it may lead to delay and confusion of grasp.

In *this here man* and *that there horse* the words *here* and *there* are wasted. Aside from the violation of grammatical rule involved in these expressions, the attempt at double emphasis weakens

rather than strengthens. *This* and *that* are pointing-out or demonstrative words, and are thus properly used for emphasis. And one token of emphasis is, as a rule, sufficient in any kind of expression. *This man* and *that horse* assert and designate with sufficient stress; *here* after the one and *there* after the other simply carry coals to Newcastle. It is, however, correct to say *this man here* and *that horse there,* meaning this man in a given line or this man standing here and that horse running there, for example. In such position the words *here* and *there* further specify or clarify *this man* and *that horse* respectively. But a *here man* and a *there horse* are both ungrammatical and unidiomatic.

Adjectives and adverbs are also sometimes wasted in such repeated modifications as *gay and happy crowd, sad and melancholy fate, showy and ostentatious gown* and *smartly and fashionably dressed, skilfully and cleverly done, awfully and dreadfully afraid.* These expressions are wordy. In technical English two or more adjectives or adverbs meaning almost but not quite the same may be essential in modifying a single term, but in general usage *gay and happy* and *awfully and dreadfully,* and the other paired modifiers here used, are so nearly alike in meaning that one is sufficient. You do not need *tweedledum* if you use *tweedledee.*

This direction must not be permitted to confuse ideas pertaining to the figure of speech *hendiadys,* though some authorities admit such expression as *singular and peculiar situation* to this classification. Strictly speaking, however, hendiadys is the use of two nouns connected by *and* one of which is adjectival in effect; thus, *He enjoys literature and drama* and *They attacked with venom and with arrows* for, respectively, *He enjoys dramatic literature* and *They attacked with venomous darts.* Hendiadys more than compensates for its wastage by its contribution of sound and rhythmic effects, as, for instance, in such expressions as *might and main* for *by main strength* and *flint and hardness* for *flinty hardness* and *joy and tidings* for *joyful tidings.* The phrase may sometimes be triple, as in Daniel Webster's *one cause, one country, one heart* for *unanimous patriotism.* Needless to say that the hendiadys has frequently been found indispensable in oratory because of its reechoing effect upon an audience.

If you say *This is the house in which we are going to live in* or *This is the business with which I am connected with* you waste the final word (preposition) in each sentence. This common type

of error usually occurs as result of forgetfulness—the person making it forgetting by the time he reaches the end of his sentence that he has already supplied a preposition to take *which* as object. The error is especially likely to occur in long sentences having *who, which,* or *that* clauses. *This is the house in which we are going to live* or *This is the house which* (or *that*) *we are going to live in* and *This is the boy with whom I am going to the party* or *This is the boy whom* (or *that*) *I am going to the party with* are correct (page 148). The relative *that* does not follow the preposition in such constructions as the first in each of these illustrative pairs, but it is correct when the preposition is placed at the end.

In the expression *She is a girl of about six years of age* either the preposition *of* or the adverb *about* must be omitted, for the one contradicts the other. There is other wastage in this short sentence also—*a girl* is unnecessary and *of age* is reducible to *old.* Either *She is six years old* or *She is about six* is correct economical reading (page 394).

If you say *No one can help from admiring his record* you waste the preposition *from,* for *admiring* is object of *help,* not of the preposition *from,* no one is helped from anything. If you say *Time does not permit of your doing that* and *Happening to pass by the school I saw Mary* and *They showed us pictures from which we gathered much instruction out of* and *We accept with the greatest of pleasure* and *On one day he arrived covered with mud* you waste *of* in the first sentence, *by* in the second, *out of* in the third, *of* in the fourth, and *on* in the fifth. Wasteful repetition of prepositions most frequently occurs after verbs in which their meaning is implied (pages 16 and 35), as in *awaiting for, discuss* or *explain about, follow after* or *on, crave for, ponder on* or *over.* But *off of, from hence, from thence, from whence* are representative also of prepositional waste. In the first two sentences above the prepositions *of* and *by* are idiomatically wasted, in the third the waste is probably due to lapse of memory (it is mentioned on page 149 that *To whom did you give it to* is probably the most frequent error in this category). The types of wastage illustrated in the last two sentences are probably the result of an affectation of overcorrectness.

The little word *off* was originally *of,* and as preposition it still has *of* in it. But it may be adjective, adverb, interjection, and noun, and it has thus broadened its ancestral province considerably.

Similarly, *hence, thence, whence* have *from* in them, and *hither, thither, whither* have *to* in them. To use *from* with any of the first three, or *to* with any of the second three, is therefore wasteful. Think of *hence* as *h* (for *here*) plus *ence* (*from*), of *thence* as *th* (for *there*) plus *ence* (*from*), of *whence* as *wh* (for *where*) and *ence* (*from*); and think of *hither* as *h* (for *here*) and *ither* (*to*), of *thither* as *th* (for *there*) and *ither* (*to*), of *whither* as *wh* (for *where*) and *ither* (*to*). Such analysis may check any tendency to say *from whence* and *to hither* or—worse—*to hitherward* which is really *to here to ward.*

If you say *I do not doubt but that he will go* you waste the conjunction *but.* The sentence should read *I do not doubt that he will go,* for *but* has no connective value in the sentence. After such verbs as *deny, despair, doubt, question* used either negatively or interrogatively, *that* alone is preferable to *but that* inasmuch as what follows is, as a rule, a noun clause used as object introduced by *that.* If you say *Though he is very headstrong, can any one deny but that he is well liked* you again waste the *but;* either *can any one deny that he is well liked* or *can any one help admitting that he is well liked* is correct. In *I hear how that Abner Jones is ill, how* as part of the once phrasal conjunction *how that* is wasted (page 197). Here, again, the object of the verb *hear* is the noun clause *that Abner Jones is ill* introduced by *that; how,* according to modern usage, has no office to perform in the sentence. This archaic construction is observable in *Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you* (*2 Corinthians* xiii: 5) and elsewhere in biblical texts.

If you say *Both Dick and Harold agreed to go* you waste the correlative word *both,* for it is implicit in *agreed.* But *Both Dick and Harold wish to go* and *Both Dick and Harold think the plan feasible* are correct, for people do not necessarily wish and think alike.

A most frequent wastage of conjunctions occurs in such sentences as *Thank you for that beautiful present and which I shall always cherish* and *Illness had overcome Clara and who wished to go home at once as a consequence* and *I shall answer your question after school and when we shall have more time.* In these sentences *and* does not connect *which* and *who* and *when* respectively with any preceding correlative *which* or *who* or *when.* All three words —*which, who, when*—have connective quality of their own, the first two being relative (relating) pronouns and the third a relative

adverb. If, however, a dependent clause of the same kind precedes the one included in each sentence, connection by *and* (or *but)* is correct; thus, *Thank you for that beautiful present which reached me yesterday and which I shall always cherish* and *Illness had overcome Clara who had been so gay all evening but who now wished to go home at once* and *I shall answer your question when we get home and when we shall have more time* (page 181).

If you say *The reason he is absent is because he is ill* you waste the conjunction *because* for it repeats the idea of *reason,* and it is therefore unnecessary. Say *The reason for his absence is illness* or *He is absent because he is ill* or *The reason for his absence is that he is ill* or *He is absent on account of illness* (page 194).

If you say *We fed and clothed and sheltered and nursed him* you waste at least two connecting *ands,* though the repetition of *and* in such construction may be made an aid in emphasis. But in ordinary expression *We fed, clothed, sheltered, and nursed him* is sufficient—and economical (page 89).

If you say *I do not know whether he is going or not (going)* your conjunction *whether* itself implies alternative—choice, doubt, hesitancy. The correlative term *or not* is thus unnecessary and *I do not know whether he is going* says all that is meant. But *whether-or* are correlative conjunctions, and the expression of the latter in association with the former is never incorrect. In statements such as the above the full form is idiomatic and more or less expected (page 197).

CONTEST *

NO	YES
1 They have been leveling *off* this road	They have been leveling this road
2 If we had not *have* gone we should have seen her	If we had not gone we should have seen her
3 *They wanted to have us hear her play*	*They wanted us to hear her play*
4 Whence they came *from* and whither they are going *to* I do not know	Whence they came and whither they are going I do not know
5 You cannot *but* help sympathizing with Alice	You cannot help sympathizing with Alice

* See page 3.

	NO	YES
6	I do not care *to have* to kill myself at this job	I do not care to kill myself at this job
7	We can only imagine *as to* what the result will be	We can only imagine what the result will be
8	Sister cannot *help* but think that I was in the wrong	Sister cannot help thinking that I was in the wrong
9	For several days we had seen that snake *and* which always scared us	For several days we had seen that snake which always scared us
10	You obscure your meaning by *too much* wordiness	You obscure your meaning by wordiness
11	Your children have *been* left at the school, Madam, and the car has *been* parked nearby	I have left your children at the school, Madam, and have parked the car nearby
12	What manner of *a* man is he	What manner of man is he
13	He is absorbed *exclusively* with his work	He is absorbed with his work
14	Do not be limited to fiction *only* in your reading	Do not be limited to fiction in your reading
15	They *both* attend the same school	They attend the same school
16	Please get some *other* similar receptacle	Please get some similar receptacle
17	Throughout the *entire* day she sat there and sighed	Throughout the day she sat there and sighed
18	She had a heart attack to which she is *often* subject	She had a heart attack. She is subject to such illness
19	You will be *equally* as well used in this school as in that	You will be as well used in this school as in that
20	We shall discuss the engine in a moment, *more* particularly as to its power	We shall discuss the engine in a moment, particularly as to its power
21	I have plenty at *the* present, thank you	I have plenty at present, thank you
22	I always read it two or three times, never more than three at *the* most	I always read it two or three times, never more than three at most
23	I think I shall have *me* a haircut	I think I shall have my hair cut
24	He has bought *him* a new car	He has bought a new car
25	Of all the books in my little library I know of no *other* better worth reading than this	Of all the books in my little library I know of none better worth reading than this
26	*The* throwing the ball and *the* swinging the mallet are the two most technical actions in the game	Throwing (The throwing of) the ball and swinging (the swinging of) the mallet are the two most technical actions in the game
27	That *there* child is ill	That child is ill
28	With whom did you go to the party *with*	With whom did you go to the party
29	They declined our invitation with the greatest *of* regrets	They declined our invitation with the greatest regrets

	NO	YES
30	I stayed all night at the little inn near *by* the river	I stayed all night at the little inn near the river
31	*On* one day he came to class totally unprepared	One day he came to class totally unprepared
32	The statesman's death, though it was expected, nevertheless *it* caused a shock	The statesman's death, though expected, nevertheless caused a shock
33	I'm afraid the weather forbids *of* our going	I'm afraid the weather forbids our going
34	The two boys were *mutually* agreed on their plans for the summer	The two boys were agreed on their plans for the summer
35	He performs all his tasks, from *the* running the car to mowing *of* the lawn, with the liveliest *of* interest	He performs all his tasks, from running the car to mowing the lawn, with the liveliest interest
36	The children *they* have gone to the park for the day	The children have gone to the park for the day
37	He was honized at all *the* athletic meets	He was honized at all athletic meets
38	Children are very much interested, as a rule, in *the* stories	Children are very much interested, as a rule, in stories
39	I cannot find just the sort of *an* opening I want	I cannot find just the sort of opening I want
40	I never thought he was that type of *a* boy	I never thought he was that type of boy
41	*Both of* those two boys have much in common	Those two boys have much in common
42	The *general* consensus *of opinion* is that Brown will be elected	The consensus is that Brown will be elected

SECTION EIGHT — BOMBAST

If you say *I cannot partake of my matutinal repast until I have performed my tonsorial and ablutionary operations* you are a vocabulary show-off; you parade and waste big words when simple ones would serve your purpose much better, namely, *I cannot breakfast until I have shaved and bathed.* Such affected expression was once referred to as fine writing and speaking, and as sheer rhetoric. It is anything but fine—anything but rhetoric—in the correct sense of these words. It is, rather, vain display of words—claptrap, fustian, rant, balderdash, inflated diction—and if persisted in it may become vulgarism (page 244). The old rhetoricians called it bombast, an English derivative from French *bombace* meaning padding. It has been called futile and trans-

parent hyperbole, attempt at rhetorical elegance that must needs be unsuccessful, diction without substance. It is rooted in insincerity of thought and feeling, so much so that a famous dramatic director once remarked that he could not tell whether bombastic writing made the "ham" actor or whether the ham actor made all writing seem bombastic. The critics called "Marlowe's mighty line" blithering bombast. John Donne commented once critically on a piece of dramatic writing

> Not pedants' motley tongue, soldiers' *bombast,*
> Mountebanks' drug-tongue, nor terms of law,
> Are strong enough preparatives to draw
> Me to hear this.

One of the most "distinguished" contributions to bombastic merriment was made recently by a college professor who had been made Federal Director of Civilian Defense. Speaking of blacking out Federal buildings during air raids, he said "Such obscuration may be obtained either by blackout construction or by termination of the illumination." His "laboring bark was undoubtedly beset by polysyllables, and embarrassed among a perfect archipelago of hard words," as Silas Wegg would have said. But his dictional day was saved when the White House revised him to read "Put something across the windows or turn out the lights." *Illumination is required to be extinguished* is still very much with us, however, in numerous public places.

If it is "chronic" with you to use *argumentation* for *argument, consummate* for *perfect, objective* for *object, directive* for *order, deleterious* for *hurtful, felicitous* for *happy, indubitably* for *surely, premature* for *early;* if you insist upon calling a house a *domiciliary abode;* a marriage, a *marital alliance;* a fire, a *devastating conflagration,* an angry elephant, an *infuriated pachyderm;* a poor storekeeper, an *impecunious merchandiser;* a good answer, a *commendable rejoinder;* a moron, a *hebetudinous biped,* you may make yourself ridiculous in an effort to be magnificent. True, a certain type of humor is sourced in such pretentious diction as this.* But good speakers and writers have long since made it the rule never in serious expression to use long pretentious words where short simple ones may be relied upon to convey thought accurately. The use of finery of phraseology for its own sake is unfair to readers and listeners. More, it makes for waste of paper

* See James Russell Lowell *The Biglow Papers* (second series).

and of printing labor and machinery to write *immediately* for *now, remuneration* for *pay, comprehensive* for *broad, conflagration* for *fire, immaculate* for *pure.*

The figure of euphemism is sometimes to blame for wordy and pretentious expression. This term means a soft or gentle or unobjectionable manner of saying something that is in reality hard, unpleasant, or disagreeable in idea, as *passed on* or *gone to his rest* for dead, *Davy Jones' locker* for the sea bottom or the grave of the drowned, *Old Nick* for devil, *Gehenna* for hell. The figure becomes pretentious and even insincere when it is used to mask anything that deserves to be expressed in plain language, when "pretty words" are substituted for calling a spade a spade. To use the general term *disorderly conduct* for the specific term drunkenness is to misrepresent. Similarly, *misappropriation* for theft, *irregularity* for murder, *assault* for rape, *fistic encounter* for fight, *vagrant* for tramp, *monetary transaction* for bribery, *pecuniary pacification* for blackmail are euphemisms that "pet and spoil," that do not say what they mean, that waste the attention of those to whom they are addressed. Walt Whitman's injunction may well be followed: "Don't attempt to be too fine in speaking. Use good honest English and common words for common things. If you speak of breeches, shirts, and petticoats, call them by their right names. The vulgarity is in avoiding them." *

But long words have their place. A single long word may very often "cover" a longer phrase. It is easier to say *fuselage,* for instance, than *the elongated structure of an airplane to which the wings are attached,* to say *incongruous* than *composed of inharmonious elements,* to say *perennial* than *continuing to live from year to year,* to say *constituent* than *serving to form or compose as a necessary part.* A long word may, moreover, add to the rhythm and stateliness of an expression, may by its very nature translate itself *(automobile, telephone, radiograph),* may by the first syllable or by the first two syllables enable a listener to anticipate the rest of its composition, and thus have the virtue of a short word. Inventors, scientists, philosophers, and others engaged in scholarly pursuits, very often find that only by use of long fabricated words can they adequately express new or complex ideas; thus, such words as *thermostat, technocracy, sulfanilamide, obscurantism* meet a need that shorter words could not meet.

* In *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle,* July 20, 1847

Foreign words and phrases, especially those from French and Latin, should be used sparingly in the cause of economy, and thus of clearness. A few, such as *foyer* and *précis* and *nom de plume, pro* and *con* and *in re* and *per se,* are pretty well established and understood. But such expressions as *My* ***atelier*** (studio) *is upstairs, He is too quick with the* ***riposte fatale*** (insult), *The new work was a* ***succès d'estime*** (artistic success), *Mary is having an* ***affaire de cœur*** (Mary is in love), *We are delighted with our* ***far niente*** (idle or lazy) *days here, The* ***modus operandi*** (method of operating) *is vague, However bad the outlook* ***nil desperandum*** (never despair!), *Let's begin* ***de novo*** (anew), in which the French or Latin terms are as yet probably unfamiliar to the majority of people, are preferably avoided in general usage. Not only do they give to expression an affected and pretentious tone but they are almost always longer than their English equivalents. It is frequently said by those who introduce such foreign terms into their English expression—from whatever language—that their equivalent is impossible of translation. Never believe this explanation, it may be a kind of foreign propaganda —was so, indeed, in the days of Kaiser Wilhelm II when it was a part of the German propaganda to try to make English-speaking peoples believe that their language was incapable of the subtleties and refinements of the German. "Ach, sie kann es nicht auf Englisch sagen"! (Page 238.)

Quite as objectionable as the foreign term itself, is the affected transference of idiom from another language. At present the superfluous use of *but* in such phrases as *but certainly* and *but definitely* in reply to the question *Are you going?* for instance, is transparently show-off expression. (The word *definitely* in the sense of yes or surely is similarly deplorable.) If you say *That window gives upon the swimming pool* you use the French rather than the English idiom in *gives upon.* If you say *The servants' quarters are below stairs* you use the British rather than the American idiom in *below stairs.* Needless to say, the would-be "grandeur" of the foreign idiom is usually borrowed from the French and the British.

It remains for the profession of law to outdo all other departments of English expression in sheer wasteful stiltedness of phraseology. In the commendable effort to leave "no possible loophole of escape" in legal documents—to meet every expressional contingency in a given situation and avoid all pitfalls of vagueness

and ambiguity and misinterpretation—the law leans backward to secure exhaustive, non-escapist coverage. Its language thus becomes necessarily and consciously repetitive. Withal, the daily papers reveal case after case arising out of the fact that legal precautions in the use of the Mother Tongue have not been tightly enough drawn. The placement of a comma has more than once been argued by the courts.

But contracts and indentures and pleadings, and the rest, are frequently so abounding in jargon—*whereases, hereinbefores, hereuntos, hereinunders, namelys, to wits*—that the layman, brought into contact with the law, and befuddled and intimidated by its redundancies, prays for relief and succor and for the restoration of lean, limpid, concise English. *Last will and testament; will and bequeath; protect, defend, and indemnify; the following terms and conditions namely and to wit; said party of the first part does by these presents make, constitute, and appoint said party of the second part, the true and lawful attorney in fact for party of the first part; the party of the first part hereinafter designated as the party of the first part hereinunder described and set forth as follows, to wit,* and the other legal bromides, make Einstein's theory of relativity seem like ABC to the lay mind.

The law is responsible for the fact that such Latin terms as the following linger in business correspondence and, to some degree, even in general correspondence: *ultimo* for *last month, instant* for *present month, proximo* for *next month, et al* for *elsewhere* or *and others, as per* for *according to, a dato* for *from today* or *from this date, per annum* for *a year, per diem* for *a day, per se* for *by itself, in statu quo* for *in its former state* or *condition, instanter* for *without delay.* And it must bear the responsibility also for the milder but equally tiresome and outworn *advise* and *even date* and *re* and *said* and *same* and *contents noted* and *duly notified,* and other English bromides like them (page 290).

CONTEST *

NO	YES
1 The report is devoid of authenticity	The report is untrue
2 He is afflicted with premature senility	He is prematurely old

* See page 8.

	NO	YES
3	My nether habiliments are too hirsute	My underwear is too prickly
4	He has repaired to his ancestral domicile	He has returned to his old home
5	He began his phenomenal career as an itinerant merchandiser	He began his great career as a pedlar
6	Please improve your epistolary composition	Please improve your letter writing
7	Thou shalt neither purloin nor assassinate	Thou shalt not steal Thou shalt not kill
8	This is the domiciliary habitation constructed by John	This is the house that Jack built
9	His olfactory organ protrudes to elephantine proportions	He has a large nose
10	I bought the following articles, namely and to wit	I bought the following articles
11	I appear to have been placed between Scylla and Charybdis	I appear to have been placed in a dilemma
12	When the fatal conflagration transpired we were in conversation	When the fatal fire occurred we were talking
13	Momentous catastrophe was narrowly averted by us	We almost had a serious accident
14	Prices have been elevated to astronomic proportions	Prices have been greatly increased
15	They were precipitated into eternity when the cataclysmic upheaval occurred	They were killed by the explosion
16	We were actuated to requisition the services of a veterinarian at the indisposition of our canine pet	We called in the doctor when our dog became ill
17	After Jane's rendition of an oration the provost of the institution distributed academic certifications	After Jane spoke the principal presented the diplomas
18	A vast concourse of humanity assembled to witness the manipulation of the pigskin oval on the gridiron	A large crowd attended the football game
19	After they had partaken of their morning repast they adjourned to their respective pursuits	After breakfast they went to work
20	When it comes to a preference between piscatorial sport and the elimination of the feathered creatures of the air by means of combustible processes, give me the former on all occasions	I prefer fishing to shooting

SECTION NINE FIGURE

Economy of reader and listener attention is to be achieved not only destructively, that is, by the elimination of waste in phraseology and by the condensation of language to the lowest terms consistent with understanding. It may be brought about constructively also, that is, by the use of phraseology that is charged and supercharged with meaning and significance—by phraseology that means more than meets ear and eye. True, reader and listener attention is a variable quantity. Some mentalities may require the exhaustive—even the repetitive—style of expression in order to gather meaning Others may be satisfied with a brief and suggestive style, provided this affords the gratifying stimulus of making them feel that they are getting meaning for themselves without too much assistance from the author. Specific language is, as a rule, more economical and stimulating than generic; figurative, than literal.

If you say *The vehicle went into the water* you make use of general terminology—*vehicle* and *went* and *water* have many specific equivalents. The statement is so general as to leave no vivid or effective impression. The specific equivalent may be *The bicycle splashed through the puddle* or *The limousine swerved into the river* or *The school bus was precipitated into the rapids* In these, reader and listener attention is focused, whereas in the generic statement it is indefinite or scattered. The specific form has moving-pictorial quality, the generic form is blurred and frozen.

But note that the very vagueness of a general expression may sometimes be an asset in that particulars may thus be left to the imagination. And general terms are valuable, too, in conveying highly technical connotations to the man in the street; in fixing in the popular mind such epigrams as *An ounce of caution is worth a pound of cure* and *He is a fool that cannot conceal his wisdom* and *After crosses and losses men grow humbler and wiser*, and primarily, in educating man, from his earliest days to his last Education, indeed, begins with the general and proceeds to the specific. Without general terms under which to classify specific knowledge the results of all special and technical learning would be chaotic and "un-get-at-able" (page 310).

Discernment in the use of specific terms is one of the distinguishing marks of the master of a language and of his habits of thinking

in that language. It is easy and lazy—and ignorant—to use the broad generic term *amount* or *quantity* for such specific equivalents as *bale* (of hay), *blade* (of grass), *bolt* (of cloth), *breath* (of air), *chip* (of wood), *clot* (of blood), *cud* (of fodder), *drop* (of water), *flake* (of snow), *fleck* (of dust), *flitch* (of bacon), *grain* (of sand), *gust* (of wind), *hank* (of yarn), *lock* (of hair), *pinch* (of salt), *puff* (of smoke), *ray* (of light), *shot* (of powder), *skein* (of silk), *slice* (of bread), *sliver* (of fiber), *speck* (of dirt), *whiff* (of odor); to use the broad generic term *call* or *cry* or *sound* for such specific equivalents as *bark* (dog), *bellow* (bull), *bell* (deer), *bleat* (goat), *boom* (bittern), *buzz* (bee), *cackle* (goose), *caw* (crow), *chirp* (cricket), *coo* (pigeon), *croak* (frog), *grunt* (pig), *hiss* (serpent), *hoot* (owl), *howl* (wolf), *low* (cow), *mew* (cat), *moo* (cow), *neigh* (horse), *roar* (lion), *screech* (barn-owl), *squeal* (pig), *troat* (buck), *trumpet* (elephant), *whinny* (horse).

It is similarly loose and undiscriminating to use the broad generic term *group* or *collection* (or other class name) for such specific equivalents as *apiary* (bees), *archipelago* (islands), *armada* (fleet of men-of-war), *aviary* (birds), *bale* (turtles), *band* (jays, musicians, ruffians), *batch* (loaves, papers), *bevy* (maidens, quails), *board* (trustees, school), *brood* (chicks), *bunch* (keys), *bury* (conies), *cabinet* (ministers), *cluster* (fruit), *colony* (ants, gulls, settlers), *collection* (coins, stamps), *company* (actors, stockholders), *congregation* (nuns, worshipers), *constellation* (stars), *covey* (grouse, partridges), *crew* (train, ship), *crowd* (people, Wordsworth's daffodils), *draft* (board, soldiers), *drove* (cattle), *faculty* (instructors), *farrow* (pigs), *field* (racehorses), *fleet* (motor cars, ships), *flight* (doves, swallows), *flock* (chickens, sheep, pigeons), *force* (police), *galaxy* (geniuses, stars), *gang* (outlaws), *gild* (craftsmen), *hatch* (chickens), *herd* (buffalos, deer, elephants), *hive* (bees), *horde* (barbarians), *host* (angels, locusts, Wordsworth's daffodils), *hover* (trout), *jury* (citizens, judges), *kennel* (dogs), *league* (teams), *leap* (leopards), *litter* (pigs, puppies), *lot* (goods, merchandise), *murder* (crows), *muster* (recruits), *nest* (drawers, mice), *pack* (cards, wolves, dogs), *panel* (jurymen, judges), *regiment* (soldiers), *run* (poultry), *senate* (representatives), *school* (whales, artists, thinkers), *shoal* (fishes), *set* (dishes, croquet), *stable* (horses), *string* (racehorses), *suite* (rooms), *swarm* (bees), *troop* (cavalry), *troupe* (actors). Most of these specific words have applications other than those indicated in parentheses; some have further specific equivalents (certain sounds, for example, pertain to rutting time only); many of them are used

figuratively entirely out of association with the generic terms respectively indicated. But all are illustrative of the importance of differentiation between generic and specific.

If you say *I visited Bill's house* when you mean *I visited Bill's home* you divert and waste attention. A house is a structure; a home is an endeared dwelling-place, the scene of domestic love and of happy and cherished family life. The word *home,* that is, has values or associations or connotations that are not contained in the word *house;* it has suggestive meanings or overtones beyond those conveyed by mere prosaic *house* that enrich it incalculably by comparison, it permits the attention to contribute much beyond what is actually said. The first sentence is correct only provided you mean that you visited the structure that Bill merely owns; the second, only provided you mean that you visited the place where Bill lives, where the members of his family are, where the domestic social graces prevail around a hospitable board, for instance, and before a warming open fire. It is conceivable, indeed, that Bill's home may be no building at all. His house must be a building.

Let it be repeated, then, that connotative words such as *babble, Christmas, frill, itch, mother, trudge* say much in little—have a spread or a reach far beyond the mere confines of mere spelling and pronunciation, as witness the merely denotative equivalents *talk, holiday, trimming, sensation, woman, move.* But it is not to be assumed that denotative terms have no place in expression. On the contrary, they mark off and distinguish with precision the tangible from the implied; thus, denotative *house for sale* is cold, if you please, but businesslike and definite and factual, whereas connotative *home must be sacrificed* may take unfair advantage; the same contrast exists between *open to parents* and *fathers and mothers welcome, infants' wear* and *togs for tots, bloody rout* and *ignominious defeat, fighting plane* and *Spitfire, military adventurer* and *soldier of fortune.*

Figurative language makes expression not only more striking and more pictorial than literal language; it very often shortens or economizes, giving in a flash or shortcut what would run to considerable length in literal form. The exclamation *Never!* says in one word something to this effect: *I shall never agree to do that.* The slang figurative interrogation *You're telling me?* expanded means *You're telling me this which I myself have better reason to*

understand than you have? The skier comes down the mountain slope like the wind (simile) and *He is the wind on skis* (metaphor) both seem shorter to the reader and listener—*are* shorter therefore—because of figurative style, than their literal equivalents *The skier comes down the mountain slope with unbelievable speed* and *He is unbelievably speedy on skis.* What three words have ever been more enchantingly economical than Milton's descriptive personification of the nightingale's song at evening—*Silence was pleased?*

The metonymy *red tape* for the routine of bureaucracy, the synecdoche *mercury* for thermometer, the antithesis *Man proposes and God disposes,* the famous Dickens syllepsis (used preferably for humor only) *Miss Bolo went home in a flood of tears and a sedan chair* (page 182), the allusion *He is the Croesus of the community,* the analogy *Chemical elements are to compounds as letters are to words,* and the editor's innuendo *Flames, James* written to an assistant named James, on the margin of a contribution which had been submitted with the request that it be printed entire or consigned to the flames—all are illustrative of the possibilities of figurative language in the cause of economy. It is true, of course, that figures of speech may also be extravagant of phraseology (page 57) especially allegory and the Homeric simile. In the main, however, they make for an unconscious expansion of attention from the little that is expressed to the much that may be felt and imagined. It is the wholesome tendency of English, as of most other languages, to express the abstract—action, condition, quality—through the concrete as usage matures, and this tendency is in a great degree the basis of figurative expression. We say to the judge *Your Honor;* to the prince, *Your Highness;* we say *Self-respect demands* and *Public opinion disagrees;* we call young men and women *youth;* Milton speaks of *laughter holding both its sides,* and Goldsmith of *grey-beard mirth and smiling toil* meaning gay old men and merry workers; Launcelot Gobbo is garrulous about the *yes* and *no* of conscience. Thus do the concrete forms of abstraction verge into figure.

But if good figures of speech, as Emerson pointed out, "illuminate the page," bad or false or mixed ones darken it. Bad figures of speech are probably the most wasteful kind of expression (see below). They are caused, as a rule, by a writer's forgetting that figures are always to be regarded as a means rather than as an end, and that they must grow naturally out of subject matter. To add

them just for the sake of enrichment or adornment is usually fatal. To say *The waves of the new tax cyclone will fire Congress into action* is to mix the three elements ridiculously. The statement squanders attention. The meaning probably is that the ever-increasing taxation has aroused public feeling to the point of forcing Congress to take action toward alleviation. It is equally diverting and wasteful of attention to mix literal language with figurative, thus *He is the father of modern music and the nephew of Senator Rothberg* (see above). Such mixed expression as this, unless used deliberately for humor (as in the Dickens sentence above), makes for lack of coherence and unity and emphasis, all three.

CONTEST *

	NO	YES
1	Her hair is of the color of gold	She has golden hair
2	He is a very big man in finance	He is a colossus of finance
3	He addressed the head of the monarchy	He addressed the crown
4	Mabel presided at the instrument	Mabel played the piano
5	I tripped over that garden utensil	I tripped over that hoe
6	He is not at home in his present environment	He is a fish out of water
7	I usually start the day on fruit juice and cereal	I usually breakfast on fruit juice and oatmeal
8	The body of the plane is long and narrow	The fuselage of the plane is long and narrow
9	He is suffering from a guilty conscience	He has a telltale heart
10	Tommy stayed away from school today without leave	Tommy played truant today
11	He was like that from his very earliest days to his very last	He was like that from the cradle to the grave
12	He walked up to the presiding magistrate meekly and timidly	He approached the judge sheepishly
13	Intrinsic merit distiguishes the man, but a mere fellow has no such distinguishing quality	Worth makes the man; the want of it the fellow
14	Mrs Fezziwig then entered with a broad smile on her motherly face	Mrs Fezziwig then entered—one vast substantial smile
15	The octogenarian vagrant walked along pitifully in his outmoded garments	The old tramp trudged pitifully in his rags
16	We went with Polly and Bob along that shaded romantic road	We sauntered with Polly and Bob along lover's lane

* See page 3.

NO	YES
17 The natural elements are still the human being's most dangerous enemies	Fire, water, and wind are still man's most dangerous enemies
18 At my morning meal I drank the fluid concocted from the seeds of the famous Brazilian shrub	At breakfast I had coffee
19 He is obliged to employ fifty industrial servants in order to keep the factory wheels revolving	He hires fifty men to keep his factory operating
20 To make that book palatable you must iron out the difficult passages	To make that book likable (readable) you must explain (simplify) the difficult passages
21 Both wings of the family stood firmly together in order to weld all the members into an enduring organization	Both branches of the family made a determined effort to unite the members into an enduring organization

SECTION TEN — SUMMARY

While long lists of defined terms are never so very important, and while "the thing itself" is always of greater significance than its mere name, terminology nevertheless does have a little value, as a convenient handle if nothing more. The various types of word wastage treated in the foregoing pages were meticulously differentiated by the old rhetoricians. They painstakingly classified and dissected. They illustrated exhaustively. Whole sections of their rhetorics were little more than catalogs. The errors of waste above discussed were once variously named—circumlocution, diffuseness, periphrasis, prolixity, pleonasm, redundancy, tautology, verbiage, verbosity—and were laboriously discriminated one from another. Applied to English expression, these terms are regarded today as meaning very much the same and they are used almost interchangeably. The term *wordiness* is used to cover them all, and *tediousness* or *confusion* is the word given to the effect that any one or more than one of them may have upon a reader or a listener. Hair-splitting shades of difference among them can be of little avail. The following brief exposition is set down merely for what it may be worth to those who like the tradition of the old rhetorics and who may be benefited by their method.

Circumlocution is from two Latin words, and *periphrasis* is from two Greek words, both meaning speaking *(locution* and *phrasis)* around *(circum* and *peri)*, that is, indirect and roundabout expres-

sion as result of too many words. The latter is more technical in use than the former. The second part of the former—*locution*—means a form of expression or a style of phraseology, as in *His writing is characterized by figurative locutions,* and connotes nothing of wordiness in the senses here discussed. *Diffuseness* means scattering of both words and thoughts; it is scatter-brained expression. Derivatively (Latin) *diffuseness* means to pour out or apart. *Prolixity* means enumeration of interminable petty details; derivatively (Latin again) it means extended or stretched out. *Pleonasm* is the expression of an idea already expressed; it means literally (Greek) more than enough. *Tautology* is the restatement in other words of an idea already stated; this is also from Greek meaning literally same speaking. The old rhetorics distinguished between pleonasm and tautology by saying that the former repeats meaning in a different grammatical place, as in *I heard it with my own ears;* and that the latter adds words in the same place, as *The members all agreed unanimously. Redundancy,* in its Latin derivation, means overflow, and thus signifies rhetorically an overflowing of words; this word is sometimes used as a coverage term for all the others. *Verbiage* means pure wordage, that is, the use of mere words without thought; perhaps present-day "double-talk" illustrates better than any other form of expression verbiage carried to the *n*th degree. *Verbosity* comes from the same Latin root—*verbum* word—as *verbiage,* and means excess of words in proportion to thought content. Verbiage and verbosity are irremediable by the mere deletion of words. A verbose sentence, as a rule, had better be erased and a new one undertaken in its stead.

Any extended wordy expression is likely to contain examples of all of these. All arise from confused or bewildered thinking, from an endless but hopeful groping for words to cover ignorance, from vanity in an attempt at so-called fine writing, from an effort to show off versatility of diction and suppleness of construction, or—ironically—from a too studied effort to avoid the very repetition that inevitably results, just as one may by a too-conscious effort to avoid a gutter drive straight into it. Mrs Nickleby illustrated all of these forms of word wastage at one fell swoop when, instead of saying "No, thank you", she declined an offer of marriage in the following "fat" phraseology

> It will be sufficient for me to say, sir—and I'm sure you'll see the propriety of taking an answer and going away—that I have made up my mind to remain a widow, and to devote myself to my children. You

may not suppose that I am the mother of two children—indeed, many people have doubted it, and said that nothing on earth could ever make 'em believe it possible—but it is the case, and they are both grown up. We shall be very glad to have you for a neighbour—very glad, delighted, I'm sure—but in any other character it's quite impossible, quite. As to my being young enough to marry again, that perhaps may be so, or it may not be, but I couldn't think of it for an instant, not on any account whatever I said I never would and I never will. It's a very painful thing to have to reject proposals, and I would very much rather that none were made, at the same time this is the answer that I determined long ago to make, and this is the answer I shall always give.

Charles Dickens *Nicholas Nickleby*

While any one or more of the above forms of wasteful repetition may easily kill both the letter and the spirit of expression, thriftiness in phraseology—as in money—may sometimes reveal itself to be shortsighted policy. It has been suggested on page 5 that repetition is by no means always lacking in positive values. It may, indeed, be employed designedly to stir or impress or make memorable. As a device or figure for emphasis, repetition—*iteration*—has been used by writers and speakers time out of mind for pathos and lamentation, for persuasion and discipline, for exhortation and action. Poets, dramatists, essayists, preachers, editors, novelists, orators—especially orators—have always known and have thus always cultivated its power. Witness Shelley's (the lark) "singing still dost soar, and soaring ever singest"; Shakspere's "Now is it Rome indeed, and room enough, When there is in it *but one only man*" (only one only man); the confession from *The Book of Common Prayer* "We have erred and strayed from Thy ways;" the lament of David "O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! Would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son," to quote a minimum from random call upon memory.

And on this side of the house, too, there was formerly much (pesky) terminology used to differentiate one type of iteration from another. Such justifiable repetition as *You have now reached the goal—the goal that you have worked so hard to win* was called *anadiplosis,* a Greek term meaning doubling; such as *Stop it, John; stop it, I say* was called *epanadiplosis,* a Greek term meaning doubling on or again; such as

And partly that I hoped to win you back,
And partly conscious of my own deserts,
And partly that you were my civil head,
And chiefly you were born for something great—

from Tennyson's *The Princess*—a form of repetition especially frequent in Tennyson—was called *anaphora,* a Greek term meaning carrying back or again. These three represent but a very small fraction indeed of such terms carried in the old rhetorics. The Tennysonian example is characteristic also of Hebrew literature and of religious literature in general, as *Answer my prayer, O Lord; answer my supplication.*

Amplification is repetition that adds new detail in each succeeding phrase. It builds and fortifies by expanding or enlarging or "telescoping" an idea, thus giving it variety or novelty, sometimes supplying a specific equivalent for a general term. In the above quotation from *The Book of Common Prayer* the verb *erred* is amplified into the specific and pictorial *strayed from Thy ways.* In Wordsworth's

> The boundaries of space and time,
> Of melancholy space and doleful time

the amplification is nothing more than mechanical expansion by means of modification, and is not perhaps a particularly inspiring addition. But note in the following the cumulative enrichment wrought by skilful amplification

> It (a certain style) had the pomp, but not the force of the original (Johnson's style), the nodosities of the oak, but not its strength, the contortions of the sibyl, but none of the inspiration
>
> John Morley *Edmund Burke*

And the excerpt below from *Paradise Lost* (IV 641–656) is frequently pointed out as the most masterful amplification in any language, its special merit residing partly in the fact that the repetition is sufficiently removed (beginning as it does in the tenth line) to prevent monotony and mechanical effect

> Sweet is the breath of Morn, her rising sweet,
> With charm of earliest birds, pleasant the Sun,
> When first on this delightful land he spreads
> His orient beams, on herb, tree, fruit, and flower,
> Glistering with dew, fragrant the fertile Earth
> After soft showers, and sweet the coming-on
> Of grateful Evening mild, the silent Night,
> With this her solemn bird, and this fair Moon,
> And these the gems of Heaven, her starry train:
> But neither breath of Morn, when she ascends
> With charm of earliest birds; nor rising Sun
> On this delightful land; nor herb, fruit, flower,

Glistering with dew, nor fragrance after showers,
Nor grateful Evening mild, nor silent Night
With this her solemn bird, nor walk by moon,
Or glittering star-light, without thee is sweet.
John Milton

Unskilful amplification may result in mere wordiness. In the following, for instance, the extension weakens original idea and becomes mere bathos or anti-climax

For five hundred decades hath rung down from Sinai *Thou shalt not steal,* that is, Thou shalt not appropriate unto thyself what doth not belong to thee.

Matthew Prior's pedestrian amplification of the simple yet magnificent biblical verse "Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow, they toil not, neither do they spin. And yet even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these" has long been quoted as the best bad example of amplifying effort

Take but the humblest lily of the field,
And if our pride will to our reason yield,
It must by sure comparison be shown,
That on the regal seat great David's son,
Arrayed in all his robes and types of power,
Shines with less glory than that simple flower.

While Samuel Johnson referred with disgust to certain circumlocutions as "a hubbub of words", he would nevertheless have been required to admit that many of our most memorable sayings are not only circumlocutory in nature but are, as a matter of fact, memorable just because of the rhythmic power of their circumlocution. There is, for instance, his own

Let observation with extensive view,
Survey mankind from China to Peru

which, as some one has not too kindly pointed out, really says "Let observation with extensive observation observe mankind extensively!" Daniel Webster's "Sink or swim, live or die, survive or perish" (though not strictly parallel) and Alfred Tennyson's "The hard-grained Muses of the cube and square" (mathematics) and John Milton's "Come and trip it as you go, On the light fantastic toe" (dance) are other cases in point. And while perhaps not so well known, Walter Savage Landor's masterpiece wherein he likened certain critics to monkeys, is too important to be omitted just here

> There is hardly a young author who does not make his first attempt in some review; showing his teeth, hanging by his tail, pleased and pleasing with the volubility of his chatter, and doing his best to get a penny for his exhibitor and a nut for his pouch, by the facetiousness of the tricks he performs upon our heads and shoulders.

The poetical parallelism that characterizes so much of Hebrew poetry is a form of amplification. Sometimes the repetition is identical, as in

> The king shall joy in thy strength, O Lord,
> And in thy salvation how greatly shall he rejoice!
> Thou hast given him his heart's desire,
> And hast not withholden the request of his lips.
> *Psalm* xxi 1-2

Sometimes it is extensive, as in

> An angry man stirreth up strife,
> And a wrathful man aboundeth in transgression.
> *Proverbs* xxix 22

Sometimes it is intensive, as in

> Adah and Zillah, hear my voice,
> Ye wives of Lamech, hearken unto my speech:
> For I have slain a man for wounding me,
> And a young man for bruising me
> *Genesis* iv 23

Sometimes it is accumulative, as in

> He will not suffer thy foot to be moved
> He that keepeth thee will not slumber
> Behold, he that keepth Israel
> Shall neither slumber nor sleep
> *Psalm* cxxi 3-4

Sometimes it is contrasting, as in

> For the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous;
> But the way of the wicked shall perish
> *Psalm* i 6

There are still other forms, but these suffice for illustration of the point that repetition of one kind or another is an important element of style in biblical expression. "The repetitiousness of a litany has more than a little to do with the salvation of souls," said a famous British preacher.

CHAPTER CONTEST *

	NO	YES
1	That movement is retrograding backward	That movement is retrograding
2	Bill has got scarlet fever but where he got it I do not know	I do not know where Bill could have caught scarlet fever
3	We should like to have you see our new Cadillac automobile	We should like you to see our new Cadillac
4	If you had have seen her diamonds you would have been astonishingly stunned	If you had seen her diamonds you would have been astonished
5	What remedy have you got for a bad head cold in the head	What remedy have you for a head cold
6	John, though he does well in his studies, he has no initiative at all	Though John does well in his studies, he has no initiative
7	They neither of them expect to be able to come to your party	Neither of them expects to be able to attend your party
8	For four years now we have mutually enjoyed one another's friendship	We have had an enjoyable friendship for four years
9	He was always ready for an adventure and who never feared consequences	He was always ready for an adventure and never fearful of consequences
10	When John graduates from out of college he is going to enter into the practice of law	When he graduates, John is going to practice law
11	They gave me a ticket free gratis for absolutely nothing at all	They gave me a ticket
12	I met two persons by the name of Oglethorpe who were both exactly alike	I met twins named Oglethorpe
13	She accepted our gift graciously and with the greatest possible gratitude	She accepted our gift graciously and gratefully
14	We were told not to exceed more than fifteen minutes in doing the work	We were told not to spend more than fifteen minutes on the work
15	As we crossed over the trail our faithful sheep dog followed after us	As we crossed the trail our faithful sheep dog followed
16	I want a house near the village where people cannot help from finding me	I want a house within easy access of the village
17	It was pouring down with rain when we started out to tour around the village	It was raining hard when we started our trip through the village
18	From whence this report came I haven't got an idea but I shall examine into it	I do not know whence this report came but I shall investigate

* See page 3

	NO	YES
19	We could only imagine as to what he would do when he had got his thoughts collected together	We could only imagine what he would do after he had thought it over
20	Mr and Mrs Evans are now divorced from each other, but when they were first married and beginning their start in life they merged their money together into one bank	Mr and Mrs Evans, who are now divorced, started married life by merging their bank accounts
21	Both Harry and Don agreed how that they couldn't help but feeling snubbed	Harry and Don agreed that they had been snubbed
22	There had been a bitter fight and which, as usual, didn't decide anything at all	There had been a bitter but, as usual, indecisive fight
23	He doesn't deny but that the road is bad and one which is rarely used in winter	He doesn't deny that the road is bad and is little used in winter
24	Good a student as he was he was nevertheless of only about twelve years of age	That good student was only twelve
25	I have a sort of a headache which influences my temper more for the worse than the better	My headache makes me bad-tempered
26	They have just started in on the examination of the two twins in our class	They have started to examine the twins in our class
27	As the result of the false misrepresentations made we are all mixed up	We are confused as result of the misrepresentations
28	Whenever I go by that route the officer he always raises his hand up	Whenever I take that route the officer raises his hand
29	Both those men stared at one another when they were told they were to be ruled over by a former employe	When those two men were told that they were to be supervised by a former employe, they stared at each other
30	At the blind end of the road it closes with a circular plaza that circles a little globe-like park	The road ends at a little park in a circular plaza
31	His story was woven together closely in order to yield up united attention and interest combined	The closely woven quality of his story begot both attention and interest
32	That burning issue will reappear again as soon as its importance becomes clear to everybody universally	That issue will reappear when its importance becomes clear to everybody
33	Of all other boys John is, I think, the most worthy of being given the prize award	Of all boys John is, I think, the most worthy of the prize

	NO	YES
34	Enclosed within this letter you will find the amount of a one-dollar bill	Enclosed is one dollar
35	We drove equally as carefully as they but even so the judge made us pay the court a money fine	We drove as carefully as they but the court nevertheless fined us
36	Farther on down the road you will see two houses united together by a kind of bridged porch	Farther down the road you will see two houses bridged by a porch
37	It has been two years ago since I built this house at a distance of ten miles from the town	This house, located ten miles from the town, I built two years ago
38	He took his coat off from around his shoulders and revealed his new purple colored uniform	Removing his coat he revealed his new purple uniform
39	They started off, happy and gay in the knowledge that for a period of ten days they were to enjoy a holiday vacation	They were happy as they started their ten-day vacation
40	There is an individualistic individual who individualizes everything he does	Everything he does bears the mark of his individuality
41	He walked ten miles on his own two feet to hear Paderewski play the pianoforte with his own two hands	He walked ten miles to hear Paderewski play
42	Judge Jenkins hedged, and nudged his associate Judge Edgeworth, thus jeopardizing the witness's chances on this question of privilege	Judge Jenkins hemmed and hawed, and nudged his ally Judge Edgeworth, thus imperiling the right of the witness on this matter of privilege
43	This car is the one of all others that I like the best, and it will be adequate enough for all my traffic purposes until I can get to buy a larger one	I like this car best of all, it will be adequate for my traffic purposes until I can get a larger one
44	We saw them coming at a distance of about four or five blocks away, the little school band immediately preceding them	We saw them coming four or five blocks away, the little school band preceding them
45	She decided that before she left that she must first put the dog inside of the house	Before leaving she decided to put the dog in the house
46	The boy has never had but more than ten dollars to spend on himself, but he will get a bonus if he promises to improve his faults in English	The boy has never had more than ten dollars to spend on himself, but he will get a bonus if he improves his English

	NO	YES
47	The old house, where they always attended the meetings together every week, is so changed no one wouldn't hardly recognize it	The old house, where they attended the weekly meetings, is so changed as to be hardly recognizable
48	It must have been twenty years ago since he went away when he was only six years of old	He was only six when he went away about twenty years ago
49	They sat there outside of the station pondering about whatever must be done about the actor's final farewell tour	They sat outside the station pondering the actor's farewell tour
50	The rest for which his body craved for had at long last been afforded to him before ever he thought it could have been	The rest for which his body craved was at last afforded him before he had thought it possible
51	That selfsame lovely tone permeates and irradiates throughout the entire museum and especially in the Egyptian room	That lovely tone permeates the museum, especially the Egyptian room
52	Say, listen there That vase on top of the piano is about to fall down off of it	Be careful That vase on the piano is about to fall
53	When at last he finally disclosed his real identity we all unanimously shouted we knew who he was all the time	When he disclosed his identity we shouted that we had known him all the time
54	The central core of the plan is mostly centered around the following, namely	The main idea of the plan is centered in the following
55	Whether or not I shall go to the wedding depends upon my mood, if you see what I mean	My going to the wedding depends upon my mood
56	I have been subpoenaed in the case, and I shall thus accordingly appear therefore at the proper place and time	I have been subpoenaed, and I shall appear where and when required
57	The woman who does our cooking says she is in need of some cooking necessities, such as flour, pepper, salt, sugar, and so on	Our cook wants flour, pepper, salt, sugar, and other staples
58	The reason he cannot go tomorrow is because of examinations and games and social dates and disinclination, and what have you	He cannot go tomorrow because of examinations, games, social dates—and general disinclination
59	Lubricating of the car and adjusting of its various parts took so long that I was delayed from getting back in time for lunch	Car lubrication and adjustment took so long that I was late for lunch
60	The youngsters stole down the stairway by stealth hoping in	The youngsters stole down the stairway hoping to give Santa Claus a

	NO	YES
	their minds and hearts to give Santa Claus a frightening that he would remember a many a day	scare that he would remember many a day
61	Traveling by every means possible—horse, motor, train, boat, plane—he was finally ready to penetrate into the deep and swampy and tangled forest	Traveling by every means possible, he was finally ready to penetrate the jungle
62	From hence he will travel in among the tribes of the Sierras, and from thence he will return back again to the coast	Hence he will travel among the tribes of the Sierras, thence he will return to the coast
63	The eyes and ears of the *vox populi* are ever alert to sound the clarion call of public opinion in order to cue those who have in charge the trail-blazing of our Ship of State	Public opinion is ever alert to cue those who command our Ship of State
64	Having indulged in the terpsichorean art until the wee sma' hours, they flung themselves into the arms of Morpheus where they remained until Helios was driving his chariot through the zenith	Having danced all night, they slept till noon

2

DON'T UNDERUSE WORDS

SECTION ELEVEN — COMPARISON

"I have rarely seen a finer woman than my mother, never than my father," said Mrs. Wilfer, sparing words so seriously as to make it appear that her father was a woman. Her irrepressible daughter Lavvy, to whom the remark was made, replied reprovingly: "Whatever grandpapa was, he wasn't a female!" What the senior Wilfer meant to say was "I have rarely seen a finer woman than my mother; never a finer man than my father." She might have substituted *person* for *mother,* but this would have been a simplification of expression somewhat at the expense of courtesy.

Comparisons are frequently made absurd by the omission of words. In *Tom's roar was like a lion,* for instance, the omission of *that of* before *a* or of apostrophe *s* after *lion,* makes the comparison not only ridiculous but also illogical. *Tom's roar was like that of a lion* and *Tom's roar was like a lion's* are correct, for now one roar is compared to another, whereas in the incorrect form *Tom's roar* is compared with *lion,* terms that belong in entirely different categories. Compare thing with thing, animal with animal, abstraction with abstraction.

The most common error made in the use of the comparative degree is that of omitting a term that sets off the principal item of comparison. If you say *This is higher than any building in the city* you do not separate the principal term or the subject of comparison *This (building)* from other buildings, as is the obvious intention, for *any* covers all buildings in the city. The separative term *other* is required after *any* in order to place *This (building)* apart from all other buildings in the city; thus, *This is higher than*

any other building in the city is correct, for *This (building)* is now made to stand in direct contrast with *other building.* The subject of the comparison in which the comparative degree is used must, in other words, be excluded from the group or class with which comparison is made. The separative term in such comparison may sometimes be *else,* as in *You will be happier at home than anywhere else.* Omit *else,* and *home* like *building* must be included under *any,* making the comparison absurd. But *You will be happier at home than at any other place* is also a correct reading (page 193).

The case stands oppositely with the superlative degree: The subject of superlative comparison must be included in the group or class with which comparison is made. *This is the highest of all the buildings in the city* is, thus, correct, for *This (the highest building)* belongs in the class of *all the buildings in the city.* You may, of course, say *This is the highest building in the city* and *This is the highest of the buildings in the city* in both of which the subject of the superlative comparison is included in the group of comparison. But if *any* or *any other* is used in connection with a superlative, the meaning becomes absurd. To say *This building is the highest of any building* is to say really *This building is the highest of itself* (among other buildings). And to say *This building is the highest of any other building* is to classify *This building* among *other buildings.*

If you say *He'd rather see a fight than fish* you leave your hearer in doubt as result of omission. Do you mean *He'd rather see a fight than see a fish* (or *see fishes)*? It is hoped not, for no comparison should be attempted between terms in such different categories as the abstract noun *fight* and the concrete noun *fish* (see above). What is meant is probably *He'd rather see a fight than go fishing* in which *(to) see a fight* and *(to) go fishing* stand in parallel form and therefore in consistent contrast.

If you say *I like Mary better than John* you are again ambiguous because of omitted terms Do you mean *I like Mary better than I like John* or *I like Mary better than John likes her*? But note that, if the comparative *than* in such expression as this is followed by a personal pronoun, inflection solves the ambiguity, as *I like Mary better than she* and *I like Mary better than her.* Here there are still omissions, but they are clearly implied by case forms, *she* being nominative and *her* being objective; thus, *I like*

Mary better than she does (or *likes her*) and *I like Mary better than I like her.* Substitute *as well as* for *than,* and the same exposition applies (page 87).

If you say *This work is as good if not better than that* you spare a part of the first term of comparison. *As* and *as* (*so* and *as* in negative expression) are correlative in comparisons, just as *better* (or some other comparative form) and *than* are. In the sentence as it stands one correlative *as* is omitted. In *He did this better or, at least, just as well as John did it* the word *than* is omitted from the first term of comparison. Awkward as it may sometimes be to complete comparative terms they must be completed if they are to say exactly what is meant; thus, *This work is as good as if not better than that* and *He did this better than or, at least, just as well as John did it.* But the understood member of the comparative term may be omitted provided it is left to be implied at the end of such sentences as these, as in *This work is as good as that if not better (than that)* and *He did this better than John did it or, at least, just as well (as John did it).*

The use of *like* for *as* in clausal comparisons is regarded by most authorities as illiterate (page 190). In *He looks like John* the comparison is made by means of a phrase—*like John*—which modifies *looks,* and the sentence is correct. But in *It is cold here, like in Canada* the word *like* is used incorrectly as a conjunction—*It is cold here, like it is in Canada.* Only rarely, when *like* definitely defines similarity by way of conjunctive comparison, may it be used simultaneously as a connective, though even this is disputed by the purists (page 189). This sentence should read *It is cold here, as (it is) in Canada.* Note that this expression does not mean the same as *It is as cold here as in Canada.* The latter means equality of degrees of cold; the former, approximation of degrees of cold.

Do not spare *more* before comparatives or *most* before superlatives that are not to be compared by suffixing. To say *strenuouser* rather than *more strenuous* and *strenuousest* rather than *most strenuous* is to resort to false economy. Inferior or decreasing comparison is always made by the use of *less* for the comparative degree and *least* for the superlative, as *less strenuous* and *least strenuous.* There is no other way of indicating this kind of comparison. But superior or ascending comparison is made sometimes by suffixing *er* for the comparative degree and *est* for the

superlative, as *high, higher, highest;* and sometimes by the use of *more* for the comparative degree and *most* for the superlative; as *more beautiful* and *most beautiful.* Never should both tokens be used—the adverb before the word, and the suffix at the end of it. Usually short adjectives and adverbs—of one or two syllables only—are compared by suffixing; longer ones, by the preceding adverb. But the rule is variable, especially where emphasis and absolute comparisons are involved; thus, *The weather is most cold* and *He is a most common person, Please be more kind to me* and *I was never more hungry,* in all of which the extended form is justified by the impressiveness it brings to bear. This is not to say that *coldest, commonest, kinder, hungrier* are incorrect forms. It means simply that they are somewhat less emphatic in certain expressions than the two-word forms.

It must not be forgotten that comparisons are made through at least three degrees of difference. You say that some one is *kind* to you, that he is *kinder* than he used to be, that he has become the *kindest* person in the world; that is, this particular "some one" has gone from *kind* to *kinder* to *kindest.* There are, of course, intermediate or extended degrees to be indicated by modification—*quite kind, much kinder, the very kindest.* These intermediate or extended forms are not necessarily recommended but they are constantly used, and they are at least grammatically correct. But to use the same degree of quality to denote progress is incorrect, as in *He has gone from kinder to kinder.* This is a contradiction in terms—no progress is indicated in going from *kinder* to *kinder.* Say, rather, *He has gone from kinder to kindest.* The error *He has gone from worst to worst* is so generally made by the best writers and speakers that there is reason to fear that it may become an accepted usage. He may go from bad to worse, and from worse to worst, just as he may go from good to better, and from better to best. The use of *worse* for *more* is an equally serious error. Say *He needs this more than I,* not *He needs this worse than I.*

CONTEST *

NO	YES
1 She did it better than anybody	She did it better than anybody else
2 I like this coat better than any I have	I like this coat better than any other I have

* See page 3.

	NO	YES
3	You will feel more at home in this town than anywhere	You will feel more at home in this town than anywhere else
4	He was told to study bank statements such as Topeka National	He was told to study bank statements such as those of Topeka National
5	He would very much prefer to eat an apple than smoke	He prefers eating an apple to smoking
6	The outlook here is dark, like in England	The outlook here is dark, as it is in England
7	Miss Tessler gave me a much better recommendation than Mr Richman	Miss Tessler gave me a much better recommendation than Mr Richman gave me
8	Everybody at the meet said that Bill's running is equal to a deer	Everybody at the meet said that Bill's running is equal to that of a deer
9	Apples are just as good if not better than pears	Apples are just as good as pears if not better
10	I like this car better than any car made	I like this car better than any other car made
11	This is the largest of any other college in the United States	This is the largest college in the United States
12	This is better than all fabrics put together	This is better than all other fabrics put together
13	You will hardly ever see a better looking girl than my sister, never than my brother	You will hardly ever see a better looking girl than my sister, never a better looking boy than my brother
14	This is taller than any tree on the campus, and you'll be more comfortable in its shade than anywhere	This is taller than any other tree on the campus, and you'll be more comfortable in its shade than anywhere else
15	Men are as brave now but fighting is fiercer and more dangerous today than it was then	Men are as brave now as they were then but fighting is fiercer and more dangerous today than it formerly was
16	He conceitedly asserted that he was the best of all other students in his class, or, at least, easily as good and probably better than the few so-called best	He conceitedly asserted that he was the best of all students in his class, or, at least, easily as good as and probably better than the few so-called best
17	He is handsomer but not so athletic as Harold	He is handsomer than Harold but not so athletic
18	This workman's output goes from least to least	This workman's output goes from less to least
19	This old car seems to have gone from worst to worst	This old car seems to have gone from worse to worst (from bad to worse)
20	Old man Rip was more loyal to his dog than his wife	Old man Rip was more loyal to his dog than to his wife
21	He has shown more generosity than anybody living or dead	He has shown more generosity than anybody else
22	I am growing more trees than I am farming	I am doing more tree-growing than farming
23	There is no difference in kind be-	There is no difference in kind be-

NO	YES
tween the qualities of a liar and a traitor	tween the qualities of a liar and those of a traitor
24 Though she has been more comfortable here than she could possibly be anywhere, she nevertheless insists that she has no freedom here like in the city	Though she has been more comfortable here than she could possibly be elsewhere, she nevertheless insists that she has not the freedom here that she has in the city

SECTION TWELVE • SUSPENSION

If you say *He saw that the world he had known was yielding to a new and sterner* the probability is that the intelligent reader or listener will have no trouble in supplying *one* or *world* which you leave to be understood after *sterner*. But it is better not to put him to this trouble And even though the sentence as it stands is correct, it nevertheless has about it an unfinished and suspended quality that, according to some authorities, constitutes impairment.

Even the dictionaries now define *prescription* not only as a written direction for the preparation and use of medicine but also as *the medicine itself*. It is customary—and right—for dictionaries to succumb to usage, usage makes the dictionaries—dictionaries do not make usage. *Take this prescription for your cold* must thus be acceptable, momentum of usage having made it so. What is meant, however, and what had really better be said is *Take the medicine prepared from this prescription*. There is no sanction —yet—for *Eat this recipe for your dinner tonight*. But the time may come when this expression, too, will have to be accepted. A recipe is still defined, however, as a formula for making a dish in cookery.

If you say *Wanted to go but couldn't* you express yourself with a sparingness that amounts to discourtesy. A subject noun or pronoun is suspended in thin air. True, one may convey meaning—may get himself understood—in the use of such clipped or condensed or stenographic expression as this. But his listener has to depend upon before-and-after context to gather that meaning, and exactness of understanding is endangered. For one to make it a custom to cut expression short in this way is to be at once slovenly and perhaps flippant—not only in use of the Mother Tongue but in expressional attitude toward others (page 92).

Word groups that are left dangling or hanging or suspended may convey ridiculous or misleading meanings. To say *After finishing work last night the house caught fire* or *Running toward the river with all his might the car nevertheless overtook him* is to leave a hiatus between one part of an expression and another. A reader or a listener may be obliged to "take time out" to establish in his own mind the relationship intended. *After finishing work last night* and *Running toward the river* are suspended ambiguously; they have nothing in what follows to attach to. Who was finishing work? Who was running? Complete revision is required to convey clear and logical meaning, as *The house caught fire last night after Harry had finished his work* and *Running toward the river with all his might the boy was nevertheless overtaken by the car.*

In *Harry's fractured arm, caused in the basketball game last Saturday, is more serious than it was at first thought to be,* the *ed* action word *caused* is suspended. There is no word in the sentence to which it may be grammatically attached, though in idea it clearly pertains to *fractured.* Actually, the sentence says that Harry's arm was caused by the basketball game. It must be reorganized for correctness, as *Harry's arm fracture, caused in the basketball game last Saturday, is more serious than it was at first thought to be* or *Harry fractured his arm in the basketball game last Saturday, and the injury is more serious than it was at first thought to be.*

The *ing* action word groups at the beginning of a sentence should, as a rule, be made to pertain to the principal word (subject) in it. So also should almost every other type of word group (phrase) so placed. Note that in *To enjoy music relaxation is necessary, To enjoy music* has no personal relationship to hold to, no agency to pertain to. Say *To enjoy music you must relax,* and the initial phrase "ties" closely and logically with the other elements of the idea expressed. Note again *In the correction of my work I was scolded* that *In the correction of my work* is similarly suspended. The statement may ridiculously imply that I corrected my own work and scolded myself. But in *In the correction of my work the instructor scolded me* or *I was scolded by the instructor when he corrected my work* no word or word group is left "hanging," coherent relationships being established by the revision.

Essential parts are suspended, again, in such expressions as *While still a child, my grandmother taught me her native tongue* and *You must not try to bend the stick until thoroughly soaked.*

These are ridiculous, standing as they do, for the reason that *While still a child* and *until thoroughly soaked* are not clearly tied to a logical term. They are called elliptical expressions because words necessary to their completeness are omitted. Say *While I was still a child, my grandmother taught me her native tongue* and *You must not try to bend the stick until it is thoroughly soaked* and you supply the missing links necessary to logical statement (page 105).

The obvious omission in such phrases as *Mrs Jones and son* and *Mr Hubbard and wife* is so generally made (some of the best newspapers sanction it) that it has come to be expected if not everywhere accepted. But it is the sort of stenographic style that is frowned upon in business letter writing (page 92) as well as in most other types of composition. A popular society publication many years ago found itself in serious litigation as result of inserting a scandalous query at the point of omission in a phrase of the same kind clipped from the social news column of a daily paper. Strictly correct form requires *Mrs Jones and her son* and *Mr Hubbard and his wife.*

The omission of *it* in such sentences as *I have heard argued* and *I have heard discussed* and *I have heard debated* and *I have heard said* may be regarded as a serious mistake, though such expressions pass as localisms in many parts of the United States. Say, rather, *I have heard it argued* and *I have heard it discussed* and *I have heard it debated* and *I have heard it said,* the word *it* standing as substitute for an expressed or an implied statement preceding or following, as *I have heard it argued that the rates can easily be reduced.* Here the word group (clause) beginning with *that* means the same as *it;* the grammatical term is *apposition,* that is, the clause—*the rates can easily be reduced*—is highly pertinent to *it,* means the same as *it,* and is thus in *apposition* with *it.* In *I have heard tell,* the word *tell* represents an old usage (now chiefly provincial) meaning account or rumor or story, and the expression is equivalent to *I have heard it (the story) told (that the house is haunted,* for instance).

If you say *I trust that you will have success in this venture, and assure you of my very best wishes* you may cause temporary confusion in the mind of a reader—dissipate his attention—by omitting the subject of *assure.* Since *you* is the subject of *will have* he may naturally and justifiably assume that the last subject used is the

next one understood, as it customarily should be. But he is wrong in this case. The sentence should read *I trust that you will have success in this venture, and I assure you of my very best wishes.* The comma after *venture* helps to clarify but it is insufficient to bear the whole responsibility of clarification.

Again, if you say *The three boys who had annoyed me and I had warned several times before now confronted the magistrate* you scatter attention by omitting the object of *had warned.* This is naturally some form of *who* but since it must be objective rather than nominative, that is, a form different from the one already used, it must be expressed, thus, *The three boys who had annoyed me and whom I had warned several times before, now confronted the magistrate.* The same kind of error of omission occurs in *He whose honor and self-respect always stand him in good stead, and with such entrenchment of character has nothing to fear, is a fortunate man indeed.* Here the possessive relative *whose* in the first dependent clause supplies the concept for the subject of *has* but like *who* above lacks case precision. The correct reading must therefore be *He whose honor and self-respect always stand him in good stead, and who with such entrenchment of character has nothing to fear, is a fortunate man indeed.*

If you say *A bitter fight ensued between those who supported and opposed the candidate* you weaken the antonymous quality of *supported* and *opposed* by making them the compound predicate of a single subject—*who.* Two distinct parties are indicated by *fight* and *between,* and by the opposite meanings of the two verbs *supported* and *opposed.* The correct reading is *A bitter fight ensued between those who supported and those who opposed the candidate,* in which the subjects of the dependent clauses draw the party line sharply.

Certain verbs require pronominal complement. If you say *When I tapped on his window he opened* and *After he passed through the gate he closed* and *They availed of the lower rate* and *We must conduct properly* you leave construction suspended in each instance by sparing a pronoun. After *opened* and *closed* the pronoun *it* must be supplied (though the first two expressions are localisms); after *availed,* the reflexive pronoun *themselves,* and after *conduct* the reflexive pronoun *ourselves.* The verb *trouble* in such sentences as *Don't trouble to return it* and *I shall not trouble to look that up* was once invariably followed by a reflexive

pronoun—*Don't trouble yourself to return it* and *I shall not trouble myself to look that up.* The idiom is now changed and the pronoun is no longer regarded as essential though the purists still insist upon it.

If you say *We walked as far as the old oak tree where the path narrowed, and turned abruptly through the meadow* you may leave some doubt as to the subject of *turned.* The comma helps as far as writing is concerned, but it probably does not help sufficiently in speech. The personal pronoun *we* (preceded by *there*) must be supplied as subject of *turned,* or the comma must be omitted, the former yielding the more logical meaning.

If you say *I never have and I never will do such a thing* you omit some form of the verb *do* after the auxiliary *have.* Such omission makes a sentence incorrect when the understood form is not the same as the expressed form. If both forms are the same in such paralleled predicates, one may properly be omitted; thus, *I never have done and I never will do such a thing* and *He has always performed before and should have this time* Some form of the verb *do* may frequently be substituted for the latter verbal form in such expressions as these, as *He has always performed before and should have done so this time.* Note further that *Let him tell us whether he would have spoken as I have done* (or *spoken*) and *On entering the office today he appeared to be more nervous than he appeared* (or *was* or *had been*) *last week* are correct, that *Let him tell us whether he would have spoken as I* and *On entering the office today he appeared to be more nervous than last week* are insufficient.

Omission of the idiomatic verb makes for absurdity and awkwardness. If you say *I shall never forget the good food and the many friends I made at that hotel* you really permit *made* to be understood as the predicate of *food.* But this is not idiomatic within the meaning of the sentence. *I shall never forget the good food I had and the many good friends I made at that hotel* is the correct and intended meaning. If, however, the understood verb is in the same idiom as the verb expressed, its omission is not only permissible, but is recommended in order to avoid monotony of repetition, as *I shall never forget the beautiful buildings and the grand old trees that I saw on your college campus.*

In sentences such as *I meant to do something I forgot to* and *I failed to do something I meant to* the verb form following *to* is

preferably expressed. While it is not incorrect to end a sentence with a preposition, there are certain constructions (such as these two) which appear particularly awkward or not rounded out when the preposition is left hanging at the end. Moreover, the form of the understood term may not always be the same as the corresponding preceding form. The complete reading of the first is obviously *I meant to do something I forgot to do* but the second may be *I failed to do something I meant to do* or *I failed to do something I meant to have done.* In answer to *Are you going to the party?* the correct form may be *I think I ought to go,* not *I think I ought to.* In answer to *Did you go to the party?* the correct answer may be *No, but I think I ought to have gone,* not *I think I ought to* or *ought to've* (page 239).

It has been said that the three most illiterate errors in the construction of the verb are (1) the omission of *have* from the perfect infinitive after *ought* (2) the substitution of *of* for *have* in the perfect infinitive after *ought* (3) the use of an imperfect form for the infinitive. These are illustrated, respectively, as follows: *You ought to worked harder* for *You ought to have worked harder, You ought to of gone* for *You ought to have gone, It would have been better to retreated* for *It would have been better to retreat.*

If you say *I think you better not drive today* you omit the predicate of the dependent clause and clip *better* to "half an idiom" (page 282). The sentence should read *I think you had better not drive today* in which *drive* is an elliptical infinitive—*I think you had better not (to) drive today,* that is, *I think you ought not to drive today.* The verb following the idiom *had better* is always an elliptical infinitive, discoverable by expanding the construction as is done here. Note again *You had better have given the book to me than to the library* which, expanded, reads *You had done better to have given the book to me rather than to the library* or *You ought to have given the book to me rather than to the library.* In such constructions as these the present infinitive is usually identified with the indication of future time; the perfect infinitive, with past time. Your driving today, that is, is in the future; your giving the book to the library is in the past.

If you say *He is the greatest general in the army, and, what is of preeminent satisfaction to his countrymen, spending his energies at present in training recruits* you require your reader or lis-

tener to carry copulative *is (He is general)* over as an auxiliary before *spending;* that is, the understood *is* before *spending* functions in a different capacity from that of the preceding *is.* It has been pointed out above as a wasteful economy to require a word to be understood unless its exact form is used previously. The sentence must read *He is the greatest general in the army, and, what is of preeminent satisfaction to his countrymen, he is spending his energies at present in training recruits.* Economy becomes even more ungrammatical when it spares a verb form at the violation of number or person as in *Always remember how much more difficult and dangerous to manage these planes are, and how much simpler and easier this type.* Unless *is* is expressed as the predicate for *type,* the preceding verb *are* will automatically get itself understood. In *I am going to the festival and John too* the change of person between the two subjects requires a different form of the verb *be* after *John* from the one used after *I;* thus, the sentence should be expanded to *I am going to the festival, and John is too.*

Such action words as *act, comport, direct, govern, manage, operate, regulate, rule, superintend, supervise* are general in meaning and require modification (adverbial) to focus them, as *governed ably* and *supervised efficiently.* While the verbs *behave* and *conduct* belong in the same category the one is frequently and the other occasionally used without modification. It is correct to say *Behave yourself properly* and *Conduct yourself becomingly.* It is, strictly speaking, incorrect, because insufficient, to say *Behave yourself* and *Conduct yourself.* The latter would be unusual; the former is commonly heard and is idiomatic, and by inference it may mean *You are not behaving properly.* Moreover, pressure of usage (misusage) has brought the dictionaries to add to the definition of *behave* "to act or conduct oneself properly or suitably."

If you say *It is more valuable as well as satisfying to do one's studying alone* you do not make it clear whether you mean that it is more satisfying also. If you do mean this, then the adverb *more* must be used before *satisfying,* as *It is more valuable as well as more satisfying to do one's studying alone.* But your meaning may be *It is satisfying—it is also more valuable—to do one's studying alone,* though this is an unlikely interpretation of the original sentence—and an unequal paralleling of positive *satisfying* with comparative *more valuable.*

CONTEST *

NO	YES
1 That is a nicer car than I have ever had or ever shall	That is a nicer car than I have ever had or ever shall have
2 It is Professor Lance decided that the game must be postponed	Professor Lance is the one who decided that the game must be postponed
3 The coach told us that we better be on guard when we play Henderson	The coach told us that we had better be on guard when we play Henderson
4 Her failure to pass the test, and condition of health, has caused her to leave school	Her failure to pass the test, together with her condition of health, has caused her to leave school
5 He never had the courage that he ought to, and he never has and never will be the man his father was	He never had the courage that he ought to have had, and he never has been and never will be the man his father was
6 Every American should be as devoted to his flag as every Britisher	Every American should be as devoted to his flag as every Britisher is to his
7 Having arrived late they began the concert anew for us	Inasmuch as we were late in arriving, they began the concert anew for us
8 You should avail of every opportunity to serve your native land	You should avail yourself of every opportunity to serve your native land
9 Rub this prescription on the swollen part	The liniment made from this prescription should be rubbed on the swollen part
10 Mrs Mortimer Jones and daughter have come to town to see dentist and oculist	Mrs Mortimer Jones and her daughter have come to town to see their dentist and their oculist
11 I think you ought to started earlier in order to get everything done that you intended	I think you ought to have started earlier in order to get everything done that you intended to do
12 You will hardly be able to read as much as he has but you ought to	You will hardly be able to read so much as he has read but you ought to do so
13 Let me prove to you how much more devastating are the plane and the submarine, and how apparently trivial and futile by comparison the man-of-war	Let me prove to you how much more devastating are the plane and the submarine, and how apparently trivial and futile by comparison is the man-of-war
14 He is always ready to do what he feels to be his duty but I call anything but his duty	He is always ready to do what he feels to be his duty but what I call anything but his duty
15 My friends and acquaintances will always be welcome at my new studio, and shall try to entertain them as heretofore	My friends and acquaintances will always be welcome at my new studio, and I shall try to entertain them as heretofore

* See page 3.

	NO	YES
16	When the officers arrived they were evidently more interested than now	When the officers arrived they were evidently more interested than they now are
17	I admit I ought to waited, but the messenger who notified me and you had urged to hurry back was greatly confused in regard to the details	I admit I ought to have waited but the messenger who notified me and whom you had urged to hurry back, was greatly confused in regard to the details
18	No matter whom I substitute for or substitutes for me, the job must be done promptly	No matter whom I substitute for or who substitutes for me, the job must be done promptly
19	There was a long conference between those who voted yes and no on the issue	There was a long conference between those who voted yes and those who voted no on the issue
20	Those whose loyalty was certain and had nothing to conceal were given assignments at once	Those whose loyalty was certain and who had nothing to conceal were given assignments at once
21	You must not pass the drinks until thoroughly mixed	You must not pass the drinks until they are thoroughly mixed
22	Going west on the Malcolm Boulevard, our place is the first on the right after you cross bridge	Going west on Malcolm Boulevard you will find our place the first on the right after you cross the bridge
23	While waiting for the train the newspaper is a great convenience	I find the newspaper a great convenience while I am waiting for the train
24	Looking high and low for that old necktie there it was in the bathroom	Looking high and low for that old necktie I found it at last in the bathroom
25	To understand the subject thoroughly a trip should be made through the mills	To understand the subject thoroughly you should make a trip through the mills
26	I discovered that Chicago, from a distance, looked like a cloud of smoke	I discovered that Chicago, viewed from a distance, looked like a cloud of smoke
27	He drinks a great deal, I know, but he is far from the drunkard people would have you believe	He drinks a great deal, I know, but he is far from being the drunkard people would have you believe he is
28	He always drives along the old river road to where it joins the boulevard and then returns through the avenue of elms	He always drives along the old river road to where it joins the boulevard, and then he returns through the avenue of elms
29	I think he is more gifted as well as interesting than his predecessor, but every one thinks he should behave	I think he is more gifted as well as more interesting than his predecessor but every one thinks he should behave more discreetly
30	Having come to the United States only last month her knowledge of our language and customs is as yet far from complete	Having come to the United States only last month she has as yet far from a complete knowledge of our language and customs
31	While motoring through the city	While driving through the city the

	NO	YES
	the other day the beauty of the new city hall impressed me for the first time	other day I was impressed for the first time by the beauty of the new city hall
32	Before bringing you two more interesting news items have you ever got up in the morning with a ringing headache	Before bringing you two more interesting news items I should like to ask whether you have ever got up in the morning with a ringing headache
33	In his comments on our performance the audience laughed at his many facetious imitations	In his comments on our performance he caused laughter by his many facetious imitations

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SECTION THIRTEEN — ARTICLE

A great deal of misunderstanding has been caused in the use of English by the omission of the articles *a, an, the.* As the comma is to punctuation so these little words are to the parts of speech—small but mighty. Many a legal decision has hinged upon their correct use and upon this alone. If, for instance, you say *They have arrested the secretary and the treasurer of the company* you must mean that two officers of the company have been arrested. If you say *They have arrested the secretary and treasurer of the company* you must mean that one officer working in two capacities has been arrested. If you say one and mean the other, that is, if you are not careful about including or omitting that little word *the,* you are, to say the least, inaccurate, and this kind of inaccuracy might possibly in certain connections make you liable for something serious.

If you say *The boy has taken a pen and a pencil from my desk* you mean that the boy has taken two articles from your desk—a pen and a pencil. But if you say *The boy has taken a pen and pencil from my desk* you really say, though you may not mean to do so, that one article only was taken from your desk, namely, a utensil with, probably, a pen at one end and a pencil at the other. The separative quality of the repeated article *a* before *pencil* is thus seen to have importance. There is, of course, no likelihood of misunderstanding in such sentence as *A man and woman have just entered.* This sentence is clear without the repeated *a* before *woman,* and it offers no ground for misunderstanding. At the same time *A man and a woman have just entered* is a better, more

clear-cut and accurate expression, or, at least, so the purist will insist.

When the grouped terms in an expression represent ideas that are closely related or unified in type or quality, repetition of the article before the second (and succeeding ones if any) is not only unnecessary but sometimes absurd. *The red, white, and blue* means the American flag; so, too, does *the stars and stripes.* To repeat *the* before *white* and *blue* and *stripes* is correct only on condition that special emphasis of separation is desired. To say *In case of fire the women and children leave the ship first* is to indicate that women and children represent a single group, set apart perhaps from *the men* who will leave the ship next, and *the members* of the crew who will leave last

Again, in *He is paying plentifully for the fault and error of his way* no repetition of *the* before *error* is required because fault and error are so much the same. In *His life has been marked by the vices and the virtues of the man of the world* the article is used before *virtues* because it stands distinctly apart in connotation from the word—*vices*—with which it is connected by *and.* In cases, however, where terms of similar or related meanings are stated in rigidly classified form, emphasis may require repetition of the article, especially if all conjunctions are expressed (page 89); thus, *Please arrange on the proper cabinet shelves the salves and the liniments and the creams and the washes.* The emphasis may be made even stronger by the use of a comma before each *and.* It will be observed how much more expository and emphatic the above sentence is than *Please arrange on the proper cabinet shelves the salves, liniments, creams, and washes.* The former suggests orderly arrangement; the latter, merely placement in the cabinet.

The use of *a (an)* after *such* in, for instance, *Such a book cannot be too highly recommended* and *Such an applicant cannot be considered* is still idiomatic and correct. But logically the article is as little in place here as it is in *kind of a* and *sort of a* (page 33). Substitute the meaning of *a—one*—and it makes as little sense after *such* as it does after *kind of, sort of, manner of, style of, type of,* and *class of. Such book cannot be too highly recommended* and *Such applicant cannot be considered* will be regarded as correct tomorrow, if not late today.

Observe that *a red and a white balloon* means two balloons, one red and one white; that *a red and white balloon* means one balloon of two colors, that *the red and the white balloons* means a collection of red ones and a collection of white ones (or of both in the same collection); that *the red and white balloons* may mean a collection of balloons some of which are entirely red and some of which are entirely white, or all of which are mixed red and white, or (less likely) some of which are red, some white, and some mixed red and white. If in the collection of balloons some are all red and some are all white and some are mixed red and white, even the mighty article cannot be depended upon to differentiate, and the expression must be elaborated, as it is above. The article, in other words—be it *a, an,* or *the*—used before each of two or more connected adjectives modifying a single noun tends to individualize and separate, used before the first only, it tends to merge or combine.

So, if you say *We use the Wentworth and Higginson machines* you properly mean that you use machines made by a firm called *Wentworth and Higginson.* If you say *We use the Wentworth and the Higginson machines* you properly mean that you use some machines made by the firm of Wentworth, and some made by the firm of Higginson. If you say *We shall use the Wentworth or the Higginson machines* you properly mean that you shall use machines made by the Wentworth firm or those made by the Higginson firm. If you say *We shall use the Wentworth, or Higginson, machines* you properly mean that you are going to use one kind of machines that are sometimes referred to as Wentworth and sometimes as Higginson, the comma being used to set off an explanatory term or appositive (page 568).

If you say *The young teacher was tried by the parents' association and the trustees* you properly mean that the teacher was tried by two bodies probably at two separate or independent trials If you say *The young teacher was tried by the parents' association and trustees* you properly mean that he was tried by the two bodies acting together and at once in all probability.

While the omission of *a, an, the* may be a frequent cause of ambiguity and even of vagueness, the omission of other particles before name words may sometimes be equally confusing. If, for instance, you say *I have two dollar bills in my pocket,* you may mean that you have some bills in your pocket that are denomi-

nated two dollars or you may mean that you have two bills in your pocket each denominated one dollar. In writing, the hyphen may be depended upon to clarify, as *I have two-dollar bills* and *I have two dollar bills in my pocket,* the first of which means some twos and the second two ones. The hyphen is supposed to be heard a little, that is, there should be a slight pause after *two* in the latter, whereas in the former the term *two-dollar* should be run together by the voice. Better, however, than to depend upon such nice distinctions of pronunciation are *I have some two-dollar bills in my pocket* and *I have two one-dollar bills in my pocket.*

Terms connected by correlative conjunctions require the article before both (or more) or require its omission before both (or more); thus, *Neither boys nor girls agree to the proposition* or *Neither the boys nor the girls agree to the proposition* is correct. *Neither the boys nor girls agree to the proposition* is insufficient. Similarly, *He has both a car and a bicycle* is correct; *He has both a car and bicycle* is insufficient.

Euphony is the chief guide in deciding whether to use *a* or *an* before a word. The fundamental rule that prescribes *a* before consonant sounds and *an* before vowel sounds is generally observed in the United States but not always in England. The word *sounds* is the most important one in the rule. We say *a unit, a university, a one-armed man* because the word following *a* begins with a consonant *sound* though with a vowel letter—*a yunit, a yuniversity, a won-armed man.* Ear is the major agent of decision here, even where the printed page is concerned, for the "hearing eye" and the "seeing ear" unconsciously collaborate. True, *an unit, an unicycle, an one* are sometimes heard and are even sometimes seen. But these combinations are the result of ignorance or of oversight, or, more likely, of a specious reasoning that would make *y* and *w* vowels under certain conditions. In writings of the fifteenth century *an* was generally used before *w* and *y.*

The words *hot* and *house* and *hotel* are pronounced with aspirated *h* before *o,* thus, you say *a hot day, a house, a hotel.* The words *honest* and *honorable* and *hour,* however, do not begin with the consonant sound *h* in pronunciation but with the vowel sound *o;* thus, you say *an honest statement, an honorable man, an hour a day,* that is, *an onest statement, an onorable man, an our a day.* There are some speakers and writers even yet, especially in Eng-

land, who prefer to use *an* before a dissyllabic or longer word beginning with *h,* when the first letter is negatived by accent on some syllable other than the first. And this rule is also sometimes applied (particularly in England) to words beginning with *u;* thus, *an heroic act, an historical fact, an hypnotic influence, an university course* are correct under this rule. But these combinations do not represent the best present-day American usage.

A and *an* are called indefinite articles; *the,* the definite article. The indefinite articles pertain to the general; they do not specify. The definite article pertains to the particular; it does specify. You say *a man* or *an army* to mean any man or one man, any army or one army. You say *the man* or *the army* to mean some particular man or some particular army. As indicated above, *a* (which is the same as *an*) may convey the idea of one, was once the same as *one.* The instruction given on page 33 in regard to *kind of a, sort of a, style of a,* and so on, explains this original meaning of the indefinite articles. But *a (an)* and *one* now have distinctive uses also, many of which have been indicated above. It is by no means the same, for example, to say *I see one man in my office before breakfast every morning* and *I see a man in my office before breakfast every morning.* Each of these sentences is capable of more than one interpretation, of course, and colloquially they may be loosely used to mean the same, though they should not be. Now note the differentiation wrought by the articles in *I see a Mr Baldwin in my office* and *I see the Mr Baldwin in my office.*

The definite article *the* may sometimes be used for generalizing purpose, and so used it may be confusing. It nevertheless in such use follows the above rule but broadens its coverage. If you say *The cow is man's most valuable domestic animal* you use the article *The* to point out a special representative class of animal. *The cow* is a definite term, and *The* functions as a specifying article. So it does in *Don't go near the water* (the element called water) and *The poor* (a class of beings) *we have always with us.* But *the* is not used before terms that are inclusive and general, as in *Gold is precious* and *Man is mortal.* Here *The gold* and *The man* would be absurd for the reason that all gold is referred to in the one and all men in the other. *The* would, therefore, specialize where no specialization is honestly possible.

This (these) and *that (those)* are not articles but they are sometimes unnecessarily used for *the,* as in *This golden rule should*

guide us now and *That boy in the blue sweater is the culprit.* In the first the words *golden rule* are sufficient identification; in the second, *in the blue sweater* sufficiently identifies the boy. Both sentences should begin with *The* unless there is some special reason for double emphasis. There rarely is such reason, and double emphasis may weaken rather than strengthen (page 57). In colloquial usage such expressions as *this author Maugham, that man Turner, these women of the DAR, those McSorley twins* are commonly heard, and they may carry an intimacy of stress that *the* is incapable of. But this is seldom the case, and *the* is preferable usage.

CONTEST *

	NO	YES
1	Please take these orders to the chauffeurs and telegraphers	Please take these orders to the chauffeurs and the telegraphers
2	Those two positions have been filled by a Yale and Harvard man	Those two positions have been filled by a Yale and a Harvard man
3	There is an horde of people hoping for a honest political leader	There is a horde of people hoping for an honest political leader
4	Those two desks belong to the recording and corresponding secretary	Those two desks belong to the recording and the corresponding secretary
5	The twelfth and the last chapter is the most exciting in the book	The twelfth and last chapter is the most exciting in the book
6	You will soon learn that the theory of medicine differs from practice	You will soon learn that the theory of medicine differs from the practice
7	The principal and the faculty were sitting together on the platform	The principal and faculty were sitting together on the platform
8	The resolutions on the death of the dean will be presented to the trustees and mayor	The resolutions on the death of the dean will be presented to the trustees and the mayor
9	Now that the woman has the vote this frequently heard talk about equal rights takes on new meaning	Now that woman has the vote, the frequently heard talk about equal rights takes on new meaning
10	We want an university man for the sort of a position that only a true and a tried university man can fill	We want a university man for the sort of position that only a true and tried university man can fill
11	Between the mountain and river is situated the state college of agriculture	Between the mountain and the river is situated the state college of agriculture
12	She placed the bread and butter on the proper shelves	She placed the bread and the butter on the proper shelves

* See page 3.

	NO	YES
13	The bread and the butter taste good to him	The bread and butter tastes good to him
14	Have you packed the bread and butter and jam in their proper places in the lunch basket	Have you placed the bread and the butter and the jam in their proper places in the lunch basket
15	He eats the bread and the butter and the jam sandwich with enjoyment	He eats the bread and butter and jam sandwich with enjoyment
16	Don't go to either the party or lecture unless you can promise to come home early	Don't go to either the party or the lecture unless you can promise to come home early
17	I could not tell whether he was a white or colored man	I could not tell whether he was a white or a colored man
18	A great struggle is constantly going on betwen the flesh and spirit	A great struggle is constantly going on between the flesh and the spirit
19	Bring to me the poor and maimed and halt and blind	Bring to me the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind
20	He was speaking of the industry and heroism of the chap	He was speaking of the industry and the heroism of the chap
21	I left five dollar notes in the top drawer	I left five one-dollar notes in the top drawer

SECTION FOURTEEN — LINKAGE

Articles, conjunctions, and prepositions have been called the pesky sticks and straws of our language. The preceding section has shown that this uncomplimentary observation is deserved in part, at least, as far as the article is concerned. Whether the preposition and the conjunction deserve it in part or wholly must be decided by the contents of this section. They are used to link ideas, and the linking of expressional parts is quite as important as the parts themselves. Incoherent and illogical linkage may very easily throw a sentence so seriously out of gear as to make it unintelligible, no matter how expertly its other elements may be handled. The parallel between the isolated parts of a machine and those parts put together to make the machine run perfectly, and that between a sentence and its parts, must be too obvious to require elaboration.

The omission of prepositions verges closely upon slovenliness of speech (and writing) in many commonly used expressions. To say, for instance, *This is no use* and *I don't see what value that is* is to be loose almost to the extent of illiteracy. The preposition

of must, of course, be supplied, as *This is of no use* and *I don't see of what value that is.*

Similar to these sentences is the frequently used *There is no use trying to convince him* which leaves *trying* hanging or without construction, since *use* is subject of *is.* The preposition *in* is necessary to make the sentence grammatical, as *There is no use in trying to convince him.* The preposition *in* is unfortunately spared again in *I cannot find him any place.* The sentence should read *I cannot find him in any place.* But *I cannot find him anywhere* is probably a preferable reading, and no preposition is involved in it, for *anywhere* is an adverb. Note again that in the very colloquial *This room is ten feet width* and *That balloon is one foot diameter* the preposition *in* is required before *width* and before *diameter* to make the sentences correct.

The word *home* may be used without a preceding preposition when it has adverbial significance, as *He went home.* Here *home* may be construed as an adverb of direction. But *He is home* is wrong if the intended meaning is *He is at home.* In other words *at* is required before *home* when *home* is used as a noun meaning location. If *He is home* means *He has come home, home* is again adverbial indicating direction. The preposition *to* is never used before *home* unless modifying words come between *to* and *home,* as *They are going home* and *They are going to their old ancestral home.* Some authorities rule that *to* is always understood before *home,* and that in *He went home, (to) home* is an adverbial phrase of place modifying *went.* This is unnecessary, however, as *home* may, again, be an adverb of direction and is so classified by the dictionaries.

Such expressions as *Please give it me* and *I shall not write him* may be regarded as partly affected and partly commercial. The latter is reputable usage today, the former is not. *Please give it to me* and *I shall not write to him* are correct. The first is more important than the second because a grammatical principle is involved. When an indirect object *(me)* follows a direct object *(it)* the preposition should not be understood. It is understood when the order is reversed. The preposition *to* is clearly understood in *Please give (to) me the book* and *Give (to) me liberty or give (to) me death,* for in these the indirect object follows immediately after the verb. So, then, observe the correct forms *John gave me the book* and *John gave the book to me.*

In expressions in which it is desirable to make a distinction—to draw a line of demarcation—between parallel prepositional phrases, the use of the preposition is desirable in each one; thus, *I have great respect for his beliefs and for his achievements* and *I wonder whether he is speaking from experience or from reading* This means that the rule of the article in correlative expressions applies in a way to prepositions also. Say therefore *I believe neither in what he says nor in the work he is doing* and *I believe both in what he says and in the work he is doing.* Read without the repeated preposition—*I have great respect for his beliefs and achievements, I wonder whether he is speaking from experience or reading, I believe neither in what he says nor the work he is doing, I believe both in what he says and the work he is doing*—the prepositional objects appear to be merged and to lose identity. Indeed, omission of the second preposition after *either—or, whether—or, neither—nor* may cause ambiguity (as in the second example), may make one object seem to be appositional with the other, as in *He is either in the dumps or love* for *He is either in the dumps or in love.*

The foregoing rule applies likewise to infinitive phrases and to participial phrases. Say *I am happy to learn about this and to have your explanation* rather than *I am happy to learn about this and have your explanation, He succeeded in winning the coveted prize and in getting the scholarship also* rather than *He succeeded in winning the coveted prize and getting the scholarship also.*

It is important to remember that the verbal noun (page 34) contains so much of the nature of a noun that it cannot take an object. Care must be exercised, therefore, not to omit any preposition that should properly follow such verbal. *The sprinkling of water and the intoning of hymns make the ceremony impressive* has two verbal nouns as compound subject, each correctly preceded by *the* and each correctly followed by *of.* Read this sentence omitting one or both of the prepositions and ambiguity or vagueness or awkwardness (or all three) must be the result.

If you say *I was not offended at what he said to me but the way he said it* you omit the preposition *at* before *the way,* and thus throw your sentence out of parallel gear. Even more serious than this is the fact that, by omitting *at,* you may lead your hearer to expect a predicate for *way—but the way he said it annoyed me.* The

sentence should, of course, read *I was not offended at what he said but at the way (in which) he said it.*

If you say *I have great respect and faith in the man* you omit the idiomatic preposition *for* after *respect.* Inasmuch as the parallel nouns connected by *and* are not idiomatically followed by the same preposition, each requires prepositional adjustment to what follows, and the reading should be *I have great respect for and faith in the man.* When in such construction as this the same preposition is idiomatic one only need be used, as in *I have great respect and love for the man.* This type of suspended construction should, in any event, be used sparingly. In this connection it is worth noting that a verb used in one sense may sometimes require a preposition after it, used in another it may not; thus, *I protest (assert, avow) my sincerity about this* and *I protest (declare) against the severity of the punishment.*

The omission of *of* after *type* in such expressions as *what type of car* and *what type of carpet* has become almost a threat to the English language. *Type* used in the sense of *kind, style, manner, class, sort, fashion,* as it is in these illustrations, should always be followed by *of. What kind car, what style carpet, what manner man, what class machine, what sort fellow, what fashion hat,* and *what type desk* are all improprieties of omission.

But the forms *What price glory, What price liberty, What price peace* have become acceptable as result of their adoption by newspapers and other mediums. Their elliptical quality gives them value as three-word slogans. But they have been and are still much overused. Without the ellipsis they read *What price do* (or *must*) *we pay for glory* (or *liberty* or *peace*). The tense of the supplied verb is variable; it may be *What price did we* or *What price shall we* or *What price should we.* And the expression may be second or third person as well as first, as *What price do you* and *What price do they.*

The failure to repeat a relation word (preposition) after *as well as* may cause ambiguity as well as absurdity (page 66). In *The coffee goes through the strainer as well as the cloth* and *The ice crashed over the dam as well as the trees* there is doubt as to whether the cloth went through the strainer in the first sentence, as to whether the trees crashed over the dam in the second. The first should probably read *The coffee goes through the strainer as well as through the cloth,* and the second *The ice crashed over the*

dam as well as over the trees. But *Both the ice and the trees crashed over the dam* is a logical reading of the second.

Either *He graduated from college* or *He was graduated from college* is correct form today, the latter still being insisted upon by the purists. *Graduate* in this use was once an intransitive verb only but usage has worn it down to transitive use as well. Observe, however, that the preposition *from* is required after it, used as it is above, either actively or passively. Do not say *He graduated college* or *He was graduated college.* But the preposition *by* or *in* may be correct, as *He was graduated by Yale* and *He graduated in law,* not *He was graduated Yale* and *He graduated law.* It is always incorrect to use *out of* in such connections as these. *I was graduated out of Yale* and *He is going to be graduated out of medicine in June* are illiterate forms. *We shall graduate your son in June* is, however, so stubbornly colloquial as to demand acceptance if not respect, poor relation though it is of such expression as *The authorities will graduate the income tax.*

If you say *I saw the man set the hen* you mean that through the use of your eyes you perceived the man in the act of setting the hen. If you say *I saw that the man set the hen* you mean that you exercised the power of making the man set the hen. If you say *I heard Flanagan spread the rumor* you mean that through the use of your ears you perceived Flanagan in the act of spreading the rumor. If you say *I heard that Flanagan spread the rumor* you mean that some one or more than one told you that Flanagan had spread the rumor. Action words that have the same form in all parts, such as *beat, beset, broadcast, burst, cast, cost, hurt, let, rid, set, shed, shred, spread,* are especially likely to convey a very different meaning when the introductory word to a following noun clause is omitted, from the one they convey when the introductory word is expressed. In short colloquial expressions introductory *that* is by no means always required before a noun clause object, as *He said he would go, They insisted the train would leave on time, He thought they had arrived long before.* But in long and formal expressions of this kind, and particularly in sentences such as those above in which meaning hinges upon its use, the introductory (conjunctive) *that* should be used.

In compound noun clauses the introductory word (usually *that*) should be used consistently before every clause (page 21), or it should be omitted before all clauses. It is correct to say *He in-*

sisted that they had gone and that they would not return. Though not necessarily incorrect, it is at least inconsistent to say *He insisted they had gone and that they would not return.* But both euphony and rhythm are very often deciding factors in omitting or including *that* in constructions such as are here discussed.

The sentence *He walks, talks, reads, and rests* illustrates normal connection of a serial expression; that is, words in a series and in parallel construction are usually separated by the comma with the exception of the last two which may be separated by a conjunction. If the conjunction is used between the last two the comma is preferably placed before that conjunction (page 565). But in *I came, I saw; I conquered* this normal connection is not observed, for the reason that a more rapid reading and more vivid impression is desired. In *I reason and argue and reprove and punish the boy, all without avail* normal connection is again departed from, for the reason that a slow reading pace is desirable in order to emphasize the exercise of patience. This latter style of connection is said to be *syndetic* (*polysyndetic* where such connection is excessive), a Greek word meaning serving to unite, the former is said to be *asyndetic,* that is, without connection. Which of these three methods of connection it is desirable to use must be decided in the mind of a speaker or a writer in accordance with the thought that he wishes to express and the purpose he has in expressing it. Sparing conjunctions altogether may cause confusion; using them to excess may cause tediousness and monotony; sparing some and including others may be a happy, normal medium in usage.

But note that in a short compound sentence in which opposition of terms is important, the omission of the conjunction very often sharpens and vivifies the contrast. You may say *He is a sportsman but not a gambler* or *He is a sportsman but he is not a gambler,* and in ordinary conversation your contrast is probably sufficiently well drawn. But if you are arguing in a certain man's behalf, you may bring to bear a more lively refutation perhaps by saying *He is a sportsman, not a gambler* or *He is a sportsman; he is not a gambler.* Mark Antony's pointed "I come to bury Caesar, not to praise him" reveals him as "the plain blunt man." Even if he had been speaking in prose instead of in blank verse, it would have been "out of character" for him to say "I come to bury Caesar rather than to praise him" or "I come to bury Caesar, but not to praise him."

CONTEST *

	NO	YES
1	I saw he went	I saw (*or* saw to it) that he went
2	I have been home all day	I have been at home all day
3	It is no use to look there	It is of no use to look there
4	Members of the team protest the new order	Members of the team protest against the new order
5	I am not going to deprive him it	I am not going to deprive him of it
6	He's going to try every way to be there	He's going to try in every way to be there
7	Please give it me and go your way	Please give it to me and go (on) your way
8	We expect to be home for Christmas	We expect to be at home for Christmas
9	We heard the Colorado dam burst while we were in New York	While we were in New York we heard that the Colorado dam had burst
10	We were told that the doors and windows rattled when we heard that the dam burst	We were told that the doors and windows rattled when the dam burst
11	What's the use denying he is ill and that he can't do the job	What's the use in denying that he is ill and that he can't do the job
12	Necessity is the mother of invention as well as industry	Necessity is the mother of invention as well as of industry
13	He has fled away from the detectives and gone to Canada or South America	He has escaped the detectives and fled to Canada or to South America
14	The bombing the building has necessitated the drawing new plans at once	The bombing of the building has necessitated the drawing of new plans at once
15	This couldn't have happened any other time, and I'm sorry to lose my place and bother you for another	This couldn't have happened at any other time, and I'm sorry to lose my place and to bother you for another
16	We have gone out of our way to be generous and considerate of you	We have gone out of our way to be generous to and considerate of you
17	Please extend to him whatever of courtesy and whatever of generosity you can	Please extend him whatever courtesy and generosity you can
18	I am going to the city to pay my taxes and see whether there are any bargains at the shops	I am going to the city to pay my taxes and to see whether there are any bargains at the shops
19	I told him I thought he was wrong in giving so much and expecting others to give the same amount	I told him I thought he was wrong in giving so much and in expecting others to give the same amount
20	He said he was delighted with everything he saw and the manner in which he was received	He said he was delighted with everything he saw and with the manner in which he was received

* See page 3

	NO	YES
21	He said he was going, that nobody could stop him, and he'd like to see somebody try to stop him	He said that he was going, that nobody could stop him, and that he'd like to see anybody try to stop him
22	I heard Turner broadcast his great message both at night and morning	I heard Turner broadcast his great message both at night and in the morning
23	The rug is eighteen feet length and sixteen breadth	The rug is eighteen feet in length and sixteen in breadth
24	What type specialized work he expects to do after he graduates medicine, I cannot say	What type of specialized work he expects to do after he graduates in medicine, I cannot say
25	This grand little car ran straight through the forest as well as a herd of cattle	This grand little car ran straight through the forest as well as straight through a herd of cattle

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SECTION FIFTEEN — ABBREVIATION

The old effusions that were once regarded as essential to etiquette in English are now curious, and nothing more. *Satisfy the chair's desire to embrace you* and *Honor my arm with your precious hand* for *Please sit* and *Please take my arm* have had their day, less glorious than inglorious be it reported. But there are still certain standards of expression, even in the ordinary give-and-take of conversation, that are better observed than ignored, for selfish reasons at least, if for no better ones. The flat, point-blank *You're wrong,* for example, is always out of order, no matter what its provocation. *Perhaps you're right, but don't you think there is something to be said for this side of the issue* will salve ruffled feeling, if any, as the interrogative form of disagreement usually does.

Your voice has promise under training said a stage director to an aspirant. He might have said truly, though brutally and unpsychologically, *Your voice is husky and unpleasant, and it will never do for this part.* Do not tell a lady that her right foot is larger than her left, when you may just as easily say that her left foot is smaller than her right. Do not tell a person—especially a young person—that he has blundered badly when you may just as easily say that you hope he will do better next time. *How bad you look* and *How clumsy you are* and *You've disappointed me terribly,* and other similar expressions, are all violations of etiquette in English in average conversational intercourse. There are, to be sure,

times when "brutal frankness" must be expressed, but they are really few and far between.

The following is illustrative of a prevalent discourtesy in expression: The members of a formal dinner party were discussing the sudden death of a man known to all of them. "He died, I understand, of a *thrum bah' sis,*" said Harry LeGrand. "Oh, I didn't know it was a case of *thram' b' sis,*" commented Bob Gunderson, with conscious or unconscious impoliteness. "Strange. Two of his brothers also died of a *throwm bay' sis,*" remarked Jimmy Hale, sneakingly attempting to correct two bad pronunciations with another bad one. All three were, of course, ignorant of the correct pronunciation of the word (*thrŏm bō' sis* riming with *Tom no' kiss*). What was even worse, they were ignorant of the ordinary etiquette of English expression.

Jim and Harry and I received prizes is more courteous than *I and Jim and Harry received prizes,* and it is more courteous even though the prize I received was the most distinguished of the three awards. But *I and Jim and Harry must take the blame for this outrage* is more courteous than *Jim and Harry and I must take the blame for this outrage.* The rule of etiquette is that modesty in honor requires me to name myself last in the first example; that conscientiousness in acknowledging my own fault requires me to name myself before naming others.

"Bernhardt looks like my sister," said the gushing debutante, proud that her sister had been permitted to "walk on" momentarily at a stage performance. "No, no, my dear," replied the Divine Sarah's vigilant press agent, "your sister may look like Bernhardt, but the great Bernhardt looks like no one else in the world. Others may be ambitious to resemble her but she couldn't possibly look like any other person."

Of the many forms of discourtesy in expression abbreviation or short-cutting of any sort remains the most general. Its being unintentional in no way minimizes its seriousness. In commercial paper and in telegrams and cablegrams, abbreviation is of course the rule, but these mediums are special, and do not fall within the scope of discussion just here. The day has happily passed, however, when business letter writing and business English in general may be condescendingly characterized by such curt curtailments of phraseology as *Yours received and contents noted, Enclosed is check for ten dollars, Address reply care Greenwich*

National, Expecting early reply Yours truly. Time was when students of the subtle art of letter writing—especially business letter writing—were actually instructed to use such expressions, and to regard them as contributory to correct letter tone. But those days are no more, and the *I now take my pen in hand to let you know that I am well and hope you are the same* of a somewhat earlier time, has also passed—more happily, if possible—from the requirements of friendly letter composition.

In addition to being ungrammatical, the abridged or elliptical expressions above (and a host of others like them) are now hackneyed, and the letter writer who uses them today is likely to be penalized directly or indirectly, just as in an earlier day he was penalized for not doing so. *Your letter has been received and read, We enclose a check for ten dollars ($10.), Please address your answer in care of the Greenwich National Bank, Expecting an early reply, I am Yours truly* have, at least, the virtue of grammatical completeness—if not exactly Shavian sparkle of tone.

The number of omissions—"spare parts"—in the average business letter of a quarter of a century ago was very often but slightly less than that of supplied parts. The use of *yours* to mean your letter, your telegram, your message, of *ult* for last month, *inst* for present month, *prox* for next month; of *at hand* for received, and *noted* for read, of subjectless *beg to say* or *would say* or *will say,* of *same* in reference to a letter received *(in reply to same),* of nouns without proper articles or other modification before them, as *enclose check for amount* instead of *I enclose a check for the amount, check received* for *Your check is received, manager Coleman Company* for *manager of the Coleman Company;* of the dangling participial closing or the *and oblige* closing without established grammatical relationship—the use of any of these ungrammatical and hackneyed forms, and of others in the same category (page 290), deservedly brands a letter writer as an assassin of syntax and an antediluvian in style.*

Such obsolete abbreviation forms as y^e for *the,* y^t for *that,* w^t for *with,* w^h for *who* or *which,* sometimes revived in advertising and other printed matter for the sake of securing antique tone or quality, do not belong under the sweeping generalization above in regard to abbreviations (page 508). And there are times when

* See *Take a Letter, Please* by the same author, published by Funk and Wagnalls Company

and places where the use of the normal abbreviation is itself convenient and important. Such abbreviations, for example, as *Ltd* and *Inc* and *BVD* and *QED* come to have an established signification that would be lost to a degree were the terms they stand for written out. They have acquired individuality. Writing and speaking would become very labored and bungling if our many governmental departments had to be referred to by full names rather than by abbreviations every time they were mentioned. To say or write "The secretary of the Eastern Zone Army Air Corps Mail Operations is conferring with the Office of Price Administration and Civilian Supply and will later in the day hold a joint meeting of the Public Works Emergency Housing Corporation and the Federal Home Loan Bank Board" is unnecessarily exhausting when one may by administrative shorthand say "The secretary of EZAACMO is conferring with OPACS and will later in the day hold a joint meeting of PWEHC and FHLBB." A "pony" may be necessary for one unacquainted with government organization and Federal phraseology, and may be had free of charge. But in less pretentious realms DAR and SPE and SPCA and YMHA (periods may be used) are handy and, perhaps, sometimes necessary.

Abbreviations should, in the main, be used most sparingly. With the exception of those that are found imperative to technical composition, and of those that are accepted as standard in general composition, such as *Mr, Mrs, Dr, St, Esq, Jr, Sr, LittD, DD, LLD, PhD,* they save little time and space, and may even be more wasteful of attention than completely written-out terms. Moreover, in letters, on envelopes, in public papers, they may convey to many persons both a haste and an abruptness akin to rudeness.

Monsieur is preferably abbreviated *M* but *Mons* is a permissible English abbreviation. *Messieurs* is preferably abbreviated *MM* but *Messrs* is a generally used American abbreviation of *Messieurs*. *Madame* (short for *ma dame*) is abbreviated *Mme,* and the plural *Mesdames* is abbreviated *Mmes;* these are generally used in English for *Lady* and *Ladies* respectively, in the absence—as yet—of an authorized *L* and *Ls*. *Mlle* and *Mlles* are the abbreviated forms of *Mademoiselle* (short for *ma demoiselle*) and *Mesdemoiselles* respectively, the English equivalents being *Miss* and *Misses,* which are not abbreviations (page 458).

The abbreviation of personal names is especially objectionable. Besides, many of them represent little if any economy, as for in-

stance *Jas* for *James, Jno* for *John, Josh* for *Joshua, Robt* for *Robert, Walt* for *Walter.* Surnames should never be abbreviated, women's given names should never be. The young man who wrote in answer to an examination question such hieroglyphics as *Hen V* and *Mer of Ven* and *12th Ngt* by *Wm Shak* deserved zero on the answer, for mental tendency evinced. And the reporter on a rural weekly who writes *Mrs Wms Wednesdayed in town doing some shopping in preparation for Decembering in the South* will probably be a long, long time getting promoted to a metropolitan daily.

It is true, of course, that such words as *Colorado* and *California* and *Pennsylvania, Cincinnati* and *Minneapolis* and *Tallahassee* may be justifiably abbreviated on occasion. But more often than not it will be found that these words used in an inside address or on an envelope, or elsewhere, may be so placed when written out as to give a balance and a uniformity that their abbreviations would never afford. Moreover, most abbreviations are hybrids. They "just happen." They develop sometimes out of a feeling for haste in writing, labeling, and classifying; sometimes—out of laziness. Their construction is more or less haphazard (chiefly more) and what little system may be observable among their various forms is coincidental rather than studied or deliberate.

Sometimes the first letter and the last letter of a word suffice for its abbreviation, as *ht* for *height;* sometimes the first letter, the last letter or letters, and a letter or letters from between, as *mdse* for *merchandise;* sometimes the first two or three letters are used, as *art* for *article,* or the first two letters and the last, as *amt* for *amount.* In the abbreviation of expressions of more than one word, the initial letters only may be used, as *c o d* for *cash on delivery;* the initial letters of the two most important words may be written in fractional form, as *b/s* for *bill of sale;* the first letter of the first word and two or more of the second may be used, as *b rec* for *bills receivable.* Plurals may be formed by the addition of *s,* as *bl* for *bale* and *bls* for *bales;* or they may be formed by doubling the letter used to denote the singular, as *p* for *page* and *pp* for *pages, p s* for *post script* and *p ss* for *post scripts* (if there are more than two, the better practice is to number them). There are still other generalizations that might be made, but sufficient has been here given to show that abbreviations are not words, not English words, and only fractionally English in any sense. Their composition on analysis is seen to be not only haphazard but

and places where the use of the normal abbreviation is itself convenient and important. Such abbreviations, for example, as *Ltd* and *Inc* and *BVD* and *QED* come to have an established signification that would be lost to a degree were the terms they stand for written out. They have acquired individuality. Writing and speaking would become very labored and bungling if our many governmental departments had to be referred to by full names rather than by abbreviations every time they were mentioned. To say or write "The secretary of the Eastern Zone Army Air Corps Mail Operations is conferring with the Office of Price Administration and Civilian Supply and will later in the day hold a joint meeting of the Public Works Emergency Housing Corporation and the Federal Home Loan Bank Board" is unnecessarily exhausting when one may by administrative shorthand say "The secretary of EZAACMO is conferring with OPACS and will later in the day hold a joint meeting of PWEHC and FHLBB." A "pony" may be necessary for one unacquainted with government organization and Federal phraseology, and may be had free of charge. But in less pretentious realms DAR and SPE and SPCA and YMHA (periods may be used) are handy and, perhaps, sometimes necessary.

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stance *Jas* for *James, Jno* for *John, Josh* for *Joshua, Robt* for *Robert, Walt* for *Walter.* Surnames should never be abbreviated, women's given names should never be. The young man who wrote in answer to an examination question such hieroglyphics as *Hen V* and *Mer of Ven* and *12th Ngt* by *Wm Shak* deserved zero on the answer, for mental tendency evinced. And the reporter on a rural weekly who writes *Mrs Wms Wednesdayed in town doing some shopping in preparation for Decembering in the South* will probably be a long, long time getting promoted to a metropolitan daily.

It is true, of course, that such words as *Colorado* and *California* and *Pennsylvania, Cincinnati* and *Minneapolis* and *Tallahassee* may be justifiably abbreviated on occasion. But more often than not it will be found that these words used in an inside address or on an envelope, or elsewhere, may be so placed when written out as to give a balance and a uniformity that their abbreviations would never afford. Moreover, most abbreviations are hybrids. They "just happen." They develop sometimes out of a feeling for haste in writing, labeling, and classifying; sometimes—out of laziness. Their construction is more or less haphazard (chiefly more) and what little system may be observable among their various forms is coincidental rather than studied or deliberate.

Sometimes the first letter and the last letter of a word suffice for its abbreviation, as *ht* for *height,* sometimes the first letter, the last letter or letters, and a letter or letters from between, as *mdse* for *merchandise,* sometimes the first two or three letters are used, as *art* for *article,* or the first two letters and the last, as *amt* for *amount.* In the abbreviation of expressions of more than one word, the initial letters only may be used, as *c o d* for *cash on delivery,* the initial letters of the two most important words may be written in fractional form, as *b/s* for *bill of sale;* the first letter of the first word and two or more of the second may be used, as *b rec* for *bills receivable.* Plurals may be formed by the addition of *s,* as *bl* for *bale* and *bls* for *bales;* or they may be formed by doubling the letter used to denote the singular, as *p* for *page* and *pp* for *pages, p s* for *post script* and *p ss* for *post scripts* (if there are more than two, the better practice is to number them). There are still other generalizations that might be made, but sufficient has been here given to show that abbreviations are not words, not English words, and only fractionally English in any sense. Their composition on analysis is seen to be not only haphazard but

higgledy-piggledy. These two points may be important, however, for those who feel that they cannot get along without using abbreviations: Abbreviations other than titular should be capitalized only provided the words they stand for are capitalized; and periods are rapidly disappearing from abbreviations, though they may still be used. At present there is unfortunately much confusion in regard to the latter. If periods are used, needless to say they should be used consistently throughout a piece of copy; if they are omitted, they should be consistently omitted. The most overused abbreviation of all is *etc.* It is used indiscriminately as well as promiscuously to cover a multitude of lapses and vacuities in both written and oral expression. Pray you, avoid it. It means *and so forth, and so on, and the like.* The *et* is the Latin word for *and;* the *c* is the first letter of *cætera* meaning other things, *cæteri* meaning other men, *cæteræ* meaning other women; it should be written and pronounced accordingly but it rarely is, *cætera* or *cetera* being used in both speech and writing for all genders. Do not use the combination symbol and letter sign—*&c*—for *etc* in written composition. The spaced writing—*et c*—is preferred by some authorities inasmuch as two words are represented, and two-word and longer abbreviations are frequently spaced as the words themselves would be if written out. But this form is seldom seen in the United States.

A contraction of a word is made usually by the omission of letters or syllables from somewhere within and the retention of first and last letters or syllables, the omission being denoted by an apostrophe, as *m'f'd* for *manufactured* and *rec't* for *receipt* (page 461). But slovenly pronunciation of the end of a word, especially of *ing,* amounts to a contraction, though not as a substitute for abbreviation. *Happenin'* for *happening, mornin'* for *morning, doin'* for *doing* are, as a rule, illiterate contractions. A contraction is never followed by a period, an abbreviation never contains an apostrophe. The colloquialisms *don't, can't, won't, it's, I'd,* and the numerous other shortenings used in everyday conversation, are contractions (page 239).

The word *elision* may be used as a technical term in poetry; *contraction* belongs mainly to prose. But elision takes place in a contraction. It means the omission or suppression or "striking out" of a part of a word for the purpose of easing expression and making hearing more agreeable. In *e'er* the letter *v* is elided; in *wat'ry,* the letter *e.* Elision should never be used for effect in

prose. While *'tis* and *wat'ry* are proper elisions in poetry, they are not suitable forms for prose. It was the practice of Greek and Latin poets, as of most English poets up to the nineteenth century, to suppress the final vowel of a word if the next word began with a vowel; the two vowels were thus merged or coalesced, and reading was accordingly accommodated; thus, *And then, the more t' enrich his speech he brings* in which perfect iambic measure is preserved to the line by eliding *o* before *e* in *enrich* and making the third foot almost *tĕn rich*. If, through scanning, the meter makes it unnecessary to elide the first vowel, that vowel is then said to be open; thus, in Edward FitzGerald's quatrain

> O thou, who Man of baser Earth did'st make,
> And ev'n with Paradise devise the Snake,
> For all the Sin wherewith the Face of Man
> Is blacken'd—Man's forgiveness give—and take!

there are three elisions marked by the apostrophe, but *e* in *give* before *a* in *and* (in the last verse) is an open vowel inasmuch as the meter at that point is perfect without elision. The slight pronunciation pause or "gap" between two such concurrent vowels (here increased by the dash) is called *hiatus*. In words like *co-operate* and *re-enter* this pause or hiatus is indicated by a hyphen or by a dieresis over the second vowel—*cooperate* and *reenter* (page 531). *Internal hiatus* occurs when the pronunciation pause is required within a word for the separation of the two vowels coming together, as in *preempt* and *zoology; external hiatus,* when the two vowels occur in separate words, as *die ignominiously* and *the editors.* In illiterate pronunciation a consonant very often slips into external hiatus, as *the very idear of it.* In general usage *hiatus* may refer to any opening or gap—to any omitted or suspended part of a sentence such as is discussed in section XII—usually in a humorous sense, as *There was a hiatus between his collar and his tie* and *The hiatus between the road and the bridge is too wide for traffic.*

CONTEST *

NO	YES
1 Yrs t'ly, Wm. Al. Jas, Jno.st'n., Pa	Yours truly, William Albert James, Johnstown, Pennsylvania
2 Beg leave to inform yrs. not rec'd on date specified	I inform you that your letter was not received on the date specified

* See page 3.

NO	YES
3 Leaving N O., La., 20 inst Address 12 St. Th. Pl., N.Y., N Y. F'lly, Wil.	I leave New Orleans, Louisiana, on the twentieth of this month Address 12 St Thomas Place, New York City Faithfully, Wilbur (Wilfred, Willard)
4 Accept heartiest on marriage. Trust have pleasure seeing you soon	Accept my heartiest congratulations on your marriage. I trust I may have the pleasure of seeing you soon
5 Would advise shipment sent on date mentioned by route requested	The shipment was sent to you on the date mentioned and by the route requested
6 At present wire stock depleted; fill order on replenishment	Our wire stock is depleted at present; we shall fill your order on its replenishment
7 Expecting early reply and good wishes, remain S'ly yr frd, Ol.	I am expecting an early reply. With good wishes I remain, Sincerely yours, Oliver
8 I find 'tis unlikely we shall be able to come owing to num'rous other engagements	I find it is unlikely we shall be able to come owing to numerous other engagements
9 Chairs desired no longer carried; see cat enc for sub stock Hoping to receive order, Yrs etc	We no longer carry the chairs you desire, but the enclosed catalog will show you our substitute stock We hope you will find in it something to your liking Yours very truly
10 Yrs of 12 inst. recd, and contents noted. In reply would say check sent as per request care Thompson 30 ult	We have your letter of the twelfth. The check was sent to you, in accordance with your request, in care of Thompson, on the thirtieth of last month
11 Mr. and Mrs Jas Witherspn, who are Februarying in our midst, Januaryed in Florida	Mr and Mrs James Witherspoon, who are spending February in this community, were in Florida during January
12 In the opinion of me and my assistant you do not look so well in the brown suit as in the gray	In the opinion of my assistant and me you look extremely well in the gray suit

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SECTION SIXTEEN — REFERENCE

Sometimes the logic of an expression is seriously impaired by attributing to a word an idea that it does not possess, and thus by inferring a connection that does not naturally follow. This kind of mistake is just as serious as the dangling or suspended error (page 70) and is akin to it. If, for instance, you say *Ninety of the*

names on the list may be depended upon to contribute you attribute to *names* the power of contribution. The break in logic between the first part and the second part of the statement is not only absolute but ridiculous. Mere names may not be depended upon for anything. The omission of *persons* (or of some other noun denoting a group of people) in the complete subject leaves the complete predicate "stranded." In *Ninety of the persons named* (or *listed*) *may be depended upon to contribute* or *Ninety persons among those named may be depended upon to contribute* there is a coherent flow of idea, the complete subject leading logically into the complete predicate.

Note again that in *That moving picture took place in the Far East* the idea is inadequately expressed because of the omission of *events* or *episodes* or *action of*. The statement should read *The events of that moving picture took place in the Far East.* The moving picture itself, if it can be said to have taken place anywhere, took place on the screen or in the studio.

If you say *Bill is an excellent marksman, skill in which he has attained through long practice* you leave the word *which* (pronoun) hanging without any definite word to refer to. In an indefinite way it refers, of course, to *marksman,* and almost any reader or listener can "get your idea." But it is obviously absurd for *which* to refer to *marksman*—to say that Bill has attained his skill through long practice in marksman. Say rather *Bill's marksmanship, which has been attained through long practice, is excellent* or *Bill is an excellent marksman, his skill in marksmanship having been attained through long practice* or *Bill's excellent marksmanship has been attained through long practice* in which the supplying of *marksmanship* gives the idea grammatical and, therefore, logical continuance.

Observe again that in *Bill likes to work with airplanes and he has chosen it as his life work* the word *it* is left without any definite word to pertain to. The idea of its reference is contained in *airplanes,* but here, as in the above example, the idea is by no means specific, and there is technical disagreement of terms. In *Bill likes to work in mechanical aviation and he has chosen it as his life work* the word *it* now definitely pertains to *aviation.* This reading is also correct: *Bill likes to work with airplanes and he has chosen mechanical aviation as his life work* (page 154).

The omission of abstract form (as in the above sentence)—or the substitution of concrete form for abstract—may result in an error of omission as serious as that in the comparative *He has a nose like an eagle* (page 64), thus, if you say *He has been promoted to a general* or *Our manager has been advanced to the president* your subject and predicate in each statement not only presuppose but obligate abstract follow-up—*generalship* in the first and *presidency* in the latter. Omit *a* before *general* and *the* before *president,* and the sentences will still be incorrect. But they may read *He has been made* (or *has become*) *a general* and *Our manager has been made* (or *has become*) *the president,* and the preceding article in each instance may or may not be omitted.

Observe further that in *You must not cut in closely in front of another car, it* (or *that*) *is a serious breach of road courtesy* there is no definite word for *it* (or *that*) to refer to or substitute for. The general idea of relationships can be gathered, but precise speech and writing require specific, clear-cut references or—these being impossible—substitutions for pronouns. The sentence must be revised to read *You must not cut in closely in front of another car; to do so is a serious breach of road courtesy* or *You must not cut in closely in front of another car, "cutting-in" is a serious breach of road courtesy* or *Cutting-in closely in front of another car is a serious breach of road courtesy; you must not do it.* The substitution of *something that* or *this sort of thing* or *such action as this* for *it (that)* are never recommended in a sentence such as this, for the reason that they are themselves indefinite terms, and like *etc, and so on, and the like* merely "clutter up" rather than clarify (page 154).

If you say *Your order is received; it will be filled at once and sent to you tomorrow* you may mean that certain merchandise will be sent at once, but what you really say is that the order—presumably a paper on which items are listed—will be returned to the customer. You may receive an order; you may fill it; and you send in return, not the order, but the goods or merchandise called for in the order; thus, *Your order is received; it will be filled at once and the goods will be sent to you tomorrow.*

Note that in *Tommy is delighted with the gadgets and the experiments in physics* the meaning probably is *Tommy is delighted with the gadgets he has to use and the experiments he has to perform* (or *that are performed*) *in his study of physics* (or *in his*

physics laboratory). The former statement may mean the latter, but, taken at face value, it may mean only that he is an observer in a classroom or laboratory. The parts omitted from it leave meaning vague, and may justify, perhaps, interpretations in addition to the one here given.

CONTEST *

	NO	YES
1	Dickens' *A Tale of Two Cities* takes place principally in London and Paris	The events of Dickens' *A Tale of Two Cities* take place in London and Paris
2	Write to the even numbers on this mailing list, please	Write to those persons whose names appear opposite the even numbers on this mailing list, please
3	Sarah has decided to become a pianist which is the music she has always liked best	Inasmuch as Sarah has always preferred piano music to any other, she has decided to become a pianist
4	You should never smoke in a passenger elevator, it is not considered good form	Smoking in a passenger elevator is not considered good form, you should never do it
5	Harry has just been advanced to the captain of the team	Harry has just been advanced to the captaincy of the team
6	The part of the play that stirred me most occurred in the lonely Sahara Desert	The part of the play that stirred me most was that of the action which occurs in the lonely Sahara Desert
7	The name is *Bryant Kirkland;* he will call again this afternoon	*Bryant Kirkland* is the name of the man, he will call again this afternoon
8	Grammatical rules are important because it is a subject that you'll be using every day of your life	Grammatical rules are important, because grammar is a subject that you will be using every day of your life
9	The subject of my address—*Serve and Be Served*—deals with the values of civil service	My address deals with the values of civil service The subject is *Serve and Be Served*
10	It won't be long, I expect, until John is promoted to a colonel	It won't be long, I expect, until John is promoted to a colonelcy
11	Manuring and spading have eventually converted my little garden into delicious vegetables	As result of manuring and spading my little garden now yields delicious vegetables
12	His principal fault has always been coherence and extent of vocabulary	His principal faults have always been incoherence and limited vocabulary
13	He plays every instrument in the band and he may decide to devote his future years to it	He plays every instrument in the band, and he may decide to devote his future years to band music
14	He was rewarded generously for his heroism, and he turned it over to the society	He was rewarded generously for his heroism, and he turned his reward over to the society

* See page 3.

	NO	YES
15	Here's a name that ought to contribute, I think	Here's the name of some one who ought to contribute, I think
16	The subject of his speech discussed poverty and its problems	He discussed poverty and its problems in his speech
17	A specimen of his work occurred today	A specimen of his work was on view today
18	Billy loves to play baseball but he is never able to hit it	Billy loves to play baseball but he is never able to hit the ball
19	The name you ask for is *Harrison Rose,* he is tall and rather handsome, if I remember rightly	The name you ask for is *Harrison Rose,* Mr Rose is tall and rather handsome, if I remember rightly
20	His request for our price list was received this morning and will be sent at once	His request for our price list was received this morning, the list will be sent at once
21	The scene of the battle took place on the slopes of the sacred mountain	The battle took place on the slopes of the sacred mountain

SECTION SEVENTEEN — COMPLETENESS

In *We went to the station to meet Alice Afterward to the matinee* the latter part of the expression is a phrasal (prepositional) fragment; that is, a group of words lacking subject and predicate. The reading should be *We went to the station to meet Alice. Afterward we went to* (or *attended*) *the matinee.*

In *They voted billions for airplanes. To be spent in the main for flying fortresses* the latter part of the expression is an infinitive fragment. An infinitive names action, it does not assert action or make a statement, and cannot therefore be used as a predicate. The reading should be *They voted billions for airplanes. Most of this money will be spent for flying fortresses.*

In *She was graduated* (or *She graduated*) *at the head of her class. Also being voted the most popular girl* the latter part of the expression is a participial fragment. Like the infinitive, the participle names action; it does not assert and it cannot be used as a predicate. This expression should read *She was graduated* (or *She graduated) at the head of her class. She was also voted the most popular girl.*

In *Billy telephoned in great excitement. While I was eating my lunch* a clause is permitted to stand alone as a complete sentence. In *Among his various tasks there are two that he particularly dislikes. Interviewing officers and making out his expense accounts*

a compound appositional phrase is permitted to stand alone as a complete sentence. In the first of these the period should be removed after *excitement,* and *while* should be written with small *w;* in the second the period after *dislikes* should be removed, a dash substituted for it, and *interviewing* should be written with small *i.* Nothing has been omitted from these two sentences, but, like the examples above, they reveal a serious lack of what is known as the "sentence sense" on the part of the one who uses such constructions. They probably reflect a mind that "cerebrates in capsules" rather than in a continuous and coherent manner.

Very often the fragment or the fractional sentence that is begun with a capital letter and ended with a period may easily and properly be incorporated with what precedes or with what follows it. Very often it cannot be and the salient parts have to be supplied. It may be just as well, for instance, to insert *and* before *she* in the third revised sentence above and to supply *which is* in the second, and thus make the one compound and the other complex. The kind of revision is unimportant as long as it is so made that groups of words that are not complete sentences are not permitted to masquerade as such by means of initial capital letter and final period. This does not mean, of course, that one must always insist upon stilted and mechanical complete-sentence form in all of his expression (page 109). But it does mean that such unfinished or fragmentary expressions as *Wishing you the best of luck* and *While we were standing there* and *Inasmuch as he had gone by that time* carelessly or ignorantly permitted by a writer to stand as complete, not only dissipate a reader's attention but may get the writer adjudged illiterate. It means, in other words, that you should not start a sentence unless you finish it—a rule that applies to other fields as well. One of the greatest exponents of the fragment is, naturally, a creation of Dickens. " 'It is enough for me to know in my own heart that I am not going to'—having imprudently got into a sentence without providing a way out of it, Miss Lavinia was constrained to close with 'going to go it.' " *

Equally serious is the opposite type of error, namely, the run-on expression. While omission of constructional parts is not likely to be involved in the run-on sentence, the omission of punctuation always is. And its damaging effect upon reader attention is usually even more serious than that of the fragmentary sentence.

* From *Our Mutual Friend*—not only an excellent novel but also an excellent textbook in usage.

In *Here is the new car in the garage you will find the old one* the first clause runs headlong into a prepositional phrase that begins the second clause. There should be a period after *car* and a capital *I* for *in*. In *He invariably stays here at this time to have spring come without him would seem strange to us* the first clause runs into the infinitive phrase at the beginning of the second clause. A period should follow *time* and *to* should be capitalized. In *You will soon be in Denver where will you go from there, I wonder* the first clause runs into another (dependent) clause. A period is required after *Denver* and a capital *w* in *where*. These few examples are sufficient to show that the run-on sentence has a hurried or breathless quality that prevents clear and definite grasp of meaning, and leaves the impression that the writer is ignorant of the peculiar ways of the parts of speech, or is careless about them.

A comma is required, as a rule, before such conjunctions as *and, but, for, nor, or, so, while, yet* when they connect the members of a long compound sentence (page 568). If the members of such sentence are not connected by conjunctions, a semicolon should be used to separate them or they should stand as independent sentences. If the members of such sentence are separated by neither a comma and conjunction nor a semicolon, they run together—unintelligibly very often—and belong in the category of run-on sentences. This particular kind of mistake in English expression is known as the comma error or the comma blunder.

You may say *After I read that book I was nervous and irritable, and for weeks I was certain that the house was haunted* or *After I read that book I was nervous and irritable; for weeks I was certain that the house was haunted* or *After I read that book I was nervous and irritable. For weeks I was certain that the house was haunted.* You may not say *After I read that book I was nervous and irritable for weeks I was certain that the house was haunted.*

Sometimes a sentence, though complete grammatically, leaves so much to be understood or inferred that it is really fragmentary in meaning, and neighboring sentences have to be known in order that one may gather fully what is said. If you say *From every direction now there was the hurrying of feet* your sentence is impersonal or out of touch. Its complete meaning cannot be grasped unless context is known. What caused the hurrying? Whose feet were hurrying? If you say *From every direction now there was*

the hurrying of children's feet you make your sentence less impersonal. The actor is known, but the agency is still in doubt. If you say *The children with hurrying feet now came from every direction to see the parade* you place some one and something "in control" of sentence meaning and sentence construction.

Sentences beginning with impersonal *it* (page 22) are very often lacking in complete clearness just because of their impersonal quality. In *It is requested that the minutes be made out in duplicate* there is such general or indefinite quality that, unless the sentence is revised, an extra sentence is necessary to focus its meaning. In *The secretary is requested to make out the minutes in duplicate* or *The president is requested to order the minutes made out in duplicate* the meaning is definitely aimed at some one, is, in other words, personalized.

The dangling gerund and participle constructions treated on page 70 are really impersonal constructions, leaving on the mind, as they do, uncertain meanings or, at least, inferences to be made. A gerund or a participle phrase that does not *in idea* relate to the idea of the principal verb in the sentence in which it occurs, scatters attention. Not only is it a type of general misconstruction; it is also a type of run-on expression. In *Beginning years ago as a bellboy, he is now owner of the hotel* and *Receiving a large box full of good things to eat, she is about to give a party for her hungry friends* the participles are "out of place in point of time" (such use of the participle is sometimes called *anachronous*). The first sentence should read *Having begun* (or *Although he began*) *years ago as a bell boy, he is now owner of the hotel,* and the second *Having received* (or *Since she has received*) *a large box of good things to eat, she is about to give a party for her hungry friends.* The first part of each is now *synchronous,* that is, it relates logically to the governing elements in the sentence. The beginning and the receiving happened before the time registered by the principal verb.

The pronouns *you* and *they* are also frequently used impersonally, and thus vaguely and loosely. It is better to say *He may be used as of common gender* than *You may use he as of common gender* and to say *Firearms are made in Connecticut* than *They make firearms in Connecticut.* The latter example in each of these illustrations is colloquial. In such expressions as *We never know what will happen* and *We must be prepared for the worst,* the pronoun

is also used impersonally and indefinitely, and colloquially. But the use of *we* and *you* in this way may very often be an aid toward vivifying and focusing expression. They may do for an explanation, for instance, what the personal pronoun *I* may do for a narrative—put the reader or listener directly into an experience. Instruction that might be dull and dreary enough given through the pronouns *it* and *they* may be made to take on life and sparkle by the adoption of *you* and *we* in their stead. Use impersonal pronouns and expletive *there* (page 21) sparingly, especially in successive sentences. Some newspapers rule that they must never be used at the beginning of paragraphs.

Any abrupt change of point of view in a sentence without corresponding adjustment of grammatical structure is not only wasteful but profligate of reader attention. The Greeks designated this sort of error as *anacoluthon,* a long and perhaps unimportant word now, but a word significant in derivative meaning, namely, not following, wanting sequence, abandonment of this for that. The Romans used *non sequitur* with much the same meaning, though this Latin term is now applied chiefly to argument. Anacoluthon may be deliberate in poetry, and is one kind of poetic license. But its occurrence in prose is usually the result of carelessness—or of ignorance—and is, needless to say, bewildering to a reader. *Please mail these letters on your way down and have you seen my car this morning* and *The ride through this section of the country is always monotonous and explain to me why you always stop your speedometer here* illustrate. They have the bad qualities of the run-on sentence plus a conjunctive break of such revolutionary nature as to require completely new construction with, perhaps, words and phrases to be supplied.

The linking of the last sentence of a business letter with the "participial getaway" is one of the most frequent errors of this sort, as in *You have received the goods by this time we trust, and hoping to have the pleasure of serving you further, we remain.* In this expression two unrelated ideas are run together, as are two different grammatical constructions. Even if they are made parallel—both participial—the ideas still crave separate sentence treatment. The second part of this letter closing must have subject and predicate supplied, and must thus be written as an independent construction, if not, indeed, as an independent paragraph, as

You have received the goods by this time, we have no doubt.

Will you please permit us to serve you further?

The independent construction is not to be confused with any of the constructional types discussed above. The first and independent part in *The rain having stopped, we decided to go to the party* is explicitly related *in idea* to what follows, though it is grammatically detached. It does not constitute anacoluthon, therefore, and it is not a sentence fragment beggaring relationship as result of carelessness or ignorance on the part of a writer or speaker. Its easy incorporation into the expression as a whole is so evident as to make it seem a grammatical as well as an idea part of it—*Inasmuch as the rain had stopped, we decided, to go to the party.* This important characteristic of the independent construction differentiates it from anacoluthon as well as from the illiterate sentence fragment.

Independent word groups that apply in general to the idea that they accompany rather than to any specific person or thing or condition, do not admit of such easy conversion, nor is it desirable that they should. Note in each of the following that the expression marked off by comma pertains to or covers everything else in the sentence—*By and large, I think this will be the best procedure, He is, to say the least, an ungrateful chap, In walking, the arms should be swung loosely back and forth; He decided that, all things considered, it would be well for him to make an appearance* Exclamatory expressions are always detached and without bounds, and are hardly to be regarded as grammatical parts of a sentence at all

CONTEST *

NO	YES
1 He is going to motor to California, recently buying a new car	Having recently bought a new car, he is going to motor to California
2 It has just been ordered to park all cars facing the street	According to a new order all cars must now be parked facing the street
3 To drive safely your eyes should never be taken off the road	If you would drive safely you should never take your eyes off the road
4 After examining me thoroughly I was given a qualifying certificate	After he (they) had examined me thoroughly, he (they) gave me a qualifying certificate
5 The most interesting episode in which he leaps off the rocky peak into the rapids	The most interesting episode is his leaping off the rocky peak into the rapids
6 They are delighted with the arrangement That they start early and take the long route	They are delighted with the arrange ment to start early and take the long route

* See page 3

	NO	YES
7	The book tells how that a man who, being in a sad predicament, managing to extricate himself	The book tells about a man who, being in a sad predicament, manages to extricate himself
8	You see, not having prepared his lesson thoroughly, and the fact that the work was new to him	The work was new to him, and he had not prepared his lesson thoroughly
9	He telegraphed us just when he expected to arrive you may be sure we were glad to hear from him at last	He telegraphed us just when he expected to arrive. You may be sure we were glad to hear from him at last
10	He has received promotion on the basis of his daring feats in the air. In addition receiving many awards	As result of his daring feats in the air he has not only received many awards but he has also been promoted
11	I told them that I thought the outing had been too expensive for all of us could have had just as good a time for less money	I told them that I thought the outing had been too expensive. All of us could have had just as good a time for less money
12	We had just put the lights out and gone to bed Then suddenly hearing three sharp shots and a rapping at the garden gate	We had just put the lights out and gone to bed. Then, suddenly, we heard three sharp shots and a rapping at the garden gate
13	We think we have answered all your questions and trusting you will give us the privilege of making out your itinerary for you, we are	We think we have answered all your questions. We shall be happy to help you arrange your itinerary
14	When he entered the room he was shocked at the behavior of the crowd but your cars were being held in readiness	When he entered the room he was shocked at the behavior of the crowd Your cars were being held in readiness

SECTION EIGHTEEN — COMMENT

The foregoing sections treat of the omission or the sparing of terms from expression to the detriment of understanding and of correct grammatical structure. The cases discussed in them represent the majority of those common to current speech and writing, and the remedies recommended are important to all and sundry who sincerely desire to say what they mean. But here as elsewhere, a too literal interpretation of instruction may have sorry if not, indeed, damaging results. For one always to express himself in completely rounded periods is to be "faultily faultless and splendidly null." And this is a fact that should be as clearly realized by the conversationalist as it is definitely known by the writer, especially by the writer of orations and of poems.

The imperative sentence is the simplest and most general instance of the spared sentence part. An order gains directness and immediacy as result of its starting with the verb that contains the kernel of imperative action. "Go!" is more emphatic—more likely to get immediate result—than "You go!" In dramatic situation a pointing to the exit—pantomime—with no word at all is even more impressive than the monosyllabic *go*. But in everyday speech and writing, such expressions as "Nothing else but" and "Give me that or I'll——" and "I disagree with you—but we'll go into that later," and practically all exclamatory utterance—"Ugh!" and "Never!" and "Alas!" and "Impossible!"—are consciously and purposely broken off, the deliberately omitted parts being easy of supply. Such omissions, indeed, add not only emphasis to expression but piquancy as well. In addition, such sparing of parts may have a genuine utility value. The word *armistice* saves time and space as substitute for *cessation of hostilities,* as do *St John's* for *St John's Church,* and *Atlantic* for *Atlantic Ocean,* and *Canada* for *The Dominion of Canada,* and a host of other everyday shortcuts.

But the poet and the orator realize more than others, perhaps, as they should do, the subtle values of omitted words and phrases. It is their particular privilege to be elliptical—to say just so much and let imagination do the rest. They may even defy the rule that a word should not be understood unless its exact form is used elsewhere (page 73). From such doggerel as

> A boy,
> A gun,
> And fun.
> "Bust!"
> Dust!

to such poetry as

> Man never is, but always to be, blest
> (Man never is blest but is always about to be blest)

and

> In heaven, yclept Euphrosyne,
> But by men heart-easing mirth
> (But by men yclept heart-easing mirth)

the gamut of omission, or of poetic license by way of omission, may be seen to be of varying degrees. When Cicero in his oration against Verres said

> It is an outrage to bind a Roman citizen; to scourge him is an atrocious crime, to put him to death is almost parricide, but to crucify him—what shall I call it?

he deliberately spared words at the very apex of his climax for the sake of oratorical effect. Without such privileged omissions as are here briefly indicated, the writer's ecstatic pleasure of meaning more than is expressed, and the reader's equally ecstatic pleasure of reading between the lines would be denied, and imagination in both "houses" might well become atrophied.

There are, again, certain terms that may be helpful to some, that may have nothing but nuisance value to others. They are set down here chiefly by way of summary, rather than as essentials in the important business of saying what you mean. Here, as in the preceding chapter, it is the thing itself that must be understood, its name—be it fancy or other—is comparatively negligible. One of these terms is *elision,* defined and illustrated on page 96. It is sometimes extended in meaning to denote the omission of a word from a sentence, but it is preferably held to the meaning of the omission of a letter from a word. All that needs to be added here about elision is that it must not be permitted to lead to misspelling or mispronunciation of such words, for instance, as *arithmetic* (not *'rithmatic*), *artistically* (not *artisticly*), *eighth* (not *eight*), *especially* (not *speshly*), *exactly* (not *gzakly*), *factory* (not *factry*), *finally* (not *finely*), *incidentally* (not *incidently*), *jewel* (not *jool*), *poem* (not *pome*), *usually* (not *usely*). There are many other common words that, elided in pronunciation, are misspelled and mispronounced by ear (page 330). The time will probably soon come when the elided form of *telephone—'phone*—will be accepted in general usage—and without the apostrophe. Pressure is hard upon it. No such danger threatens *telegraph,* apparently, *graph* sharing too many combinations probably to make its segregation safe.

The word *ellipsis,* like the word *elision,* belongs in general as well as in special usage. Neither is highly technical. The adjective form—*elliptical*—is used above and in preceding sections, and it too is applicable to both prose and poetry. In England *ellipse* is customarily used for *ellipsis* but the latter form is preferable in order to prevent confusion with the mathematical term *ellipse.* Both forms of the word derivatively mean defect or falling short. As applied strictly to usage, *ellipsis* is the omission of a word or

of words for the sake of brevity or convenience, rhythm or effect, as illustrated in the examples above. It does not apply to the omission of letters or syllables. In the print-shop, however, *ellipsis* is a technical term applied to a series of dots or dashes or asterisks that are used to indicate the omission of letters or words or whole phrases. The use of dots or asterisks—*ellipses*—to separate sentences or groups of sentences, as a kind of paragraph notation when nothing whatever is omitted, is not to be recommended even though it is a style that has been adopted by many columnists. It may be an economy of white space and of printer's ink but it is wasteful of reader attention. The term *elliptical order* means the inverted order characteristic of lists and indexes, as *Lincoln, Abraham* and *Grammar, Harper's English.*

When in classical rhetoric a sudden breaking off of expression occurred, as in the Ciceronian excerpt above and in such everyday expressions as *His record—well, we won't go into that* and *The game?—I refuse to mention it,* the rhetoricians, who were never at a loss for terms, called the breach *aposiopesis* which derivatively means keeping quite silent. When a speaker or writer spared extended mention of something by an indirect reference to it and thus by a pretended suppression or denial of it, the Greek rhetoricians called the hypocritical maneuver *paraleipsis* which derivatively means leaving aside or beside. Mark Antony made effective use of this device in his first reference to Caesar's will, and when he reminded his hearers that he came to bury Caesar rather than to praise him. But it occurs in daily conversation in such expressions as *I cannot stand his untidy appearance, not to mention his insufferable conceit* and *I prefer to say nothing of his inadequate diction, and shall proceed at once to the structure of his story.*

In such expressions as *He was surrounded by smoke and sycophants* and *He jumped into his car and the spirit of the race* the double duty of the verb *surrounded* (it is understood before *sycophants*) in the one and of the preposition *into* (it is understood after *and*) in the other illustrates a device of omission that the Greeks called *syllepsis.* This word derivatively means a taking together. As pointed out on page 51 it may be and has been freely used for purposes of humor, but in serious expression words (verbs and prepositions chiefly) should not be spared in this manner. The device may suggest a too eager desire to economize. Reconstruction of such sentences as the foregoing is usually necessary, if

they are to be made logical, as, for instance, *In a room filled with smoke he was surrounded by sycophants* and *Jumping into his car he was imbued with the spirit of the race* (page 182).

If you say *Harry has passed the height-flying test and he will therefore receive a certificate* you make use of a short form of syllogism which the Greeks called *enthymeme.* This word means leaving or keeping in the mind but suppressing as far as words are concerned. Here is the complete syllogism of the above sentence

> To receive a certificate a student must pass the height-flying test.
> Harry has passed the height-flying test
> Therefore, Harry will receive a certificate.

In this example the first premise may safely be inferred from what is contained in the other two premises. But such omission in the three primary steps of reasoning may not always be clearly "seen" in the mind of a reader or hearer. He may make inference that does not coherently follow, and may come to false conclusion; thus, in *All animals are mortal; therefore, John is mortal* the omitted step is the second premise *John is an animal.* Since a great many people do not ordinarily think of human beings as animals, such enthymeme as this might be misleading to them.

It is to be inferred from what is said on page 50 that figures of speech necessarily derive their chief values from a devised sparing of words. But omission must be expertly made in order that inference may be sure and complete and impressive. If you say *Paddling in and out among the larger and busier craft John in his canoe was like a sparrow unexpectedly caught in a badminton game* you have a complete analogy—John in his canoe was to the larger and busier craft as a sparrow to a badminton game. Conclude the comparison after *sparrow* and you leave the imagination of your reader or hearer without any definite "place to go."

Litotes and *irony* and *innuendo* (page 51) are especially the figures of restraint—figures that depend more upon what is omitted than upon what is said, that leave in the mind a wealth of imaginative inference. Litotes is really the opposite of hyperbole (page 29) and in many of its phases it may have the qualities of both innuendo and irony. In *He did his constituency no small damage: He spoke dutifully for its favorite measure and the house defeated it,* the words *no small damage* constitute litotes, and the remaining words contain both irony and innuendo—he must have

been a bad or, at least, an indifferent speaker, for in spite of his speaking the house ironically voted down the measure.

Though the English language contains more monosyllabic words than most other languages, and though short words are usually preferable to long and pretentious ones (page 44), it is a mistake for a writer or a speaker to conclude that he should aim always to spare the dissyllabic or longer word for the monosyllabic. True, most of the memorable epigrams are expressed simply, usually in words not longer than one or two or, at most, three syllables, as *A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush* and *Keep thy shop and thy shop will keep thee,* and they are memorable very largely because of their simplicity of diction. As a stunt—and as nothing else—it may sometimes be interesting to write a letter or other composition in completely monosyllabic form. It will usually be found, however, that in such writing enrichment of meaning and effectiveness will have to be sacrificed for the sake of the monosyllable. Note in the following brief example for instance—the first entirely monosyllabic, the second not—how much is lost to the first brief sentence alone in holding it strictly to monosyllables:

I

He asked for the prize. He said that I must give him the gold, that it was not mine by right, that he would see to it that I was paid back But I told him that the gold was a trust and that I could not give it up. At this he called the state guards, forced the prized gold from me, and had me placed in this damp, dark cell in which you now find me.

II

He demanded the booty He insisted that I give him the gold, that I was not entitled to it, that he would promise reimbursement But I replied that the gold was a trust and that I must refuse to surrender it. At this he summoned the state police, forced the coveted metal from me, and had me incarcerated in this damp, dark dungeon in which you now discover me.

The word *demanded* is much more compelling and threatening than mere *asked,* and the word *booty* is covered with connotation. All of the dissyllabic and longer words, indeed, in the second version have in them meanings that the monosyllabic equivalents do not convey. So it may be seen in even such brief example as this, that it would be a mistake to spare the longer words altogether.

A series of monosyllables may sometimes run together and give the impression of longer words, especially in case some are merged

by elisions. But this is more likely to be a studied effect in poetry than a spontaneous one in either prose or poetry. And climaxes —especially oratorical climaxes—rarely reside effectively in monosyllables. A series of such words at the end of a period may, indeed, break and scatter a climax. A high-sounding polysyllable at the end of a climactic sentence may very often be more important as far as impressiveness is concerned than a vastly more meaningful monosyllable that precedes it. The famous example from Burke—*high crimes and misdemeanors*—though now hackneyed, nevertheless remains the master illustration.

In both speech and writing language tends to become simplified—complicating elements tend to disappear. Movements toward this simplifying evolution are always helpful and are, thus, always, welcome. But in spite of them simplification in usage takes place slowly if none the less certainly. *Not* is reduced almost to the loss of individuality in such enclitics as *can't* and *don't*. *Cheat* (for *escheat*), *change* (for *exchange*), *dropsy* (for *hydropsy*), *lone* (for *alone*), *mend* (for *amend*), *mid* (for *amid*), *pert* (for *apert*), *sample* (for *ensample*), *scallop* (for *escallop*), *spite* (for *despite*), *squire* (for *esquire*), *sterling* (for *Easterling*) are a few only of those commonly used words that have lost or are losing an unnecessary first (usually unaccented) syllable, even the initial apostrophe disappearing (page 231). The Greeks again had a word for the process—*aphæresis* to take from. No apostrophe is now needed to denote the omission of *o* from *damsel (damosel)* or of *e* from *laundress (launderess)*, or the shortening of *cabriolet* to *cab, cleric* to *clerk, consolidated annuities* to *consols, curiosities* to *curios, hackney coach* to *hack, mobile vulgus* to *mob, procurator* to *proctor, procuracy* to *proxy, sacristan* to *sexton, vanguard* or *caravan* to *van,* to mention only a few of those words in everyday use from which parts have been spared advantageously.

The loss of a medial letter or sound or syllable is called *syncope,* a Greek word again, meaning literally a cutting up. Elision is a form of syncope, as, for example, *e'er, o'er, med'cine*. The gradual loss of a last letter or of last letters is *apocope*. The French *richesse (richece)* has undergone apocope to become our *riches;* the Anglo-Saxon *singan* has become *sing;* the modern tendency to clip final *g* from *ing* words is a form of apocope, as *ringin'* and *playin'*. The Greek word used as antonym of syncope is *anaptyxis,* the original meaning of which is unfolding. But in diction it means the careless introduction of a parasitic vowel between con-

sonants, often before *l* and *m* and *r*, as in *busheal* and *disterict* and *umberella* and *rheumatisum* and *musheroom* (pages 24 and 330).

But extra letters have sometimes been deliberately put into words, in order to facilitate pronunciation as a rule; thus, *p* has been put into *empty*, *b* into *slumber* and *nimble*, *d* into *kindred*, *l* into *could*, *n* into *passenger*. (*Epenthesis*, the Greeks called this liberty, meaning placing in upon.) But this process is a diminishing one while the former is an increasing one. Both spelling and punctuation have become greatly simplified during the past quarter of a century. And the long, heavy latinized sentences that were once such a fashionable blunderbuss of expression have in great measure given way to the short, staccato, concentrated ones that fire their messages like machine guns.

CHAPTER CONTEST *

	NO	YES
1	They have never seen any one more charming or as beautiful as Clara	They have never seen any one more charming than Clara or as beautiful (as she is)
2	I think you will be better taken care of here than anywhere	I think you will be better taken care of here than anywhere else
3	We fared just as well in those days there was more food if not such fine cooking	We fared just as well in those days; there was more food, though not such fine cooking
4	The trouble with those children is that they never behave	The trouble with those children is that they never behave properly
5	I think Harold has more high talent than any one in the world	I think Harold has more high talent than any one else in the world
6	An army and navy man will be present to give our party official tone	An army and a navy man will be present to give our party official tone
7	Those paintings give you a full and profile view of the Great Emancipator	Those paintings give you a full and a profile view of the Great Emancipator
8	Please give me two bottles of beer for the carpenter and bricklayer	Please give me two bottles of beer for the carpenter and the bricklayer
9	They are preparing a petition to be presented to the president and newspapers	They are preparing a petition to be presented to the president and to the newspapers
10	Harrison says he likes his new car better than any he owns	Harrison says he likes his new car better than any other he owns
11	This mountain is higher but not nearly so picturesque as that	This mountain is higher than that, but not nearly so picturesque (as that is)

* See page 3

	NO	YES
12	The tenth and last chapter of the book are by all odds the best	The tenth and last chapters of the book are by all odds the best
13	He cannot make up his mind whether to take the academic or commercial course	He cannot make up his mind whether to take the academic or the commercial course
14	A beautiful inlet lies between the rugged mainland and fertile peninsula	A beautiful inlet lies between the rugged mainland and the fertile peninsula
15	The grocer, baker, and milkman makes unusually early deliveries on Sundays	The grocer, the baker, and the milkman make unusually early deliveries on Sundays
16	Am sorry to hear he refused to give it you after all	I am sorry to hear that he refused to give it to you after all
17	We have telegraphed our friends in Tulsa, and hope they are home	We have telegraphed our friends in Tulsa, and we hope they are at home
18	I was under the impression that you had gone some other place	I was under the impression that you had gone to some other place
19	Henry graduated college in June, and now asks what use it all was	Henry graduated (was graduated) from college in June, and he now asks of what use his college course is
20	I must protest you saying that the boy doesn't want to be home for Christmas	I must protest against your saying that the boy doesn't want to be at home for Christmas
21	She was sorry to learn about my predicament and seeing me so pessimistic	She was sorry to learn of my predicament and to see me so pessimistic
22	I never object to what our minister says but the way he says it	I never object to what our minister says but I do not always like his manner of saying things
23	To no name does industry point with greater pride than Henry Bessemer	To no name does industry point with greater pride than to that of Henry Bessemer
24	This side the road is dry and smooth, the other nearly impassable	On this side the road is dry and smooth, on the other it is nearly impassable
25	Bought young terrier yesterday; send picture day or two	I bought a young terrier yesterday; I shall send you a picture of him in a day or two
26	There was very strong feeling between the yeas and nays	There was very strong feeling between the yeas and the nays
27	His skill was considered greater than any other surgeon in the hospital	His skill was considered greater than that of any other surgeon in the hospital
28	His surgical skill is considered greater than any ever known	His surgical skill is considered greater than any other ever known
29	His surgical skill is the greatest of all other in the country	His surgical skill is the greatest in the country
30	Young man, if you have not yet done your homework, you ought to	Young man, if you have not yet done your homework, you ought to do it now

	NO	YES
31	This is the nicest type car he ever has or ever will have again	This is the nicest type of car he has ever had or ever will have again
32	At first he couldn't decide between a Buick and Cadillac	At first he couldn't decide between a Buick and a Cadillac
33	I think you better not ask both the captain and manager to dinner	I think you had better not ask both the captain and the manager to dinner
34	It is a wonderful book, taking place as it does, in the high Rockies	It is a wonderful book; the scene of action is the high Rockies
35	Having just been promoted to captain, the team now means everything to Bill	The team means everything to Bill, now that he has just been made captain of it
36	Feeling as you do about it, and having had all this trouble, as you have	Feeling as you do about it, and having had all this trouble, you are probably willing to give it up
37	After all our efforts to get there on time. The game had been postponed	After all our efforts to get to the game on time, we found that it had been postponed
38	We have heard debated whether a red or blue pennant should be adopted	We have heard it debated whether a red or a blue pennant should be adopted
39	With the exception of Mr Smith and wife, all the other names will accept	Everybody has accepted but Mr and Mrs Smith
40	You must always make it a point to be as loyal to associates as employer	You must always make it a point to be as loyal to your associates as to your employer
41	Please don't trouble to show me the sports and evening dresses	Please don't go to the trouble of showing me the sports and the evening dresses
42	I think you ought to waited till he knocked, and then opened	I think you ought to have waited till he knocked before you opened the door
43	You will find our prices lower than any department store in town	You will find our prices lower than those of any other department store in town
44	Trusting to be favored with further orders, and beg to remain, Yours truly	We shall be happy to receive further orders from you. Very truly yours
45	We thought he ought to go but that he should not take Mary with him	We thought that he ought to go but that he should not take Mary with him
46	In spite of all his faults he is far from the moron his teachers say he is	In spite of all his faults he is far from being the moron that his teachers say he is
47	The topic of my poem is about the eternal struggle between capital and labor	The subject of my poem is the eternal struggle between capital and labor
48	The boy whose number was called	The boy whose number was called

	NO	YES
	and in the best of spirits went off to camp, has been heard from at last	and who in the best of spirits went off to camp, has been heard from at last
49	Paddling a canoe can be great adventure, especially made of birch bark and with a sensitive balance	Paddling a birch-bark canoe having a sensitive balance can be great adventure
50	Your request for two pairs of black and russet shoes has been received and will be sent by parcel post at once	Your request for two pairs of shoes—one black and one russet—has been received and the merchandise will be sent by parcel post at once
51	Although they say that he is a most unpredictable chap, I find that you can always tell what he will do under certain circumstances	Although they say that he is a most unpredictable chap, I find that under certain circumstances you can always tell what he will do
52	Every one of these enrolments has been told to report tomorrow but I have heard said that there is usually a five per cent defection	Every one of the persons enrolled has been told to report tomorrow but it is reported that five per cent usually fail to do so
53	It is quite possible that a plane in the air, from below, will look like a bird	It is quite possible that a plane in the air, viewed from below, will look like a bird
54	This story is the best of any other I have read about a damsel and knight	This story about a damsel and a knight is the best I have read on the subject
55	As far as training, every student in our classes gets six hours daily, a longer period than any school	Every student gets six hours of training daily, a longer period than that given by any other school
56	The harbor was rendered useless as far as warships, and cruisers and destroyers had to remain outside in the danger zone	The harbor was rendered useless as far as warships were concerned, and cruisers and destroyers had to remain outside in the danger zone

3

DON'T MISUSE WORDS

SECTION NINETEEN — QUALIFICATION

Such limiting or modifying words as *almost, barely, even, ever, hardly, just, most, mostly, nearly, never, only, scarcely* are so versatile in their application that, by this very token, they are often loosely and incorrectly used by many speakers and writers. *Only* is the greatest offender. If you say *I only ate five* when you mean *I ate only five* you will probably not be misunderstood, for the former is so generally used to mean the latter that it is rapidly becoming acceptable today even in literary usage. But *only* pertains to *five,* not to *ate,* as it is made to do in the incorrect form. It may, of course, mean alone and pertain to *I,* that is, *I alone ate five.* It may mean alone and pertain to *ate,* the meaning being that no one else was present when I ate five or no one else present ate so many. But these interpretations are beside the point, which is that any one who wishes to express himself by means of such construction as this must know what he means and place his modifying word accordingly.

Niceties of meaning cannot be conveyed to logical-minded readers and hearers unless *only* and other similar qualifiers are placed exactly where they should be in a sentence. Such words should be placed as close as possible to the terms they modify. Sometimes nothing may be lost to understanding if slight liberty is taken with this rule, and the modifying word is placed at the end of a brief but complete expression. *He arrived with one bag only* is clear, but *He arrived with only one bag* is more precise. In such sentence, however, as *John only touched his hat to her, only* is ambiguous. It "squints" (page 129). It may pertain to *John,* that is, John was the only one of a group of men to touch his hat to her.

It may pertain to *touched,* that is, John merely touched his hat whereas others perhaps took their hats off.

Such ambiguity may be clarified by reading and accent. In the following six illustrations of the placement of *only,* sentences one and two may have this sort of ambiguity in them, but the others offer no doubt whatever. Sentences may easily be devised to illustrate the similarly varied placements of *barely, hardly, just, merely, nearly,* and *scarcely.* The words *almost, even, ever, most, mostly,* and *never* are separately discussed below.

I requested John only to do that job.
I only requested John to do that job
I requested only John to do that job.
I requested John to do only that job.
Only I requested John to do that job.
I requested John to do that job only.

Only should not be used to qualify *barely, hardly, just, merely, nearly, scarcely;* none of these words should be used to qualify *only.* Do not say *I have only barely* (or *barely only*) *begun* or *I have only just* (or *just only*) *begun,* for the two words thus used together are repetitive to a great degree. Though *but* may be used to mean *only, only* should not be used in place of *but,* as in *I meant to go only I was ill. I meant to go but I was ill* is the correct form. This misuse of *only* is especially bad when the word is permitted to stand at the beginning of an independent statement (page 184), as in *I was going to wear my new dress. Only it rained.* This sentence should, of course, read *I was going to wear my new dress but it rained.* The misuse of *also* for *and* is a corresponding error that is equally bad (page 102) as illustrated in *I shall take that red one, please. Also, I shall carry it if you will wrap it well.* The correct reading is *I shall take that red one, please, and I shall carry it if you will wrap it well.*

Most should be used primarily in application to names of persons and things, and to superlative degree of rank or quality, as *most boys, most chairs; most beautiful, most numerous.* It must not be used in the sense of *almost* or *nearly.* Say *We are almost done* and *We are nearly there,* not *We are most done* and *We are most there. Most* and *mostly* were once used interchangeably, but they are no longer so used. *Mostly* means principally or chiefly or for the most part, as in *His time is spent mostly in reading. Most* means greatest or highest in amount or quantity or number, and (adver-

bially) in the highest or greatest degree, as in *That student most* (not *mostly*) *in need must be helped* and *He gave us a most serious talk.* The placement of *a* before *most* is by some regarded as an undesirable usage; thus, *He is a very earnest worker* is preferable to *He is a most earnest worker,* though the latter is seen and heard in "high places." If you substitute *one* for *a (an)* in an expression such as this, you definitely imply that there are other workers of the same kind, whereas *a (an)* does so indefinitely (page 82).

Note in the following sentences the varied placements of which the adverb *even* is capable in response to intended meanings:

Even John has applied that term to my industrious associates.
John has even applied that term to my industrious associates.
John has applied that term to my industrious associates even.
John has applied that term even to my industrious associates.
John has applied that term to even my industrious associates.
John has applied even that term to my industrious associates.
John even has applied that term to my industrious associates.

If you say *I never wish to see him again* you make *never* pertain to *wish.* This may be what you mean, but it probably is not. You probably mean *I wish never to see him again,* that is, *never* applies to *see.* It is your seeing him that you want discontinued, not your wishing. If you say *I don't ever wish to see him again* you make *ever* pertain to *do wish.* Again, this may be what you mean, but it probably is not. You probably mean *I don't wish ever to see him again,* that is, *ever* applies to *see.*

Never is the negative form of *ever.* The negative in the latter sentence occurs in the verb *don't,* and the positive form *ever* must be used with it. When the negative form *never* is used, it must not be made to pertain to another negative form in the same expression (page 35). Such combinations as *ever* or *never expect, ever* or *never intend, ever* or *never hope, ever* or *never plan, ever* or *never wish, ever* or *never remember, ever* or *never try, ever* or *never purpose* should be used with great caution. In the sentences *Run as rapidly as ever you can* and *Bring it to me as quickly as ever it can be brought,* and in other similar constructions, *ever* is superfluous. It is, strictly speaking, contradictory in *I seldom ever see him* and *I seldom or ever see him,* for *seldom* conveys the idea of rare or infrequent, and *ever* the idea of always or under all circumstances. If it is desired to emphasize or extend the idea of *seldom* say *seldom or never, seldom if ever,* or *very seldom.* Simi-

larly, say *rarely or never, rarely if ever,* or *very rarely.* Do not say *rarely ever* or *rarely or ever.*

Inasmuch as *ever* is a "time-covering" and a "condition-covering" word meaning, as it does, perpetually, at any time, in any degree, at all, the use of *before* after it is seen to be superfluous, as in *I don't think I ever before did such a thing.* In this sentence, and in other expressions like it, *ever* covers *before.* It is similarly superfluous to use *almost* before *ever,* as in *It was the best play I almost ever saw,* though this passes as colloquialism. Say, rather, *It was almost the best (nearly the best) play I ever saw.* This is what is meant, in all probability, and it is grammatically correct, for *almost* may limit the meaning of a comparative or a superlative idea—*almost the most industrious, almost better than this, almost the unkindest act, almost the better 'ole.* But such complicated modification is not necessarily recommended. *Most* (see above) must not, of course, be used to pertain to *ever,* or to take the place of *almost* in any such usages as these.

Too and *very* are words used to intensify or emphasize the meaning of other words, preferably such as describe or limit, as *too good, too sweet, very bright, very numerous.* The old rhetorics ruled that they should not be used in direct qualification of words that indicate action or of words derived from action words; thus, *too pleased, very vexed, too devoted, very disturbed* were regarded as incorrect. An intervening modifying word was prescribed in order to "cushion" the harsh combination, as *too greatly pleased* and *very much disturbed.* But usage has now worn this old rule down until it is evident that the intervening term is by no means always imperative. At least the *ed* form and sometimes the *ing* form of *accomplish, alarm, devote, disturb, excite, gratify, interest, learn, please, soothe, terrify, tire, vex,* and of still other commonly used action words, do now take in the best of speaking and writing direct qualification by means of *too* and *very.*

The adverb *so* means in such manner, and is correctly used in such sentences as *The furniture is so arranged as to make seating convenient* and *So plan your work as to waste no time.* It is also used intensively, to denote indefinite degree, as in *so big, so high, so considerate,* in which it has the force of *very* or *thus.* But it is not correctly used as a substitute for *so much,* as in *I love her so* and *I so liked your performance.* These incorrect uses have been called "debutante deviations." It is hardly necessary to point

out that *so* in the correct expressions above—*so big, so high*—is sometimes incorrectly discarded for *this* or *that*. Strictly speaking *this big* and *that high* are wrong, but the substitution of *this* or *that* for *so* is stubbornly gaining ground.

Alone was once used in the sense of *only*, but it is preferably no longer so used. It should be kept to its original or basic meaning of solitary or unaccompanied or unique or unparalleled. It is both adjective and adverb, as *only* is. But *John, not only in his freshman year but in his remaining college years, distinguished himself in athletics* is better than *John, not alone in his freshman year but in his remaining college years, distinguished himself in athletics*. The latter may be taken to mean that John was accompanied by some one.

Both *fresh* and *full* are adjectives and should be so used, though they were once acceptable adverbs, and in the hyphened *fresh-cooked* and *fresh-roasted* and *full-throated* and *full-grown* they still persist to a degree in their adverbial office. But do not say *They have just fresh sown the lawn* for *They have just freshly (newly) sown the lawn* or *I have full as much right here as you have* for *I have fully as much right here as you have.*

Otherwise is an adverb and a conjunction; *other*, an adjective and a pronoun. The former, used adverbially, means in any other way, as in *Sorry, but I cannot do otherwise. I cannot do other* is wrong, for *other* is never used adverbially. *I cannot do other work* is, however, correct, *other* being an adjective modifying *work*. Though *otherwise* is sometimes used adjectively, as in *We sell furniture, modernistic and otherwise* and *The facts in the case are otherwise*, it is better confined to adverbial use. In both of these examples *other* is also correct grammatically and is more exact—*We sell furniture, modernistic (furniture) and other (furniture)* and *The facts are other (facts than those you suppose).* Supply the adverbial meaning of *otherwise* in either sentence, and the reading is made absurd. Very often *different* may be substituted for *otherwise* used adjectively, as in *His reply could not have been different* and *The facts in the case are different.*

The adverb *not* is misplaced in *All that glisters is not gold;* it modifies *all*, not *gold. Not all that glisters is gold* is the correct reading of this expression. The first or wrong form is self contradictory. It says that everything that glisters is not gold. But gold glisters, and gold is included in *everything.*

The adverbs *above, near-by, once, one-time, sometime, then* may now be correctly used as adjectives, as in *the above statement, a near-by house, the once president, a one-time actor, a sometime Rhodes scholar, the then secretary.* But they have made the grade only after a long struggle. The words *almost, now, within* are still straining at the leash, but *an almost winner, a now widow, the within circular* are not permissible—yet.

Above and *better* are to be used sparingly in the sense of over or more than or superior to. Both are colloquial—the latter is also provincial—in such use. Say *We have more than fifty bushels of wheat* rather than *We have above* (or *better than*) *fifty bushels of wheat.* Say also *He is my superior officer* rather than *He is above me in service* (or *in the ranks*). *Foregoing* or *preceding* or *this (these)* or *that (those)* are highly preferable to *above* in such phrases as *the above facts* and *the above claim* and *the above statement* for which business expression is largely responsible.

The adverb of degree *quite* is, at best, a vague and indefinite term. Do not use it to denote number or quantity or size, or in the sense of *rather* or *very* or *somewhat.* Its correct meaning is totally or entirely or altogether, as in *I am quite satisfied* and *Our work is quite done.* But *quite tired* and *quite thin* and *quite sad* are nebulous. The term *quite a* or *quite an* is even more indefinite, if possible, than *quite* alone. Remembering that *a* and *an* basically mean one, the absurdity of *quite a lesson* and *quite a little* and *quite a long period* and *quite an accident* is at once evident. Moreover, the *quite a (an)* phrase has become through overuse one of the most hackneyed of colloquialisms.

Do not use the adjective *scarce* for the adverb *scarcely. I was scarce able to escape the fire* and *I have scarce three left* are wrong. Say, rather, *I was scarcely able to escape the fire* and *I have scarcely three left.* The misuse of *bare* for *barely* and of *hard* for *hardly* is not so likely to occur as is that of *scarce* for *scarcely,* but *I had bare time to make the train* and *I hard know what to say* are localisms.

In general, the use of an adjective instead of an adverb to modify a verb constitutes what is classed by many grammarians as vulgarism (page 250). *He plays good* and *We arrived prompt* illustrate this kind of misuse. *He plays well* and *We arrived promptly* are the correct forms. On the other hand, do not use an adverb for an adjective, as is done in *She looks sadly* and *His speech was*

well. These should read *She looks sad* and *His speech was good,* for *sad* pertains to *She* and *good* to *speech* rather than to *looks* and *was* respectively.

After such verbs as *appear, become, feel, go, grow, keep, look, remain, sit, seem, smell, sound, taste* a qualifying word may very often pertain, not to the verb itself, but to its subject. When this is the case that qualifying word should be an adjective (see below); when it is not the case—when the qualifying word pertains to the verb—it should be an adverb. After all forms of the verb *be* the adjective is the rule, as in *John is angry* and *The girls were sorry.* In these sentences *angry* pertains only to the subject *John,* and *sorry* pertains only to the subject *girls.* Similarly, in *Mary feels bad, bad* is an adjective descriptive of *Mary.* If you say *Mary feels badly* you really mean that when, for instance, Mary feels a piece of wood to discover whether there are splinters in it she does so inaccurately. In some instances adjective and adverbial forms are similar; thus, *She looks sick* and *She looks sickly* are both correct for *sickly* as well as *sick* is an adjective. But *badly* is an adverb only, and *bad* is an adjective only. Sometimes a single form is both adjective and adverb, as *close* and *slow,* but these words, and others like them, usually also have regular adverbial *ly* forms, as *closely* and *slowly.* In *John is slow, slow,* like *angry, sorry, bad, sick,* and *sickly* above, pertains to the syntactical subject. It is technically called a predicate adjective. In *John drives slow* (or *slowly*), *slow* is a pure adverb pertaining to *drives.* The adjective in each of the following is a predicate adjective pertaining to the subject even though it comes after the verb: *He appears fine, She became weary, They feel happy, He grew kind, The man kept silent, You look beautiful, They remained glum, They sat mute, It seems wrong, This smells sweet, The music sounds mournful, That tastes sour.*

A noun or a pronoun following the verb *be* pertains, as a rule, to the subject, and it very often does the same following the other verbs above listed. It functions not as a qualifier, however, but, rather, as a sort of defining appositive. In *John was a captain,* for instance, *captain* refers to *John*—really means *John*—and it is thus regarded as a part of the subject, and as nominative in case. In technical grammar *captain* is known as attribute complement or predicate noun or predicate nominative. The same kind of construction is illustrated in *John became a captain* and *Mary remains a girl* and *Their father seemed a stranger.* Here *captain*

and *girl* and *stranger* do not receive action from a verb, are not objects, but rather explain and belong to a preceding noun in each case. *John* and *captain* are one and the same, as are *Mary* and *girl,* and *father* and *stranger.*

Inasmuch as *captain* and *girl* and *stranger,* and other English nouns, are not inflected (changed) to denote case, no problem of case adjustment is involved in the attribute complement. But pronouns are inflected, especially personal pronouns, and the problem of adjusting them to the office of attribute complement sometimes results in highly questionable usages. In *It is I* and *These are they* and *This is she* and *It was he, I* and *they* and *she* and *he* are attribute complements, and are necessarily in the nominative case. *Me* and *them* and *her* and *him* are respectively incorrect in these sentences, though the National Council of Teachers of English has placed the stamp of approval upon them (page 211).

Picturing or explaining words (adjectives) ending with *ic* very often have the same meaning as those ending with *ical* (page 503). But there is a distinction that may well be observed in the use of many such words. The *ic* words sometimes denote a closer or more inherent connection with the subject indicated; the *ical* words sometimes denote a remoter connection, and indicate agency or practicer, and convey the meaning of dealing with or touching upon. A historic novel, for instance, is one that makes a momentous impression and works a great influence upon people; it is epoch-making, it makes history on its own, even though it may not contain a single word about history itself. A historical novel is one based upon history, one that makes use of the backgrounds and the facts of history. Fielding's *Tom Jones* is a historic novel; Scott's *Ivanhoe,* a historical novel. Shakspere's *Hamlet* is a historic play; Shakspere's *Henry Fifth,* a historical play.

Of all the pairs of words ending with *ic* and *ical, politic* and *political* still retain probably the most stubborn distinction (page 503). The former means sagacious, wary, crafty, judicious, discreet; the latter, pertaining to public policy or the science of government. *Politic* is used partly in the sense of *political* only in the expression *the body politic* in which it means pertaining to public polity, and in this special use it is always placed after the noun it modifies. You say that a man is politic in the management of personnel. You say that a man is political in the appointment of his assistants.

The foregoing exposition has to do with such qualifying words as are most commonly misused or misplaced in daily usage, with those that are most troublesome to the average speaker and writer. But any word that is used to qualify another runs the chance of being misplaced, with results that are sometimes ridiculous, sometimes ambiguous, or both. In *Please show me a plain gentleman's silk muffler* the misplacement of *plain* makes the sentence ridiculous. *Please show me a plain silk muffler for a gentleman* or *Please show me a gentleman's plain silk muffler* is evidently the meaning intended. In *I was told this car was for sale yesterday* the meaning may be that the car was for sale yesterday and is not, by inference, for sale today, or it may be that I was told yesterday. It may therefore be correct as it stands, but *I was told yesterday that this car was* (or *is*) *for sale* is probably the intended meaning. Note, further, the different meanings conveyed through placement of a modifying word in *He rode downtown in his new car* and *Downtown he rode in his new car,* in *It has been asserted repeatedly that he did these things* and *It has been asserted that he did these things repeatedly,* in *They called rapturously to me as Billy made the goal* and *They called to me as Billy rapturously made the goal.*

CONTEST *

	NO	YES
1	I scarcely have enough to go around	I have scarcely enough to go around
2	We have only barely time to catch the train	We have barely time to catch the train
3	I scarcely have a minute to talk to you	I have scarcely a minute to talk to you
4	When I was most ready to go I saw that I hardly had a sheet of paper left	When I was almost ready to go I saw that I had hardly a sheet of paper left
5	My beau told me he had intended to give me a present. Only he forgot	My beau told me he had intended to give me a present, but he forgot
6	This is the best fabric I most ever saw	This is almost the best fabric I ever saw
7	Those workmen mostly in need of jobs don't ever wish to exert themselves	Those workmen most in need of jobs don't wish ever to exert themselves
8	He said he never hoped to see me again	He said he hoped never to see me again
9	Please go to the store as soon as	Please go to the store as soon as pos-

* See page 3.

	NO	YES
	ever possible and just bring me one pound of coffee	sible and bring me just one pound of coffee
10	I found an undressed lady's kid glove on the pavement	I found a lady's undressed-kid glove on the pavement
11	Harry says that he never thinks that they will permit him to make a solo flight	Harry says that he thinks that they will never permit him to make a solo flight
12	The teacher said this word was Latin yesterday	Yesterday the teacher said this word is Latin
13	We seldom or ever attend that church, not when they have their gala services even	We seldom or never attend that church, not even when the gala services are held
14	He should know better than that even	He should know better even than that
15	You're a very lazy young man. Also, you lack all sense of responsibility	You are a very lazy young man; moreover, you lack all sense of responsibility
16	She fainted on their approaching her nearly	She nearly fainted on their approaching her
17	Most all the boys just did as little as possible	Almost all the boys did just as little as possible
18	I have only merely enough yarn to finish this sweater and I never intend to start another	I have merely enough yarn to finish this sweater and I intend never to start another
19	He nearly has his job done and is thus most ready for a new assignment	He has his job nearly done and is thus almost ready for a new assignment
20	She is the most beautiful girl I really have ever seen	She is the most beautiful girl I have really ever seen
21	She is the most beautiful girl almost I ever saw	She is almost the most beautiful girl I ever saw
22	Can you ever before remember seeing the office only closed on Saturdays	Can you remember seeing the office closed on Saturdays only
23	He shouted that he had seldom or ever spoken to the employe angrily	He shouted that he had seldom if ever spoken angrily to the employe
24	I almost have no ink with which to finish this letter	I have almost no ink with which to finish this letter
25	He is very economic with his money	He is very economical with his money
26	He is ambitious to make a politic career for himself	He is ambitious to make a political career for himself
27	He is writing a historic novel based upon the American Revolution	He is writing a historical novel based upon the American Revolution
28	I must go; I have no course otherwise	I must go; I have no other course
29	There are full as many here on top as in the drawer	There are fully as many here on top as in the drawer

	NO	YES
30	He has above one hundred dollars in his pocket	He has more than one hundred dollars in his pocket
31	I so wanted to visit you but I could scarce find time to write you a letter even	I very much wanted to visit you but I could scarcely find time even to write you a letter
32	All the stars in the skies of night are not visible to the eye	Not all the stars in the skies of night are visible to the eye
33	He ran to the station immediate and brought us the papers quick	He ran to the station immediately and brought us the papers quickly

SECTION TWENTY — SQUINTING

Groups of words are likewise frequently misplaced in sentences, with, if possible, even more ridiculous or more illogical results than those brought about by the misplacement of individual words. In *Laddy Holcombe is said to have been killed in action by some reporters* the word group (phrase) *by some reporters* pertains to *is said* and should follow *is said* immediately. In *He accepted the sentence pronounced by the judge without comment* the word group (phrase) *without comment* may be correctly placed as it stands, thus modifying *pronounced;* but it may pertain to *accepted* and, if so, it should follow *accepted* immediately. In *He is going back to Oxford University where he was educated this summer* the phrase *this summer* obviously pertains to *is going,* and it should therefore stand in the group of words governed by *is going.* As it now stands it seems to pertain to *was educated* and this placement conveys absurd meaning. The sentence should read *This summer he is going back to Oxford University where he was educated.* Sometimes spatial requirements are permitted to throw a newspaper headline * "out of gear" grammatically. In

NUPTIALS ARE HELD
OF MISS HAMILTON

for example, the phrase *of Miss Hamilton* obviously pertains to *nuptials* but it would require unwieldy spacing if it were placed immediately after *nuptials.*

In *There is a sweater in the last box on the shelf that has a red letter on it* the word group (clause) *that has a red letter on it* seems to pertain to *shelf* but the real meaning obviously is that the

* For the elementary mechanics of newspaper headlining see *Get It Right* by the same author, published by Funk and Wagnalls Company.

sweater has a red letter on it (as sweaters are more likely to have than shelves). *In the last box on the shelf there is a sweater with a red letter on it* says what is obviously meant. In *I found it to be a small room having but one window when I arrived to inspect it* the word group (clause) *when I arrived to inspect it* is apparently meant to pertain to *found*, not to *having* as it seems to do. *When I arrived to inspect it I found it to be a small room having but one window* says what is obviously meant. In *He said after I had finished my work I could go on the hike with the other boys* the meaning may be either *After I had finished my work he said I could go on the hike with the other boys* or *He said I could go on the hike with the other boys after I had finished my work.* The word group (clause) *after I had finished my work* may modify either *said* or *could go.*

If you say *Mr Biggars has gone to Denver where he has just been appointed to take charge of the Federal offices* you imply that Mr Biggars' appointment took place in Denver. The appointment probably took place in Washington, however, and what you mean is *Mr Biggars who has just been appointed to take charge of the Federal offices in Denver, has gone there* or *Mr Biggars has gone to Denver, having been appointed to take charge of the Federal offices in that city.*

The word *squint* means to make or be cross-eyed, to look obliquely, to seem to look in two directions at once. If a phrase or a clause, or even a single word, in a sentence may apply with equal appropriateness to two or more terms, it is said to squint and is called a squinter phrase or clause or word. Usually such squinter stands between two terms and is thus applicable to either backward or forward modification. In *When Harry arrived in the big city for the first time in his life he felt homesick and forsaken* the word group (phrases) *for the first time in his life* may pertain to the preceding *arrived* or to the following *felt. Harry felt homesick and forsaken for the first time in his life when he arrived in the big city* or *Arriving in the big city for the first time in his life, Harry felt homesick and forsaken* or *When he arrived in the big city for the first time in his life, Harry felt homesick and forsaken* is correct. In *Inasmuch as Mary cannot understand the problem when it is explained to her she should pay better attention* the word group (clause) *when it is explained to her* squints; it may pertain either to *can understand* or to *should pay.* The expression may correctly read either *Inasmuch as she cannot understand*

the problem (even) when it is explained to her, Mary should pay better attention or *Inasmuch as Mary cannot understand the problem, she should pay better attention when it is explained to her.*

The Greek figure *tmesis* is akin to squinting, may sometimes result in squinting. It means the inserting of a word between the members of a compound term, or of words or phrases between words that are customarily used together, as *what place soever* for *whatsoever place, to us ward* for *toward us.* A particularly juvenile tmesis is that of inserting *own* between the parts of a compound personal pronoun, as *my own self* and *your own self.* Tmesis merges into squinting in such expression as *the haranging of the people in convention* or *the haranging in convention of the people.*

It has been pointed out in the illustrative uses of *only* and *even* (pages 120 and 121) that these words sometimes squint, just as in *The scene which is very beautiful sometimes leaves one quite unmoved* the word *sometimes* is Janus-faced; it may bear upon what goes before, that is, the scene may sometimes be very beautiful, or upon what follows, that is, it may sometimes leave one quite unmoved. Either *The scene which is sometimes very beautiful leaves one quite unmoved* or *The scene which is very beautiful leaves one quite unmoved sometimes* is correct.

In the category of squinting construction comes what is known both grammatically and popularly as the split or cleft infinitive. It is better never to place any modifying term between *to* and an action word immediately following it; thus, *to go quickly* or *quickly to go* is better than *to quickly go, to arrive safely* or *safely to arrive* is better than *to safely arrive.* In a few instances in which the split form may seem to supply emphasis, as in *to distinctly understand* and *to thoroughly appreciate,* it is usually justified by authorities. But it is especially bad when the intervening matter is permitted to become long and awkward, as in *I want you to without the slightest delay or demur of any kind whatsoever, regardless of what your feelings may be, tell him that I object to his calling at this house.* And it should be noted that squinting occurs in such expressions as *His father left immediately to bring the boy back* and *They tried honestly to promote him* in which the *ly* words "look" both forward and backward. They must be placed either at the end of the sentence in each case, or before *left* and *tried* respectively. There are some authorities

who sanction *to immediately bring the boy back* and *to honestly promote him* in such expressions as these, claiming that splits here make for a more closely-knitted structure than is otherwise possible. This is undoubtedly true. *No New Worlds to Almost Conquer* was the caption of a popular cartoon showing the Mad Hitler in grief. The split infinitive was imperative, as a matter of fact. Try reading the caption with *Almost* before *to* or after *Conquer,* and speech feeling *(sprachgefuhl)* will be shocked. There is no reasoning of whys or wherefores. *No New Worlds Almost to Conquer* and *No New Worlds to Conquer Almost* are as ill-sounding as they are unidiomatic and (perhaps) illogical. The split infinitive makes the caption neat and tidy.

The analysis of this particular type of construction made by the famous rhetorician, Adams Sherman Hill, a half century ago, must still be accepted as the soundest on record. Of the sentence *Even such a prospect as this failed to wholly restore peace to my mind* he wrote: "Occasionally, as in this example, it is impossible to amend the sentence without recasting it. *Wholly failed* is not the meaning; *failed wholly to restore* and *to restore peace wholly to my mind* are ambiguous; *failed to restore wholly peace* is hardly English; *wholly* at the end of the sentence is unbearable." His two rewrites to avoid the cleft form *to wholly restore* are *Even such a prospect as this failed to bring peace wholly back to my mind* and *Even such a prospect as this could not wholly restore peace to my mind.**

The perfect infinitive and the passive forms of the infinitive are less sensitive to splitting than is the present active. Such expressions as *These ought to be generously distributed* and *These ought to have been generously distributed* and even *He is said to have generously contributed to the cause* offer no problem and are seldom challenged by the grammarians. But nothing whatever would be lost—something, indeed, might be gained—by postponing *generously* in each of these sentences to the end. The cleft or split infinitive form is objected to primarily when, as above explained, the initial *to* is separated from the following verb by an inserted word, phrase, or clause.

The dangling or suspended expressions treated on page 105 are chiefly misuses or misplacements caused by absence of definite terms to tie with. Those discussed on pages 70 to 71 in which

* From Hill *Beginnings of Rhetoric and Composition,* copyright. Used by permission of American Book Company, publishers.

words are used without any clear harking back to identifying terms are misuses or misplacements resulting from sheer vagueness of thinking. Such expressional looseness as is discussed in this section cannot be justified even in the fact that it has for many years been a prolific source of humor in such classified advertisements as these:

Wanted: Second maid; give age, size, wages expected.
Wanted: Boy to deliver fish and oysters with good references.
Lost: A pair of fur-lined gloves by an old gentleman with two thumbs slightly out.
For Rent: Furnished room for elderly person with cross drafts and good ventilation.
For Sale Comfortable little house by maiden lady with bath, steam heater, and electric lights

CONTEST

	NO	YES
1	The officers were directing traffic in shirt sleeves	In shirt sleeves the officers were directing traffic
2	He testified that the motor had been left running on cross-examination	On cross-examination he testified that the motor had been left running
3	He drove off without even so much as thanking us in his car	He drove off in his car without even so much as thanking us
4	I have told him to leave the house many times	I have told him many times to leave the house
5	Take two of these powders on going to bed in a little cold water	On going to bed take two of these powders dissolved in a little cold water
6	Here are some of the numbers of those who will probably be called early	Here are the numbers of some of those who will probably be called early
7	There was the very man who owned the estate coming toward me	There, coming toward me, was the very man who owned the estate
8	I saw a large cow driving in from the country this morning	Driving in from the country this morning I saw a large cow
9	They showed us the old chapel in the churchyard where my sister was married	They showed us the old churchyard chapel where my sister was married
10	He has left with me the book that he has just finished for my critical opinion	He has left with me for my critical opinion the book that he has just finished
11	Write a statement on your paper in which there are two words spelled alike but pronounced differently	Write on your paper a statement in which there are two words spelled alike but pronounced differently

* See page 3

	NO	YES
12	When I resumed work at the office yesterday after an absence of a month I found myself bewildered and inert	When, after an absence of a month, I resumed work at the office yesterday I found myself bewildered and inert
13	Though I had thought when I met Nettie again I should have a great deal to say after my long absence all I could do was to sit and stare	When I met Nettie again after my long absence, all I could do was to sit and stare, though I had thought I should have a great deal to say
14	I think you ought to energetically and emphatically with every possible means at your command try to overcome that defect	I think you ought to try energetically and emphatically, with every possible means at your command, to overcome that defect
15	Wanted Young man to open and serve oysters of good appearance and proper manners in an old established restaurant with promise of advancement	Wanted. Polite, good-looking young man to open and serve oysters in an old, established restaurant. Promise of advancement
16	This poem was composed more than a century ago by one of our native townsmen who has for a long time now been sleeping in his grave for his own delight	One of our native townsmen, who for a long time now has been sleeping in his grave, composed this poem for his own delight more than a century ago
17	Lost A valuable umbrella by an old lady made of cellophane with glass handle and aluminum ribs	Lost By an old lady a valuable cellophane umbrella with glass handle and aluminum ribs
18	The general is said to have been assassinated by certain of his associates, his body will be taken to Colorado where he spent his boyhood days next week	It is said by certain of his associates that the general was assassinated. His body will next week be taken to Colorado where he spent his boyhood days
19	Tell Jones as soon as he is done I want to see him	Tell Jones I want to see him as soon as he is done

SECTION TWENTY-ONE — PERSONAL

A pronoun, that is, a substitute for a name (noun) must represent the same number as is represented by the name to which it refers. If you say *If any one thinks this is true, they may try to prove it* you make plural *they* refer to singular *one*. This is an inconsistent use of the pronoun. Strictly speaking, the sentence should read *If any one thinks this is true, one may try to prove it.* But this reading is awkward and repetitive, and as a consequence the pronoun *he* is now permissible in such reference, and so used is properly regarded as of common gender. *If any one thinks this is*

true, he may try to prove it is therefore correct today though a few decades ago it was not. Note a similar conflict of number in *Everybody must do their* (should be *his*) *own work* and *Neither of them will be found lacking in their* (should be *his*) *application* and *John went to see* ***Sullivan's Travels*** *but he didn't like them* (should be *it* inasmuch as reference is to a title) and *Day after day has passed but they* (should be *it*) *has* (not *have*) *brought us no word of our boy.*

Inasmuch as there is no singular personal pronoun of common gender to cover *he, she, it,* some authorities rule that in conversational English it is permissible to refer to *each, every, one, somebody, nobody,* and other such singular terms by means of *they, their, them, themselves.* But agreement in number should be observed even in conversation, however colloquial, in order to prevent disagreement from carrying over into formal writing. The word *thon* (contraction of *that one*) was devised for the purpose of covering the third person common gender, that is, to stand for *he, she, it* at one "fell swoop" (see *Standard Dictionary*) It has not been generally adopted but it would be a very convenient term (The archaic word *yon* is a pronominal localism in England meaning that or those yonder in reference to persons or things in sight.)

You may say *One must go about one's duty seriously* in which *one's* is a repetition of *One* to which it refers. But you may say, preferably, *One must go about his duty seriously* in which *his* refers to *One* and indicates either male or female, or both. Again, instead of clumsily saying *Everybody must go about everybody's duty seriously,* you may say *Everybody must go about his duty seriously, his* again being used to make the expression smoother and to denote either male or female, or both. And *his* is even of greater convenience in such expression as *Every pupil in the school must go about his duty seriously* in which it may, by grammatical license, refer to both *boys* and *girls* implied in *pupil.* This is a considerable improvement over the stilted form *Every pupil must go about his or her duty seriously.* Context may, to be sure, change the course of reference. The principal of a school for girls would naturally and safely say *Every pupil must go about her duty seriously.*

The terms *anybody, any one, a person, each, either, every, everybody, every one, many a, neither, nobody, no one, one, somebody,*

some one (page 362) convey the idea of oneness; that is, they are singular in significance and should be referred to by singular forms only. But persistence of colloquialism is gradually breaking down the niceties of singular reference in regard to at least some of these terms; thus, such sentences as *Everybody has received their own* and *Many a person was given their just reward* are almost constantly heard and are frequently seen. The pronoun *their* is plural, and it should not be used to pertain to singular *Everybody* in the one sentence or to singular *person* in the other.

Each (that is *each one*) like *every* (that is *every one*) must be held therefore to pertain to a single unit or individual. But *all* pertains to more than one, preferably to more than two, and to numbers or amounts collectively regarded. It is ridiculous to say *Each of the cars is of the same weight* for the sentence really says *One of the cars is of the same weight. All of the cars are of the same weight* is correct provided more than two are referred to. *Both of the cars are of the same weight* is correct provided two cars are referred to. If you say *All the pupils received a box of candy* your meaning really is that one box of candy was distributed to a group of pupils. What you probably mean is *Each of the pupils received a box of candy,* that is, there were as many boxes of candy as there were pupils. *All* takes a singular predicate when it is thought of and treated collectively, as in *All's well (All is well)* and *All that I heard was favorable* and *All that I live by is with the awl.* But in *All of them are now ready* and *All are going but Jane* it is clearly thought of as denoting more than one, and must thus have a plural predicate. As modifier *all* requires plural follow-up when it is used in a general enumerative sense, as *all boys* and *all kinds. All kind* and *all sort* are common misuses of *all* in violation of this rule. It is also followed by a plural when used distributively, though an intervening term (pronoun) may be singular, as *all my ties* and *all his books.* But used in the sense of completely or entirely, *all* may be followed by singular number, as *He is all man* and *She is all musician.* It should not be used loosely and ambiguously for *at all,* as in *He has not eaten all day* for *He has not eaten at all today.*

Of the two terms *each (one)* and *every (one),* the former is somewhat more individualizing—less collective—than the latter; thus, *Each man must take his packet with him* is more emphatic than *Every man must take his packet with him.* But this distinction,

insisted upon by the purist, has now become, it is feared, more or less of a dead letter even in literary usage.

If you say *He gave the door several knocks pausing briefly between each knock* you violate the principle of singular significance residing in *each*. To pause between each of anything is very nearly impossible of achievement, for *each* like *every*, and the rest, is singular—it denotes a single unit that may not be pried apart. You may say that he paused between (or among) knocks or that he paused after each knock or that he alternately knocked and paused (rather than continuously knocked). But the expressions *between each page* and *between every row* and *between any one of them* have long since been colloquial, and are by way of becoming acceptable. Separative *every* is sometimes affected, as in *Put a ribbon between every two*, but this cannot be recommended, chiefly because it is ambiguous. Does it mean between pairs or between one and one? *Between each row of carrots and the next plant a row of radishes* or *Alternate rows of carrots and radishes in this patch* are precise, if somewhat troublesome, readings.

Do not misuse *both* for *each*. If you say *Both women have received a medal* you imply that two women share one medal (see *all* above). But your meaning probably is *Each woman has received a medal*, that is, there were two medals, one being given to each woman. Even the colloquial *Both women received medals* may not be absolutely clear. The meaning may be that each woman received more than one medal.

None has always presented pesky difficulties to speakers and writers. It may be either singular or plural; it is more commonly used with a plural predicate than with a singular one. Inasmuch as it means *no one* or *not one* the purists hold that it should be used as singular only. When the singular idea is to be emphasized, *no one* is preferred by many writers, as *She is not coming, and no one could be happier than I*. Note the biblical *None were of silver* and *None of these things move me* and *Beware that none touch the young Absalom*. In general, it may be said that when *none, number, remainder, rest* refer to a whole as a unit they are correctly regarded as singular; when they refer to individuals in a group severally, they are plural. But this rule is by no means always easy to apply.

In some uses of *none* antecedence solves the problem of number. If you ask *How many girls were there*, the answer *None were there*

is correct for *None* refers to *girls* which is plural. If you say *Though many a man is caught off guard, none needs to be* you correctly make *none* singular because its antecedent is singular *man*. Note, now, these correct constructions involving *none, rest; remainder: None but the brave deserves the fair* and *There is none like her* and *There is none that doeth good* and *None think the great unhappy but the great; The rest is silence* and *The rest of them are in disagreement about the route; The remainder proves the solution of the problem to be correct* and *The remainder of my appointments are to be canceled.*

There was once a well-observed rule to the effect that the word *number* preceded by *a* should be treated as plural; preceded by *the* as singular, as *A number of them have requested a change of time* and *The number of members present at our meetings averages fifty*. This complies with the provision explained above, namely, its number, like that of the other words here under consideration, depends upon context

The importance of *the* as a definite or particularizing article is nowhere more clearly evidenced than in its use before *one (ones)* If you say *The dog was found by the one who knew his owner* you mean that the dog was found by the only one who knew his owner —by some particular one. If you say *The dog was found by one who knew his owner* you mean some one or any one or a person among several of a group. The latter is in normal expression the more likely meaning and use. But the distinction should be kept in mind, for there are many instances in which a particular or individual *one* must be designated, many in which a generalizing *one* must be used.

In *The culprit was finally brought before the ones (the one) he feared,* the term *the ones (the one)* apparently stands for persons (person) and is thus a personal pronoun, but *them* or *him* or *her* would represent a more exact usage, as would either of the demonstratives *these* or *those* (never *these ones* or *those ones!*). *The culprit was finally brought before them* (or *him*) *whom he feared* or *before those* (or *him*) *whom he feared* is a better reading. Like *the one, the ones* designates individuals, *them* and *those* pertain to collective persons or things. But note that in *Those are the ones I want* generalizing *Those* is focused and individualized by the use of *the* before *ones,* and the sentence is correct. Note, too, that in such phrases as *the smaller ones* and *the red ones* and *the*

tall ones the article with the help of the following adjective points out or particularizes, and is thus correctly used.

It is preferable to hold *either* and *neither* to pertain to one of two, not more. But there is abundant literary usage in violation of this preference. Say *The parcels may be sent to any* (or *any one*) *of the twelve neighbors,* not *The parcels may be sent to either of the twelve neighbors.* Say *None* (or *No one*) *of the five pupils will be allowed to go,* not *Neither of the five pupils will be allowed to go. Any one, no one, none* are used to pertain to more than two persons or things.

In the expression *Harry wrote a letter to Peter that he thought would settle the difficulty* the name to which *he* pertains is not clear. It may pertain to either *Harry* or *Peter,* and reference is thus divided or ambiguous. Either the one name or the other must be substituted for *he,* according to intended meaning, regardless of awkward repetition; otherwise the statement is not clear. It is always possible that in a sentence of this kind reference may be made to a word—a name—in a preceding sentence. But in such case uncertainty may become even more perplexing.

In the expression *He assured his friend that he would soon hear from him* the words or names to which *his,* the second *he,* and *him* pertain are not clear. Reference is vague. Who is going to hear from whom? The meaning may be *John assured his friend Bill that Bill would soon hear from him (John)* or *John assured his friend Bill that he (John) would soon hear from Horace* (a third party) or *John assured his friend Bill that Horace would soon hear from him (John).* Still other combinations may be made. The best solution of such vague expression as this is direct discourse, that is, the use of the exact words of the speaker, as *He assured* (or *said to*) *his friend, "I shall soon hear from you"* or *"You will soon hear from me"* or *"Horace will soon hear from me"* or *"I shall soon hear from Horace"* or *"You will soon hear from Horace."*

In the expression *If the workmen thought as much about their jobs as they do about their recreation they would be worth more* the word to which *they* pertains is not clear. Reference is double —perhaps triple. Would the workmen be worth more or would the jobs be worth more, or would, perhaps, both workmen and jobs be worth more? The meaning may be clarified only by substituting *workmen* or *jobs* (or both) for *they,* or, preferably, by

reorganizing the statement completely, as *The workmen would be worth more if they thought as much about their jobs as they think about their recreation* or *Their jobs would be worth more if the workmen thought as much about them as they think about their recreation* or *Both workmen and jobs would be worth more if the workmen thought as much about the jobs as they do about their recreation.*

If you say *In Martin's speech he referred to me as secretary* you make *he* pertain to the possessive *Martin's,* that is, to a subordinately used name. *Martin's* is a mere modifier of *speech* rather than an independent word or name. Reference is thus weak. In the idea as expressed Martin, the man, is really referred to, not Martin, the one who made a speech. If in his speech Martin referred to me as secretary, then he probably refers to me as such on other occasions. The sentence should read *Martin in his speech referred to me as secretary.* Even if you say *In the speech made by Martin he referred to me as secretary* you still make *he* refer to a name in a weak or subordinate position—*Martin* is object of the preposition *by.* But the latter reading is correct, though it was not regarded as preferable by the purists of a former day. It is still however a sound rule and one respected by the best writers and speakers, that substitutes for names or nouns (pronouns) should be so used that they refer to nouns in major positions only, that is, in nominative or objective case rather than in possessive case. The substitutes (pronouns) chiefly involved in such constructions are *I (my, mine, me), we (our, ours, us), you (your, yours), he (his, him), she (her, hers), it (its), they (their, theirs, them), who (whose, whom), which, that.*

If you say *Calling old Dobbin from the pasture, Thomas rubbed his nose vigorously* your readers or listeners may at first think that *his* pertains to *Thomas.* Reference will, therefore, appear ludicrous to them. What you mean, of course, is *Calling old Dobbin from the pasture, Thomas rubbed the horse's nose vigorously.* If a pronoun cannot be placed close enough to its antecedent to prevent such ridiculous meaning as is here illustrated, a name or a substitute name must be repeated.

If you say *The man was seen to enter the building at midnight with a suspicious-looking parcel who has been arrested* you place the pronoun *who* too far away from the noun *man* to which it pertains. Reference is, in other words, too remote to permit rela-

tionship to be easily and quickly established in the minds of readers and listeners. The reading should be *The man who has been arrested was seen to enter the building at midnight with a suspicious-looking parcel.* Every minor word group (clause) beginning with *who, which, that* should be placed as close as possible to the word or name to which it pertains in its accompanying major clause.

In *She has always been very beautiful but it has had no effect upon her behavior* the word *it* pertains to an entire group of words—*She has always been very beautiful.* Reference is general or broad. *It* should be used to refer to a single word only, except in those cases where it is used expletively and impersonally (page 22). Such expression as this must, therefore, be reorganized in the interest of definiteness or unity. True, *it* does refer in this sentence to the idea of beauty, but the word itself is not used for *it* to fix reference upon. The difficulty may sometimes be overcome by converting an adjective into a noun—*beautiful* into *beauty.* But it is more commonly overcome by the use of such word as *fact* or *condition* or *question;* thus, *The fact that she has always been very beautiful has had no effect upon her behavior* or *She has always been very beautiful but this fact has had no effect upon her behavior.* But *Her great beauty has never been permitted to influence her behavior* is a better because a briefer reading.

In *The people began now to murmur of one tramp instead of a number of them* the word *them* pertains to *tramp,* its would-be antecedent. But *them* means more than one (plural) and *tramp* means one (singular). Reference is thus contradictory as to number. To make the statement correct the plural form of the antecedent must be substituted for *them,* as *The people began now to murmur of one tramp instead of a number of tramps* or *of many tramps.*

The ruling is sometimes made that young animals, small animals, and insects are properly referred to by *it* and *its;* large animals by *his.* But this is by no means a constant rule, and it is not generally followed when the sex of an animal is commonly recognized in everyday conversation. *Hen* is *she* and *her* and *hers;* so is *ewe. Rooster* is *he* and *his* and *him;* so is *ram. The horse has lost his bridle* and *The mare is eating her fodder, The dog has broken his leash* and *The bitch is feeding her young* are preferred forms inasmuch as *his* and *her* are so easily adjusted in gender reference

by the average person. But *The calf has broken its leg* and *The puppy has drunk its milk, The elephant is swinging his trunk* and *The camel is taking his stride* are likewise correct. *She* and *her* are used both colloquially and figuratively in reference to things; thus, *Push her ahead a little* is colloquial for *Push it* (or *the car*) *ahead a little,* and *She rides the wave majestically* is figurative form for *The ship rides the wave majestically* (*ship* is figuratively feminine as a rule).

Personal pronouns ending with *self—myself, yourself, herself, himself, itself, ourselves, yourselves, themselves, oneself* (page 31)—are used as emphatic or intensifying forms, or as reflexive forms. As the latter the *self* compound generally refers to the subject of the clause in which it is used, as in *She dances by herself.* As an emphatic form it stresses an accompanying noun or simple personal pronoun with which it appears, as *I am going with Mary herself* and *They have made themselves ill; You have admitted it yourselves* or *You have yourselves admitted it.* It is incorrect to use any of these compound forms in place of the simple forms to which *self (selves)* is attached. Do not say *Yourself and friends are invited* for *You and your friends are invited* or *My guests and myself gladly accept* for *My guests and I gladly accept.*

Unless the foregoing rule regarding the reflexive is closely observed, ambiguity may result. In *Alice was not certain whether Mary bought the book for Harry or for herself,* for instance, *herself* logically refers to *Mary* but the intended meaning may be—probably is—that Alice did not know whether Mary bought the book for her (Alice) or for Harry, and the sentence should read *Alice was not certain whether Mary bought the book for Harry or for her.* The same sort of ambiguity occurs in *Alice, assuming that Mary had bought the book for herself, composed a note of thanks in anticipation of the gift* in which *her* should be used instead of *herself.*

Used intensively the *self* form should, as a rule, be accompanied by the simple personal pronoun which it emphasizes; thus, *I myself objected to it,* not *Myself objected to it; You yourself must be blamed for this,* not *Yourself must be blamed for this.*

Euphony may sometimes decide the use of the *self* compounds. If a simple personal pronoun must be so frequently used in a sentence, for instance, as to become monotonous, the reflexive form may be occasionally substituted for relief. As a rule, it is better

not to use the objective-case personal pronouns in direct relationship with their reflexives, an intervening word or more than one usually being desirable to prevent a sound clash; thus, *Let him answer the question himself* is better than *Let him himself answer the question; I hold them responsible themselves* is better than *I hold them themselves responsible.*

The so-called plain forms of the personal pronoun—nominative *thou,* possessive *thy* and *thine,* objective *thee*—are now found rarely except in biblical and poetical literature. Among Quakers *thee* is colloquial for the nominative, instead of *thou,* in spite of the fact that the *thou* forms—*Thou hast, Thou wilt,* and so forth —were once colloquial. *I refuse to take advice from such as thou (art)* is correct, though colloquialism has it *I refuse to take advice from such as thee. Wilt thou go* is correct; *Wilt thee go* is incorrect. *Thyself* and *thyselves* are now archaic.

Little if any distinction is longer made between *oneself* and *one's self.* The former is, strictly speaking, the real reflexive form, as is seen in *One is likely to hurt oneself (himself) in diving there;* the latter, the emphatic or intensive form used in direct reference to one's individuality, as in *It is degrading to one's self to become involved in a fight.*

Each other and *one another* are sometimes classified among those forms that imply cross-relationships, as the above compounds do. They are sometimes called reciprocal terms, the first properly used of two persons or things, as *Brother and sister should help each other;* the second of more than two, as *The members of the club respect one another.* But this distinction is decreasingly observed even in literary usage.

In the sentence *A fellow is invariably thrilled when the boys go marching past you* the pronoun *you* is second person and the noun —*fellow*—to which it refers is third person. This sort of pronominal misuse, which can perhaps be more confusing to a reader or a listener than any other, occurs most frequently in connection with *one,* as in *One can never tell what may happen to you* and *One shudders when you realize what may befall us in an attack.* These sentences should respectively read *A fellow is invariably thrilled when the boys go marching past him* and *One can never tell what may happen to him* (or *one*) and *One shudders when he* (or *one*) *realizes what may befall him* (or *one*) *in an attack.* It has been pointed out (page 135) that *he (his, him)*

may be used as of common gender, and that it may be used to refer to such words as *each, everybody, nobody, one, somebody.* In such sentences as the last two *he* (or some form of *he*) is preferable to the repeated *one,* as is the case in any sentence in which *one* becomes monotonous or seems affected. It is wise not to begin an expression with *one* unless it can be carried through easily and gracefully to the end. It is better to start with first person *I,* second person *you,* or third person *he,* and use each person consistently throughout, than to be obliged to say *one* and *one's* to excess. *You never need your nerve more than when you are confronted with an intruder in the night* is better than *One never needs one's nerve more than when one is confronted with an intruder in the night.*

Confusion of person through such misuse of pronouns as is illustrated above sometimes become ridiculous in letter writing, especially in formal notes. In *The undersigned approves your action, and we shall be present at the meeting* the substitute noun *undersigned* is third person and the pronoun *we* is first. The sentence should read *We* (or *We, the undersigned,*) *approve your action, and we shall be present at the meeting.* In *Mrs Archibald Brown requests the pleasure of your company to dinner on Thursday evening June tenth* the third-person style of formal notes is awkwardly abandoned with second-person *your.* The sentence should read *Mrs Archibald Brown requests the pleasure of Miss Selma Cohen's company to dinner on Thursday evening June tenth.*

CONTEST *

	NO	YES
1	One must keep oneself respect	One must keep one's self-respect
2	Sarah told her sister that she ought to go early	Sarah said to her sister, "I think you ought to go early"
3	In Harrison's story of the game he made several surprising confessions	In his story of the game Harrison made several surprising confessions
4	He hardly speaks to me but it makes no difference	He hardly speaks to me but this attitude of his makes no difference
5	John's father told him that unless he did better this year he would have to seek work elsewhere	Said John's father, "Unless you can do better this year, son, you will have to seek work elsewhere"
6	If the children would give half as much attention to their studies	The children would be very much better prepared if they would give

* See page 8.

	NO	YES
	as they give to their games, they would be very much better prepared	half as much attention to their studies as they give to their games
7	Stroking Tabby's fur in the wrong way Jane put a saucer of milk before her by way of apology	Jane put a saucer of milk before Tabby by way of apology for stroking her fur in the wrong way
8	Bill has been late three times in succession and it has almost cost him his job	Bill has been late three times in succession, and his tardiness has almost cost him his job
9	I think that must be a very good car because I see so many of them on the road	I think that must be a very good car because I see so many cars of the same make on the road
10	If any one of you cares to visit the display of spring dresses at the Emporium, I shall be glad to excuse them early	If any one of you cares to visit the display of spring dresses at the Emporium, I shall be glad to excuse her early
11	Every one of you wishing to visit the display of Boy Scout uniforms at the Emporium may have their report card early	Every one of you wishing to visit the display of Boy Scout uniforms at the Emporium may have his report card early
12	Yourselves and friends are requested to come early so that we may chat with each other before the performance begins	You and your friends are requested to come early so that we may chat with one another before the performance begins
13	John is going to California when school closes and it will be a fully deserved vacation for him	John is going to California when school closes; the trip will be a fully deserved vacation for him
14	The bull apparently lost its temper, and there was nobody who didn't run as fast as they could	The bull apparently lost his temper, and there was nobody who didn't run as fast as he could
15	If one has proper respect for oneself they will not associate with low company	If one has proper respect for one's self, he will not associate with low company
16	The working man's penny is as good as yours, and there are more of them	The working man's penny is as good as yours, and there are more of his pennies than of yours
17	This is a renowned coeducational college in which many a student has found for himself or herself the proper focus for his or her life	This is a renowned coeducational college in which many a student has found for himself the proper focus for his life
18	Every man and woman must do their utmost to see to it that any cruelly mistreated domesticated animal is taken to the hospital maintained for them by the SPCA	Every man and woman must do his utmost to see to it that any cruelly mistreated domesticated animal is taken to the hospital maintained for it by the SPCA
19	Every graduate of the preparatory school enters college; the dean of the school visits them twice a year during their college course	Every graduate of the preparatory school enters college; the dean of the school visits him twice a year during his college course

	NO	YES
20	In Alice's essay she referred to me as the male animal	In her essay Alice referred to me as the male animal
21	Negotiations will begin by the fifteenth at the latest which, we hope, will lead to a peaceful settlement	Negotiations which, we hope, will lead to a peaceful settlement, will begin by the fifteenth at the latest
22	I forgot all about that old motor when he came to ask for scrap iron which has been lying under the workbench all these years	When he came to ask for scrap iron I forgot all about that old motor which has been lying under the workbench all these years
23	The writer of this note is eager to place myself in a good position. I have had excellent preparation for the sort of work you have to do, and my references will be satisfactory to anybody	The writer of this note is eager to place himself in a good position. He has had excellent preparation for the sort of work required and his references will be found highly satisfactory
24	Miss Stassen presents my compliments to Mrs Harsen, and would say I found a scarf which she thinks belongs to her If you have missed your scarf this one which she has found is probably the one	Miss Stassen presents her compliments to Mrs Harsen. If Mrs. Harsen has missed a scarf, Miss Stassen informs her that one has been found which is probably Mrs Harsen's
25	Mr and Mrs Robert Grant request the pleasure of Mr and Mrs Everett Farbstein's company to dinner on Wednesday May sixth at seven o'clock (Wear your everyday clothes, please)	Mr and Mrs Robert Grant request the pleasure of Mr and Mrs Everett Farbstein's company at dinner on Wednesday May sixth at seven o'clock. Informal dress
26	The undersigned has never sanctioned the kind of procedure you mention, but I shall think it over and we shall let you hear from us	I have never sanctioned the kind of procedure you mention, but I shall think it over and shall let you hear from me
27	Between every row of cabbages he planted old garden flowers	Between one row of cabbages and another throughout the patch he planted old garden flowers
28	John confronted the ones who, he knew, had come to accuse him	John confronted those who, he knew, had come to accuse him
29	I don't think either Alice, Mary, or Jane has brought their books	I don't think Alice, Mary, or Jane has brought her books
30	Here are two more books like the ones that have been selected for the school	Here are two more books like those that have been selected for the school
31	All commodities listed in Appendix A are those known to the trade as such excepting therefrom such thereof, if any, while subject to another regulation	All commodities listed in Appendix A are known to the trade as Appendix-A commodities But if any such commodities are subject to a regulation not pertaining to Appendix A, they may be excepted from it

SECTION TWENTY-TWO RELATIVE

Who is used primarily to refer to persons; it is used occasionally to refer to animals; it is not used to refer to things unless they are designedly personified in composition. *Which* is used primarily to refer to animals and things, never to persons individually considered. But a collective noun pertaining to a number of persons spoken of as a unit is correctly referred to by *which;* one that pertains to a number of persons spoken of individually is correctly referred to by *who,* as in *I was a member of the jury which condemned the man to death* and *The jury who were in stubborn disagreement all day requested the judge to clarify certain points.* Though *which* is preferably used in referring to animals, literature abounds with the use of *who* in such reference. Some authorities rule that highly domesticated animals, such as cats, dogs, horses, may correctly be referred to by *who.* But *who* is preferably used to refer to persons only, and the best present-day speakers and writers observe this usage.

Whose, possessive of *who* and *which,* is used to refer to persons, to anything designedly personified, and, according to some authorities, to all animals on the plane below human. *Of which* is used to refer to anything not personified and to anything without animal life except where euphony requires *whose. That* is used to refer to persons, animals, and things, and to persons and animals or things named together. *That* is therefore used as a covering word of reference in such sentence as *Everybody and everything that we cherish must be given up. That* is also used in a minor statement (clause) that is necessary to the meaning of a major statement. In *Bill is the only boy that I want to see* the meaning of the sentence would be entirely changed if not destroyed by the omission of *that I want to see.* This is why such group of words is called necessary or limiting or *restrictive.* It is one of the more or less arbitrary rules of grammar that *that* must be used in this sort of restrictive word group, rather than *who,* or *which* in case animals or things are referred to. The most careful writers and speakers respect this rule, though colloquially *Bill is the only boy whom I want to see* is used widely, and is not likely to be misunderstood or challenged But the use of *that* is sometimes justifiable in a non-restrictive expression for the sake of euphony, as are *who* or *which* in a restrictive expression. In *These stitches, that are stretched apart, are the most difficult* the

word group *that are stretched apart* is not restrictive, and *which* should be used instead of *that*. But since it would add to the *ch* and *s* sounds already abounding, *that* may be used for sound relief. Similarly *That man that you appointed has arrived* is correct since the minor clause is restrictive, but *That man whom you appointed has arrived* is more euphonious.

That is preferred by some authorities in reference to such collective terms as *assembly, audience, committee, council, group, meeting, senate*. As pointed out above, *which* may be used when reference to such words is strictly collective. *The congregation that voted this resolution has left the church* is correct usage; *congregation which* is also correct (see above); *congregation who* is incorrect.

Which was once used of persons, as in *Our Father which art in heaven*. But it is no longer so used, *who* now being the preferred form. The possessive form *whose* is very often justifiable for the sake of convenience where *of which* would occasion an awkward break in an expression. *Henry whose record has been good should receive the prize* and *The woman whose bag was lost has rewarded the finder* represent correct usage, as do *The car the fender of which was smashed belonged to me* and *The cupboard the door of which is broken cannot be used* But *The car whose fender* and *The cupboard whose door* represent pressing colloquialism that may well become standard. Shakspere's *The undiscovered country from whose bourn* (not *from the bourn of which*) illustrates the metrical convenience of *whose*.

Whom, the objective or receiving form of *who*, is frequently misused in speech and writing. In questions the "hang" of its use may very often be clarified quickly by turning them around into statements or declarations; thus, turn *Whom do you want to see* around so that it reads *You do want to see whom* and it immediately becomes clear that *whom* receives the action of *see* and that *Who* would be a misuse in the original question. Note, however, that the situation is different in *Who did you think I was*, for, turned around, this expression reads *You did think I was who*. Here *who* logically follows *was*, a verb that usually takes the same case after it as before it, serves really as a mere connective, and expresses no action at all. In *The boy who* (rather than *whom*), *I had supposed, came early brought the parcel* the word group *I had supposed* is thrown in, and it in no way changes the relation-

ship of *who,* the substitute agent of the action expressed in *came.* The straightaway reading is *who came early.* The same situation is illustrated in the question *Who* (rather than *Whom*) *do you think will win,* that is, *You do think who will win* or *Who will win, do you think;* and in *Who* (rather than *Whom) did you say is going,* that is, *You did say who is going* or *Who is going, did you say.* In *Whom* (rather than *Who) shall we give it to* the word *Whom* logically follows *to,* that is *To whom shall we give it* or *We shall give it to whom.* In reply to such questions as this, say *Give it to whoever* (rather than *whomever) deserves it* or *Give it to whomever* (rather than *whoever) you regard most highly. Him* is understood after *to* in each of these replies, that is, *Give it to him whoever deserves it* and *Give it to him you regard whomever most highly.* In *The question of who* (rather than *whom) shall be invited is a puzzling one* the word *who* is subject of *shall be invited* and this four-word group (clause) is object of *of.*

The case of *who* in double reference is by no means always the same. In *He was helped by a friend whom he had known in college and who had unexpectedly appeared at this of all times* both *whom* and *who* refer to *friend* but the former is object of *had known* and the latter is subject of *appeared.*

The *than-whom* (rarely *than-who*) construction is to be avoided whenever possible. It is likely to be awkward or high-sounding, or both, and it may leave doubt or confusion in regard to antecedence. But it has long been used by the best speakers and writers. It has been pointed out on page 65 that in such sentence as *There has never been a more careful worker than he* the last word is subject of an understood verb—*than he is.* Objective *him* is wrong though it is occasionally justified by those who insist that in such use *than* may be regarded as a preposition. This classification of *than* is not, however, generally accepted. Now observe that in *He is a careful workman than whom I like none better,* that is, expanded, *He is a careful workman I like none better than I like whom,* the last four words constitute an adverbial clause of degree modifying *better.* But in *He is a player than who no one is regarded more highly,* nominative *who* is required after *than* because, expanded, the sentence reads *He is a player no one is regarded more highly than who (he) is.*

The personal pronouns also present their problems to both ear and eye by way of case adjustments. In *That man, him who just*

spoke to me, is leaving for the front tomorrow, for instance, *him* is wrong. The nominative form *he* is required for it stands for *man* (is in apposition with *man*) which is subject of *is leaving.*

If you say *I never thought it could be her* you make the mistake of using *her* for *she,* the objective for the nominative. The various forms of the verb *to be* with rare exceptions take the same case after them as before them. The verb *be* in all its forms is a connective or copulative verb only, denoting state or condition of rather than pure action. The expressions *It is I* and *We are they* and *This cannot be she* and *If it had been he I should have been surprised* and *If you were we you would do likewise* are therefore correct, though the momentum of colloquial *It is me* and *We are them* has become well-nigh insurmountable as far at least as speech is concerned (page 126).

But if you say *I thought the man to be he* you misuse nominative *he* for objective *him.* The sentence should read *I thought the man to be him.* The word *man* is in the objective case. Since, as above pointed out, the verb *to be* usually takes the same case after it as before it, it must here be followed by objective *him* for the reason that it is preceded by an objective *(man).* In *It was supposed to be she,* however, *she* harks back to *It* in reference, and *It* is the only word before *to be* that has case. *It* is nominative; therefore, *she* is correctly nominative. The sentence is equivalent to *It was supposedly she* in which *she* is an attribute complement (page 125). In *Between you and me I think he is greatly mistaken* both *you* and *me* are object of the preposition *Between. Between you and I* is wrong. Similarly, in *His was the bearing of a military man, the carriage of him (one) who is fearless in the face of enemies,* the pronoun *him* is object of the preposition *of* and nominative *he* would therefore be wrong.

Before verbs ending with *ing* used as nouns—gerunds or verbal nouns—the possessive case of a noun or a pronoun is usually required. It is called the gerundial possessive (page 442). In comparatively rare instances the objective case, and in rarer ones the nominative, may be necessary. The intended meaning must decide. If you say *I object to your dancing* you must mean that dancing is objected to. If you say *I object to you dancing* you must mean that objection is made to you in the act of dancing. If you say *I have doubt of his being appointed* you express doubt, not in regard to him, but in regard to being appointed. If you

say *I have doubt of him being appointed* you express doubt about him, not about the fact of being appointed. Note further the difference between *If my going upsets you I shall change my plans* and *If I, going* (that is, *getting off*), *upset you I shall change my plans;* between *They were angry at our smoking in the elevator* and *They were angry at us smoking in the elevator.* The rule applies to the relative pronoun as well as to the personal but "ear" tends to make error unusual in the use of the former. You say *Whose dancing do you object to,* not *Whom dancing do you object to.* But the latter is conceivably correct, that is, *Whom do you object to while he (she) is in the act of dancing.* This, however, is a farfetched instance.

The sentence *I am not certain of its being his* is correct, for *being* has possessive case before it and also after it. The meaning may very well be *I am not certain of its (operating) being his (responsibility)* as in reply to *Who is responsible for its operating* But the colloquial *I am not certain of its being him* (or *he*) is incorrect. What such expression as this means is *I am not certain that it is he* (page 125). You may say *I am not certain of it being him* in which *being* has the same case after it as before it, that is, *I am not certain of it as being him.* Such colloquialisms as *I had no idea of its being he* (or *him,* or *they* or *them*) and *I never thought of its being we* (or *us*) *who should go* are frequently heard (sometimes seen), and are permitted to pass unchallenged. To be correct they should, however, read *I had no idea of it (as) being him* (or *them*) or *I had no idea that it was he* (or *they*) and *I never thought of it (as) being us who should go* or *I never thought that it was we who should go* (page 160).

Demonstrative and certain indefinite pronouns cannot show possessive form before gerunds or verbal nouns, inasmuch as they are not inflected. But they follow the foregoing rule in "spirit" and meaning; that is, in *I have no doubt of this being right* and *I am certain of each having his first-aid kit. This* and *each* have no such forms as *this's* and *each's.* Expanded, these sentences may be made to read *I have no doubt of this article's (thing's, statement's) being right* and *I am certain of each man's (boy's, girl's, woman's) having his first-aid kit.* But indefinite compounds in *one* and *body* may of course make the possessive adjustment.

The coupling of a personal with a relative pronoun in identical reference is another pronominal misuse that leads to confusion

and misunderstanding. In *The agency informed me of a young stenographer whose name is Marshall and her present employer is going out of business* the noun *stenographer* is referred to, first, by the relative *whose* and, second, by the personal *her*. The sentence should read *The agency informed me of a young stenographer whose name is Marshall and whose present employer is going out of business.* Note, again, *The building has a wide, steep roof from which snow and water drain quickly and it therefore never holds dampness for a very long time* which should read *The building has a wide, steep roof from which snow and water drain quickly and which therefore never holds dampness for a very long time.*

The pronoun *what* rarely refers to a word in the sentence in which it is used, though it usually pertains more or less definitely to something that is implied. *I haven't taken anything that you want* is correct; *I haven't taken anything what you want* is incorrect. But *I have what you want* is correct, the thing that you want having been mentioned in a previous expression in all probability. *What* has no inflection. It is the same in all cases and numbers. Used alone, it is correctly regarded as singular unless plural reference in a preceding or following expression is clearly implied. If you say *These are nectarines,* some one who does not hear you clearly may ask *What are they* or *What do you say they are* in which question he properly uses *What* as plural because it refers to *nectarines.* But observe *What is wanted is more funds for the poor* in which the pronoun *What* is singular even though *funds,* the attribute complement of the noun clause, is plural (page 160). So used, *what* is invariably singular. Observe, however, *What is desirable and what is imperative are respectively old clothing and more funds.* In this sentence there are two noun clauses used as subject—there are two classes of things mentioned—and the principal predicate is therefore plural—*are* (page 158), but the subject of each clause—*what*—is singular. In such sentence as *He stated the case and, what is more to the point, his manner carried conviction* the word *what* is equivalent to *that which* or to *which fact.* But it is used to refer, by anticipation, to a whole clause, namely, *his manner carried conviction,* a construction that cannot be recommended in spite of colloquial pressure (see below). The better reading is *He stated the case and—this is more to the point—his manner carried conviction.*

As is sometimes misused for *who,* as in *The driver as just entered has been deprived of his license.* It is sometimes misused for *that,* as in *They say as he has been arrested.* It is sometimes misused for *whether,* as in *She hasn't said as we may sit here or there.* These sentences illustrate further the fact that *as* is far too generally and inexactly used, at least in colloquial expression if not in literary. It is preferably confined to such connective meanings as the way in which, the time at which, the purpose or reason for which (usually with *inasmuch*), as in *Do this as I want it done* and *I left as they entered* and *As I have several errands to do I shall leave for the train early* (page 191).

As is preferable to *that* in such expressions as *Such as* (not *that*) *I have I give you* and *This is the same as* (not *that*) *I have.* An old rule that is now generally ignored but that probably deserves revival, says that *same* and *as* should be used as correlatives when identity of kind or class is intended, *same* and *that* or *which* when perfect identity is intended; thus, *He uses the same piano as I use* means that we use the same make of piano—Knabe or Steinway or Hardman; *He uses the same piano that I use* means that we use one and the same piano. Note that the former may be elliptically expressed, that is, the final verb may be omitted—*He uses the same piano as I.* But the latter may not be elliptical, for *He uses the same piano that I* sounds absurdly unfinished. Both *as* and *that,* like *what,* are unchangeable in form, that is, they undergo no inflections in form for different uses, as *who* and *which* do.

Note the compounds *whoever, whosever, whomever; whosoever, whosesoever, whomsoever; whichever, whichsoever; whatever, whatsoever.* These are sometimes used for emphasis, sometimes with distributive signification. Like *what* they do not, as a rule, pertain definitely to any term within the structure of their own statement, but, rather, imply their own reference to something without. Sometimes this reference is so broad or indefinite as to be guessable or imaginary only, as in *Whatever happens, he'll be here* and *Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.* But these forms should not be used in place of the simpler originals in ordinary expression, as in *I asked him who* (not *whoever*) *gave him the book* and *He couldn't tell me what* (not *whatever*) *he meant by that remark* (page 32). The forms *whatso* and *whoso* are now archaic.

In the expressions *He wanted to know what had become of the car, but I couldn't answer that* and *I was late getting to the office this morning which was caused by the storm* the word *that* in the first like *which* in the second pertains, not to a single specific term, but to an entire group of words (page 100). *That* refers to *He wanted to know what had become of the car; which* to *I was late getting to the office this morning.* Reference is, in other words, too general or too broad. Vagueness very often results from such structure as this. *Who, which, what, that,* like *it,* should be held to definite reference—to a single word rather than to a group of words. *He wanted to know what had become of the car but I couldn't answer his question* and *The storm which delayed all traffic prevented my reaching the office on time this morning* are correct. It is always better, if possible, to eliminate reference entirely, as in *I could not answer his question as to what had become of the car* and *I was late getting to the office this morning because of the storm.* If there are two or more such minor word groups pertaining to the same term in the major statement, the relating word—*who, which, that*—should be repeated. Do not use *who* with one minor group and *which* with another. *Please extend to him the parking privilege that you gave me and that, I know, he will appreciate* is correct; each *that* pertains to privilege. But *Please extend to him the parking privilege that you gave me and which, I know, he will appreciate* is loose English.

CONTEST *

	NO	YES
1	Whatever did you say just then	What did you say just then
2	Who in the world did that man take me to be	Whom in the world did that man take me to be
3	A car which won't run is just an annoyance	A car that won't run is just an annoyance
4	The committee who appointed him now regrets having done so	The committee that appointed him now regrets having done so
5	He inquired where we had been, which nobody cared to answer his question	He inquired where we had been, but nobody cared to answer his question
6	They did not hear me call which was due to my being so far away	Because I was so far away they did not hear me call
7	That tire whose inner tube is worn will never get us to town	That tire the inner tube of which is worn will never get us to town

* See page 3.

	NO	YES
8	The old maple which stands at the crossroads is a famous landmark	The old maple that stands at the crossroads is a famous landmark
9	Any girl who cannot sew will be refused membership in our Stitch Club	Any girl that cannot sew will be refused membership in our Stitch Club
10	When lightning struck the house which was about midnight, whom do you think was most frightened	When lightning struck the house about midnight, who do you think was most frightened
11	The trip that they had planned and which promised great fun had to be canceled	The trip that they had planned and that promised to be great fun had to be canceled
12	He has been late three mornings in succession which may cost him his promotion	He has been late three mornings in succession and this tardiness may cost him his promotion
13	Who do you consider to be the best student in the school	Whom do you consider to be the best student in the school
14	"Who do you mean? Who is that for? Who did you go with? Who does this hat belong to?" were a few of the questions he asked in rapid succession	"Whom do you mean? Whom is that for? Whom did you go with? Whom does this hat belong to?" were a few of the questions he asked in rapid succession
15	To whomever has leisure these books that are beautifully bound and printed will bring many hours of pleasure	To whoever has leisure these books, which are beautifully bound and printed, will bring many hours of pleasure
16	We did not know that the officer objected to you turning there	We did not know that the officer objected to your turning there
17	What are needed here are more dollars and cents	What is needed here is more dollars and cents
18	The officer as I spoke to was very obliging	The officer that I spoke to was very obliging
19	Please hand me that shawl that is hanging on the hook and which I want to have mended	Please hand me that shawl which is hanging on the hook and which I want to have mended
20	For a change he came to the meeting on time which pleased us very much	For a change he came to the meeting on time, and thus pleased us very much
21	I should never have taken you to be she	I should never have taken you to be her
22	There seems to be an understanding between my sister Mary and he	There seems to be an understanding between my sister Mary and him
23	That girl, her who you just spoke to, is my niece	That girl, she whom you just spoke to, is my niece
24	He said he never imagined it could be me who telephoned him	He said he never imagined it could be I who telephoned him
25	We concluded that the intruder must be him of the little shack on the hill	We concluded that the intruder must be he of the little shack on the hill

NO	YES
26 Somebody whistling has set his nerves on edge	Somebody's whistling has set his nerves on edge
27 I have heard of a young man who has an excellent record and he wants a job such as I have to offer	I have heard of a young man who has an excellent record and who wants a job such as I have to offer

SECTION TWENTY-THREE — AGREEMENT

The expression *aren't I* has become an American affectation. It is incorrect, not to say illiterate, for the reason that *are* should be used only in relation to more than one—it is plural; and *I* should be used only in relation to one—it is singular. The correct form is *am I not.* The words *am not* are never spoken or written as a contraction—*amn't* does not exist in English usage. But many *not* combinations, such as *am not, are not, is not, has not, have not,* are expressed by the vulgarism *ain't.* The British *an't* was once, and still is in many localities, the equivalent of *ain't,* and the British pronunciation of *an't* is *ahn't.* This broad or Italian *a* sound naturally causes, to the ear at least, confusion with *aren't,* and it is therefore easy to understand how *aren't I* evolved from *an't I,* that is, *ain't I.* Dramatists and novelists have unfortunately done much to "freeze" this singular-plural anomaly into American conversational usage.

Any word that asserts action or condition in regard to the subject of a statement is called a predicate. It is a grammatical rule that a predicate must always agree with its subject as to number of things indicated and also as to the person of the subject, that is, as to whether it denotes a person as speaking (first person), as spoken to (second person), as spoken about (third person). This is a most important rule, inasmuch as it is very confusing for a reader or a listener to be required to think of one only in relation to a subject and of more than one in relation to its predicate, or vice versa. And the confusion may become "more confused" unless it is remembered that the third person singular of an action word indicating present action usually ends with *s,* whereas the name word used as subject may very likely not end with *s.* In other words, a singular name word (noun) does not usually end with *s,* but a third singular present action word usually does; a plural noun usually does end with *s,* but a third plural present action word does not; thus, *The boy runs* and *The boys run.*

Since *and* means addition, singular subjects connected by *and* must have plural predicate, as *Bill and Harry are going.* But if such subject really denotes the idea of a single combination or a single idea, the predicate must be singular, as *The bread and butter is good* and *The captain and manager is going to stay to dinner* (one individual serves as both captain and manager). Singular compound subjects connected by such alternative words as *either* —*or, whether*—*or, neither*—*nor* must have a singular predicate, as *Whether Bill or Harry is going I cannot say* and *Neither Bill nor Harry is going.* If one member of a compound subject so connected means one and another member means more than one, the predicate takes its number from the one closer (or closest) to it, as *Either this boy or those two boys are going to do this for you* and *These two boys or that one is going to do this for you.* If different persons are denoted by the subject, the same rule applies to the predicate, as *Either Harry or I am going,* and *Either you or Harry is going.* But better usage in connection with change of person requires that both predicate forms be used, as *Either Harry is going or I am* and *Either you are going or Harry is.*

If two or more singular subjects are specifically mentioned and thought of individually, each by itself, their predicate should be singular as in *No word, no sign, no thought was evidenced.* Here the meaning is *No word was evidenced, no sign was evidenced, no thought was evidenced;* the three subjects, moreover, all stand for one idea which is emphasized by being mentioned in three terms. And in *The joy and happiness of the little group was contagious* the predicate *(was)* is correctly singular for the reason that *The joy and happiness* must convey to any reader or listener a single idea. The omission of *the* before happiness also justifies the treatment of the two words as one or singular (page 78). Again, in *First John, then Bill, and then Harry was called to the desk* the predicate *(was called)* is singular because, as in the two preceding examples, each subject is singly or individually considered, one at a time, as *First John was called, then Bill was called,* and so on. But there can be no doubt that in *The house, the barn, and the new garage are located near the road* and *His book, his overcoat, and his stick have been placed in the car,* the three subjects in each sentence are regarded as three taken together plurally, not each by itself, and require therefore a plural predicate.

Two or more noun clauses used as subject require a plural predicate; a single noun clause does not; thus, *What they were doing all day is a secret* contains a noun clause subject having in itself a plural subject and predicate, but the noun clause stands as a single subject of the predicate *is*. But in *That he is wrong and that he knows he is are self-evident facts* and *That he is wrong or that he has been misinformed is evident* the number of the major predicates depends upon the connection of noun clauses (page 152).

A singular subject ending with *s* must not be mistaken for a plural form requiring a plural predicate. In *Happy Days is the title of my new song* and *Five-sixths of his fortune is lost* and *Six-thousand dollars is enough for it,* the subjects, though ending with *s,* are nevertheless singular and require singular predicates. The first is a title; the second, a fraction; the third, an amount. But *Happy days are here again* and *Five sixths were distributed among the heirs* and *Six thousand dollars have been scattered to the winds* are plural in idea and thus require plural predicates. Any term of measurement or distance or quantity or amount regarded as a single unit, thus denoting totality, requires a singular predicate when used as subject, as *Three cupfuls of flour is the proper amount* and *Twenty-six miles is the Marathon-run distance* and *Two dollars and a half is the price. The sum of one thousand dollars is required to carry on the work* and *One thousand dollars is required to carry on the work* are correct, the latter being the same as the former, the term *One thousand dollars* indicating a single amount or unit sum.

You may say *Two times two are four* or *Two times two is four.* Either is correct. The first means *Two digits* (or *units*) *multiplied by two digits* (or *units*) *make four digits* (or *units*) or it means *The number two multiplied by two makes four.* In the former *Two* is regarded severally; in the latter collectively, as a single number. The same exposition applies to *Two and two make four* and *Two and two makes four,* either of which is, again, correct. The former means *Two units added to two units are four units;* the latter, *The number two added to two is four.*

There are some name words (nouns) that are plural in form but that are treated as singular in use and meaning (page 447), such, for example, as *civics, mathematics, news, physics.* There are others, again, that are plural in both form and use, but that are likely to become confused with those of the above group, such as

scissors, spectacles, tongs, trousers. The news is bad and *The scissors are sharp* represent perplexing usages especially for those who are studying English for the first time and are unacquainted with its "vain and peculiar ways."

While in normal sentence order the subject precedes the predicate, it by no means always does so. When it does not precede, care must be exercised to make subject and predicate agree in number, sentence "hindsight" is necessary. In *There are a boy and a girl in the office,* the compound subject *boy* and *girl* is "behind" the predicate, it is plural, and *are* rather than *is* must be the predicate. Do not mistake *There* for subject. In such sentence as this *There* is expletive merely (page 21). Note further *Where were you yesterday,* that is, *You were where yesterday; In what respects do John and Harry disagree,* that is, *John and Harry do disagree in what respects; Here are the pencil and the pad requested,* that is, *The pencil and the pad requested are here.*

It must be remembered that *doesn't, wasn't, hasn't* are always singular; that *don't* is a plural form except when it is used with *I* or with singular *you* as subject. Say *I don't, You don't, We don't, They don't,* but *He doesn't, She doesn't, It doesn't. You* always takes a plural predicate.

A name word indicating a group (collective noun) is treated as singular when the group is spoken of as a single unit, as plural when context shows that individuals are being considered; thus, in *The army has been formed very slowly* the army is spoken of as a unit, and in *The army have evinced widely divergent views about this policy* the idea behind *army* is plural, namely, the members of the army. The first sentence of Emerson's *Essay on Manners* is "Half the world, it is said, knows not how the other half live," in which the subject of the first part—*Half*—has a singular predicate—*knows*—and the subject of the second part—*half*—has a plural predicate—*live.* Apologists explain that the first *Half* applies to the safe, smug, solid bourgeois as a class unit, whereas the second *half* pertains to all other classes—promiscuous, scattered, ununified—and that therefore the one is singular and the other, plural.

Troublesome collective nouns in daily use, such as *assemblage, assembly, board, cabinet, class, committee, company, convention, corporation, crowd, generation, group, jury, majority, ministry, minority, nation, people, public* may usually be made to bear the

stamp of consistency if placed after the expression *members of,* that is *Members of the company meet here* and *Members of the jury were excused.* But this recourse is recommended only where confusion may otherwise easily appear.

Such terms as *with, along with, together with, in addition to, as well as, in company with, including, no less than* are relational rather than connective. They are not used like *and* and *but* and *either—or,* and other merely connective terms. They therefore have no deciding power in regard to how many are denoted by a subject and a predicate. In *Mary, in company with the other girls, is going to the party,* the singular name *Mary* is the grammatical subject, and the predicate must therefore be singular *is* rather than plural *are,* though the idea presented before the predicate is plural. *In company with the other girls* is a prepositional word group (phrase) establishing relationship, not connection. Note further *The boy on the right, as well as those two girls, has been promoted* and *Jameson, no less than Harrison and Blaine, is to blame* and *The girls, together with their brother, are very much disturbed by the loss.*

When words intervene between a subject and its predicate, care must be taken to see that the number of the predicate is influenced by the subject only, rather than by some intervening term of a different number; thus, in *Willie's choice of playmates is not always safe* and *Our teacher's use of words and sentences is perfect* the subject is singular *choice* in the one and singular *use* in the other, not the plural word immediately preceding the predicate in each example. When a predicate is wrongly made to agree with the word immediately preceding it, the mistake is known as the error of proximity.

Inasmuch as a predicate must agree with its subject in number and person, these sentences *The best fruit is oranges and bananas* and *Reliability and industry are the keynote of character* are correct. The subject of the first—*fruit*—is singular, and the predicate must therefore be singular even though *oranges* and *bananas,* used to mean the same as *fruit,* are plural. The subject of the second—*Reliability* and *industry*—is plural, and the predicate must therefore be plural even though *keynote,* used to mean the same as *Reliability* and *industry,* is singular. The words following *is* and *are* may be called "completers"—grammarians call them attribute complements or predicate nouns (page 125)—and the

good grammatical rule regarding them is that they must never be permitted to influence the number of a predicate. Only the subject to which they always refer can exercise such influence.

The plural of *this* is *these;* of *that, those.* Do not apply *this* and *that* to plural relations, *these* and *those* to singular ones. *These kind* and *those type* are wrong, as are *this ashes* and *that goods.* Say, rather, *this kind, that type, these ashes, those goods.* Do not use *these* and *those* indefinitely in the sense of kind of or this (that) sort of thing, as in *It was one of those rough-and-tumble performances* and *He is one of these talkative men.* It is more specific—and therefore preferable—to say *It was a rough and tumble performance* and *He is a talkative man,* or *It was one of those performances that are rough and tumble* and *He is one of those men who talk a great deal.* Such vague generalizations made by means of *these* and *those* may be converted into more direct or specific form either by omission or by a qualifying word group (clause), as is illustrated in the examples given.

Observe in the last italicized sentence above that *talk* is plural, to agree with its subject *who* which is plural in agreement with the word it pertains to, namely, *men.* In a sentence of this kind *who* is sometimes mistaken to be singular in reference (in this example) to *He* or *one.* In the sentence *This is the table among all those on display that is best suited to your needs* the word *that* pertains to *table,* not to *those,* and the combination *that is* is thus singular in signification. But in the sentence *I like this newspaper best of all of those that are placed on my desk every morning* the word *that* pertains to *those,* not to *newspaper,* and the combination *that are placed* is thus plural in signification.

CONTEST *

NO	YES
1 There is altogether too many coats in the closet	There are altogether too many coats in the closet
2 This is one of those books that has been called "un-lay-down-able"	This is one of those books that have been called "un-lay-down-able"
3 What has just happened and what will happen again all too soon is everybody's concern	What has just happened and what will happen again all too soon are everybody's concern
4 Every one of the thirty girls in the dances desire success	Every one of the thirty girls in the dances desires success

* See page 3

	NO	YES
5	*The Chimes* by Charles Dickens are most entertaining	*The Chimes* by Charles Dickens is most entertaining
6	The novelist's exquisite taste in the choice of words impress me	The novelist's exquisite taste in the choice of words impresses me
7	This work which is the most important of all my special assignments give me the greatest satisfaction	This work which is the most important of all my special assignments gives me the greatest satisfaction
8	I do not believe that either Mary or Jane are going to pass in history	I do not believe that either Mary or Jane is going to pass in history
9	They live in one of those made-over barns that is the delight of artists	They live in one of those made-over barns that are the delight of artists
10	Whether Harry or I are going has not yet been decided	Whether Harry or I am going has not yet been decided
11	*News, Ads, and Sales* have sold well among business men	*News, Ads, and Sales* has sold well among business men
12	Here at last are Mary along with her little brother Joe	Here at last is Mary along with her little brother Joe
13	If he don't take them I doubt whether the boy or you is going to have a place to sleep	If he doesn't take them I doubt whether the boy or you are going to have a place to sleep
14	In stubborn disagreement all night the jury has at last given up hope of reaching a verdict	In stubborn disagreement all night the jury have at last given up hope of reaching a verdict
15	His chief interest are the rabbits and the chickens	His chief interest is the rabbits and the chickens
16	She don't care to go unless Myrtle or I accompanies her	She doesn't care to go unless Myrtle or I accompany her
17	A large tract of meadowland and woods have just been sold to him	A large tract of meadowland and woods has just been sold to him
18	There in the pouring rain stands my trunk, my bag, and my paper parcel	There in the pouring rain stand my trunk, my bag, and my paper parcel
19	I wonder what the news are this morning, and whether our team are going to get the trophy	I wonder what the news is this morning and whether our team is going to get the trophy
20	Here in this little room is the man and the woman who wants passports	Here in this little room are the man and the woman who want passports
21	This is a special model among those machines that was turned out in such great numbers last year	This is a special model among those machines that were turned out in such great numbers last year
22	I guess I'm one of those little girls that is hatable, aren't I	I guess I'm one of those little girls that are hatable, am I not
23	*The Lives of the Poets* by Johnson were not in the library	*The Lives of the Poets* by Johnson was not in the library

NO	YES
24 The United States of America are a great and powerful nation	The United States of America is a great and powerful nation
25 Billy is one of the athletes whose name is inscribed on the school tablet	Billy is one of the athletes whose names are inscribed on the school tablet
26 The United States of America is one and inseparable	The United States of America are one and inseparable
27 In this cemetery lies buried many of the greatest poets of all time	In this cemetery lie buried many of the greatest poets of all time
28 That the earth is round and that it revolves on its axis was unbelievable to me as a youth	That the earth is round and that it revolves on its axis were unbelievable to me as a youth

SECTION TWENTY-FOUR — ACTION

Action words (verbs) are used in accordance with certain manners or modes, times (tenses), and agents that act or are acted upon (voice). If, for example, you wish to use an action word in an emphatic manner you may place *do* or *did* before it, as *We do fight* and *We did fight* which are stronger than mere *We fight* and *We fought.* If you wish to use an action word in an interrogative manner, you may most conveniently do so very often (not always) by means of *do* or *did,* as *Do we fight* and *Did we fight.* These are more graceful idiomatic forms than *Fight we* and *Fought we.* Again, if you wish to express action in a negative manner, you make use of *not* or some other negative term, as *We will not fight* and *He has not won* and *They will never give up,* making sure that the negative word bears directly upon the action word. *Do* and *did* are relied upon in such negative expressions in order to make them more graceful as well as more emphatic and idiomatic, *I do not fight* being better than *I fight not,* and *We did not yield* than *We yielded not.* If you wish to express yourself imperatively, that is, if you wish to order or command, you hit the nail dynamically on the head by starting with the action word and omitting its subject, as *Go to work* and *Give me your pencil* and *Do not go* and *Leave.* The subject is always clearly implied, of course, by the direction of the expression, as *(You) leave* and *(You) go to work.* Orders are, as a rule, given *to* some one or *to* some group directly, and their action words are, therefore, in the second person.

If you wish to indicate something as a fact or something assumed to be a fact, you use an assertive or indicative form of action,

word, as *I have no books* and *They will all agree to that.* Since interrogative expressions are really nothing but assertions or "indications" turned around and left in doubt, and since negative expressions deny rather than affirm assertions or indications, they are commonly classed in technical grammar as belonging to the indicative mode or manner of the verb.

An action word that says something not necessarily supported by a speaker as true or even as likely is regarded as "joined under" a wish or condition or doubt or supposition or concession or exhortation, and is said to be in a subjunctive fashion or mode of expression. Such introductory words as *if, though, lest, unless, that, till (until), whether* usually signal this mode of expression, but they are by no means confined to the subjunctive. If you say *I wish I were home* you imply that you are away from home and are wishing for something that is not a fact. *I wish I was home* is wrong, for *was* belongs to indicative or factual statements. If you say *If I were Mary I should go* you express a condition contrary to fact; you are *not* Mary. Again, indicative *was* would be wrong, and subjunctive *were* is correct. Sometimes a conditional expression denotes doubt or uncertainty only, as in *If she were to fail, I could never see her again.* This is a weaker subjunctive than that in the former example, but *were* instead of *was* is nevertheless required. It occurs, as a rule, before an infinitive (the *to* form of an action word) in which the doubt or uncertainty actually resides. The subjunctive of supposition may pertain to time as present, past, future, or indefinite, and its meaning naturally involves either condition or doubt, or both; thus, you say *Suppose she be* (not *is*) *ill, what shall we do* and *Suppose she had failed, all would have been different* (the form of action term here is the same as it would be in an indicative statement) and *Suppose she fail* (not *fails*) *tomorrow, what then* and *Say there were* (not *was*) *to be an earthquake, you should go into the open.*

Note these further examples of the "queer" or unusual verb forms characterizing the subjunctive fashion of expression: *If he come* (not *comes*), *we shall be ready* (he is probably not coming); *He will spend all his strength, though it be* (not *is*) *futile against such opposition* (it is conceded that his strength will not amount to much, if anything, but this is not stated as a fact); *Unless she go now, it will be too late* (there is doubt about her going now); *He plays as if he were* (not *was*) *angry* (that is, he plays as he would play if he were angry); *Take care that you be not* (not *are*) *misled*

(the supposition is that you may be misled); *Whether this be* (not *is*) *for the best I cannot say* (it is too uncertain apparently to admit of a factual statement); *I will not believe him until he perform* (not *performs*) *a miracle* (his being able to perform a miracle is contrary to belief or fact or probability).

Though some authorities rule that the subjunctive is used in resolutions and orders such as *Resolved:* (that is, *Be it resolved:* or *Let it be resolved:*) *That the secretary notify* (not *notifies*) *Mr Blank of his election* and *Be it ordered:* (that is, *Let it be ordered:*) *That a committee be* (not *is*) *appointed to investigate the causes of the fire,* others regard them as not really subjunctive forms at all, but, rather, merely future indicative forms without auxiliary *shall,* as *That the secretary shall notify* and *That a committee shall be appointed.* The latter is the simpler and more logical. It, of course, makes no difference what they are called provided the forms themselves are correctly used.

Subjunctive form becomes most conscious of itself in the use of the verb *be,* for in the use of this verb it requires the most radical changes, those that sound most special and peculiar. Here in parallel are the present and the imperfect indicative and subjunctive of *be:*

Present Indicative		*Present Subjunctive*	
I am	We are	if I be	if we be
You are	You are	if you be	if you be
He, she, it is	They are	if he, she, it be	if they be
Imperfect Indicative		*Imperfect Subjunctive*	
I was	We were	if I were	if we were
You were	You were	if you were	if you were
He, she, it was	They were	if he, she, it were	if they were

All other forms of both modes are the same, with the exception of the third person singular of the perfect tense, which in the indicative is *He has been* and in the subjunctive is *if he have been.* The only difference between indicative and subjunctive expression of other verbs is in the perfect, as above illustrated for *be*—*if he have* (not *has*) *learned, if he have* (not *has*) *sent*—and in the third singular present—*if he learn* (not *learns*), *if he send* (not *sends);* and in the passive *if he have been sent* in the perfect tense, and *if he be sent* in the present tense.

It is, thus, the idea behind most expression that decides whether flat, actual, indicative form is to be used in action words, or

whether forms are to be used that denote doubt or condition or supposition or concession. Only the intention in the mind of the speaker or writer can decide, and this intention can be technically reflected only at the points above indicated.

The niceties of subjunctive usage are, in the main, neglected in colloquial expression. Indeed, the momentum of subjunctive misuse has for many years been so strong that many authorities prefer to say that the subjunctive no longer exists as a mode or fashion of expressing action. But would they write off the subtle subjunctives of literature, such as Christ's "Judge not that ye be not judged"; Shakspere's "If it were done when 'tis done, then 'twere well"; Milton's "To serve there with my Maker, and present My true account, lest he, returning, chide"; Tennyson's "I would that I were dead"; Lincoln's "If there be those who would not save the Union unless they could at the same time save slavery, I do not agree with them", to mention an infinitesimal few of the numerous memorable subjunctives? And in the less dignified realms of expression, it does make a significant difference whether one says *Though you be a murderer I shall give you shelter* and *Though you are a murderer I shall give you shelter.* At least, the hospitality would be somewhat more safely dispensed under the former.

It is sometimes pointed out that our more or less everyday expressions *God forbid* and *God have mercy upon me* and *Be that as it may* and *Long live the king,* make use of the subjunctive. This may be, for most such expressions involve wish or desire. But they are also imperative in manner, that is, they express a sort of impersonal command. And they also convey a quality of permission or possibility or potentiality; that is, *May God forbid* and *Let that be as it may* and *May the king live long.* Action expressed through the aid of *may (might), can (could), must, should, would,* followed by the infinitive with *to* understood, is sometimes called potential, inasmuch as it expresses possibility, permission, liberty, ability, power, obligation, or necessity, rather than mere fact. Most authorities now disregard this as a separate mode, however, and either call the *may-can-must* forms special verb phrases or consider them as so nearly factual as to justify classification of them among indicative forms.

Must is called a defective verb for the reason that it does not have regular parts, as most other verbs have. It never changes, but is

the same for all numbers, persons, tenses, modes, voices. Its very simplicity is often the cause of its misuse. It is used chiefly to pertain to either present or future, as in *I must leave* and *We must be prepared for the worst.* But it may be thrown into past significance by the use of other words, principally verbs, as in *He replied that he must have my answer.* Avoid its use (misuse) when it tends to make your reference to time awkward, contradictory, or obscure. In *I was detained at the office by something that must be attended to,* for instance, its misuse is obvious; the last part of this sentence should read *that had to be attended to* or *that required attention.* In *We ran out of gas, and one of us must walk to the nearest service station, must* is again misused for *had to* or *was required to.* But *must,* like *will* and *would,* has a well established habitual use, as is illustrated in *He must always have his way* and *We must always be taxed to death* in which it pertains to all time—present, past, future.

May means to be permitted; *can,* to be able. The past or imperfect of *may* is *might;* of *can, could.* These two words are frequently misused, partly perhaps because *can* once meant know or to know how, and *may* meant to have power or to be able. Shakspere sometimes used these words with their original meaning. Today *can* always implies some form of ability or possibility; *may,* some form of permission or wish or contingency or concession. *Could* follows *can,* and *might, may.* But *could,* in addition, may express inclination based upon condition, as *I could have died* and *I could have knocked him down.* And *might* is occasionally used as a localism meaning *is* or *may* (present form), as *What might your name be.* In *I can climb that wall, can* denotes ability; and in *Can this be the end, can* denotes possibility. In *Tell me that I may go, may* denotes permission; in *May I never see you again, may* denotes wish; in *You may run into that pole unless you make a sharp turn, may* expresses contingency; in *You may break my body on the wheel, but you will never break my will, may* denotes concession. *You can drive* means that you are able to drive; *You may drive* means that you are able to and in addition have permission to. *You can drive* in the sense of permission is colloquial, but it is neither precise nor elegant.

Tense means the change in the form of action words to denote the varying times they express or the varying degrees of completeness. The word is itself a modified form of the Latin *tempus* meaning time. Tense distinctions in English are very imperfect,

and fluctuating in both formation and technical use. Sometimes tense inflection takes place by means of adding *d* or *ed* or *t* to an action word, as *clothe* and *clothed, walk* and *walked, spoil* and *spoilt;* sometimes by means of changing the internal makeup of a verb, as *run* and *ran, give* and *gave, buy* and *bought;* sometimes a participial form differs from all other forms, as *go* and *went* and *gone, see* and *saw* and *seen.* These forms are so different one from the other as to appear almost like unrelated words. Misuse of these inflections is one of the most general errors made, especially by beginners in the study of English. If such misuse occurs in connection with verbs commonly in demand it may be regarded as impropriety neighboring close upon vulgarism (page 241), as, for instance, *He has came* (for *come*) and *They have knew* (for *known*) *it all along* and *They should have went* (for *gone*).*

In general there are three times or tenses in expression, as in life, namely, present, past or imperfect, and future. In order that nicety or precision in verbal expression may be made possible each one of these has a split or divided form—perfect or present perfect, pluperfect or past perfect, future perfect. Perfect means finished or done; present perfect therefore means finished or done at or in the present; past perfect or pluperfect, finished or done in the past; future perfect (to be) finished or done in the future. With the exception of the present tense and the imperfect tense, all tenses are formed by the use of helping or auxiliary verbs. The helping verb in the present perfect tense is *have,* and in the past perfect or pluperfect, it is *had,* imperfect of *have.* The future tense auxiliaries are *shall* and *will.*

The present tense is the most fluid of tenses. It shows first and most generally action going on now, as *It rains.* It also shows habitual action, as *He walks through his garden every morning;* it is used for a constant or all-time truth, as *Water freezes at thirty-two degrees above zero Fahrenheit;* it may even indicate future time, as *Tomorrow is Tuesday* and *I go to the city next Monday.* But the future forms *Tomorrow will be Tuesday* and *I shall go to the city tomorrow* are likewise correct. In *If the weather is* (or *be*) *clear tomorrow I shall go to the city,* however, the present indicative or subjunctive (page 165) is necessary in the first clause; it is incorrect to say *If the weather will be clear tomorrow, I shall go to the city.* The subjunctive form *If the weather be clear* (page 164) may also be correct, provided weather conditions when

* For paradigms of verb parts see *Harper's English Grammar* by the same author.

the remark is made justify it. The present tense is also frequently used to introduce quotations, as *Dickens says . . .* and *Thackeray somewhere remarks . . . ;* it is used to vivify past events (historical present) in order to make them more real and impressive, as *Napoleon now orders his generals to advance* and *Washington shares with his soldiers the hardships of Valley Forge.* The past or imperfect tense may also be used in the last two examples, as *Dickens said* and *Thackeray remarked; Napoleon ordered* and *Washington shared.*

The past or imperfect tense denotes action as simply past, as *It rained;* action in progress in past time, as *She played while I worked;* action as habitual or repeated, as *We formerly breakfasted at eight.*

The perfect or present perfect tense is sometimes used like the historical present (very often with it in continuous composition) as in *Napoleon now orders his generals, who have become increasingly doubtful of success, to advance without delay.* But its primary use is to denote an action as just finished at the time designated by the principal action element in a statement. In *He has won the prize,* though the action is completed, the sense of the expression is that he has only now won it, that he has just won it, that its consequences are still present in our minds. The present perfect, in other words, comes up to and touches the present or the time indicated by the predicate. This differentiates it from the pluperfect (past perfect) by which is indicated action over and done with some time in the past, action that in no sense comes up to or touches the present; thus you say *I had never before seen such beauty* and *If it had not been for his illness he would have made a superior record* in both of which the pluperfect verbs—*had seen* and *had been*—denote meaning behind the present and having nothing to do with it. If you say *I have never before seen such beauty* you imply that you are now in the presence of the great beauty such as which you have never before seen, or you are making it re-live by means of *present* perfect form. The pluperfect is stronger and usually more remote in connotation than the imperfect. It, moreover, denotes a sort of continuous action up to a specified time, that is, *(Up to that time) I had never seen such beauty,* just as the present perfect tense denotes covering or continuing action up to the present, that is, *(Up to this time) I have never seen such beauty.* If you use the imperfect tense and say *I never before saw such beauty*

you "freeze" the action, make it stationary, with no extension either backward or forward. The imperfect tense, in other words, fixes action at a definite point in the past, whereas both the pluperfect and the present perfect contain an element of continuance in them, the former up to a certain point behind the present, the latter up to the present.

If you say *We are delighted to meet old friends whom we missed all these years* you misuse the imperfect tense for the present perfect; the reading should be *We are delighted to meet old friends whom we have missed all these years* for the missing has continued directly up to the present. But *We are delighted to meet old friends whom we years ago had given up as lost* is correct for the "given up as lost" refers to time as completed or perfected at some period in the past and does not join the present.

If you say *On Monday of next week I am in this school three years* or *On Monday of next week I have been in this school three years* you misuse the present tense in the first and the perfect tense in the second for the future perfect tense, that is, *On Monday of next week I shall have been in this school three years.* Similarly if you say *On Monday of last week I was in this school three years* or *On Monday of last week I have been in this school three years* you misuse the past tense in the first and the perfect tense in the second for the past perfect or pluperfect, that is, *On Monday of last week I had been in this school three years;* the time period indicated expires sometime before the present or speaking time.

Have had and *has had* (third person singular) are correct perfect tense forms, and *had had* is correct pluperfect tense form, as *We had had a good time at the circus that afternoon.* Strange confusions sometimes occur in connection with the auxiliary *have* of which *had* is the imperfect form. *If I had gone I should have been helped* is correct. *If I had have gone* is ridiculous, for the past or imperfect form is made to precede present, whereas present time logically precedes past—becomes past. *If I had of gone* is equally in error (page 74), for the preposition *of* is made to take the place of the verb *have* (through inaccuracy of ear). And *If I had have of gone* is the ultimate in illiteracy. If doubt besets you in regard to the correct use of *had*—if you are inclined to think it much more involved and complex than it really is—substitute another verb form for it, if possible. *In the place where I had written "had", my brother had used "had had", and I was*

come with me. John will have no reason to feel compelled or controlled because his coming is made to appear a matter of his own will. Orders given by superiors are—should be as a rule—couched in this courteous *will* form; it begets a more willing and efficient response than imperative *shall* does. But the *shall* of the Ten Commandments was and is necessary because they constitute a code of discipline. The following quotation from Shakspere's *Coriolanus* (Act 3 Scene 1) may add some additional light:

Sicinius: It is a mind
That shall remain a poison where it is,
Not poison any further
Coriolanus: Shall remain!
Hear you this Triton of the minnows? Mark you
His absolute "shall"? . . why,
You grave but reckless senators, have you thus
Given Hydra here to choose an officer,
That with his peremptory "shall", being but
The horn and noise o' the monster's, wants not spirit
To say he'll turn your current in a ditch,
And make your channel his? . .
And such a one as he, who puts his "shall",
His popular "shall", against a graver bench
Than ever frowned in Greece

Will is sometimes used neither to denote future time nor the exercise of volition but to indicate habit, as in *He will sit by the fire all day reading a book* and *He will throw his matches here in spite of all my warnings. Shall* is also sometimes used in special senses, as in *Don't worry, you shall have the money* in which it signifies a promise, and in . . . *there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth* in which it signifies prophecy. The latter special use of *shall* is now almost archaic but it is frequently found in the Bible and in Shakspere.

In either a second or a third person question *shall* or *will* is used in accordance with the auxiliary expected in the answer; thus, *Shall you go to church today? I shall* and *Will your friend be here tomorrow? He will* illustrate the simple future; and *Will you go to the party with me? I will* and *He objects but will he say so? He will* and *Shall he be permitted to suffer this? He shall not* illustrate the so-called will-power future. Note that in the last example the will of the one addressed is concerned; that in the next to last, the will of a third party. The use of *will* in a first-person interrogation is obviously absurd in most instances. If you say *Will I go* you seem to be questioning your own will, asking

forced to admit that his "had had" gave the clearer meaning is undoubtedly better than *In the place where I had had "had" my brother had had "had had", and I had had to admit that his "had had" had had a clearer meaning.*

The future tenses are the bugbear in the use of action words. When to use *shall* and *will?* Well, many grammarians have abandoned all attempt to differentiate between these pesky action aids, just as they have abandoned the niceties of differentiation between the subjunctive and the potential manner of speaking. They claim they do so in order to simplify the study of grammar. But the truth of the matter more likely is that the momentum of the use of these phases of expression has so blunted and worn down by distance that they take the what's-the-use attitude.

Now, it is true that many writers and speakers even in the upper brackets of literary reputation either deliberately or ignorantly misuse *shall* and *will.* This being the case, there are many instances in which they do not—can not—say exactly what they mean. At least these two fundamentals regarding the use of *shall* and *will* would appear to be easy enough to be remembered by all who care: To denote mere future time, use *shall* with *I* and *we* (that is in the first person), and *will* with *you, he, she, it, they* (that is, in the second and third persons); to denote the exercise of will power (volition), use *will* in the first person, and *shall* in the second and third persons. This means, of course, that if you say *I shall go, You will go, He will go,* you express nothing more or less than future time. But if you say *I will go, You shall go, He shall go,* you express the exercise of will power, the first meaning *I am determined to go,* the second and third *You are required to go* and *He is required to go* as result of the order of some one or because of stubborn circumstance.

Under this latter usage *will* has an element of futurity in it, of course, but it primarily denotes inner purpose and exercise of volition; and *shall* likewise has an element of futurity in it, but it primarily denotes influence from without, or necessity, or discipline. *Shall,* in this use, may sometimes be regarded as too strong for courtesy or modesty; it may indicate a compulsion that is not polite to the one spoken to or considerate on the part of the one speaking. In such cases *will* may be used instead; thus, *You will come with me, John* is courteous to and considerate of John's feelings, though the meaning is, as John will understand, *You shall*

yourself what your intention is. No one can decide this for you but yourself. But sometimes *will I* (or the negative *will I not* or *won't I*) is used in a kind of semi-slang expression to emphasize by way of repetition something that has been said, as in *Will you stand by me in this trouble? Will I!* or *Won't I!* As in statements involving *shall* and *will,* so in questions *Will he* may denote either the exercise of will power or simple futurity, as may also *Will you. Shall he* means that the answer *He shall* is expected, and that the affirmative reply is imposed by influences outside his own mind.

Would and *should* follow the foregoing exposition in regard to *will* and *shall* respectively, *would* being the past or imperfect of *will,* and *should* of *shall. Would* is even more frequently used than *will* to indicate habitual action, as *He would sit by the window for hours at a time. Would* is also commonly used to express desire, as in Hamlet's *O that this too too solid flesh would melt. Should* originally meant *owe,* that is, *ought,* in its imperfect form, and that meaning persists in such expression as *We should go for John's sake.* Shaksperean comment in *Hamlet* (Act 4 Scene 7) may here again elucidate further:

> . . . that we would do,
> We should do when we would, for this *would* changes
> And hath abatements and delays as many
> As there are tongues, are hands, are accidents,
> And then this *should* is like a spendthrift sigh,
> That hurts by easing.

In sentences such as *I shall* (or *should*) *be glad to go* and *As your teacher I shall be delighted to recommend you* and *We should prefer a sedan to a coupe, should (shall)* is correct for the reason that no volition is expressed through the auxiliary action word. The attitude of willingness is covered in such accompanying words as *glad* and *delighted* and *prefer;* any enforcement of it by *would (will)* is superfluous. Similarly in *She had always insisted that she should like to be an actress* and *I then thought to myself, "What if I should never see him again!" should* is correct because no volition is expressed through it, *insisted* in the one example and *thought* in the other carrying the force of will power. But in *He was determined that he would win* and *Mary repeated that she would not give him up, would* indicates the exercise of will-power over and above that expressed by the preceding verb, and both predicates pertain to past time, both subjects to the same

person. The direct words of the speaker in the one would be *I will win* and in the other *I will not give him up.* Observe the difference between these two expressions and *I promised the kidnapers that the child should be at the appointed place.* Here *should* is correct, for what I said to the kidnapers was *The child shall be at the appointed place,* and *shall (should)* represents a guarantee made under outward pressure.

If you say *The manager tells me that he will be engaged for some time* and *You appear to be confident that you will succeed* you misuse *will* for *shall.* No volition is expressed in the minor clauses of these sentences but, rather, mere future time. Moreover, in all similar expressions, in which two or more clauses have the same subject and in which the dependent members indicate no volition, *shall* is correct regardless of person. In the examples given, supply the manager's own words in the one, and the direct words of *you* in the other—*I shall be engaged* and *I shall succeed* —and the use of *shall* becomes obvious But in a complex sentence in which the major clause has a different subject from that in a minor clause, *shall* should be used in the first person in the minor clause and *will* in the second and third persons if the subordinate thought expresses simple future, and *will* in the first person and *shall* in the second and third persons in case it expresses volition; thus, in *If you think that I will ever do that, you are mistaken* and *I say that you shall do it* and *I promise the kidnapers that the child shall be at the appointed place,* the use of *will* and *shall* is correct, for volition is clearly indicated by them.

After *if, lest, though,* and other conditional terms; after *that* in result clauses; after such prohibitory expressions as *God forbid* and *Heaven prevent, should,* like *shall,* is generally required and, so used, may be regarded as subjunctive; thus, Macbeth's *If we should fail!* and Hamlet's *That it should come to this!* and Henry Fifth's *And God forbid, my dear and faithful lord, That you should fashion, wrest, or bow your reading.* But very often in a subordinate clause *shall (should)* or *will (would)* must be used according as futurity or volition is indicated by the total expression, as in *We shall damage your property if we will* (that is, if we will to do so) and *If you should order us to damage your property, we would not do so.*

Such expressions as *I inform you I shall retire* and *You will be notified later; he will notify you himself* are sometimes called pri-

mary futures or present futures as opposed to secondary futures or past futures, such as *I informed you that I should retire* and *I told you that you would be notified later, and that he would notify you himself.* In the same way *I shall have arrived before June by which time they will have disposed of my property* are called primary future perfects or present future perfects as opposed to secondary future perfects or past future perfects, such as *I knew that I should have arrived before June by which time they would have disposed of my property.*

If you say *I am sorry that a previous engagement will prevent my attending your party* you misuse the future tense for the present. The reading should be *I am sorry that a previous engagement prevents my attending your party,* for the engagement is evidently of the present though the appointment is in the future. Similarly, the present rather than the future is correct in *Mr Bey· is* (not *will be*) *happy to accept Mrs Nolan's kind invitation for the fifteenth;* the simple future in *Will you please excuse my son's absence from school yesterday,* and the present sequence in *This is* (not *was*) *the first time he has* (not *had*) *been absent from school this year.*

No hard and fast rule can be set down in regard to the sequence of tenses, in regard, that is, to the tenses of verbs following each other in a single sentence. The thought expressed must always be the guiding factor. It is by no means sufficient or correct to say that present follows present, imperfect follows imperfect, except in the very simplest cases such as *He knows he can* and *He knew he could.* But *John was happy while he is at school* is obviously "out of joint" as far as time values are concerned. The sentence must read either *John was happy while he was at school* or *John is happy while he is at school.* Again *John would have been happy while he had been in school if his parents visited him oftener* has no logical follow-up in the presentation of action time. The reading should be *John would have been happy while he was in school if his parents had visited him oftener, for* the major predicate—*would have been*—must be in time accord with the other two predicates; it states a past possibility in relation to a past fact *(was in school)* which in turn is related to an implied perfected past act *(if his parents had visited).* Observe, however, that in *I wish he would go* and *I wished he would go* and *I have often wished that he would go* and *I could have wished that he would*

go, the time indicated by *would go* always remains the same, following, though it does, predicates of different time signification.

In *John is ready but he didn't go yet* the second predicate—imperfect *did (not) go*—is out of accord with the first—present *is.* The keynote of present time is struck by *is* and it must be followed by another predicate having some sort of present signification in it; thus, *John is ready but he hasn't gone yet*—present perfect following present—is correct. Make *is* imperfect, and the follow-up must be pluperfect, as *John was ready but he hadn't gone yet.* The misuse of the emphatic *do* or *did* form of action term for simple *have* or for the *have* verb phrases is all too common in speech and even in writing. Say *I haven't any,* not *I don't have any;* say *I haven't eaten potatoes for a year,* not *I didn't eat potatoes for a year.*

Axioms and permanent facts and truths are correctly expressed by means of present tense regardless of preceding tenses, as in *The speaker said* (imperfect) *that a stitch in time saves* (present) *nine* and *During my gullible school days I was told* (imperfect) *time and time again that virtue is* (present) *its own reward* and *The lecturer pointed* (imperfect) *out that Istanbul is* (present) *now the name of the old city of Constantinople.* But in such expressions as these the quality of expression known as tense affinity or tense attraction is often permitted to violate this rule; thus, in *What did you say his name was* the last verb *(was)* should logically be *is* provided, that is, that the person about whom the question is asked is not dead or has not changed his name. *They said that their car is outmoded now* and *Where did you say you are going* and *He said that there can never be such a thing as complete happiness* are logically correct sentences as can easily enough be seen by analyzing time relationships. But in colloquial usage and also to a degree in literary usage, the tense attraction of the imperfect in each major clause very often begets an imperfect follow-up— . . . *car was outmoded* and . . . *you were going* and . . . *could never be such a thing.* But the time may be technically correct in *Where does he say he was going (but did not go* is implied).

There are two infinitive forms—the present and the perfect—each with active and passive voices, as *to hurt* and *to have hurt, to be hurt* and *to have been hurt.* Their correct use following other verbs is not difficult but misuses of them frequently occur and in

the "least expected circles." One simple rule is this: After verbs pointing to the future, such as *expect* and *hope* and *intend* and *mean* and *propose* and *wish,* use the present infinitive as a rule, as *I expect (expected) to see him* and *I have hoped (had hoped) to go* and *I shall propose to discontinue the service* and *By this time next week I shall have arranged to put the plan into effect.* But note the possible difference between *I was to come by boat* and *I was to have come by boat,* either of which may mean that I did or did not come by boat, the latter having somewhat stronger negative suggestion than the former.

As in other decisions regarding tense, therefore, a speaker and a writer must be guided by meaning in the use of the infinitive forms. In *Harrisonville was* (or *is*) *reported to have been used by Washington as temporary headquarters during the Revolutionary War,* for example, the passive perfect infinitive—*to have been used*—is correct, rather than *to be used,* for the reason that the use of the place by Washington antedated the reporting mentioned in the sentence. In *It is* (or *was*) *a joy to me to have seen Normandy in blossom time* and *It is* (or *was*) *a joy for me to see Normandy in blossom time* analysis of meaning and of consequent time relationships reveals that both expressions are correct. The first *(to have seen)* means that the joy resides or did reside in the fact that the Normandy blossoms have (had) been seen; the second *(to see),* that the joy lies in the fact that they are seen now, or were seen in the past, and that the seeing is vivified by a present infinitive having much the quality of a historical present. *I am pleased to meet you,* though hackneyed, is grammatically correct. *I have been pleased to meet you* and *I have been eager to talk with you* and *It has been a pleasure to see you* are likewise correct. But *It has been a pleasure to have met you* and *I have been eager to have talked with you* are incorrect for obvious disaccord of time as above explained. As they stand both expressions may be insulting, for they imply that the pleasure and the eagerness antedated the present meetings.

To summarize: The present infinitive in general usage assumes the speaker or the writer to be putting himself in a time that is the same as that denoted by the preceding principal verb; the perfect infinitive in general usage assumes the speaker or the writer to be putting himslf at a period of time later than that denoted by the infinitive. The former represents time as present or future; the latter, as finished or perfected. But when doubt exists as to the

use of the present infinitive or the perfect infinitive, try substituting a present participle form. If it fits your idea, then the present infinitive will fit it also; thus, *I had expected to see you* becomes *I had expected seeing you, They would have liked to see you* becomes *They would have liked seeing you.* The idea of past time is already expressed in the predicate of each of these sentences. All that is required of the follow-up infinitive is to name action—the primary function, really, of all verbals.

The *ing* form of an action word in combination with helping or auxiliary verbs denotes action as continuing or progressing, as in *I am reading* and *We were dancing.* It is formed in the active voice by adding the present participle (the *ing* form) to every form of the verb *be;* in the passive voice, by adding the past participle to every progressive form of the verb *be;* thus, in the active *He has been hurting the dog,* and in the passive *The dog has been being hurt; I was asking a question* and *I was being asked a question.* Sometimes the active progressive form is used for the passive, but it is not sanctioned by the best writers and speakers. *The house is being built* is grammatically correct, but *The house is building* is increasingly the colloquial equivalent. Substitute *erecting* for *building* in the colloquial form and it becomes absurd.

An action word is said to be in the active voice when its subject denotes the doer of the action; in the passive voice, when its subject is represented as acted upon, thus, *I granted him a vacation* is active; *A vacation was granted him by me* and *He was granted a vacation by me* are passive. Passive voice forms such as these sometimes seem awkward and illogical, and are to be avoided for the most part. *A book was handed to me by him* is more objectionable than *I was handed a book by him,* but the latter is by no means recommended. The active form in such expression as this —*He handed me a book*—is always preferable.

CONTEST *

NO	YES
1 If I was you I would not do it	If I were you I should not do it
2 I told him to be careful lest he falls	I told him to be careful lest he fall
3 O that we was at the beach where the cool breezes blow	O that we were at the beach where the cool breezes blow

* See page 3

	NO	YES
4	Suppose your dog was drowning, what would you do	Suppose your dog were drowning, what should you do
5	He now wishes he was in college where he could so easily have been	He now wishes he were in college where he could so easily have been
6	It is impossible to believe that he can turn iron into gold unless he lets us see him do it	It is impossible to believe that he can turn iron into gold unless he let us see him do it
7	You will do as I say or I will be obliged to punish you	You shall do as I say or I shall be obliged to punish you
8	I have never in my life saw a more beautiful picture	I have never seen a more beautiful picture
9	Yesterday I have came to a very important decision	Yesterday I came to a very important decision
10	I didn't do my hair yet and Billy shall grow tired of waiting for me	I haven't done my hair yet and Billy will grow tired of waiting for me
11	Will I go with Mary to the circus or will I attend the play with Harry	Shall I go to the circus with Mary or shall I attend the play with Harry
12	They say that a previous engagement will prevent their coming to our party	They say that a previous engagement prevents their coming to our party
13	Turner expected to have been in Philadelphia last week	Turner expected to be in Philadelphia last week
14	The speaker told the graduates that honesty was the best policy	The speaker told the graduates that honesty is the best policy
15	Hasten to stop him lest he drives over the precipice	Hasten to stop him lest he drive over the precipice
16	I think that I will never see a poem lovely as a tree	I think that I shall never see a poem lovely as a tree
17	Will you attend commencement tonight to receive your coveted diploma	Shall you attend commencement tonight to receive your coveted diploma
18	Mrs Jameson is sorry that serious illness will prevent her attending Mrs Thompson's dinner tomorrow evening	Mrs Jameson is sorry that serious illness prevents her attending Mrs Thompson's dinner tomorrow evening
19	No sooner had he taken off his coat than in comes Harrison Hampden	No sooner had he taken off his coat than in came Harrison Hampden
20	We have only just arrived when the boys greeted us with their class call	We had only just arrived when the boys greeted us with their class call
21	I didn't read a good story for a long time; I will therefore read one tonight	I haven't read a good story for a long time; I shall therefore read one tonight
22	We were told that Hollywood was the moving-picture capital of the world	We were told that Hollywood is the moving-picture capital of the world

	NO	YES
23	We had expected to have seen you at the flower show	We had expected to see you at the flower show
24	It has always been my ambition to have met you	It has always been my ambition to meet you
25	The new municipal auditorium is now building on Rittenhouse Square	The new municipal auditorium is now being built on Rittenhouse Square
26	A newly sharpened pencil has just been given to me by the office manager	The office manager has just given me a newly sharpened pencil
27	He would have been a different sort of chap if he would have had your advantages when he had been a boy	He would have been a different sort of chap if he had had your advantages when he was a boy
28	Tomorrow I am here three days but it seems as though I had have been here three weeks	Tomorrow I shall have been here three days but they seem like three weeks

SECTION TWENTY-FIVE — COORDINATION

Such connecting words as *and, but, or, nor, while, likewise, moreover* are called coordinate connectives (conjunctions). As the word *coordinate* implies, they should be used to connect ideas of equal rank and, thus, expressions of similar form or composition If you say *He is robust and possessed of riches and a sage* you use *and* to connect the describing word (adjective) *robust* with a participial phrase *possessed of riches,* which you in turn connect by another *and* with the noun *sage.* Terms that should be kept in parallel running order are thus thrown out of equilibrium by awkward connection. Say, rather, *He is healthy and wealthy and wise* or *He is possessed of health and wealth and wisdom* in which coordinate terms (describing words in the one and name words in the other) are coordinately connected.

If you say *To unlock the old trunk was my hardest job and finding the treasure my most exciting one* you use *and* to connect *To unlock* and *finding.* But one of these is a *to* action word (infinitive) and the other an *ing* action word (participle), and the connection is not a well balanced one. Say either *To unlock . . . and . . . to find* or *Unlocking . . . and . . . finding,* so that similar grammatical elements may be connected by coordinate *and.*

If you say *I saw Jimmy with a pretty girl whom I once met but cannot recall her name* you really use *but* to connect the clauses

I saw and *(I) cannot,* whereas it logically connects *I met* and *(I) cannot.* These are parallel elements. The sentence must read *I saw Jimmy with a pretty girl whom I once met but whose name I cannot recall* in which coordinate *but* connects two similar word groups or two *who* clauses.

In the sentence *On leaving the office today I met Netta Langdon of London and who was looking very well* the connective *and* is used to connect the preceding major word group with the subordinate or minor word group. Inasmuch as *who (which, that)* supply sufficient connection in such expressions as this, any coordinate connective is unnecesary and wasteful. The sentence should read *On leaving the office today I met Netta Langdon of London who was looking very well.* As a rule, coordinate connectives should be used before *who, which, that* only provided there is a preceding *who* or *which* or *that* used in a parallel or coordinate construction. A *who* may be added to another by *and* —or subtracted from another by *but*—as may a *which* or a *that* (page 39). Note in this sentence, however, *I saw him looking at me but who he was I did not know* that, though *but* precedes *who,* it does not connect the *who* word group with any similar *who* word group. It connects, rather, two independent statements *I saw him looking* and *I did not know,* and the sentence is therefore correct. This reading *I saw him looking at me but I did not know who he was* is structurally clearer.

Observe further the connection in *First be sure to get the light right and then that you are comfortably seated in the chair* in which the action (infinitive) phrase beginning with *to get* is wrongly placed in parallel with the noun (substantive) clause starting with *that.* This is one of the most common types of illogical connection by means of a coordinate linking word. Say either *First be sure that the light is right and then that you are comfortably seated in the chair* or *First be sure to get the light right and then to get yourself comfortably seated in the chair.*

Though a coordinate connective may not be said to be misused when it links a passive verb with an active one, and when it links two different subjects in a comparatively short sentence, such connection usually has a strained quality and is to be avoided as far as it possibly can be. Note the jolt or disruption in *We hastened our pace and soon the mountain was seen just ahead* caused by the change of subjects (*we* and *mountain*) and by the two action words

of different voice (*hastened* and *was seen*). *We hastened our pace and soon saw the mountain just ahead* is much more closely knit and much more easily grasped.

There is a similarly dissipating wrench of structure in *If you wish to remove the stain it must be thoroughly brushed and then two or three drops of the liquid must be applied.* The shock of three different subjects in a comparatively short sentence, of the different kinds of action words, of *and* functioning between differently organized word groups is disconcerting, to say the least. *If you wish to remove the stain, you must brush it thoroughly, and then apply two or three drops of the liquid* has *you* as subject throughout, has nothing but active action words, has *and* as a connective between two similar action terms—*must brush* and *(must) apply.* Again, the sentence is not wrong grammatically in its original form. But in its rewritten form it has greater ease.

Do not use *and* to connect ideas that are entirely unrelated or incongruous, or that denote altogether different spheres of thought and action (pages 52 and 111). In *Mary is an excellent cook and Bill goes to school regularly* the two ideas, though expressed in good parallel form, are nevertheless too incongruous to occupy the same sentence structure. Each one should be expressed as a separate or independent statement. In *He told me that he expected to be advanced very soon and that his father has bought a new car* the two things that he told me are excellently paralleled as far as mere structure is concerned. But his advancement is an abstract idea and his father's new car is a concrete idea. The two ideas should not be taken in the same grammatical breath.

Additive *and* is sometimes wrongly used after *come* and *go* and *try,* and other verbs with which it connects expressions that are not equal or coordinate but, rather, dependent. In *Try and come,* for instance, the two action words *Try* and *come* are not of equal importance. The complete sentence should read *You try to come* in which *come* is seen to be a present infinitive used as object of *try.* In *Come up and see me,* again, *come* and *see* are not coordinate, but *to see* is an infinitive modifier of *Come,* that is, *You come up in order to see me.* In *Come and get it* and *Go and try it* and *Fight and conquer,* and numerous similar expressions, *and* should give way to *to,* inasmuch as an infinitive construction usually follows the principal verb. If, however, a writer or a speaker means the two terms connected to be equivalent in importance, *and* is,

of course, correct. In the last example given, fighting and conquering may very well be considered as of equal value in certain expressions. *Fight to conquer* is probably not so strong in certain circumstances as *Fight and conquer.* In *Try and try again* the two action words are naturally coordinate, and *to* would be ridiculous in place of *and,* first, because hammering repetition is the aim and, second, the next *try* is not the object of the first one, nor would another one be the object of the second one; *Try to try to try* again would only in very rare circumstance be the intended meaning. And it is this—the intended meaning—here as elsewhere in English usage, that must always be the deciding factor. The point is that *and* is too colloquially used in such construction as this.

In such expressions as *Take and stir the batter* and *To every one's surprise he went* (or *he up*) *and did it* the connective is used superfluously because the word before it is so used. *Stir the batter* and *To every one's surprise he did it* express the ideas intended. The taking is implied in the stirring, as the going is in the doing. This error represents a weak form of preparatory emphasis, which has now become a sort of hackneyed humor, as in *First catch your hare* and *To begin with take one large mixing bowl,* introductory sentences, respectively, in recipes for hare soup and making a cake.

In such expressions as *I like those and especially the red one* and *He did well in the tests and particularly in the algebra test* the connective *and* is superfluously used. It has nothing whatever to connect. *Those* and *especially* are not coordinate terms in the first; *tests* and *particularly* are not coordinate terms in the second. *I like those, especially the red one* and *He did well in the tests, especially in the algebra test* convey the intended meaning correctly.

Also, and, besides, likewise, moreover, therefore are called additive connectives because they really add terms or ideas. *But, however, nevertheless, notwithstanding, on the other hand, yet* are called contrasting or adversative or subtractive connectives because they contrast or oppose terms or ideas, or subtract ideas one from another.

If you say *He is hale and hearty but wealthy and happy* you contrast ideas that are not inherently opposite. All four terms—*hale, hearty, wealthy, happy*—are additive, and all should be connected by *and* or have *and* understood as connective. In *He is hale and*

hearty but morose and unhappy the connective *but* is correct, for it connects pairs of terms that are contrasted in idea.

One of the meanings of *but* is except, as in *Every one is going but me.* But *only,* though another meaning of *but,* never means except, and should not be used for it. *There is no one here, only John* is wrong (page 120). Use either *but* or *except* instead of *only* in such expression as this, and omit the comma, as *There is no one here but (except) John.* In *I have but one, but* means only and has adverbial value.

In the expression *can but, but* has the force of *only. If worse comes to worst, I can but shoot* means that I can only shoot, that all I can do is to shoot. *I can but try* means that I can only try, trying is all that is left to me. *I cannot but try* means I am irresistibly impelled or forced to try. *If I could but have helped you* means if I could only have helped you.

In the expression *cannot but, but* has the force of *help. If worse comes to worst, I cannot but shoot* means that I cannot help shooting. *I cannot but try* means that I cannot help trying. *I could not but feel thankful to him* means that I could not help feeling thankful to him.

It is not incorrect to say *After all you have suffered you can but feel discouraged,* but *After all you have suffered you cannot but feel discouraged* is the stronger and more logical expression, the obvious meaning being that the person addressed is justified in his discouragement because of his sufferings.

This distinction between *can but* and *cannot but* is regarded by careful speakers and writers, but its nicety is sometimes puzzling to beginners. Context, as in the above examples, usually decides which of the two expressions should be used, *cannot but* being the stronger. *I can but go since I have no excuse for not going* and *I cannot but go since I am the guest of honor* illustrate again. The use of *only* with the one—*I can but only go*—and of *help* with the other—*I cannot help but go*—makes both wrong. Say *One cannot but be impressed,* not *One cannot help but be impressed.* The latter is culled from a popular column.

Do not use *but what* for *but that* when the meaning is *as not to. I am not so stupid but that I can find the road* is correct, the meaning being *I am not so stupid as not to be able to find the road. I am not so stupid but what I can find the road* is wrong.

If you say *The lad is always studying and idling away his time down at the lake* you use *and* to add terms that are really alternative. The lad is presumably not studying and idling at the same time, as the sentence indicates. The alternative connective *or* is required in place of *and* to make the sentence correct.

The correlative connectives *both—and* should be used to refer to two only—two persons, two animals or things, two groups. It is wrong to say *I like Balzac both for his keenness of observation, his vividness of portrayal, his sane cynicism, and his masterful phrasing,* for the reason that the items connected by *both—and* exceed two. Say, rather, *I like Balzac for his keenness of observation, his vividness of portrayal, his sane cynicism, and his masterful phrasing.*

Neither—nor should be used together, as should *either—or.* It is incorrect to pair *neither* with *or, either* with *nor. Neither the man or the woman would confess* is wrong. *Neither the man nor the woman would confess* and *Either the man or the woman will confess* are correct. In case both pairs of correlatives are necessary in the same expression, discernment must be exercised to place them correctly. In *Neither the boys nor the girls either approved or disapproved* the correlatives *neither—nor* connect *boys* and *girls,* and the correlatives *either—or* connect *approved* and *disapproved.* Though this is a type of sentence that is exceptional and that cannot be highly recommended, it sometimes happens that exactly the same alternative emphasis cannot be brought to bear without using both pairs of alternatives, one before nouns and one before verbs, for example, as above. You may say *The boys and the girls neither approved nor disapproved* but something important is lost by way of separating and emphasizing the two groups. The additive connective *and* merely links; it does nothing by way of setting apart and alternating.

Since *either* and *neither* are correctly used as separative or alternative connectives, care must be exercised not to confuse them with words that are additive or collective. If you say *He dislikes both the boy and the girl and treats either equally badly* you confuse the use of *equally,* which applies to more than one, with the use of *either,* which applies to one only. Say *He dislikes both the boy and the girl, and treats both equally badly* or *He dislikes both the boy and the girl and treats one as badly as the other.*

Many errors are made in correlating *or* and *nor* with *no, not, never,* and other negative terms. *He is not just or considerate* and *You should never read or write by bad light* are correct, for *not* in the one modifies both *just* and *considerate,* and *never* in the other modifies both *read* and *write. Or* is merely an alternative connective with additive force, never actually equivalent to *and: Not* and *never* do not have the force of *neither.* But these sentences may just as well read *He is not just and considerate* and *He is neither just nor considerate,* and *You should never read and write by bad light* and *You should neither read nor write by bad light.*

Observe, however, that in *He has in no sense denied it, nor has he evinced the slightest regret* the negative *no* is equivalent to *neither* and its influence does not carry over to the next clause; thus, *nor* is required to enforce the alternative negative idea in the second clause. If you say *He has not denied it or evinced regret, or* is correct because *not* modifies *denied* and *evinced* equally, and *or* connects them.

In *There is no leader left today such as Washington or Jefferson or Lincoln or Wilson (was)* the negative adjective *no* modifies *leader.* Since *leader* is singular, the names of the leaders are to be considered each by itself alternately. Make *leader* plural and the connection between the names must be additive rather than alternative, as *There are no leaders left today such as Washington, Jefferson, Lincoln, and Wilson (were).* Now the four names are added and equal *leaders;* in the former, each name equals *leader.* Since *either—or, neither—nor, whether—or* are discriminative connectives, you say at your own risk *We must choose between slavery or liberty,* and you may be deservedly answered in kind *There is no choice between slavery or liberty. Choose* implies at least two, and *between* pertains to two (page 201). But *or* pertains to one regarded alternatively with another; it does not add one to another. Slavery and liberty must be added before choosing between them is possible. Connected by *and* they stand together and one must be chosen. Connected by *or* one or the other stands alone, and choice is impossible. Say *You must choose between slavery and liberty* and *There is no choice between slavery and liberty.* Similarly say *Choose among a book and a sled and a muffler for Christmas,* not *Choose among a book or a sled or a muffler for Christmas.*

Correlative conjunctions should immediately precede the terms that they connect. In *Billy both excels in sports and in studies* the correlatives *both—and* do not do this, and the statement reads ridiculously as if *excels* and *in his studies* were the correlative terms. *Both* is misplaced; it should precede *in sports* for it connects this phrase with *in studies,* and the sentence should thus read *Billy excels both in sports and in studies.* In *I shall either take French or Spanish* the correlatives *either—or* connect, not *take* and *Spanish* as their placement now makes them do, but *French* and *Spanish.* The statement should read *I shall take either French or Spanish.* In such connections as these it is undesirable to throw in a phrase or a clause between one member of a coordinate pair and another, as in *I do not know whether Billy is attending Professor Dryasdust's lecture or—what the others regard as the more likely—is taking Mary to Danceland* This sentence is colloquial; it lacks the compactness of construction that makes for clear, immediate grasp. *I do not know whether Billy is attending Professor Dryasdust's lecture or is taking Mary to Danceland. The latter is regarded by the others as the more likely* leaves the connectives *whether—or* clear of impediment to do their work.

Sometimes, especially in poetry, parallel form is deliberately violated for the sake of strikingness or emphasis as well as for the sake of rime and rhythm. Milton wrote *Love without end, and without measure grace* instead of *Love without end, and grace without measure.* This kind of inversion or cross-order (Greek *chiasmus*) is not recommended as a prose device for the reason that it is likely to call undue attention to form at the expense of idea. But *He loved his books and his children, in fact, his children and his books were his only loves* and *He was not only disqualified, but, as well, condemned* are taken at random from current literature.

This section is particularly concerned with the latter of these constructions. The second member of such double correlatives as *not only—but also, not only—but even, not merely—but also, not only—but as well* is usually placed before or after the second connected term, as *He was not only disqualified but condemned also.* It is correct to say *He was not only disqualified but also condemned.* But the cross-order in *He was not only disqualified but, as well, condemned* is probably too great a wrench in placement of connectives. *He was not only disqualified but condemned as well* follows conventional before-and-after distribution and allows the idea to have its traditional way without interrup-

tion by form. Any other arrangement, while not necessarily a misuse of connectives, is an unusual one.

CONTEST

	NO	YES
1	Try and give me your closest attention	Try to give me your closest attention
2	Do you prefer to play tennis or swimming	Do you prefer to play tennis or to swim
3	My vacation is either going to be spent in Maine or in Colorado	My vacation is going to be spent either in Maine or in Colorado
4	He is bright and clever and having great capacity for work	He is bright and clever and industrious
5	Tell Frieda that she is expected to come and to wear her new dress	Tell Frieda that she is expected to come and that she is to wear her new dress
6	We reached the station at noon and the parade was seen coming down the street	We reached the station at noon and saw the parade coming down the street
7	Take the first turn to the right and the tents will soon be seen on the left	If you take the first turn to the right you will soon see the tents on the left
8	Far above the old barn was a steep slope and which was used for coasting	Far above the old barn was a steep slope which was used for coasting
9	You must decide between going to college or going into your father's business	You must decide between going to college and going into your father's business
10	He is interested in aviation and his sister caused a sensation at the ball last night	He is interested in aviation . . His sister caused a sensation at the ball last night
11	It was a very small car and having only two cylinders but made of good materials	It was a small car having only two cylinders but it was made of good materials
12	They promised him that they would go at once and to return before nightfall	They promised him that they would go at once and that they would return before nightfall
13	We were awakened by the crowing of roosters but measures were soon taken to put a stop to it	We were awakened by the crowing of roosters but we soon took measures to put a stop to it
14	Mother brought me a coat, a pair of shoes, a sweater, and finally unwrapped a new hat	Mother brought me a coat, a pair of shoes, a sweater, and a new hat
15	We were determined to visit the haunted house, and if a ghost appeared our clubs would be put to good use	We were determined to visit the haunted house, and to use our clubs to good advantage if we saw a ghost

See page 3

	NO	YES
16	You should now add the eggs and the whipped cream but first making sure that the base is thoroughly mixed	When you are sure that the base is thoroughly mixed, add the eggs and the whipped cream
17	A petition was drawn up asking for special privileges but which seemed to be strangely lacking in discretion	A petition was drawn up asking for special privileges but it seemed to be strangely lacking in discretion
18	Not only does he think he is likely to be promoted but, as well, get the scholarship	He thinks that he is likely not only to be promoted but to be given the scholarship as well
19	He was first made secretary, then elected governor, and then still other important offices	He was first made secretary, then he was elected governor, and he has since held still other important offices
20	The young applicant entered my office with an air of confidence and determination and his report card	Holding his report card before him, the young applicant entered my office with an air of confidence and determination
21	He had been feeling in almost uncontrollable spirits all day and he did not therefore allow his feelings to interfere with his work	He had been feeling in almost uncontrollable spirits all day but he did not allow his feelings to interfere with his work
22	Take and mix the flour with the milk, only don't forget to sift the flour in slowly	Sift the flour slowly into the milk
23	It seemed to her that she was always locking and unlocking doors	It seemed to her that she was always locking or unlocking doors
24	I am ill today and I shall therefore work harder than ever	I am ill today but I shall nevertheless work harder than ever
25	Both his alertness and his attitude and his industry please his teachers very much	His alertness, his attitude, and his industry please his teachers very much
26	This little affair has shown that he is not trustworthy nor liberal	This little affair has shown that he is not trustworthy and liberal
27	They have never said that they would grant us the holiday, or have they shown the slightest consideration for us in other ways	They have never said that they would grant us the holiday, nor have they shown the slightest consideration for us in other ways
28	He felt himself attracted to every one in the group and peculiarly so to Dubiner, and he could not but help expressing himself about this feeling	He felt himself attracted to every one in the group, peculiarly to Dubiner, and he could not help expressing himself about this feeling

SECTION TWENTY-SIX — SUBORDINATION

As, than, unless are subordinate connectives. *Except, from, without* are not connectives. *Like* should rarely if ever be used as a connective. In *He scolded me for behaving as I did* the word *as*

is equivalent to *in the way in which;* it connects *behaving* with *I did. He scolded me for behaving like I did* is incorrect, for *like* is preferably not used in such connective office as this (page 66). There is a little authority—and some logic—for regarding *like* as a connective (conjunction) when in addition to setting up relationship it establishes some degree of resemblance. *As* never does the latter; it may, indeed, cause ambiguity by suggesting resemblance, as, for intance, in *Please dress as you promised to.* Does this mean that you promised to change dress, to wear a specified dress perhaps previously discussed, or to put on clothes on arising in the morning? *Like* instead of *as* would answer the second of these queries, for *Dress like you promised to* means that you promised to dress in a specified way. But *like* in this usage is not recommended—yet. It may be a noun, a verb, a preposition, an adjective, an adverb, and it is used as any and all of these in everyday conversation. But it is not generally accepted as a conjunction even when, as in the above illustration, it may conveniently function as such.

Observe further that in *He speaks as a lawyer* the connective *as* is again ambiguous. Does he speak similarly to a lawyer or does he speak in his capacity as a lawyer; that is, is he a layman speaking like a lawyer or is he really a lawyer speaking? If the former, then *He speaks like a lawyer* is preferable, the word group (phrase) *like a lawyer* being a prepositional phrase modifying *speaks.* In *He speaks as a lawyer (speaks)* it is probably safe to assume that a lawyer is speaking. But the ambiguity is by no means settled, and cannot be; voice inflection is often the only solution. In *Now you're speaking like the lawyer (that you are),* as in *spoken like a man,* a lawyer is specified in the one case, and a man in the other. But if the rules of grammar permitted of the use of *like* as a conjunction, such ambiguity as this and as that illustrated in the paragraph above might be considerably clarified in many instances.

The expressions *like this* and *like that* are loose or, at least, too generic when used with the meaning of in this way or in that way. Say *Don't do it in that way* rather than *Don't do it like that.* Similarly, *like which* as a shortcut for *the like of which* amounts to an incorrect usage. Say *There is a sight the like of which I shall never see again,* not *There is a sight like which I shall never see again.* So used, *like* is made the required noun.

As may be used for *because* or *for* or *since,* as *He worked hard as (because) he wanted to be promoted* and *I need a new typewriter as (for) my old one is beyond repair* and *As (Since) there is no other course to take, I shall have to take this one.* In all three of these examples, however, the parenthetical connective is preferable for the reason that it is more specific. *As* is itself so general in application and meaning as to leave vague conclusions in the mind unless its use is carefully watched. In the first sentence above the relation of cause and effect is clearly intended, and this is preferably expressed by *because.* In the second one the clauses are too nearly independent one of the other to justify the use of *as.* (It should be noted that a *for* clause follows a major clause but an *as* clause may either precede or follow a major clause.) In the third *Since* or *Inasmuch as* brings an emphasis to the minor clause which *As* is clearly incapable of. *Forasmuch as* or *for as much as,* meaning since or seeing that or considering that, is little used today, having been largely supplanted by *inasmuch as* or *in as much as* (the solid forms are preferred). The latter means the same as the former and may in addition be used in the sense of in so far and in like degree; and it conveys a somewhat stronger note of concession. Though none of the foregoing uses of *as* may be called incorrect, they are, as a rule, avoided by the best speakers and writers.

In such expressions as *Her charms are regarded as irresistible* and *He has been pronounced as highly qualified* the word *as* is superfluous. In constructions like these it is sometimes explained as an introductory word to the attribute complement (page 125), *irresistible* in the one and *qualified* in the other. But the laws of grammar do not require such complements to be formally introduced. *Her charms are regarded irresistible* and *He has been pronounced highly qualified* are grammatically correct and logically clear (page 183).

In a comparative statement *so—as* is used instead of *as—as* in case a negative precedes a comparative term, as in *I am not so ill as I was.* Omit the negative term and the correlatives must be *as—as,* as in *I am just as ill as I was. So—as* preferably work together also in negative comparisons in which it is desirable to limit comparison and, thus, to inject an element of courtesy, as *She is not so frivolous as she once was.* But observe *Does not Washington shine as brightly as Lincoln, for did not the one make the Union and the other preserve it?* Here *as—as* is used in the negative

question for the reason that equality of comparison is implied, and the answer must therefore be positive, namely, *Washington does shine as brightly as Lincoln.* The case is different in *Does not the moon shine so brightly as the sun,* for the answer here must be *The moon does not shine so brightly as the sun.*

Than is so persistently used wrongly after *different (differently)* that it is feared grammarians and lexicographers may be unable to withstand the momentum of this incorrect usage much longer. The *er* in *different* gives it the appearance and the sound of a comparative. But it is not a comparative, and it is followed by *from* rather than by *than.* Say *Mine is different from* (not *than*) *yours* and *The question is no different from* (not *than*) *the one we discussed yesterday. Than* is always inextricably linked with comparisons. Do not confuse it, therefore, with *when* which is as inextricably linked with considerations of time. In *No sooner had I arrived than it began to rain* the connective *than* is correctly tied with the comparative *sooner.* But *Scarcely* or *Hardly had I arrived when it began to rain* expresses no comparison; it expresses time only; hence, to use *than* for *when* is incorrect. It would be equally incorrect to say *hardly until,* though *than* is not involved with *until* and is not likely to be. *Until* means up to the time of; *when,* time at which (page 195). Say *I had hardly started the car when they came driving in,* not *I had hardly started the car until they came driving in.* Make sure that *than* is placed as close as possible to the term it holds up for comparison. In *There is nothing more disgusting than to see a drunken man* the intervening *to see* between *than* and *a drunken man* makes the comparison incoherent. It is not the seeing that is more disgusting; *nothing* and *drunken man* are the chief terms of comparison. The expression should read *There is nothing more disgusting than a drunken man* or *There is nothing more disgusting than the sight* (or *appearance* or *helplessness*) *of a drunken man.*

The term *prefer than* is incorrect, as is also the term *prefer rather than.* The correct idiom is *prefer to,* as in *I prefer this route to that.* Do not say *I prefer this rather than that* or *above that* or *more than that* or *ahead of that.* Both *prefer* and *preferable* have within them the comparative quality. *Preferable,* for instance, means more desirable; the expression *more preferable* is therefore incorrect. Say *This hat is preferable to that one,* not *This hat is more preferable than that one.* Derivatively *prefer* means to bear

before. *I prefer this before that* and *I prefer this instead of that* are therefore tautological (page 54).

Other once meant second or alternate, and *the other day* meant the next or the second day. These meanings still hold to a degree but not so specifically as formerly. *I did that the other day* means I did that on a day not long ago. The expression *every other day* colloquially means every second or alternate day, and the original meaning functions intact. But this usage is deservedly falling off even as colloquialism because of its indefiniteness or its downright ambiguity. In *I was here on Tuesday and there every other day,* for example, the latter part of the expression may mean that I was there every day after Tuesday or that I was there every second day. The imperative use of *other* as a separative element in comparison has already been pointed out (page 64): *This is larger than any truck I have seen* is illogical unless *other* is supplied after *any* to separate into different classes the truck I am now considering and all other trucks. (The prevalence of this type of error in usage justifies the passing repetition here.)

Else is an old genitive singular of an Anglo-Saxon adjective meaning other. Just as you say *I shall deal with no one other than he,* you should also say *I shall deal with no one else than he* (pages 64 and 65). The term *but he* is wrong in all expressions such as these. Since, however, *but* may be a preposition meaning *except,* these sentences may read *I shall deal with no one but him.* In *I shall deal with no one else* (or *no one other*) *but him, else* or *other* is used superfluously. In the *else—than* and *other—than* expressions, some predicate is understood after the noun or pronoun following, as *We shall speak to no one else than she (is).*

Unless is used only to connect a subject and a predicate before it with a subject and predicate after it; that is, to connect one clause with another. It is not used to show relationship between one word and another. *I shall not go unless you go* and *I shall not go unless the weather clears* are correct. *Except* or *without* in place of *unless* in these two sentences makes them wrong. But *I shall not go without you* is correct, for here the preposition *without* shows relation between *shall not go* and *you* which are not word groups (clauses) containing subject and predicate. In *Every one is going except me* the preposition *except* is correctly used to show relationship between *is going* and *me,* that is, between two single terms—verb and pronoun.

Because is to *on account of* as *unless* is to *without* (or *except*). *On account of* is a unit or phrasal preposition used only to show relationship between words or terms. *Because* is a conjunction used to connect word groups (clauses) having subject and predicate. You may say *I staid away because I was ill* and *I staid away on account of illness,* but you may not say *I staid home on account of I was ill.* In the first sentence *because* connects two word groups (clauses) each having subject and predicate; in the second, *on account of* shows relationship between *staid* and *illness.* The phrasal preposition *because of* may be used interchangeably with *on account of,* as *I staid away because of illness.* But *because* alone must be used as a connective and as a connective only.

Because is preferably not used, therefore, as an introductory word. It is very often so misused, especially following the word *reason,* as in *The reason I didn't go was because I was ill.* Here *because* is wrong on two counts: first, it repeats the idea of reason and is thus wasteful; second, it introduces, not a causal clause, but an attribute noun clause in completion of *was* (page 125). *The reason for my not going was illness* and *The reason for my not going is that I was ill* and *I didn't go because of illness* and *I did not go because I was ill* are correct. Even more serious, if possible, is the use of *because* as introductory word to a clause that stands as subject, as in *Because I didn't write does not mean that I didn't think of you.* Here the subject of *does mean* is the entire word group preceding. The word group is used as a noun, and noun clauses should not be introduced by *because* (page 40). *The fact that I didn't write does not mean that I didn't think of you* and *My not writing* (or *My failure to write*) *does not mean that I didn't think of you* are correct.

Why is an adverb meaning for what cause or reason or purpose. Such expressions as *Why I did it is because I felt I should do it* and *The reason why he left is because he was ill* are extremely loose English. The first contains one repetition; the second two repetitions. They should read *I did it because I felt I should do it* and *He left because he was ill.* The use of *for* before *why,* as in *For why did you do it,* is a kind of impropriety that barely escapes vulgarism (if it does). Say, rather, *For what reason did you do it,* or better—because simpler—*Why did you do it.*

A somewhat similar misuse of *when* and *where* occurs in such sentences as *Skidding is when you slip or slide sidewise* and *Coasting*

is where you ride down a slope by force of gravity. To say *Skidding is when* is to make skidding pertain to time, for *when* connotes time—is a time word. To say *Coasting is where* is to make coasting pertain to place, for *where* connotes place—is a place word. Skidding is not a time; coasting is not a place. *When* and *where* are misused; they convey wrong ideas; moreover, they are superfluous. Say, rather, *Skidding is slipping or sliding sidewise* and *Coasting is riding down a slope by force of gravity.* But *when* and *where* are used correctly in *When he will arrive is problematical* and *No one knows where he is,* for here each word functions in relation to its meaning—*No one knows the time of his arrival* and *No one knows the place at which he is. When* is used in relation to time, *where* in relation to place.

And *when* may be used to "cover" a given time or period, as in history; thus, you may say *When Woodrow Wilson was in the White House, public information was better regulated than it had previously been.* This means *At some time during Wilson's presidency.* If *While* were used in this sentence it would mean during the entire period of Wilson's term, and this would not be true. Public information was regulated by the Government for only a part of that period.

When is sometimes misused for *though.* If you say *I made believe that I had no fears, when in my heart of hearts I was very much scared* you mistake a concession relationship between clauses for a time relationship. The time does not greatly matter in an expression such as this, but the concession does. Say, rather, *I made believe that I had no fears, though in my heart of hearts I was very much scared.*

The misuses of *when* and *where* explained above occur most commonly in definitions. A word is defined preferably by a term simpler than itself and by a term in the same grammatical category, that is, by a word that is of the same part of speech. If this is not easily done, the definition may begin with some such term as *act of* or *process of* or *form of* or *phase of* No word should be defined by a term longer or more difficult than it is itself, and no form of the word defined should appear in the definition itself. The general part of a definition may state class in which the defined term belongs; the second part may differentiate it from other members of the class; thus, a table is a piece of furniture (class) having a flat horizontal top upheld by one or more supports, on

which things may be placed (differentia). From this example it is clear that *when* and *where* have no place in the definition. True, a hangar is a place where airplanes, vehicles, agricultural implements, are kept, and curfew is a time in the evening when, at the ringing of a bell, lights and fires are put out and streets are cleared. The one is a place and the other a time, and the words *where* and *when* are respectively retained in the definitions. They are properly placed, be it noted, between class and differentia. But there are comparatively few definitions in which *where* and *when* belong as component parts in these positions (page 9).

The word *while* differs from *when* in that it denotes duration or going on at the time at which, whereas *when* denotes definite or stated time. The former means *during* the time, the latter *at* the time. Say *While (During the time) I am driving I must keep my eyes on the road* and *When (At the time at which) I drove past your house I saw you at the window.* Colloquially the two words are used interchangeably, but the best writers and speakers are careful to use them with precision according to the exposition here given. *Whenever* is subject to the same use as *when* in this distinction. There is no such term as *whilever* for the reason that *while* has some of the idea of *ever* in it.

While should be sparingly used for *and* or *but* It is now listed in the dictionaries and in the grammars as a coordinate connective, but in mere additive expressions *and* is preferable and in mere adversative ones *but* is better; thus, *When the siren sounded I was sitting at the table while the baby was playing on the floor* and *This will look well in the blue room while that belongs in the red room* are not so good as *When the siren sounded I was sitting at the table and the baby was playing on the floor* and *This will look well in the blue room but that belongs in the red room.* In the one mere addition is indicated; in the other, contrast. The basic meaning of *while*—during the time at which—is in no way concerned in either sentence. The use of *though* for *but* in the second cannot be recommended either, inasmuch as there is no note of concession in the second clause. The use of *while* in the sense of *though (although)* and *whereas* is colloquial but not strictly correct (though pressure of usage is probably making it so). *While* pertains to time and has nothing whatever to do with concession. The dictionaries record but do not sanction its use as a concessive conjunction.

The use of *how* or *how that* or (worse) *how as that* to introduce a noun clause may verge closely upon vulgarism, as in *He said how* (or *how as* or *how as that*) *his work is done* for *He said that his work is done.* Special care must be taken not to confuse *how* with *that* in noun clauses following such verbs as *believe, conceive, perceive, say, teach, tell, think.* Say *They told us that the epidemic is now under control,* not *They told us how the epidemic is now under control.* When, however, the noun clause following such verbs suggests explanation or manner in which, *how* is correctly used, as in *He taught me how to fly* and *I can't think how you wish to do this* (page 39).

The connective *if* should not be used for the connective *whether. If* is preferably used to indicate condition only, not to imply alternative. *I'll come if I can* means I'll come on condition that I can. But *I don't know if I can come* basically makes nonsense; the sentence should read *I don't know whether I can come.* Note also *See whether he has gone* rather than *See if he has gone, Tell me whether this is satisfactory* rather than *Tell me if this is satisfactory, Ask her whether she is ready* rather than *Ask her if she is ready.*

The use of *or no* or *or not* after the correlative *whether* is generally wasteful (page 40) for one or the other is usually implied—and usually occurs in colloquial expression. But they are not interchangeably used. *No* or *not* is required according as the understood word following is modifiable by the one or the other. It is absurd to say *I do not know whether he is married or no* for the understood word is *married—I do not know whether he is married or no married. Not* is required as correlative with *whether* in such expression as this. But in *I do not know whether he possesses talent or no* the noun *talent* is understood after *no,* that is, *I do not know whether he possesses talent or no talent.* Usage, however, by no means always recognizes this distinction, and some authorities rule that the completely understood construction in such expression as this justifies the use of *not,* namely, *I do not know whether he possesses or does not possess talent* in which *not* correctly modifies *does possess. Whether* is no longer used for *which* or *who* as an interrogative pronoun to mean which or who of two persons or things, as in *Whether is greater, the gold or the temple.* The pronoun *which* now takes its place in such usage.

Though is not used interchangeably with *if*. Its meaning is *notwithstanding*, and it should be used only in word groups (clauses) that concede facts, as *Though he is ill he is nevertheless working. Though* and *nevertheless* are correlatives. *Though* and *although* are used interchangeably, the sound of an expression often being the only deciding factor between the two forms. *As if* is preferable to *as though* in making comparisons. Here again the idea of condition should be associated with *if* and the idea of concession with *though*. *The river looks as though it were going to overflow* absurdly says *The river looks as it might look if it were to concede to overflow*. The *though*-word group is not concessive. The correct form is *The river looks as if it were going to overflow*, that is, *The river looks as it might look on condition it were going to overflow*.

Authorities are divided, however, in regard to the strict usage of *if* for condition and of *though* for concession. Some rule that after such verbs as *ask, doubt, explain, inquire, interrogate, know, learn, prophesy, see, tell, think* either *if* or *whether* may be used to introduce a clause. The basic meanings of these two words should be taken as guide in their use, *if* standing for in case or on condition, and *though* for in spite of, notwithstanding that, conceding that. It is important to remember that *whether* implies *or*, that *whether—or* are correlatives indicating alternative two, that *both —and* indicate additive two. *If* has no such double functioning. If you say *Tell me whether she is ill* two conditions are thought of immediately—being ill and being well. And this is true when *or not* is added to the expression. If you say *Tell me if she is ill* only one condition is thought of—being ill. The former is preferable usage.

It is a mistake to use *though* in the capacity of a relative pronoun, as in *The new car, though unusual in many ways, is made entirely of plastic materials*. The fact that the car is made of plastic materials is just another unusual feature, not a concessive one. *Though* has nothing of the force of in spite of, notwithstanding that, conceding that; it could not logically be correlated with *nevertheless* in such sentence. The reading should be *The new car, which is unusual in many ways, is made entirely of plastic materials.*

So is colloquially used as a connective (usually with *that*) to indicate result. It is preferable always to use *accordingly* or *conse-*

quently or *hence* or *therefore* instead of *so* in such expressions as *I found the money; so I was rewarded* and *They promised to be here; so we shall wait for them.* In expressions such as these any one of the four words above is preferable to *so.* Note that the semicolon is used at the breaking point, that is, before the resultant term. *So* is increasingly overused for *very* *This is very satisfactory* is preferable to *This is so satisfactory* (page 122).

The adverbs *directly, immediately, once* are frequently used with conjunctive or connective quality, but the purists frown upon this transference or doubling of office. In *Immediately I arrived there, I discovered what the trouble was,* for instance, *immediately (once* or *directly* could be substituted) is primarily a time word (adverb) modifying arrived, but it functions also in a secondary way as a connective between the two clauses *I arrived* and *I discovered.* According to the rules of formal grammar the sentence should read *As soon as I arrived there I discovered the trouble* or (as a simple sentence) *Immediately on my arrival there I discovered the trouble.*

Used conjunctively, *after* is sometimes confused with *since.* If you say *After her husband died she lived in seclusion* you indicate by *After* a definitely closed period of time. This is correct for *after* means later than or subsequent to. The use of *since* for *after* in this sentence is wrong for the reason that *since* brings up to date or covers intervening time You may say *Since her husband's death she has lived in seclusion* or *Since her husband has been dead she has lived in seclusion,* neither of which implies any obligation for her to continue a life of seclusion.

CONTEST *

	NO	YES
1	Please do this like I do	Please do this as I do
2	My book is different than John's	My book is different from John's
3	I want you to speak as you promised to	You promised to speak and I want you to do so
4	Our chauffeur talks as a doctor	Our chauffeur talks like a doctor
5	Hardly had it begun to rain than they entered	Hardly had it begun to rain when they entered
6	There is no place for Bill to sleep only in the bathroom	There is no place other than the bathroom where Bill may sleep
7	He says he will not go without you promise to wait for him	He says he will not go unless you promise to wait for him

* See page 9

	NO	YES
8	They have gone to Palm Springs on account of they both need a vacation	They have gone to Palm Springs because they both need a vacation
9	There is nothing more heart-rending than to see one's old friends passing away	There is nothing more heart-rending than the death of one's old friends
10	When he was doing his algebra they stole a ride in his car	While he was doing his algebra they stole a ride in his car
11	I don't know if I am going to be able to meet those conditions	I don't know whether I am going to be able to meet those conditions
12	He is by no means as good in school work as his brother	He is by no means so good in school work as his brother
13	It looks as though it were going to snow tonight	It looks as if it were going to snow tonight
14	I don't know as I want to go with you tonight	I don't know that I want to go with you tonight
15	He has taken the trouble to telegraph me, so I shall meet him	He has taken the trouble to telegraph me, therefore I shall meet him
16	On account of I lost my book I couldn't prepare my lesson	Because I lost my book I couldn't prepare my lesson
17	The reason I didn't prepare my lesson is because I lost my book	The reason that I didn't prepare my lesson is that I lost my book
18	Because I lost my book is the reason why I didn't prepare my lesson	The reason for my not preparing my lesson is that I lost my book
19	Dancing is when you perform a rhythmic and patterned succession of movements, usually to music	Dancing is the performance of a rhythmic and patterned succession of movements, usually to music
20	Anaptyxis is where you add an unnecessary vowel between the consonants of a word, as *umberella* and *disterict* for *umbrella* and *district*	Anaptyxis is the addition of an unnecessary vowel between certain consonants of a word, as *umberella* and *disterict* for *umbrella* and *district*
21	While he was apparently absorbed in his lessons he nevertheless heard everything that was said	Though he was apparently absorbed in his lessons he nevertheless heard everything that was said
22	Except we need him his mother wants him to stay with her	Unless we need him his mother wants him to stay with her
23	Do not leave her in this storm without you must for there is nothing she fears like she fears lightning	Do not leave her during this storm unless you must, for there is nothing she fears so much as she fears lightning
24	He insisted that I accompany him when he very well knew that I was expecting guests	He insisted that I accompany him though he very well knew that I was expecting guests
25	While the World War was fought daylight saving was introduced	Daylight saving was introduced when the World War was fought
26	He amused himself playing the piano while on clear days she played tennis	He amused himself playing the piano, and on clear days she played tennis

NO	YES
27 They couldn't tell us whether he had joined the corps or no	They couldn't tell us whether he had joined the corps or not
28 Our new helper, though a conscientious worker, is sometime going to buy a farm, he says	Our new helper, who is a conscientious worker, says that he is sometime *going to buy a farm*
29 I cannot tell you now if I am going to the party or no	I cannot tell you now whether I am going to the party or not
30 Directly I saw her enter the room I rose and went forward to greet her	As soon as I saw her enter the room I rose and went forward to greet her
31 Since he inherited the money he deserted all his old friends	After he inherited the money he deserted all his old friends

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SECTION TWENTY-SEVEN — ADJUSTMENT

Shall you say *I am going to publish this article over* or *under my own name?* *Under* is preferred usage in formal writing of any kind that carries title and authorship at the beginning or at the top. But in papers in which signatures usually follow copy, such as letters and contracts and wills, *over* is also correct. The legal idiom *under my hand and seal* is technically and literally precise, or was so originally, and the *under* of this idiom has carried over to general usage with the meaning of authorized or substantiated, no matter where the signature actually stands.

In general it may be said that *among* should be used to pertain to more than two persons, things, or groups; *between* to pertain to two only. But the latter is correctly used to pertain to more than two in case it is required of a reader or a listener to think of but two at a time; thus, you say *This must be settled between Bill and Henry* and *This must be settled among the fifty pupils in the class.* But you also say *I am unable to see the difference between coal and coke and slate* for here consideration belongs between coal on the one hand and coke and slate on the other, between coke on the one hand and coal and slate on the other, between slate on the one hand and coal and coke on the other; that is, two groups of things only are considered by the mind at one time. *Between* is used, therefore, to express relationship of one thing to many and vice versa; whereas *among* is used to express collective relationship and is thus general and very often more or less vague. It does not precede singular nouns or pronouns as a rule, unless they are collective. To say *They agreed among one another* is ridiculous,

as is *They agreed between one another,* for these expressions imply the fractioning of *one* (page 137). *They agreed with one another* is correct. You may say *He is a man among men* or *He is only one among many* or *He is a devil among the ladies* in each of which *among* properly pertains to a homogeneous group of more than two. But you may not use *among* for *in* or *through* in such expressions as *He walked in the clover* and *He shouldered his way through the winds.*

Note that *by* is correct and that *from* is wrong in such expressions as *Judging by his conduct I should say that he has been badly brought up* and *Estimated by the standards you mention the antique should bring one hundred dollars. According to* is permissible in place of *by* in both sentences but *by* is preferable. *From* is sometimes misused also for *on,* as in *On* (not *From*) *the basis of his own opinion I shall take the trip* and *On* (not *From*) *strategic grounds alone the Panama Canal should have a fleet permanently assigned to it.*

But *from,* be it noted, is usually correct after so-called separative or dividing words, as in *separated from his children, different from another, divorced from her husband.* You do not speak of a *separation with his children, different than another, divorced away her husband.* It has been seen (page 192) that *different* and *differently* are correctly followed by *from,* not by *than. To* and *with* are likewise wrong after these words, though *toward* may be correctly used after them, and both *to* and *toward* are correct after *indifferent.* After the verb *differ* the prepositions *about, in, on, with,* and still others, may be used correctly in accordance with context.

Beside is always a relation word (preposition), never a connecting word (conjunction); it means by the side of or apart from or, in a special idiomatic sense, temporarily unbalanced mentally, as, respectively, *He sat beside me* and *You are talking beside the point* and *She is beside herself with grief. Besides,* as a relation word (preposition), means in addition to; as a connecting word (conjunction) it means moreover, as, respectively, *Besides me the other four boys are going* and *I have a cold; besides, I think I am running a temperature.* The best writers and speakers observe this distinction. The use of *beside* as a conjunction is properly regarded as loose English.

At is very often idiomatically confused with *by, on, to, with.* Say *I did it by my lawyer's advice* and *He was on the point of leaving*

and *He left on the hour* and *She went cheerfully to work* and *He started with a teaspoonful three times a day. At* would be incorrect in all of these sentences, for no reason other than the reasonless one of idiom. It is not idiomatic in such uses. On the other hand you may do something *at* another's suggestion, you may take a train *at* three o'clock, you may remain *at* work all night, and you may start a course of medicine *at* the rate of a teaspoonful three times a day. The expression *come at* in, for instance, *I was unable to come at his meaning,* is probably the most stubborn of all *at* idioms. When you say you *come at* a thing or do not *come at* a thing you imply difficulty or obstacle involved (see below).

But there are other *come* idioms of almost equal individuality. One is *come about* meaning to take place or happen, as in *This came about in a strange way;* meaning also, in a special sense, to turn in order to proceed in an opposite direction, as in *The ship came about suddenly to avoid a clash.* Another is *come by* meaning to acquire or gain possession of, as in *I didn't come by these possessions, you may be sure, without hard work.* Still another is *come to* meaning to recover or revive as from fainting; to anchor or to bring a ship close to the wind, to turn short to the left, as a team of horses; to result, as a sum of figures; to arrive at, as in *What we shall come to, no one knows.* Aside from these special uses, these terms are also used, of course, with their normal verb and preposition meanings, that is, *I shall come by your house at eleven* and *Come to me* and *Come at nine* and *Come about ten.*

The preposition *in* is frequently confused with the preposition *at* in indicating location. To denote temporary location, *at* is preferable, as *We lunched at Westboro, dined at Spingarn, and stopped for gas at Innesville.* To denote a longer period, *in* is preferable, as *We remained in Charleston for three weeks.* This distinction is, however, increasingly disregarded by both speakers and writers, euphony sometimes deciding which of the two words shall be used, the importance of the place sometimes deciding it. It is correct to say *Lincoln was born at Springfield, Illinois, but he did his immortal work as a statesman in Washington* and *Though he votes at Weston, Connecticut, he lives for the greater part of the year in New York City.* The old rule to the effect that *in* should be used before the names of large and important places, and that *at* should be used before the names of small and unimportant places, is today ignored for the most part in the United States though generally followed in England.

Motion or action from without to within is preferably indicated by *into,* as *He jumped from the log into the pool* and *They had forced him into an embarrassing position. Into* is, in other words, preferable after verbs of motion, but this is a preference not without exceptions that are at least colloquial if not literary; thus, you may correctly say *He cut the oranges in halves* and *She fell in love* and *His honor was placed in doubt* and *Put your money in your wallet.* After *put* meaning place, deposit, lay, in a stationary sense, *in* is preferable to *into;* after *put* meaning some radical or unusual or initial change of position, *into* is preferable; thus, you may correctly say *Put my manuscript in the file* and *Put your hand into the cement very gradually.* But the rule is meticulous, and euphony and idiom must be the solution very often.

Mr Deeds goes to town is colloquially correct. *Mr Deeds goes into town* and *Mr Deeds goes in town* are colloquially incorrect, though both may be justified by more or less precious argument, the latter is a localism in certain parts of the country. Do not confuse the solid preposition *into* with the adverb *in* and the preposition *to* used in sequence but as two separate words. *I am going in to have a drink* and *I am coming in to supper now* are correct. The solid *into* is wrong in either example, for *in* is an adverb pertaining to the preceding verb in each instance, or is, at least, a part of the verb phrase—*go in* and *come in.* In speech a slight pause naturally occurs between *in* and *to* when they are thus used as separate words. After *purpose, use, value,* and a few other similar words that are frequently followed by a gerund phrase, *in* is preferable to *of,* inasmuch as possession is not concerned in such expressions; thus, you say *There is no use in doing that* and *Your purpose in saying that is not clear.*

In is frequently misused for *by* or *on* or *to* or *within.* Say *By doing that you have shocked your friends,* not *In doing that,* for agency is denoted by *by.* Say *He affixed his signature to the paper,* not *in* or *on the paper,* for motion rather than position is involved. Say *That does not come within my province,* not *in my province,* for *within* carries the idea of belonging to, *in* does not.

Of should not be used for *in* in such expression as *John takes pride in owning a new car;* for *between* in such expression as *The difference in physique between the brothers is extraordinary;* for *on* in such expression as *John prides himself on owning a new car;* for *at* in such expression as *John hinted at driving his new car*

tonight. But one may give a hint or suggestion *of* treachery, may point out differences *of* height and appearance and carriage between two brothers, may be proud *of* a possession, may convey an idea *of* suspicion. As a rule, *of* is correctly identified with the idea of possession (page 433) but its idiomatic uses are strange and stubborn, especially to the beginner *in* (not *of*) the study of English.

On and *to* are correlative with *in* and *to* in their combining power as well as in their independent uses as adverbs and prepositions respectively. But the combined form *onto* has been much longer in gaining acceptance (if, indeed, it has already done so in the mind of the purist) than *into* has been. *Onto* is now defended, however, by considerable authority, even though it may be admitted that in nine cases out of ten either *on* or *to* alone will do its work satisfactorily. In such expressions as *Lead on to victory* and *He held on to me, on* is clearly an adverb modifying the preceding verb or is a part of a verb phrase in each case, and *to* is an independent preposition. The two words must not, therefore, be written solid here. But in *He stepped onto the ice* the parallelism with *into* is clear, as *He jumped into the water.* Neither *on* nor *to* quite does the job in this expression. If you say *He stepped on the ice* you imply that he was already on the ice and that he stepped from one place on the ice to another place on the ice. If you say *He stepped to the ice* you mean that he stepped to the edge of the ice. And *He stepped upon the ice* similarly leaves some ambiguity—he may have taken a step up to gain the level of the ice. So *onto,* it would seem, has a little accepted and acceptable place. Of course, such slang expressions as *I'm onto you* and *Get onto him* are outside consideration here, inasmuch as they are commonly and properly classified as vulgarisms.

Such phrases as *on the point of, on the verge of, on the brink of, on the grounds of,* followed by the gerund, are correct. The use of *at* for *on* in such phrases has been seen (page 202) to be incorrect. But *at the edge of the forest, at the point of the bayonet, at the verge of death, at the river's brink* are correct. *At,* in other words, is not usually identified with motion or duration, as *to* and *into* are likely to be. Say *I shall be late at* or *for* (not *to*) *the meeting* and *At this time tomorrow we shall be at* (not *to*) *sea.*

The use of *up to* for *till* or *until* represents waste in expression but it is colloquial. Say *Until* (or *Till*) *today I thought he would*

surely come, not *Up to today* (or *Up to until today*) *I thought he would surely come.*

For the beginner in the study of English there is no more difficult and bothersome phase than the idiomatic adjustment of prepositions—especially *for, in, on, to, with.* Certain words—verbs and adjectives for the most part—require special prepositional company, and they require one preposition in one expression and another in another. You say, for example, *Deposit this check to my credit* and *Deposit this check in the bank, He has done all this work to no purpose* and *For what purpose he did this I cannot say, The government has worked many weeks on the project* and *The government has worked untiringly for the alleviation of these people* and *The government has worked to bring about change.*

The foregoing exposition covers the major adjustments in the idiomatic prepositional phrase. The list below adds more than a hundred similar phrases that the average person has to draw upon in daily conversation. To be sure, these compose but a small fraction of all those in the language that may give one pause in a sincere effort to say what is meant. But they richly illustrate a principle that one may satisfy to the full by consulting the unabridged dictionary.*

abhorrence for
absolve from
absorb in
accede to
accommodate to, with
accompany by (persons), with (things)
accord with
acquiesce in
acquit of
adapt for, to
adequate for, to
adherence to
admit into, of, to
affinity between, to, with
agree to (a proposal), upon (a course), with (a person)
aim at
alive to (a cause), with (vermin)
angry at, with
assent to
associate with
attach to

* See *English Synonyms, Antonyms, and Prepositions* by J C Fernald, published by Funk and Wagnalls Company.

averse to
blend with
center at, in, upon (not around) (page 17)
characteristic of
charge to (a person), with (a crime)
cognizant of
coincide with
comment on
compare to (to note resemblance), with (to note either agreement or difference)
comply with
conducive to
confer on or upon (bestow), with (talk)
confide in, to
conform to
conformity to, with
confront by, with
consist in, of
contend against, for, with
contrast with
convenient for, to
conversant with
correspond to or with (one thing with another), with (a person)
dependent upon
derogatory to
desirous of (something), to (be, do, have)
devoid of
die of (laughter)
differ from, in, with (page 202)
difference among, between, from, in (page 202)
disagree about, in, with
disappoint in
disgust at, with
dissent from
dissociate from
distrust (noun) of
emigrate from
estrange from
exchange for (a thing), with (a person)
familiar with
glad for, of
grate on
hanker after, for
identical with
ill with
imbue with
immerse in
immigrate into
independent of
inferior to
infuse into

inherent in
in search of
instil into
inveigh against
involve in
judged by
knowledge of
liable for (expenses), to (a person)
martyr to
meddle in (another's business), with (mechanism)
merge with
migrate from, to
monopoly of, in
need (noun) of
oblivious of
originate in
part from (leave), with (give up)
persecution of
pine for
possessed of, with
prefer to
pregnant with
prodigal of (money)
profit by
prosecution by, of
protest against (page 87)
pursuance of
rail at
receptive of
recognizable by
recoil from
reconcile to, with
rely on, upon
responsible for (action), to (the boss)
revenge for, on
search for
sensible of
sensitive about or of (shortcomings), to (criticism)
set out for, to
solicitous of
sparing of
subscribe for (paper), to (a movement)
suffer from
superior to
taste of (food), for (art), in (clothes)
tendency to
thirst after, for
tolerant of
transform into
treat of (a subject), to (a gift)
unequal in (value), to (undertaking)

vested in (inheritors), with (power)
view, in view of (in consideration of), with a view to (aim or purpose of)
wait at (a place), for (anybody), on (serve)

CONTEST *

	NO	YES
1	This must be decided between the members	This must be decided among the members
2	He has been separated with his family for a long time	He has been separated from his family for a long time
3	Judged from ethical standards his conduct is highly culpable	Judged by ethical standards his conduct is highly culpable
4	Beside Tom and Dick there were three others in the car	Besides Tom and Dick there were three others in the car
5	I don't care to go with you, beside, I'm not feeling very well	I don't care to go with you, besides, I'm not feeling very well
6	I refuse to answer on advice of my lawyer	I refuse to answer by advice of my lawyer
7	He jumped from the car and ran in the house	He jumped from the car and ran into the house
8	I was just at the point of calling you up	I was just on the point of calling you up
9	Bill has devoted a great deal of time on his studies	Bill has devoted a great deal of time to his studies
10	Up until yesterday I had never seen the new statue	Until yesterday I had never seen the new statue
11	I was accompanied with Mary on my trip	I was accompanied by Mary on my trip
12	This will be adequate to my needs, thank you	This will be adequate for my needs, thank you
13	All of these questions center around one problem	All of these questions center in one problem
14	The date you mention is not convenient to me	The date you mention is not convenient for me
15	He spoke in a manner derogatory of my best friend	He spoke in a manner derogatory to my best friend
16	He is evidently oblivious about what happened a year ago today	He is evidently oblivious of what happened a year ago today
17	I would not part from my sheep dog for anything in the world	I would not part with my sheep dog for anything in the world
18	He has become more and more prodigal with money	He has become more and more prodigal of money
19	I am not going to subscribe for the special performance	I am not going to subscribe to the special performance
20	I waited on you at the entrance to the park	I waited for you at the entrance to the park

* See page 3.

SECTION TWENTY-EIGHT SURVEY

Misuse is a broad term, even when it is confined to the field of English expression. It may cover most if not all of the errors that occur in expression. But as used in the preceding sections of this chapter it applies to such violation of expressional purity as results from the misconstruction of words in relationship. Words put together contrary to grammatical rule or idiomatic usage were said by the Greeks to constitute a *solecism.* With them this was really a word invention—a slang term—taken from *Soli* or *Soloi,* the name of a colony in Cilicia where the Greek colonists made themselves notorious for their corruption of the Attic dialect. The term is used loosely to cover all sorts of minor mistakes in expression—mistakes in pronunciation, mistakes in choice of diction, even mistakes in spelling. But it is correctly used, as indicated above, in reference to errors made in the relationships of words in sentences.

For the sake of convenient summary solecisms may be classified under five general headings. First, and perhaps most serious, may be set down errors of agreement, such as a plural predicate with a singular subject; second, errors in the dictional elements of grammar, such as wrong conjunctions, wrong prepositions, wrong modes, wrong tenses, wrong uses of *can* and *may,* and *shall* and *will;* third, errors of government, such as nominative case for objective case *(who* and *whom, I* and *me);* fourth, errors of modification, such as adjectives for adverbs, adverbs for adjectives, dangling construction, squinting construction, remote placements; fifth, errors of reference, such as broad reference, weak reference, ambiguous reference, vague reference, omission or suspension of basic relationship for adjectives and pronouns (pages 138 to 142).

These overlap to some degree, but each represents a fundamental misuse in putting words together to form sentences. Most of them have been treated extensively in the foregoing sections of this chapter; a few of them, in chapters one and two Inasmuch as the sentence is the basic unit of expression, meticulous attention first to its formation as a whole and then to the purity of the elements of which it is composed, may be made to do much by way of avoiding slips in construction. It is sentence sweep that reveals and reflects the literacy or the illiteracy of thinking habits, not necessarily the various dictional and phrasal and clausal items that are

involved in its cumulative composition, and that are automatically "kept straight" by pressure of clear thinking. Muddled expression reflects muddled thinking.

This principle has been overlooked, it would seem, by the National Council of Teachers of English when it places its stamp of approval upon such colloquialisms as *It is me, None are expected, Try and get well, The reason was because . . . , awfully bad . . . , healthy climate . . . , I wish I was there, Every one was here but they all went home early, He invited my friends and myself.* If the bars are let down for such "black sheep" as these, then the field is wide open. There is no possibility of fencing off other—perhaps worse—solecisms. And what shall those good folks do who have all their lives said and now habitually say *It is I* and *Try to get well* and *healthful climate,* and the rest? They are going to feel penalized for being right. Having been born or educated (perhaps both) to *I wish I were there* and *He invited my friends and me,* they are going to be required to give up their birthrights and their educational rights (they paid tuition for the latter) while those who glory in the sanction of their illiteracy stampede the conversazioni.

Training in logical process of thought should be the first step in the teaching of expression in any language. Just in proportion as thought is clearly and logically formulated in the mind, is expression purified. Just as the little aches and ailments of our physical being tend to disappear when general body tone takes on sturdiness and robustness, so do the little technical errors of expression disappear as perfection of sentence composition—thought composition—is approached. There is much more in this axiom than is realized by the average person. That it is not more deeply realized by those who instruct in the Mother Tongue is one of the tragic elements in education—probably the most tragic one. The evolutionary principle of the displacement of wrong by right, as enunciated continuously from Roger Bacon to Matthew Arnold and Walter Bagehot, is as persistent in its workings in the field of language as it is in other fields. *Try and get well* reveals ignorance of the principle of thought coordination; *the reason was because,* the principle of thought economy; *Every one was here but they all went home early,* the principle of thought relationships. The study of language is the study of such principles as these, that is, the study of logic. And facility in expression is

attained only when the mind is habituated by their application in putting items of thought together.

If you say *This is the boy who came in as I was ringing the bell which seemed strangely off-key when I rang it the first time* you express yourself in a stringy and ragged manner. Worse, you permit your expression to reflect a kind of loose and irresponsible thinking that is ripe for such illiteracy as *This is the boy which come in as I was ringing the bell what seemed off-key while I rung it the first time.* This, indeed, is the inescapable next step down. *Dis* for *This, ringin* for *ringing, foist* for *first* (page 247) are only a hair's breadth lower—and the descent is inevitable unless you train yourself in clean-cut, close-up, coherent thinking. But the construction of the sentence—the cumulative telescopic follow-on of afterthoughts resulting in a series of tag-on clauses each dependent upon the preceding one—reflects a loose and detached habit of thinking that makes for solecism. The old rhetoricians called this kind of expression *incapsulation,* that is, placement of one within another as in capsules The cumulative last stanza of the house-that-Jack-built jingle still stands as the best example of this bad construction (the dozen tandem clauses are indicated by numbers)·

This is the farmer sowing his corn
(1) That keeps the cock (2) that crowed in the morn
(3) That waked the priest all shaven and shorn
(4) That married the man all tattered and torn
(5) That kissed the maiden all forlorn
(6) That milked the cow with the crumpled horn
(7) That tossed the dog
(8) That worried the cat
(9) That killed the rat
(10) That ate the malt
(11) That lay in the house (12) that Jack built

The term *incapsulation* is sometimes applied also to words that are made up from other words, or agglutinated, such as *afterthought, nevertheless, notwithstanding, spoonful, wastebasket.* All languages possess this facility of word composition, and it increases in proportion as a language reflects a rich and complex civilization.

This is the boy that entered as I was ringing the bell. Incidentally, when I rang the bell the first time, it seemed to be off-key is a more logical reading of the rambling sentence above. One

part now treats of *boy;* one part of *bell.* The second part is, however, still further removed from the first than this arrangement shows; it is really parenthetical to the first and may be somewhat better written *(Incidentally, when I rang the bell the first time, it seemed to be off-key.)* Even the most commonplace of expression may thus, by a little devising, be kept from a sprawling tendency that would convert it into the merest babble.

To string a series of expressions loosely along, using such words as *and, but, for, so* to connect them is to label thinking processes unorganized and haphazard, and, what is even more serious, to bewilder the minds of those who read or hear what is thus expressed. *I ran out but he didn't see me so I had fooled him at last for he had watched me all day* is badly strung out. *Though he had been watching me all day, he didn't see me when I ran out. I had fooled him at last* presents a more logical relationship of ideas. But *He couldn't lend me the money for he didn't have it for he had recently lost his job* and *I have always liked her but she doesn't seem to care for me so much but she prefers my friend Cyril instead* are even worse than the foregoing sentence for the reason that the same connectives are used to link clauses that are unnecessarily loose and detached. *Inasmuch as he had recently lost his job he didn't have the money to lend me* and *Although I have always liked her she prefers Cyril to me* are more compactly and consistently stated. Short choppy sentences, or units within a sentence, may usually be combined through subordination to beget smoother and more economical reading. But such condensation must not be permitted to do violence to the thought expressed or to the relation of the ideas of which the thought is composed.

The complex sentence is the most difficult sentence form to use successfully, but it may always be made an excellent master for whipping thought into disciplined form. It is used in the above revisions in order to present ideas in properly subordinated relationships. In addition to its other faults the stringy sentence is usually lacking in subordination of ideas. But it is rarely the case that several ideas embodied in a single expression are or can be of the same value or importance. One or more must, as a rule, be made to stand out, and the others must be ordered under, that is, *subordinated.* Logical thinking will automatically marshal important ideas into independent word groups or clauses, and unimportant ones into dependent clauses.

In *She broke her arm when she fell from the ladder,* for example, there are two ideas, the idea of breaking an arm and the idea of falling from a ladder. There can be no doubt that under any circumstances whatever the former is the more important of the two. It is thus correctly placed in the principal or independent part of the expression, and the less important idea is placed in a dependent part—in a *when* clause which should be used only for adjusting the time of a happening to a principal statement. Say *When she broke her arm she fell from the ladder* and the cart is before the horse. Say *She fell from the ladder and (she) broke her arm* and the cart and the horse are moving side by side, that is, the two ideas are made coordinate.

Thought should discipline ideas in regard to arrangement, as well as assort them in regard to relative values. Expression that is badly or, at least, ineffectively arranged may also reveal loose thought processes, and may thus deter readers and listeners from understanding easily and immediately. *When she fell from the ladder she broke her arm* is, for instance, a stronger and more impressive statement than *She broke her arm when she fell from the ladder.* Both are correct grammatically but the former, in addition to mere correctness, contains an element of suspense, and this in turn implies an element of climax. And all human beings, as well as many lower animals, are susceptible to these two important elements, part and parcel, as they are, of living experience. All are capable, too, of creating them. It is, therefore, not merely good but it ought to be natural for man to arrange ideas in an expression so that they build in importance and, thus, in interest and effectiveness.

A sentence that is not grammatically complete before its end is reached is called a periodic sentence. This term is used because the main idea is, in other words, placed next to the concluding period. But questions may be periodic—*When she fell from the ladder, did she break her arm?* Orders or commands (imperative sentences) may be periodic—*Don't break your arm.* Exclamations may be periodic—*Alas, she has broken her arm!* Periodic style was defined by Genung as that in which the principal element in an expression is delayed till the close, and meanwhile prepared for by preliminaries of circumstance, condition, or predication.* A complex sentence is periodic in all cases when the dependent parts precede the independent parts. It is loose when the order is

* From *The Working Principles of Rhetoric* by John Franklin Genung. Used by permission of Ginn and Company, publishers.

reversed. There are degrees of periodicity, just as there are degrees of looseness. The completely periodic sentence suspends meaning until the very last word is reached, as in *As I entered the room Bobby was just emerging from the jam.* But *As I entered the room Bobby was just emerging from the pantry—and the jam* is not quite so periodic, for a period could be placed after *pantry* and a complete sentence would be left. (The former reading, however, has the humor of anticlimax.) *Bobby was just emerging from the pantry—and the jam—as I entered the room with my parcels* is a loose sentence; it may be brought to a close by means of a period at any one of five places before the end is reached—after *emerging* or *pantry* or *jam* or *entered* or *room.*

Periodic construction concentrates attention and interest, and by this very token demands greater care in composition. Fewer misuses such as are discussed in the foregoing pages are therefore likely to occur in periodic structure than in other types of structure. It requires both the speaker and the writer to look to the arrangement of his expressed thought, as the loose sentence rarely does. The latter may just "string along," the former must be consciously "banked" for effect. Used to excess the periodic style becomes heavy and exhausting; the loose style, while necessary for relief and variety in conversation and narration and, to only a lesser degree perhaps, in other forms of composition, may very easily lead expression into incoherence, error, and misunderstanding.

A thought may logically be made up of two or more ideas of equal importance and its expression may thus require two or more statements or clauses of equal weight. Use of the complex sentence is a discipline in subordination; use of the compound sentence, a discipline in coordination. The latter is always a loose sentence, and it naturally therefore tempts to over-looseness. The problem in assorting ideas for expression is to see whether they are really of equal weight and whether they thus demand equality of expressional form. In *All of his clothing was stolen and all of his furniture was destroyed* there are two ideas of equal weight—stolen clothing and destroyed furniture—and the compound construction is called for. The *and* may, however, be omitted and a period or a semicolon substituted. In the one case two short, more or less choppy sentences would result; in the other, the sentence would still be compound with a mark of punctuation rather than a connective to mark the division between almost independent statements. The discipline of thought remains the same,

though, as above stated, it is never so strict as that exercised in the complex-sentence. Two sentence types—complex and compound—are frequently united. The discipline of their construction is severe, or should be regarded so, and the consequent elimination of error should be accordingly automatic. In *The man who earns his own living is entitled to the highest respect but he must not permit this fact to make him domineering when a social crisis occurs* there are two major or independent ideas—man entitled to respect and man becoming domineering. They are coordinate ideas, and are properly connected by the coordinate connective *but*. Each of these has a subordinate idea attached to it —earning living and social crisis. The arrangement of parts is necessarily loose but the sentence is not choppy or stringy or confused. Subordination is correctly made close to related major parts. This kind of statement is called compound-complex. It may take on more dependent clauses or it may have only one such clause. It must have two independent clauses—it may have more —one of which must have a related dependent clause, or more than one; both of which may have such a clause or such clauses.

Just as the complex sentence may be easily turned to use to build suspense and periodicity and climax, so the compound sentence may lend itself easily to balance and antithesis. Certain ideas and thoughts may by their very formation call for balancing one against the other; the ultimate expression will thus be given a rhythm and an impressiveness that it otherwise could not have. In *Wrath is cruel and anger is outrageous* the two ideas are expressed additively in perfectly balanced form, the most convenient and effective form for the thought to dictate. The two balanced ideas may be adversative, as in *They that forsake the law praise the wicked but such as keep the law contend with them.* When the balanced members are sharply opposed or contrasted, antithesis (page 418) results, as in *The prodigal robs his heir; the miser robs himself.* As such balance or contrast or parallelism approaches the emphasis of repetition, it may become more and more pointed; thus, *This is true but not new; that is new but not true* and *I thought him a lord among wits, but I find him only a wit among lords.*

Such constructions as these represent a type of mind—a pathological type of mind, say the envious. The habits of thinking of certain persons are, of course, discernible through their modes of expression, else we should have no such precious but elusive qual-

ity as style in literature. Balance and antithesis very often reflect the analytical—the analogical—mind, and they have in many cases characterized the wit and the conversational exhibitionist, just as periodicity and climax have characterized the philosopher, the orator, the dramatist, and the poet. Carried to excess, balance and antithesis may become monotonous and superficial and wordy, and may beget a kind of untrustworthiness on the part of readers and hearers. The proverb or aphorism (page 289) is memorable very often because of its balanced or antithetical structure, but the thought behind the structure must be worth while or it will slip out of the memory as easily and deservedly as do the merely smart and flippant epigrams of the critic, the columnist, and the after-dinner wag.

The great English philologist, Henry Sweet, classified words in correct expression according to their form and according to their ideas. The former he called grammatical categories, the latter, logical categories. The one pertains to the mechanics of expression—word, phrase, clause, sentence; the other to the thought behind the mechanical conveyance. He classified thought expression—the logical categories—as follows: MATERIAL or CONCRETE WORDS *(gold, iron, wood);* PERMANENT ATTRIBUTE or ABSTRACT WORDS *(brittle, soft, white);* FLUCTUATING ATTRIBUTE or ABSTRACT WORDS *(misty, shining, water);* QUALIFYING WORDS (quantitative, as *all, many, some,* and demonstrative, as *this, that, here, there);* GENERIC WORDS and SPECIFIC WORDS (page 48); HEAD or LEADING WORDS (words that are modified); ADJUNCT WORDS (words that modify); SUBJECT WORDS (words that indicate persons and things thought of); PREDICATE WORDS (words that say what is thought about subject words); ASSUMPTIVE WORDS (words that imply or call for predication); SUBORDINATE WORDS (words that are dependent upon others); COORDINATE WORDS (words that are equal in thought expression).

Such classification as this gives point to the choice and use of words as the agents of ideas rather than as mere pictures of ideas, as words have so often been defined (perhaps the old definition would be improved by making it read *the moving pictures of ideas*). The point of this summary—as of the chapter—is that such errors as are listed and illustrated and corrected in the preceding sections may be obviated in large measure, if not entirely, by the priming of thought before expression is attempted, and by choosing and arranging words at the dictates of that thought. "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure," pertains no

whit more pertinently to disease than to solecism. And this principle applies to the illogical (though comparatively trivial) *It is me* with as much force as it does to the larger issues of unity and coherence and emphasis and variety in speech and writing. To misuse the parts of speech is to misthink beforehand—or not to think at all. Being to the manor born or being to the hovel born makes not so much difference as is generally supposed—in view of the lavish expenditures made for education—education in English—the country over.

Chapter Contest *

	NO	YES
1	He caught a rabbit in the box with a broken leg	He caught in the box a rabbit with a broken leg
2	Long Branch invites you to their beach front	Long Branch invites you to its beach front
3	His father died before he was elected to office	John's father died before John was elected to office
4	I have told him to see the doctor more than once	I have more than once told him to see the doctor
5	Once you do it right, you'll have no more trouble	If you do it right once, you'll have no more trouble
6	Study the rules carefully and it will be a help to you	It will help you to study the rules carefully
7	She is ambitious both in written work and oral to win the award	She is ambitious to win the award in both written and oral work
8	He opened the door that had been jammed with a hatchet	He opened the jammed door with a hatchet
9	He passed the cake around to our little party which his sister had made	He passed around to the members of our little party the cake which his sister had made
10	I want you, please, to never again even think of doing such a thing	I want you, please, never again even to think of doing such a thing
11	I gave to the principal the long letter written by my father who read it aloud	The long letter written by my father I gave to the principal who read it aloud
12	Such comment as he made is uncalled for both on the part of old and new customers	Such comment as he made is uncalled for on the part of either old or new customers
13	The use of correct English not only helps us but we help others by doing so	The use of correct English helps him who speaks and writes, as well as the listener and the reader
14	It ought to under any circumstances whatever have been un-	Under any circumstances whatever it ought to have been unnecessary for

* See page 3.

	NO	YES
	necessary for me to tell you that the parcel was to be given to no one else than him	me to tell you that the parcel was to be given to no one but him
15	The story of this novel is not artificial like so often in other books you read or see in the moving pictures	This story is not artificial, as are so many stories that one reads or that one sees on the screen
16	Without you're in a great hurry never take that road except you're sure it's safe	Never take that road unless you are in a great hurry or unless you are sure it is safe
17	He was suffering from a heavy cold and he therefore accomplished more work than usual	Though he was suffering from a heavy cold, he nevertheless accomplished more work than usual
18	He learned that it is extremely difficult to tow a car smoothly through this sad experience	Through this sad experience he learned that it is extremely difficult to tow a car smoothly
19	My dress is different than the one in the window but I shall nevertheless wear it like I promised to	My dress is different from the one in the window but I shall nevertheless wear it as I promised to do
20	In the first place, try and get the signature certified and that the man is good for the amount who signed it	Try to get the signature certified, to make sure that the signer is good for the amount
21	Myself and Joe have decided not to play except you play also, and without a goodly number of people are present	Joe and I have decided not to play unless you play also, and unless there is a goodly number present
22	The farmer carried the extremely large bag of seed and actually sowed the seed with his other hand at the same time	Carrying the extremely large bag of seed in one hand, the farmer at the same time actually sowed the seed with his other hand
23	They were unable to go farther for the road was under repairs and on account of one of their tires were punctured	They were unable to go farther because the road was under repair and because one of their tires was punctured
24	He has always been considered a very clever boy and it has gone to his head and made him almost unbearable to ourselves	The fact that he has always been considered a very clever boy, has made him so conceited that he is almost unbearable to us
25	It always makes me feel angry to see a man throw away his opportunities; so I am never a fit person to give them advice	Inasmuch as it always makes me angry to see a man throw away his opportunities, I am never a fit person to give him advice
26	Bill explained the new device to his cousin and said he could make a great deal of money out of it if he had it patented	Explaining the new device to his cousin, Bill said, "You can make a great deal of money out of it if you have it patented"
27	There is a golf club on the porch that has my initials on it which	On the porch there is a golf club with my initials on it; you may use

	NO	YES
	you may use, only please don't break it with your heavy swing	it, but please don't break it with your heavy swing
28	Please report any discourtesy on the part of our salesmen to the management and take two glasses of water every other hour from now	Please report to the management any discourtesy on the part of our salesmen. . . . Beginning now, take two glasses of water every two hours
29	In my new, well-furnished home I would not be averse to letting a delightful room with plenty of heat and southern exposure	For rent: In newly furnished home, delightful, well-heated room with southern exposure
30	In order to get there on time and that they might not miss Alice's entrance they had to decide between speeding or to take the train	In order to get there in time to see Alice's entrance they had to decide between speeding and taking the train
31	If those two men would give half the attention to the horses that they give to the cows they would be much more valuable	If those two men would give half the attention to the horses that they give to the cows they would be much more valuable employes
32	Calling Fido from his warm kennel, Horace patted his head vigorously, put his harness on him, hitched him to the cart, and drove off to the store	Calling Fido from the warm kennel, Horace patted the dog's head vigorously, harnessed and hitched him to the cart, and drove him to the store
33	Any good cross-examiner can tell if a witness is telling the truth better than the judge and the jury	Any good cross-examiner can tell better than the judge and the jury, whether a witness is telling the truth
34	When I was studying my Greek lesson this morning, I learned that *epizeuxis* is when repetition is used to secure emphasis	While I was studying my Greek lesson this morning, I learned that *epizeuxis* means repetition for the sake of emphasis
35	I don't ever remember if it was Jane or Mary who came between us, but whichever it was I never intend to speak to them again	I am never able to remember whether it was Jane or Mary who came between us, but I shall never speak to either of them again
36	We seldom or ever go to that church, for my husband and I have never wished to see it again after our son fell from the choir loft	My husband and I seldom or never go to that church, for since our son fell from the choir loft we have had little desire to visit the scene again
37	There was a good-looking man and a nondescript woman waiting in the office neither of who appeared to be in a bit of a hurry	There were a good-looking man and a nondescript woman waiting in the office neither of whom appeared to be in a hurry
38	He looked as though he were going to be sick, so I ran to the telephone to call the doctor; only Mary had already called him	He looked as if he were going to be sick. I therefore ran to the telephone to call the doctor but found that Mary had already done so

NO	YES
39 In the president's speech before the committee, he assured them that the condition had never before been as perilous as it is today	In his speech to the members of the committee, the president informed them that the condition had never before been so perilous as it is today
40 All those states who seceded were reunited and it saved the Union; only, not until the bitterest war in history had been fought	All those states that had seceded were reunited with the others, and the Union was saved But this did not occur until the bitterest war in history had been fought
41 Please let me know if I may expect you to dinner tomorrow evening and if Hallie will come without I extend her a special invitation	Please let me know whether you will come to dinner tomorrow evening and whether Hallie will come without a special invitation
42 I hadn't the slightest idea that the tall slender young man who you pointed out to me yesterday was in Charlie's debt who had a wart on his nose	I hadn't the slightest idea that the tall slender young man whom you pointed out to me yesterday and who has a wart on his nose, is in Charlie's debt
43 The chair whose leg is broken and that always stood before the fireplace is to be taken to that upholsterer of whom Harris told us of	The chair which always stood before the fireplace and the leg of which is broken is to be taken to the upholsterer of whom Harris told us
44 After the park had been reached we spread our luncheon on the grass and the flies and bugs had just about consumed it when they arrived	On reaching the park we spread our luncheon on the grass but the flies and bugs had just about consumed it when they arrived
45 I never hardly go to that shop except I want to buy something for Jim; only, I went there yesterday to get a red student's necktie	I hardly ever go to that shop unless I want to buy something for Jim, but I went there yesterday to get a red necktie for a student
46 Give the book to whomever you think will get the most enjoyment out of it, but not to any one, please, who the instructor has told the story to	Give the book to whoever you think will get most enjoyment out of it, but do not give it to any one, please, to whom the instructor has told the story
47 While he stood there trying to decide between the hospital or the sanatorium and who should be called to treat her, I telephoned you about it	While he stood there trying to decide between the hospital and the sanatorium, and debating in his mind who should be called to treat her, I telephoned you about the affair
48 Somebody in the room has lost their muffler; so will everybody please look under their seats to make definitely sure that they haven't seen it	Somebody in the room has lost his muffler. Will every one please look under his seat in an effort to find it

	NO	YES
49	Years of toil and suffering must be the bitter lot of every one of those who dares deliberately to defy the enemy	Years of toil and suffering must be the bitter lot of every one of those who dare to defy the enemy
50	I didn't do my homework yet but I will have had it done before ten o'clock tomorrow when our classes meet	I haven't done my homework but I shall have it done before ten o'clock tomorrow when our classes meet
51	If I was to climb to the top of that steeple I would get so dizzy that I will probably fall	If I were to climb to the top of that steeple, I should get so dizzy that I should probably fall
52	The number of contributors are not large but the total of five thousand dollars have been raised easily	The number of contributors is not large but the total of five thousand dollars has been raised easily
53	Every one of the vast group of spectators were thrilled when the trapeze artists have done their balancing in mid air	Every one of the vast group of spectators was thrilled when the trapeze artists did their balancing act in mid air
54	If your understanding were that you was to report at twelve o'clock, which seems to us doubtful, we could do nothing	If your understanding was that you were to report at twelve o'clock, we can do nothing. But we feel that there has been some mistake
55	Thackeray's *English Humorists* are one of those works that is both considered a literary classic and a classic in literature	Thackeray's *English Humorists* is one of those works that are considered literary classics as well as classics in literature
56	He insisted that he didn't care a bit when we all knew very well that he was greatly annoyed by the incident	He insisted that he didn't care at all, though we very well knew that he was greatly annoyed by the incident
57	It don't seem right that our boy along with those others have to report Saturday mornings on account of he hadn't done his work	It doesn't seem right that our boy, along with those others, has to report on Saturday mornings because he hadn't done his work
58	My clothes has been brushed and my trousers has been pressed, and so I shall now go to the polls, where politics abound, and cast my vote	My clothes have been brushed and my trousers pressed; I shall therefore go to the polls, where politics abounds, and cast my vote
59	He said he wished there was some way in which he can help you and that he has a great deal of time in which to do it in	He said he wished there were some way in which he could help you, especially since he has a great deal of time
60	If you would only do what I have told you if you were in trouble, things will go better for you	If, when you are in trouble, you would only do what I have told you to do, things would go better for you
61	He don't need me to tell him that a rolling stone gathered no	He doesn't need me to tell him that a rolling stone gathers no moss, but

NO	YES
moss, only he can regret the day when he won't listen to me	he will regret the day when he didn't listen to me
62 We will not be able to accept your kind invitation for Thursday evening, I am sorry to say, because Mr Ogden's illness will prevent us doing so	Mr and Mrs Ogden regret that illness prevents their accepting Mrs ———'s kind invitation for Thursday evening
63 There was a good many attendants at church this morning, and the minister along with the deacons were accordingly in genial mood	There were a good many attendants at church this morning, and the minister, along with the deacons, was accordingly in genial mood
64 I think I must tell you that I prefer the blue rather than the green and I nevertheless admit that you look good in both	I think I must tell you that I prefer the blue to the green, but I admit that you look well in either
65 No thought, no word, no deed have been permitted to contribute to his undoing yet it is a question whether you or his sister are interested in his well-being	No thought, no word, no deed has been permitted to contribute to his undoing, yet it is a question whether you or his sister is the more interested in his well-being
66 If it is true, and all signs point to the fact that it was, that he was present at the time of the accident, it is obligatory upon him that he must give testimony	All signs point to the fact that he was present at the time of the accident, he must therefore testify
67 Drudgery and overwork was the price he paid for getting where he is, being one of those get-ahead men who, as very often happens, ambition kills	Being one of those get-ahead men whom ambition often kills, he paid the price of drudgery and overwork for getting where he is
68 One, of course, never knows what may happen to one, and one must be prepared for what comes; only one does not necessarily have to go about with a forlorn look on one's face all the time	A man never knows what may happen to him, and he must be prepared for what comes, but he does not necessarily have to go about with a forlorn look on his face all the time
69 The wheel turned with magic speed and smoothness and between every revolution a number was recorded in the manager's office who was thus kept informed if the machinery were running satisfactory	The wheel turned with magic speed and smoothness, and after every revolution a number was recorded in the office of the manager who was thus kept informed whether the machinery was running satisfactorily
70 The acquisition of additional acres, though they undoubtedly incur additional responsibilities, yet it gives us protection against encroachments	Though additional acres undoubtedly incur additional responsibilities, they nevertheless give us protection against encroachments

NO	YES
71 Fully three fourths of the sum *total were given by Mr Philipson* whose interests in the church are enduring and he has, moreover, a contagious enthusiasm for religion	Fully three fourths of the sum total was given by Mr Philipson whose interest in the church is enduring and whose enthusiasm for religion is contagious
72 We came to a steep hill which must be ascended, they said it was one of the steepest that they had seen in these parts; but his little car has took it at a single puff of the engine, so to speak	We came to a steep hill that had to be ascended; they said it is one of the steepest that they have seen in these parts. But his little car took it in a single puff of the engine, so to speak
73 In that railroad suit the other day the jury returned this verdict If the train had run as it should have ran; if the whistle had blowed as it should have blew; and if the bell had rung as it should have rang, both of which it did neither, the cow would have not have been killed when she was killed	In that railroad suit the other day the jury returned this verdict. If the train had run as it should have, if the whistle had blown as it should have; if the bell had rung as it should have, the cow would not have been killed

4

DON'T ABUSE WORDS

SECTION TWENTY-NINE — IMPROPRIETY

An impropriety in English is the use of words and phrases in senses other than those assigned them by good taste and accepted standards of expression. In general application the word *impropriety* covers barbarism, slang, solecism, vulgarism, and any other deviation from the straight and narrow path of normally correct usage. It is used in this section (as is usual in books of the kind) with special reference to word time and word nationality and word reputation The last takes in word associations to some extent. It is used in the next chapter with reference to word similarities and dissimilarities. But, as usual, the mere cataloging and indexing of error—the "calling of names"—matters very little in comparison with the error itself.

It is trite to draw analogy between dress and demeanor on the one hand and propriety of expression on the other. Yet it is one that apparently cannot be too often drawn Gaudy, uncouth, careless dress and bad, unrefined, inconsiderate manners are part and parcel of impropriety in speech and writing. Failure or refusal to adjust expression to time and circumstance is quite as bad form as failure or refusal to wear clothes suitable to occasion or to behave according to the dictates of social convention. To wear evening dress at breakfast and to "hiccough your coffee" may have nothing whatever to do with correct English usage. But inappropriateness in the one association is equivalent to impropriety in the other. Though behavior and expression are usually regarded as different kinds of personal manifestations, they are really one and the same, and differ only in degree. Said a blind man, "Tell me how a man looks and how he conducts,

himself, and I shall tell you how he speaks." Said a deaf man, "Tell me how a man speaks, and I shall tell you how he looks and how he conducts himself."

The fact that the English language comes so closely to being a universal language exposes it to large-scale impropriety. Assimilating words and phrases, as it does, from all other spoken and written kinds of expression, and holding in its coffers such vast word-hoard, the English language by its very scope makes not only for comprehensiveness and versatility second to no other but by this token ironically exposes itself to easy impropriety—and even induces impropriety. Its "hospitality" bespeaks inestimable advantages and at the same time invests with almost terrifying risks and responsibilities.

Usage is, in larger measure than is popularly supposed, the result of an unconscious and indefinable evolution. It has been seen (page x) that purity of derivation has little or nothing to do with the acceptance of words. Note, for example, African *chimpanzee,* American Indian *succotash,* Arabian *alkali,* Australian *kangaroo,* Belgian *spa,* Bengal *bungalow,* Brazilian *jaguar,* Celtic *clan,* Chinese *kowtow,* Danish *boss,* Dutch *yawl,* East Indian *calico,* Egyptian *oasis,* French *bureau,* German *meerschaum,* Greek *crisis,* Hebrew *cherub,* Hindustan *coolie,* Hindoo *puttee,* Hungarian *hussar,* Icelandic *bunch,* Irish *shamrock,* Italian *piano,* Japanese *kimono,* Latin *hesitate,* Malay *caddy,* Mexican *cocoa,* Persian *shawl,* Portuguese *molasses,* Russian *mammoth,* Scotch *slogan,* Spanish *cargo,* Swedish *dahlia,* Turkish *caviar,* Welsh *flannel,* West Indian *tobacco*—all of them, whatever their origin, long since accepted into the circle of standard English.

And note the following mongrel company, every member of which is a "self-made man," moving with certainty and assurance (if not always with ease) in the best of dictional society: *bailiwick* (from *bailie* alderman, and *wick* village, now used to mean a province or special domain); *balderdash* (possibly from Danish *balder* meaning noise or clatter or hubbub, with *dash* added); *banter* (Swift accorded it to the bullies of White Friars whose chiding was supposed to put a *ban* upon those subjected to it); *bigot* (French for hypocrite, a name once applied to the Normans in France); *blarney* (from the legend regarding the Blarney stone in Blarney Castle, village of Blarney near Cork, Ireland); *blatherskite* (Scotch form is *bletherskate; blather* means noisy talk or

garrulity, and thus *blarney* of which it may be a corruption; *skite* means boaster; *skate* is American slang for fellow, as in *a good skate*); *blurb* (publisher slang, perhaps from *blurred,* perhaps a corruption of *splurge;* Partridge * associates it with later *blah* which he thinks may be from French *blague* or German *Blech* or —"more probably"—Scottish and Irish *blafium*); *bugbear* (*bug* goblin, and the "big heavy mammal"); *bumptious* (*tious* added to *bump,* or from the era of phrenology when having the "bumps" of one's head examined was considered conceited); *cabal* (popularly devised by Pepys from the initial letters of the surnames of privy councilors *C*lifford, *A*rlington, *B*uckingham, *A*shley, *L*auderdale; but derived from Hebrew *qabbalah* meaning secret doctrine); *contraband* (Italian *contra* against, and *banda* proclamation); *daguerreotype* (coinage from a personal name, one of many in the language); *dilly-dally* (reduplication of *dally,* from French *dailer* to trifle); *flim-flam* (Scotch *flamfew* meaning trifle, or perhaps a reduplication of *flam*); *flimsy* (originally thin banknote paper; then thin paper of any sort, especially such as reporters used for copy, and then news paper and—ultimately—news); *focus* (Latin for hearth—center of family life); *fustian* (originally a coarse, stout cloth; now anything, especially expression that is pompous or pretentious or bombastic); *gas* (an invention by the Belgian chemist Van Helmont); *gewgaw* (corrupt form of Middle English *givegove* which is in turn a reduplication of Anglo-Saxon *gifu* gift); *harum-scarum* (*hare,* that is, *harass 'em* and *scare 'em*); *helter-skelter* (perhaps imitative, perhaps *helter* to halter, and *kelter* to defy; thus, to halter or hang against orders, the *s* being euphonic); *higgledy-piggledy* (reduplication of *pig* in reference to the huddling of pigs); *hoax* (perhaps corruption of *hocus,* or it may come from Romany *hokano* to cheat); *hocus-pocus* (conjurer's sham Latin doubtfully guessed to be a corruption of *Hoc Est Corpus*) ; *hodge-podge* or *hotch-potch* (Dutch *husten* to shake, plus *pot*); *hoity-toity* or *highty-tighty* (meaning quarrelsome or uppish, probably from *high rope* and *tight rope* used in connection with tight-rope walking, or, it may be, merely a play upon *high*); *humbug* (probably from *hum* in *hum* or *hem and haw,* and *bug* bear); *hurly-burly* (*hurling* throwing, and *burling* picking); *jalopy* or *jallopy* or *jalopie* or *jallopie* (distorted diminutive of *gallop* frequently used in the alliterative names painted by collegians on their leaping and bucking open-air taxi-

* *A Dictionary of Slang and Unconventional English* by Eric Partridge, published by The Macmillan Company.

cabs; or from *jalloped,* that is, having wattles, combs, or gills colored differently, like a cock's—they wobble as a cock struts in much the same way as an old car wobbles; or perhaps, from *jalap,* the tuberous purgative Mexican plant that yields the well-known drug; or even, perhaps, a euphemistic contraction of *dilapidated*); *jeep* (name of the acrobatic army reconnaissance car, appropriately riming with *leap;* contraction of GP—general *p*roduction—the design originally having a number and being ordered in War Department correspondence as GPO#—; orders came so thick and fast that they were designated as GP—, and, perhaps under the influence of a popular moving-picture comic strip, employes came to reduce the letters to *jeep;* in the World War a new recruit was called a *rooky,* now an almost archaic word in this sense, for today he is called a *jeep* which is definitely derived from the comic strip); *khaki* (Hindustani meaning dust-colored, from Persian *khak* meaning dust; during the wars with the Sikhs from 1845 to 1849 the British felt so conspicuous in their white uniforms that they dipped them into muddy water to make them "khaki"); *loco-foco* (*locus* place, *focus* hearth—hearth place; thus derivatively a friction match, name given to the extreme section of the Democratic Party in 1835 known as the Equal Rights Party); *mossback* (one whose back is said to be mossy because he is slow, conservative, oldfashioned; during the Civil War one who avoided conscription by hiding); *mugwump* (Algonquian *mugquomp* meaning chief; name given to a bolter from the Republican Party in 1884; hence, an independent in politics); *namby-pamby* (critics' name for Ambrose Philips in dispraise of his verse); *nincompoop* (corruption of Latin *non compos mentis* meaning not possessed of one's mind); *numskull* (*numb skull* or skull that is numb); *pell-mell* (French *pelle* shovel, and *meller* mix); *pinchbeck* (name of the inventor of a cheap imitation of gold made of copper, tin, and zinc, hence, anything spurious and pretentious), *point-blank* (French *de pointe de blanc,* the white point of the target, or, perhaps, *vin blanc,* white wine that goes "right to the spot"); *quixotic* (coinage from Miguel de Cervantes' novel *Don Quixote*); *robot* (Czech *robota* meaning compulsory service or work; name given to mechanical persons, efficient but insensible, in Karel Capek's play *RUR,* initial letters of the manufacturer who turned them out—*R*ossum's *U*niversal *R*obots); *shilly-shally* (reduplication of *shall I, shall he, shall we* meaning vacillating or irresolute); *topsy-*

turvy (*top* plus *so* plus Anglo-Saxon *torfian* throw); *willy-nilly* (reduplication of *will I, will he, will we* meaning without choice).

These represent but the proverbial drop. There are thousands of such words in English that are now quite as usable, quite as welcome, quite as "at home", as are the pure and undefiled Anglo-Saxon *creek, egg, foot, game, harvest, kind, law, neighbor, plot, rent, road, sand, scrub, stocking, thief, tooth, water.* And they stand "shoulder-to-shoulder" with such old plurals as *men, mice, Normans, oxen;* with such old gender formations as *count* and *countess, czar* and *czarina, testator* and *testatrix;* with such old imperfects and participles as *went* and *gone, sang* and *sung, took* and *taken;* with the old inflections of the pronoun (the most archaic element in English), and with still other vestiges of the age of hieroglyphs that persist in the Mother Tongue. Born but yesterday, of strange and irregular lineage, these children of the alphabet demand and get the same respect that is paid their elders of a royal blood. Diction is nothing if not democratic.

Samuel Johnson, who made the perhaps unworthy boast that he had rarely used a word without having the authority of a previous author, said of *clever* "This is a low word, scarcely ever used but in burlesque or conversation, and applies to anything a man likes, without a settled meaning"; of *fun* "a low cant word"; of *nowadays* "though common and used by the best writers, is perhaps barbarous", of *banter* "a barbarous word, without etymology"; of *robustious* "is now used only in low language"; of *ignore* "This word Boyle endeavored to introduce but it has not been received." Milton had no luck in his effort to get *imbastardized* and *affatuated* adopted. Swift raved at *mob* (Latin *mobile* moving, then easily moving, then easily swayed, as the vulgar are; hence, *mobile vulgus*). Landor thought *talent* a foolish word in, for instance, *a person of talent.* Lincoln used *abolishment* instead of *abolition.*

The order of the day has always been—is now and must always be —selection and rejection, innovation and repudiation, revival and relinquishment. English spelling (page 510) has naturally come in for the most intense partisanship between the old and the new, for it is the most vulnerable element in the language. The recommendation of *annexion* for *annexation* is more than a century old, and though the British have never quite abandoned *exion* for *ection* in Latin nouns ending with *xio—connexion, deflexion,*

genuflexion, inflexion—especially when they pertain to science, the Americans have. But as early as 1554 one John Hart had something to say about the "unreasonable writing of the English toung." Edward VI had two secretaries—John Cheke and Thomas Smith—both of whom advocated spelling reforms, encouraged doubtless, directly or indirectly, by the spirit of reform evinced by Edward in both religion and education. It was Edward VI who, among other advanced achievements, had a new service book compiled (*First Prayer Book* of Edward VI) and who restored many of the grammar schools which Henry VIII had suppressed, some of them still known as King Edward's schools. Smith went so far as to recommend an alphabet of thirty-seven characters. A famous master of St Paul's School in London—Doctor Gill—urged as early as 1619 an alphabet of forty characters. And James Howell in his *Grammar* (1662)—one of the really historic grammars in English—adopted such simplifications as *honor* for *honour, logic* for *logique, sin* for *sinne, war* for *warre, bodily* for *bodilie, bear* for *beare, wit* for *witt.* As a matter of fact Samuel Johnson with his dictionary in 1755 retarded the reform movement in English diction which during and before his time had many ardent champions. But he was a resolute classicist, and his conservatism had no patience with any attempts to lead words astray from their Greek and Latin originals. Most departures or innovations he characterized as low (see above). It has remained for the Simplified Spelling Board to exercise the most positive wide-spread influence in respect to spelling reform and thus, indirectly, in respect to a liberalized point of view, toward English usage in general (page 538).

Time and momentum and persistence have made themselves felt, and the old purism that insisted upon English words and phrases "pure and undefiled" (as if there could really be such phenomena)—combined and used only in accordance with pure English idiom—is now, in America at least, well-nigh defunct. English like other things must "pay as it goes", so to say; it must meet the challenge of aliveness—the constant-changing spirit of words and phrases that is always and everywhere besetting and thus giving continuous notice that it is a going-ahead vehicle of communication. The particle *an* meaning *if* or *and* is dead and done with; it is no longer used even by poets and religionists to whom is reserved special dispensation in such matters. It is *obsolete.* The word *whit,* meaning jot or speck or smallest particle, as in *not a*

whit, is by way of passing out of use. It is *obsolescent.* It is used practically never and nowhere but in the phrase given, just as obsolescent *kith* and obsolescent *dint* survive practically nowhere else but in, respectively, *kith and kin* and *by dint of.* Even if he were living today Johnson could no more delay their passing than he could successfully resuscitate them.

Archaism—a word or an expression carrying with it the quality and characteristic of a past period but no longer generally used—is not, in spite of what is said above, to be regarded as either useless or improper. It may be deliberately and effectively used to beget in expression the tone and atmosphere of a bygone day. Though such adjectives as *boughten (the dearly boughten victory)* and *foughten (the bloody foughten field)* and *fraughten (the richly fraughten galleys)* once had their day in usage, they no longer appear except occasionally in period prose and poetry—and in old plates. In everyday modern prose, archaism should not be used; it becomes a kind of barbarism injected into current expression. Such archaic terms as *agone, albeit, anent, anon, belike, betwixt, bounden, brake, burthen, certes, cheque* (though still British), *chide, choler, corse, doth, eftsoons, ere, erstwhile, exceeding* (for exceedingly), *fain, forgat, gotten, haply, hast, holpen, howbeit, inwit* (conscience), *kine, knoweth, meseems, methinks, perchance, prithee, quoth, shoon, spake, surcease, swain, thine, thou, thy, wast, wert, whilom, whit, wight, wilt, withal, wot, yclept, ye, yore* are not so remote from present use as are obsolete words. But they, too, are dead and done with as far as ordinary expressional intercourse is concerned. We do not casually say *We strolled through the pleasance* and *'Tis true he spake to me only this morn.* Time has ruled such expression out. It has given place to new.

Equally unwelcome have been—so far, at least—*educationalist* for educator, *musicianly* for like a musician or possessing musical taste, *humans* for human beings, *suspicioned* for suspected, *try* as noun for trial, and a host of other raw recruits which have knocked long and hard at the door without gaining to date more than a mere toe-hold, if so much. On the other hand, *cute* from *acute, peal* from *appeal, extradite* (*to do over from* really), *normalcy, informational, managerial, reportorial, dependability, roadster, issuance, editorial, inaugural* are a few of the many in the same category that have made the good fight and have gained entrance or re-entrance but comparatively recently (page 271).

The noun *boredom* has made a place for itself after much difficulty, but the adjective *boresome* is still an aspirant seeking patrons. Though *hasty* and *hastily* have long since made themselves acceptable and agreeable company in even the best word society, *tasty* and *tastily* have not quite made the grade, moving in circles, as a rule, no higher than colloquial. In spite of the pressure that has been brought to bear to make nouns of *collegiate, combine, disappoint, electric, invite, optional, preventative, raise, wayward,* they somehow do not "take"—or have not yet done so. These few are representative of the host of terms that would crowd through the doors if ticket of admission were issued by Manager Usage.

It is true that the extension of a word from one part of speech to another is a desirable and wholesome sign of growth in a language. Without it, a language would be a stiff and frozen medium indeed, lacking in versatility and adaptability. But the extension very often requires as much time for acceptance as does the introduction of a new word or phrase. Almost any word may be a noun; almost any word may be a verb, as far as provincialism and colloquialism are concerned. A word such as *wireless* may fairly leap into being as both adjective and noun (perhaps as verb also), whereas the stiff and labored *marconigram* after long and discouraging trial must die the death just because of lack of popular appeal. Such words as *cable, circular, domestic, editorial, equal, essential, extreme, inaugural, open* are now at long last equally at home as either nouns or adjectives. *Wire* has arrived colloquially as both verb and noun for, respectively, *telegraph* and *telegram,* and *freight* has long been acceptable as noun and verb and adjective (the British *goods* is not so versatile, being adjective only in this sense, as *goods train*).

These few examples typify the ease with which English words may transfer function, and thus add suppleness and facility to expression. The old rhetorics called this priceless quality of the Mother Tongue *enallage* (*en* in, and *allasso* change), and as originally used the word covered change in inflection and change in construction as well as change in use as part of speech. When the liberty of such change and adjustment of expressional parts was abused and became license, the purists were (still are) naturally shocked. If you were to say *Sure, he has ab-so-loot'-ly went* you would commit a triple violation of the privilege of enallage, and your statement would properly be condemned as vulgarism. *Sure* is not only

superfluous, but it is an adjective rather than adverb; *absolutely* is mispronounced, and is also unnecessary; the use of *went* for *gone* is a misinflection of the verb *go*.

The verb has been called the most commonly abused part of speech. But it is the most important and most-used part, and expressional requirements therefore evoke greater versatility—greater "elasticity"—from the verb than from any other part of speech. The now acceptable verbs *to clerk, to finance, to referee, to umpire* were once shocking in general usage; *to summons, to neighbor, to railroad, to recess* are as yet nothing more than colloquial, and *to discord, to lotion, to orate, to liquidate* (kill) are vagrants. The addition of *ize* (page 492) to almost any name word —common or proper—may be made to form a verb, sometimes a low verb form, sometimes a reputable one. But the ease with which such suffixing is possible is in itself complimentary to the language.

Words that are used and understood the nation over—in all cities of a country as well as in small and remote districts—are said to enjoy word nationality. Writers and speakers known in all parts of a country, especially as they are heard over the radio and read through the leading publications, decide by their own expression what national usage is and must be. Words and phrases that are confined to particular districts, especially to isolated and "closed-in" communities (few and far bewteen now, thanks to the automobile, the telephone, the radio, the moving picture, and so forth), are naturally too narrow in scope and application to be regarded as national. They are known, rather, as localisms or provincialisms, and, as such, may perhaps be understood only within their confined limits, and are "Greek" to other places in a country.

The term *gun-toter,* for example, is a localism in the South meaning one who carries a gun (*tote*—carry—is probably a variant of *tout* from old French *tauter;* old abandoned roads in country parts are sometimes called tote roads, that is, roads over which things are carried—goods, mails, and the like). In remote New England *to red up a room* means to put a room in order, *red* in such provincial usage probably being the first syllable of *ready,* that is, to make a room ready. In the same locality *to turn out* coffee or tea or other beverage means to pour out, and *to spell* means to relieve by taking turns, as in *We spelled each other at driving.* The term *flitting* (usually *flittin'*) is a localism used in

many rural sections to mean a moving; and *boughten* (used as an archaic form on page 231) is also a modern localism for factory-made in distinction from home-made, called into use largely as result of the circulation of the mailorder catalog in remote parts. And *vest* for waistcoat, *gums* for overshoes, *slice* for fire-shovel, *drum* for barrel, *poke* for bag or sack, *reckon* and *calculate* and *guess* for expect or intend or think, *right smart* for very (*right* for very is local to the South, but the Psalmist sang "I myself will wake right early"—*Revised Version* 108—2), *hail from* for come from, the precious Pennsylvania-German *what for a* (more often *what fer a)* meaning what kind of *(was fur ein),* and *all* or *out* in the sense of no more *(The butter is all* or *The butter is out)* are others that are too local geographically to be included under the heading of national usage. As above indicated, all localism is, as result of modern invention and dissemination of reading matter and increased complexity of living, being broadened until even the most intimate of its forms are known if not used practically everywhere in the nation. The linking of *all,* for example, with pronouns (chiefly personal) as in *we-all* and *you-all* and *they-all,* commonly regarded a localism of the South, is known everywhere and is "older than the hills." "What eats me up," said the northern girl visiting a friend in the South, "is the way the southern gals say *you all* instead of *youse."* Thus were the patois of patrimony linked with the colloquialism of the curb in common understanding despite geographical distance.

Two particular provincialisms may be worthy of notice for the sake of showing how "foreign" this type of expression may become. One is the slang provincialism *hump your stumps,* inelegant imperative for hurry, still heard in certain parts of the Middle West. The other is the now archaic *sharp bits,* a term used on either side of the Mississippi River in the days when traders and settlers alike were in possession of large coins but had few if any small ones for making change. The large ones were accordingly chipped into "sharp bits" for the purpose of making change. Since this custom has passed, the term has also passed. But revival of such makeshift—with its accompanying localism—is not beyond the realm of imagination. Ever changing, ever uncertain economic conditions are always naturally reflected in diction. The career of *bootleg* is a case in point—its ups and downs have been—still are—dizzying. *Black market, blitzkrieg, blunderbuss, carpetbagger, copperhead, gerrymander,*

racketeer, rum-runner, scalawag, scofflaw, wardheeler, and dozens of other period words, bear the imprint of history upon them, and may come and go again and again with the fickle and fluctuating turns that history characteristically makes.

War, more than any other historical phase (with the possible exception of political campaigns), contributes lavishly to diction and to phraseology in general. Most of its words are slang, and they pass as a rule with the particular war that gives them birth. But a few may live and may establish themselves in the language. The German *strafe* meaning to hate or to punish has remained from its introduction during the World War of 1917 for the Global War of 1941. So also have *Jerry* for German, *dog-fight* and *scramble* for low altitude encounter in the air, *joystick* and *kite* and *bus* for almost any type of airplane, *bump* for plane landing, *circus* for planes flying in formation. But *brown job* for army, *blue job* for navy, *duff* for "rotten" or bad or wrong, *get cracking* for get going or get a move on, are, peculiarly, a few of the many slang terms of the Global War. A Royal Air Force pilot, talking to an American officer in London in 1942, is reported to have said: "The rhubarb was a piece of cake. They pranged the drome and strafed down a couple of Jerries into the drink. But even so, when they took the bump, there was the queen bee binding away spoiling for a burton." What he meant was this: This sortie (rhubarb) was easy (piece of cake). They smashed (pranged) the enemy flying field (drome) and shot down (strafed) a couple of Germans (Jerries) into the sea (drink). But even so, when they made their landing (took the bump), there was the station commander (queen bee) complaining (binding) and spoiling to reprimand them (burton).*

The term *provincialism* may be extended beyond mere geography to mean local or special to individual or to subject matter. If you say *I am minus an umbrella* you appropriate a mathematical term—*minus*—for a remark that is not mathematical; you mean that you do not have an umbrella or that your umbrella has been taken. If you say *I do not like John's diggings* you appropriate a mining term to indicate something that has nothing whatever to do with mining; you mean that you do not like John's living quarters or rooms or home. If you say *I think the concert was above par* you appropriate a financial term to denote an idea in

* From an Alfred Wall dispatch to the United Press Association. Used by permission.

no way connected with finance; you mean that the concert was better than the average concert that you hear or better than most other concerts. If you say *I have too many details on the docket today to be able to have luncheon with you* you use a court-of-law term—*on the docket*—to express a general idea; you mean that you have too much to do, too many details to attend to. If you say *He is struggling against severe handicap* you make use of a race-course term—*handicap*—to convey the general idea of disadvantage. If you say *Please focus your attention upon the other argument for a moment* you employ the photographic term *focus* in the sense of concentrate.

Special terms thus transferred to general usage may in a short time become national in scope. But they are not national when the appropriation or the transference first takes place. The illustrative words above are known and used colloquially as both special and general words throughout the United States. But the legal word *party,* as in *The party wearing the old coat is waiting for me,* the theological word *advent,* as in *The advent of my son is momentarily expected,* the business foreign term *ad valorem,* as in *By ad valorem estimate his services to the community are incalculable* are a few of the many similar appropriations that are not in good national use. And all such words, unless they have served a sufficiently long time in the general field to feel at home there, are better reserved for the special departments to which they severally belong.

Sometimes special terms within a special word division are used in general conversation, to the bewilderment of a hearer. Needless to say it is a breach of expressional etiquette for a college lad to remark to "his uncles and his aunts" that he *flunked in an exam because some plebe swiped his trot.* This is not only slang; it is special or technical slang understood in all probability only by college students. The lad means that he failed in an examination because some freshman had taken his translation of a foreign language passage. The seaman who directed a lady visitor on his ship *to take the lee hatchway and go aft to the spanker* was probably not very helpful. Neither was the automobile mechanic who informed the Rev Obadiah Smatherbotham *that his torque was sprung, that he had carbon in his carbureter, and that he was not hitting on all eight.* But every department of human activity has, of course, its own special vocabulary, its own special slang and colloquialism, which cannot in any sense be regarded as

national in scope but which is permissible and even desirable very often in its own particular sphere.

A Briticism is a term that is peculiar to Great Britain, or to England. An Americanism is a term that is peculiar to the United States. There was once much ado made by grammarians as to the propriety of an American's using a Briticism, and of an Englishman's using an Americanism. But that time is happily past. Today British *biscuit* and *braces* and *lift* and *luggage* are almost as freely used in the United States for, respectively, *cracker* and *suspenders* and *elevator* and *baggage* as are the equivalent Americanisms themselves. And American *blizzard* and *caucus, gerrymander* and *moccasin* are common in England. But some of the everyday terms that still retain their distinctive national signification are the American *beet, conductor, druggist, faucet, gasoline, hello (telephone), long distance (telephone), mail, pocketbook, rare, spool, store, street-car, switch, tailor, truck, trunk* for, respectively, the British *beet-root, guard, chemist, tap, petrol, are you there, trunk, post, wallet, underdone, reel* or *bobbin, shop, tram, shunt, draper, lorry, box.* It cannot be said, however, that national use in the United States today precludes any term that is national to England, for the closer relationship existing between the two countries tends to make their language one. There is no diverging tendency in American expression to justify the terms American English and British English. True, there are characteristics of the one as of the other that amount to difference and to differentiation. When, however, Noah Webster predicted the development of a special American language he failed to foresee the present-day intimacy of the two English-speaking peoples that has been brought about as result of improved facilities of intercourse and communication, and of similarity in social, economic, and political ideals. It is still facetious to call an Americanism a term that gives an Englishman a headache, to call a Briticism a term that the American tries to live up to. Writers and speakers of English on either side of the Atlantic Ocean should be advised to express themselves with intelligibility to both sides, and should avoid the affectation of using to excess either the American idiom or the British idiom, each of which is disappearing as such.

This rule applies to the use of the idiom or of the actual words of other languages, so-called foreign languages. Briticisms have never, it may be remarked, been set down as belonging to a foreign language, owing in part to the fact that it was once "the

thing" for American writers to affect British idiom (cf Henry James). Certainly no foreign word should be incorporated into English expression for which there is an exact English equivalent. You have already been urged (page 45) to be skeptical of those who would justify their foreign affectations in speech and writing by telling you that English is inadequate. Anything that is worth saying and worth listening to—and can be said at all—can be said in English. True, certain colorfulness of idiom may sometimes be possible only through a paralleling of a foreignism (alienism) with a Briticism or an Americanism. But such instances are comparatively few and far between. Say *Billy is a prodigy* or *Billy is an exceptional lad,* not *Billy is a rara avis;* say *He is suffering from seasickness,* not *He is suffering from mal de mer;* say *I shall attempt to cover all sides of the question,* not *I shall discuss the question in extenso.* First-rate English is always better than any such admixtures. But there can be no objection to those foreign terms that have been accepted into English and that now belong to national usage. Many have been so accepted, and are pronounced and written as English words, such for instance as *aide, a posteriori, a priori, cliché, clique, coupé, critique, depot, gamin, vogue.* These are domesticated and adopted words, and no one who uses them may justly be accused of being a dictional show-off. All such words may be given English pronunciation and may be written in body face. But words that are not yet adopted, that are perhaps on the way to becoming naturalized, should be pronounced as they are in their foreign tongue and should be printed in italics, thus, the French *élan* (ā lahn′) and *laissez faire* (lĕ say fâr′), and the Italian *ben trovato* (bĕn trō vah′tō) and *sotto voce* (sōt′ tō vō′ chā) are not English words; they must, therefore, when spoken in English carry foreign pronunciation and, when written, be set in italics.

A colloquialism is an expression that is permissible in informal discourse, but is used sparingly if at all in formal discourse; it is below the grade of so-called literary expression. If it becomes especially loose or down-at-heel, it is called low, that is—low colloquialism. It has been seen (page 229) that Samuel Johnson in his famous dictionary used the term *low* in regard to words that he did not consider worthy of current usage. Colloquialism is neither dressed-up-for-Sunday expression, nor the don't-care expression of slang and vulgarism. It is avoided in public speaking and in writing, but in informal address and in private conversation it is

depended upon to reflect ordinary states of mind among those with whom one moves in the everyday ways of life. It may be localism, but it is rarely illiterate; it may occasionally be barbarism, but it has nothing of the flippancy of most slang; it may abound with informal constructions, homely allusions, common and general words, evincing a less conscious (even less conscientious) attitude than formal expression entails, and it never gives the impression of studied or devised phrasing. The commonly used conversational contractions are colloquialisms, such as *I'm* for *I am, I'll* for *I shall* or *I will, I'd* for *I should* or *I would* or *I had, I've* for *I have, you've* for *you have, you're* for *you are, you'll* for *you will* or *you shall, you'd* for *you would* or *you should* or *you had, we're* for *we are, we'll* for *we shall* or *we will, there've* for *there have, there'll* for *there shall* or *there will, there'd* for *there had, who've* for *who have, who'd* for *who had* or *would* or *should, who's* for *who is* or *who has, that's* for *that is* or *that has, what's* for *what is* or *what has, they're* for *they are, they'll* for *they will* or *they shall, they'd* for *they would* or *they should* or *they had, they've* for *they have, he'd* for *he would* or *he should* or *he had, she'd* for *she would* or *she should* or *she had, it'd* for *it would* or *it should* or *it had, we'd* for *we should* or *we would* or *we had, we've* for *we have, he's* for *he is* or *he has, she's* for *she is* or *she has, it's* for *it is* or *it has, he'll* for *he will* or *he shall, she'll* for *she will* or *she shall, it'll* for *it will* or *it shall, 'tis* for *it is, 'twas* for *it was, 'twill* for *it will, 'twere* for *it were, 'twould* for *it would;* and *can't, didn't, o'er, '76, o'clock, ne'er, mustn't, e'er, isn't, aren't, don't.* Rarely should such contractions be permitted to stand for three words, *there'd've* and *who'd've* for *there would have* and *who would have* are low colloquial forms. *Wa'n't* is also low colloquial for *was not.* But *shan't* (more correctly *sha'n't*) is acceptable colloquialism for *shall not; won't* (more correctly *wo'n't,* since *wo* is short for obsolete *woll*) for *will not; t'won't* for *it will not.* In all such forms, care should be exercised to get the apostrophe in the right place—the place where the actual omission occurs. But few if any of these should be used in formal expression, oral or written, except in cases where exact conversation is being reproduced.

Many words have colloquial meanings that are different from their actual or formal meanings. The word *nice,* for example, is used colloquially to mean pleasant, but formally used it means precise, delicate, fastidious; the word *pretty* is used colloquially to

mean very or moderately, but formally used it means pleasing, neat, elegant, engaging; the word *patron* is used colloquially to mean customer or client, but formally used it means guardian, protector, supporter, benefactor. Colloquialism may be national in scope. The three italicized words above are used and understood both formally and informally in San Francisco and New York City, in Minneapolis and New Orleans, and everywhere else in the country. Colloquialism may be regarded as one of the upward grades through which many now accepted words have been obliged to pass. Such words as *boycott, fad, mob, punch, shoddy, wire* (page 232) were once low forms. But they persisted in spite of opposition, sometimes apologized for by way of italics or quotation marks or parenthetical offset, until they today move and have their being in good dictional company. Others (page 233) may never pass the grade of colloquialism—may never indeed get so far—and, like *bulldoze* (intimidate) and *kilter* (out of kilter —out of order) and *well-posted* (well-informed) and *ugly* (bad-tempered)—may deservedly pass out of use or become more or less static on their particular plane, subject to occasional call.

A word of good reputation is one that has the practical support of writers and speakers who are nationally accepted and established; writers and speakers of high repute, that is, who sanction the word by using it in their writing and their speaking. If a word is not in present use, it cannot be called reputable in the strict sense of the definition. If a word is not national in use, it cannot be regarded as completely reputable. If a word is by way of edging in and has not yet quite made the grade, it cannot be called a reputable word. Slang and barbarism and vulgarism, needless to say, are not reputable. Most provincialism is not reputable in the national sense. Some colloquialism is not reputable. If in formal speech or writing you make use of the term *size up* for *estimate,* or *funny* for *strange* or *unusual,* or *fixed up* for *done* or *accomplished,* or *teach* for *learn,* or *let* for *leave;* if you misuse *shall* for *will, can* for *may,* or if you habitually confuse imperfect tense forms with past participle forms in the use of irregular verbs (page 168), you commit impropriety if, indeed, not vulgarism. If, in other words, you say *I can't size him up* and *This is a funny car* your expression is too low-colloquial to be regarded as either national or reputable at present. Only such words and phrases as are recognized as current and reputable and national in the sense to which they are applied may be said to be in good use.

The inflectional improprieties, especially those involving the verb, are even more serious, if possible. *The ship has sank, The train has came, He has been went about an hour, He has broadcasted the news, He digged in the sand, It has been televisioned* represent verb inflectional improprieties that are by some classed as vulgarism (page 168). Temptation into error is made the more irresistible by the fact that such verbs as *bear, beat, beget, behold, bid, bite, burst, chide, cleave, drink, forbid, forsake, get, hang, hold, ride, ring, shrink, slide, smite, speak, stink, stride, strike, tread,* all of them irregular verbs, have two forms for a single part, sometimes with different meanings. Some of these alternates are now archaic, such as old imperfect *drunk, gat, shrunk, spake, sunk,* and are thus met with in early literature. But they are nevertheless improprieties as far as present usage is concerned. Wherever a choice remains, that form which tends to simplify usage—to keep the verb regular—is preferred; thus, you may say *I lit the lamps* or *I lighted the lamps* but the latter is invariably preferable. *Drunken, gotten, proven, shrunken, sunken* are no longer used after auxiliaries, their use now being correctly confined to the function of adjective (participial adjective). The special verb *hang (hanged)* is still inevitably with us in personal connections, but *hung* bids fair (though not too fair perhaps) to replace it. The wholesome "thaw" in regard to *dive* and *graduate* has been noted on pages 88 and 383 respectively.

Owing to the volatile quality of living language, the general level of good use very often seems, especially to those who watch it most closely and are most sensitive to its possibilities, to be gradually lowering. Every generation experiences this feeling to some extent. Just as surely every generation to some extent realizes that what is taken for deterioration is really change and difference of standard according to the demands of the times, rather than the actual lowering of standard, that what is current and national and reputable in diction and phrase today may quite justifiably be something else again tomorrow—and something else just as good, perhaps better. If in the onrush of changing expression—the introduction of new terms, the revival of old ones, the adoption of foreign terms, the generalization of localism, the promotion of colloquialism and slang to higher levels—doubts beset you, hold fast always to that diction and phraseology that are simple and direct and short—and established. Use the term that invites but

a single interpretation in relation to context, and thus reduce likelihood of ambiguity or misunderstanding.

Though impropriety in usage does not necessarily always offend good taste, it invariably does so when it is permitted to intrude, however slightly, upon literary expression. The probabilities are that the *shall-will* distinction will cease to exist in a comparatively short time, as movements go in language reform. The momentum of indifference in regard to the precise use of these two words, even in high literary circles, is probably too strong to be overcome. All the solecisms mentioned in the preceding chapter are to be regarded as improprieties, and are therefore properly to be classified as both misuses and abuses. The use of *this* or *that* in the sense of *so,* of *these* and *those* in modification of singular *kind* or *sort* (or of *this* and *that* in modification of plural nouns—*these phenomenon, that criteria*); the use of *kind of* and *sort of* for simpler and shorter *rather* or *seemed* (*He looked kind of tired* and *She sort of trembled* for *He looked rather tired* and *She seemed to tremble*); the use of such localisms and colloquialisms and archaisms as *I look to see the weather clear* for *I expect to see the weather clear, He livened up the party* for *He enlivened the party, Billy favors* (or *features*) *his brother* for *Billy resembles his brother, I shall admire* (or *adore*) *going to the play with you* for *I shall be delighted to go to the play with you;* the use of such formations as *firstly, illy, muchly, thusly* (the last two are sometimes used for the sake of humor) in an effort to be fastidious or affectedly precise in manner—all are solecisms or abuses or improprieties. Though all of them are colloquial or provincial, none may correctly be called national or reputable—or vulgar.

It is extremely unlikely that you will ever be able to say exactly what you mean unless you keep abreast of words, of their changing realms of usage, of their changing applications and meanings, of their changing formation and "citizenship"—unless, that is, you make sure to use current, reputable, nationally accepted words to express your thought. This is a large order, for words, like events, move with a rapidity that very often eludes grasp. Even the lexicographers, whose principal job it is to keep abreast of words, will be the first to testify that this is impossible of more than merely approximate achievement; and that it is, thus, quite unlikely that the rank and file of human beings may ever be able to say exactly what they mean; hence, as aforesaid, misunderstandings, disagreements, disputes, and lawsuits.

CONTEST *

NO	YES
1 Thou knowest in thy heart what to do	You know in your heart what to do
2 If we're going to win we must hustle	If we wish to win we must make haste
3 The while we play cards you may gambol on the greensward	While we play cards you may play on the lawn
4 Guard, please put me down at the bottom of the footway	Conductor, please let me off at the end of the walk
5 In sooth, I need new shoon, though I may have enow for the nonce	Really, I need new shoes, though I may have enough for the present
6 He doesn't take any stock in that sort of a venture	He does not believe in that sort of undertaking
7 It rained right smart in the night, and we were on the anxious seat about the drains	It rained hard in the night, and we feared our drains would overflow
8 John had lost a stopping and was suffering no end with toothache	John had lost a filling and was suffering from a bad toothache
9 Mrs Jordan (nee Anderson) prided herself on being a Virginian *bas bleu*	Mrs Jordan (the former Miss Anderson) prided herself upon being a literary woman of Virginia
10 Her brother is a scalawag, and she is just an idle baggage	Her brother is a worthless fellow, and she is a pert and wilful girl
11 Their father was a carpetbagger —a *chevalier d' industrie*—whose booty is now being spent by them *sans souci*	Their father was a financial adventurer whose money is now being spent by them without concern
12 Harry struck it rich in Canada and is now enjoying life to the top of his bent	Harry became rich in Canada and is now enjoying life thoroughly
13 Since she buys everything on tick, I don't see how she can be so high-falutin'	Since she buys everything on credit, I don't see how she can be so pretentious
14 I think I'll take a tub and put on my Sunday-best, after I milk the kine	I think I shall take a bath and put on my best suit after I milk the cows
15 We dined *al fresco,* and then strolled through the vale under the starry welkin	We dined in the open air, and then strolled through the valley under the starry sky
16 I booked into the hotel at half after nine and was very soon wending my way to the draper's shop	I registered at the hotel at half past nine and was soon on my way to the tailor's
17 The whilom favorite very soon became *persona non grata* because of his bumptiousness	The former favorite very soon became unacceptable because of his aggressive conceit

* See page 3

	NO	YES
18	The twain would sit on the stoop smoking their meerschaums	The two men would sit on the front steps smoking their pipes
19	The desk has been fixed, and you are beholden to the new scout for the work	The desk has been repaired, and you are indebted to the new servant for the work
20	I calculate you'd better red up this room a little before company drops in	I think you had better clean and tidy this room somewhat, before company comes
21	His opinions are wobbly, and he is to be regarded as an unknown quantity when bed-rock decisions are to be made	His opinions are fluctuating, and he is not to be relied upon when basic decisions are to be made
22	Don't discount the value of Mary's influence when you need a sponsor in the aforesaid negotiations	Do not overlook Mary's influence when you need a responsible person in the negotiations referred to above

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SECTION THIRTY — VULGARISM

As applied to expression, vulgarism is language that grossly offends good taste by evincing a lack of culture and refinement or by habitually violating reputable usage, or—most likely—both. It may be coarseness, but it is not necessarily so. It may consist of phraseology that, though in no way slangy or blasphemous, is avoided—perhaps scorned—by polite society. Like most other classifying terms pertaining to usage, the word *vulgarism* is a fluid one, defying the strict limitations of definition. It is by no means always possible to draw a line of demarcation between misuse or incorrectness or impropriety on the one hand, and vulgarism on the other. The former may shade into the latter. Where impropriety ends, vulgarism probably begins. Time, place, and circumstance may decide which is which. Objective rather than subjective considerations usually have to be weighed when one gives offense, expressional or other. But the "other fellow's" point of view is too fickle and variable to be taken as a safe criterion. Corrupt and inelegant and tasteless speech may be the result of association or imitation, or lack of education and breeding, or downright "character cussedness."

When, in Oliver Goldsmith's charming old novel *The Vicar of Wakefield,* the precise and proper little dominie heard a "lady of distinction" exclaim that "by the living jingo she was all of a

muck of sweat," he was shocked, not so much by the expression itself as by the incongruity between her assumed grandeur and her coarseness of expression.

Everything is in point of view—and in point of time. What was vulgarism to Mrs Wilfer in her time may be the mildest of impropriety to another in another time. "Brisk?" said this precise lady, repeating her daughter. "Brisk? Whence the low expression, Lavinia?"

"I wish to goodness, Ma," said Lavinia, throwing herself back among the cushions, with her arms crossed, "that you'd loll a little."

"How!" repeated Mrs Wilfer. "Loll!"

"Yes, Ma."

"I hope," said the impressive lady, "I am incapable of it."

"I am sure you look so, Ma. But why should one go out to dine with one's own daughter or sister, as if one's under-petticoat were a back-board, I do *not* understand."

"Neither do I understand," retorted Mrs Wilfer, with deep scorn, "how a young lady can mention the garment in the name of which you have indulged. I blush for you."

Many if not most of the solecisms treated in the preceding chapter —*like* for *as* or *as if, but what* for *but that, without* for *unless, how as that* for *that, whatever* for *what,* the incorrect use of *self,* and so on—were until comparatively recently labeled vulgarisms by purists. Sometimes a distinction is made in this connection between wrong constructions and corrupt forms, the former being called impropriety, the latter vulgarism. *This is him* and *That was them* would thus be classed as impropriety; *This hain't him* and *Dese ain't hern* as vulgarism. But the distinction is too subtle —and too bothersome. Say that in *John is a good fellow,* the word *fellow* is a colloquialism; that in *John looks badly,* the word *badly* is an impropriety (page 125); that in *John is a bum,* the word *bum* is a vulgarism—and your distinctions are close enough, if not too close. It may happen that change in language habits will make an acceptable usage of yesterday a vulgarism today. The *for-to (fer-to)* infinitive, for example, was by no means tabu among Elizabethan writers. Today *for to go, for to see, for to understand* are listed as serious improprieties by some, as mild vulgarisms by

others. In case *for* is vulgarly pronounced *fer,* classification as the latter may be made more definite. Blasphemy (page 262) and certain types of slang (page 259) and obscenity are the lowest forms of vulgarism.

Indeed, some authorities admit to this classification of expression only such terms and phraseology as pertain to things and actions and inclinations not to be mentioned in public without begetting blushes and mortification. But objectionable terms "translated" into Latin or scientific equivalents are very often tolerated, and in mixed company. It may be that the few Mrs Wilfers still to be found in our midst would faint at the mention of mammary glands, but most persons—and well-brought-up persons—would not, for the term is frequently heard in conversation and seen in print. The veterinarian quite frankly and correctly speaks of the teats of a cow; the farmhand may refer to them by one of the coarsest vulgarisms in the language. Yet the dictionaries must list it along with others of its kind if they are to be comprehensive to any degree whatever. The terms *defecate, ecdysiast, feces, genitals, venereal, urinate, syphilis* may be used in special circles if not in general without giving offense, especially among members of the same sex. Their simpler equivalents (usually Anglo-Saxon) are vulgarisms, found in writing only on the walls of lavatories and heard only from the lips of the low-minded. Even *stool* for defecate and *pee* or *make water* (nursery terms really) for urinate must not be used in mixed company. But a woman speaker may stand before a mixed audience and use such words as *pregnancy* and *contraceptive* without qualm. A quarter of a century ago the use of these two words even in the drawing room would have been considered shocking. *Fanny,* the much-used slang equivalent of *bottom, buttock, posterior* (French *derrière*), has a widely recognized humor, especially in the theater, that mollifies its use to a degree without, of course, removing from it the stigma of vulgarism. It has come about in all probability through the use of the name Fanny in many of the popular brothel stories. Partridge mentions in particular John Cleland's *Memoirs of Fanny Hill.**

The obscene story is in a class of vulgarity by itself. Its vulgarism lies chiefly in its choice of subject which is usually sex. The individual terms in such story are not necessarily vulgar of themselves, but the cumulative effect they achieve is the height of both

* *A Dictionary of Slang and Unconventional English* by Eric Partridge, published by The Macmillan Company

vulgarity and vulgarism. An obscene story may be told in good English, but it rarely is, for the reason that the person who tells it is one usually habituated to corrupt terms. Though it may evoke gales of laughter, the merriment is invariably forced or "courtesy" reaction. Such story cannot be really humorous because its subject matter is not. Even expert manner of telling it cannot endow it with any real spontaneous humor, as any true-and-tried raconteur will readily testify. Very often the impulse to tell obscene stories is sourced, like swearing, in the false ambition to be thought a good fellow—a "great guy." And very often that is just where the impulse takes—and leaves the misguided storyteller.

Invite is a vulgarism for *invitation; combine,* for *combination.* Not so long ago *employ* was considered a vulgarism if used for the noun *employment;* today it is colloquial, and is freely used as a noun in newspapers and magazines and books. The word *plenty* is a noun; its adjective equivalent is *plentiful;* its adverb equivalent, *plentifully. This is plenty of paper for my purpose* is correct. But in *I have plenty paper* and *This paper is plenty heavy,* in which it is used as an adjective and as an adverb respectively, the word *plenty* violates good usage, and is thus to be classified as low colloquialism or vulgarism. *Pants*—short for *pantaloons*—is, in spite of much wishful and persistent use, still a vulgarism, as is *gent* for *gentleman,* and *scrublady* or *scrubwoman* for a woman who scrubs. In the same category belong such low colloquialisms as *girl friend, boy friend, lady friend,* and *gent friend.*

Objectionable as these corrupt forms of nouns may be, they are nevertheless not so serious as such pronominal vulgarisms as *meself* for *myself, yourn* for *yours, youse* for *you, youself* and *youselves* for *yourself* and *yourselves, hisn* for *his, hisself* for *himself, hern* for *hers, ourn* for *ours, theirn* for *theirs, theirself* and *theirselves* for *themselves, this un* and *that un* for *this* and *that, them uns* for *them, these uns* and *those uns* for *these* and *those.* These are corrupt forms, deep-dyed-in-the-wool vulgarisms that offend good taste, evince lack of education, and violate the principles of usage, all three in one. They are for the most part heard rather than seen. Only a little less serious are *your's* for *yours, her's* for *hers, hi's* for *his, it's* for *its, our's* for *ours, their's* for *theirs, who'se* for *whose.* These are discernible to the eye only—the ear cannot "see" them. By some authorities the latter are listed as solecisms or improprieties rather than as vulgarisms. But they

represent corruption of standard forms, and if persisted in must be classified as written vulgarisms.

In every language vulgarism is more largely a spoken than a written abuse of words and phrases. Though the person who habitually says *hern* and *theirn* is likely also to write them when he has occasion to write, this is by no means always the case. Many persons are much more careless about their speech than about their writing, and thus commit vulgarism in the one and not in the other. The very formalities that must be complied with in writing has to a degree a purifying effect upon expression.

The use of objective *me* for possessive *my,* as in *I want me hat,* is a widely occurring pronominal vulgarism. The pronunciation of *my* with short or slurred *i* for *y* has for centuries found justification on the stage because of its (supposed) dramatic quality; thus, *m' life and m' sacred honor* (if not, indeed, *muh life and muh sacred honor!*) has been given a kind of special license in the theater. But wherever used it is a "ham-actor" vulgarism.

The negative forms *ain't* and *hain't* are probably the most objectionable verb vulgarisms. The former is made to stand for *am not, are not, is not,* but it is not a true contraction of any of these. It is still less a true contraction of *has not* and *have not,* for which it is also sometimes used. The latter *(hain't)*—worse if possible—is made to stand for *has not* and *have not* in place, respectively, of *hasn't* and *haven't.* But these two vulgarisms are interchangeably used, both *He ain't gone* and *He hain't gone* being used for either *He hasn't gone* or *He isn't gone. Aren't I* (page 156) is regarded by some authorities as a vulgarism quite as objectionable as these. Close second to these forms in illiteracy are the vulgarisms associated with *ought—didn't ought, had ought, hadn't ought, ought of,* as in *She didn't ought to be so proud, They had ought to go, They hadn't ought to go, He ought to of come* for, respectively, *She ought not to be so proud, They ought to go, They ought not to go, He ought to have come.* The last, involving *of* for *have,* is preeminently a vulgarism of the ear and it occurs after *can, could, may, might, must, shall, should, will, should* quite as often as after *ought—may of seen* for *may have seen, should of read* for *should have read,* and so on (pages 74 and 170).

It is expressional habit or tendency or limitation more than anything else perhaps that decides whether given phraseology constitutes vulgarism. If you habitually say—if you have inherited—

if you have not been "educated out of"—*Nope* and *Gimme* and *We wasn't nuts about it* and *Has youse fellers been to the circust,* and the rest—you are properly adjudged a vulgarian. You habitually—though perhaps unconsciously—offend ears more sensitive than your own. And you may double offense by using vulgar diction and vulgar relationship of words in one and the same expression. The former is likely to be slang; the latter, equally inexcusable solecism (page 210). But which is the more offensive in such expression as *Youse hain't got no invite,* the corrupt forms or the bad construction, it is difficult to say. The one probably begets the other, and they work together to perfect an expressional horror of horrors. Idiom may sometimes throw word relationships out of gear without in any sense making them incorrect. You speak of *five-foot rule* and *six head of cattle,* and you make use of sound and acceptable idioms even though plural *six* modifies singular *head* and plural *five* modifies singular *rule.* But carry this sort of idiom too far and provincialism or low colloquialism may result as in *Mother has baked four cake and five pie for the festival.* The purist calls such mistakes as these idiomatic vulgarism. They belong in a different category, of course, from such rowdy mispronunciations as *moom pitcher* and *Lemme seet* and *youse fellers,* which have been called congenital vulgarism.

The monstrosity *looksee* is a vulgarism of such frightful mien that to be hated needs only to be seen—and heard. It is used as both noun and verb, as in *Let's have a looksee* and *I'm going to looksee.* Its near-correlative *hear tell* is a corresponding localism. *I hear tell of great happenings at the circus* means *I hear of great happenings at the circus.* In some localities *hear say* is used for *hear tell,* as *I hear say that Tomlinson is ill;* in still others, it becomes *hear talk,* as *I hear talk that Tomlinson is ill. Talk* is used also in the sense of rumor, as *It is talked that Tomlinson is ill.* A rural workman vigorously shoveling dirt once proved himself very close to earth linguistically too when he thus explained the object of his activity to an inquirer: "I've heerd say how as that there's gold down here; it's talked all over the countryside. So I'm goin' to hev a looksee."

In a related category of abusage is the treatment of such words as *corps, series, species, Chinese, Japanese, Portuguese, Siamese,* as plurals only, with the consequent substitution of *corp, serie, specie, Chinee, Japanee, Portuguee, Siamee* for singular use. These words as they stand in the first listing are both singular and

plural (the singular word *specie* meaning coin has no plural). The last four are proper adjectives as well as singular and plural proper nouns. Say *I have seen only one of the series* and *There goes that infamous Japanese,* not *I have seen only one of the serie* and *There goes that infamous Japanee* (page 446).

The verb *enthuse* was once listed in all dictionaries as a vulgarism. It is now marked colloquial, and it persists in spite of all efforts made by grammarians and lexicographers to discourage its use. Necessity and convenience are strong forces in overcoming opposition to words, as to other things. *Enthuse* is probably a too handy short-cut for the somewhat labored *to be enthusiastic, to render enthusiastic, to make* or *become enthusiastic* to be given up easily. It is at best today a low colloquialism.

The determined fight on the part of grammarians to rid the language of the hybrid *complected* is well-nigh won. The substitution of *complexioned* has, however, never been regarded as a satisfactory one. You properly say that a person is of light complexion or of dark complexion, not that he is *light complected* or *dark complected* or even *light* or *dark complexioned.*

Disremember is dialectic and low colloquial for forget. It must not be used for *misremember* which is a correct term in the sense of to make a mistake in remembering or not to remember correctly.

Usen't and *usedn't* are corrupt forms—vulgarisms—devised naturally enough for economy but ugly to see and hear, and difficult to pronounce. Say *In those days I didn't like the theater,* not *In those days I usen't* (or *usedn't*) *to like the theater.*

The superfluous use of *the* before *two* or *three,* or other cardinal, and before *all, both, either, neither, which, whole* may be regarded as a low colloquial construction in many expressions. Say *I'll fight all of you, I'll fight both of you, I'll fight either* (or *neither*) *of you, Tell me which is wrong,* not *I'll fight the all* (or *the whole*) *of you, I'll fight the both* (or *the two* or *the three*) *of you, I'll fight the either* (or *the neither*) *of you, Tell me the which is wrong.*

Irregardless has been pointed out (page 10) as a corrupt form of *regardless. Unbeknown* and *unbeknownst* are dialectic or provincial corrupt forms of *unknown.* Adjectives and adverbs persistently transferred in grammatical function—*He treated her mean, I'm real angry, She is bad off, He is not like to come, I am some*

tired, I am sure coming—are low colloquialisms always and in some instances ("company") vulgarisms. Say, rather, *He treated her meanly, I am really (very) angry, She is badly off, He is not likely to come, I am somewhat tired, I am surely coming.*

Though *like* as wrongly used above was once correct (it is biblical) it is no longer used adverbially in this sense. *Some* is a slang vulgarism in such phrases as *some picnic* and *some appetite,* in which it is supposed to mean unusual or extraordinary. Its use as an adverb meaning approximately, as in *some twenty people,* is provincial and colloquial. In such uses as *We have some odd numbers here* and *There were some queer persons at the party,* it is preferably regarded as an adjective modifying the unit term *odd numbers* in the one and *queer persons* in the other, rather than an adverb modifying *odd* and *queer.* (For *something* and *somewhat* see page 372.)

The double comparative—*more happier*—and the double superlative—*most happiest*—have been pointed out as corrupt usages (page 67), sometimes called vulgarisms of repetition. More objectionable, if possible, is the tripled comparison, as in *more better* and *most bestest.* Though the double forms were once acceptable, they have not been so since about the beginning of the eighteenth century.

Nothing like for *not nearly, nothing much* for *not much, nowhere near* for *not nearly, somewhere near* for *almost* or *nearly, anywhere near* for *approximately* are corrupt usages, most of them sourced in provincialism. Say *He is not nearly so clever as Bill,* not *He is nothing like so clever as Bill, I haven't much to read,* not *I have nothing much to read, He is not nearly so tall as John,* not *He is nowhere near so tall as John, I have almost enough,* not *I have somewhere near enough, Have you approximately enough,* not *Have you anywhere near enough.*

Anywheres, everywheres, nowheres, somewheres are vulgarisms for *anywhere, everywhere, nowhere, somewhere,* as are respectively *anyplace, everyplace, noplace, someplace* written as solid terms. Written as two words, as they should always be, *any place, every place, no place, some place* are correctly used as any other nouns with modifiers are used, thus, you may say *I cannot find it anywhere* and *I cannot find it in any place.* The use of *else* after *place* terms is a common form of wastage, as in *You will find it someplace else.* Here the omission of *in* before *some,* the writing

of *someplace* as a solid term, and the use of *else* at the end gives the expression a threefold looseness. Say, rather, *You will find it in some other place* or *You will find it somewhere else.*

Nowise, meaning not at all or in no manner or degree, is preferable to *noway.* It is better to write the latter as two words with *in* before them. But do not use *in* before *nowise* in such expressions as *The two are nowise comparable* and *I am nowise surprised* in which *nowise* is an adverb used in direct modification of the following adjective in the one and the following verb in the other. But *The two are in no way comparable* and *I am in no way surprised* are likewise correct. *Noways* in such uses is a vulgarism.

Nohow is also a vulgarism. Say *I cannot understand this at all* or *in any way,* not *I cannot understand this nohow.* The adverbial *no* combinations are likely to deceive into double negative expressions, which must, as a rule, be classified as vulgarism (page 35). Say *This is nowise proper* or *This isn't proper in any way,* not *This isn't nohow* (or *nowise*) *proper* or *This isn't proper nowise* (or *noway* or *nohow* or *noways*). The expression *no good,* used in the sense of worthless or of no account, is regarded by many as a vulgarism. At any rate *He is worthless* or *disreputable* or *a rogue* is less inelegant than the more or less flippant *He is no good*

Anyhow is a vulgarism in word composition, but it is colloquial as an adverb meaning in any way or manner, and as a conjunction meaning however, in any event, at any rate. Most authorities parallel it with *nohow* as a vulgarism in such expressions as *I can't do this anyhow* and *Anyhow you look at it I can't go.* Say, rather, *I can't do this anyway* or *in any way* and *Anyway* or *In any way you look at it I can't go,* the phrase *in any way* being preferable usage. *Anyways* is also a dictional vulgarism. The habitual exclamatory use of *well* or *why* before *anyhow* and *anyway,* as in *Well, anyway, we had a good time* is an abusage quite as bad as that of prefacing all remarks with *listen, look, say, say listen, say look, first off,* and of concluding them with *see, do you see, I mean to say,* and the like (page 21).

Habitual violation of the prepositional idiom (page 206) may constitute provincialism or low colloquialism or even vulgarism. Here as elsewhere the classification and its name are of little consequence in comparison with the "thing itself." *To make mention on* for *to make mention of, not to home* for *not at home, He took it on me* for *He took it from me, In course I'll go* for *Of course*

I'll go are instances in point. So also may the habitual use of superfluous prepositions, such as *examine of the contents* for *examine the contents, consider of the lilies* for *consider the lilies, recollect of the story* for *recollect the story, remember of his being here* for *remember his being here, along of me* for *along with me, He is meditating upon the issues* for *He is meditating the issues, For whom is he waiting for* for *Whom is he waiting for* (page 149), *For why did he go for* for *Why did he go, What for a gadget is that* for *What sort of gadget is that, Where is it at* (page 17) for *Where is it, They are contemplating about moving to the city* for *They are contemplating moving to the city.* Such localisms as are discussed on page 233 are always improprieties in general usage, and some may be regarded as vulgarisms.

Dear S'r and *Dear Gents* are salutatory vulgarisms in letter writing. *Respt yrs* and *Yrs Tl'y* are closing vulgarisms. *Yours at hand and contents duly noted* and *Yrs of the 15th inst rec'd* are opening vulgarisms. All evince a hurried and an impolite attitude toward the person addressed (page 94), and are thus in bad taste. Many abbreviations and clipt forms in daily speech and writing may similarly be regarded as vulgarisms, indicating as they may do a loose and flippant attitude toward human relationships.

The careless or rowdy or slouchy pronunciation of words is one of the most culpable forms of impoliteness in the use of language. This is not meant to apply to mispronunciation resulting from dialect or foreign accent, or from physical speech defect which very often cannot be helped and which evinces no disrespect toward a person or toward the Mother Tongue. It is intended to apply, rather, to such downright laziness in pronunciation as connotes lack of pride in the manner and the privilege of expression. Such slovenly forms as *dis* for *this, dese* for *these, dat* for *that, dose* for *those, de* for *the, wat* for *what, wich* for *which, dey* for *they, dem* for *them, dare* for *their, huh* for *What did you say, nuh* or *naw* for *no, uh-uh* or *yep* or *yeah* (not the slang interrogative) for *yes, whosis* and *whatsis* for *Who's this* or *Whose is this* and *What's this,* are among the worst of such vulgarisms.

Certain provincial mispronunciations are to be regarded as separate and apart from those provincialisms that occur in both speech and writing. Some may be vulgar, but most are not, being, rather, "sot" neighborhood inheritances, used in many instances by persons who may be able neither to read nor write. *Bile* for

boil, drap for *drop, finicky* for *finical, hist* for *hoist, jine* for *join, ornery* for *ordinary, passel* for *parcel, passnips* for *parsnips, purty* for *pretty, quare* for *queer, ruinated* for *ruined, sasser* for *saucer, sassy* for *saucy, seed* for *saw, tuck* for *took* are representative. *Fixins* for stuffing (as of chicken), *gangly* for awkward, *slather* for spread on thickly, *jubice* or *juberous* for *dubious, soc(k)dologer* for "sock on the jaw" that "lays out" its victim (a slang provincialism related to *doxology* which indicates the end of a service!), *what's-his-name* or *what-you-may-call'm* as substitute for a name that cannot be quickly recalled, *nary* or *nary a* (sometimes *narrow a* in England) for *not a, never a, neither a*—all are beyond bounds of standard usage, yet none may be classed as serious vulgarism, if as vulgarism at all. Many of them upon examination may be found to have an earthy interest and picturesqueness which true local-color delineation of character could not well do without. Lady Tippins' spontaneous "thingimmies and incorruptible whatdoyoucallums" were an important part of her endearing as well as enduring charm.

But such mispronounciations as *banket* for *banquet, cuz* for *cause, didja* for *did you, doncha* for *don't you, furder* for *further, gimme* for *give me, gonna* for *going to, gotta* for *got to, hadda* for *had to, jest* or *jist* or *jess* for *just, reckonice* for *recognize, sing* for *sink, sink* for *sing, wanna* for *want to* must be regarded as vulgarisms, especially when they are permitted to become habitual in any individual's expression.

There is an unsuspected contagion in mispronunciations such as these, a kind of contagion that does not at all exist in connection with the written word. Entire communities may unconsciously adopt illiterate pronunciations, and the variations in adoptions as between one community and another are very often so great as to defy any completely covering tabulation. No inclusive or comprehensive listing of such corruptions is possible. The following may, however, prove helpful in the avoidance of pronunciation vulgarisms. It represents the major types in this particular field of dictional abuse, each entry illustrating a principle.

In the pronunciation of English words be careful *not* to treat

a	as	e	in	catch (ketch)
	as	ı	in	can (kın)
	as	u	in	was (wuz)
aw	as	ar	in	draw (drar)
b	as	p	in	disburse (disperse)
c	as	g	in	auction (augzhun)

	as	z	in	proceeds (prozeeds)
ch	as	j	in	chairman (jairman)
d	as	j	in	audience (aujence)
	as	t	in	saddle (sattle)
e	as	i	in	get (git)
	as	u	in	*difference (diffurunce)*
er	as	ah	in	concern (koncahn)
	as	re	in	cavern (cavren)
f	as	v	in	reference (reverence)
g	as	ch	in	genius (cheenyus)
	as	k	in	peg (pake)
h	as	silent	in	rehearse (re-erse)
	as	sounded	in	heir (hair)
i	as	u	in	*prospective (prospectuve)*
ing	as	in	in	buying (buyin)
ir	as	oi	in	third (thoid)
j	as	ch	in	injunction (inchunction)
k	as	g	in	inkwell (ingwell)
l	as	silent	in	particularly (particarly)
m	as	silent	in	competent (copetent)
n	as	silent	in	government (goverment)
ng	as	nk	in	ring (rink)
nk	as	ng	in	think (thing)
o	as	a	in	oral (aral)
	as	u	in	office (uffice)
oi	as	ur	in	spoil (spurl)
our	as	oi	in	journal (joinal)
p	as	b	in	wrapper (rabber)
q	as	k	in	quote (kote)
qu	as	k	in	quorum (korum)
r	as	h	in	bear (beah)
	as	w	in	retail (wetail)
re	as	er	in	children (childern)
s	as	ss	in	please (pleass)
	as	z	in	cashier (kazheer)
sh	as	zh	in	shawl (zhawl)
t	as	ch	in	literature (literachoor)
	as	d	in	realty (realdy)
th	as	d	in	they (dey)
	as	p	in	something (sumpin)
	as	t	in	thought (taut)
them	as	m	in	sold them (sold'm)
u	as	e	in	judgment (jedgment)
	as	oo	in	revenue (revenoo)
v	as	f	in	have (haf)
	as	w	in	very (wery)
w	as	v	in	wear (vear)
wh	as	w	in	white (wite)
x	as	gs	in	extra (eggstra)
	as	ng	in	anxious (angshus)
z	as	s	in	itemized (itemised)

The following passage has been used many times as a test of cultured pronunciation in respect to both vowel sounds and syllabic accent. It includes most of the pitfalls in pronunciation that arise in everyday expression, and that constitute the deciding factors as between refined and unrefined diction. If you are able to pronounce every word correctly in a first fluent reading, your pronunciation quotient need cause you little or no concern.

A sacrilegious son of Belial who had suffered from bronchitis, having exhausted his finances, in order to make good the deficit, resolved to ally himself to a comely, lenient, and docile young lady of the Malay or Caucasian race He accordingly purchased a calliope and coral necklace of a chameleon hue, and securing a suite of rooms at a principal hotel he engaged the head waiter as his coadjutor He then dispatched a letter of the most unexceptional calligraphy extant, inviting the young lady to a matinee. She revolted at the idea, refused to consider herself sacrificable to his desires, and sent a polite note of refusal, on receiving which he procured a carbine and bowie knife, said that he would not now forge fetters hymeneal with the queen, and went to an isolated spot, severed his jugular vein, and discharged the contents of the carbine into his abdomen. The debris was removed by the coroner.

CONTEST *

	NO	YES
1	This ain't right	This isn't right
2	That's no concoin of yourn	That is no concern of yours
3	We went for to see the elephants	We went to see the elephants
4	Youse fellows had ought to try	You fellows ought to try
5	I hain't afraid of the whole of yousens	I am not afraid of all of you together
6	Dey took me overcoat on me	They took my overcoat
7	Its John hisself what has did it	It is John himself who has done it
8	Blease gimme me book, won'cha	Please give me my book, will you
9	He don't wanta but he's gotta	He doesn't want to but he must
10	Uh-uh, I hoid 'm the foist time	Yes, I heard him the first time
11	I won't do that for nobody nohow	I will not do that for anybody under any circumstances
12	She features her sister in the face	She resembles her sister in the face
13	Yourn and theirn are still here	Yours and theirs are still here
14	You'res and ourn ain't right	Yours and ours are not right
15	It's a long ways from my home to yours	It is a long way from my home to yours
16	He has swam for tree ours	He has swum for three hours
17	You hadn't ought to of did dat	You should not have done that
18	Hain't yuh goin to lemme see it	Aren't you going to let me see it
19	Leave us stand here and getta looksee	Let's stand here to get the view

* See page 3.

	NO	YES
20	Their enthused by her beautiful sinking	They are enthusiastic about her beautiful singing
21	The all of you must look out for theirselves	All of you must look out for yourselves
22	First off, I wanta tank youse goils	First, I want to thank you, girls
23	Firstly, I lost my poise, second, my hat	First, I lost my purse, second, my hat
24	It hain't right, nohow you look at it	It cannot be considered right from any point of view
25	Its talked that Jennie has forsook her home	It is rumored that Jennie has forsaken her home
26	The whole of the directors will attend	All of the directors will attend
27	She has pondered of the situation and has decided that we are to stay to John's house	She has pondered the situation and has decided that we are to stay at John's home
28	Before I knowed it he'd dove in right quick and grabbed a passel of passnips that had fell outa de boat	Before I knew it he had dived in very quickly and grabbed a parcel of parsnips that had fallen out of the boat

SECTION THIRTY-ONE — SLANG

Slang is correctly classified as vulgarism. But it, too, varies in degree (page 259), sometimes descending very close upon profanity, sometimes enriching speech and ultimately being admitted to literature. It ill behooves any one to be prudish about slang, inelegant as it usually is, offensive as it may occasionally be. The processes by which it comes about are in a great many ways the very processes by which language itself is created. And it has been seen (page 226) that English has not been too particular certainly ~~in accumulating~~ her word-hoard. She has found words in the gutter, nurtured them, and given them the highest dignities of expression. She has disregarded the birthright of words, clipped and mutilated and added to them, and has made of the resultant mongrel forms messengers of poetry and philosophy. She has bent her ear to nature, imitated the sounds she heard, and come up with a meaningless assemblage of letters that magically suited her purposes and became an imperative part of her vocabulary. Study the genealogical charts of such words as *bang, bump, bus, cherry, consols, conundrum, cycle, daisy, gibber, hector, pamphlet, pander, picnic, sandwich, tawdry,* and you'll find no very awe-inspiring lineage, no ancestral aristocracy to give you pause (page 275).

Like hundreds of other words, these just happened; they started with nothing and have become something from urchin beginnings. Language is to a considerable extent self-made, inspired by necessity, adapted by convenience, and retained or dropped according to just deserts.

Though slang has little to be proud of perhaps, it does not, however, have to hang its head. The words *buncombe, coax, fed, fun, grog, hobby, imp, mob, prig, snob, tandem,* among others, were once slang. Doctor Johnson referred to some of them as low terms. The slang expression of the late nineties—*out of sight*—meaning fine, satisfactory, excellent, like the later *skiddoo* and *twenty-three,* meaning go or get out, and *Ich gebibble*—eloquent vocalization of Slavic shrug—has long since disappeared. Like most other slang terms these were ephemeral, but they were innocent fun while they lasted. They are representative of the real quality of slang, that is, they were humorously fantastic and grotesque and eccentric in composition as well as in application. They enlivened expression of the time, added a spice to what might otherwise have been tame or dryasdust or unpicturesque. And they were quite harmless, as are their present-day equivalents Instead of *out of sight* we now say *A1* or *tops* or *hot* or *jake;* instead of *skiddoo* and *twenty-three,* we say *on your way* or *take the air* or *get* or *vamoose.* The verb *mosey* is used in two contradictory senses—to move quickly, to hustle, to light out, and to saunter or move lazily along. In the latter sense it is distinctly a Middle West localism. It may also be used as a noun for *move,* as in *Get a mosey on.* It is said to be a corruption of the Spanish word *vamos* meaning go, which is also the source of the slang term *vamoose* meaning go or get out. We still say *I should worry,* but *Ich gebibble* is deservedly dead and done with. From the point of view of mere choice of diction such terms as these are inoffensive, their application may or may not be At their worst they are (were) merely smart or flippant. Still, these are mild forms of slang, and are to be objected to chiefly on the ground that they get themselves monotonously repeated and indiscriminately applied. The habitual use of slang (which, of course, implies its perversion of application) betokens a lamentable impoverishment of expressional resource, and reveals the fact that he who uses it thus is mastered by it rather than master of it.

There are, naturally, many slang expressions that cannot be regarded as anything but offensive from whatever point of view

considered. There are some that may be innocent and harmless enough in low-colloquial conversation, but that derivatively analyzed reveal themselves as highly objectionable to perhaps the majority of people. The slang terms *gee, jabers, jing,* and *jingo* are all clipt and corrupt forms of *Jesus.* The slang term *cripe (cripes)* is a corruption of *Christ; gosh,* a corruption of *God* (originating, it is said, in drunkenness in which state the *sh* sounds are likely to come to the fore in speech); *golly* is the Negro form of the same corruption. All are general conversational exclamations; as such, they are permitted to pass muster, very often in high place, and no harm done. But to the purist and the religionist they constitute modified forms of blasphemy by token of their derivation, and they are therefore better avoided in order to make sure that offense may be given to no one. Moreover, their excessive use may be made to cheapen even the best of conversation.

Almost equally offensive as slang that is nothing short of modified profanity is slang that connotes a flippant or inferiorizing or too familiar attitude. To call a doctor *doc,* a captain *cap,* a druggist a *druggĕr;* to ask a charming young lady to *worm a squirm* instead of to dance; to refer to a thin young lady as a *washed-out babe* is crudely and coarsely to offend. To call a church a *dirge factory* (Mark Twain referred to a church as the *doxology works),* a cemetery a *boneyard,* religion a *shot in the arm* amounts to irreverence, and unnecessarily offends many people. And slang is carried too far also when it is flippantly and disrespectfully applied to persons and things that by inherent right of convention and tradition demand respect as, for example, *governor* or *old man* for *father, old woman* for *wife* or *mother, dump* or *doghouse* for *home, ball and chain* for *wife, kid* or *second mortgage* for *child, rag* for *flag.* On the other hand, it cannot be denied that some of the most vivid and picturesque words in the language are those used for contempt or abuse or disesteem, such, for example, as *bootlegger, bootlicker, gerrymander, humbug, lickspittle, rowdy, scapegoat, skinflint, spitfire.*

There is never any delay in finding appropriate substitutes for the shortlived slang term, one corrupt form springing into being apparently overnight to take the place of another consigned to the hellbox. It has been estimated that fully fifty per cent of slang terms both general and special, are shortened forms used for quickening expression and making it seem smart and nimble, such as *ad, bike, cig, jit (jitney), pard, prelim, prex (prexy), quad, rep,*

sub, varsity, vocab. This sort of slang back-formation is part and parcel of youth, and slang is par excellence the expressional vehicle of youth. But that person, young or old, given to the use of slang would do well to make for himself the uncompromising rule of never resorting to slang unless he is quite sure that he has its better equivalent in reserve. If he does not take this precaution, he may find himself in the embarrassing predicament of being at a loss for better words when he pressingly needs them. Serve him right, too! Slang, like cursing, it has more than once been said, is the last refuge of those who lack vocabulary and who often suffer the most pitiful mortification when they find themselves under stress unable to make proper substitutions. Be it said that the mortification is to their credit.

> Jack was embarrassed—never hero more—
> And as he knew not what to say, he swore.
> Lord Byron *The Island* (Canto 3 Stanza 5)

Though slang has about it, as a rule, the quality of newness or novelty, it is by no means itself a new channel of expression. Originally the word *slang* pertained to the cant of beggars and thieves, to the speech of the lower classes in general. But it very soon came to be applied to the strained, arbitrary, and grotesque uses of good words and to word inventions and coinages, such as inevitably leap into language from active and imaginative minds Perhaps its alertness in adapting good terms to perverted usages is its most distinguishing characteristic, as for example *hoosegow* or *hoosgow (gaw)* from Spanish *juzgado* meaning court, and the use of *vitamin* as verb, as *It won't be vitamin for you to steal my hat.* Though slang may be a certain sign that a language is alive, it may quite as certainly be the death of reputable terminology. It has, for instance, worn off the edge of *awful, babe, bloody, grand, nice, sweet* by promiscuous or indiscriminate application; it has taken away from them much of their former definitiveness and much of their essential tastefulness in daily expression.

The word *gyp* (from *gypsy*) is four or five centuries old. Shakspere embodied the slang of his times in his plays. The slang words *boss* and *mammy* were used in a slang sense as early as the sixteenth century; *lousy* and *beat it* were probably first used as slang in the seventeenth century. About 1800 Richard Harris Barham wrote in his *Ingoldsby Legends.*

> You'd lift up your hands in amazement and cry,
> 'Well, I never did see such a regular guy.'

Both *guy* (its correlative *gal* has probably resulted from a stubborn New England mispronunciation) and *regular guy* have survived and are today very much alive as slang expressions. Our forefathers, both American and British, used *booze, brat, crimp, gab, grub, henpecked, hick, hoof it, hush-money, kid, mum, pull, snitch, spree, squeal* for enriching and enlivening their daily conversation. And so it would seem that the very age of some slang may command a kind of respect.

Slang becomes classified according to the kind of people who use it and therefore according to the kind of pursuit or phase of life to which it pertains (page 236). Such slang terms as *bat, co-ed, co-op, exam, flop, fluff, flunk, frat, grid, gym, lab, med, prep, prof, soph, stude, zip* very soon come to be accepted by the student as part and parcel of his school or college inheritance. There is no prize-fighter who does not understand *glims, in the pink, peepers, punch, slats, smeller, uppercut,* no hobo to whom *dingbat, hand-out, punk, shack* are foreign; no gangster to whom *bull, bump off, cooler, gat, racket, squeal, stool, take for a ride* are entirely unknown; no habitué of the theater who doesn't "gather" *"bad box-office," belly-laugh, cold, dark, fake, gag, lights, nifty, patter, sob-sister, strike, wisecrack, wow;* no printer or newspaperman who is unaware of *beat, bull-dog, colyum, cub, devil, dope, hell-box, legman, spot, stick;* no lively, up-to-date, music(?)-loving adolescent today who can possibly be at a loss to understand *hep-cat* (*hep* is the drill-sergeant's explosive *Hep! Hep!* for the mild *Step! Step!*; as for the second syllable—the rest is silence), *jitter-bug* (*jitter* plus *bug*—devotee of swing music, inspired to wild gesticulation by the oddities of rhythm), *jive* (selections in swing music that leads dancers to *(d)jive* movements(?); also the lingo of the swing musician), *jook* or *juke* (corrupt pronunciation of *joint,* especially in the South where any out-of-the-way resort, especially one frequented by Negroes in the old turpentine forests, was likely to have a nickel-in-the-slot music machine), *swing* (a style of playing dance music in which a basic melody and rhythm are always recognizable but are submerged in individual interpretation of theme), *zoot* (corrupt form of *suit,* the term *zoot suit* thus being tautological). But *O U Kid, tickle the ivories, so's your old man, go way back and sit down,* even *butter-and-egg man,* and dozens of other terms in the same category—"all the rage," but a little while ago—have gone the way of most slang expres-

sions. Query (to which no answer is expected): Were "the good old slang days" better or worse than the present ones?

The abuse of language for the manifestation of anger and bitterness and passion has come to be accepted, though such language itself is never acceptable. Cursing is, as a rule, angry and emotional and fierce. It may, of course, become coolly habitual and "callous," but it comes into being as angry passions rise and is usually the psychological compensation for physical attack in hot or in cold blood. One important difference between slang and cursing is that the former is less likely to be identified with anger than the latter is. Slang most often signifies indifference or disgust or slovenliness or flippancy, but it is not generally regarded as adequate for the expression of anger and hate and bad temper. Slang rarely evokes more than amusement or impatience or slight shock, cursing evokes scorn or return anger or pugnacity. Both may evoke pity—chiefly for the user.

Blasphemy, profanity, cursing, swearing all involve coarse and impious and irreverent language, and all belong under the general classification of vulgarity. Any expression involving blasphemy, profanity, cursing, swearing is loosely referred to as an epithet, but it is a mistake to think of *epithet* as confined to this narrow usage only (page 18). Blasphemy is expressional indignity intentionally directed toward God and toward sacred things. It is usually ruled out of all public entertainment, though *damn* and *hell* are not. You may say *Curse you* or even *Damn you, Jack Dalton,* on the stage, but not, as a rule, *God damn you, Jack Dalton.* This in spite of Montaigne's testimony, "When I swear after my own fashion it is only by God—the directest of all oaths." The Third Commandment—Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain—is justifiably applied to loose and expletive forms of blasphemy. But it is really a commandment against forswearing, as Jesus in his paraphrase of it (*Matthew* v : 33-37) makes clear.

Profanity pertains to all irreverent expression directed toward holy things. The *pro-fane (pro* before, *fanum* temple) were originally those outside the temple or other sacred place, and were composed of the rabble or the mob deemed unworthy of closer approach to the sacred tokens within. As applied to literature and history, *profane* means other than sacred, and its use in this

connection has nothing whatever to do, of course, with the subject of irreverent speech.

Cursing, strictly speaking, means to invoke evil, whereas *swearing* is a broader or covering term and is often used synonymously with all three others. It also means to take oath, to administer oath, to declare or charge or confirm, as in law. And the term *oath* has also double application, namely, a careless or blasphemous use of the name of the divine being or anything divine or sacred, and the solemn attestation of the truth of a promise or a statement, the latter definition applying chiefly in legal procedures. In general expression blasphemy, profanity, cursing, swearing are interchangeably used. *Cuss* is a corrupt form of curse, both noun and verb; as noun—low colloquial—it is also used to mean person or fellow, especially a worthless fellow. *Curse,* as noun, means the terms used in cursing as well as any oath or imprecation evoked as a wish of harm to another or to something. Both words are colloquially used as adjectives, as *cuss word* and *curse word.*

It has been said that the adjectival inability of language to meet emotional demands is the cause of cursing. Certainly English cannot be said to be barren of adjectives, but it may be that the provocation to use them, caused by the unforeseen complexities and perplexities of living, has always placed too great a strain upon the adjective elements, and "cuss words" have thus come to represent the overstrain. This is at least a generous point of view.

Cursing has been regarded as a second-to-no-other stimulant in an emotional or nervous crisis. Slang takes unto itself no such hypocrisy. The psychological function of cursing as a relief agent —as an outlet—cannot, of course, be accurately defined. It may fairly be concluded that it is and has been grossly exaggerated, even by Mark Twain himself who in *Pudd'nhead Wilson's Diary* said: "In trying circumstances, urgent circumstances, desperate circumstances, profanity furnishes a relief denied even to prayer." And Tristram Shandy's father said that he swore on and on till he found himself easy. But it may be that recourse to profane oaths has prevented worse things, namely, felonious attack and, perhaps, murder. Even Ralph Waldo Emerson said (*Journals* 1840): "I confess to some pleasure from the stinging rhetoric of a rattling oath." And William Blake in *Proverbs of Hell* asserted that *damn* braces and relaxes.

There is a kind of ironic sadness in the fact that all great leaders, especially religious ones, have managed to get themselves not only sworn by (as in vows religious and others) but cursed by as well. By Buddha, by Confucius, by Mohammed, by Allah, by Zoroaster, by Zeus, by Jupiter, by Jesus ("what the b' Jesus") are well known instances. By Gandhi, by Hirohito, by Lenin may be in the offing.

Damn is the most commonly used secular "swear word." It is from the Latin *damnare* meaning to condemn, the last syllable of *condemn* being *damn* indeed, and final *n,* silent in English, was, of course, vocalized in Latin—*dam-no, dam-na-re. Damn* and *Damn it* may be regarded as merely impersonal exclamations. But *Damn you* and *Damn John* are curses because they are personally focused. They may even be blasphemous, inasmuch as *God* is so easily understood before them, making them ambiguous at best. *Damn* is a verb and an abstract noun; its adjective form is *damned;* thus, *damn fool* is grammatically incorrect, but *damned fool* and *I don't give a damn* and *Damn the fool* are grammatically correct. The contraction *damn'* is sometimes used for *damned.*

The word *dam,* of many meanings, was the name of a small Indian coin of little value. The expression *not worth a dam* was once used with the meaning of not worth the value of this coin, as the French say *not worth a sou.* Taken to task for saying *not worth a damn,* the user of the phrase has often hypocritically insisted that he referred to the coin. Since *damn* and *dam* are homonyms, he cannot safely be contradicted perhaps. *Not worth a curse* is sometimes "explained away" in much the same fashion, *curse* being a corrupt pronunciation of *crass* or *kress* in some localities. But expressional and emotional intention, as above indicated, must be the criterion—and the worse of the two in each pair will, it is feared, usually be found the one intended in provocative present-day usage.

To curse a thing or an animal is sheer flattery. To curse a person directly is not only vulgarly insulting but it is illegal. The right of free speech as set forth in the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution is by no means absolute at all times and under all circumstances. Lewd, obscene, profane, libelous, insulting, "fighting" speech, such as tends to inflict injury or to incite a breach of the peace, does not raise any constitutional problem. The

social interest in order and morality clearly outweighs before a court of justice any claimed expository or defining or defensive value of such speech. To call a person to his face a *damned cheat* or a *damned liar* is to provoke to retaliatory fury which may result in the direst of consequences. Cursing may thus hurt or damage the person against whom it is directed and it may also make for actual harm to a community.

The printer's apostrophes and dashes—*da-n, J's's, h-ll, b'st'rd*—have on occasion been a help in mollifying the law, but elliptical devocalization deceives no one, and never has done so, though religionists have been known to accept such compromise. It is similarly naive to euphemize *God* into *Gog* or *Cod*, or *by God* into *I'cod* or *ecod* or *egad*, or *God's looks* into *adzooks* or *gadzooks*, or *God blind me* into *blimey*, or *God's little body* into *ods bodkins* or *bodikins*, or *God's bones* into *by Gogges Bones*, as has been done so much—both mercifully and unmercifully—in literature. When such sterilizations as *Judas Priest* for *Jesus Christ, darn* or *dang* for *damn, gosh* or *golly* (see above) for *God, gosh dang* for *God damn, dash it all* for *damn it all*, are used, it is, as aforesaid, the feeling behind the utterance that matters, and disguise deceives itself. If that be "curseworthy", then the distortions are transparent; the offense remains but the law may wink—and attribute the substitute form to defective speech on the part of a character (Sir Toby, for example). Slang and curse terms that find their way into print are sometimes softened, it is thought, by surrounding them with quotation marks. But this is a device that is unfair to quotation marks and to readers alike. The eyebrows of punctuation (as quotation marks are sometimes called) were never intended for apologetic use or for salve to conscience, and no reader's intelligence should be affronted by such subterfuge. The best that may be said for the practice is that quotation marks so used denote a confession by the writer that he is taking a liberty at the reader's expense.

A sizable dictionary might be compiled consisting of euphemistic curses, most of them provincialisms adopted for the purpose of audibly relieving the feelings without giving offense, perhaps, to the local dominie. Barrie's *Sentimental Tommy* has *dagont* which is a short variant of *dog gone (dog-gone, dogoned, dagoned)* and is really *God-damned* in fantastic disguise. Sometimes *damned* masquerades as *dinged, damn* as *ding*, without fooling anybody. *Danged* and *dang* (see above) are regarded as somewhat

stronger, somewhat nearer the real thing. *By jiminy* is really an oath based upon the Twins Castor and Pollux, the Gemini. *Heck,* as in *what in heck,* is euphemistic for *hell. Cracky* or *criky (ey)* stands for Christ. In some parts of the country the short disguised oath *by cracky* or *by crikey* is elaborated into *jiminy cracky,* and *jiminy-cracky-whiz* is supposed to be the ultimate in emotional outlet for him who would go as far as to disguise disguise. *Shucks* is probably a corruption of *husks* and is used to denote something that is worthless or as empty as a husk. *Gum* in *by gum* is probably a lazy provincial's shortening or telescoping of *God Almighty. Dickens* in *what the dickens* is a contraction of *devilkins; all-fired* of *hell-fired.* And such exclamations—provincial in the main—as *Well I swan, Jerusalem crickets, gee whillikens* (a *Jerusalem* rhythm), *plague take it, all git out (It's raining' to beat all git out), by grab and gravy* (an exceptionally vulgar phrase), *jumping Jehoshaphat* (or *Jupiter* or *Moses*) for *Jesus* are all more or less feeble attempts to relieve feelings and conscience at the same time.

Literature abounds in references to and uses of cursing. It could not truthfully run the gamuts of character delineation without doing so. The views expressed in Laurence Sterne's military chronicle *(Tristram Shandy)* on the subject of swearing are sometimes taken as comfortable refuge in this age and time for the reason that the eighteenth century had much in common with the twentieth. For one thing it excelled in finesse of the vulgar oath. New styles and devices were resorted to to such an extent that the age of Elizabeth seems almost timid by comparison. Sheridan has Bob Acres say: "To swear with propriety *(sic)* . . . the oath should be an echo to the sense. *Damns* have had their day." And so he introduced "Odds triggers and flints." Not to be unfair to the Elizabethan period or to the pre-Elizabethan and post-Elizabethan periods, however, it must be recorded that the professional abuser or swearer (he was called a "roarer") came into his own in those days. He extorted money by means of rehearsed curses and threats. There is no play of Shakspere's in which the oath—mild or otherwise—is not used. And Middleton and Rowley in their *A Fair Quarrel* made use, not only of roarers and roaring, but actually laid a scene (Act IV Scene i) in a roaring school where pupils where trained to swear at an innocent person —to "curse him out"—in public in attempts at blackmail. Fagin at least spared the language in his underworld pedagogy.

Slang has been popularly called language "on a spree"; cursing, language "on a drunk". The fact that a "spree" and a "drunk" are very often synonymous makes these definitions the more accurate, for slang may shade almost imperceptibly into swearing. As has been amply implied in the foregoing exposition, slang is that element in language comprised of certain widely current terms having forced, fantastic meaning or exhibiting eccentric or grotesque humor or fancy at the expense of legitimate expression; it is likewise the jargon or special terminology of a particular class or calling The latter form may easily prove to be a convenience if not, indeed, a necessity. But the former can have no semblance of authority and is justifiably regarded inelegant.

Cursing implies vulgar abuse, desire or threat of evil, a prayer or wish expressed by means of rough language that harm or injury may be visited upon its object. Cursing is the black-sheep brother of slang, and, needless to say, it is to be avoided, as are the lower forms of slang, by all who would maintain their own self-respect and by all who would have and hold the respect of others. It sometimes happens that a young person considers it sissified not to resort to these vulgar types of expression, thinks it big and manly
14 -attle off slang phrases and profane epithets. There should be
15 I ing more discomforting to his elders than this point of view, s' much as youth invariably imitates age. Both slang and curs-
16 ,spring from the emotions. They say, perhaps, what one feels. ey do not say, as a rule, what one means. They do injustice the mind; they probably also do injustice—grave injustice—to he feelings of the one who uses them as well as to the one toward whom they are directed.

It need not be insisted that a young person say *He has usurped my prerogatives* instead of *He has snitched my stuff,* but it may be well to recommend to him the good middle-ground expression *He has invaded my rights* or *He has denied me my privileges* as an acceptable substitute. Instead of saying *She has gone high hat on me* on the one hand, or *She has developed an attitude of superciliousness toward me* on the other, he may as well understand that *She has become very cold (reserved) toward me* or the idiomatic *She has given me the cold shoulder* is better than either and is, at the same time, neither inelegant nor effeminate.

Like Guinevere who was vexed at having lied in vain, he who uses slang or curse terms may easily find himself in a state of chronic

vexation, for both methods of expression are futile—all the time and under any circumstance. The driver who feels impelled to curse his horse, would do just as well to call the animal a parallelepiped as a—so-and-so. The student who cannot resist the temptation to vent his feelings in slang when he sees his report card, might feed his verbal emotions quite as satisfactorily by calling his instructors iotas and omicrons as dopes and rotters. Thus, Samuel Butler in his *Hudibras* told only half the truth when he wrote

> For though an oath obliges not,
> Where anything is to be got,
> As thou hast proved, yet 'tis profane
> And sinful when men swear in vain

Captain Corcoran of the Royal Navy, Commander of H M S *Pinafore,* went Butler somewhat better when he sang

> Bad language or abuse
> I never, never use,
> Whatever the emergency;
> Though *bother it* I may
> Occasionally say,
> I never use a Big, Big *D.*

Profanity has time out of mind been regarded as a necessary accompaniment of fighting. "Our armies swore terribly in Flanders," said my uncle Toby. Perhaps it spurs and encourages, the begets *esprit de corps* on the battlefield, just as college cheer does on the sports field, just as the *Marseillaise* did as it was sung by the men marching from Marseille to join the revolution of August 10, 1792, just as the rallying cries (never profane) of King Arthur's knights did for the cause of the Round Table. Though Shakspere said that the soldier is full of vain oaths and bearded like the pard *(As You Like It,* Act II Scene 7), his Henry the Fifth was nevertheless able to get the best out of his men through reasoned-emotional and unprofane appeal—"Once more into the breach, dear friends, once more" *(King Henry Fifth,* Act III Scene 1). And George Washington who was never at a loss to express himself forcibly in correct language, issued this proclamation to his armies *

> The General is sorry to inform that the foolish and wicked practice of profane cursing and swearing, a vice hitherto little known in an American army, is growing into fashion He hopes the officers will, by example as well as influence, endeavor to check it.

* In his *General Order to the Continental Army* July 1776.

CONTEST *

	NO	YES
1	Quit your kiddin'	Stop making fun
2	Those two are in cahoots	Those two are in collusion
3	Well, what do you know	What do you think of that *or* What is the news
4	That bloke is the cat's eyebrows	That fellow is astonishing
5	Listen, Babe, soft-pedal the applesauce	Stop flattering, young lady
6	They handed him the raspberry	They showed him their disapproval
7	Hunky-dory, but where do I get off	All right, but what is going to happen to me
8	Everything was jake until the whoopee started	Everything was all right until the hilarity started
9	Lay off, big boy, or I'll shoot the works	Stop it, my man, or I'll take control
10	She dished out a lot of hooey	She expressed a great deal of nonsense
11	I'll tell the world the low-down about you	I'll tell every one the actual facts about you
12	Believe me that flapper is a washout	I assure you that that daring young woman is a disappointment
13	Vamoose, or I'll bat you one in the nozzle	Go, or I'll hit you on the nose
14	Please stick around and do your stuff, it slays me	Please stay and present your program; it entertains me hugely
15	You said a mouthful when you pulled that one, dearie	When you said that you made a very true remark, my dear
16	That stuffed shirt back of the mahogany always lets George do it	That pompous person sitting at the desk always lets some one else do his work *for him*
17	Why don't you hire a hall and get this bull off your chest	Why don't you publicize this nonsensical theory of yours, and have done with it
18	He told me he was fed up with my patter. Can you beat that	He told me he had had more than enough of my talk. What do you think of his effrontery
19	"Aw, so's your old man," said he, when I told him what a blighter he is	When I told him what a contemptible person he is, he said, "O don't bother me"
20	When she said, "I'm falling for you", I replied, "You're telling me"	When she said that she was falling in love with me, I replied that I knew it
21	When that little gold digger asked me whether she might toe in at my sister's bustle rustle tonight, I said, "No dice, toots"	When that self-seeking girl asked me whether she might attend my sister's dance tonight, I said, "No, Miss ——"
22	We were sitting in our hangout	We were sitting in our lodging, talk-

* See page 3

	NO	YES
	chewing the fat, when in came that roughneck with his moll and pointed a gat straight at my sidekick	ing, when in came that boor with his girl and pointed a revolver straight at my companion
23	"Have a heart," I cried, "or I'll soak you one in the jaw that'll knock you cold. Get me	"Have mercy," I cried, "or I'll hit you on the jaw so hard that you'll fall unconscious to the floor Do you understand
24	Come clean, now, Billy, after all your chin music you don't give me the low-down about your attempted come-back to the boards last night	Speak plainly, now, Billy; after all your talk you don't give me the facts about your attempted return to the stage last night
25	Can the stalling, kid, step on the gas and shoot everything you've got about the joint or we'll take you for a ride and bump you off, cops or no cops, coolers or no coolers	Stop making excuses, my man; tell us immediately everything you know about the resort or we'll take you out and shoot you, police or no police, jails or no jails

SECTION THIRTY-TWO — BARBARISM

A barbarism is a word or an expression that is not in accepted use. It may be a foreign term, an improperly derived term, or any other unapproved or disapproved term. Any perversion of word or phrase—an out-of-place or ill-adapted one, an old one suddenly revived, a too new one not yet established, a too highly special or technical one, a shockingly unestablished usage or construction—constitutes barbarism. Like slang, barbarism is very often of passing moment only, unimpressive and unworthy. But like slang, some of it makes a place for itself, and endures in the language. And like slang again, barbarism may be sheer vulgarism, or it may possess a novelty or a genius that recommends.

Invented words—coinages—belong to this yes-and-no group of barbarisms. The Greeks called them *neologisms*—*neo* new, and *logos* word. But *neologism* is used in English to mean any new word or usage or expression, or the use of a new word or an old word out of its ordinary functioning. By extension, therefore, it covers barbarism, certain types of slang and impropriety, revived archaism, and other unacceptable formations and uses. *Beautician, unbluffable, conveneer* are neologisms, that is, barbarisms as to form; *lend* for *loan (Let me have a lend of ten dollars), to wide spread* for to broadcast, *to suicide* for to commit sui-

cide are barbarisms by perversion or transference of function and use.

Mongrel word derivation has ever been—and still is—employed for the fabrication of terms to meet occasion. One part of a word may belong to one language, another part to another language, and the combined word unit may come to be established out of sheer appropriateness. Cicero in translating from Greek into Latin very often found it necessary to devise new words—they are sometimes called tramp terms—and there is hardly an English writer of note who has not occasionally found it desirable and even necessary to do so (page 301). Lydgate, Chaucer, Spenser, Shakspere, Tyndale, Coverdale, Browne, Newton, Milton, Benham, Pepys, Evelyn, Boyle, Chesterfield, Macaulay, Coleridge, Huxley, Galton, Keats, Carlyle, Scott, and still others equally well known, have made notable contributions to English by way of word invention or adaptation. Scientists have time out of mind found themselves at a loss for words to keep up with their scientific progress, and they have therefore manufactured them or have adapted place and personal names to meet their needs. Scott found it advantageous to revive such old words as *bluff, foray, gruesome, knight-errant, lodestar, onslaught, raid* to add flavor to his past-period romances. Burke found such coinages as *colonization, electioneering,* and *financial* essential to his political vocabulary. Carlyle was, of course, not satisfied merely to coin new words, such as *environment, vestural, stertorous, visualised* (which have lived, by the way), *amusee, benthamee* (which have not) but he must take the further liberty of pluralizing abstract forms extensively, as *credibilities, philosophies, theologies, transcendentalisms,* and these amounted to coinages. *Cantankerous* was invented by Goldsmith as a play on *contentious,* and it was used by Sheridan, Thackeray, Hardy, and others. Chaucer used the word *conteke* in the sense of ill-humored or quarrelsome. The Standard Dictionary traces it from Middle English *conteckour,* a quarreler.

An individual peculiarity of expression, such as Thomas Carlyle's *gigmanity* and *dandiacal,* Keats' *aurorean* and *beamily,* Milton's *emblazonry* and *bannered,* is called *idiotism.* Sometimes such coinages or inventions remain peculiar to the individual; sometimes they are accepted into general usage and remain, as, for example, Macaulay's *constituency,* Huxley's *agnostic,* Coleridge's *intensify,* Browning's *artistry.* A *nonce word,* on the other hand,

is a word coined for an occasion; it is, in the main, an objective invention—evoked from without—whereas an idiotism is subjective—evoked from the inner workings of a person's mind. Chaucer's *octogany* (eighth marriage), Southey's *philofest* (cat lover), Butler's *cynarctomachy* (fight between dog and bear), Theodore Roosevelt's *chinafy* (to make politically impotent) are nonce words. *Nonce* is from Middle English *nones* which is a misdivision of *then ones.*

Something happens—something is made—something is changed—and there is no term by means of which it may be easily and conveniently "handled." One has to be devised or, more likely, one is hit upon in haste. Many new terms may be consciously or unconsciously suggested and used to meet the emergency, but one somehow "catches on" and sticks. The word *automobile,* for example, was brought into established usage in a hurry (page 11). Its first two syllables are Greek; its last two Latin. But no matter. It has been accepted beyond peradventure in spite of its mongrel composition. The British may have done better to adopt and use the term *motor car* instead of Greek *auto* (self) and Latin *mobile* (moving) for the now popular vehicle. But *automobile* has dignified company today in spite of its cross breeding. The commonly used words *broadcast, ediphone, interbreed, superman, television, undervalue* are promiscuous children, and *atonement, autocar, bedlam, blare, blunt, blurb, blurt, boost, bus, cafeteria, cannery, chairwoman, chortle, chum, chump, dunce, duplex, eatable, embargo, farmerette, film, foist, folklore, grumble, hatchery, houseware, interbred, kitchenette, lunch, lynch, macadamize, mackintosh, mesmerize, movie, new-fashioned, newsmagazine, (k)nick(k)nack, ohm, oldster, pamphlet, pander, parson, picnic, quisling, radiogram, sandwich, scholarship, silver, simplex, squash, squirm, standee, stardom, storiette, talkie, volt, watt, wisteria* are a motley—a mongrel—crew, if you please, and, like them or not, we must accept them—have accepted them as high colloquialisms, if nothing more. The fact that such words as *telegraph, telephone, telephoto* happen to be legitimate Greek offspring, and that such as *fraudulent, subterfuge, transpire* happen to be of pure Latin strain, is not particularly to their credit. All were once "put together" to meet pressing need, all were once barbarisms, like those above, and all were obliged to fight for their ultimate adoption (page 231). Difficulty of spelling and pronuncia-

tion is, strangely enough, never a deterrent in such cases provided the "child" is otherwise congenial in its new environment.

Many attempts have been made to classify the methods of formation of coined or invented terms. But such urchin or irregular or erratic terms defy all effort to be pinned down authoritatively. Since nothing irks a lexicographer more than to be obliged to write "derivation uncertain" after a word, scholarship has been known to go to great lengths to establish serious origins for some of the most interesting dictional orphans in the English language. When, for example, it was first set down that *snob* is derived from *sine nobilitate* (once written before the names of pupils in English public schools who were not of the nobility), scholarship discovered in short order (or thought it had) that the word is "probably from the Icelandic *snapr* meaning dunce." Shortly after *fad* was delightfully and appropriately guessed to be madeup of the initial letters in the phrase *for a day,* heavy-browed authority came along and sourced it in the old French *fader* from which *fade* is derived. Until further notice, however, *chum* must still stand as a mispronounced curtailment of *chamber fellow (chum* for *cham)* and *chump* as a variant of it; *chortle* and *galumph* are still acknowledged to be Lewis Carroll's coinages from *chuckle* and *snort,* and *gallop* and *triumph,* respectively; *scurry* as a blend of *scour* and *hurry; flurry* as a blend of *flaw* and *hurry; flaunt* as a blend of *fly, flout, vaunt; doff* and *don* as blends respectively of *do off* and *do on; flabbergast* as, very likely, *flabby* and *aghast* on a wedding spree. And such words as *blizzard, bluff, coax, conundrum, fun, hubbub, loll, lounge, queer, rowdy, roly-poly*—promiscuous and chameleon in birth and breeding as they have been—are not to be legislated out by the purists. Though like Topsy they may just have happened, though Doctor Johnson spurned them and classified many of them as low, they have long since been good enough to avoid snubbing by the best writers and speakers.

Prefixes and suffixes are commonly used for the purpose of coining words, especially such as *ad, anti, auto, be, by, co, de, ex, pre, pro, sub, vice,* and *able, age, an, cy, ee, ette, fy, ia, ian, ic, ise, ism, ist, ium, ment, out, ship, y,* to mention a few (pages 2 and 7) of each group that lend themselves most easily to blending. In the invention of any term, however, whether by prefixing or suffixing, or by root combinations, resemblance or analogy through ear and eye plays a most important part, as may be briefly illustrated by *deadlihood, freshwoman, lendthrift, mezzobrow, narrowcast, out-*

roduction, prettify, unintelligentsia, walkative, wavement. Why not these, ask the coiners, since we have *livelihood, freshman, spendthrift, high-brow* and *low-brow, broadcast, introduction, beautify, intelligentsia, talkative, pavement?* Why not *avigator, boldacious, collegiance, confusiasm, felineous, frateriority, futilitarian, Mexamerican, radiotorial, shero,* since we have *navigator; audacious, allegiance, enthusiasm, felonious, sorority, utilitarian, Eurasian, editorial, hero?* There is, of course, no analogy really, though to the popular mind there may seem to be.

Shakspere prefixed and suffixed freely—not to say violently—in devising new or modified dictional forms. Were he living now he would not be at all shocked by *pre-shrunk* or *super-suds, certain-teed* or *aetnaized,* and he might, indeed, be depended upon to add considerably to the piquancy of "advertising English." A few of his coinages of interest here are *bemonster, forbid, impale, mislike, neglection, intendment, opposeless, recordation, slumbery, unmeritable, unproper, untent, violenteth.* He suffixed *er* to almost any word at all to indicate agent. He similarly compounded words radically, and often with such subtlety and strikingness as to make the compounds memorable epithets, as *my too-much-changed son, a twenty-years-removed thing, thy here-approach, honey-heavy dew, this childhood-proof, honorable-dangerous, love-performing night, heart-sore, heart-whole, home-making, hunch-backed, ill-got, ill-starred, lack-luster, leap-frog, fair-play, fancy-free, gentle-kind, deep-contemplative.*

Not only did he invent and devise unusual word combinations such as the foregoing, but he likewise introduced into the language such words and phrases as the following: *aërial, assassination, backing a horse, beggar description, breathing one's last, burying faces, critic, cudgeling one's brain, denote, discharging firearms, disgraceful, dishearten, distrustful, drinking healths, dwindle, eventful, exposure, falling to blows, fitful, flaming youth, foppish, foregone conclusion, fretful, gibber, gnarled, groveling, hedging, how the world wags, hubbub, hurry, illume, impartial, laughable, laying odds, men of note, misplaced, monumental, on purpose, painting from life, pedant, perusal, reeling in the street, sportive, staring on vacancy, the mettle of the pasture, the sere and yellow leaf, thereby hangs a tale, wearing hearts on our sleeves, what the dickens.* Such everyday expressions have these and others of equal familiarity from the same source become, that it is no wonder the

dear old lady from Dubuque, on reading Shakspere for the first time, found his pages "full of quotations."

The most interesting coinages (and very often the best and most poetic ones) are those that are imitative in origin—echoistic or onomatopoetic terms that have sprung into being as result of their sound appropriateness (page 257). These are the natural offspring of expression, including, as they do, such terms as *babble,* bah, bing, blare, bobolink, bobwhite, boom, bounce, bow-wow,* burr, buzz, cackle, chatter,* chirp, choo-choo,* chug, clash, crack, crackle,* cuckoo, ding-dong,* fie, flip-flop, gabble,* giggle, gobble, groan, growl, grumble, grunch, grunt, gurgitation, gurgle, ha-ha, hiss, hoot, jabber,* jangle, jingle, jitter,* mew, miaow, murmur,* oh, palaver, patter,* pom-pom, pooh-pooh,* prattle,* pshaw, purr, quiver,* screech, splash, splatter,* sputter,* squawk, stutter, swish, tattle,* thump, tinkle, tintinnabulation,* twaddle, ugh, wheeze, whirr, whoop, zip.* A more dignified, more legitimate ancestry, it is thought, has been traced for some of these words. But they are ineluctably the children of nature, and nothing more dignified or legitimate is required—or desired.

Some philologists have claimed that language originated in such natural terms as the asterisked ones. When their theory was announced it was respectfully referred to as the natural or imitative or frequentative theory (*frequentative* because these terms imply repeated acts or sounds). When, later, it came to be held in ridicule, it was humorously designated as the bow-wow theory, the pooh-pooh theory, the ding-dong theory, and so on.

The short vowel is always more staccato than the long, as *grip* and *gripe, hop* and *hope, tap* and *tape* illustrate; the sound of *cr* and *gr* have roughness and dissatisfaction in them very often, as *crunch* and *grate* illustrate; and *k (ck)* and *p,* especially at the end of a word, are characteristic of dramatic abruptness, as *kick* and *quick* and *prop* and *stop* illustrate. Without such words as these, the *bow-wow* or the *chirp-chirp* theory of the origin of language would have neither a bone to chew upon nor a bough to warble from. With them, the theory will always have at least a picayune of plausibility. The worst coinages are those that are extensions or other modifications of terms that are already slang, such as *bluffosophy, boobography, coffin nailer, crammer upper, flapperdom, flunkite, grubery, junkage, pussyfooter, quizzify.* Present-day columnists and advertising copy writers take the lead, as they should

do, in devising terms that are clever and catchy and humorous, that just exactly fit expressional occasions, but that are nevertheless barbarisms or violations of dictional usage. Prefixing, suffixing, compounding, shortenings, unusual spellings, foreign adaptations, syllabic punning or hyphening, plays upon names and initials—all contribute to the cause, sometimes worthily, often unworthily.

Areco, Clupeco, Cuticura, Dictaphone, Duofold, Everwear, Holeproof, Kodak, Lux, Multigraph, O-Cedar Mop, Oldsmobile, Resinol, Safetea, Sealect, Sunkist, Tarvia, Uneeda, Waxtite, from the advertising pages, have their rhythmic and their eye-arresting points. *Chicagorilla, intelligentmen, Parkrowge* (for newspaper man), *orb-arresting* (for strikingly attractive), *cupiding* (for making love), *lohengrined* and *middle aisled* (for getting married), *renovating* (for divorcing), *slimelight* (for notorious publicity) are typical Winchellisms. There is no doubt that some of the clever coinages devised by Walter Winchell will survive. Many of them will, of course, go the way of George Bernard Shaw's once popular *comstockery,* coined from the name—*Anthony Comstock*—the one-time vice-crusader in New York City. But even the most ephemeral of barbarisms lay hold upon both the attention and the imagination of the average reader. Winchell is the direct dictional descendant of the late Elbert Hubbard who early in the century prostrated the purists with the now comparatively mild *ambisholine, belliake, bibliomag, cigarettist, illuminati, shovelry* (for that present-day lack of chivalry), *sunovagun, word-wizard* Certain barbarisms that the world will not soon forget because they evolved so ruthlessly from barbarianism, are *Gestapo* (*Ge*heim *Sta*ats *Poli*zei), *Nazi* (*Na*tional sozialistische Partei), *SS* (*S*chutz *S*taffel—Storm Troops).

Reputable writers and speakers may successfully revive old words, may successfully coin new ones; they may broaden localisms to general use, and may even elevate slang and curses to levels of temporary humor if not to acceptance. During the past decade *damn* and *hell* have increasingly appeared in print, and rarely objectionably when used by a reputable author for emphasis and humor. Booth Tarkington's euphemistic *jobjam* is of comparative recent coinage. A general rule should, however, be observed by all young writers and speakers, namely, never coin words unless you are certain that the coinage is a real one (not one used before), that it contains sparkle or appropriateness or strikingness (preferably all three), and that it cannot possibly be offensive to

any person or group of persons. There is an ample supply of reputable or standard English words to meet the expressional demands of all writers and speakers. Until this supply is exhausted, there can be little if any excuse for devising additional ones, no matter how much may be said for such apt inventions as *brunch* (combined *br*eakfast and l*unch*) and *dunch* (combined *d*inner and l*unch*).

A few of such words as *jazzomania, lambast, obscenario, rankincense, saxophobia, slantindicular, snorpheum, snowmobile, trollibus, whichbone* go a long way. There are not many bores more insufferable than the word wag—he who thinks it a sign of cleverness to roll a coinage off the tongue (or to try to) at every turn of conversation. Equally hard on human patience (though more forgivable) is the person who is reduced to expressing himself almost exclusively by means of such figurative and colloquial idioms as *alpha and omega, beck and call, by dint of, by hook or crook, carcass, cheek by jowl, ever and anon, fiddle-faddle, harum-scarum, higgledy-piggledy, hob-nob, hocus-pocus, hoity-toity, hue and cry, in high dudgeon, kith and kin, pell-mell, pot-luck, tittle-tattle, to and fro, to curry favor, under the yoke, warp and woof.* In the same category of misguided "specialists" are those who can not resist the temptation of trying to give to their expression an atmosphere of dignity and scholarship by using to excess such archaisms as are listed on page 231. The young poet, the young preacher, the young instructor, for example, may have the mistaken feeling that a certain respect—nay, awe—is created by the use of such terms. Poem and prayer, and pedagogy, needless to say, may be made much more appealing and moving through the medium of current standard phraseology than through that of days gone by. The tendency down the centuries has been to keep literature (even the Bible) revised to date except where the expense of making new plates is too great in relation to sales. The following labored effort of a young poet is typical of the kind of writing that condemns many would-be Calliope to a clerkship:

> In the chasms of eld,
> Unfrequented gulphs,
> Where bleak are the scarps—
> Where with brachs of wild things
> And the attor of serpents—
> All's writhen in terror.

Following are many coined words—barbarisms all—most of which are almost if not quite forgotten, a few of which are making their way into accepted usage, many of which are "on the fence." Still others are to be found in the contest that follows this list. These are all gathered from the speech and writing in various parts of the United States during the past ten years. *Absotively, adjectivitis, advertistics, advertisee, advisee, alcoholiday, americanese, Amerindian, anecdotage, anywhen, anywhy, asphaltician, autodrunk, automobilia, babblative, basketeria, beanery, beatee, belonger, bestsellerdom, betweenite, billionarea, biographee, blabberist, blimp, bobbatorium, bolshevictory, boobocracy, boobology, booterie, bootery, bootician, boozery, boozegob, boulevardia, bowlderize, brattish, bromidite, burglarious, buymanship, cakery, callee, camerist, charmedian, chatful, cheatee, chinafication, chinesey, coedna, confectaurant, controversaries, conventionite, correctitude, cowlet, crookery, cursee, delovely, deluscious, demasculine, demode, demublican, detouring, doglet, doughnuteria, dreamery, drinkery, drugeteria, drunkist, dymitard, eatery, epitaffy, escapee, examinee, fandom, feminology, fightfest, flapperdom, flirtee, follower-upper, foolocracy, fruiteria, funfest, gabfest, galoshing, gangsterdom, germantrocity, gerrymander, gigglegraph, globaloney, golfosophy, gossipocracy, gramaniac, grammaryann, gunocracy, hearee, happenstance, happify, hashery, hatatorium, hitlermaniac, hooverize, horriferous, horrifical, humanzee, infantorium, insinuendo, interruptist, interruptment, jokesmith, jitterbug, journalese, knockoutist, ladify, landocratic, laughsmith, lawyerage, layaways, lovee, mendery, meward, moronist, nicotina, nuditorium, oldtimer, Patland, pedanticular, pepsonality, piggerel, plentypenitentiary, Porkopolis, posilutely, preachifier, pushful, quislingite, radioteria, realtor, restroomier, restorium, saxtette, scentsible, scribblement, shaveteria, sixtyish, slanguage, slaughterist, slangism, sodajerker, softship, spendhound, spendicative, splendiferous, speechify, sportcraft, sporteria, standstillism, staree, stenomaid, suaviloquence, stitchery, sundae, swellegant, systemite, talkie, talkification, tavernacular, teachify, thunderation, tobaccolaureate, touristing, tryoutee, tryouter, tunesmith, typestenog, unitedstatish, unself-conscious, uppity, vagabondia, valeteria, versiflage, watermeloncholia, walkist, washery, womanize, young-timer, youward.*

CONTEST *

	NO	YES
1	We arrived just at darkfall	We arrived just at nightfall
2	Mussolooney was dictooter of Italy	Mussolini was dictator of Italy
3	I sent her some large chrysanthemammas	I sent her some large chrysanthemums
4	She has gone to the bobber shop	She has gone to the barber shop
5	John is not given to clubability	John is not given to joining clubs
6	Madam Buti is an expert cosmetician	Madam Buti is an expert in cosmetics
7	In militerror affairs he is ruthless	In military affairs he is ruthless
8	She's very much fussified and botherated	She's very much troubled and bothered
9	I am going to the groceryteria for some vegetables	I am going to the grocery store for some vegetables
10	Please take these shoes to the mendery	Please take these shoes to the cobbler
11	His investments in Texas have placed him among the oiligarchists	His investments in Texas have placed him among the oil magnates
12	We found many parts of Mexico almost Saharical	We found many parts of Mexico almost like the Sahara
13	He became a propheteer as result of the gypsy's propheteering	He became a profiteer as result of the gypsy's prophesying
14	Lie down a little while in the restatorium	Lie down a little while in the restroom
15	His achievements prove that he belongs to the hustlerati	His achievements prove that he is a hustler
16	I never before met such a gossipaceous jawsmith	I never before met such a gossiper
17	He has joined the Wendell Wilkpublican party	He has joined the Wendell Willkie party
18	There is too much viceversation in his exposition	There is too much alternation or change of order in his exposition
19	The accident has uglified your face and fearified your nerves	The accident has marred your beauty and made you nervous
20	She stood under the kisseltoe and intensified her smileage	She stood under the mistletoe and smiled more seductively than ever
21	There was a mirthquake in the room when Billy made his spectacularious entrance	There was hilarity in the room when Billy made his spectacular entrance
22	Sing a song at twinight on this pictureaskew height	Sing a song at twilight on this picturesque height
23	I may not belong to the automocracy but the benzine buggy passes my door	I do not have an automobile but the public bus passes my door
24	There was so much yellocution taking place in the next room that we were obliged to vascoot	The elocution in the room next to ours was so disturbing that we were obliged to vacate

* See page 3.

NO	YES
25 The radiotrician came just as we were brunching	The radio repair man came just as we were having our combined breakfast and luncheon
26 My neighbor displayed a great deal of hegotism at the shavetorium this morning	My neighbor displayed a great deal of conceit at the barber shop this morning
27 She was consumed with furiosity when he called her a fussbudget	She was very angry when he told her she was unduly exacting in regard to details
28 Conbratulations on becoming a father, old chap, and all that sort of kiboshery	Congratulations on becoming a father, old chap, and all that sort of nonsense
29 Yes, I admit she's prettyish, but she's too goshgarrulous for me	Yes, I admit she's rather pretty but she's much too talkative for me
30 Their little chummery in the residence hall was raided by the stormsquad	Their little apartment in the residence hall was raided by the police
31 I call this place a dudocracy because it's neither dansical nor galsworthy	I call this place a failure because it has neither dancing nor attractive girls
32 Are you Hungary? Yes, Siam. Well, I'll Fiji	Are you hungry? Yes, I am. Well, I'll feed you
33 My analyze over the ocean; my analyze over the sea. Oh, who will go over the ocean, and bring back my anatomy	My Anna lies over the ocean; my Anna lies over the sea Oh, who will go over the ocean, and bring back my Anna to me

SECTION THIRTY-THREE — IDIOM

Idiom is an expression in the use of a language that is peculiar to that language—peculiar very often in grammatical construction, peculiar always in that its meaning is derived from the expression as a whole rather than from its combined elements individually. It is, in other words, the peculiar mold in which language casts its thought, and is thus usually a departure from or irregularity in the normal characteristics of a language. The meaning of an idiomatic phrase cannot be arrived at by knitting together one by one its component parts, as the meaning of ordinary phrases is arrived at. The elements must, rather, be grasped collectively. *How do you do,* for instance, is collectively considered a form of greeting. Analyze it word by word and it is nonsensical—*in what manner do you act,* for instance, which, to say the least, is a strange sort of greeting expression. The corresponding German greeting *Wie befinden sie sich* (How do you find yourself), the French *Comment allez-vous* or *Comment vous*

portez-vous (How do you go or How do you carry yourself), the Spanish *¿Y cómo le va?* (And how goes it?), the Italian *Come sta?* (How are you?) are all equally idiomatic or "sot" expressions that mean much as a unit group of words, that mean less than nothing construed word for word.

Observe now the idioms *to bring about* (cause), *to come by* (obtain) (page 203), *to put up with* (tolerate), *to go hard with* (be painful or difficult), *to stand up for* (champion), *to carry out* (manage or achieve or finish), *to take down* (humble), *to take after* (resemble), *to have a mind to* (disposed toward), *to turn on* (retaliate), *at cross purposes* (conflicting), *to beg the question* (assume something), *to stand to reason* (appear logical), *hue and cry* (any clamor or outcry; originally a legal term used in reference to the outcry with which the public pursued a felon), *by fits and starts* (sudden or transient manifestations), *hard and fast* (strict or rigidly binding), *spick and span* (new or appearing new), and such other self-interpretive ones in every day use as *free and easy, safe and sound, high and dry, fair and square, from top to toe, as bold as brass, as large as life, as thick as thieves, by and by, over and over, round and round, bag and baggage, hither and thither* (the last five being mere repetitions, which by some authorities are not regarded as idioms). Each of these must be "swallowed at a gulp" rather than morsel by morsel, if the intended meaning is to be grasped. Any one who would try to arrive at their meaning word by word would find himself in a sadly befuddled mind. The trouble that Alice had with the Frog about *answering the door* was caused entirely by the Frog's unfamiliarity with the idiom. "What's it (the door) been asking of?" he inquired, a question that was "as Greek" to her as her idiom was to him.

These few idioms are the merest illustration of the numerous similar word groups in English that by habituated association have become special and peculiar, that cannot be taken in by the mind word for word for cumulative understanding. Compare with these phrases such unidiomatic ones, for instance, as *to sit a long time by the window* and *to start to work early* and *to cross the road slowly* which may be received by the mind a word at a time and thus built into a mental concept by normal processes. The individual elements of these latter expressions are not congealed or frozen into singleness of idea as are those of the former. Idiom has appropriately been called language that has formed unbreakable habit.

The word *idiom* is very often loosely applied to all accepted and customary phrasing to which the ear has become habituated. If any one violates this accepted phrasing, he is said not to speak the idiom. Peculiarities of dialect, of localism, of foreign or "broken" English violate idiom. The prepositional idiom (page 206) has long been regarded as the most difficult of mastery, especially for those who study English for the first time. There is a great difference between *living at* and *living with,* between *living by* and *living for,* and the difference resides mainly in the preposition. The foreigner who is puzzled about turning his phrases easily and naturally into English may honestly place blame upon the waywardness of the English prepositional idiom. It is this general signification of the word *idiom* that decides whether a person has a feeling for a language as well as an understanding of it. Speech feeling—what may better be called *speech instinct*—is a quality that comes with background aided and abetted by education and learning. It is as much speech feeling as anything else that brings one who really cares about his speech, to use *shall* and *will* correctly, to say *The man was hanged* rather than *The man was hung,* to express his gratitude by *many thanks* rather than by *much thanks,* to distinguish between *born* and *borne, effect* and *affect, bring* and *take,* to write *To whoever may be interested in the undertaking* rather than *To whomever may be interested in the undertaking,* and *I stayed at the residence of Mr Coe* or *at Mr Coe's residence* rather than *at the residence of Mr Coe's,* and to grasp naturally the thousand and one other subtleties of word usage. In this sense of the word, *idiom* is often nicely defined as the genius of and for language.

The use of *would better* for *had better* (or *might better)* is regarded incorrect by some grammarians, as in *Would you not better go by way of Chicago* and *He thought he would better take the scientific course.* Idiomatically these sentences should read *Had you not better go by way of Chicago* and *He thought he had better* or *might better take the scientific course* (that is, *might do better to take*). *Had rather* is preferred in the first person; *would rather* in the second and third persons. *I had rather go than stay* and *He* (or *You*) *would perhaps rather remain here* are correct. *Would better* is incorrect for *had better,* regardless of person, as in *I had better go* and *You had better hurry* and *He had better remain with me. Had best* is preferable to *would best,* especially in the first person. But say *You had best return soon* and *She*

had best take this course rather than *You would best* and *She would best* respectively. In both comparative and superlative forms, however, the expanded expression may be taken as *would do better to return* and *would do best to return*, as it may be in the case of *might better* and *might best (may better* and *may best)*. Similarly, the overused verb phrase *would have* is unidiomatic for *had* in such expression as *If we had gone* (not *If we would have gone*), *this could not have happened.*

To say *I am staying by John's* for *I am staying at John's*, or *She wants I should go home with her* for *She wants me to go home with her*, or *Please make out the light* for *Please put out the light*, or *He come already yet* (Pennsylvania German) for *He has already come* is to betray lack of speech feeling. Such substitutions for accepted English phraseology may be pardoned perhaps, made occasionally by one who speaks a foreign tongue, but persisted in, they are gross violations of the English idiom.

The term *an idiom* also means an expression or form that belongs in particular to a certain language; the term *the idiom* means the general characteristics of a certain language as evinced through grammatical usage. You speak of the French idiom or the Italian idiom, by which you mean the ways or mannerisms of the language as a whole. You say "to apply an idiom from the French" when you wish to use a French idiom that you consider particularly applicable to a conversational instance.

The rendition of foreign idiom into English idiom is by no means always easy, though always possible. But no foreign tongue can be said to be properly taught unless it is taught in large measure through its own idiom and through the equivalence of this idiom in the student's native tongue. Idiomatic translation of the French *cheval noir* is *black horse*, not *horse black*, as the Frenchman has it, with adjective after the noun. Idiomatic translation of the French *C'est à rire* is *It is laughable*, but literally—as, again, the Frenchman expresses the same idea—*It is to laugh* is the translation. What is idiomatic in French is not correspondingly idiomatic in English equivalence. It is not idiomatic in English, as it is in Latin, to accumulate verb forms at the end of a statement, as in *The ravaging hosts in wild confusion to the four winds have been scattered.* The English idiom has it *The ravaging hosts were scattered in wild confusion to the four winds.* The pet construction of the Romans—the ablative absolute—is not a recommended

one in English, though the English substitute—the nominative independent (page 107)—is frequently used. The Roman said *The weather being clear we shall assemble for the games* but the preferred English idiomatic equivalent has it *If the weather is clear we shall assemble for the games.* The German tendency to build long modifying constructions before a noun does not comply with English idiom; it is bewildering to an English-speaking person, requiring him very often to re-read in order to get a unified impression of what is meant; thus, *Among the most deeply touched but at the same time outwardly self-contained and sincerely desirous of being unnoticed mourners was the young nephew himself* is, according to English idiom, better expressed as *The young nephew was among the most deeply touched of the mourners but he was self-contained and sincerely desirous of being unnoticed.*

In spite of the fact that idioms probably originated in figures of speech, nice distinction is sometimes properly drawn between so-called figurative phrases and idiomatic phrases. The latter may be figurative, however, and the former may become idiomatic. *Talking straight from the shoulder* and *cutting off your nose to spite your face,* for example, are figurative phrases. As in the case of provincialism (page 233) such figurative idioms may be representative of special pursuits, as for example, *riding a high horse* and *to saddle with* and *to nose ahead* from horsemanship; *on the rocks* and *to turn adrift* from seamanship; *to pass muster* and *close quarters* from soldiering; *stiff as a poker* and *on the shelf* and *a watched pot never boils* from housewifery; *to hunt down* and *the open trail* and *far afield* from hunting. Each of these word groups conjures up a picture, and by this pictorial quality emphasizes the idea conveyed. The words used in them appear in normal grammatical relationships, but the ideas expressed are exaggerated. Idiom is, as a rule, convenient and immediate rather than imaginative and pictorial. Yet, as above pointed out, before certain elements in an expression have become frozen into idiom, they have served very often as figures of speech; and after certain figurative phrases have become so generally used that their picture-making quality is no longer thought of—no longer functions because their original keen edge has been dulled by overuse—they may come to be regarded as idioms. Moreover, it is the totality of meaning conveyed by many figurative phrases that is paramount, rather than the word-by-word accumulation of thought.

And this is also—let it be remembered—of the very essence of an idiomatic expression. *To put upon* (attack) and *to stick to one's guns* (hold fast) and *to break the ice* (to overcome first restraints) were once purely figurative phrases—are so even yet in all likelihood heard by any one to whom they are comparatively fresh or new. But to most adults who have used English all their lives, the figurative freshness of such expressions as these is no more, and they are accepted almost if not quite entirely as idiomatic shortcuts.

It must be clear, then, from the foregoing that, though slang and idiom are by no means synonymous terms, the one may be used for the other—may, indeed, become the other. *Break it up,* for example, is idiomatic for dissolve or scatter, it is also sports slang for the discontinuance of some action. *Break down* is idiomatic for a collapse of any sort, though nothing may be broken and nothing may be down; it is business office slang for resolving a set of figures into its component parts—a budgetary total, for example, into itemized listing. *To do for* is idiomatic for to care or provide for; it is slang meaning to kill. *To give way* is idiomatic for concede or yield, or lose one's self-control; it is stock market slang for drop in prices. The few illustrations of idiomatic expression presented thus far reveal it undoubtedly as both picturesque and convenient. It is, indeed, as Landor long ago pointed out, "the life and spirit of language." Young writers and speakers are too often inclined to regard idiom as inferior or commonplace, only to learn later—perhaps too late—that it is one of the qualities of style through which masterpieces have become what they are.

Certain phrases in English, as well as in other languages, tend to get themselves overused, and as result become down at heel and worn out. And this is true of phraseology of any type—slang, idiom, figure, cursing, barbarism, impropriety. Sometimes such phrases are classifiable merely as worn out and belong to no other category. *Pleased to meet you,* for example, is not vulgarism or slang or idiom, or any other such classifiable type of expression. It is just so commonly used—so overused and abused—that it has become meaningless. Other expressions like it in all too general use are *the parting of the ways, the weaker sex, the horns of a dilemma, one never knows, hot enough for you, cold enough for you, too numerous to mention, if I may be permitted to suggest, deem it advisable, green with jealousy, conspicuous by absence, brutal frankness, single blessedness, the cup that cheers, ever and*

anon, to and fro, a far cry to, at the eleventh hour, near future, not-too-distant future, irony of fate, never to be forgotten, along these lines, it seems to me, curry favor, and the words *feature, consensus, survival, environment, technique, atmosphere, trend, galore, clean-cut, clear-cut, epoch making* by way of minimum illustration (page 290). So commonly are such terms used that they constitute a sort of mental and conversational stenography, a kind of stock printing plate kept ready at hand for immediate set. The French term *cliché* is sometimes figuratively applied to a fixed expression thus tiresomely overused; literally, it is an electrotype or stereotype plate or printing block that is kept in "permanent set" in a print shop and filled in to matter at a gulp without the labor of setting individual letters. Such wornout word or expression is also called a commonplace, a bromide, a trite or stock or stereotyped or hackneyed phrase (from French *haquenée* meaning an ambling horse).

Transitional words and phrases cushion expression. Without them change or passage from one sentence to another, from one paragraph to another, would very often seem abrupt and incoherent. But many such terms are much overused and have become hackneyed. It has been said that purely logical expression follows on of its own accord, and does not require the props of verbal transitions. Some writers have tried to follow this dictum, notably Elbert Hubbard, and have succeeded to a degree. Do not use such transitional terms as those below listed unless they are really necessary to link the units of your expression neatly and coherently into unified flow. But do not omit them at the risk of making it strained or sharp-cornered, even though occasionally you may be conscious of using a term that has seen hard service: *after all, another matter is, as a result, as a matter of fact, as has been noted* (or *stated*), *as has been seen, as I have said, at all events, at any rate, at least, for example, for this reason, from this you can see, in addition, in any case* (or *event*), *in fact, in order that, in other words, in the meantime, in next place* (or *first place,* or *second place*), *in the same way* (or *manner*), *it is true, it must be said, moreover, notwithstanding, now let this be considered, now to my next point* (an especially objectionable one), *of course, on the contrary, on the other hand, on that point let me say, so much for that, that is to say, the next point is, to be sure, whatever the case may be, while on the one hand.*

Though any and all phraseology may become thus stereotyped or hackneyed, slang and curses and idioms lend themselves particularly to such overuse for the reason that they are at best limited in scope and application. There are few if any new or novel curse phrases; the same old epithets that were used centuries ago are in use today. There may be variations from time to time—new combinations and relationships of terms—in blasphemous epithets, but in the main all are cliché—all are the same stock phrases of centuries ago. This is true only to a somewhat less degree of slang. The average slang expression is "done to the death" as a rule by monotonous repetition, and out of sheer exhaustion gives way to a new one of very much the same significance. Most slang is neither new nor novel, though it may by its use and application *and intonation* give the impression of being both. With idiom the case stands in somewhat different light. It is justified for the most part by the fact that it saves time, gives to expression a "homey" and intimate quality, and "breaks the ice" between the speaker and the one spoken to in the event that restraint or "standoffishness" is likely to obstruct understanding. But it, too, as above illustrated, may be abused by way of overuse. Such stock idiomatic phrases as *as it were, at sixes and sevens, in the long run, in the thick of it, the long and the short of it, to scrape acquaintance, I take it, under the circumstances,* excellently fitting and suitable as they frequently are, may become soporific or bromidic, and he who uses them to excess is likely to be accused of having a sleepy mind.

The best writers and speakers avoid hackneyed expressions, aiming as they must do to bring freshness and vigor and impressiveness to their words. In effort to avoid them, however, some have leaned too far backward and have fallen into the equally serious mistake of coining and inventing terms to excess (page 277) on the one hand, or of becoming too precious or pompous or foreign (page 45) on the other. After all, happy phraseology has a contagion about it; let an author use an especially engaging term in some connection for the first time, and it is not long before the man in the street is heard adapting it at every possible turn and sally of his conversation. It thus becomes a soporific in short order and is in a little while deservedly abandoned to its eternal sleep—to be replaced almost immediately by some other equally happy combination of words.

The endless search for the elusive epithet is in no small part responsible for the overwhelming number of stock phrases in English, as in most other languages. The apt and effective epithet has for ages been regarded the open sesame to distinguished style. Once discovered, it all too often falls prey to overuse, and thus becomes cliché. The term *epithet* is used loosely in reference to any uncomplimentary or abusive phrase—especially in reference to blasphemous oaths (page 262). It is also used with almost equal looseness to mean any word at all—especially any adjective at all—that is applied, happily or unhappily, to a noun (page 18).

The *epigram,* like the epithet, tends to become trite and commonplace. Originally, an epigram was an inscription, as was also an epigraph—*epi* being Greek for upon, and *gram* or *graph* Greek for writing. The former has now come to be applied to a brief and pointed remark which says much in little, and which has in addition, as a rule, some element of surprise. Elbert Hubbard's definition of an epigram is probably the best—certainly the most succinct—ever given: An epigram is a dash of wit, a jigger of wisdom, flavored with surprise. In verse an epigram is a short rimed couplet or quatrain, such as Martial's

> Three things must epigrams, like bees, have all—
> A sting, and honey, and a body small.

and Coleridge's

> What is an epigram? a dwarfish whole;
> Its body brevity and wit its soul.

and Elbert Hubbard's

> Now I get me up to work,
> I pray the Lord I may not shirk;
> If I should die before the night,
> I pray the Lord my work's all right.

But William Watson's famous octet is correctly called an epigram (Watson was one of the great masters of epigram)

> I do not ask to have my fill
> Of wine, or love, or fame;
> I do not for a little ill,
> Against the gods exclaim.
> One boon of Fortune I implore,
> With one petition kneel:
> At least caress me not before
> Thou break me on the wheel.

These are true prose epigrams: *One's ease may become one's disease* and *Language as often conceals thought as reveals it* and *He that cannot obey cannot command.*

The term *epigraph* has more or less fallen out of use. Like the epigram, the epigraph, as originally used, had to be brief for the reason that it was used as an inscription on a monument or statue, or was prefixed to a literary or historical work, as *Let us now dedicate ourselves to the art of sculpture.* But unlike the epigram, its brevity is not necessarily the brevity of wit; it does not carry a sting in its tail. An *epitaph* (*epi* upon, *taphos* tomb) is, as generally used, an inscription to commemorate the dead. It may be the merest truism or saw or platitude, as *At rest* or *Gone but not forgotten.* But it may not be entirely without its grim or ironic epigrammatic pointedness, as witness Herrick's tombstone tribute to his devoted cook Prue

Peace be to her hashes.

and Gay's epitaph on himself as sent in a letter to Pope

Life is a jest, and all things show it,
I thought so once, but now I know it.

and the following on the tombstone of a man named Fish

Worms bait fish—now Fish is bait for worms.

and this on the tombstone of a brewer

Poor John Scott lies buried here,
Though once he was both hale and stout;
Death stretched him on his bitter bier,
In another world he hops about.

Many, if not most, of the cherished sayings—adages, apothegms, aphorisms, axioms, dicta, maxims, mottoes, precepts, proverbs—call them what you will—depend for their memorableness upon figures of speech, upon epithet and epigram and hendiadys not only, but as well upon metaphor and simile and personification and metonymy and synecdoche, and the rest.* And all tend to get themselves overused to the point of dulness and monotony and meaninglessness. This happens in large part because such expressions as those listed below have such broad conversational coverage—"come in so handy" for the average individual in his

* See *Get it Right* by the same author, published by Funk and Wagnalls Company.

thousand-and-one daily remarks. But this circumstance should not lead him to the extremes of dear old Lady Dull-as-Ditch-Water (or Dish-Water—either idiom is correct) who habitually advises "Be perfectly willing to admit that an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure, and that, other things being equal, a stitch in time saves nine quite as certainly as that a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush, but never make the mistake of crossing a bridge before you come to it, that is to say, do not count your chickens until the eggs are hatched."

Long as the following list of clichés is—business-letter clichés, idiomatic clichés, figurative clichés—it must nevertheless appear as a comparatively short one to him who "keeps his ears open" "from morn to midnight": *above-mentioned subject, according to our records, aching void, alabaster brow, almighty dollar, as I was saying, and oblige, apple of his eye, arms of Morpheus, as per your request, at an early date, at the earliest possible moment, attached hereto, bated breath, bathed in tears, beard the lion, beg to state, beggar description, better half, better late than never, bitter end, blind as love, blood will tell, blushing bride, bolt from the blue, bosom of the family, brave as a lion, bright lexicon of youth, brown study, business as usual, budding genius, busy as a bee, center of attraction, cheered to the echo, clear as crystal, clinging vine, cold as ice, come to hand, consigned to the flames, contents noted, cradle of the deep, daughter of the gods, dead as a doornail, demon rum, diamond in the rough, die is cast, distance lends enchantment, dizzy heights of fame, embryo doctor, enclosed herewith, esteemed favor, eyes like stars, fair sex, festive board, few and far between, filthy lucre, fine and dandy, finishing touch, finny tribe, flowing bowl, fly in the ointment, fragrant weed, fulsome fancies, furrowed brow, glass of fashion, golden locks, green as grass, gross calumny, grim reaper, groaning board, heartless wretch, heated argument, hope springs eternal, ignorance is bliss, in conclusion would say, inner man, in our midst, in the main, kind order, last but not least, lean and hungry look, light fantastic toe, madding crowd, mantle of snow, marble brow, monarch of all he surveys, motley crew, needs no introduction, nestling cottage, no sooner said than done, palatial residence, past all recall, pearls before swine, pearly teeth, point with pride, poor but honest, psychological moment, pursuant to yours, sadder but wiser, sad to tell, silvery locks, snare and delusion, solemn conclave, staff of life, sumptuous repast, thanks for calling the matter to our*

attention, thereby hangs a tale, there's the rub, tired to death, too full for utterance, touching upon the matter, tumultuous applause, up to this writing, vast concourse of people, velvety grass, view with concern, watery grave, we shall check on the matter at once, wee sma' hours, wheel of fortune, words fail me, worse for wear, would say, writer wishes to inform you, you will hear from our Mr ———, your interest is deeply appreciated, your suggestions are very helpful.

The following list contains some of the coupled and tripled bromides that "creep and intrude and climb" into the daily conversation of Mr Average Man *advice and counsel, aid and comfort; alive and kicking, better or worse, body and soul; by and large; cats and dogs, down and out, fast and loose, fine and dandy; fire and water; flesh and blood, free and easy; gall and wormwood, gay and lively, give and take, good and all, goods and chattels, hammer and tongs; hand and foot; hand and glove, hand to mouth; hard and fast, head and shoulders; heart and soul, heaven and earth, here and there; hide and seek; hit or miss, hook or crook; hue and cry, joy and solace; length and breadth; letter and spirit; long and short, milk and honey; null and void; one and all, one and same; over and above, over and done with; rain or shine; rank and file; root and branch; take or leave; tooth and nail; top and bottom; touch and go; up and doing; up and down; ways and means; wear and tear; well and good, whim and fancy, wish and will; young and foolish; bell, book, and candle; eat, drink, and be merry; first, last, and always; health, wealth, and beauty; healthy, wealthy, and wise; here, there, and everywhere; hop, skip, and jump; life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; lock, stock, and barrel; love, honor, and obey; stop, look, and listen; time, place, and the girl; way, shape, and form; wine, woman, and song.*

And the following have the virtue(?) of being alliterative: *all in all; bag and baggage; bated breath; beat the band, bed and board; beef and brawn; beer and bacon; beg, borrow, or buy; belle of the ball, betwixt and between; blushing bride; bold as brass; bolt from the blue; Boston baked beans; brains and brawn; bread and butter; broken to bits; brown as a berry, busy as a beaver, busy as a bee; butcher and baker; cabin'd, crib'd, confin'd; cap the climax; cash and carry; clear as crystal; close as a clam; cold and clear; confusion worse confounded, cool as a cucumber; crass and crude; cross and crown; dawn to dark; day and date; dead as a doornail; do and dare; do or die; dry as dust; each and every; facts and*

figures; fads and fancies; fame and fortune; fast and furious; feasting and fun; fire and flood, first and foremost; fish, flesh, or fowl; fit as a fiddle, forgive and forget; gift of gab; gleam and glare; good as gold, grand and glorious; green as grass; hale and hearty; hand and heart; hare and hounds; have and hold; head over heels; hearth and home; hem and haw; high and haughty; house and home; humor and hilarity, judge and jury; kill or cure, kit and caboodle, kith and kin; lean and lank; large and luscious; large as life; last but not least, lay of the land, leaven the lump; light and leading, live and let live; make a mountain of a mole-hill; make or mar; man and message; many a mickle; matter and manner; method in madness, might and main; naughty but nice; neck or nothing, new and nifty; next to none; now or never; off and on; part and parcel, pay the piper; peace and plenty; peaches and persimmons; pence and pound; pillar to post; pit and pendulum; plot and plan; poet and peasant; point with pride; poor as a pauper; preserve the peace, pride and prejudice, primrose path; prince and pauper, quality and quantity; questions and queries; quit and quittance; rack and ruin, rant and rave; red as a rose; rich and rare; rime or reason; rough and ready; rum, Romanism, and rebellion; rush and roar, safe and sane; safe and sound; safe to say; sense and sensibility; short and sweet; shoulder to shoulder; sink or swim; sixes and sevens; skimp and save; slow but sure; soft as silk; spick and span; sticks and stones; stolen sweets; stood stock-still; storm and stress; sugar and spice; sum and substance; sunshine and shadow; sweet as sugar; then and there; thick and thin; thick as thieves; this, that, and the other; time and tide; tit for tat; top to toe; treasure trove; trials and tribulations; tried and true; warp and woof; watch and wait; watch and ward; wax and wane; weal or woe; wild and woolly; wind and wave; wish and will; wit and wisdom, wooed and won; worn and weary; work and win; worse for wear; you and yours.

CONTEST *

NO	YES
1 She switched on the electric	She turned on the electricity
2 These cost cheaper than them	These are cheaper than those
3 He bought for a penny a pencil	He bought a pencil for a penny
4 Unluckily I got late this morning	Unluckily I was late this morning
5 The woman is making supper	The woman is getting supper

* See page 3

	NO	YES
6	I graduated college last June	I graduated (was graduated) from college last June
7	I am getting sixteen tomorrow	I shall be sixteen tomorrow
8	They laughed on me	They laughed at me
9	The sugar is all	There is no more sugar
10	She told me why I didn't work harder	She asked me why I didn't work harder
11	He must right away go to the principal	He must go to the principal immediately
12	Today night I shall make a party	Tonight I shall have a party
13	We are happy why you have come	We are happy that (because) you have come
14	It's a pity of you	It's a pity for you
15	That boy has got a hate on me	That boy hates me
16	She lighted out the candle	She put out the candle light
17	The pair of shoes is old by me	These shoes of mine are old
18	Let's go up John's house	Let's go up to John's
19	Please excuse my boy from being absent	Please excuse my boy's absence
20	The garage is built with stone	The garage is built of stone
21	He is six years of old	He is six years old
22	He is six years aged	He is six years of age
23	It gets overhot the engine	The engine gets (becomes) overheated
24	Mary's new dress is with a stain	Mary's new dress has a stain on it
25	How is it by you everything	How are you . . . How do you do . . . How are you getting along
26	I am after doing the work now	I am doing the work now
27	I want in	I want to get in . . . I want to enter
28	I am going to stay by John's house	I am going to stay at John's
29	I am going to out	I am going out
30	I am going to up	I am going to get up
31	We stood on line	We stood in line
32	The club dues must be paid for now	The club dues must be paid now
33	He was sent for an errand	He was sent on an errand
34	You can't get ahead from him	You can't get ahead of him
35	We are going on a wedding tomorrow	We are going to a wedding tomorrow
36	You will do me a kindness of accepting them	You will do me a kindness by (in) accepting them
37	Please do me the kindness in accepting them	Please do me the kindness of accepting them
38	He is going to work by the grocery	He is going to work at the grocery store
39	They came up with the elevator	They came up by (on, in) the elevator
40	He arrived at England in July	He arrived in England in July

NO	YES
41 He is concerned of his brother's health	He is concerned about his brother's health
42 Please be informed that the merchandise has been sent	The merchandise has been sent
43 He is ready for the grim reaper	He is ready for death
44 He reclined on his downy couch	He lay on the couch
45 He indulged in the cup that cheers	He took a drink of (wine, whiskey, or other alcoholic beverage)
46 I beg to state that I cannot come	I cannot come
47 His death was like a bolt from the blue	His death was a shock
48 He became brown as a berry sitting by the briny deep	He became tanned sitting on the sea beach
49 He partook generously of the staff of life	He ate a great deal of bread
50 He preferred to live in single blessedness	He was a bachelor

SECTION THIRTY-FOUR SLIP

Any error in English may be called a slip. But the word is euphemistic applied to an error of serious nature. There are, however, three particular kinds of errors in speech and writing that have become more or less strictly identified as slips—the *malapropism,* the *howler,* and the *spoonerism.*

A *malapropism* is a grotesque misapplication of a word, or the word itself so misapplied. When it occurs unconsciously it is the result usually of careless seeing or careless hearing (or both) of terms that are somewhat alike but not exactly so. It may also be prompted by a desire to use pretentious words, without corresponding educational equipment to do so. Malapropism is dictional impropriety; it may also be barbarism; whether it is vulgarism depends upon its seriousness as a breach of taste. One trained in precise mental habits does not commit malapropism consciously, though he may occasionally do so for the sake of humor. When it is used by an author deliberately to hold up to scorn the diction of a lower or a special class, it is an unworthy source of humor. But when used, as it was by Richard Brinsley Sheridan in his play *The Rivals,* to reveal the innocent dictional ambitions and pretensions of his lovable and sympathetic character Lydia Malaprop, it may be made an unrivaled type of humor. The noun *malapropism,* like the adjective and adverb *malapropos* meaning inopportune, inappropriate, inopportunely, inappropriately, is adapted from

the three-word French phrase *mal à propos* literally meaning badly to the purpose, as was the surname of the character in Sheridan's play. Typical of Mrs Malaprop's slips or blunders in diction are *allegory* for *alligator, intuition* for *tutelage, superstitious* for *superfluous, orthodoxy* for *orthography, progeny* for *prodigy, illiterate* for *obliterate, contagious* for *contiguous, derangement of epitaphs* for *arrangement of epitaphs.* But in everyday conversation, the ignorant use of *affect* for *effect, exceptional* for *exceptionable, respectfully* for *respectively, reverend* for *reverent* (pages 11 and 328) must be set down as malapropism, as malapropos diction.

The character of Dogberry in Shakspere's *Much Ado About Nothing* antedated Mrs Malaprop in the tendency to satisfy a compensation complex at the expense of the "parts of speech." But literature teems with character and character incidents that depend for their interest and amusement upon naive and pretentious vocabulary acrobatics. Dogberry is an ignorant and foolish constable who tries to compensate for his insignificance by means of showy, impressive diction, Mrs Malaprop tries to make herself appear elegant and refined and educated by the same means. And both of them feel most grand and confident when their stuffed diction reaches the height of absurdity and inappropriateness. Dogberry's "Our watch have indeed comprehended two aspicious persons" and "O villain! thou wilt be condemned into everlasting redemption for this" and "Comparisons are odorous" typify not only the blundering garrulity of the constable but also his determination to hear himself talk.

Errors in diction, such as those above referred to, are sometimes called *howlers* or *boners,* slang names commonly identified with the confused and befuddled use of words that sometimes appears in students' examination papers, such as *Marie Antoinette was gelatined* and *A queue is a brief question.* But the examination room is by no means the only place where such dictional abuses occur as result of slovenly speech, slovenly eyesight, slovenly hearing—slovenly understanding in general. Every day in almost everybody's life there are misunderstandings, serious and comic, that are caused by looseness in word usage.

A lady once inquired at a library desk whether *The Red Boat* was in. "I don't think we have the book," said the librarian. "Excuse me," said the lady. "I have made a mistake. The title is

The Scarlet Launch." After a search, the librarian reported that no such title was listed in the card catalog. "But I'm sure you have the book," the lady insisted. Then she opened her handbag and consulted a slip of paper on which she said she had written the title correctly. "I beg your pardon," she said. "The book that I want is *The Ruby Yacht* by an author named Rohmer. I'm very sorry. It is a poem that urges us to burn our clothes." The librarian thought a moment, and the line "in the fires of spring your winter garments of repentance fling" miraculously occurred to her. "Yes, Madam, we have *The Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám,*" she said; "I shall get it for you."

On other occasions the librarian was asked for Judge Eliot's *Silent Smile,* for Buskin's *Says a Man to Lily,* for McGinty's *The Firework King,* and for Darling's *Oranges and Peaches.* Being a paragon of patience (as the librarian usually has to be) this librarian was experienced in the whimsical confusions that characterize the minds of many readers, and so she was prepared to deliver, in turn, George Eliot's *Silas Marner,* John Ruskin's *Sesame and Lilies,* Justin Huntley McCarthy's *If I Were King,* and Charles Darwin's *The Origin of Species.*

It may be set down as fairly certain that these malaproprian book borrowers, as well as those in their circles, habitually said *gray day* for *grade A; Funex* for *Have you any eggs; Svfx* for *Yes, we have eggs; Funem* for *Have you any ham; Svfm* for *Yes, we have ham; O K Mnx* for *O K ham and eggs; Beama bribe* for *Be my bride; Filagree, I'll go* for *If he'll agree, I'll go; gray starling* for *Grace darling; wimmetumb* for *with my thumb, Imadvisinya* for *I'm advising you; Well, evanescent Tom* for *Well, if it isn't Tom; Chamean* for *What do you mean; Read map home* for *Read my poem; Wassamatta* for *What's the matter; I juswannastya* for *I just want to ask you; Abcd goldfish* for *Abie, see the goldfish; Whohitchainnyi* for *Who hit you in the eye, They arrived just in the nicotine* for *They arrived just in the nick of time; That bird is ostracize* for *That bird is ostrich size* (as big as an ostrich); *Idaminetellinyaowiffeels* for *I don't mind telling you how it feels; One man's Mede is another man's Persian* for *One man's meat is another man's poison; Euripides* for *(Did) you rip these; Yah, Eumenides* for *Yes, you mend these; Do it asbestos you can* for *Do it as best you can.*

There is no more amusing kind of slip in word usage than that generally classified as *spoonerism*. This means the transposition of sounds (usually initial) among words or syllables immediately following one another or, at least, coming close together. Rapid utterance that "twists the tongue' is often the cause of this particular brand of slip in speech. It takes its name from Dr William Archibald Spooner, a noted scholar of New College, Oxford University. That Doctor Spooner was excessively given to "the accidental transposition of initial letters" (this is the New Oxford Dictionary definition of *spoonerism*) has been denied. But it is authoritatively affirmed that he did commit at least one such error in his time, and this a serious one.*

But, again, "the Greeks had a word for it," namely, *metathesis*. *Lips* for *lisp, diary* for *dairy, prefect* for *perfect, calvary* for *cavalry, aks (ax)* for *ask,* or vice versa, illustrate metathetical or spoonеristic slips. They may reside in single words, as here—such words are "naturals" for spoonerisms. In rapid speech particularly, dissyllables and longer words of similar sound and rhythm may slip over the tongue in confused transposition of letter or syllable, as *ossifer* for *officer, ephilant* for *elephant, relegate* for *regulate, revelant* for *relevant, renumerate* for *remunerate, Tanathopsis* for *Thanatopsis*. And the terms spoonerism and metathesis are sometimes loosely extended to cover any ridiculous substitution or transposition of words as well as of letters and syllables, as in *upholstered piano* for *upright piano, circumcized the subject* for *circumscribed the subject, impregnancy of Gibraltar* for *impregnability of Gibraltar*. Such substitution or transposition is sometimes intentionally used for the sake of humor, as the two excerpts below may illustrate:

> The social program arranged for the queen of a foreign country on the occasion of her official visit to the United States had been made so strenuous that at one of the important functions in her honor she fainted dead away from sheer exhaustion The master of ceremonies, a highly nervous individual even under normal procedures, was beside himself with anxiety and excitement at her sudden collapse, and as he agitatedly moved among the guests in his effort to find a physician, he called "The sween has quooned . I mean to say the squean has

* See *Get It Right* (page 610) Spooner may have unconsciously revived this sort of error to a marked degree, but it did not originate with him It is, as a matter of fact, as old as speech itself Rabelais called it "tongue-trip" and set it down as characteristic of one "in his cups" His translator's most famous example still rates as a super-spoonerism—*The Chicop of Bichester loves beggs and acon* for *The Bishop of Chichester loves eggs and bacon*

wooned . . . if you see what I mean, the coon has sweened . . . that is, the swoon has weaned. . . . please, help, the wean has squooned . . . do you understand, THE QUEEN HAS SWOONED!"

The Fergusons—Cora and her chinless husband Odell—had never been in domestic service, but as they had lost their money and were now offered the unusual opportunity of working for Mrs Armour Swift McCormick—she as maid and he as butler—they decided to accept Odell had never mixed (but never missed, really) a drink in his life, and it was just his luck that on the second day of service he was told to prepare cocktails for some guests whom Mrs McCormick was having in that afternoon This is Odell's running comment as he went about the job, with Cora at his elbow "I put a jigger of gin in the pitcher and, for the sake of verification, drank a jigger myself. I then put a jigger of vermouth in the pitcher and—ditto—just for verification Then in goes—and down goes—two more jiggers of gin—and one of vermouth And show on Nesh, I hurn my tand to the hanmattans, fie-a-verying the tonkents by sulping a gwallow of thish and thash, chopping drerries and tice yubes into the quaker and tracing the play on the rining-doom wum-dater Shen I sake anosher tip of the free-rigerator, cash Dora into the bangostura jitters, and moishen my tarched proat with a rash of dye A shen I beer a hell! Flick as a quash I fonetell the dire fepartm'nt, hurn the tose on the hady of the louse patacult my wrecious little pife into the pimming swool, and—mexh norning ish jooking for anosher lob, Mrs McArmour Cormick having fiftly swired me."

CONTEST *

NO	YES
1 The mottle poised in the newt	The model posed in the nude
2 The water here is invested with sharks	The water here is infested with sharks
3 Please show the jigadier-brindle into the library	Please show the brigadier-general into the library
4 You must relapse if you would secede with this kealth horse	You must relax if you would succeed with this health course
5 That satire on her third finger is requisite	That sapphire on her third finger is exquisite
6 The mujik is malodorous and the dancing is anesthetic	The music is melodious and the dancing is esthetic
7 The man with the highly extinguished career took the dog out on a lease	The man with the highly distinguished career took the dog out on a leash
8 He had an Ali Baba, so the court could not hold him for the krievous grime	He had an alibi, so the court could not hold him for the grievous crime
9 The menthol expert denounced the patent endurable	The mental expert pronounced the patient incurable

* See page 3.

	NO	YES
10	When she saw her long-lost finance, she declaimed: "Exit homo!"	When she saw her long-lost fiancé, she exclaimed "Ecce homo!"
11	The subject of his desertion is *The Perpetration of the Animal Specie*	The subject of his dissertation is *The Perpetuation of the Animal Species*
12	He became deleterious, and knocked the canary off its purge	He became delirious, and knocked the canary off its perch
13	In the bright Lexington of youth there is no such ford as wail	In the bright lexicon of youth there is no such word as fail
14	The incite inflammation given us helped mercurially	The inside information given us helped materially
15	He is going to try to cross the Specific Ocean in a shawl	He is going to try to cross the Pacific Ocean in a yawl
16	They say that Bobby is a very nautical boy because he neglgées his lessons	They say that Bobby is a very naughty boy because he neglects his lessons
17	If you're a great tea luscious you'll find this depot too small	If you're a great tea lusher you'll find this teapot too small
18	I have my strength (that's one constellation) so I shall alleviate you of that bevy hag	I have my strength (that's one consolation) so I shall relieve you of that heavy bag
19	Devote is only a fracture of what it was at the last selection	The vote is only a fraction of what it was at the last election
20	He raises his crops by means of irritation and by heavy spreading of mature	He raises his crops by irrigation and by heavy spreading of manure.
21	Always take an optional point of view and be synthetic with any one in trouble	Always take an optimistic point of view and be sympathetic with any one in trouble
22	I have increased my chaste measurement by eating an ample a day	I have increased my chest measurement by eating an apple a day
23	He usually leads a very oscillated life, but last night he went out and celibated	He usually leads a very isolated life, but last night he went out and celebrated
24	I insulted my physician and he told me that there are probably a million Germans in every drop of water I drink	I consulted my physician, and he told me that there are probably a million germs in every drop of water I drink
25	The circus aristocrats lost their equilateral when they thought of their friend's death	The circus acrobats lost their equilibrium when they thought of their friend's death
26	The incandescent Willie refused to eat his espionage and was consequently baptized	The adolescent Willie refused to eat his spinach and was consequently chastised
27	He was taken into custardy and was led through the propagate to the plenipotentiary	He was taken into custody and was led through the proper gate to the penitentiary
28	John shouted exitedly: "Stop that,	John shouted excitedly: "Stop that,

	NO	YES
	you big bomb; authorize I'll call the please"	you 'big bum'; otherwise I'll call the police"
29	Though Mrs Brown had a beryl on her neck, she nevertheless wore her precocious neckless	Though Mrs Brown had a boil on her neck, she nevertheless wore her precious necklace
30	When the mother of Achilles dipped him into the river Stinks, he became intolerable except for his hells by which she held him	When the mother of Achilles dipped him into the river Styx, he became invulnerable except for his heels by which she held him
31	If you want a potion to make your teeth look newly enamored, thistle work lyricals	If you want a lotion to make your teeth look newly enameled, this will work miracles
32	Please let me have the *Farmer's Suitable Pocket Book* and Jean's *Universal Rounders*	Please let me have the *Pharmaceutical Pocket Book* and Sir J H Jeans' *The Universe Around Us*
33	*A Play on Words* *	
	Assert ten Barren love day made	A certain Baron loved a maid
	Dan woo'd her hart buy nigh tan day,	And woo'd her heart by night and day,
	Butt wen knee begged she'd marry hymn,	But when he begged she'd marry him,
	The crewel bell may dancer neigh.	The cruel belle made answer nay
	Lo atter fee tin vein he side	Low at her feet in vain he sighed
	Ant holder office offal pane—	And told her of his awful pain—
	A lasses mown touched knot terse sole—	Alas! his moan touched not her soul—
	His grown was sever awl Lynn vane.	His groan was ever all in vain
	"Owe, beam my bride, my deer, rye prey,	"O be my bride, my dear, I pray,
	And here mice size beef ore rye dye,	And hear my sighs before I die,
	Oak caste mean knot tin scorn neigh way—	O cast me not in scorn away—
	Yew are the apple love me nigh!"	You are the apple of my eye!"
	She herd Dan new we truly spoke.	She heard, and knew he truly spoke
	Key was of noble berth, and bread	He was of noble birth, and bred
	Tool lofty mean and hie renown,	To lofty men and high renown,
	The air too grate testates, 'twas head.	The heir to great estates, 'twas said.
	"Ewe wood due bettor, sor," she bald,	"You would do better, sir," she bawled,
	"Took court sum mother girl, lie wean—	"To court some other girl, I ween—
	Ewer knot mice stile, lisle never share	You're not my style, I'll never share
	The thrown domestic asure quean!"	The throne domestic as your queen!"
	"'Tis dun, no—farebutt Scilly won—	"'Tis done; O—fair but silly one—

* By permission of Charles Scribner's Sons.

NO	YES
Aisle waiste know father size on thel"	I'll waste no further sighs on thee!"
Oft tooth the nay bring porte tea flue	Off to the neighboring port he flew
And through himself into the see.	And threw himself into the sea

Eugene Field

SECTION THIRTY-FIVE CRITIQUE

Grotesqueries in language, as in other things, run amok. Let a peculiar style become a vogue, and you will probably see it become a fetish. The fastidious refinements of euphuism, for example, soon became phraseological jugglery, and, after deserved parodying by Shakspere and others, disappeared. Long stretches of such writing as

> Father and friend (your age showeth the one, your honesty the other), I am neither so *s*uspicious to *m*istrust your goodwill, nor so sottish to *m*islike your good counsel As I am therefore to *th*ank you for the first, so it stands upon me to *th*ink better on the latter I mean not to *c*avil with you as one loving *s*ophistry; neither to *c*ontrol you, as one having *s*uperiority, the one would bring my talk into suspicion of *f*raud, the other convince me of *f*olly
>
> John Lyly *Euphues and his England*

become abuse, abuse of language and abuse of reader. The acrobatics of diction and construction constitute a kind of narcism of composition, and sound and rhythm are conveyed rather than thought.

The Latinisms and Grecisms of the seventeenth century similarly doomed themselves. Such words as *deturpated* for *deformed, clancularly* for *secretly, immorigerous* for *disobedient, intenerate* for *render soft, paranymph* for *lady's maid, insolent* for *unusual, excellent* for *extreme* did not—would not—"take," however logical they were from a linguistic point of view. And such constructions as *The despised drops into an artificial river and an intolerable were grown* and *Into hollowness and a prodigious drought shall the seas descend* had no better chance of survival. Such heaviness of diction and imagery as is represented by the following specimen of seventeenth century writing is interesting neither as a stunt nor as a "rapturous figure of speech":

> For thus the sun is the eye of the world; and he is indifferent to the Negro or the cold Russian, to them that dwell under the line, and them

> that stand near the tropics, the scalded Indian, or the poor boy that shakes at the foot of the Riphean hills, but the flexures of the heaven and the earth, the conveniency of abode, and the approaches to the north or south, respectively change the emanations of his beams, not that they do not pass always from him, but that they are not equally received below, but by periods and changes, by little inlets and reflections, they receive what they can, and some have only a dark day and a long night from him, snows and white cattle, a miserable life, and a perpetual harvest of catarrhs and consumptions, apoplexies and dead palsies, but some have splendid fires and aromatic spices, rich wines and well-digested fruits, great wit and great courage, because they dwell in his eye, and look in his face, and are the courtiers of the sun, and wait upon him in his chambers of the east
>
> Jeremy Taylor *Doctor Dubitantium*

The brocaded conceits of the eighteenth century became equally forbidding and precious Pluming themselves upon the "crystal clarity" of the French classicism, writers of the period nevertheless indulged in overwriting to the point of irrationality and incomprehensibility. Even the transparent Addison could write

> I must confess, after having surveyed the antiquities about Naples and Rome, I cannot but think that our admiration of them does not so much arise out of their greatness as uncommonness

What he meant—simply and directly—was

> I think that our admiration of the antiquities of Naples and Rome arises not so much from their greatness as from their uncommonness

To call the eyes variously "sister springs," "parents of silver-forded rills," "thawing crystal heavens of ever falling stars," and tears "walking baths," "compendious oceans," "the cream of the Milky Way at which cherubs sip, . . . whose liquid is bottled by angels for the new guests of heaven," is to out-refine refinement, and to sacrifice both imagery and thought to attempted exquisiteness.

The nineteenth century, with its liberalism of the romantic movement, said "Write as you please," and the twentieth follows up with the same policy The individual is all in all; the cult and the school are tabu. And the results? Sometimes Babel; sometimes sanity and clarity; always experiment. Not that experiment has ever been absent down the centuries. It has been shown (page 274) that Shakspere coined words, used the slang and the barbarism of his time, held the mirror up to language through characterization

and direct comment—as did others. But during the past century or century and a half there has been broader and more complex experiment in usage for the reason that civilization has been fuller and freer, more intricate and expansive, more literate and, by that very token, more illiterate also. Universality of educational opportunity has brought with it multiplication of expressional problems and greater willingness to take expressional risks on the trial-and-error basis. There is now and has been for many decades less respect for tradition—if not, indeed, downright disrespect for it. And both advantage and disadvantage reside in this attitude.

Authors in every field of composition, especially in the novel and the drama, have been obliged to run the gamut of language abuse. Otherwise they could not accurately have portrayed character in all walks and levels of life. From the point of view of characterization, yesterday and today and tomorrow must ever be the same. Keats and Carlyle have been called the last of the great word creators in the field of literature. But the field of utilitarian expression—science, art, business, journalism—abounds in new terms. This distinction must, however, be kept in mind: New words today tend to confine themselves strictly to the field for which they are especially designed; they do not work themselves into the language—do not assimilate—as do words that come into being through literature itself. They insist upon retaining all their rough edges and particularities, and standing apart, and they thus come to constitute a kind of jargon.

The term *jargon* really means speech (or writing) that is special to a group, and that is unintelligible to those not initiated, thus, the jargon of aviation, the jargon of the theater, the jargon of statistics, the jargon of astrology. It pertains primarily to the technical language of the sciences and the professions, and to that of trades and crafts and sports, and so on. Jargon is, in other words, shop talk. In colloquial usage, however, *jargon* is applied to any muddled and confused expression, its appropriate synonym is the imitative word *gibberish*. *Argot* is sometimes used with the same signification but it should not be. Originally and specifically argot is the secret speech and signs of rogues and thieves, such as *sparklers* for diamonds, *gat* for gun, *bump off* for kill—their special and intimate slang, if you please. Like *argot, lingo* is a subordinate form of jargon, or usually appears so; it is a more or less contemptuous term applied to any foreign tongue or dialect, or to technical expression, by those who cannot understand it.

Patois is usually provincial and dialectic, and always illiterate, characteristic chiefly of the lower classes who may well enough understand the literate forms of expression but are satisfied to use the illiterate. *Cant* is, again, expression peculiar to a given class and, as a rule, understood only by it, usually a lower, not to say underworld class, rather than a technical group. It may also be the special idiom of a pursuit or a profession, but it is, in particular, the insincere conventional give-and-take of social conversation, "pietistic pretentiousness," and human-relations hypocrisy.

Vernacular is also a variable term, meaning really one's native and indigenous language or Mother Tongue, but it is colloquially applied to both special locality and to special pursuit. *Dialect* is a modification of a language according to some local or group peculiarity, broader than provincialism, as a rule, in use and understanding, and not necessarily identified with illiteracy since it may be the expression of the educated as of the uneducated. The tendency of the educated always is, however, to smooth out all particularities of speech into standard usage The word *dialect* should not be used to denote any departure from standard usage, as it frequently is Its differences in usage and idiom and pronunciation are usually geographic or regional and ethnological, and are thus far more difficult of analysis than are localism and slang and barbarism, and the other departures from normal expression Climate is of no small importance as a cause of dialectic differences in a language.

The twentieth century has been characterized—is being characterized—by much excellent writing and speaking. But it has to date yielded more that is careless and confusing and, as Saintsbury would say, down-at-heel. If the style of this century is capable of definition by means of a single word, that word must be *heterogeneity*. This may be exactly fair, for life so far in this century has been to a high degree confusing and complex and heterogeneous, and writing and speaking inevitably reflect life.

It is estimated, for instance, that at least seventy-five per cent of all legal controversy originates in the inability of people to say exactly what they mean—or in their indifference as to precision in expression. Though this is a well-deserved irony, inasmuch as the law remains probably the most stubborn of professions in the retention of archaic jargon (page 46), it is unfortunate that the same inability or indifference is permitted to characterize all too

much of the expression calculated for general consumption—books, magazines, newspapers, theater, radio. These mediums should be exemplars of economy and clarity and correctness in regard not only to words themselves but to the association of words in phrases, clauses, sentences, and paragraphs. But how far they fall short—how hopelessly they descend into mere woolliness —is revealed by the following excerpts taken at random from the mediums indicated. They are unfortunately typical of the abuses that the Mother Tongue has fallen heir to in these days of muddled mentalities and rugged but unassimilative individuality.

There could hardly be a better adjective than *wooly* or a better noun than *woolıness* to denote haziness and approximateness of expression, the lack of definiteness and incisiveness and luminosity in saying what is meant. The British schoolmaster could hardly do without these terms in his criticism of themes; the American schoolmaster would do well to use them more frequently "To pull the wool over one's eyes" implies conscious deception by word or act, usually the former. To pull the wool over one's eyes unconsciously is a wooly business that is even more damaging to all concerned than mere deception, for the deceiver is himself deceived.

Day in and day out the beloved radio persists in not saying what it means by the use of such garbled grammar as

1

Now, before bringing you two more items of news, Pebbly Soap Flakes are devised to mollify your Mondays

2

It is now just seventeen minutes and one quarter after seven o'clock a m Eastern War Time, going on to seventeen minutes and one half, being the accurate report of the incomparable Tick-Tock Watch which every one should wear on the wrist or in the pocket or on the cosy bed table

The newspapers are, as a rule, miracles of accuracy in English usage when they are judged by the volume of printed matter they carry and the speed with which much of it has to be whipped into shape. Curiously enough their clearest and most accurate composition is usually to be found in those items and stories that are most rapidly put together, their least accurate in the more leisurely columns (colyums). It has been said, facetiously and otherwise, that the women columnists write more fluently and less precisely than the men columnists. However, there has been no authorita-

tive poll. Of the four wooly passages below two are by women newspaper columnists, two by men:

1

The second was a note from that committee which stated that they had been unable to arrange to send the greater part of the boys' under its care to several holiday camps throughout the southern counties

2

Washington is at its most beautiful at this time. All the flowering shrubs are out and the spring flowers are everywhere One cannot help but be impressed by the beauty of this capital of a great country

3

He has been in ———————— with her for the last year and a half and she said his bravery during the last few weeks when he was in constant pain won the admiration of everyone in the cast Laura is happy as a lark at being here for a few weeks Then she returns to re-open with the same play in New York She has had a wonderful season and says it is so good to hear people laugh—which, of course, this comedy always does

4

The struggle goes on constantly against our baser natures, but we, as individuals, are able to carry it on today without being weighed down by the knowledge that in order even to exist ourselves we must try to destroy our fellow human beings—people who live in some other bit of land and speak some other language, who claim some other nationality and yet who have the same needs and the same desires we have ourselves, and whom we could love and understand if it were not for this thing called war

The following are clipped from national magazines and best-selling novels, two mediums for which leisureliness of copy preparation ought to be at least some guarantee that what is said is meant, that what is meant is said:

1

Many a time the conversation became so interesting that I almost died from anxiety had it not been that some bully begins to seriously blaspheme the company

2

I say advisedly, and let me repeat, that not a word of this must get out, having regard to the delicacy of our positions and for the sake of our wives and so on

3

Oh, you would reckon Marie was the older sister and Tom the baby of the family being married off the way Marie busied herself about and the knowing airs she gave herself

4

It came over him this must be Sunday for his boots had been freshly charcoaled and his linsey shirt was clean, though his neck and tow britches looked like neither had seen water for a long time

5

. . . but, even with all that happened since in mind, he admitted, as his eye waited for Mary's shadow to cross the window again, that even now he would do the same, that he had not had the strength in him to resist, would not have it now

6

The identification of the reader with the author is the real cause why even the most general types of satire are a sort of glass wherein beholders do generally discover everybody's face but their own which is the chief reason for that kind reception which it meets with in the world

7

Yes, the place was just a dugout—a dugout, with him like a thin ferret at one end of the table and that soft, bulging, ferret-woman at the other, and between them, one on either side, himself, outraged and nauseated, and that unhappy little fellow, like a changeling from the world of fresh air, caught and dragged down and imprisoned in the ferret-warren

The lawmakers are, of course, the black sheep of wooly expression. Many people break the law deliberately; many break it because of ignorance of its existence in specific instances. But a great many people break the law and thus get themselves into endless litigation because of the unconscious secretiveness of its phraseology. Perish the thought that it is made purposely vague and ambiguous in order that the legal profession may be—retained! In any event the following example of legislative English may serve in part to explain why so many taxpayers are fit subjects for the psychopathic wards after trying to compute their taxes in accordance with THE LAW:

For the purposes of Section 712, Section 742, and Section 743 in the case of a corporation which is a component corporation in a transaction described in subsection (a).

(1) Except as provided in paragraph (2), for the purpose of computing, for any taxable year beginning after Dec. 31, 1941, the excess profits credit of such component corporation or of an acquiring corporation of which the acquiring corporation in such transaction is not a component, except in the application of sections 713(f) and 742(h) (other than the limitation on the amount of average base period net income or Supplement A average base period net income, as the case may be, determined thereunder), no account shall be taken of the excess profits

net income of such component corporation for any period before the day after such transaction, or of the excess profits net income for any period before the day after such transaction of its component corporations in any transaction before such transaction, and no account shall be taken of the capital addition or capital reduction of such component corporation either immediately before such transaction or for any prior period, or of the capital addition or capital reduction either immediately before such transaction or for any prior period of its component corporations in any transactions before such transaction.

From Section 740(c) of the Excess Profits Tax Title, as Congress amended it in 1943 by Section 228 of the Revenue Act of 1942.

It would seem, certainly, that if there is one medium of expression in which woolliness is to be studiously avoided, that medium is advertising copy. Here perspicacity is bought and paid for—or should be. But the following excerpts from copy in national mediums cause a qualm. Note in the first the pitiful attempt at rime; in the second, the solecism *(plenty)*, the exaggerated statement, the incomplete comparison, in the third, the involved tag-on sentences; in the fourth, the general looseness, and the labored (belabored) detail that makes the copy suspect. The last two speak (or do not) for themselves.

1

——— for mine
Every time

2

A tank destroyer is plenty rough on radio . . . After assembly there are vibration tests that simulate the roll and toss of a tank destroyer, tests that reproduce the heat and humidity of steaming jungles, violence tests that hurt worse than a ton of bricks

3

No, to him it's one single mechanical marvel, with a distinct personality, which he has learned to know and respect because he has found it dependable in situations involving life or death . . . We never want that light in a pilot's eyes which bespeaks his silent trust in us to be suddenly extinguished by the bitter disillusionment which failure of our product would mean

4

Today, ———'s soldiers of industry are devoted to the production of communications equipment, radios for tanks and airplanes, artillery fuzes and shells for the service of our armed forces . . . doing their part

to give our men at the front not only the vast superiority in equipment that America's mass production experts can produce, but also *new* weapons of victory, yet unknown to the world, that America's industrial scientists can devise

5

Because the welfare of your family and the security of your country is at stake—it is essential that you co-operate with your coal dealer in his gigantic task of getting your coal bin filled for next winter without interfering with the flow of coal to America's vital war production plants

So you can help yourself and help America at war by ordering your coal *now* and keeping your bin ready for delivery any time your dealer can make it in accordance with government transportation regulations and shortages in equipment, labor, gasoline, and tires

6

Here's a cigarette with mildness that counts, and flavor too, and coolness Nothing hits the spot like a ———. Its taste is cleaner, it is slow-burning, it has just the right distinction in tobacco selections to make its user the envy of everybody. Its incomparable smoothness, its soothing quality, its elegant aroma give it top-notch place with connoisseurs as well as with amateurs in the use of the precious weed It does not irritate throat and nasal passages, but, rather, heals them after they have been exposed to the harsher and rougher brands of cigarette. Its packing is tight enough to conserve tobacco goodness to the last fleck, yet loose enough to permit smoke to play in and around and through its every flake with resulting ecstacy for the smoker You may be sure that there will be no spilling of its delectable content when you take out a ——— to light up. And you may be equally sure that its ash will hold on till you can reach the tray. Long brands, and short. Tips of all varieties and colors. Packages of twelve and twenty four. The last word in the smoker's paradisiacal perfection

The conversion of abstract thought into specific, concrete expression is attended with almost insuperable difficulties. The attempt at such conversion is very likely to result in just such muddled and disconnected and beclouded expression as is illustrated in these excerpts. Vivid and vigorous and explicit expression is inevitably the reflection of vivid and vigorous and explicit thought *beforehand.* The more general and abstract an idea is in the mind, the less safely may it be expressed by means of either speech or writing. Indeed, a mental revolution, and nothing short of it, may be required before the right words together with their right connections and relationships are found to liberate the abstract into the concrete, the generic into the specific (page 148). Herbert Spencer's illustration of this principle, old as it now is, must still stand as the perfect guide:

ABSTRACT

In proportion as the manners, customs, and amusements of a nation are cruel and barbarous, the regulations of their penal code will be severe

CONCRETE

According as men delight in battles, bull-fights, and combats of gladiators, so will they punish by hanging, burning, and crucifying

But excess of specific terminology may easily lead to preciosity, may induce a writer to call a spade anything but a spade. It stands in danger of being called an agricultural implement of excavation that delves into good old Mother Earth under propulsion of humanized energy, or merely a "devil scoop," rather than an implement for digging. And excess of generic terms may dull expression and reduce it to the dead level of what-you-may-call-it and thing-a-ma-jig, leaving only blurred notions and ideas that hardly approach or approximate the detail that must be the very life and essence of worth-while expression. It may very well be that the more synonyms a person knows for a given term, the more numerous will be the pitfalls of confusion into which his expression may be tempted. By the same token the fewer he may know, the more meaningless his generalities are likely to become.

The words *machine* and *tool* are generic concrete, the words *printing-press* and *vise,* specific concrete equivalents. The words *motion* and *wisdom* are generic abstract; the words *running* and *discretion,* specific abstract equivalents. But to confine words such as these to one classification alone would weaken expression by simplification and make it monotonous; to extend them enriches at the same time that it tempts into the dangers of confusion and misunderstanding. Man was a long time in coming to understand such figurative language as *the machine of government, the tool of the politicians, the power of the (printing) press, caught in the vise of fate, the glory of motion, the wisdom of the stars, a running comment, the discretion of the meteor,* if, indeed, he has yet fully done so. To use such figures may be to abuse language. Herrick's famous "Bid me to live and I will live, thy Protestant to be" was a conundrum when it was written, and remains one, because of the word *Protestant.* No one has ever known exactly what it means as here used. But there are few passages in literature that live by words alone; there should be fewer. And there should be no idle toying or "playing" with words especially on the part of young writers. Thought should lead, diction follow. The

term *rhetoric* came into disrepute for the reason that writers and speakers permitted appeals to feeling and passion, oftentimes through mere sound, to take the place of appeals to reason. It came to mean the art of persuading by means of the artificial and ostentatious, of the bombastic and pompous. And this bad odor remains to a great degree. When a speaker becomes rhetorical, the logically minded in his audience begin to squirm (page 42).

Bathos is a quality in "rhetoric" that constitutes abuse of language. It is, strictly speaking, unconscious anticlimax, but this distinction is by no means always insisted upon. When, however, Thomas Gray wrote

> What female heart can gold despise?
> What cat's averse to fish?

he deliberately in the second line descended to the ridiculous, if not exactly from the sublime. He was seeking—and he found—comic effect by means of unusual and surprising comparison. The application of an insignificant adjective to describe a phenomenon is one of the commonest forms of bathos; Niagara Falls is not *pretty* but *majestic*. The unconscious use of an unworthy second term in a serious comparison is similarly bathetic; a sharp flash of lightning is not appropriately compared with the striking of a match. Any abuse of a reader's sense of fitness and proportion may result in bathos. Longfellow's notorious comparison of the falling of night with a feather "wafting downward from an eagle" has become a classic in unintentional bathos. It is very much like introducing into a poetic description of the beauty of Mont Blanc, speculation as to the amount of gold that may lie hidden in "that thar hill." Bathos must not be mistaken for pathos. It has sometimes been called false pathos The latter is a sincere expression of sympathetic sorrow and grief evoked by pain or suffering; the former can be but an awkward and naive imitation of such expression.

There are other abuses in words and word relationships that may very easily result from mere rhetoric, the writer or speaker being misled by dictional device rather than by appeal to reason. One such is *irony*—a method of expression in which the opposite of what is said is to be understood. The danger in its use arises from the fact that unless it is carefully stated it may be taken literally rather than figuratively. "You're a nice one, you are!" is an example of everyday irony. Its point is lost, however, unless by

tone and manner of expression it is made to convey the contrary of what it says. Carried to excess, irony may become more annoying and disgusting, perhaps, than any other device in expression. It may be gentle, bitter, cutting, or merely exaggerative as a source of humor. *Socratic irony* is the feigning of ignorance, sometimes used for the purpose of "drawing a person out," thus causing him to reveal himself as ignorant or, as in cross-examination, guilty.

Litotes (page 112) is related to irony in that it is a striving after effect by the device of understatement. It is, thus, the opposite of *hyperbole* which, it has been seen (page 29), is sheer exaggeration for the sake of effect. Any figure of speech used to excess—like any other device—may be made an element of abuse in expression, but these particular figures lend themselves to artificiality more, perhaps, than others. Both litotes and hyperbole are said to be habit-forming, the one representing inferiority complexes and the other superiority complexes. *Not without justice, not unattended by, not beyond reproach, not all that could be wished, no uncommon thing, no small task, no ordinary man,* are examples of hackneyed litotes that are now without point or emphasis, and *frightened to death, cold as ice, mountains of gold, oceans of gasoline, acres of diamonds, rivers of blood* are now hackneyed hyperboles. The one group, like the other, represents excess that amounts to abusage of privilege in the use of figures.

Pedantic expression is that which reveals a writer or a speaker as being over meticulous in regard to purity of English terms. He enslaves himself to the dictionary in order to make sure that his every word is of pure and honorable origin and descent, failing or refusing to recognize the fact that the dictionary never pioneers but records only, that it contains terms that have been and are used rather than those that may be and perhaps will be. It does not decide good use It must contain words that are not now in good use; it must contain special and technical words, it must contain coinages that are now trying their way with conversation and literature. But it makes no claim of being the final or absolute arbiter. It may, like grammar, explain usage and discuss the factors that make or have made for or against acceptance of given terms. But, like grammar, it overreaches itself if it attempts to prescribe arbitrarily what shall be good use. This is done only by the best speakers and writers themselves, whom the dictionaries and even the grammars must follow. The pedant thus leans backward to the archaic rather than forward to the coinage, he is a

precisian, and could never be brought to admit that the "flash" descriptive power of a slang term, such as *bounder* or *flapper* or *stunt,* is worth vastly more to everyday speech than the more strictly proper equivalent. His insistence upon propriety thus leads him very often into the circumlocutions of precise definition and exposition, and his sheer pedantry becomes affectation.

Pedantry in writing and speaking sometimes takes the form of excessive quotation and allusion. Needless to say both of these devices should be kept accurate and appropriate if they are to be made the richly effective aids that they may be made. Milton wrote "Fresh woods and pastures new," not "Fresh fields and pastures new." Coleridge wrote, "Water, water everywhere, nor any drop to drink," not "Water, water everywhere, and not a drop to drink." Hamlet said "How weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable, Seem to me all the uses of this world," not "How flat, stale, and unprofitable." "A parting shot" should really be "A Parthian shot," and "All that glitters is not gold" should really read "Not all that glisters is gold." Tennyson wrote "More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of," not "More things are brought by prayer than this world knows of" as he is sometimes misquoted. Pope wrote "A little learning is a dangerous thing," not "A little knowledge is a dangerous thing," as he is sometimes misquoted.

Quotations should spring spontaneously from memory enriched by reading and experience. Whether they slip naturally and easily into their appropriate place or are labored and "looked-up" can always somehow be told by the intelligent reader. Any one who knows books ever so little may inject quotations here and there into his composition in order to give it the appearance of learning and sophistication, but their studied library quality—their lack of spontaneity—will give him away. Macaulay is the grand example in quotation, as he is in allusion. His mind was so rich and full of sayings and references that applied subtly, forcefully, and ineluctably to his every discussion, that they sometimes evoked applause by their very aptness His problem was rather to resist them than to seek them out laboriously.

One of the greatest difficulties in reading Milton's poetry resides in his extensive allusiveness. Not only was he a classical scholar but he lived and wrote in a time when it was fashionable if not imperative to allude to Greek and Roman life and character. In

some of his poems there is to be found a classical allusion in almost every line, an element that makes him forbidding to those who know little or nothing of Greek and Latin mythology. But the great beauty of this element in his work is its inescapable appropriateness and rightness. The politician who in a burst of rhetoric stated that his public record was as invulnerable as Achilles' heel, would have done well to study Homeric mythology somewhat better in his student days.

It sometimes happens that a writer or a speaker will affect a kind of condescension or arrogance or superciliousness toward those who supposedly "hang" upon his words. This kind of abuse may occur in connection with quotation and allusiveness, as for example in the Man of Sorrows for Jesus, the Bard of Avon for Shakspere, the Great Emancipator for Lincoln, the Sage of Chelsea for Carlyle, the kind of mercy that is not forced for "The quality of mercy is not strained," the preference of liberty to death for "Give me liberty or give me death." Such indirect allusive quotation may be intended as complimentary to an audience but the compliment is gratuitous at best, the average audience interpreting the method as pompous and conceited as if to say "See how familiar I am with all this, why, I don't even have to name names or quote quotes." Similar condescension is evinced by such parenthetical asides as *When the true story of the Blythe family (Barrymore to you) is written . . .* and *Last summer in the Argentine (yes, sir, we writers get around) I saw . . .* These are also gratuitous conceits thrown in for no discernible reason, and to the annoyance of most readers, who may very often know vastly more about the Barrymore family or the Argentine than the one who makes such supercilious contribution to his expression. *As every one knows by this time, You are of course familiar with, If you think that you are sadly mistaken, I have yet to learn, Never make the mistake of,* injected into composition of any kind, may confer an air of superiority that the average reader or listener will resent. It is even more pompous, if possible, for a writer to refer to himself as *the present writer* or *your obliging author* or *the expositor (narrator) now in your service.* Most objectionable of all—not to say disagreeable—is the tendency sometimes evinced by a writer to apologize for his use of some popular slang phrase or colloquialism by such parenthetical expression as *to descend to the vernacular* or *to coin a curtness from the curb* ("to coin a curbage"), or *if you will pardon the lapse,* as much as to say that

his writing does not usually keep such company but you will undoubtedly understand. *Sic* is a Latin adverb meaning thus. It is sometimes placed in parentheses or brackets to indicate that a quotation or a spelling exactly follows the original to which reference is made. It is especially likely to be used to point out ironically some unusual point of view or some error. Some writers use it in a show-off way as if to reveal the fact that they belong to the literary sophisticates. Use it sparingly, if at all. It is always written in italics, and is enclosed in brackets or parentheses, as context requires (page 603).

Overuse of the mechanics of emphasis, especially underlining (italics), may not only ironically weaken what it is intended to stress, but may result in misjudgment of the writer. If so much of what he has to say requires underlining, it is likely either that his message is of unheard-of importance or that he overestimates his words. Italics, moreover, are complimentary neither to the writer himself nor to his reader. They are in a way a confession that he cannot use language with sufficient skill to impress it without a mechanical device, or they imply that the reader's intelligence is so low in grade that he cannot grasp relative values in what is written without such mechanical enforcement. Occasionally italics may be desirable for pointing an emphasis of distinction or contrast, but only occasionally—after every possible resort has been made to diction and construction to say what is meant. And they are, of course, indispensable very often for differentiating kinds of printed matter, but this is not the point under discussion here. If, again, he intersperses exclamation and interrogation marks parenthetically—(!), (?)—through his writing, he runs the risk of misjudging and of being misjudged. His jokes may all have been heard, his shocks may all be regarded as quite ordinary. In

> It is delightful(?) to contemplate the *colossal* stupidity(!) man has displayed since his emergence(?) from the jungle. As soon as he has made a little progress(?) he has torn it asunder by his silly(!) warfare His genius(!) for destruction is—alas—greater than his genius for construction

the excessive parenthetical marks say something very much like "See what a great fellow I am!" Never should two marks of mechanical emphasis be used in connection with the same term, as in *You **must** (!) do this.* Here ***must*** of itself is strong enough; to emphasize it by means of both italics and exclamation mark weakens rather than strengthens its purport.

A parenthetic style is in general a diverting and confusing one. It is sometimes deliberately used as a medium for humor, sometimes by way of giving to writing an intimate conversational quality; it is sometimes fallen into unconsciously. It has been called mathematical style for the reason that it may very often be enclosed in parentheses, brackets, and braces as mathematical terms may be. The following, for example,

> He never knew, though it cannot be said he never suspected, for his own brother, the one who visited us last summer while we were in Paris intimated as much, that she had made all those sacrifices for him while he was, according to all reports, enjoying a hunting trip in Africa

is so interrupted by parenthetic phraseology that thought progress is impeded almost to the point of unintelligibility. It may be given mathematical statement

> He never knew { though it cannot be said he never suspected [for his own brother (the one who visited us last summer while we were in Paris) intimated as much] } that she had made all those sacrifices for him while he was (according to all reports) enjoying a hunting trip in Africa

The reading should be

> He never knew that she had made all those sacrifices for him while he was reportedly enjoying a hunting trip in Africa. According to his brother, the one who visited us in Paris last summer, he may, however, have suspected as much

Adjectivitis is a coined word used to mean excessive use of adjectives, especially pretentious ones. Many writers seem to have the feeling that they cannot express themselves impressively without tagging every noun with an adjective (and, in the same way, every verb with an adverb, for that matter). But this is a characteristic of inferior writing—and speaking. The adjective may be an emotional outlet, but it is by no means always a logical device even for emphasis (page 29). Subtler devices by way of choice of diction and arrangement of phrases are always preferable to the piling on of adjectives. Moreover, the overuse of adjectives tends to detract from the native meanings of the words they are used to modify. To say *The septuagenarian thinks that the over-exploited younger generation should regard human life with the lofty seriousness that so markedly characterized the exemplary youth of his own retarded day* instead of *The septuagenarian thinks that the younger generation should regard life with the seriousness that characterized the youth of his own day* is to add nothing by way

either of meaning or of engagingness. The adjective embellishments subtract from rather than add to the thought conveyed.

As the term *mongrel* like the word *hybrid* is sometimes applied to a word containing elements from two or more languages (page 226) such as *authorship, dotage, martyrdom, priesthood,* so is it also applied to straight-away composition made up of the various elements of abuse treated in this chapter. In particular, it is applied to the various kinds of stereotyped expressions—outworn idioms and figures *(the cup that cheers, coign of vantage, thereby hangs a tale, last but not least);* outworn allusions and quotations (Shylock's *pound of flesh,* Hamlet's *To be or not to be,* Milton's *light fantastic toe,* Gray's *born to blush unseen,* Mr Micawber's *something will turn up);* outworn foreignisms *(tempus fugit, tempora mutantur, mens sana in corpore sano, nouveau riche, entre nous, dolce far niente);* outworn improprieties and colloquialisms *(anyway* for *at any rate, guess* for *suppose* or *think* or *expect,* in *back of* for *behind, mad* for *angry, pants* for *trousers, plenty* for *plentiful, right away* for *at once* or *immediately, viewpoint* or *standpoint* for *point of view, through* for *finished, way* for *entirely).*

Journalese is probably one of the most unfortunate terms that has ever been coined in English. It has happily never been adopted as standard but is still used colloquially to denote a style of writing considered by some as characteristic of newspaper reporters and editors. Today some of the best writing to be found anywhere in all the various mediums of expression is to be found in the newspaper. It cannot be denied that some of the worst writing is also likely to be found in the newspaper. But *journalese* was the vogue half a century ago as a term of disparagement to denote the attempts at fine writing (page 42) that were made by penny-a-liners—ornateness, foreignisms, pretentious phrases, condescending smartness, high-flown diction applied to ordinary affairs, "the sparrow wearing ostrich plumes for wings." The dictionaries define journalese as a stilted style of language featured by colloquialism, superficiality of thought or reasoning, clever or sensational presentation of matter, and evidence of haste in composition. The following are written in a journalese that has now happily passed:

> After delivering an oration to the armed forces the Major General partook of noonday refreshment in company with the military dignitaries of the encampment

> After they were united in the holy bonds of matrimony the bridal couple joined the gay throng on the festooned terrace where a sumptuous wedding breakfast of rare delicacies was enjoyed by all
>
> Serious accident was narrowly averted yesterday afternoon in the proximity of Town Hall when an adolescent riding his bicycle home from our secondary educational institution was precipitated headlong to the curb in collision with a ponderous transportation vehicle

Today these would be written in simpler style, perhaps as follows, except in such "truly rural" newspapers as are expected to deliver their journalese untranslated:

> After speaking to the troops the Major General had luncheon with the officers at the camp
>
> After the marriage ceremony the bride and groom joined the guests at a wedding breakfast served on the terrace
>
> A high-school student riding his bicycle home from school yesterday afternoon was thrown to the curb and injured as result of colliding with a large truck near Town Hall

The abuses of the Mother Tongue—of any Mother Tongue—are legion, and they interlock and overlap to such a degree that it is impossible to say of any one that it is a consistent departure from normal or standard form. In the first place, the normal or standard form is itself so fluid and volatile that it refuses to be "pinned down"; in the second place, the departure or aberration, as has been seen, is itself likely at any time to assume authority. And it has ever been thus. No other language has been so mutilated down the centuries as English has been, what with one abuse and another—foreign influence, dialectic change, climatic condition, variety of illiteracy, social and economic diversity and transition, scientific innovation and revolution. And out of the welter of it all the language has by selection (which implies rejection) and adoption and fabrication not only held its own, but has come through—is always coming through—enriched and reinvigorated, wresting from wreckage new words, new phrases, new turns of expression that in retrospect show its dangers and misfortunes to have been worth while for the sake of the continuous reclamation.

CHAPTER CONTEST *

	NO	YES
1	A large number of humans will be *here*	A large number of men and women *will be here*
2	They felt a great disappoint at my failure	They were greatly disappointed at my failure
3	That doesn't make a dif of bitterance to me	That doesn't make a bit of difference to me
4	All the bedrooms in the house are to be fireplaced	Every bedroom in the house is to have a fireplace
5	According to my cheque this must be a ritzaurant	Judging by my check I take this to be a very expensive restaurant
6	Put in a bat of putter, add a sablespoon of talt, and otherwise teason to saste	Put in a pat of butter, add a tablespoon of salt, and otherwise season to taste
7	"What's a metaphor?" asked the collegiate. "It's a place where cows are pasteurized," answered the progeny	"What's a meadow?" asked the college student. "It's a place where cows are pastured," answered the prodigy
8	She has just undergone an abominable operation performed by the leading sturgeon	She has just undergone an abdominal operation performed by the leading surgeon
9	My invite to the opening of the joynt was delayed by an inextricable happenstance	My invitation to the opening of the cabaret was delayed by an inexplicable circumstance
10	"Some peroxide of odium, please," said the bladinum pond to the dromedary	"Some peroxide of sodium, please," said the platinum blonde to the apothecary
11	The loafer we saw at the cinnamon had a consomme nerve	The lover we saw at the cinema had consummate presumption
12	When he kicked the ghoul, the jeers and applesauce were deafening	When he kicked the goal, the cheers and applause were deafening
13	She wears atheists with her new evening coffer	She wears amethysts with her new evening coiffure
14	As result of the inesthetic she felt no pang at all	As result of the anesthetic she felt no pain at all
15	After all that rampong on the miranda they must rust	After all that romping on the veranda they must rest
16	Don't throw anything into the cynic that won't resolve	Don't throw anything into the sink that won't dissolve
17	He suffered a compound rapture in the muddle of his thy	He suffered a compound fracture in the middle of his thigh
18	She finished reading the cereal story going downtown on the ominous	She finished reading the serial story going downtown on the omnibus
19	The moom pitcher sequins was rare-hazing and ledightful	The moving-picture sequence was hair-raising and delightful

* See page 3.

	NO	YES
20	The boughten bread is by no means so tasty as the home-made but it contains more salaries	The bakery bread is by no means so savory as the home-made but it contains more calories
21	They've been off their feed ever since we've been feeding them this mange preventative	Since we have been feeding them this mange preventive they have lost appetite
22	If I get a zip in this exam I can't take that new optional next term	If I fail in this examination I can not take that new elective subject next term
23	In my absinthe he had unscrewed the nasal from my new guerdon hose	In my absence he had unscrewed the nozzle from my new garden hose
24	It began to drivel just as I backed the car into the barrage	It began to drizzle just as I backed the car into the garage
25	The captain made the comet that this behavior on the part of the crew looked very much like monotony	The captain made the comment that this behavior on the part of the crew looked very much like mutiny
26	He has now got himself into a convex chain gang as result of burning his scandal at both ends	He has now got himself into a convicts chain gang as result of burning his candle at both ends
27	I told him I'd lock him up in the carbon if he didn't keep a servile tongue in his head	I told him I'd lock him up in the car-barn if he didn't keep a civil tongue in his head
28	At the masquerade I shall wear the garbage of a queen with a cordage of orchards and gardens	At the masquerade I shall wear the garb of a queen with a corsage of orchids and gardenias
29	Pompeii was a city of two thousand inhabitants who were all destroyed by an eruption of saliva from the Vatican	Pompeii was a city of two thousand inhabitants who were all destroyed by an eruption of lava from Vesuvius
30	In spite of the fact that there are six telephone operettas in the office, massages delivered to my desk are invariably amphibious	In spite of the fact that there are six telephone operators in the office, messages delivered to my desk are invariably ambiguous
31	Alice said that she did not care for riding in the gorgonzolas in Venice because it is such a sedimentary pastime	Alice said that she did not care for riding in the gondolas in Venice because it is such a sedentary pastime
32	Shortly after his explosion from school he became ill with guitar and was required to take many aspirate tablets	Shortly after his expulsion from school he became ill with catarrh and was required to take many aspirin tablets
33	As he was on his way to meet his congenital friends, the barbarians in his wheels broke, and he had to hire a puny to finish the journey	As he was on his way to meet his congenial friends, the ball bearings in his wheels broke, and he had to hire a pony to finish the journey
34	Wearing nothing but vandals I strolled through the seminary	Wearing nothing but sandals I strolled through the cemetery where

	NO	YES
	where dear old Massive lies buried in the cold, cold ground	dear old "Massa" lies buried in the cold, cold ground
35	After I relegated the clock, I read the secular about the Chinese mandolin who became so auspicious of the fascination mark the doctor made on his arm	After I regulated the clock I read the circular about the Chinese mandarin who became so suspicious of the vaccination mark the doctor made on his arm
36	His Royal Harness attended our village church, our possum breached in a foreign languish; our quire sang a beautiful malady	His Royal Highness attended our village church, our parson preached in a foreign language, our choir sang a beautiful melody
37	The meeting was adjoined because it lacked a decorum, and those of us present sat around the statute in the park and demented the fact that our club isn't better orangeized	The meeting was adjourned because it lacked a quorum, and those of us present sat around the statue in the park and lamented the fact that our club is not better organized
38	Sitting *vis-a-vis* he plunged *in medias res* regarding his *piece de resistance*, and he spoke with such *naiveté* and *savoir faire* that we all believed, for the nonce at least, that it must in truth be a *magnus opus*	Sitting opposite he was at once in the height of discussion regarding his masterpiece, and he spoke with such frankness and ease that we all believed, for the time being at least, that it must in truth be a great work
39	She prunes herself on using five-cylinder words and thinks she is the most virulent writer extent, but I nearly always have to take acrobatic spirits of pneumonia after reading one of her *hors d'oeuvres*	She plumes herself on using five-syllable words and thinks she is the most virile writer extant, but I nearly always have to take aromatic spirits of ammonia after reading one of her *chefs-d'oeuvre*
40	That pernickety old party who bought most of my goods and chattels at my vendue last fall hain't never yet paid me one red cent	That fussy old person who bought most of my personal property at my sale last fall has not yet paid me
41	Whatever's got into her nobody seems to know but there be folks what think she's gone plumb crazy like	Nobody knows apparently what is wrong with her but some think that she is out of her mind
42	I neighbored with the Joneses yesterday, and I heerd tell from them that Mrs Harder is held bad at the horspital	I called on my neighbors, the Joneses, yesterday, and they told me that Mrs Harder is seriously ill in the hospital
43	I ain't never been one for to scrape acquaintance or curry favors; howsumever, I'd do anything most jes to shake hands with the President	I am one of those who never seek acquaintance or favor; however, I should be willing to do almost anything for the privilege of shaking hands with the President

	NO	YES
44	Fawncy what a jolly fright I must have looked after being jostled in the tube and all that sort of thing, you know	I must have looked very untidy as result of the crowding in the subway
45	I reckon mebbe Jeremiah's jes been a-hevin one o' his bad spells, fer I seen old Doc Guess-a-dose take some ligament outa his carpetbag and rub it on the patience head	I fancy Jeremiah has been having another attack, for I saw Doctor Guess-a-dose take some liniment out of his bag and apply it to the patient's head
46	Hey, wadja tink I hoid? Billy's got a new thing-a-ma-jig—one o' them there whatyoumaycallums—and he's over by my house stickin aroun to kid de dizzy dames wid it	What do you think I heard? Billy has one of those new —— and he is over at my home teasing the girls with it
47	For diner we had chicken coquettes, persevered strawberries, an rich cream from the farm diary, but we could not drink the water because it was not filleted	For dinner we had chicken croquettes, preserved strawberries, and rich cream from the dairy, but we could not drink the water because it was not filtered
48	Well, land o' livin! If thar ain't old Si Perkins a-comin up the lane behind that old plug o' hisn hitched up to the tinlizzy that Hank Ford musta turned out fifty year ago	Of all things! If there isn't old Silas Perkins coming up the lane in his T-model Ford pulled by that old wornout horse of his
49	What a washout that dame turned out to be! When I asks 'er to take a joyride wid me, she ups and says, "Skip it, Dearie I'm dated with a Romeo tonight that makes you look like something the cat brought in"	What a disappointment that girl turned out to be! When I asked her to take a ride with me, she said, "Sorry, Dear. I have another engagement"
50	Least said, soonest mended, I always say, and yet there's nothing like taking the bull by the horns and putting your shoulder to the wheel if you want to steal a march on some one in keeping the wolf from the door	Say little, act promptly, work hard, and thus keep the wolf from your door
51	An insolent country must keep a large navy, being open, as she is, to retrogression on all sides and to the historical behavior of her people when she is circumnavigated by hostel graft and soup tureens and heir bumbers	An insular country must maintain a large navy, being exposed, as she is, to aggression on all sides and to the hysterical behavior of her people when she is surrounded by hostile craft—submarines and air bombers
52	Harry's been dancing attendance upon Jane for these many moons	Harry and Jane are probably going to be married

NO	YES
now, and, though I have no desire to make a mountain out of a molehill, I must say that where there's so much smoke there must be some fire, but of course one can never tell these days	
53 The following "definitions" are taken from Billy Boner's last examination paper:	
—A young bear is called a brunette	—A young bear is called brum
—A queer person is known as concentric	—A queer person is known as eccentric
—Petroleum is a floor covering	—Linoleum is a floor covering
—Surfs were slaves under the frugal system	—Serfs were slaves under the feudal system
—A polygon is a man having two or more wives	—A polygamist is a man having two or more wives
—The noblest of mountains is Blanc Mange	—The noblest of mountains is Mont Blanc
—A centurion is a person one hundred years old	—A centenarian is a person one hundred years old
—A monogram is a glass worn in one eye	—A monocle is a glass worn in one eye
—A chapel is a place where small people worship	—A chapel is a small place of worship
—A centimeter is an insect having one hundred legs	—A centipede is an insect having many ("one hundred") legs
—A convoy is a small collection of birds	—A covey is a small collection of birds (usually partridges)
—Etiquette is a dish made of yeggs	—Omelet is a dish made of eggs
—A pilot is an old-time sea robber	—A pirate is an old-time sea robber
—A prospectus is one who looks for valuable ores	—A prospector is one who looks for valuable ores
—Divest is what a man wears under his coat	—A vest is what a man wears under his coat
—An equestrian is a person who asks questions	—An equestrian is a horseman
—A glazier is a slow-moving body of ice	—A glacier is a slow-moving body of ice
—Hysterics are letters that slope toward the right	—Italics are letters that slope toward the right
—Oyster feathers are ornaments used on women's hats	—Ostrich feathers are adornments worn on women's hats
—A criterion is one who cries tears	—A criterion is a standard of judgment
—Criteria are restaurants where everybody helps himself	—Cafeterias are restaurants where everybody helps himself

NO	YES
—A sextant is a church janitor	—A sexton is a church janitor
—Gladiators are iron pipes used for heating	—Radiators are iron pipes used for heating
—A shawl is a large group of fish in the sea	—A shoal is a large group of fish in the sea
—A barrister is something on which to slide downstairs	—A banister is a railing on a stairway
—A consternation is a collection of stars	—A constellation is a collection of stars
—An obscure angle is one that exceeds ninety degrees	—An obtuse angle is one that exceeds ninety degrees
—An anecdote is a lady sheep	—A nanny goat is a female goat
—Inherited property is called parsimony	—Inherited property is called patrimony
—People who engage in mischievous tattle are called gossamers	—People who engage in mischievous tattle are called gossips
—A humidor is a Spaniard who has a prize fight with a bull in a punch bowl	—A matador is a man appointed to kill the bull in a bull ring
—Nitrates are the lower charges made by a telephone company for night messages	—Night rates are the lower charges made by a telephone company for night messages
—An auditor is one who keeps order	—A monitor is one who keeps order
—*Alsop's Foibles* is the title of a book	—*Aesop's Fables* is the title of a book
—An angle is a glorified human bean	—An angel is a glorified human being

5

DON'T CONFUSE WORDS

SECTION THIRTY-SIX — PRONUNCIATION

Many English words are alike in sound and appearance. Many are capable of use in almost but not quite the same way as others. Many have shades of meaning and interpretation leading over into the realm of meaning and interpretation of other words, context or occasion being the only deciding factor in their correct use. It is not to be wondered at, therefore, that impropriety in word usage is of such common occurrence.

There are few words even in everyday use behind which temptation to impropriety does not lurk; few nouns and verbs and adjectives or adverbs that may not be regarded as pitfalls to inaccuracy. Exactness in word usage is rarely if ever completely possible, it is to be approximated only. Though words have been extensively classified and differentiated by the lexicographers for the sake of minimizing confusion in their use, they still for the most part defy all attempts to shut them up in water-tight compartments. Their assortment or cataloging has been more than justified by the provocation of misuse or impropriety, and the degree of success it has achieved has been more than considerable in view of the composite nature and volatility of English words. But complete success in the elimination of confusion in word usage is no more possible than it is perhaps desirable in a language that is preeminently alive and moving. A few of the classifications—only comparatively few—are treated below. The illustrative units under each have been kept representative in the hope that contagion of corrective practice may be easily spread. For exhaustive treatment, the dictionary is, of course, the court of last resort.

Words that are the same in spelling but different in sound and meaning are called heteronyms. The term *heteronym* is from Greek *heteros,* other or another or different, and *onyma,* name. The following are illustrative:

> aye, bow, canon, close, collect, does, entrance, essay, expose, hell (he'll), ill (I'll), inter, job, lead, live, minute, moderate, mow, poll, read, recreate, refuse, resume, row, sow, tear, wed (we'd), well (we'll), were (we're), wind, wont (won't), wound, yule (you'll).

Those written with apostrophe cannot be regarded as true heteronyms except as used by writers who defy the use of the apostrophe in contractions. In the works of George Bernard Shaw, for example, the contraction *can't* is never written with apostrophe. It is thus heteronymous with the noun *cant* as far as the eye is concerned; the former may be pronounced with either short *a* or Italian *a,* the latter with short *a* only. But *mow,* riming with *now* and meaning a place where hay is stored, and *mow,* riming with *go* and meaning to cut grass, are perfect heteronyms, as are all of the others above that are not contractions. In speech, it is sound, of course, that distinguishes one heteronym from another; in writing, it is context. For the beginner in the study of English, heteronyms may be the cause of much confusion, for there are many others in addition to those above given. In philology the word *heteronym* is applied to one of two exactly equivalent terms in different languages, as Anglo-Saxon *eorthe* and English *earth,* Swedish *huvud* and English *head.*

Heterography means spelling in which the same letters have different sounds in different words (again *heteros* different, and Greek *graphein* write). The key to pronunciation in the prefatory matter of dictionaries contains all English heterographs. The following serve as sufficient illustration here:

a in *ah* and in *apparatus*
e in *me* and in *prey*
c in *cipher* and in *can*
g in *gin* and in *good*
i in *ivy* and in *ill*
o in *old* and in *odd*
ou in *cough* and in *rough,* in *through* and in *cloud*
ow in *now* and in *throw*
s in *this* and in *wise*
th (ath), in *bath, hath, path, snath, wrath, aftermath*
th (athe) in *bathe, lathe, scathe, swathe*
th (eath or *eeth)* in *heath, sheath, teeth, wreath, 'neath*
th (eathe or *eethe)* in *breathe, seethe, sheathe, teethe, wreathe*
th (eth, ath, or *ith)* in *breath, death, saith, sheth,* and in the plain form third singular present indicative of verbs, as *coveteth* and *lingereth*
th (oth) in *broth, cloth, froth, moth, sloth, troth, wroth*
th (oth or *oath)* in *both, oath, loath, quoth*
th (othe or *oathe)* in *clothe, loathe*

With but twenty-six alphabetic symbols for more than twice the number of alphabetic sounds, the English language would seem to invite—to encourage—confusion of pronunciation, or, at least, so it may well appear to the child in the elementary school and to the adult foreign-language immigrant who would qualify as a literate United States citizen. Both accurate ear and accurate eye are imperative for the mastery of nice distinctions in English pronunciation and spelling. It has been said that the closest, most exacting requirements are made upon man's powers of observation in the study of the natural sciences. But the study of English yields first place to no other in the meticulous demands made upon both eye and ear if the student would speak and write with precision; and the so-called "higher brackets" of composition are anything but immune to slips of the tongue. Occasionally, however, one of the "slippers" shows himself capable of piquant reply to a critic. The great English actor and dramatist, David Garrick, censured by one John Hill for the habitual pronunciation of *u* for *i*, replied to him as follows:

> If 'tis true, as you say, that I've injured a letter,
> I'll change my note soon and, I hope, for the better.
> May the just rights of letters, as well as of men,
> Hereafter be fixed by the tongue and the pen,
> Most devoutly I wish they may both have their due,
> And that *I* may be never mistaken for *you*

Careful speaking—the trained tongue—and careful writing—the trained pen—are, of course, the first essentials. But strange as it may seem, speech and writing that as closely approach perfection as is possible, short of basic human frailty, may easily be misheard and mis-seen as result of careless hearing and careless seeing, even by those whose vision and hearing are keen (impairment of either function is, of course, not the consideration here). The trained ear of the master musician will automatically detect the subtlety of the merest accidental note, just as the trained eye of the master painter will detect that of the merest fleck of color at exactly the correct place in a large canvas. The untrained "general" ear may hear *golf* for *gulf, tradegy* for *tragedy;* the untrained "general" eye may see *tee* for *tea, punctuation* or *pronounciation* for *pronunciation.* Such loose functioning of hearing and seeing has pointedly been called "guess perception", that is, a word is guessed at—"jumped at"—from the first letter or two or from its implied rhythm or from supposed context. Sometimes such

guesswork may be safely engaged in; sometimes it may not be, as any dyed-in-the-wool proofreader will unhappily testify. There is "no such animal" as a typographically perfect book "hot off the press." Shaksperean texts still carry numerous pet typographical errors that have by this time become an inheritance almost as traditional as the text itself. And the Bible has by no means been able to escape the typographical embarrassments that all printed matter must needs fall heir to apparently (page 416).

The person who habitually uses words foreign to his meaning is said by pathologists to suffer from *heterophasia*—again a Greek word meaning other or different speech. If his words or letters are "mixed" or "muddled", conveying one idea when another (perhaps related) is meant, the scientific term applied to his condition is *heterophemy* which derivatively means saying otherwise. In connection with ordinary speech and writing in which one word or syllable is erroneously substituted for another, the tendency or habit requires no high-sounding term to designate it (though there is no native English word for it if one were needed); it may be explained simply as the result of careless habits of hearing and seeing or, as some prefer, as an emotional penchant to jump at dictional conclusions The habitual use of spoonerisms (page 297) or malapropism (page 294) may be pathological—and it may deserve a long scientific name. The occasional lapse needs none; it may, indeed, be turned to positive advantage by way of humor.

Words that sound alike, that have the same syllabication and thus the same rhythm are at a glance very likely to be mistaken one for another (page 11). Words that are alike except for the doubling of a letter or for the transposition of letters or for the addition of a single silent letter are similarly easy of confusion. How many times the words in each of the following groups have been confused it would be hard to say. But the confusion cannot be called unnatural. These few are merely illustrative of the many others that may deceive on first hearing or appearance. *Abominable* and *abdominal, ally* and *alley, American* and *Armenian, angle* and *angel, Arthur* and *author, baring* and *barring, broad* and *board, Calvary* and *cavalry, causal* and *casual, clam* and *claim, collision* and *collusion, coma* and *comma, commend* and *command, conservation* and *conversation, critic* and *cricket, croquet* and *coquet, croquette* and *coquette, custom* and *costume, dairy* and *diary, deference* and *difference, dining* and *dinning, dragon* and *dragoon,*

dying and *dyeing, envy* and *envoy, ether* and *either, except* and *excerpt, exercise* and *exorcise, facet* and *faucet, facility* and *felicity, fiend* and *friend, filet* and *fillet, gentle* and *gentile, genus* and *genius, goal* and *gaol, impostor* and *imposture, ingenious* and *ingenuous, ladies* and *laddies, lightning* and *lightening, martial* and *marital, nether* and *neither, odor* and *order, of* and *off, ordnance* and *ordinance, participate* and *precipitate, participle* and *participial, patent* and *patten, perfect* and *prefect, phrase* and *phase, Philippians* and *Philippines, picture* and *pitcher, pillar* and *pillow, plaintive* and *plaintiff, portion* and *potion, prescription* and *proscription, presentment* and *presentiment, prophecy* and *prophesy, proposition* and *preposition, quite* and *quiet, rabies* and *rabbis, referee* and *reverie, reverend* and *reverent, salvage* and *selvage, scared* and *sacred, sculptor* and *sculpture, septic* and *skeptic, solder* and *soldier, spacious* and *specious, stag* and *stage, statue* and *stature* and *statute, step* and *steep, stop* and *stoop, super* and *supper, though* and *through, title* and *tittle, tough* and *trough, trail* and *trial, travel* and *travail, treatise* and *treaties, vacation* and *vocation, venal* and *venial, veracity* and *voracity, vicegerent* and *viceregent, were* and *where, woman* and *women.*

As in the construction of grammatical parts, so in the pronunciation and the writing of words—and in most other things—man tends to follow the course of least resistance. Call it laziness if you will, the fact persists that the average person is strongly inclined to make expression as easy and comfortable for himself as possible. Add to this the imperfection of vocal equipment in the average individual, the rarity of perfect physical health, the press and rush of modern life, and still other elements and conditions that make of words taken-for-granted symbols or hieroglyphs rather than the privileged vehicles of thought and feeling that they are, and the wonder is that speaking and writing are as well done as they are. It is, of course, colloquially easier—and lazier—to say *pome* and *reglar* and *hurring* and *supratendunce* than, respectively, *pō'em* and *rĕg'ū lĕr* and *hûr'rĭ ing* and *sù pĕr ĭn tĕn'dĕns.* It is just as easy—and lazy—to add syllables as to suppress them, inasmuch as such addition means very often that the speaker allows himself to be carried along by the general rhythm of an expression. But it may also mean, of course, that he neither knows nor cares about the merging power of digraphs or diphthongs, and of the other "bewildering ins and outs" of English pronunciation wherein sound is so likely to mean more than one

hears or suspects. Monosyllabic *work* (wûrk) may comfortably become *wur ruk* in dissyllabic association; dissyllabic *concise* (kŏn sīs′) may become trisyllabic *con a cise;* trisyllabic *familiar* (fă mĭl′yĕr) may become *fa mil i ar;* quadrisyllabic *miserable* (mĭz′-ĕr ă b'l) may become quinquesyllabic *mis er i a ble;* quinquesyllabic *curiosity* (kū rĭ os′ĭ tı) may become hexasyllabic *cu ri o os i ti.* Dickens' Mr Boffin and Silas Wegg—the one with his *worrited* for *worried,* the other with his *sappurized* for *surprised* and his *terri-menjious* for *tremendous*—took their illiteracy with an easygoing and rhythmic distinction.

The suppression of syllables and the addition of syllables (pages 24 and 114), evincing as they do a hurried disrespect for words, constitute a kind of illiteracy and a most serious kind. They almost invariably follow through into writing. Two other types of mispronunciation that are related to these in seriousness are misaccent, such as *ad′dress* for *ad dress′, su per flu′ous* for *su per′flu ous;* and false sound values in the utterance of vowels, as *ap pa rah′tus* for *ap pa ray′tus, il leg′u ble* for *il leg′ı ble.* The last example is the more important for the reason that it is typical of the mispronunciation of an obscure or unaccented vowel, always more likely to be mispronounced than an accented one.

The words below are representative of those in general use that are probably more frequently mispronounced and miswritten than others in like categories, and, as the negative side of the column indicates, most of these lend themselves easily to the illiterate suppression or addition of syllables They are arranged from monosyllable to heptasyllable (page 515).

breadth	brĕdth	*not*	breath
depth	dĕpth	*not*	det *or* deth
drowned	dround	*not*	droun ded
elm	ĕlm	*not*	el lum
film	fĭlm	*not*	fil um
height	hīt	*not*	hithe
hef	lĕf	*not*	le ıf *or* leave
length	lĕnGth	*not*	lenth
strength	strĕnGth	*not*	strenth
width	wĭdth	*not*	with

across	ă krŏs	*not*	a krost *or* kros
advice	ăd vīs′	*not*	ad vız *or* ad a vız
advise	ăd vīz′	*not*	ad vıs *or* ad a vis
arctic	ark′tĭk	*not*	ar tık *or* ar t ık
attacked	ă tăkt′	*not*	a tagt *or* a takt ed
attempt	ă tĕmpt′	*not*	a demd *or* a tem

burglar	bûr'glĕr	*not*	bur gu ler
children	chĭl'drĕn	*not*	chil durn
chimney	chĭm'nĭ	*not*	chim li *or* chim bli *or* chim bi li
cognac	kō'nyăk	*not*	kog nak *or* ko ni ak
column	kŏl'ŭm	*not*	kol umb *or* kol yum
coupon	kōō'pŏn	*not*	keu pon *or* koo pn
cruel	krōō'ĕl	*not*	krool
depend	dē pĕnd'	*not*	de pen
describe	dē skrīb'	*not*	dis krib
diphthong	dĭf'thŏng	*not*	dip thong
explain	ĕks plān'	*not*	egs plan
fellow	fĕl'ō	*not*	fel a *or* fel er
grievous	grēv'us	*not*	grev yus *or* gre vi us
gumption	gŭmp'shŭn	*not*	gum shin
hundred	hŭn'drĕd	*not*	hun durd
hungry	hŭn'grĭ	*not*	hun gar i
modern	mŏd'ĕrn	*not*	mod ren
moving	mōōv'ĭng	*not*	moom
partner	part'nĕr	*not*	pard ner *or* par ti ner
pattern	păt'ĕrn	*not*	pat run
perform	pĕr fôrm'	*not*	pre vorm
perhaps	pĕr hăps'	*not*	pre haps *or* bre habs *or* praps *or* brabs
poplar	pop'lĕr	*not*	pop u ler
quarter	kwôr'tĕr	*not*	kwo ter *or* kor ter
quiet	kwī ĕt	*not*	kwit
rhubarb	rōō'barb	*not*	roo bub
subtract	sŭb trăkt'	*not*	zub trak
surprise	sûr prīz'	*not*	sup riz
symbol	sĭm'b'l	*not*	zim bul
symptom	sĭmp tŭm	*not*	zim dum
tactic	tăk'tĭk	*not*	tag tig *or* tag a tig
tendril	tĕn'drĭl	*not*	ten de ril
vary	vâr'ĭ	*not*	ver i
water	wô'tĕr *or* wŏt'ĕr	*not*	wat ter
Wednesday	wĕnz'dĭ	*not*	wen ez di
yellow	yĕl'ō	*not*	yal a *or* yel er

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actual	ăk'tŭ ăl	*not*	ak shal
alpaca	ăl păk'*a*	*not*	al a pak a *or* al a pak er
antarctic	ănt ark'tĭk	*not*	ant ar tik *or* ant ar ti ki
armory	ar'mĕr ĭ	*not*	arm ri
assumption	*ă* sŭmp'shŭn	*not*	a zum shun *or* a sum shi un
athletic	ăth lĕt'ĭc	*not*	ath a let ic *or* thlet ik
attitude	ăt'ĭ tūd	*not*	at tood *or* at toot
battery	băt'ĕr ĭ	*not*	bat ri
boisterous	bois'tĕr *ŭs*	*not*	bois trous *or* bois ter i us
boundary	boun'd*á* rĭ	*not*	boun dri
calculate	kăl'kŭ lāt	*not*	kal ker late *or* kal ka lat *or* kal ki lat *or* kalk lat
candidate	kăn'dĭ dāt	*not*	kan dat *or* kan da ate
carrying	kăr'ĭ ĭng	*not*	kar ing
catholic	kăth'ŏ lĭk	*not*	kath lik *or* kath er lik
convenience	kŏn vēn'yĕns	*not*	kon ven yuns *or* kon ven ee uns
courteous	kûr'tē *us*	*not*	kurt yus *or* kurt chus
decorous	dĕk'ō rŭs	*not*	de ko ri us *or* de kore'us

description	dĕ skrĭp'shŭn	*not*	dız krıb zhun *or* skrıp shun
desirous	dĕ zīr'ŭs	*not*	de zır yus *or* de zir ı us
difference	dĭf'ĕr ĕns	*not*	dıf runz
disastrous	dĭz ás'trŭs	*not*	daz trus *or* dız as ter us
eleventh	ĕ lĕv'nth	*not*	lev nth
emigrant	ĕm'ĭ grănt	*not*	em grant *or* em grunt
finally	fī'năl ĭ	*not*	fi nı al ı *or* fin lı
formally	fôr'mă lĭ	*not*	form lı *or* for mı a ly
formerly	fôr'mĕr lĭ	*not*	form lı *or* for mı a ly
genitive	jĕn'ĭ tĭv	*not*	jen tıv *or* jen u tıv
government	gŭv ĕrN mĕnt	*not*	guv er munt *or* guvn munt
granddaughter	grănd'dô tĕr	*not*	gran do ter *or* gra do ter
history	hĭs'tŏ rĭ	*not*	hıs tri
library	lī'brā rĭ	*not*	lı bri *or* lı ber ı
Long Island	lŏng ī'lănd	*not*	lonk ı len *or* long guy len
mackerel	măk'ĕr ĕl	*not*	mak rel
maritime	măr'ĭ tīm	*not*	mar tım *or* mar a tım *or* mar ı teem (but măr'ĭ tīm is permissible)
marvelous	mar'vĕl ŭs	*not*	marl vus *or* mar vel ı ous
memory	mĕm'ŏ rĭ	*not*	mem rı
mischievous	mĭs'chĭ vŭs	*not*	mıs che vı us
mountainous	moun'tĭ nŭs	*not*	mount nus *or* moun to nı us
mystery	mĭs'tĕr ĭ	*not*	mıs trı
obstinate	ŏb'stĭ nĭt	*not*	ob snıt
odious	ō'dĭ ŭs *or* ōd'yŭs	*not*	owe jus
phaeton	fā'ĕ tŏn	*not*	fa ton
popular	pŏp'ū lĕr	*not*	pop ler
positive	pŏz'ĭ tĭv	*not*	poz tıv
possible	pŏs'ĭ b'l	*not*	poz bl *or* pos sı a bl
potato	pō tā'tō	*not*	pa ta ta *or* per ta ta
prevalent	prĕv'*a* lĕnt	*not*	prev ı a lent *or* prev lunt
privilege	prĭv'ĭ lĕj	*not*	priv lej *or* priv leej
probable	prŏb'*a* b'l	*not*	prob bl *or* pro bı a bl
realty	rē'ăl tĭ	*not*	reel tı *or* re al ı tı
recognize	rĕk'ŏG nīz	*not*	rek o nız *or* rek nız
relative	rĕl'ă tĭv	*not*	rel tıv *or* rel ı a tıv *or* rel er tıv
remember	rē mĕm'bĕr	*not*	re mem er *or* rem ber
resumption	rē zŭmp'shŭn	*not*	re zum shun *or* re zum shi un
Saturday	săt'ĕr dĭ	*not*	sat dy *or* sat ty *or* sat dee
sensible	sĕn'sĭ b'l	*not*	sens bl *or* sen sa bl
several	sĕv'ĕr ăl	*not*	sev ral *or* se ve rı al
similar	sĭm'ĭ lĕr	*not*	zım ler
singular	sĭng'gŭ lĕr	*not*	sing er ler *or* sing gler
stubbornness	stŭb'ĕrn nĕs	*not*	stub er es
studying	stŭd'ĭ ĭng	*not*	stud ıng
stupendous	stū pĕn'dŭs	*not*	stu pın jus *or* stu pen dı us
telegraph	tĕl'ĕ grăf	*not*	tel graf
temptation	tĕmp tā'shŭn	*not*	tem ta zhun
terrible	tĕr'ĭ b'l	*not*	ter bl *or* tur a bl *or* ter rı a bl
tomato	tŏ mā'tō *or* tō ma'tō	*not*	ta mat a *or* ter ma ta
tragedy	trăj ĕ dĭ	*not*	traj dı *or* trad a jı
tremendous	trē mĕn'dŭs	*not*	tre mın jus *or* tre men dı us
victory	vĭk'tŏ rĭ	*not*	vık trı *or* vık ta rı
violence	vī'ŏ lĕns	*not*	vı lenz *or* vı lunz
Washington	wŏsh'ĭng tŭn	*not*	wosh ın tun *or* washk tun
wearisome	wēr'ĭ sŭm	*not*	wer sum *or* wor rı sum

abdominal	ăb dŏm'ĭ năl	*not*	ab dom nal *or* a bum nbl
absolutely	ăb'sō lūt lĭ	*not*	abs loot'lı
accuracy	ăk'ū *ra* sĭ	*not*	ak ra sı
asparagus	ăs păr'*a* gŭs	*not*	as par gus *or* spar o gas (gras) *or* spar gras
authority	ô thŏr'ĭ tĭ	*not*	o thor tı *or* o thor a tı
auxiliary	ôg zĭl'*ya* rĭ	*not*	oks zıl ra
compatible	kŏm păt'ĭ b'l	*not*	kom pat bl *or* kom pat a bl
competition	kŏm pē tĭsh'ŭn	*not*	komp ısh un *or* kom er tısh un
conspiracy	kŏn spĭr'*a* sĭ	*not*	kon spır sı *or* kon spur sı
delirium	dē lĭr'ĭ ŭm	*not*	de leer yum
delivery	dē lĭv'ĕr ĭ	*not*	de lıv rı
despicable	dĕs'pĭ k*a* b'l	*not*	des pık'a bl
desultory	dĕs'ul tō rĭ (*or* tĕr ĭ)	*not*	des ul trı
diphtheria	dĭf thē'rĭ *a*	*not*	dıp theer ya
February	fĕb'rōō ĕr ĭ	*not*	feb rı *or* feb rar e
generally	jĕn'ĕr *a*l ĭ	*not*	jen ral ı
genuineness	jĕn'ū ĭn nĕss	*not*	jen yu nes *or* jeen yu nez
geography	jē ŏg *ra* fĭ	*not*	jog raf ı
gymnasium	jĭm nā'zĭ ŭm	*not*	jım na zum *or* jım nazh yum
hygienic	hī jĭ ĕn'ĭk	*not*	hı jen ık (*but* hī jē'nĭk ıs permissible)
hypocrisy	hĭ pŏk'rĭ sĭ	*not*	hı pok ray sı
illustrious	ĭ lŭs'trĭ ŭs	*not*	ı lus trus
infinitive	ĭn fĭn'ĭ tĭv	*not*	ın fin a tıv *or* ın fin tıv
interested	ĭn'tĕr ĕs tĕd	*not*	ın tress ted
irrelevant	ĭ rĕl'ē v*ă*nt	*not*	ı rev e lant *or* ır el e vant
mathematics	măth ē măt'ĭks	*not*	math met ıks
memorable	mĕm'ō *ra* b'l	*not*	mem ra bl *or* mem or ı a bl
minimature	mĭn'ĭ *ā* tûr	*not*	mın na tur
miserable	mĭz'ĕr *a* b'l	*not*	mız rı bl *or* mız e rı a bl
monotonous	mŏ nŏt'ŏ nŭs	*not*	mo not nus
Niagara	nī ăg'*a* r*a*	*not*	nı ag ra
nominative	nŏm'ĭ n*a* tĭv	*not*	nom na tıv *or* nom tıv
original	ō rĭj' ĭ n*ă*l	*not*	o rıj nal *or* rıj nal
peculiarly	pē kūl'yĕr lĭ	*not*	pe kul er ı *or* pe kul lı
permissible	pĕr mĭs'ĭ b'l	*not*	per mız bl *or* per mız a bl
perspiration	pûr spĭ rā'shŭn	*not*	pres pray shun *or* pres pı ra shun
physically	fĭz'ĭ k*ă*l ĭ	*not*	fiz ık lı
practically	prăk'tĭ k*ă*l ĭ	*not*	prak tı klı *or* prakt le
predicament	prē dĭk'*a* m*ĕ*nt	*not*	per dık ı munt *or* pre dık munt
preparation	prĕp *a* rā'shŭn	*not*	per pa ra shun *or* perp ı a shun
preposterous	prē pŏs'tĕr ŭs	*not*	pre pos trıs *or* per pos trıs *or* pre pos ı ter ı ous
presumptuous	prē zŭmp'tū ŭs	*not*	pre zump shus *or* pre zum shus
propaganda	prŏp *a* găn'd*a*	*not*	prop gan da *or* prop er gan der
qualitative	kwŏl'ĭ tā tĭv	*not*	kwol a tıv *or* qwol tıv
quantitative	kwŏn'tı tā tĭv	*not*	kwon a tıv *or* kwon tıv
repetition	rĕp ē tĭsh'ŭn	*not*	rep tısh un *or* rep er tısh un
sacrilegious	săk rĭ lē'jŭs	*not*	sak re lıj yus *or* sak er lıj yus
secretary	sĕk'rē tā rĭ	*not*	sek re trı *or* sek er ta rı
superfluous	sū pûr'flōō ŭs	*not*	su pur floo'us *or* su pur floos
temperature	tĕm'pĕr *a* tûr	*not*	tem per chure
temporary	tĕm'pō rĕr ĭ	*not*	tem prı *or* temp rer ı
vegetation	vĕj ē tā'shŭn	*not*	vej ta shun *or* vej er ta shun
vulnerable	vŭl'nĕr *a* b'l	*not*	vul nra bl *or* vul ner ı a bl

abominable	ă bŏm'ĭ nă b'l	*not*	a bum nbl *or* ab dom nal
accidentally	ăk sĭ dĕn'tăl ĭ	*not*	ak sı dent lı
accompaniment	ă kŭm'pă nĭ mĕnt	*not*	a kump n'munt
administrative	ăd mĭn'ĭs trā tĭv	*not*	ad mın ıs tray'tıv *or* ad mın stray'tıv
anticipation	ăn tĭc ĭ pā'shŭn	*not*	ants ı pa tıon
authoritative	ô thŏr'ĭ tā tĭv	*not*	o thor tıv
considerable	kŏn sĭd'ĕr ă b'l	*not*	kon sıd ra bl *or* kon sıd er bl
contemporary	kŏn tĕm'pŏ rā rĭ	*not*	kon temp re *or* kon tem pra *or* kon tem po re
Elizabethan	ē lĭz ă bē'thăn	*not*	e lız a be thı an
genealogy	jĕn ē al'ŏ jĭ	*not*	jen yal jı *or* jen e ol o jı
immediately	ĭ mē'dĭ ăt lĭ	*not*	ım me date lı *or* ım mej ate ly
incalculable	ĭn kăl'kŭ lă b'l	*not*	ın kalk bl *or* ın kal ker bl
insuperable	ĭn sū'pĕr ă b'l	*not*	ın su pra bl *or* ın su per ı a bl
laboratory	lăb'ŏ ră tŏ rĭ	*not*	lab ra tree *or* la bore ı a to rı
organization	ôr găn ĭ sā shŭn	*not*	org nı za shun *or* ork za na shun
particularly	pĕr tĭk'ū lĕr lĭ	*not*	par tık u ler ı lı
pronunciation	prŏ nŭn sĭ ā'shŭn	*not*	prone c a shun *or* pro noun she a shun
sarsaparilla	sär să pă rĭl'ă	*not*	sas prıl a *or* sas sa prıl er
subordinately	sŭb ôr dĭ năt lĭ	*not*	sub ord nat lı
territorial	tĕr ĭ tō'rĭ ăl	*not*	ter tore yal *or* ter a tore yal
unanimously	ū năn'ĭ mŭs lĭ	*not*	u nan mus lı *or* u noun a mus lı
uproariously	ŭp rōr ĭ ŭs lĭ	*not*	up ror us lı

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familiarity	fă mĭl ĭ ăr'ĭ tĭ *or* fa mĭl ĭ yăr'ĭ tĭ	*not*	fa mıl yar tı
oleomargarine	ō lē ō mar'ga rēn	*not*	ole ya mar jer en

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enthusiastically	ĕn thū zĭ ăs'tĭ kăl ĭ	*not*	en thuz as kal ı *or* en thu zast kle

CONTEST *

NO	YES
1 You were very conservational at our little tee party	You were very conversational at our little tea party
2 Please make your propositional phase modify the subject	Please make your prepositional phrase modify the subject
3 The imgrants cant possbly be taken care of here evn temprarly	The immigrants can't possibly be taken care of here even temporarily
4 They will make an adminstive change here on the leventh of Janry	They will make an administrative change here on the eleventh of January
5 They were all very much supprised at the det of the canon	They were all very much surprised at the depth of the canyon
6 I remained prefectly clam in spite of the causal glance she gave me	I remained perfectly calm in spite of the casual glance she gave me

* See page 3.

	NO	YES
7	Well take our gulf clubs with us to the lynx every day of our vocation	We'll take our golf clubs with us to the links every day of our vacation
8	The wit and hite are greater than the lenth	The width and height are greater than the length
9	Incidently, in reconition of the rule you should place a coma after that word	Incidentally, in recognition of the rule you should place a comma after that word
10	My most poplar corespondent writes from his resdence in Nor Lens	My most popular correspondent writes from his residence in New Orleans
11	It makes no deference to me which you take but I think this preferiable	It makes no difference to me which you take but I think this preferable
12	Its a very tedjus undertaking to get the car into the grage without scrapping the fenders	It's a very tedious undertaking to get the car into the garage without scraping the fenders
13	You must learn to face realty with more formidiable bravry	You must learn to face reality with more formidable bravery
14	This little town has one hundurd inhabtants, and every one carries causality insbunce	This little town has one hundred inhabitants, and every one carries casualty insurance
15	Even patritism, valble as it is, should not be odjusly displayed	Even patriotism, valuable as it is, should not be odiously displayed
16	Their response was immedjet, and we could not have been more hospitiably received	Their response was immediate, and we could not have been more hospitably received
17	The attude of the voters in this distenct has been marvelious	The attitude of the voters in this district has been marvelous
18	His friendship has been consonant, and his genrosty phenomenal	His friendship has been constant, and his generosity phenomenal
19	In raising my umberella I accidently jabed a pedestran	In raising my umbrella I accidentally jabbed a pedestrian
20	Please give this custom to the launderess and tell her I must have it by Satdy	Please give this costume to the laundress and tell her I must have it by Saturday

SECTION THIRTY-SEVEN — HOMONYM

Two or more words that are spelled alike but that differ in use and meaning and also, as a rule, in derivation, are called *homographs* (Greek *homo* same, and Greek *graphe* write). Such words are usually but not always pronounced alike. Some of the most commonly used homographs are ***ball, bar, base, bass, bay, bear, bill, bore, box, bridal, bridle, cape, carp, cell, cord, corn, course, court, dam, deal, die, dock, down, drill, drove, duck, due, dun,***

even, fair, fare, fell, felt, frank, grate, grave, graze, heart, hide, hose, host, invalid, its (it's), key, kind, knead, last, lay, lead, leaf, lean, lesson, lick, links, liquor, list, lock, mail, main, match, meet, mine, minor, mold, nap, nave, pall, peel, peer, pier, pine, pipe, plain, plane, plate, play, port, pound, principal, prior, prize, radical, rank, reel, right, ring, rock, roll, rood, row, scale, scene, seal, see, sheer, side, sign, size, slight, slow, smack, solder, sole, sound, sport, spring, spruce, spur, staff, stage, stake, steal, steel, step, stick, sum, swallow, tack, tale, tare, team, tease, temper, tenor, throne, tick, title, tow, tower, track, tract, trail, train, turn, twill ('twill), twine, vain, vein, vice, wag, wander, ward, waste, way, wear, weed, weigh, wheel, whet, while, whine, yoke

Unless such words as these differ in derivation they are not regarded as homographs at all by many authorities, but, rather, as single words having two or more uses. The word *ball,* for example, meaning an assembly for dancing, is of Latin-through-French derivation, whereas *ball,* meaning round, is from Middle English *Base, bear, fair, lead,* and *number* are a few others that are differently derived according to certain meanings and uses. They are therefore called true or pure homographs.

But *bar* and *invalid* and *pound* and *sum,* each having more than one meaning and use, are called mixed or false homographs, for the reason that each has but a single ancestor and has been converted to many uses since its arrival in English (though it may have played more than one role before). Most words in the language may be placed in the second category, for there are comparatively few words that may not be used in at least more than one way. English habit and custom have made of most words general practitioners rather than specialists.

Two or more words that are pronounced the same but are used differently are called *homonyms* or *homophones* (Greek *homo* same, and Greek *onyma* name, or Greek *phone* sound). Homographs are, by many authorities, included under the classification homonym, and are called homonyms that are spelled alike. Words that are pronounced exactly alike, such as the proper name *Abel* and the adjective *able,* the plural *patients* and the abstract *patience,* the proper name *Hugh* and the verb *hew* and the common noun *hue,* are called pure homonyms. Words that are colloquially pronounced (mispronounced) alike, such as *adieu* and *ado, where* and *ware, while* and *wile, whig* and *wig,* are called false or

colloquial homonyms. To the latter group belong most if not all such words as those listed on page 328, words that are so easily mistaken one for another by careless eye and ear, that by the man in the street they are regarded as homonyms. And it is in connection with this latter group that the study of homonyms may be made an aid second to no other in corrective spelling and pronunciation. That student who is permitted to leave school and college halls with such untrained ear for English as to believe that *offal* and *awful, Breton* and *Britain, thigh* and *thy, Barbary* and *barberry* and *bayberry,* are true homonyms is justified in reproaching his educational service, for it has "turned him out" with a basic incompetence that carries over certainly into spelling and usage, and probably into a general lack of precision in habits of thinking. His diction will escape by only a hair's breadth—if it escapes at all—the pronunciation and spelling and use of *bigger* for *beggar, bathe* for *bath, hospital* for *hospitable, illusion* for *allusion, imminent* for *eminent, later* for *latter, least* for *lest, lose* for *loose, practicable* for *practical, satin* for *Saturn* for *Satan, shot* for *shod, wart* for *wort* for *wert.*

The study of homonyms stands in high importance as training in mental discipline. The nice distinctions to be made in spelling and pronunciation and meaning between or among words that sound alike build invaluable mental habits. They are akin to those among figures in the study of mathematics and to those among adjusted word endings and inflections in the study of foreign languages. The comparatively long list below contains both pure and colloquial homonyms; it is, in addition, a review list of the classifications on pages 326 and 328. It is by no means exhaustive —could not be. Proper names—*Abel (able), Ernest (earnest), Dane (deign), Philip (fillip), Gaul (gall), Hugh (hue), Styx (sticks)*—are not included, nor are such double homonyms as *adore* and *a door, align* and *a line, assign* and *a sign,* which are strictly speaking not homonyms at all. But it does contain most of the homonyms, both true and false, that are met with in everyday writing and conversation.

accede, exceed; accept, except; access, excess; acetic, ascetic; acts, ax; ad, add; addition, edition; adds, adz (adze); adherence, adherents; advice, advise; affect, effect; ail, ale; air, ere, e'er, heir; aisle, I'll, isle; all, awl; allowed, aloud; allusive, elusive, illusive; altar, alter; analyst, annalist; ant, aunt; ante, anti; antecedents, antecedence; apposite, opposite; arc, ark; arrant, errand, errant; ascent, assent;

assay, essay; assistance, assistants; ate, eight; attendance, attendants; auger, augur; aught, ought; auricle, oracle; awful, offal; aye, I; bad, bade; bail, bale; bait, bate; baize, bays, beys; bald, balled, bawled; ball, bawl; band, banned; bard, barred; bare, bear; baring, bearing; baron, barren; base, bass; baton, batten; bay, bey; be, bee; beach, beech; bean, been, bin; beat, beet; beau, bow; beer, bier; bell, belle; berry, bury; berth, birth; bight, bite; billed, build; blew, blue; boar, bore; board, bored; bold, bolled, bowled; bolder, boulder; bole, boll, bowl; born, borne, bourn; borough, burrow; bough, bow; bouillon, bullion; boy, buoy; braes, brays, braze; braid, brayed; brake, break; breach, breech; bread, bred; brewed, brood; brews, bruise; bridal, bridle; broach, brooch; brows, browse; but, butt; buy, by, bye; buyer, byre; calendar, calender, colander; call, caul; cannon, canon; cant, can't; canvas, canvass; capital, capitol; carat, caret, carrot; cask, casque; cast, caste; caster, castor; cause, caws; cease, seize; cede, seed; ceil, seal; ceiling, sealing; celery, salary; cell, sell; cemetery, symmetry; censer, censor, censure; cent, scent; cere, sear, seer, ser; cereal, serial; cereous, serious; cession, session; chagrin, shagreen; chair, chare; chaise, chase; champagne, champaign; chard, charred; chased, chaste; chews, choose; choir, quire; choler, collar, color; choral, coral; chord, cord; cite, sight, site; clause, claws; click, clique; climb, clime, cloths, clothes; coal, cole, kohl; coaled, cold; coarse, corse, course; coarser, courser; coddling, codling; coign, coin, quoin; collision, collusion; colonel, kernel; command, commend; complacence, complaisance; complacent, complaisant; complement, compliment; complementary, complimentary; confidant, confident; consul, council, counsel; coquet, coquette; core, corps, corpse; corporal, corporeal; correspondence, correspondents; correspondent, corespondent; costume, custom; councilor, counselor; courtesy, curtsy, curtesy; cousin, cozen; coward, cowered; crawl, kraal; creak, creek; crewel, cruel; crews, cruise, cruse; cricket, critic, critique; croquet, croquette; cue, queue; currant, current; cygnet, signet; cymbal, symbol; dairy, diary; dam, damn; days, daze; dear, deer; decease, disease; decree, degree; defer, differ; deference, difference; descendant, descendent; descent, dissent; desert, dessert; device, devise; deviser, devisor, divisor; dew, do, due; die, dye; dire, dyer; discreet, discrete; divers, diverse; do, doe, dough; does, dose, doze; done, dun; dost, dust; draft, draught; dual, duel; dyeing, dying; earn, ern, urn; either, ether; elicit, illicit; elude, illude; elusion, illusion; emerge, immerge; emersion, immersion; emigrant, immigrant; emigrate, immigrate; eminent,

immanent, imminent; envelop, envelope; eruption, irruption; ewe, yew, you; ewer, your, you're; exercise, exorcise; extant, extent; facility, felicity; fain, fane, feign; faint, feint; fair, fare; faker, fakir; fate, fete; faun, fawn; fays, feaze, phase; feat, feet; felloe, fellow; fiend, friend; filter, philter; finale, finally; find, fined; fir, fur; fisher, fissure; flair, flare; flea, flee, flew, flue; flocks, phlox; flour, flower; for, fore, four; formally, formerly, fort, forte; forth, fourth; foul, fowl; franc, frank; frays, phrase; freeze, frieze; funeral, funereal; fungous, fungus; gage, gauge; gait, gate, gamble, gambol; gang, gangue; gaol, jail; genius, genus; gild, guild; gilt, guilt; glacier, glazier; glair, glare; glutinous, gluttonous; gnu, knew, new, goer, gore; gored, gourd; gorilla, guerrilla; grate, great; grater, greater; grays, graze; grisly, gristly, grizzly; groan, grown; grocer, grosser; guessed, guest; hail, hale; hair, hare; hall, haul; handsome, hansom; hart, heart; hay, hey; heal, heel, he'll; hear, here; heard, herd; heed, he'd; heigh, hie, high; hew, hue; hide, hied; higher, hire; him, hymn; ho, hoe; hoard, horde; hoarse, horse; hoes, hose; hole, whole; holey, holly, holy, wholly; holm, home; hoop, whoop; hour, our; I, aye, eye; ide, I'd; idle, idol, idyl; impassable, impassible; imposter, imposture; in, inn; incidence, incidents; incite, insight; indict, indite; ingenious, ingenuous; instance, instants; intense, intents; its, it's; jam, jamb; key, quay; kill, kiln; knap, nap; knave, nave; knead, need; knew, new; knight, night; knit, nit; knot, not; know, no; knows, noes, nose; lac, lack; lade, laid; lain, lane; lair, layer; lea, lee; leach, leech; lead, led; leaf, lief; leak, leek; lean, lien; leased, least; lessen, lesson; lesser, lessor; levee, levy; liar, lyre; lie, lye, lieu, loo; lightening, lightning; limb, limn; lineament, liniment; links, lynx; liqueur, liquor; literal, littoral; lo, low; load, lode; loan, lone; loch, lock, lough; loon, lune; loot, lute; made, maid; magnate, magnet, mail, male; main, mane; maize, maze; mandrel, mandrill; manner, manor; mantel, mantle; marshal, martial; marten, martin; massed, mast; matrass, mattress; mead, meed; mean, mien; meat, meet, mete; medal, meddle; meddler, medlar; metal, mettle; mews, muse; might, mite; millenary, millinery; mind, mined; miner, minor; missal, missel, missile; missed, mist; moan, mown; moat, mote, mode, mowed; monetary, monitory; moral, morale; morn, mourn; morning, mourning; muscle, mussel; mustard, mustered; naval, navel; nay, nee, neigh; none, nun; O, oh, owe; oar, o'er, or, ore; ode, owed; odor, order, ordure; of, off; one, won; ordinance, ordnance; packed, pact; pail, pale; pain, pane; pair, pare, pear; palate, palette, pallet; pall, pawl; participle, parti-

cipial; passed, past; pastor, pasture; paten, patten, pattern; patience, patients; pause, paws, pores; paw, pore, pour; peace, piece; peak, peek, pique; peal, peel; pearl, purl; pedal, peddle; peer, pier; pencil, pensile; pendant, pendent; penitence, penitents; persecution, prosecution; personal, personnel; physic, physique, pi, pie; picks, pyx; picture, pitcher; pillar, pillow; pistil, pistol, place, plaice; plain, plane; plaintiff, plaintive; plait, plate; pleas, please; plum, plumb; pole, poll; poplar, popular; populace, populous; portion, potion; pray, prey, prays, praise, preys; precede, proceed; precedence, precedents, presidents; preposition, proposition; prescribe, proscribe; prescription, proscription; presence, presents; presentiment, presentment; pride, pried; prier, prior, pries, prise, prize; primer, primmer; princes, princess; principal, principle; profit, prophet; prophecy, prophesy; quarts, quartz, quiet, quite; rabbet, rabbit; radical, radicle, radish, reddish, rain, reign, rein; raise, rays, raze; rancor, ranker; rap, wrap; rapt, wrapped; read, reed; real, reel; receipt, reseat; recent, resent, reck, wreck; red, read; reek, wreak; referee, reverie; relic, relict; residence, residents, respectfully, respectively; rest, wrest; retch, wretch; reveal, revel; reverend, reverent, rheum, room; rhyme, rime; right, rite, write, wright; ring, wring; road, rode, rowed; roc, rock, roe, row; role, roll, rood, rude, rued, root, route, rote, wrote; rough, ruff; rows, rouse; rues, ruse; rung, wrung; rye, wry, sac, sack; sail, sale; sailer, sailor; salvage, selvage; sane, seine; satire, satyr; scene, seen; scull, skull; sculptor, sculpture, sea, see; seam, seem, seas, sees, seize; serf, surf, serge, surge; sew, so, sow; sewer, sower; shear, sheer; shoe, shoo; shone, shown; shoulder, soldier, solder, solider; side, sighed, sigher, sire, sighs, size; sign, sine, syne; slay, sleigh; sleight, slight; slew, slue; sloe, slow; slough, sluff, soar, sore, sower, soared, sward, sword; sold, soled; sole, soul; some, sum, son, sun; species, specious; spiritual, spirituel; staid, stayed; stake, steak; stare, stair; stationary, stationery; statue, stature, statute; steal, steel; step, steppe; stile, style; straight, strait; succor, sucker, suit, suite; suite, sweet; superintendence, superintendents; subtler, sutler; surplice, surplus; tacked, tact; tacks, tax; tail, tale; taper, tapir; tare, tear; taught, taut; tea, tee; team, teem; tear, tier; teas, tease; tenor, tenure; tern, turn; the, thee; their, there, they're; therefor, therefore; threw, through; throne, thrown; throe, throw; thyme, time; tic, tick; tide, tied; timber, timbre; tite, tight; title, tittle; to, too, two; toe, tow; told, tolled; ton, tun; tortious, tortuous, torturous; tour, tower; tracked, tract; trail, trial; travail, travel; tray, trey; treaties, treatise; troop,

troupe; vain, vane, vein; vail, vale, veil; venal, venial; veracity, voracity; verses, versus; vial, viol, vile; vice, vise; virtu, virtue; wade, weighed; wail, wale, whale; wain, wane; waist, waste; wait, weight; waive, wave; wander, wonder; ward, warred; ware, wear, where; watts, what's; way, weigh, whey; we, wee; weak, week; weal, we'll, wheel; weald, wield; wean, ween; weather, wether, whether; weave, we've; weed, we'd; wen, when; wet, whet; which, witch; while, wile; whine, wine; whirl, whorl, world; white, wight; whither, wither; whose, who's; with, withe; woman, women; wont, won't, wood, would; yoke, yolk; you'll, yule; you're, your.

CONTEST *

	NO	YES
1	The old beach trees stand close to the sandy beech	The old beech trees stand close to the sandy beach
2	He board a whole through the hole bored with his new machine	He bored a hole through the whole board with his new machine
3	The hire the wages you pay, the less the men do for their higher	The higher the wages you pay, the less the men do for their hire
4	He soled me a pair of shoes and said that he would have my old ones sold for me	He sold me a pair of shoes and said that he would have my old ones soled for me
5	Saturn finds some mischief still for idol hands to due	Satan finds some mischief still for idle hands to do
6	After she had worked in the guerdon a few ours she feinted	After she had worked in the garden a few hours she fainted
7	Yule find that book about racial you'll lower on the lore shelf	You'll find that book about racial Yule lore on the lower shelf
8	I had to leave my loam for a moment to order some loom for the garden	I had to leave my loom for a moment to order some loam for the garden
9	To all intense and purposes his frequent telephone calls are the merest incidence	To all intents and purposes his frequent telephone calls are the merest incidents
10	The playwrite is exercising his rite to wright a play about a famous old marriage right	The playwright is exercising his right to write a play about a famous old marriage rite
11	Piering among the luggage on the peer I took a peak into the peek of an animal cage	Peering among the luggage on the pier I took a peek into the peak of an animal cage
12	Presently Roger will stork in with his drawing of that odd-looking waiting bird, the stalk	Presently Roger will stalk in with his drawing of that odd-looking wading bird, the stork
13	It is, indeed, a feet to fit feat hygienically, especially when, in	It is, indeed, a feat to fit feet hygienically, especially when, in the

* See page 3.

	NO	YES
	the coarse of your duty, you are obliged to suffer the course language of a costumer	course of your duty, you are obliged to suffer the coarse language of a customer
14	The most beautiful seen I have ever scene is that along the river Seen just before it paws its flood into the English Channel	The most beautiful scene I have ever seen is that along the river Seine just before it pours its flood into the English Channel
15	They ascent to making the assent this morning because they are eager to sea the see from the mountain top during a storm	They assent to making the ascent this morning because they are eager to see the sea from the mountain top during a storm
16	Inasmuch as she was feeling very down, she took the down train home and lay down on the down pillows all afternoon	Inasmuch as she was feeling unwell, she took the down train home and lay on the downy pillows all afternoon
17	When the cruise heard that the ships were to make a world crews, they readily signed piece with the union on a peace of old parchment taken from some wreckage	When the crews heard that the ships were to make a world cruise, they readily signed peace with the union on a piece of old parchment taken from some wreckage

SECTION THIRTY-EIGHT — ANTONYM

Antonyms are words of opposite meanings (Greek *anti* against, and *onyma* word). Like synonyms (page 348) antonyms are relative rather than absolute, representing degrees rather than definite poles of oppositeness. In all general considerations, however, *black* may be taken as the antonym of *white, each* of *all, good* of *bad, high* of *low, loosen* of *tighten, likely* of *unlikely, no* of *yes, alas* of *hurrah.* Degrees of difference, however minute, defy perfection as between antonyms and thus make the selection of opposite terms as elusive as the selection of equivalent ones. The whiteness of hair and the whiteness of snow are two different whitenesses, as mourning black and burnt-cork black are two different blacknesses, and even the color expert may have difficulty in giving the antonym of *cerise* or *maroon* or *elephant's breath.*

Though fewer than synonyms, antonyms are subject to the same power of extension and overlapping, and reflect the same richness of composite word derivation. The antonyms of *wisdom* may be *absurdity, error, fatuity, folly, foolishness, idiocy, ignorance, imbecility, imprudence, indiscretion, miscalculation, misjudgment, nonsense, senselessness, silliness, stupidity.* The word *stupidity* may, in turn, have as antonyms *acuteness, alertness, anima-*

tion, brilliancy, cleverness, information, intelligence, keenness, knowledge, quickness, readiness, sagacity, sense, sensibility, understanding. And *quickness* from this list may have *check, clog, delay, drag, hindrance, impediment, inertia, obstruction, retardation, slowness, stoppage.* But these are lists of general equivalents merely, the terms themselves being variables that must be carefully selected to reflect logical thought. *Wisdom* and *foolishness, alertness* and *inertia* (or *inertness*), *quickness* and *slowness* are better antonyms—better "opposites"—than are, respectively, *wisdom* and *error, alertness* and *miscalculation, quickness* and *stoppage.* Though the latter pairs are widely divided in meaning, they are not as a rule applicable in similar or related categories of usage. You speak of a stoppage or an impediment in speech rather than of an obstruction or a hindrance in speech. You speak of the imprudence or the indiscretion of a course of action rather than of the fatuity or the ignorance of a course of action. If it is the contrast of antonym that you wish to express you say that John is wise and Bill is foolish, not that John is brilliant and Bill is miscalculating. The latter confuses the issue of contrast, placing the two contrasted personal qualities in different and unequal spheres of apperception.

Antonyms such as *mind* and *matter, flesh* and *spirit, man* and *woman (Joseph* and *Josephine, Julia* and *Julius),* are sometimes called complementary antonyms. Some authorities have had the temerity to classify as perfect or absolute antonyms (see above) such terms as *round* and *square, perpendicular* and *horizontal,* and—pet example of the old rhetoricians—*dextrorse* twining spirally from left to right like the stem of the hop vine, and *sinistrorse* twining spirally from right to left like the stem of the bindweed (page 399). Most antonyms are classified with greater safety as indefinite or relative for the reason that, as above explained, there is usually a wide margin of fluctuation or variation between such relative opposites as *health* and *disease, right* and *wrong, up* and *down.* Under this last classification are the prefixal and the suffixal antonyms such as *kind* and *unkind, regardful* and *regardless,* important in definition by way of pointing out what things are not, important also in contrast by way of dramatizing difference, but most perplexing very often to the beginner in the study of English.

Antonyms formed by the use of prefixes and suffixes cause confusion for the reason that the meaning of these particles is usually

taken for granted. Most people look up words in the dictionary now and then but very few take the trouble to look up a prefix or a suffix or a root. To most, therefore, *in* and *un* and *dis* and *less* and *ock* are merely negative or subtractive affixes, and nothing more. This misconception leads many, especially children and foreigners who are obliged to wrestle with the problems of English for the first time, to confuse in both reading and writing the most commonly used antonyms in the language. Again, the combining power or "habit" of prefixes and suffixes varies, sometimes without reason, and this increases confusion. If you will consult the brief treatment of prefixes and suffixes in chapter one (pages 1 and 4) you will see that *in* and *sub* and *syn*, and certain other prefixes, undergo change before certain roots, as do *ant* and *ian* and *y*, and other suffixes after them. You use *unlike*, not *inlike*, as antonym of the adjective or the adverb *like;* you use *dislike*, not *unlike* or *mislike*, as antonym of the verb *like* (though *mislike* is Shaksperean). You use *insufficient*, not *unsufficient*, as antonym of *sufficient; noncombatant*, as antonym of *combatant*. Sometimes *in* is entirely without force, sometimes it is intensive. *Indifferent*, for example, does not mean *not different* or *undifferent* or *nondifferent*, and is not antonymous with *different* or synonymous with *similar*, it means neutral or apathetic, and is the antonym of *interested* or *excited* or *aroused*. And *invaluable* does not mean *not valuable* or *unvaluable* or *nonvaluable*, and is not therefore antonymous with *valuable* or *worthy* or *precious;* it means valuable beyond calculation, and is the antonym of *valueless* and *worthless*. The *in* in *infamous* is much stronger than mere *not* or *non* or *un;* it is, rather, *not* carrying with it the connotation of bad or base or scandalous. The antonyms of *infamous* are, therefore, not *famous* and *known*, but *notable* and *esteemed* and *reputable;* its synonyms, *odious, nefarious, detestable*. The suffix *less* sometimes means without, destitute, free from; sometimes, beyond range; sometimes, unable or without power. *Careless* is subtractive meaning without care, and is the antonym of *careful* and *vigilant;* but in *boundless* and *priceless* the suffix means limitless or without range, antonyms of the one being *bound* and *limited* and *small*, and of the other *worthless*, and *valueless* and *useless*. The prefix *dis* (*di* before *b, d, g, j, l, m, n, r, v*) is separative in signification denoting reversal or expulsion or negation or absence or opposite; but it may be a simple intensive prefixed to a stem that itself indicates any of these, as *disannul* and *disbar*. It connotes greater intensity or emphasis

than *un,* as a rule. The term *unliked person* means simply a not-liked person; the term *disliked person* connotes active antipathy or aversion. If you say that a person is *unable* to do something, you may mean that he has never tried to do it but is adjudged unable before trying. If you say that a person is *disabled,* you may correctly mean that he has been made unable to do something which he has been proved able to do. In the same way, *disqualified* means deprived of qualification, whereas *unqualified* may mean that qualification was never made or proved, *disassociated,* again, implies former association, but *unassociated* may or may not do so. And you speak of an *immovable* (not *unmovable*) spirit, and of *unmovable* (not *immovable*) furniture.

The foregoing is merely illustrative of the invitations to confusion issued by English prefixes and suffixes in the construction of antonyms. The treatment could be greatly extended to cover the antonyms *in* and *ex, intra* and *extra, male* and *bene, micro* and *mega, mono* and *poly, per* and *peri, pre* and *post, retro* and *pro, sub* and *super, un* and *ultra,* and the many others that befuddle and betray in daily use. Even the abridged editions of dictionaries are now including long lists of prefix (sometimes of suffix) combinations for the guidance of students in this very puzzling phase of English diction, an authoritative, if belated, acknowledgment certainly that such guidance is greatly needed.

The list of antonyms below is given for its representative value. Any one who will take the trouble to expand each term in a pair as far as he can from his knowledge and from his reading—or from the dictionary, if this be necessary—may easily build a little lexicon of antonyms of at least two thousand words. Vocabulary-building power is nowhere better developed than in the exercise of expanding synonyms and antonyms. It has been estimated that the average college student should have "on call" at least ten thousand such pairs of antonyms, including of course the negative prefixals.

above, below; abrogate, confer; absolve, blame; abstract, concrete; acquit, convict; active, passive; add, subtract; adroit, maladroit; advance, retreat; affinity, antipathy, affirm, deny; agreeable, offensive; all, each; ally, antagonist; amity, enmity; analysis, synthesis; antonym, synonym; assemble, adjourn; asset, liability; assist, deter; assuage, aggravate; attach, detach; attraction, repulsion; austere,

gentle; autocracy, democracy; barrier, opening; beautiful, ugly; begin, end; benefit, damage, benevolence, malevolence; benign, malign; birth, death; blame, praise; bleach, blacken; bless, curse; bring, take; broad, narrow; bullish, bearish; busy, idle; calm, storm; capitalism, communism; catch, release; center, circumference; certainty, doubt; cheer, sadden; chief, underling; civilized, barbarous; clear, obscure; cold, hot; collect, scatter; collectively, severally; come, go; comedy, tragedy; complainant, defendant; complex, simple; concave, convex; conceal, reveal; concord, discord; condemn, commend; constant, variable; continuous, intermittent; contract, expand; cool, warm; coordinate, subordinate; courage, cowardice; daily, nightly; defeat, victory; diurnal, nocturnal; down, up; economy, extravagance; end, means; endorse, repudiate; entertain, bore; entice, repel; eulogize, slander; excavate, mound; exhale, inhale; exhaust, restore; exit, entrance; fact, fiction; faith, unbelief; false, true; fame, obscurity; fast, slow; fear, bravery; feminine, masculine; fickle, steady; fiery, docile; find, lose; first, last; fluctuating, stable; fluid, solid; free, hold, fresh, stale; friend, foe; frank, shifty; frustrate, promote; full, empty; gain, loss; gaiety, gloom; give, take; gladden, sadden; glut, starve; good, bad; grief, joy; guest, host; guilt, innocence; hallow, desecrate; hard, soft; hatable, lovable; help, hinder, homogeneous, heterogeneous; hope, despair; ignite, extinguish; improve, deteriorate; in, out; increase, decrease; inductive, deductive; intelligent, ignorant; join, sever; kind, cruel; kindle, smother; large, small; lie, stand; lift, drop; liquid, solid; live, die; long, short; lord, vassal; love, hate; marriage, divorce; masochism, sadism, master, slave; maximum, minimum; native, alien; oblivion, remembrance; occupy, vacate; open, close; oppose, support; optimism, pessimism, order, chaos; ornate, plain; over, under, partner, rival; patriot, traitor; plenty, want; plus, minus; poor, rich; presence, absence; profit, loss; profundity, superficiality, prorogue, convoke; protuberance, cavity; proud, humble; public, private; purify, corrupt; question, answer; raise, lower; rare, frequent; raze build; real, spurious; relaxed, tense; resemblance, disparity; rest, motion; remember, forget; reticent, forward; right, left; righteous, evil, rise, fall; ruler, subject; rural, urban; savant, idiot; scarcity, abundance; Scylla, Charybdis (though the former is a rock, the latter a whirlpool); select, reject; sharp, dull; singular, plural; sleep, wake, smooth, rough; sober, drunk; stimulate, enervate; stop, start; straight, crooked; strong, weak; suave, brusque; submit, defy; subvert, sustain; succeed, fail; succinct, wordy; summon, dis-

miss; sunny, cloudy; superior, inferior; supply, demand; sure, dubious; surfeit, stint; sweet, sour; taciturn, loquacious; tame, wild, teach, learn; temerity, timidity; theory, practice; terse, prolix; thin, thick; tiny, massive; together, apart; tranquil, turbulent, transient, permanent; transparent, opaque; unanimity, dissension, unite, divide; variety, monotony; virile, impotent; virtue, vice, vivacity, lethargy; vigilant, sluggish; well, ill; wide, narrow; wise, foolish; within, without; work, play; zenith, nadir.

CONTEST *

	NO	YES
1	He who has few desires for things is a rich man	He who wants least has most
2	The reason you give me is unrational and nonsufficient	The reason you give me is irrational and insufficient
3	A year ago today he was very proud, today he is quite the opposite	A year ago today he was very proud, today he is very humble
4	I do not know whether he is assigned here temporarily or for good	I do not know whether he is assigned here temporarily or permanently
5	His lack of trustworthiness cannot be attributed to his unmaturity	His untrustworthiness cannot be attributed to his immaturity
6	He was formerly considered clever but this reveals him as being anything but clever	He was once considered clever but this reveals him as stupid
7	The luncheon guests came early but they did not leave until almost dark	The luncheon guests came early and left late
8	Your unlegible writing makes you uneligible for the position	Your illegible writing makes you ineligible for the position
9	The coming-in of the tide like its recession has a not disinteresting effect upon the weather	The flood and ebb of tide have a not uninteresting effect upon the weather
10	He walked leisurely toward the stern of the ship as I walked as fast as I could toward the other end	He walked leisurely toward the stern of the ship as I walked rapidly toward the prow
11	You were once an assiduous and reliable student but lately you have become different indeed	You were once an assiduous and reliable student but lately you have become slack and untrustworthy
12	His body was once hardy and sturdy but now it lacks firmness and robustness	His body was once hardy and sturdy but now it is soft and frail

* See page 9.

NO	YES
13 He was once optimistic regarding the human race but he now sees only the worst in store for it	He was once optimistic regarding the human race but he is now pessimistic
14 He remained unmovable when I assured him that his not working would bring unpleasant results whereas working would be more gratifying in all ways	He remained immovable when I assured him that idleness would bring unhappiness whereas industry would bring happiness
15 He said that the furniture was nonmovable, and that only a very intelligent person or one who knew nothing could so have placed it	He said that the furniture was unmovable, and that either a wise man or a fool could so have placed it
16 The pushing forward of the enemy was anything but markedly rapid or notably speedy, and the backward movement of the defending forces was carefully made	The advance of the enemy was slow and tedious, the retreat of the defenders was orderly
17 He was put ahead because of his excellent work in his studies, but he was later put back because of his character ratings	He was promoted for excellence in his studies, but he was later demoted for defect in character
18 The jury declared that the prisoner had not been basically at fault but rather the opposite, and recommended that he be treated kindly rather than rigorously	The jury declared the prisoner innocent rather than guilty, and recommended clemency rather than severity
19 When he is in high form, he is very little below the level of a human being, when he is in low form, he is almost on the plane of the lower animal creatures	When he is best, he is little worse than a man, when he is worst, he is little better than a beast

SECTION THIRTY-NINE — SYNONYM (NOUN)

Synonyms are words that have approximately the same meaning, that are similar, though not necessarily identical, in some—perhaps all—meanings and uses. The word *synonym* (*synonyme* is an old variant now almost archaic) is from Greek *syn* along with or same as, and *onyma* name. Chesterfield said that those who study a language attentively will find that there is no such thing as absolute synonyms. There are many words, however, that are sufficiently alike in meaning and in certain uses as to seem identical and, thus, interchangeable. Of all the riches of the English tongue none is more important as a means to precise expression

than its synonymy. This arises, of course, from the composite quality of the language, from its proven power to assimilate elements from other languages the world over and make of them an amalgam rather than a jumble or a patchwork. But nowhere may the term *embarrassment of riches* apply with greater point than just here. The very wealth of word similarity or seeming equivalence may justly very often give pause even to the savant. What, then, must be the bewilderment of the child or the foreigner, struggling to achieve even an elementary—a merely communicative—use of the language, when he is confronted with even the simplest synonyms.

Though *fur* and *hair* are in some respects synonymous, you speak of the *fur,* not the *hair,* of mink; of the *hair,* not the *fur,* of man Though *high* and *tall* are in some respects synonymous, you speak of a *high,* not *tall,* bridge; of a *tall,* not *high,* child. Though *hide* and *skin* are in some respects synonymous, you speak of the *hide,* not the *skin,* of the lower animals; of the *skin* that "you love to touch." Words of the same signification derived from different contributory elements sometimes approach perfect synonymity but they are more often alternatives having long fringes of difference and variation in use and meaning, thus, Latin *benevolence* and Anglo-Saxon *goodwill,* Latin *innocent* and Anglo-Saxon *sinless,* and (trite as it may be to refer to the first chapter of Walter Scott's *Ivanhoe*) French *pork* and Anglo-Saxon *swine,* French *beef* and Anglo-Saxon *ox,* French *veal* and Anglo-Saxon *calf* are synonymous and are not synonymous or more than synonymous. As result of the composite versatility of the language the word *wisdom* may, for example, have as synonyms *attainment, depth, discernment, discretion, enlightenment, erudition, foresight, insight, judgment, judiciousness, knowledge, learning, prescience, profundity, prudence, reason, sagacity, sense, skill, understanding.* The word *prudence* may, in turn, have *care, carefulness, caution, circumspection, consideration, discretion, forecast, foresight, forethought, frugality, judgment, judiciousness, providence.* And *care* from this list may have *anxiety, attention, bother, caution, charge, circumspection, concern, discretion, forethought, heed, management, oversight, perplexity, precaution, prudence, solicitude, trouble, vigilance, wariness, watchfulness, worry.* The end is not yet. But here is sufficient illustration of synonymic extension to show something of the possibilities that synonyms offer by way of getting expression exactly adapted to thought—by way,

also, of getting it almost hopelessly confused. Note that, as above listed, there are but four terms in common between *wisdom* and *prudence,* between *prudence* and *care.*

It follows, therefore, that the study of synonyms is of paramount issue for any one who wishes or is required to use words with precision. Only by knowing all the equivalents or near-equivalents for a given term can he possibly choose intelligently the one or those best suited to his thought. Any inaccuracy or infelicity in his choice of words, though it cloud his thought by ever so little, may nevertheless misrepresent his idea, perhaps be fatal to it. The distinctions to be made between words that mean almost the same but not quite the same are nice and often evasive, but they are worthy of search and re-search.

When Mark Twain said that the difference between the right word and the almost right word is the difference between lightning and the lightning bug, he was speaking of synonyms. Many a countinghouse employe who is satisfied with the almost right addition or subtraction or multiplication or division very soon finds himself out of a job—and perhaps in jail. A too easy-going attitude toward precision in the choice of words has been known to lead to even worse consequences, for words represent something more important than mere calculation. Any one who is willing to let the almost right word go for the right one, confesses thereby not only to poverty of thought but to mental laziness. If he is unwilling to study and assort the approximately twenty-four synonyms for *plentiful,* for instance, the approximately twenty-six for *queer,* the approximately thirty for *vain,* he is expressionally unsafe—and his silence is golden, at least in respect to words that are rich in synonym. Minute—even pesky—as some of the shades of difference may seem to be, they are noted and are discriminatingly respected by the best speakers and writers always.

Synonyms should be searched for the sake of variety and succinctness of expression, sometimes even for beauty and rhythm of expression. But primarily they should be studied for the sake of enabling a speaker or a writer to say exactly what he means. He cannot do so otherwise unless, of course, he is a genius with words just as the master musician is a genius with notes. Take any literary masterpiece—a play by Shakspere, a poem by Milton, an essay by Lamb—and test its diction by synonym, and you will find that the piece you select is deservedly called *master* because, for one

thing, the author used the one inevitable and elusive word at every point where strategic choice had to be made. If there be any doubt about this, prove the test by attempted substitution of synonyms. It is sometimes insisted that synonyms should be studied for the sake primarily of avoiding monotonous repetition of words. This is by no means a major reason for such study, though it may occasionally be a justifiable one. If a thought to be repeated is worth anything, it will bear repetition in the same words. It had, indeed, better be repeated in the same words if different words chosen just for the sake of avoiding repetition leave any shade of its meaning inadequately expressed. And such inadequacy is likely to occur when a writer or a speaker consults his dictionary of synonyms just for the sake of "finding other words that will do just as well." To belabor synonyms in the cause of variety, as in *First, we traveled through France; then we toured the Alps, and finally we journeyed around the Mediterranean* is to misconceive the true purpose of their study, to make of them merely a mechanical dictional device. Mr. Venus' discipline was entirely praiseworthy however:

> "Then what you're going to do next, I suppose," said Silas Wegg to Mr Venus, "is to get married to the old party?"
>
> "Mr Wegg!" said Venus, with a sudden flush of wrath, "the lady in question is not a old party"
>
> "I meant," explained Wegg testily, "to the party as formerly objected?"
>
> "Mr Wegg," said Venus, "in a case of so much delicacy, I must trouble you to *say what you mean* There are strings that must not be played upon No, sir! Not sounded, unless in the most respectful and tuneful manner Of such melodious strings is Miss Pleasant Riderhood formed"
>
> "Then it *is* the lady as formerly objected?" said Wegg
>
> "Sir," returned Venus with dignity, "I accept the altered phrase. It is the lady as formerly objected"
>
> "When is it to come off?" asked Silas.
>
> "Mr Wegg," said Venus, with another flush, "I cannot permit it to be put in the form of a fight. I must temperately but firmly call upon you, sir, to amend that question."
>
> "When is the lady," Wegg reluctantly demanded, constraining his ill temper in remembrance of the partnership and its stock in trade, "a-going to give her 'and where she has already given her 'art?" *

The unabridged dictionary is, of course, the ultimate guide in the study of words in all their senses, especially in the study of synonyms. Special dictionaries of synonyms, excellent as they may

* From *Our Mutual Friend* by Charles Dickens.

be, can never be all-inclusive; thus, the very term for which desperate search is made may very often not be found in them. And since the language is always wholesomely growing and changing, synonyms perforce follow suit. Dictionaries are revised more frequently than are special word books. The following nouns and pronouns are presented only as typical of those that are confused in daily conversation and writing. No claim of exhaustiveness is made for the list even in these limited fields. In many instances confusion is treated not from the point of view of synonym at all, but from that of homonym or of antonym, or of any other consideration in which the term is generally misunderstood or misused in relation to other terms. Each term is explained and illustrated in connection with its customarily confused usage, not in connection with other meanings and uses in which confusion is not likely to occur, though there may be many of them. Verbs and adjectives correlative with the synonymous nouns below given are, as a rule, subject to the same distinctions, though in some cases meanings may be modified or extended (pages 376 and 393). Many "old favorites" will be found—words that have been differentiated in use and meaning by rhetoricians since the making of rhetorics began—but no apologies are in order for they are still confused, sometimes in surprising places.*

ability is the state of being able, the power to do; *capacity*, the state of being receptive, the power to acquire and hold. "Ability is to capacity as genus is to species," says Crabb. You may have great capacity for storing knowledge in your mind but lack ability to make use of that knowledge. *Capability* implies qualification for some active exercise of power, it is very often used to mean undeveloped faculty If you have not the ability to put your store of knowledge to use, then your capabilities are said to be undeveloped

abstract is a summary or concise statement of the main idea or points in a composition; *abridgment* implies a reduction of a larger to a smaller or shorter treatment, the salients always being retained, *epitome* is a succinct summary, with emphasis upon main headings, *resumé* is a summing up, a recapitulation, a run-through that gathers the important points, *synopsis* is more nearly an outline, showing particularly the order, scope, and plan of a work

acceptance means the act of accepting, as well as favorable attitude or reception; *acceptation*, the meaning in which a word, for instance, is generally received or understood. You say that the speech of acceptance was a happy one, and that the new word *quisling* received almost immediate acceptation. *Acceptation* was once synonymous with *acceptance* but is so no longer

* For a more detailed study of word meaning, use, and pronunciation, see the author's *Don't Say It* published by Funk and Wagnalls Company.

access means entrance or approach, admission or accessibility to, increase or addition, a fit of passion or outburst, *accession* means the act of acceding to office or position or honor, the act of coming in to anything that is added or inherited. You say that you have access to the museum, that access to the pool is made difficult by heavy undergrowth, that he became livid through access of fury You say that his accession to the throne was questioned, that you have won accessions to your original estate

accompanyist is (was) the agent noun form corresponding to the verb *accompany* But *accompanist* is now preferable as the name of an accompanying musician. *Accompanier* is seldom used (Note *botany* and *botanist,* not *botanyist; anatomy* and *anatomist,* not *anatomyist)*

acquisition denotes material or external gains, *acquirement,* the power or ability to achieve, usually in relation to personal qualities and resources *Attainment* is used, as a rule, in reference to intellectual acquirement, *accomplishment,* to the acquirement of social faculties and graces

act, like *deed,* pertains to the accomplished thing; *action,* to the process of doing or acting The former is correctly thought of as immediate and instantaneous and individual, the latter, as occupying time and consisting of continued process. You speak of an act of loyalty and of the action of the heart

admittance has reference to place, *admission,* to privilege or right or position You gain admittance to a private estate, admission to college or to a profession. You speak of price of admission to a theater, but of refusing admittance to an intoxicated person

advance means forward movement, *advancement* means furtherance, promotion, progression, act of advancing You speak of the furious advance of a battle line, and of the advancement in the service of a military leader

alibi is sometimes colloquially used in the sense of excuse. Strictly speaking, it means the fact of having been elsewhere at the alleged time of the commission of an act, or the plea of having been elsewhere, it is primarily a specialized legal term You prove an alibi when you prove your absence from a certain place at a certain time at which a certain act took place. To say that you have an alibi for not doing your assigned work is really a slang use of *alibi*

allusion is indirect reference to; *delusion,* misconception or false belief usually in application to reality, *illusion* is deception—self-deception—that exists in the imagination only. You say that your allusion is not to any one present, that your friend is under the delusion that he has been robbed, that your illusion of hope and optimism is the only thing that sustains you. *Elusion* means escape or evasion. It was once synonymous with *illusion* which is very often figuratively used in the sense of escape from reality. An escapist may cherish his illusions

alternative pertains to two things; *choice,* to a greater number of possibilities. The former implies compulsion of choosing; the latter does not. It is unnecessary therefore to use *only* or *either* or *neither* with *alternative. I have only one alternative* and *I have either this alternative*

or that one are wasteful, for *alternative* itself covers the distinction thus made. *Option* indicates a still broader field or course of choosing than *choice*. *Alternate*, as adjective, means every other one, as noun, substitute; as verb, to interchange, to act or vary by turns. It is frequently misused for *alternative*

amateur is one who engages in some activity for pleasure and recreation rather than gain, *dilettante* means the same but carries with it the idea of superficial elegance or trifling attitude, *novice* is a beginner, one "new at," whether in vocation or avocation, trade or business, *tyro* is one who has only an elementary acquaintance with something he wishes to learn. The novice may know but lack experience; the tyro lacks both knowledge and experience

ambiguity in expression leaves doubt as which of two or more meanings is to be taken; *equivocation* means that different interpretations may be made of what is expressed, and with equal justification, it is usually deliberate and intended to puzzle or mislead, whereas ambiguity is unintentional, as a rule, resulting from lack of care in construction *Obscurity* in expression means that it cannot be easily understood, if at all, or that it may be meaningless. *Vagueness*, applied to expression, means not clear yet not so "dark" as obscurity, it results from thinking that is not clear, and may be remedied by redefining and revising meaning in order to make it more certain Vagueness is to obscurity what twilight is to darkness

annalist is one who writes annals, that is, a historian, a recorder, one who compiles a date-by-date statement of the movement and progress of events in any field, it may also mean the record itself thus compiled. *Analyst* is one who studies factors, elements, and problems, and recommends solutions, as in chemistry or economics, or in any other field

antepenult is the third syllable from the end—"before the penult"—as *u* in *reputation* The adjective form is *antepenultimate*, as in The antepenultimate syllable in *reputation* is not accented

anthracite is noun only meaning hard natural coal; it is unnecessary, therefore, to say *anthracite coal* *Bituminous* is an adjective meaning containing bitumen (volatile pitch or other inflammable matter) It is correct to say *bituminous coal*, and not so long ago was regarded as necessary. But *bituminous* is increasingly used as noun (as antonym of *anthracite*) to mean soft coal

artist pertains to a worker in the fine arts; *artisan*, to one in the mechanical or manual arts. You call a sculptor an artist, a mason an artisan

arrival means reaching a destination as result of preceding movement, *advent* is important or momentous arrival. The latter, used in connection with the coming of Christ, is capitalized

assay (accented on the second syllable) is a technical term meaning a chemical test as of drugs, ores, metals. *Essay* (accented on the first syllable) is a literary composition. *Essay* (accented on the second syllable) is to try or attempt or undertake The first two are nouns; the last, a verb. *Assay* is archaic as a synonym of the verb *essay*. But it may be used as verb in the sense of appraise or evaluate

assumption means taking for granted, usually taking too much for granted, with little if any justification by way of evidence; *presumption* implies a certain minimum of evidence at least, some justifiable inference from which logical procedure may be started It has been said that in doubtful cases the bad lawyer proceeds upon assumption, the good one, upon presumption

assurance is no longer used in the United States to any large degree in the sense of *insurance* (though it is still so used in England) Its general use is correctly that in the sense of confidence and trust, sometimes with a derogatory connotation. You say that you have the officer's assurance that you will be allowed to pass, that some one has too much assurance. But you speak of life insurance, fire insurance, liability insurance

attorney is, strictly speaking, an agent or deputy designated to act for another, especially in business matters, *lawyer* is one graduated in a course of law and a recognized practitioner in legal procedure Colloquially the two terms are often used interchangeably. But you correctly speak of a patent attorney or a patent agent, unless the person who handles your patent business is, in addition to being a patent expert, also a bona fide lawyer, in which case *patent lawyer* is exact. The term *attorney at law* really means agent at law or legal agent, and is an unnecessarily labored expression for the simpler *lawyer* when graduate and practicing lawyer is meant

aught means any, any thing, any part, any item, as in *Is there aught that I can do,* it should not be used to mean zero or cipher for which *naught (nought)* is the correct term. *Naught* may be used generally as antonym of *aught,* that is, nothing, not anything. *Ought,* old imperfect tense of *owe,* is used to denote moral duty, as in *We ought to help the weak and unfortunate* To express mere fitness or propriety or advisability, *should* is preferable to *ought,* as in *I should go to that party I suppose, since my employer is to be there.* Do not use *ought* for *aught* or *naught.* Do not say *had ought* (page 248) or *ought of* for *ought to have* (page 74)

balance is incorrect for remainder unless used interchangeably with it in regard to money left over, as in *bank balance* Do not say balance of the week, balance of the goods, balance of the year Use *remainder* or *rest. Remnant* pertains to fragment or any small remainder; *residuum,* to what is left after processing or analyzing or dissolving a part *Residuum* is used for the most part in technical connections, its more general equivalent being *residue,* as in the residue of an estate, or of an investment, or of the rubbish

behalf may be preceded by either *in* or *on,* but with a distinction. *In behalf of* means in the interest of or for the benefit of, *on behalf of,* on the part of or as agent or representative of. *Please say a good word in behalf of me* and *This certificate is issued on behalf of the applicant* represent correct usage

breach is a break; it is used both literally and figuratively in everyday expression, as a breach in a wall and a breach in friendship. *Breech* is the bottom or lower part of any machine or mechanical device, as the breech of a gun

Breton is a native of Brittany (Bretagne) in France; ***Briton,*** an Englishman or a "Britisher," or a native or citizen or subject of Great Britain. Do not confuse the latter term with its homonym *Britain,* used frequently to designate the British Isles or, at least, the southern part of the island of Great Britain

bulk pertains to quantity of more or less definite shape; *mass,* to solidity and coherence, *volume* to that which, as a rule, cannot be given form or outline, as volume of water in a reservoir *Majority* is not to be confused with any of these three terms, it pertains principally to number, to countable objects or persons (page 366)

bursar is a treasurer, a keeper and dispenser of cash, as in a school or college, *purser,* an official on a vessel (usually passenger) who has charge of all accounts—freight, tickets, safe deposits, formerly *purser* meant paymaster on a ship, and it still retains this meaning on many freight vessels

capitol is always a noun, it pertains to the building in Washington, D C, in which official national legislative business is conducted, and to such building in every one of the forty-eight states It is capitalized when used to refer to the national legislative center; it is capitalized when used in connection with a state legislative center provided such usage is itself special and individual The White House in Washington, D C, is the presidential residence Do not call it the Capitol in Washington. The noun and adjective *capital* is correct in all other uses

center is a point equidistant from every part of a circumference or from the opposite boundaries of a square or a parallelogram. *Middle* may be a point but is frequently a line or a space The latter is less definite than the former. *Midst* implies surrounding objects or individuals or details. You say *at* the center, *in* the middle, *in* the midst; at the center of gravity, in the middle of the room or the night, in the midst of the crowd (page 433)

ceremonial is an organized system or ritual; *ceremony* is a rite or customary performance You follow a prescribed ceremonial of a religious denomination, you attend the ceremony of a wedding. The adjective *ceremonious* means nice, exact, punctilious; the adjective *ceremonial* means formal or complying with established form

certain should not be used as a pronoun, as in *Certain of those with us fell by the wayside.* Say, rather, *Some of those with us* or *Certain ones of those with us*

change means the act of altering or substituting, or the alteration or substitution itself, *phase* is a particular or transitory state between changes, *innovation* is change that more or less shocks or revolutionizes settled routine or custom, *transition* is change made by passing from one phase or place to another, especially in a regular and natural way You speak of a change in the weather, a phase in a career or the phases of the moon, an innovation in your daily round, a transition from one position to another.

"character," said Emerson, "is what one is; *reputation,* what he is thought to be." One's *record* is the sum total of his known action or inaction.

Your record probably indicates your character pretty closely; your reputation may be either higher or lower than either your character or your record justifies Your character equals your natural plus your acquired traits, whereas your *nature* is made up of your original trends and endowments and propensities

characteristic (page 397) is some distinction or quality or mark, *trait*, a closely defined or identifying mark *Characteristic* is generic, *trait*, specific *Feature*, literally used, is some particular part, as of the face, though it is sometimes applied to any particular part of the body. You say that his square chin is a feature denoting the trait of strength as prominent among his characteristics (see *factor*)

columnist is the agent noun form of *column*, meaning one who writes a special column, especially for a newspaper. *Colyumist* is its humorous or facetious trade slang synonym

compass (page 454) pertains to space within limits or included within a given boundary, *range*, to extent without idea of limitation, *scope*, to breadth and length—amplitude—of freedom afforded by range, room for functioning in relation to ends in view. You speak of the compass of man's liberty, the range of his intellect, the scope of his activity

complainant and *complainer* both mean one who complains. The former, however, is a technical legal term, the latter, a term belonging to general usage

completion pertains to an act, *completeness* to a condition—the act of finishing and the condition of being wholly and unifiedly done The completion of a building, for example, may mean that the builders have finished it, but the completeness of a building means that there is left nothing whatever to be added by way of improvement.

complement is that which makes up omission or deficiency; *supplement* is that which adds to what has already been relatively completed without regard to its sequence or relationship or dependence One part of a story may be the complement of another, a drawing or a map or an appendix may be a supplement to both parts In grammar a complement is any added term or construction by means of which predication is made complete

compliment is any courteous expression of approbation or admiration, formally or informally made *flattery* is insincere commendation, made usually with an ulterior motive and in an obsequious play to another's vanity

comptroller persists in the sense of official auditor or one who certifies and controls public accounts. You speak of the city comptroller and the comptroller of the currency. But it is archaic in all other uses of its synonym *controller*. The association of *comptroller* with legal affairs (page 46) has probably done much to retain it in the highly specialized sense above pointed out It was never in high standing, for its original adoption came about through an erroneous spelling of *controller*

confidant (masculine) and *confidante* (feminine) is one to whom secrets are confided, a confidential friend. *Confident* is an adjective meaning

trustful, sure, having self-reliance; it is sometimes colloquially used in the sense denoting obtrusive assurance or conceit

contact is primarily a noun meaning a touching or a meeting of bodies, the relation of one body (troops) to another, in science (electricity) the junction of two conductors, or a special part made for such connection But this word has been used—abused—so much as verb that one dictionary at least succumbs, listing it as verb meaning to come into touch or contact with At present it is preferably used as noun only. Commercial expression sometimes extends the license of *contact* as verb to the verb phrase *contact with*, a dictional horror of horrors belonging to the business inflation of the fabulous twenties

coral is a sea animal or the bony structure (skeleton) left by it, *corral*, an enclosure, sometimes formed by wagons, for confining animals or for defense and security The first word is accented on the first syllable, the second, on the second syllable The latter is used colloquially as a verb in the sense of gather in or capture, as *You had better corral the children before the parade starts*

corespondent is a legal term meaning a joint respondent as in a divorce suit, *correspondent* is one who writes letters, he may also be a newspaper writer or a business agent

council means a meeting of persons or a committee constituted to advise and direct, *counsel* means advice, or one (usually a lawyer) engaged to advise. The term *counselor-at-law* means adviser in legal matters The term *councilor* or *councilman* means member of a council Do not confuse these words with *consul* meaning an agent of a country in residence abroad

coup is a trick, a blow, a sudden stroke of strategy, as in politics to gain advantage, *coupé*, a small automobile accommodating fewer persons than a limousine. *Coup* is pronounced *koo* to rime with *do*, *coupé*, *koo pay'*, to rime with *do pay*

crevasse is a deep fissure or breach as in a glacier, *crevice*, a small, narrow opening, as in the wall of a house

cue is a billiard stick, the closing words of an actor's speech, a catchword, a tail or anything resembling a tail, such as a waiting line, a braid of hair, a curved line But it is more generally used in the first three senses than in the others, *queue* being used for the tail meanings The latter is becoming archaic. *Cue* may be a verb, *queue* may not You may *cue* an actor for lines, not *queue* him. Either word may be used for the name of the letter *q*

cultivation is a process; *culture* is a result. Culture is acquired as result of the cultivation of mental and moral qualities. The verb *culture* is now used largely in connection with the training and improvement of plants and animals. You speak of cultivating your mind, not of culturing it Of the two participial adjectives—*cultivated* and *cultured*—the former is preferable in relation to a person

curtsy (or *curtsey*) is a slight bow—bending of the knees and stooping of the body—made by women only in presence of a royal personage,

as a queen. It is a variant of *courtesy* but should not be confused with it in spelling It may be either noun or verb *Curtesy* is a technical legal term meaning the tenure or life interest which a husband may have in a deceased wife's lands, it pertains more generally to English law than to American

custom conveys the idea of frequency of repetition of the same act; *habit* implies a settled tendency or inclination growing out of custom Custom is the conscious and voluntary doing of the same act under similar circumstances, or is so when it is initiated Frozen into habit, it becomes spontaneous, unconscious, and even uncontrollable The custom of taking a drink every afternoon may lead to an unbreakable habit Custom pertains, as a rule, to the action of the many, or grows out of such multiple action, habit, mainly to the action of one.

deceit pertains to the habit or practice of deceiving or to a specific instance of deceiving, as *That man is notorious for deceit* and *Your every little deceit was anticipated. Deception* is the act of deceiving Deceit implies design, deception may be unintentional. The latter applies also to the condition of being deceived, deceit does not

deduction proceeds from general truth or principle to particulars or to other general truth or principle *Induction* follows the opposite course: It examines particulars in order to arrive at general truth or principle. The latter is called the scientific method, it is the course followed by a physician when he examines symptoms to discover exact ailment His method is synthetic, that is, he builds a case from details Deduction is analytic, that is, it pulls a case apart to examine details *Deduction* is much used in connection with detective work and in detective stories. *Induction* in general use means to initiate or to take into, as *induction into the armed forces,* and it is used in a special sense by the electrician to mean the act or process of electrification and magnetization

denotation is actual meaning; *connotation,* suggested or implied meaning over and above actual meaning The word *home,* for example, denotes a living-place, it connotes comfort, ease, loved ones (page 50)

dent and *dint* may be synonyms in the meanings of a depression made by a blow or a stroke. But the latter is used figuratively, the former is not You may say that you made a dint in a job that you have undertaken, not that you have made a dent

desert, as noun accented on the first syllable, means any deserted or barren or abandoned or uninhabitable region, as noun accented on the second syllable, it means justice or worthiness of reward, as *He received his just desert,* as verb, accented on the second syllable it means to leave permanently or abandon or forsake *Dessert,* noun accented on the second syllable, is the course of sweets served at the end of a meal

devilry is preferable to *deviltry,* but the two words are used interchangeably The former has more of evil or viciousness in it; the latter, more of naughtiness or mischief or high spirits

deviser is one who plans or devises or invents; *devisor,* one who disposes of something, as property in a will, *divisor,* the number by which another is divided in mathematics. The three words are frequently

confused in use and spelling. *Devisor* is the agent, the one who grants; *devisee* is the recipient. The verb form of the first two words is *devise*, as in *He devises new gadgets* and *I devise and bequeath.* The thing devised by a deviser is a *device.* As in *advise,* to give counsel, and *advice,* the counsel given, the *s* stands for verb (*s* and *v* are close together in the alphabet) the *c* stands for noun (*c* is nearer to *n* in the alphabet than it is to *v*)

discovery (page 383) is finding out something that has existed before but has been unknown, *invention* is contriving or arranging something new, before unknown and unused Radium was a discovery; the gasoline engine, an invention *Detection* also means finding out but usually in the sense of the uncovering of something that has been wilfully hidden All three words apply likewise to the objects themselves, that is, to the thing discovered, the thing invented, the thing detected

dissimulation is the pretense of not having or being or feeling what one really has or is or feels, it implies concealment *Simulation* is the pretense of having or being or feeling what one really has not or is not or does not feel, it implies assumption of false appearance

dock is an artificial basin for vessels to enter for loading or unloading, or for repairs; *wharf* is a structure built on or out from a shore line for vessels to come alongside A projecting wharf may be called a *pier.* But a pier is also an upright mass of masonry built to support a bridge or other structure, or to retain earth

dower is a technical term meaning that portion of a husband's estate which the law allows his widow. *dowry* is what the French call *dot*—whatever money or property a wife brings to her husband on marriage *Dowry* is also a general term meaning inner gift or qualification possessed by one as result of birth or circumstance

draft and *draught* are the same word, the simpler *draft* being preferable; it may be used as noun, as verb, as adjective Both forms are pronounced to rime with *raft,* the latter does not rime with *caught* (page 493)

duty originates in the nature of things; it is that which is due or owed; it pertains to persons *Obligation* originates in circumstances for the most part, it is that by which one is bound, and it is more specific though often less personal than *duty Responsibility* means answerability; it is that for which one must answer, and is thus also personal. *Duty* again is more general and comprehensive than *obligation;* it is subjective, very often involving the emotions *Obligation* connotes constraint as result of outward circumstance, it is objective, as a rule, and is prompted by some specific instance or particularity. Duty is in constant liaison with conscience, obligation is only temporarily so, unless it is modified by the adjective *moral.* Duty is done because of the still small voice within, obligation is usually met or discharged because of interests and conditions over which the inner man has little, if any, control. It is your duty to care for your mother; it is your obligation to pay me what you owe me. You speak of a sense of duty, of an obligation imposed by some service, of responsibility for a child you have adopted

egoism and *egotism* may both be used in the sense of self-worship, self-conceit. But the latter, though often objectionable because it connotes conceit, is to be preferred to *egoism* in reference to a person, inasmuch as *egoism* pertains also to a system of thought or philosophy and *egotism* does not The title of George Meredith's novel *The Egoist* is thus ambiguous Egoism is opposed to altruism, and an egoist is therefore sometimes defined as one who is unable to put himself in the place of others because he regards himself as the pivotal center of all things, the one toward whom all others should be altruistic

emigration means moving out (of a country, as a rule); *immigration,* moving into. The noun *emigrant* and its correlative verb *emigrate,* and the noun *immigrant* and its correlative verb *immigrate,* convey corresponding meanings An American who goes to live in South Africa is an emigrant from America (he emigrates to South Africa), and an immigrant into South Africa (he immigrates into South Africa) *Migration* means the act of moving from one country or place to another, usually with view to at least temporary residence, the migration body itself *Migration* may also mean periodic movement, as south in winter and north in summer

enormity means something that is exceptionally wicked or horrible or outrageous, *enormousness,* something of great size, hugeness, vastness You speak of the enormity of a crime and of the enormousness of a boulder

entrance and *entry* may both denote place of making entrance as well as the act of entering *Entry* implies formal hall or vestibule. *Entrant* means one who enters or one who applies to enter, but *entry* (especially the plural form *entries*) has almost supplanted it in such expressions as *There were many entries in the contest* and *The last entry did not appear* In both of these sentences *entrant* is the better word

episode is an incidental occurrence growing out of a larger issue but separable from it, *event* is an important or noteworthy occurrence You speak of human events, and of attendant episodes or incidents or circumstances Events are comparatively great and signal. episodes and incidents, trifling and passing

epoch is the beginning or starting point of a new period of time which is usually marked by some revolutionary upheaval, *era* extends from an epoch, and is characterized by such changes as an epoch brings about; *age* is correctly used to indicate a period dominated by some personage or by some leading characteristic. You speak of an epoch in the history of art, of an era of reconstruction, of the age of Pericles or of electricity. The adjective form *epochal* must not be confused with the adjective *epical* which means pertaining to epic poetry, *epic* is as commonly used as adjective as noun You may say that Milton wrote on epic (epical) poem on the epochal fall of Paradise

esteem means high and favorable regard formed as result of judgment and feeling; *estimate* means the exercise of judgment in appraising or evaluating the worth or value or quantity or magnitude or position of anything; *estimation* means an opinion or a judgment, favorable or

unfavorable. You have esteem for a friend, you place an estimate upon the value of something that you, perhaps, wish to buy; you may be concerned regarding the estimation in which your neighbors hold you. The verbs *esteem* and *estimate* have correlative meanings

everyone, written thus solidly, is inclusive in application, as in *Community well-being is everyone's affair.* Written as two words—*every one*—the term is distributive, having the meaning of *each*, as in *Every one at the dinner received a gift* Both forms are always singular, requiring singular verbs and singular pronominal reference. The same exposition pertains also to *anyone* and *any one*

evidence is anything and everything that tends to establish fact; *testimony* is statement or affirmation on the part of witnesses made toward the establishment of fact. *Evidence* is a broader term than *testimony*, inasmuch as it covers not only words or statements of witnesses but signs and indications as well *Affidavit* and *deposition* are testimony in writing, the former being voluntary and not drawn forth under cross-examination, the latter being evoked through questioning and other means. *Verdict* is a decision arrived at by a group of persons (jury) as result of evidence of all kinds, in general usage, an opinion or judgment or conclusion

example and *instance* are synonymous in the sense of illustration Bagehot's *winning instances* has, however, a somewhat more specific quality than *winning examples* has in his use of the term. But *example* is broader in use and meaning than *instance*. The judge may make an example, not an instance, of a culprit brought before him An *example* is always typical or representative, a *sample* is a part designed to give an idea of the quality of a whole. The latter term is now confined chiefly to commercial uses. *Instance* may be used as a verb, as *to instance* meaning to give an example of, but *example* is not so used. Do not use *where* after either *example* or *instance*. Say *This is an example in which* or *by which (instance in which* or *by which) my argument is seen at work*

excerpt is a selected passage from some composition, book, or record It is used in a more specialized way than is *extract* which is a general term meaning something taken out of, as an element removed from a substance, a decoction, a solution of a drug, and also a selected passage from written work

exemption is the act of setting free from some course or obligation imposed from without; *immunity*, the state or condition of such exemption, especially from a danger or a liability, as immunity from disease; *impunity*, freedom from loss or punishment or injurious consequences. Exemption from military service has been granted you, vaccination has given you immunity from smallpox; you cannot with impunity insult the flag of your country

facility means readiness, easiness, any thing or quality that promotes ease of action or operation; *faculty* is inner ability to do or act. *He has great faculty for music, and his facility of finger movement promises that he will one day be a great pianist.* You speak of the facilities for work

in, for example, a well equipped office, and the faculty of a secretary to make use of them

factor is an element involved in producing some result (in mathematics it may be a number which in relation to another is used in arriving at a result), *feature,* figuratively used, is an item or detail or part having some prominence You speak of early environment as a factor in building human character, of an old oak as the beloved feature of a campus (see *characteristic*)

falsity pertains to the idea of nonconformity to truth, as also does *falseness.* But the latter connotes blame, as a rule, and is frequently a synonym of *faithlessness.* The former may or may not include blame *Falsity* is usually applied to things or statements, *falseness,* to persons *Mendacity* is habitual falsification, and thus comes to denote a personal characteristic (page 357)

favor may evince grace and even a patronizing or condescending quality, *good will* (unhyphened), heartiness, readiness, zeal—hale-fellow-well-met quality, in business, advantageous good opinion of customers over and above the mere value of goods sold. Do not use favor as a synonym for letter (page 290)

feel is preferably not used as a noun in the sense of *feeling.* Say that you like the feeling of loyalty that characterized the meeting, not the feel of loyalty. *Feel* should be confined to the sense of touch, as the feel of the velvet, the feel of wool, the feel of roughness *Feeling,* that is, is emotional, *feel,* physical

femininity, strictly used, means womankind, *femineity,* womanliness and womanishness The former means, in other words, the quality or state of being feminine, and also women collectively, the latter applies particularly to the nature or inherent quality of the female sex. *Feminity* is obsolete as a synonym of *femininity*

figure is a written character or symbol used to represent a number, *number* is an aggregate that may be indicated by figures or by words, as *50* or *fifty* You say that the figures in a certain number are not clearly written or that the numbers in a given list do not run consecutively Used as verb in the sense of think or estimate, *figure* is provincial, as in *I figure it will rain before night*

final, as noun (usually plural) means that which is last or at the end, as in games or examinations, it is more generally used as adjective than as noun *Finale* is a special noun used in music or drama or dancing to mean concluding (usually climactic) part of a number or a program *Finale* is trisyllabic—*fi ná le*—and is accented on the second syllable pronounced *nah*

flair means instinctive power of discernment, taste plus aptitude, bent (it is a French word meaning odor, which is, in turn, from a Latin word meaning fragrance), *flare* means a glaring light, a sudden outburst, a radiation, a blaze By extension of meaning the latter word is sometimes dubiously used for the former But say *She has a flair for music* and *Her flare of temper was most unbecoming. Flair* is noun only; *flare,* both noun and verb

flier and ***flyer*** both mean one who or that which flies, an especially speedy train, (slang) a reckless venture as in money speculation. Strictly speaking, *flier* is one who flees, as a fugitive, and *flyer*, one who flies, as an airman But this distinction is now worn down and the two words are used more or less interchangeably The plurals are *fliers* and *flyers*

flotsam is wreckage of a ship or its cargo floating on the waters, figuratively, driftage of any sort, drifting persons *Jetsam* means goods cast overboard to lighten a vessel in distress, and such goods when picked up or washed ashore, figuratively, an outcast

fluid, like *liquid,* is antonym of *solid* The particles of a liquid move among themselves but retain their own mass or volume. *Fluid* pertains to all flowing matter, to gas and air as well as to water. *Liquid* does not apply to gaseous substances, and is therefore inelastic fluid Fluid is inclusive of liquid Water is both fluid and liquid, gas and air, fluid only

friend implies attachment to another by esteem and affection and respect, and *friendship* implies intimacy, *acquaintance* implies more than recognition but less than fellowship or friendship These terms should not be used as synonyms The term *bad friends* is as contradictory as *good enemies* or *friendly enemies* All three phrases may be used—have been—for humor or strikingness, but not in serious speech and writing Say *Bill and I are enemies* (or *unfriendly*), not *Bill and I are bad friends*

function means the discharging of natural and characteristic action, both conscious, as an occupational function, and unconscious, as the operation of organs in accordance with the laws of nature, *office* is sometimes used figuratively in these senses, but is preferably confined to the meaning of duty performed or to be performed You say that the function of the lungs is to inhale and exhale, that it is the office of every one of us to alleviate suffering *Function* is colloquial in the sense of social affair, *office,* in the sense of purpose, as the office of the ear is to hear

genius is native quality or endowment, original and apparently inspired, and thus difficult to repress *Talent* is superior aptitude, it is for the most part acquired, and may never be brought out. The plural of genius in this sense is *geniuses,* its plural in the meaning of spirits or deities is *genii*

guarantee is both noun and verb; *guaranty* is preferably noun only You guarantee a service, you issue a written guaranty. Both words are used largely in commercial and legal expression, *guaranty* is less used in general intercourse than *guarantee* Do not use *guarantee* to mean the person giving a guarantee or guaranty He is the *guarantor,* the one to whom the guarantee or guaranty is given being the *guarantee. Guaranty* is obsolete in the sense of a guaranteeing party, though it is still used in law to some extent

gypsy is capitalized only when it is used in reference to a special people or special language. It may be spelled *gipsy,* but *gypsy* is considered preferable for the reason that it is derived from *Egyptian* in which *y* is fixed

haste is a noun; *hasten*, a verb. Say *I want you to hasten this job*, not *I want you to haste this job*

institution is used primarily to denote a foundation of public interest and concern, whereas *establishment* usually pertains to private and domestic concern. The one notable exception to this distinction is the High Church Establishment of England—The Established Church. But you speak of charitable and beneficiary institutions, and of commercial and financial establishments. The former word is used by many business firms because of its somewhat greater dignity and significance, especially in case they are of old and *established* reputation. But its use in connection with any and every sort of organization is to be discouraged Do not say that the automobile is a phenomenal institution or that a school is an educational establishment

intension is a scientific and philosophic term denoting sum of attributes or total concept, it is not in general usage. *Intention*, its homonym, means aim or purpose or anticipated action.

junior denotes the younger of two bearing the same name in a family, especially of a son named for his father, as *Harrison Jones, Junior. Senior* is used after the father's name, as *Harrison Jones, Senior.* These differentiating terms may be used after the names of women also, but this usage is not so general. Both brothers and sisters are so designated, however, by schools and colleges, merely for keeping records accurate. The word *second* or *third* carried after a name means simply the second or the third bearing a name, not necessarily or even usually in the immediate family circle. The Britisher uses the Latin *secundus* instead of *second*

libel conveys the idea of written or published defamation; *slander*, of spoken defamation. Libel is, in other words, written slander. The former is sufficiently proved in law by the writing or the publishing; the latter is proved only by a witness who *heard*

lightning is used as noun only, meaning the flash of light caused by a discharge of atmospheric electricity, *lightening* is the present participle of the verb *lighten* meaning to shine or brighten or illuminate, and to relieve of burden or make lighter. The first is dissyllabic, the second trisyllabic. Used as verbal noun, *lightening* is frequently confused with *lightning While in the act of lightening the load on the donkey's back, the boy was struck by lightning* is correct

limit is that which limits or bounds (very often in the plural), as *the limits of his ability* and *the limits of my acreage; limitation* is the act or instance of limiting or restricting or qualifying, and the state of being limited You speak of a person's limitations as a musician, and of the limits of his opportunities for travel. In law the statute of limitations denotes a certain period after which a claimant may not attempt to enforce his claims by suit

litany pertains to serial prayers, usually responsive; *liturgy*, to rites connected with public worship, as Eucharistic Rites. The former is loosely applied to any repetition of words and phrases, and the latter to any religious ceremony

loan, used as verb, is still regarded as an impropriety. But pressure of colloquial usage is rapidly admitting it in such expressions as *I loaned him my books* and *Please loan me your coat* It is, however, still used by the best writers and speakers as noun only, *lend* being the corresponding verb form. Say, therefore, *I lent him my books* and *Please lend me your coat* and *I am willing to make you a loan*

majority, in the absolute sense, means more than half of any total. Eight votes constitute a majority out of twelve. *Plurality* is excess of votes, for example, over those for any other candidate for the same office, especially over the number for the next opponent If Harry has 200 votes, Bill 80, and Sam 60, Harry is elected by a majority of 60, but if Harry has 200 votes, Bill 180, and Sam 60, Harry is elected by a plurality of 20

martyr is one who voluntarily sacrifices himself for a cause or a principle, *victim,* one who is sacrificed or injured or killed. Noguchi martyred himself to the study of yellow fever Hibben was the victim of an automobile accident. Lincoln was both martyr and victim—martyr to the cause of freedom for the slaves, victim of a shot fired by the assassin Booth

marvel is that which causes wonder or astonishment; *miracle,* that which transcends the known laws of nature Both words are too extravagantly used in colloquial speech. The complicated water system of a large city is a marvel of human ingenuity and workmanship, but it is not a miracle

mediums is now the accepted plural form for all uses of *medium.* Formerly it was used only in regard to spiritualistic matters and to a halfway size or quantity between large and small, long and short, high and low, and the like; thus, *The spiritualistic mediums are all in trance* and *I like the longs, Bill prefers the shorts, and Clara wants the mediums.* The preferred plural in all other uses was *media*—still is in scientific expression but nowhere else

mendacity is habitual untruth or deceit or falsification; *mendicity* is mendicancy, that is, beggary, persistence in begging or of the begging classes (see *falsity*)

millenary is both adjective and noun, as is *millinery,* though the latter is more often used as noun. *Millenary* means pertaining to a thousand, or the period of a thousand years. *Millinery* means those articles made and used for and by milliners

miss and *missis (missus)* and *mister,* used as terms of address without a following name, are improprieties, as are the correponding plural forms—*misses* and *missises (missuses)* and *misters (messrs)* Preceded by *the* or (worse) by *say* or *listen* (page 252), as *say, mister* and *listen, miss* and *The missus is absent from home,* they constitute vulgarism. The title *Messrs* is preferably confined to business expression, *Messieurs* or its abbreviation *MM,* to social form

motif and motive are neither synonyms nor homonyms. The former is used in connection with literature and the fine arts to mean theme, or salient or dominant feature The latter is some prompting force, exter-

nal or internal, that determines choice and induces action The German *leitmotiv (leitmotif)* is a technical (as yet unanglicized) term meaning marked melodic phrase which expresses association with a certain idea or person or circumstance

mystery, once regarded as noun only, must now be accepted as adjective in such expressions as *mystery man* and *mystery story* But it should not be so used in other relationships, thus, do not say that you have a mystery loss to make right or that the mystery accident is puzzling the police *Mysterious* is required in both of these expressions

narration means both the art of narrating and the act of narrating; *narrative* means that which is narrated For the sake of clarity, the former should not be used with the sense of the latter, but it is so used, and is probably growing in such use Better say ***Ivanhoe*** *is a most engaging narrative, and it proves beyond all peradventure Scott's unsurpassable genius in narration. Narrative* is also an adjective, but do not speak of a narrative story, a narrative biography, a narrative history, a narrative ballad, in which the word repeats and is thus wasteful

natural, as noun, may mean a born fool, on the other hand, it may be synonymous with *expert* Any one or anything that is adapted by nature to fill a certain place or do a certain thing without special preparation is called a natural Contrarily, a certain office or part (as in a play) may be called a natural for some one who fits into it by his nature The word therefore means casting by nature for the playing of a part

necessities means pressing needs; *necessaries,* essentials or requisites in the ordinary round of affairs You speak of the necessities of those suffering under some acute misfortune, such as earthquake or tornado or bombing. You speak of the necessaries of life as being food, clothing, and shelter. The adjective *necessitous* carries the same connotation as *necessity,* that is, a necessitous person is one who is without the necessaries of life

neglect pertains to the fact or the instance of leaving things undone or unattended to; *negligence,* to the continuance or habit of leaving things undone You speak of the neglect of duty and of the bad effects of negligence

no one should never be written solid and should never be hyphened. *None* is a contraction of *no one* or *not one,* and for this reason it is sometimes contended that it should always be regarded as singular (page 137). *None* is used as plural more often, perhaps, than as singular and the great authors down the centuries have so used it. The two-word term *no one* may be regarded as the emphatic form of none

number pertains to countability; *quantity,* to measure; *amount,* to totality of either. You speak of a number of apples, of a quantity of wheat, of the amount of money their sale brought in. You say a number of people, not amount or quantity, an amount of cash, not a number or a quantity; a quantity of timber, not a number or an amount. *Amount* means sum total, and is generally used in reference to money and finances (page 138)

observance is taking due and proper notice of whatever may be prescribed by custom or duty; *observation* is the act of looking at or of considering or marking a fact or an occurrence You speak of the observance of the Fourth of July, and of the observation of the stars

onus means responsibility or burden or weight of a charge or undertaking, *gravamen* is the material part of a charge or accusation. You speak of the onus—the burden—of proof, and of the gravamen—chief grievance—in a charge made against you. The latter term is archaic in general usage

ordinance is a by-law or a regulation or an authoritative decree, or a religious rite or observance, *ordnance* is military supplies, such as cannon, artillery, and the establishment and management of artillery; *ordonnance* is arrangement or disposition of composition elements, of their parts and features, as of architecture for example On the European continent the last word is used in the sense of ordinance

organism is a living being or plant or any organ in such living body; *organization* means a group of individuals systematically united for some purpose, or the act of so organizing. You say that the human heart is a delicate organism, and that political organization is essential in party government

part is any fraction of a whole; *portion* is an allotted or assigned part, and thus a share, *fragment* is a broken or remnant or imperfect part, *percentage* is really some share or portion (proportion) stated by a fraction or in hundredths, but it is loosely used in the sense of each of the preceding words You inherit a portion of an estate, which constitutes a percentage of the entire estate You pick up the fragments of a broken vase You lose some of the parts of your kodak

party should not be used for *person.* Mr Venus' reproof of Silas Wegg for calling Miss Pleasant Riderhood "a old party" (page 351) is still very much to the point Say *You are going to marry the young person, I hear,* not *You are going to marry the young party* Only in legal parlance (page 46) is *party* retained in the sense of individual person, as in *party of the first part* The word *persons* is preferable to *people* when a numeral adjective is used in qualification; thus, *Thirty persons were present at the meeting* is correct. But in indefinite reference *people* is correct, as in *The people rejoice* and *The people of America are aroused*

penult is next to the last syllable in a word, as *ta* in *reputation.* The adjective form is *penultimate,* as in The penultimate syllable in *reputation* is accented

perquisite is gain or profit or pay or gratuity—any kind of income over and above regular wage, *prerequisite,* a previous necessity or requirement or antecedent condition to a proposed end. The perquisites of your job has amounted to sufficient to enable you to hire a tutor to prepare you in the prerequisites for college entrance

personnel is a collective noun meaning a group or body of persons as employes or members or other working unit *Personal* is an adjective meaning pertaining to a person or to a characteristic of a person, or to

some direct person-to-person relationship. The two words are frequently confused in use and spelling

plaintiff is the complaining party in a suit, the one that starts legal action, *defendant*, the one required to make reply or defend himself against legal action

policy is any plan or procedure focused toward definite results; *polity*, broad and comprehensive principle upon which large movements and organizations may be based. A party follows a policy, a government has (or should have) a polity. But *polity* is falling into disuse

precedence is the act of going or coming before (page 1), *precedent* means forerunner, something authoritative gone before, now used as an example upon which to base opinion or judgment *Precedent* is often confused with *president* in pronunciation But *c* is soft in the former, and *s* is hard (z) in the latter, though both words are accented on the first syllable. *Precedency* for *precedence* is now archaic

presentiment means premonition or foreboding—the feeling that something is going to happen, *presentment* is a presenting or a representation The first is quadrisyllabic, the second, trisyllabic

preterit or *preterite* is used by some grammarians for past tense (imperfect tense). It is not followed by the word *tense*, as a rule

preventive means that which prevents or hinders or wards off. There is no such word as *preventative* though this form is frequently seen and heard for the simpler, legitimate *preventive*

principal is a leader or one at the head of or one in charge of, or a sum of money as distinguished from income, *principle* means truth, law, doctrine, maxim, right rule of conduct and procedure *Principal* is adjective as well as noun, meaning chief or leading, *principle* is a noun as a rule, though the participle form *principled* is used as an adjective, usually in combination, as *high-principled attitude*

produce is used chiefly in reference to raw or unprocessed materials; *product*, to processed or specially prepared materials, *production* to the act of producing Garden vegetables are produce, canned for sale they are products, the act of raising them constitutes production *Product* is sometimes loosely used for *produce*, and *production* for both, as well as for mental or artistic or scientific output in general. *Produce* is always collective, *product* and *production* may be. You may say *the produce*, but not *a produce*. You may say *a* or *the* product or production

proposal is an offer—something put before one for acceptance or rejection; *proposition* is the setting forth for discussion some truth or assumed truth Proposals are for action, propositions for consideration or debate. Do not use the noun *proposition* for the verb *propose* (page 389). *The general propositioned peace* is an impropriety bordering close upon vulgarism

recourse is application for help or security in difficulty of any sort; *resource* is that which is used or resorted to for aid or support. You have recourse to glasses if your eyesight is bad, and your only financial resource may be your wages. *Resource* is frequently used in the plural,

as *His resources are not large.* Both *recourse* and *resource* are too loosely "covered" in colloquial expression by *resort*

refuge is a shelter, a place of safety; *refugee,* one who seeks safety or protection from threat or danger, as in going from one country to another

regard is correct in such expressions as *in regard to, with regard to, with no regard for. Regards* in these phrases is wrong. *Regards* is correct, however, in *as regards, in whatever regards his prospects, give my best regards to Regard* in these expressions is wrong. *Regarding* may usually be substituted for *regard,* rarely for *regards*

register means record, *registrar,* a recorder or a keeper of records; *registrant,* one whose name is listed in a register. You may say that the college register is reported by the registrar to contain the names of more registrants than have ever been registered before. Only the first of these words may be verb as well as noun

relation may be used to denote kinship, but *relative* is more precise and less likely to be misunderstood in this meaning The former is used preferably to denote general connections and relationships other than blood True, Lamb wrote of poor relations, not of poor relatives And *relative,* as both adjective and noun, has meanings that may lead to confusion with *relation* Context must very often be the sole guide as to which of the two words must be used. You say that you have always had pleasant relations with your co-workers, though five of them are relatives of yours

remark is a more or less casual expression of opinion; *observation,* a somewhat more critical or scrutinizing expression, *comment,* a frankly critical or explanatory statement on some particular point or phase of a subject (page 368)

requisite is something required by the nature of things or by circumstances or by some end in view; *requisition* is a formal or official request or demand. You say that honesty is a requisite for genuine success, and that the police have made requisition for the defaulter *Requirement* is more general than either of these terms, it pertains principally to man-made conditions and qualifications, such as requirements for admission to the bar and requirements for entering aviation

right is that which accords with truth and with moral propriety, and receives approval as such, in this sense it is really beyond human evaluation and regulation. *Claim* (page 380) and *privilege* are both forms of right, the one indicating the right to ask for or demand something that is in the hands of another, the other indicating a right belonging to special individuals or bodies You have the right to vote if you are a citizen If that right is denied you, you justly make a claim for it. But your voting is not, in this sense, a privilege for it is not yours alone to have or to be denied. Privilege is a concession; claim, a demand; right, an obligation

scrip and ***script*** both pertain to writing. But the former is used principally in connection with legal and financial matters; the latter, as a substitute for manuscript, especially in play and scenario writing. *Script*

also refers to written characters, to a system of writing, and it may be synonymous with *scrip* in the meaning of an original or principal document. *Scrip* is popularly used to mean a piece of fractional paper currency; it formerly had a slang equivalent—*shinplaster*—which meant any sort of poorly secured paper money. Stock certificates, bonds, deeds, and the like, are frequently referred to as scrip in financial colloquialism

secretariat means the office or offices or department or personnel—or all of these—having to do with secretarial work and records, usually governmental. *Secretarial* is the adjective form of *secretary*, not to be confused with *secretariat* *Secretaryship* means the position held by a secretary, but if such secretary represents government or section of government he is correctly referred to as the *secretariat*, especially if his position has to do with foreign representation

series is a succession of objects of similar nature or of objects standing in relation to each other, *succession* pertains to things of any kind arranged in order of time or place, *sequence* is a uniform or regular or logical succession, yet not necessarily one so intimately related as is implied by *series*. You speak of a series of volumes in an encyclopedia, of the succession of seasons, of a sequence of episodes in a story

sewage is waste matter or refuse, *sewer*, the piping or conduit through which it is drained off, *sewerage*, the system of sewers for such drainage. The sewerage of a city consists of complicated underground piping through which sewage flows or is forced to huge cesspools

significance is meaning regarded as of weight or special importance; hence, distinction and importance. *Signification* is established and accepted meaning, as of word or phrase or symbol The former is preferably used for general appraisal, as in *That maneuver has great significance*, the latter for meaning itself, as in *The signification of this term is not clear to me*

site, as of a building or a group of buildings, is the ground on which it is, was, or may be located, *situation* is relative position, that is, position in relation to surroundings You say the site of the mansion was formerly a sand quarry, and the situation of the mansion commands a view of the sea to the south and of the mountains to the north

size should not be used as adjective, as in *He wears any size coat* for *He wears a coat of any size* or *What size shoe do you wear* for *What size of shoe do you wear* The participle form *sized* should be used in comparisons and in compound adjectives, as in *small-sized shoe, larger-sized hat, good-sized room*. Do not say *medium size office*

solicitation is entreaty or importunity, allurement or incitement; *solicitude*, anxiety or uneasiness of mind Your solicitude for a friend who is in trouble may prompt you to make solicitation to others for helping him

some one is properly written as two words There is an increasing tendency, however, to write it as a solid term—*someone*—and to observe the same distinction between the two forms as is made between *everyone* and *every one* above. Since in the solid term—*someone*—two vowels come together, this form has been deservedly slow in gaining acceptance

something is a noun; its colloquial usage as an adverb of degree for *somewhat* constitutes an impropriety Say *This is somewhat like mine,* not *This is something like mine. Somewhat* may also be a noun meaning an unspecified or indefinite part or quantity, or an individual of some consequence. It is also an adverb meaning to some degree, as in *somewhat tired* and *somewhat insistent* The former is preferably held to substantive uses, the latter to adverbial Both words are listed in the dictionaries as pronouns, as in *He is somewhat* (or *something*) *of a personage.* The use of *some* for either *somewhat* or *something* is an impropriety, as in *This is some like mine* and *He is some better today.* The expression *something like* for *approximately* and for *satisfactory* is colloquial in the one case and provincial in the other. Say *We have approximately five bushels,* not *We have something like five bushels,* say *Now, that is satisfactory,* not *Now, that is something like*

speciality and *specialty* are interchangeably used in many of their meanings But the former is preferable to the latter in the sense of special or distinctive quality or characteristic, the latter is preferable to the former in the sense of special or distinctive article

stanza means two or more lines (verses) of poetry arranged according to some system of rime or sequence or meter, or all three It is frequently wrongly referred to as *verse* which is, strictly speaking, a single line of poetry But *verse* is also used to indicate one of the short divisions of the chapters in the Bible, and also to indicate poetry in general in distinction from prose *Stanza* is occasionally a grouping of lines or verses based entirely upon printing arrangement rather than upon meter or rime

statement is a formal and explicit setting forth or declaration of fact or opinion or judgment, especially in speech or writing, *assertion* (page 380) is strong, positive, usually personal statement You make a statement of the truth or untruth of something You make an assertion that something is true or untrue with or without an attempt to prove what you assert

statute is a law or a legislative act, *stature* pertains to height, as of man's figure, but it is used figuratively to indicate mental or character size; *statue* is the likeness of some living or once living being in stone or metal or other substance The three words are frequently misused or, at least, misunderstood because of lazy pronunciation

stimulant is anything that begets a temporary increase in vital activity; *stimulus,* anything that rouses mind and spirit and emotion; *stimulation* is the act of stimulating or the condition of being stimulated. You speak of coffee as a stimulant, of a patriotic march as a stimulus to action, of a tonic as a stimulation of your physical organs

substitute is a person or a thing put in place of another, *substitution* is the act of putting some one or something in place of another. Paper has shown itself a poor substitute for leather in making shoes, but the substitution is still recommended by economists in warring countries

suit means legal procedure, clothing, the act of courtship (pay suit to), one of the four classes of playing cards. *suite* is used for a retinue or

personal staff, a set of things, especially rooms and musical compositions, a series or sequence. *Suit* is increasingly used in the above senses of *suite,* but such usage has not yet become standard. *Suit* may be a verb, as to suit oneself, to have oneself suited *Suite* is a noun only

sum, in mathematics, is the result of addition; in general usage it is an amount of anything, usually money. *Total* implies completeness or magnitude, especially in reference to an aggregate of parts or elements. The result of a series of added sums may be correctly referred to as *sum total,* though the term is used loosely (sometimes for emphasis) in reference to any single sum. *Lot (lots)* for sum, total, number, amount, quantity, is both technical and colloquial. In industry it is used to mean share or parcel of goods, building plots, units. The idiom *a bad lot* means a worthless person. But *lots of happiness* and *lots of courage* and *lots of room* are colloquialisms

swine is both singular and plural. The adult female of swine is called *sow,* the adult male, *boar. Hog* is swine ready for the market

tax is a general term, pertaining to payments to government based upon official estimates, *toll* applies particularly to tax that is made for the sake of repairs, as of roads and ferries, *tribute* formerly meant that which was paid or yielded as result of coercion on the part of one or a few, whereas taxes may be voted But *tribute* has now ceased to have the idea of coercion in the sense of payment to a prince for support of his realm Charles Cotesworth Pinckney used it in this way when he said· "Millions for defense, but not one cent for tribute." It is now used figuratively for the most part, rather than literally as tax or impost, and its meaning generally is gift, respect, gratitude, mark of devotion. Its usage has been more or less vacillating Shakspere really anticipated its present-day meaning in *The Merchant of Venice* (Act IV Scene i)

> Take some remembrance of us, as a tribute,
> Not as a fee

that is, accept a gift from us as token of our feeling for your services; we do not want you to regard it as anything so sordid as a fee

television is a noun meaning the transmission and reproduction of an action *Televisor* is the name of a television apparatus. Equivalent adjectives are *televisional* and *televisionary* The verb is *televise; televised* is the imperfect tense and past participle form. Do not use *television* and *televisioned* as verb forms

temblor means earthquake. *Tremor* is sometimes used to denote a slight earthquake. But *tremblor* used for either is wrong in both meaning and spelling, the correct noun form derived from *tremble* being *trembler*

union means the bringing together of two or more, or the resulting state of such bringing together; *unity* means the state of oneness or harmony. You speak of a union of interests among the members of a trade, this may result in a trades union the members of which have complete unity of aim

various should not be used as a pronoun, as in *Various among the travelers sat down to rest* Say, rather, *Various travelers sat down* or *Various ones among the travelers sat down*

vocation is one's regular pursuit, calling, or profession; *avocation (a* away) is a minor or subordinate occupation which calls one away from his ordinary work, *hobby* is a specially focused avocation or a favorite pastime outside one's vocation

warrant is both noun and verb; *warranty*, noun only. The latter is less generally used than the former *Warrant* contains the idea of sanction or authorization, or it may mean evidence (legal) of such sanction, as a warrant for arrest A warranty is a covenant or a promise or a guarantee or a collateral engagement, as in a warranty deed and a warranty title. A *warrantee* is one to whom a warranty is made, a *warranter* or *warrantor*, one who warrants

way should not be used as an adverb meaning away or far. Say *Go away*, not *Go way, He lives far down the avenue*, not *He lives way down the avenue* The plural is regular—*ways* Do not use it for the singular, or vice versa Say *There are no two ways about it*, not *There are no two way about it, I walked a long way with Kate*, not *I walked a long ways with Kate* Substitute *distance* for *ways* in the latter sentence and you will at once see the absurdity of the plural form But *ways* meaning the inclined structure upon which a vessel is built or supported at launching is correctly used as a special plural. Meaning condition, *way* is a provincialism or colloquialism, as *She is in a bad way*

weight is heaviness, both literal and figurative. You stoop your shoulders under the weight of a burden, and you feel the weight of your responsibilities. *Gravity* means seriousness, solemnity, importance You are sobered by the gravity of a loss You do not speak of the weight of the death of a loved one, or of the gravity of your suitcase. *Gravity* is also used technically, as in specific gravity and the center of gravity

CONTEST *

	NO	YES
1	He lacks capacity to do the work, as well as the ability to remember what he learns	He lacks ability to do the work, as well as the capacity to remember what he learns
2	This dictionary is an abstract of the larger one	This dictionary is an abridgment of the larger one
3	His acceptation of my offer was a surprise to me	His acceptance of my offer was a surprise to me
4	I can get no accession to the house through the cellar	I can get no access to the house through the cellar
5	I regard your divulgence of the secret an action deserving reproof	I regard your divulgence of the secret an act deserving reproof
6	I do not know what the price of admittance is	I do not know what the price of admission is
7	My advance in the business depends upon your good will	My advancement in the business depends upon your good will

* See page 3

	NO	YES
8	My cold gave me just the alibi I wanted to avoid that party	My cold gave me just the excuse I wanted to absent myself from that party
9	He made an illusion to my book in his address	In his address he made an allusion to my book
10	The anthracite coal leaves clouds of dust over the fields	The bituminous coal leaves clouds of dust over the fields
11	She has engaged a new artisan to paint her picture	She has engaged a new artist to paint her picture
12	The essay revealed a good deal of silver in the ore I found	The assay revealed a good deal of silver in the ore I found
13	Seeing your fingers covered with jam I make the assumption that you have been visiting the pantry	Seeing your fingers covered with jam I make the presumption that you have been visiting the pantry
14	I want your insurance, please, that you will never steal the jam again	I want your assurance, please, that you will never steal the jam again
15	That patent lawyer has never seen the inside of a law school	That patent attorney has never seen the inside of a law school
16	If I have ought that you wish, it is your's	If I have aught that you wish, it is yours
17	He is going to live in Harrisburg for the balance of the year	He is going to live in Harrisburg for the rest of the year
18	You committed a breech of etiquette	You committed a breach of etiquette
19	Breton expects every Britain to do his duty	Britain expects every Briton to do his duty
20	The great majority of humanity, that is, human beings in the mass, believes in doing the right thing	The great mass of humanity, that is, the great majority of human beings, believes in doing the right thing
21	My visit to the capital in Washington, D C, was most interesting	My visit to the Capitol in Washington, D C, was most interesting
22	John parts his hair in the center now	John parts his hair in the middle now
23	After the wedding ceremonial was over, certain of us had to run for the train	After the wedding ceremony was over, some of us had to run for the train
24	Adolescence is an important innovation in life	Adolescence is an important phase of life
25	Please aim to have a good character in this neighborhood	Please aim to have a good reputation in this neighborhood
26	The compass of his knowledge of the subject seems to be unlimited	The range of his knowledge of the subject seems to be unlimited
27	The complainer in the case says that the defendent was intoxicated	The complainant in the case says that the defendant was intoxicated
28	She is confidante that her confident will not betray her	She is confident that her confidante will not betray her

	NO	YES
29	Preserve those old school habits that lead to beneficial customs	Preserve those old school customs that lead to beneficial habits
30	From these details the detective made his important inductions	From these details the detective made his important deductions
31	Of the many denotations of the word *politician,* dishonesty appears to be the most generally accepted	Of the many connotations of the word *politician,* dishonesty appears to be the most generally accepted
32	By dent of hard work and persistence he has come out on top	By dint of hard work and persistence he has come out on top
33	The boat came alongside of the dock to discharge passengers	The boat came alongside the wharf to discharge passengers
34	The culture of congenial relationships with fellow workmen is important	The cultivation of congenial relationships with fellow workmen is important
35	Every young and prosperous country should encourage emigration	Every young and prosperous country should encourage immigration
36	The enormousness of his offense is not realized by the public	The enormity of his offense is not realized by the public
37	He made his entry to the blast of trumpets and martial music	He made his entrance to the blast of trumpets and martial music
38	The episode was epoch-making but the event of the evening marred it a little	The event was epoch-making but the episode of the evening marred it a little
39	Whatever your estimate of her may be, she will always stand high in my estimation	Whatever your estimation of her may be, she will always stand high in my esteem
40	The community will never forget the falsity of the condemned official	The community will never forget the falseness of the condemned official

SECTION FORTY — SYNONYM (VERB)

What is said on page 352 in regard to the nouns there listed, applies in like degree to the verbs below. Confusion of mere verb inflection is not considered, except in a few rare and proverbially troublesome instances. Knowledge of the parts of irregular verbs should in the main be sufficient to clarify such changes as are made between present and imperfect tenses, and between these and the past participle forms.* A few of the verbs listed are directly associated with corresponding noun and adjective forms. This is a sort of repetition that justifies itself by the generality of confusion that persists even yet—after all the italics of the pedagogs—in newspaper and magazine and book, as well as on the platform and before the microphone.

* See *Harper's English Grammar* by the same author

abide is to dwell or remain continuously and indefinitely, and more or less fixedly, its imperfect tense is *abode* and its past participle *abode* or *abided* *Await* means to wait for or to be in store for, *wait,* to stay or remain for a limited time only. *Reside* is more formal than any of these three words, and is likely to carry with it the idea of legal considerations *I shall abide in my loneliness* and *Great joys await you* and *I shall wait till noon* and *We reside in Los Angeles* represent correct usage. *Abide* is on the way to archaism, being used chiefly in poetry and in elevated prose

accent means to place stress of voice on a certain syllable of a word; *accentuate* may mean to speak or pronounce with an accent, but in its more general use it means to intensify or emphasize. You accent *dress* in *address,* you accentuate like a Frenchman, perhaps, or like a German, and you accentuate the importance of punctuality

accept is to take, to receive, to acknowledge, to agree to, *except* to omit, to leave out, to object, to take exception to You accept a gift, you except a name from an invitation list

adapt is to adjust, to make right or suitable, as in *The music is adapted to dancing,* this is a regular transitive verb. *Adopt* is to accept or approve or take by choice, as in *They have adopted a child;* this is also a regular transitive verb You adapt yourself to conditions; you adopt the religion of your wife. Do not confuse either of these words with *adept,* adjective accented on the second syllable, meaning efficient, expert, skilled, or with *adept,* noun accented on either syllable, meaning expert or one versed or skilled in something

admit emphasizes the idea of concession or of granting something in the abstract, without any acceptance or color of point of view, *acknowledge* is to lay open or make public something that has been or might have been concealed, *confess* still carries a little of the old religious meaning of the feeling of wrong within oneself, but the expression *I confess* or *I must confess* is frequently used as a thrown-in deferential term. You may admit that evidence appears damaging, you acknowledge that you were present where a crime was committed, you confess that you were at fault in not calling the police. You may say *It is true, I confess, that I eat too much candy*

advert means to refer to, to turn to, as in *He adverted to the famous Worden case in his address to the jury, avert,* to turn from or aside or away, to ward off or prevent, as in *We luckily averted an accident at the turn of the road*

advertise, once used to mean to show or evince or notify, is now confined preferably to the meaning to announce publicly, and to issue and sponsor public notice or advertisement, *advise* means to inform, to warn, to give advice to

affect is to impress or influence, to produce an effect, to pretend or assume for the sake of display or exhibitionism, *effect* (see below), to bring about or accomplish. You may be affected by some one's attentions; you may affect a certain mannerism. You effect a desirable change in the management of your household. *Effect* may be a noun meaning

result, issue, outcome, purpose; in general usage *affect* is a verb only but in special (psychological) usage it may be a noun meaning emotion as a factor in conduct

affront means to treat insolently, to evince definite marks of disrespect and indignity to one's face, *insult* is stronger It means to indulge in degrading and humiliating personal attack, either verbal or physical. You may affront a man by calling him a cad and a bounder; you insult him by calling him a liar and a rascal

aggravate is to make worse or heavy or heavier, to intensify, to increase; *irritate,* to excite to anger or impatience, *provoke,* to cause strong annoyance, to challenge, to awaken a contest. You aggravate a wound by accidentally hitting it, you aggravate an offense by denying that you committed it, you irritate a person by threatening him, and if you persist in your threats you may provoke him to a quarrel

alienate is to make the emotion or feeling or heart of a person strange toward another or toward something, *estrange,* to make the judgment or intellect or understanding strange. You may alienate, not estrange, the affections of some one from another, you may become estranged, not alienated, from some one because his beliefs are in constant conflict with yours

alleviate means to lighten, to make easier to bear; *assuage,* to pacify, to make quiet; *mitigate,* to make softer or milder, *relieve,* to free wholly or to a great degree. You alleviate pain, assuage grief, mitigate penalty, relieve of a burden

allow and *permit* are used for the most part interchangeably in colloquial expression. The former, however, should be applied to less formal matters, the latter to more formal ones *Allow* is verb only. *Permit* is both noun and verb. *Allow* carries with it the merest restraint or forbearance of prohibition; *permit,* the idea of regulated or official allowance or authorization. The noun quality of *permit* is retained to a degree in the verb, that is, the idea of token of permission, such as coupon or ticket

allude means to refer to indirectly or subordinately, even perhaps without exact mention, to give passing notice *Refer* is stronger, it means direct and deliberate reference by way of open mention. Do not confuse *allude* with *elude* meaning to avoid or escape from or evade

appreciate is not a synonym of *realize* Say *I realize the difficulty you are in,* not *I appreciate the difficulty you are in Appreciate* has many meanings (see dictionary) but this misuse of the word is far too general and is apparently increasing At least one dictionary has already succumbed and gives a meaning of *appreciate* to be sensible of, to realize, to understand

arise is used to mean originate, spring (up), come into being or notice, result from, to "revive from death", *rise* applies in cases of mere ascent or reaching a higher level, to get up, to swell or puff or emerge. You say that a great movement of reform arose, and that much opposition has arisen to his candidacy. But the sun rises, a tide rises, a person rises in the world; we rose tardily from sleep

ascribe is to assign or refer anything or any quality to that object or to that being regarded as its certain originator or possessor, *attribute,* to assign a thing or a result to a certain cause or person as its probable cause or source. *Ascribe* carries the idea of certainty, *attribute,* the element of uncertainty. *Impute* is to assign good or evil, usually the latter, *charge,* to assign what is regarded unworthy You impute questionable motives to a stranger who breaks into your house, you charge him with robbery if things are missing You say that the works of Shakspere have been attributed to Bacon, that great courage has always been ascribed to Washington

assemble denotes to meet or come together in a general sense and more or less independently *Convene* implies to come together as result of call; *convoke* contains the idea of calling an organized body by superior authority, *muster* means to come together or assemble in connection with troops; *summon* means to notify or command or assemble, and is used preferably in connection with law and the courts Delegates assemble or convene Parliament is convoked. An army is mustered. Witnesses are summoned

bear is *bore* in the imperfect tense (formerly *bare*) as in *I bore the burden easily* and *She bore him twelve years ago* (that is, gave birth to him). The past participle meaning carried is *borne,* pertaining to birth *born,* as in *I have borne my burden easily* and *I was born twelve years ago.* In reference to human and other mammal birth *born* is used in all passive forms except when followed by *by,* thus, *She had been born lame* and *One child was borne by her.* Both *born* and *borne* are used as participial adjectives, as *a born violinist* and *a gracefully borne responsibility*

bereaved and *bereft* are past participle forms of *bereave* The former is preferably used in reference to loss through death, the latter, to loss of material things, and of such abstractions as hope, courage, strength You say that a widow is bereaved by the death of her husband; that a failure has bereft a man of ambition

begin is less formal than *commence* You begin the ordinary daily tasks of life, you commence formal procedures and ceremonials and undertakings. You begin to dress and to eat your breakfast, you commence a lawsuit and the construction of a bridge and the exercises of inauguration. *Begin* is much more colloquial than *commence,* and the best writers and speakers still refrain from using the infinitive after *commence*

bid, meaning to offer, is the same in all forms—present, imperfect, and past participle, this is the verb associated with auctions and with anything having to do with competitive offering or estimating *Bid,* meaning order or invite or greet, or say goodbye to, is *bade* (pronounced *bad*) in the imperfect tense, and *bid* or *bidden* in the past participle (*bade* and *bidden* are becoming archaic) You say *I bid you welcome, I bade him go,* and *I have bid* (or *bidden*) *him farewell* The former may be a noun, as *My bid was the highest;* it is a vulgarism used as a noun in the sense of invitation, as *I have a bid to the party.* Used in the sense of attempt or undertake, *bid* may be called a newspaper col-

loquialism, necessary perhaps and convenient certainly in such expression as *Britain bids for peace*

bide means to dwell, abide, wait for, stay, tarry The imperfect tense is *bided* or *bode* (preferably the former), and the past participle *bided*. *I shall bide here for him* and *He has bided in foreign parts much of his life* are correct literal usages But *I shall bide my time* and *He bided by his bargain* are more or less idiomatic uses, the former being the only transitive one remaining

bring means to come with, *take*, to go with, *fetch* means both. *Bring* implies toward, *take*, away from, *fetch*, to go to, to obtain, and to bring You fetch a book from the library, that is, you go to the library, get a book, and bring it home. You take a letter to the post office and bring the mail back

captivate is to fascinate through attractiveness or other excellence, *capture*, to take captive or prisoner, *charm*, to give delight or to cause admiration (it is no longer concerned with magic except for those who still believe in magic wands, magic potions, and the like) A lady's manner may charm a man without enabling her to captivate him You capture a squirrel, a daring aviator may captivate a girl, a voice, a manner, a speech may charm you

censor, as verb, means to subject to a judge or examiner or general overseer of morals, as noun, it means judge or overseer, usually of public morals *Censure* means to blame or criticize adversely, it is also a noun meaning blame or adverse criticism Care must be taken to pronounce these two words clearly so that the one will not be mistaken for the other *Censer* is a vessel or container, especially one in which incense is burned

chaff is to make fun of good naturedly, literally to rub with husks, or ridicule, *chafe*, to annoy as result of "rubbing the wrong way," to vex; intransitively it means to fret *Chaff* is also a noun meaning the husks of grain and grass, thus, figuratively, anything of trivial value, lightness

cite is less particular than *quote*. You cite an instance or a passage, giving the substance of what is referred to, you cite an authority by giving his name and work or the occasion from which you make your citation *Quote* means to give the exact words. When you cite you adduce, when you quote you reproduce *Cite* also means to mention in honorary manner, as cited for bravery. *Quote* is used colloquially (especially in the printing trades) as noun (usually plural) in reference to the punctuation marks

claim means to demand as a right, to hold to be true; *assert* (page 372) to state positively, even aggressively and controversially; *maintain*, to uphold by argument an assertion made, *contend* presupposes opposition to the act of maintaining. Where there is no arguable question as to right, *claim* should give way to *assert* or *maintain* You assert or maintain that Newton discovered the law of gravitation. You do not have to claim this. You claim the right to a piece of property, and you assert your claim in unmistakable terms. Your lawyer maintains your assertion, and his opponent contends that your right is not legal

clean is more general and comprehensive than *cleanse.* The former, as verb, pertains to removal of dirt; as adjective, it means free from dirt. *Cleanse* implies effort and thoroughness in being and making clean, and is used figuratively in the sense of purifying *Cleanly* is an adjective implying the habit of trying to keep clean. *Cleanse* has sound value—it sounds cleaner and more thorough than *clean*

close means to stop an opening; *shut,* to close in such manner as to bar entrance and exit. *Close* is general, *shut,* specific and emphatic. *End* implies a broader sense of finality than *close,* pertaining for the most part to processes and seasons and undertakings *Conclude* is a formal word, used chiefly in connection with transactions and negotiations. *Finish* denotes the end of something that has been continuing for some time or through some stages, as to finish writing a play. *Terminate* has in it the idea of limitation as of either time or space, as in *This misfortune terminates a distinguished career*

compare is to examine objects or qualities for the sake of discovering resemblances and differences, *contrast* means to set off or bring out differences. *Compare* is therefore the broader term of the two You say *compare with* when you bring out relative merits or qualities, *compare to* when you bring out mere likeness without emphasis upon relative characteristics, thus, you may compare Texas *with* California, an airplane *to* an eagle

condemn is to regard as wrong, to pass judgment against, to disapprove; *contemn* (now little used), to scorn, to despise, to regard with contempt. During the prohibition era it was sometimes said that many of those who condemned traffic in liquor by no means always contemned liquor

condone is to forgive tacitly or in such way as to imply that no offense was given; *atone for,* to make amends for, to make up to, to make reparation or to give satisfaction for You atone for your own transgressions, you condone the transgressions of others

conduct means to supervise or lead personally, *direct,* to give instructions and issue orders authoritatively; *manage,* to handle details You conduct negotiations, direct a play or an orchestra, manage a performance or a tour

consist means to be comprised of, *constitute,* to form or make up. The two words are, thus, almost antonyms, as *All Gaul consisted of three parts, three parts constituted all Gaul* *Consist of* is used in pointing out the parts or elements of which anything is composed, *consist in,* in pointing out and explaining its nature and indicating that on which it depends You say that a house consists of twelve rooms, that life consists in the ups and downs of fate

constitute also means to establish by putting together (see above); *comprise,* to include, to enclose, to cover *A house with furnishings and equipment intact does not necessarily constitute a home* and *The word home comprises comfort, privacy, ease, hospitality, and love* represent correct usage

construe is to explain or interpret or show meaning of, to explain rules of syntax in grammar *Construct* is to build, to put together, to set in

order or arrange. You construct a building or a sentence or a theory; you construe the meaning of a picture or a type of architecture or a sentence

convince is to satisfy by evidence or proof presented to the intellect, *persuade,* to satisfy by appeals made to the will and the feeling. *Convince* pertains to the understanding only, *persuade,* to the will and the affections You may be convinced that you have a certain duty to perform without performing it. You may be persuaded to do it as result of influence brought to bear upon your will and your feeling. You are persuaded into an opinion or a course of action You are convinced of a belief or a doctrine

credit means to believe or to give credit to; *accredit,* to clothe or invest with credit or authority, to sanction or vouch for officially You credit a story that is told you, the President accredits you as ambassador to a country

crochet—pronounced *crow shay*—is a verb indicating a kind of knitting done with a long needle, *crotchet*—rimes with *botch it*—is a whimsey, a fancy, a fad, the adjective form *crotchety* is more frequently used than the noun *crotchet* But you say either that Mrs Knott has her crotchets, or that she is unusually crotchety today, and that she crochets beautifully

dare is preferably *dared* in the imperfect tense, *durst* now being archaic *Dared* is also the past participle The third person singular present indicative is now preferably *He dares,* not *He dare* as it formerly was owing to the fact that *dare* was originally an imperfect form. The negative third singular follows suit—*He dares not—He daresn't.* But do not use *daresn't* with *I* or *we* or *you* or *they.* With these persons the regular verb forms are used—*I daren't, You daren't, We daren't, They daren't Durstn't* in all of these persons is now archaic *Dasn't* is an illiterate localism for *dare not, dares not,* as is *dast* for *dare* Treat the inflections of *dare* as you treat those of *care, flare, share,* and other *-are* verbs

debase implies lowering the worth or quality of something, *degrade,* lowering or reducing rank or station or standard. A coin may be debased by alloy, as may the human mind by evil; an officer may be degraded in rank as may one's standards of conduct

debar is to preclude, to cut off from entrance; *disbar,* to expel from membership in the bar, as an attorney who is thus deprived of status and privileges. The latter is a special word, the former, a general one

decimate means to take the tenth part of, to select by lot every tenth man and kill him. This word should not be loosely used for *destroy* in a total sense, it still carries the idea of ten as contained in Latin *decimus,* formerly it was synonymous with *tithe.* To say *The ranks of the enemy were decimated* or *suffered decimation* for *The ranks of the enemy were reduced* or *destroyed* is to put on dictional airs—and to be wrong at the same time There is little, if any, place left for this word in present general usage

declaim means to speak or harangue; it pertains to formal speaking *Disclaim* means to deny or disown or disavow interest in or respon-

sibility for. These words are no longer synonyms, but they are still very often confused in use

deduce means to arrive by reasoning, to infer from reasoning, *deduct*, to take away from or subtract. You deduce from what I say that I do not care to go, you deduct expenses from your charge account

deprecate means to disapprove or deplore, to plead against or seek to avert, as in prayer, to express regret for. *Depreciate* means, transitively, to belittle or disparage or undervalue, to lessen the value of; intransitively, to decrease in value. *Decry* is openly and frankly to discredit by public utterance or censure *Disparage* is to discredit indirectly by offensive reference, "to damn with faint praise"

describe really means to picture, but pressure of colloquial usage in the sense of explain has brought the dictionaries to their knees, and they now give *explain* and *narrate* and *relate* as standard synonyms. *Explain* means to make clear or plain, to expound, to give an explanation The two words are held to their original meanings by careful writers and speakers *Explicate* means to unfold meaning, and *expound* to set forth or explain in a learned or elaborate manner, both terms being special applications of the general term *explain*

design carries primarily the meaning of intend or purpose, *destine*, that of decree, ordain, predetermine as, very often, in reference to the supernatural. You say that a certain plan was designed to make work easier, and that a certain leader seems destined to dominate the world

disburse means to expend or pay out; it is limited in use to finances or their equivalent. *Disperse* means to spread, scatter, distribute, disseminate. In pronunciation be sure to distinguish the *b* from the *p*

disclose is to uncover or reveal or make known that which has been known and kept secret. *Discover* (page 360) is no longer used in the sense of *disclose* or *reveal* except in the theater, as in *discovered on rise of curtain*. *Invent* is to create or to put things together in a new way, thus applying to what has been unknown before A continent is discovered, a secret disclosed, a mechanical device, such as the lawn mower, is invented

discomfit is to baffle or upset or perplex or frustrate; *discomfort*, to disturb or make uneasy or interfere with the comfort of. The former is a verb only; the latter, both verb and noun You discomfit a person by your argument, you discomfort him by keeping the room too warm

dominate is to rule or control, to predominate over, *domineer*, to rule over in an insolent or overbearing manner

dove is a colloquial imperfect tense form of *dive*, but *dived* is correct. Say *He dived in bravely*, not *He dove in bravely*. (*Dove* is almost archaic)

eat is *ate* in the imperfect tense, and *eaten* in the past participle. Do not use *eat* for either of these forms *I eat, I ate, I have eaten* are correct for present, imperfect, and perfect respectively. Do not pronounce *eat et* to rime with *bet*. And do not use *eats* as noun meaning food. This innocent verb is far too often vulgarized in usage

-ed, suffix used in forming the imperfect tense and the past participle of regular verbs, is increasingly giving way to *-t* where euphony permits as in such verbs as *blent, blest, burnt, dreamt, drest, dwelt, gilt, girt, knelt, knit, leapt, learnt, pent, quit, rapt, slit, smelt, spilt, split, spoilt, sweat, wet, whet, whipt, wisht, worshipt, wrapt.** Do not pronounce the *-ed* suffix as a separate syllable in such verbs as *attack* and *drown*, as *at tack ted* and *drown ded* *Attacked (at tackt)* and *drowned (dround)* are the correct imperfect forms

effect means to bring about, very often as result of difficulty, and implies reaching a given end through purposeful means *Execute* connotes formal and more or less methodical and conventional procedure, to follow through according to prescribed custom or arrangement, as a project or a legal document *Perform* is often nothing more than an affected synonym of *do*, it implies regularity of action taken as result of assignment and of specified work. it differs from *effect* principally in signifying rule or regulation from without, whereas *effect* usually connotes inner prompting *Produce* means to lead or bring forward by either design or accident, it emphasizes end rather than means Changes are effected, decrees are executed, services are performed, benefits are produced *After a long struggle they effected an entrance to the fort, The elaborate contracts were finally executed and signed, He has performed his duty faithfully, After much resistance the culprit finally produced his booty,* represent correct usage

elicit means to draw out, to educe, to entice forth; *eliminate,* to cast out (over the threshold, literally), to expel, to get rid of, *exclude,* to prevent entrance, to keep out what has not yet come in You elicit information through discussion, you eliminate extraneous details from an argument, you exclude everything foreign to your argument or discussion *Illicit* is an adjective meaning improper, unlawful, forbidden You say that the cross-examiner had little difficulty in eliciting from the witnesses that they had been engaged in illicit practices *Elicit* and *illicit* are not homonyms, though careless pronunciation may make them seem so

eliminate also means to exclude as unimportant (see above); *isolate,* to set apart, segregate You eliminate something in order to get it out of consideration, you isolate something for the sake of better, more independent consideration

emerge means to come out of, especially after concealment of some kind; *immerge,* to plunge into, to disappear; it is antonym of *emerge* and synonym of *immerse,* the latter being used, as a rule, in connection with baptism (noun *immersion)* and in the sense of being deeply engaged in or absorbed Do not confuse *emerge* with *issue* meaning to come into being or advance from a source or enclosure after being shut in. You say that the moon has finally emerged from behind the mountain, that happiness usually issues from morality

ended must be used in reference to time that has passed, as *This is his record for the semester ended June fifteenth; ending,* in reference to time passing and about to end, as *This is his record for the semester*

* See *Harper's English Grammar* by the same author.

ending next week. The same distinction is to be made between the past and present participles of many other verbs. *Ending* is also used as a synonym of *suffix*

envelop is preferably used as verb meaning to surround, to wrap up, to put covering around, *envelope* (the first syllable may be pronounced *en* or *ahn)* is preferably used as noun meaning wrapper or covering, as for a letter. *Develope* is now archaic, as is also *developement.* Use *develop* and *development*

eradicate means to pluck out by the roots (*e* out, *radix* root); *obliterate,* to erase or efface (*ob* over or reversely and *litera* letter), it is stronger than either erase or efface. You eradicate the weeds from your garden. You obliterate an unpleasant memory from your mind

expect refers to the future So does *hope,* but the latter has in it a strong element of desire *Anticipate* is to look forward to with a degree of realization as to what is to come But these words, along with *believe, suppose, think,* are colloquially used interchangeably, and *I expect it was* or *is* are quite as commonly heard and seen as *I expect it will be.* Strictly speaking, *believe* should be used when believing is involved; *suppose* when assuming is involved; think when *thought* is involved

expire is to exhale or emit, to cease, to terminate, to die But it is archaic as a transitive verb in the sense of bring to a close Say *Your tenancy will expire this month,* not *We shall expire your tenancy this month Expire* is sometimes wrongly used, as *transpire* (page 391) is, with the meaning of happen or occur Derivatively *expire* and *inspire* are antonyms The use of *expire* in the sense of *emitting,* as in *The backyard emits a foul odor,* is now obsolete

expose is to lay open, to unmask, to set forth, very often in a discreditable sense in relation to something that has been concealed The noun form *exposure* is preferable to the French *exposé (eks po zay'),* though the latter is now thoroughly adopted in English Both *expose* and *exposure* are photographic terms used to denote the laying open of a plate to the action of actinic rays *Exposé* is not used in this sense

find means to discover, to reach, to learn or ascertain, arrive at, (in law) to render decision, *locate,* to place, fix, set, establish, (in United States) to set or fix the place of, as to locate a speedway The colloquial use of *locate* for *find* or for *settle* is not to be recommended Say *I cannot find my hat anywhere,* not *I cannot locate my hat anywhere.* Say *They settled* or *took up residence in Missouri,* not *They located in Missouri.* The use of *locate* in these two senses is sometimes an affectation—it is more high-sounding than its simpler substitutes

fix is probably the most misused, abused, confused verb in English. As a colloquial utility word it is used synonymously with *adjust, adorn, answer, apply, appoint, arrange, assign, attach, attack, confirm, consign, decide, defeat, define, determine, establish, get ready, make out, place, prepare, repair, set, settle, wangle, yield,* and still other verbs. As noun, it is colloquially used almost as loosely to mean *accident, catastrophe,*

dilemma, mess, plight, predicament, quandary, situation, tragedy. Like ***up*** (page 18) it should be spared general, not to say promiscuous usage

flaunt is to display boastfully or brazenly; ***flout,*** to sneer or mock or otherwise treat contemptuously Both words are nouns as well as verbs, but are used principally as the latter. Before your rivals in a contest, you may flaunt the prize that you won; you flout the charge that you took unfair advantage of the other contestants

flee means to run away or escape or vanish; its imperfect tense and past participle form is ***fled.*** *Flow* means to move or stream or circulate, to manifest ease and continuity, its imperfect tense and past participle form is ***flowed.*** *Fly* means to move or pass through the air, or to move or pass swiftly, or to cause to fly, its imperfect tense is ***flew,*** and its past participle is *flown Criminals flee* (or *fled*) *the law; water flows* (or *flowed*) *overpoweringly; the aviator flies* (or *flew*) *through the air,* or *flies* or *flew his plane through the air,* or *has flown his plane through the air*

follow or *follows* must be used in accordance with grammatical rule in such expressions as *Observe the words that follow* and *Observe the example that follows* These forms are subject to much looseness, used before illustration of any sort *Behind* and *after* are superfluous after *follow Say Follow me,* not *Follow behind* or *after me* Do not use *following* for *after,* as in *Following the ceremony we had dinner.* This seems to say that we had dinner while we were in pursuit of the ceremony *After the ceremony we had dinner* is correct. *Follow* is not synonymous with *succeed.* The latter pertains to two and means coming immediately after or substituting for, whereas *follow* is literal and "promiscuous" pertaining to any number, thus, you say *Harry succeeded Jim as president of the club* and *The crowd followed him to the hall*

forecast is preferably the same—*forecast*—in both imperfect tense and past participle *Forecasted* is now archaic *Broadcast* also is the same in all forms, though *broadcasted* is frequently seen and heard

forego and *forgo* are now treated by most of the dictionaries as synonyms Strictly speaking, however, *forego* should be used to mean *go fore,* that is, go ahead or before, as in *Consult the foregoing map* and *I shall follow if he foregoes Forgo* really means to abstain or relinquish or give up, as in *We shall have to forgo the pleasure of seeing you* and *I forgo rich foods in the cause of health* (page 469)

got is both imperfect and past participle form of *get,* do not use *gotten,* now archaic, as a verb. But in adjective combination forms, such as *ill-gotten gains* and *true-gotten knowledge* it survives. *Begot* and *forgot* are correct imperfect tense forms of *beget* and *forget* respectively, *begotten* and *forgotten* correct past participle forms The imperfects *begat* and *forgat* are now archaic. *Begotten* and *forgotten* are correct adjective forms The *en* participle form tends to disappear in verb uses, but holds in adjective uses, *proved* for *proven* being another signal instance. But ***beaten, beholden, bidden, bitten, hidden, ridden, slidden, trodden*** are some others that are rapidly passing as verb forms

humble means to bring low, that is, to lower pride and dignity and prestige; *humiliate,* to dishonor or disgrace. *Humble* is frequently reflexive, *humiliate* is not. The former pertains to feeling, as a rule; the latter, to outward circumstances A sense of guilt or of failure humbles, an insult or a defeat humiliates

implicate denotes to entangle, usually in an unpleasant and disgraceful way, *involve,* to complicate embarrassingly but not damagingly You become implicated in a crime or a misdemeanor, you become involved in a misunderstanding or a quarrel

inaugurate implies greater formality or ceremony than *initiate.* Both words mean to begin, the latter being the more general and the less important or dignified. A new system of bookkeeping may be initiated, or a new member of a fraternity. A new era is inaugurated after a war, or a new president of a country. *Inaugurate* is the more high-sounding term, and as a result is often used pretentiously

infer, though colloquially used in the sense of guess or surmise, really means to gather or derive from premises; *imply* means to hint, to intimate, to ascribe. You infer from evidence or from reading that a story is not true, you imply by what you say that it is not true. One who expresses himself implies something, one who reads or listens infers

injure pertains to the animate; *damage,* to the inanimate A door is damaged, a man is injured. These meanings may be transposed for the sake of humor, as *Fall in love and damage your heart* and *The ladder fell and injured a vertebra*—if these *are* humorous

inquire is to ask for or request information from authoritative or unauthoritative sources; *interrogate,* to inquire or question in a formal or systematic manner for the sake of eliciting information; *investigate,* to make a searching inquiry. You inquire about a robbery; interrogate a suspect, investigate all the circumstances surrounding it

launder is a regular verb *(laundered* in imperfect tense and past participle) *Launderer,* not *laundrer,* is the agent noun, and *laundry* is the concrete noun—the place where laundering is done and the clothes or other articles to be laundered Do not use *laundry* as verb The feminine form *laundress* is used interchangeably with *laundrywoman,* correlative of *laundryman* (page 114)

lay is transitive; its imperfect tense and past participle form is *laid. Lie,* meaning to recline, is intransitive, its imperfect tense is *lay* and its past participle is *lain* These are probably the most confusing verbs in the language for the reason that the present of the one is the same as the imperfect of the other (though *sit* and *set* compete for honors). You say *Lay my hat on the table* and *He laid* or *has laid my hat on the table,* and *Yesterday I lay on the couch all afternoon* and *I have lain on the couch all afternoon. Lie,* to falsify, offers no difficulty inasmuch as it is regular—imperfect *lied* and past participle *lied*

leave had better be kept in mind as meaning go away from, as in *Leave me alone* meaning go away from me so that I may be alone *Leave me be* is provincial for *Let me be,* that is, stop teasing or annoying or bothering me. *Let* fundamentally means permit or allow in contradistinction

to *leave* in these uses. *Leave me have it* and *Leave me help you* are improprieties

lift is to raise from the floor or other surface and implies some effort, *elevate,* to raise above normal position or state, *heighten* may mean to make higher, but it may also mean to intensify You lift a box, elevate a bridge or a standard, heighten a seam or the intensity of a current

lighted and *lit* are both correct as imperfect tense and past participle forms of *light,* as *I have lit the lamps* and *I have lighted the lamps* The former is preferable as both verb and adjective, as *a lighted lamp* and *a lighted cigarette* rather than *a lit lamp* and *a lit cigarette* (page 241)

like should not be used loosely or interchangeably for *love.* The latter pertains to the affections rather than to mere appetite, and is therefore stronger than the former You like pie, baseball, a good novel, you like, also, an acquaintance and a dog You love your parents, your close friends, you may even be said to love mankind The distinction in the use of the two words must always be personal to the user It is claimed by some authorities that *like* is the only word that may be used as all eight parts of speech (page 190)

liquefy means to reduce or to be reduced to a liquid form or condition, *liquidate,* to settle legally or financially, to determine exact charges or damages, to pay off, to dispose of, figuratively, to imprison or kill a person who is an obstruction to carrying out a policy *Liquidate* once also meant to reduce to liquid form but no longer has this meaning

loathe is a verb meaning to hate intensively, *loath* (or *loth*), an adjective meaning averse or reluctant *Since he loathes me I am loth to contribute to his welfare* illustrates correct usage

loose is used preferably in the mere sense of undo or unbind, *loosen,* in the more figurative sense of liberating or setting free The same distinction pertains to *unloose* and *unloosen* in which the prefix *un* is intensive rather than negative You loose or unloose the dog from leash, you loosen or unloosen the passions of the mob by your speech. Do not confuse *loose* with *lose* in spelling and meaning. The latter rimes with *whose,* the former with *goose*

negotiate implies settlement and adjustment as result of deliberations covering an entire situation; *transact* means to execute, to carry out, to do business with Notes, bills of exchange, loans, mortgages, treaties are discussed and, perhaps, argued, that is, negotiated, under their terms, arrived at as result of negotiation, business is transacted. *Negotiate* used in the sense of accomplishing some physical act, as *negotiating a river* (getting over it) or *negotiating a hill* (getting up) or *negotiating a dam* (repairing it), is provincial and colloquial

note is to look at or observe with care, *notice* is merely to observe or briefly to look at. If you note a thing you notice it especially

persecute is to bother consistently, to harass, oppress, punish, molest; *prosecute,* to follow in the sense of proceed against and carry out some action, as a lawsuit. But you speak of prosecuting a plan and of persecuting a child

place denotes more careful action and more exact locating than does *put* You place something in its proper position; you put it into your pocket or on the mantelpiece You *place* your hat on your head (you take care probably to give it becoming position), you *put* (turn) the sheep into the pasture

precede means to be, come, go before in time or rank or position; *proceed,* to continue, to advance, to issue forth. The two words are too frequently pronounced alike or almost alike. *Preceding* is preferably used to mean immediately before; *previous* to mean some time before. You say that the page preceding fifty is forty-nine, that on a previous occasion you had met the author. Preceding events are "present perfect," coming up to the present. Previous events are "pluperfect," stopping at some point before the present (page 169). *Antecedent* likewise implies an interval between the present and the time to which it refers

prescribe means to dictate or ordain, to lay down as a direction or course of action, to write a medical formula, *proscribe* is to condemn or denounce or outlaw You prescribe a method of conduct, you proscribe an offender against the method

propose pertains to what is offered or stated to others; *purpose,* to what resides in your own mind as an act of the will What you propose is subject to deliberation and discussion, what you purpose is not The former is likely to be definite and formal, the latter indefinite and general. *Propose* is to offer or present for consideration, *purpose,* to intend or design You propose an amendment to the constitution of your club, and you purpose (mean) to see that it is adopted (page 369)

provide is *provided* in the imperfect tense and the past participle; *providing* in the present participle. But *provided* is also a conjunction meaning if, on condition, it being provided, it being stipulated Used with the last two meanings it is preferably followed by *that* expressed or understood, as in *Provided you have a car I shall go* Used with the other meanings it may or may not be followed by *that* *Providing* is preferably not used as a conjunction, though it is commonly so used in England as such, with the meaning in case that. Its use as a conjunction in the United States is increasing, it is listed as such by Webster but not by Standard or Oxford

raise is always transitive, *rise,* intransitive Say *I was so ill that I could not rise,* not *I was so ill I could not raise* (though the latter is a localism). *Rise* is a noun in the sense of increase, ascent, source, advance, height, the act of rising in any connection; it is the antonym of *fall,* as in *The Rise and Fall of the Roman Empire* *Raise* is a noun only in colloquial usage, as of increase of wages or property or gain in any sense. Say *I have been given an increase in salary,* not *I have been given a raise in salary*

re-cover means to cover again; *recover,* to get well, to get back, to overcome, to make up for. You have your umbrella re-covered; you recover a lost umbrella or you recover your health (page 2). In the same way, *re-collect* means to collect again, and *recollect,* to recall, *re-create,* to create again, and *recreate,* to refresh, to reanimate. In other words, *re*

hyphened to a stem means again or repetition; written solid with it, it means back or former state or position or backwards or not advancing

reek means to emit or give off fumes, to be permeated with, to exude, ***wreak,*** to inflict or exact, as to wreak vengeance

repel means to reject, to turn away, to drive back, to rebuff; ***repulse*** also means to drive back, to resist, to check. But *repulse* is stronger and more comprehensive and conclusive in meaning than *repel.* You may repel by a look, you may repulse only by some direct action. You repel an unwelcome advance by some one; you repulse an enemy or an intruder

sell does not mean convince or persuade or win over. *John is trying to sell me on his party* is an impropriety. *John is trying to prevail upon me to attend his party* or *John is trying to persuade me to go to his party* is correct The noun *sale* is incorrectly followed by *on* in such expressions as *a sale on hats* and *a sale on stoves.* Say, rather, *sale of*

sit is intransitive, its imperfect tense and past participle form is *sat Set* is transitive, its imperfect tense and past participle form is *set.* You say *He sat there all day* and *He set the pitcher on the table.* But note *Your dress sits well* and *The hen sits on the eggs* and *He sits his horse gracefully* (British) in all of which *set* is stubbornly colloquial and idiomatic The verb *seat* is a regular transitive (frequently reflexive) verb, as *They seated the guests on the dais* and *We seated ourselves on the terrace*

sprain means to injure or weaken a joint or muscle or ligament, *strain* may be (but is preferably not) used to mean the same, and in addition it has many literal and figurative meanings of its own, such as to draw tight, to filter, to stretch, to strive, to balk, to overdo

stay means to dwell or remain at, *stop,* to come to a standstill. The use of the latter for the former, as in *I am stopping at the Excelsior Hotel,* is colloquial, and is rapidly edging its way into standard usage. But many authorities still frown upon the use of *stop* for *stay* in this sense You may stop at a hotel on your way from the office, you stay at a hotel only when you remain there for a time, as over night Say *I staid in bed all day,* not *I stopped in bed all day* (though the Britisher would say the latter)

struck is both imperfect tense and past participle form of *strike. Stricken* is now archaic as the past participle form, but as adjective it is currently used, as in *stricken by misfortune* and *stricken with the ravages of disease. Strike (struck)* is intransitive used to mean to quit work, to collide, to bite (as a snake), to sound (as a clock), to lower (as flag or colors), to go through (as a place—to strike through the meadow), to shock or penetrate (as an attack)

suspect, as verb, means to doubt or have doubts about, to mistrust, to surmise; as noun, one thought to be guilty of something. *Suspicion* is not a verb and should not be used as such—*suspicioned* is a vulgarism It is a noun meaning the act or fact or occurrence of suspecting, imagination of something wrong, distrust, misgiving

transpire is now correctly used to mean to leak out, to become known, it should not be used in the sense of happen or occur or come to pass. Derivatively, the word means to breathe through, and it was originally used to mean to emit or give out through the skin or pores *As to the procedures of the military court nothing has as yet been permitted to transpire* is correct. *More than an hour has transpired between his arrival and mine* and *He told me what transpired at the circus* are incorrect

underlay is to put something under, to support by something laid under; *underlie*, to be at the basis of, to lie below, to rest in a position under. You underlay a pavement to correct unevenness in it, the principle that underlies your plan is not sound

CONTEST *

	NO	YES
1	Which syllable in *detail* should be accentuated	Which syllable in *detail* should be accented
2	Mr Harris excepts with pleasure Mrs Coley's kind invitation	Mr Harris accepts with pleasure Mrs Coley's kind invitation
3	Mr and Mrs Ferguson have adapted a little girl	Mr and Mrs Ferguson have adopted a little girl
4	He admits that he was wrong and he confesses that much may be said for his accuser	He confesses that he was wrong, and he admits that much may be said for his accuser
5	Averting to the accident, he said that the driver of the car barely adverted death	Adverting to the accident, he said that the driver of the car barely averted death
6	She effected the manners of royalty but the attitude of others toward her was in no way affected thereby	She affected the manners of royalty but the attitude of others toward her was without effect
7	He aggravated the poor woman by enumerating her many faults	He irritated the poor woman by enumerating her many faults
8	He has estranged all his friends by his disloyalty to the flag	He has alienated all his friends by his disloyalty to the flag
9	This application will relieve and may entirely alleviate your neuralgia	This application will alleviate and may entirely relieve your neuralgia
10	Our teacher permitted us to go to the park but when we arrived there we were not allowed to enter	Our teacher allowed us to go to the park but when we arrived there we were not permitted to enter
11	You must arise early to be ready to meet any difficulties that may rise under the new management	You must rise early to be ready to meet any difficulties that may arise under the new management
12	You won't commence to appre-	You won't begin to appreciate Dick-

* See page 3

	NO	YES
	ciate Dickens fully until long after you have read him	ens until long after you have read him
13	I bade forty dollars for it, and then bid good-by to the auction	I bid forty dollars for it and then bade good-by to the auction
14	Bring this to the repair shop for me, and take it home when it is done	Take this to the repair shop for me and bring it home when it is done
15	When the pirates captivated the yacht they were captured by the lady's beauty	When the pirates captured the yacht they were captivated by the lady's beauty
16	The play was censured, and the company and the author were censored	The play was censored, and the company and the dramatist were censured
17	Harry was very much chaffed by the chafing the boys gave him	Harry was very much chafed by the chaffing the boys gave him
18	He claims his innocence eloquently and asserts his right to prove it	He asserts his innocence eloquently and claims the right to prove it
19	After awaiting all these years, he found great honors finally waiting him on his arrival	After waiting all these years, he found great honors finally awaiting him on his arrival
20	He is apparently not designed to become a great political leader	He is apparently not destined to become a great political leader
21	Compared to my car yours has a far better engine and a much more beautiful line	Compared with my car yours has a far better engine and a much more beautiful line
22	Pretty talk and fashionable dress do not condone bad manners	Pretty talk and fashionable dress do not atone for bad manners
23	You manage the group, please, while I conduct the many financial details	You conduct the group, please, while I manage the many financial details
24	The greatness of our Constitution consists of its provision for the individual rights of man	The greatness of our Constitution consists in its provision for the individual rights of man
25	Though his speech was well construed, he might easily have been misconstructed	Though his speech was well constructed, he might easily have been misconstrued
26	He not only persuaded me but convinced me to act	He not only convinced me but persuaded me to act
27	Mr Choate was credited as ambassador to the Court of St James's	Mr Choate was accredited as ambassador to the Court of St James's
28	He degraded his position and was thus justifiably debased in the service	He debased his position and was thus justifiably degraded in the service
29	He declaims all knowledge of the embarrassing affair	He disclaims all knowledge of the embarrassing affair
30	I shall deduce five dollars from your total bill	I shall deduct five dollars from your total bill

NO	YES
31 Everybody, I think, must depreciate a deprecated currency	Everybody, I think, must deprecate a depreciated currency
32 Let me describe the course you should take to make your trip successful	Let me explain the course you should take to make your trip successful
33 You have dispersed entirely too much money this morning	You have disbursed entirely too much money this morning
34 He dominates his people in the cruelest possible manner	He domineers his people in the cruelest possible manner
35 All ill-feeling must be elicited if we are to make any progress in this meeting	All ill-feeling must be eliminated if we are to make any progress in this meeting
36 When we immerged from the tunnel we were all momentarily blind	When we emerged from the tunnel we were all momentarily blind
37 After I develope the film I shall envelope it in a wrapper and send it off	After I develop the film I shall envelop it in a wrapper and send it off
38 She tried for hours to locate the purse she carried when she came in	She tried for hours to find the purse she carried when she came in

SECTION FORTY-ONE — SYNONYM (ADJECTIVE)

The list below contains adjectives principally, but there are also a few adverbs and other parts of speech in it. Adverbs being in large measure derivative from adjectives, what is said of the latter applies in most instances to the former. The wasteful use of the adjective has been treated on page 27, and certain grammatical functioning of the adjective on page 125. These references may profitably be consulted in connection with some of the items below, for very often the confusion of two or more similar adjectives is inextricably linked with the tendency to overuse adjectives as well as to the tendency to misuse them grammatically. Human emotions being what they are, there is little hope that the former may be successfully stemmed for a long time to come, but in the cause of "selfish safety" alone—low plane of consideration though it is—both tendencies had better be stemmed. Legal action, it is said, more frequently originates in overused or misused or abused or confused adjectives than in any other part of speech however badly used.*

* See *Take a Letter, Please* by the same author, published by Funk and Wagnalls Company.

about is correctly used in the sense of as to, in regard to, as regards, in connection with, in respect to. It is not used correlatively with *or* (pages 38 and 555), as in *He is about six or seven* for *He is six or seven* or *He is about seven.* In the sense of approximately, *about* is preferable to *around* but pressure of colloquialism is unfortunately having its way with the latter. Say *I waited about an hour,* not *I waited around an hour, I have about ten dollars in my pocket,* not *I have around ten dollars in my pocket. About* and *around* may be used interchangeably in the adverbial sense of here and there, as in *He walked about* and *He looked around.* Do not use *round* for *around,* as in *He looked round* for *He looked around.* But *He looked 'round* is permissible though not recommended Colloquially, however, *round* (without apostrophe), is used in all senses of *around* and runs the gamut of the parts of speech with the exception of pronoun and conjunction.

addicted and *devoted* both mean inclined or accustomed or attached or prone to, the former to some taste or pursuit or habit, often in a bad sense, the latter to some person or thing in a good sense. You are addicted to drugs, you are devoted to your music and to your friends

adverse to means opposed to; *averse to,* strongly opposed to, disliking, having deep repugnance for. The former pertains chiefly to opinion and judgment and intention, the latter, to feeling or inclination. A person is averse to attending social functions, adverse to your expressed sentiments regarding his attitude.

a fortiori means all the more, with the greater force; the term is used in argument chiefly with the meaning that what pertains to a proposition already accepted as proved or true applies with all the greater force to one being considered, inasmuch as the same premises apply

after should not be used in the sense of *about to do* or *now doing,* as in *I am after peeling the potatoes.* Say, rather, *I am just going to peel the potatoes* or *I am now peeling the potatoes. After* is frequently used superfluously before a perfect participle, as in *After having traveled eighty miles I gave up* for *Having traveled eighty miles I gave up* If, however, it is desired to indicate a lapse of time between the participle and the principal verb, *after* may be desirable, as in *After having secured passage many weeks in advance of sailing Harry decided at the last moment that he would not go*

already, altogether, always are written solid, as here. *All right* must never be written as *alright* But note that in *Are they all ready* and *Are they all together* and *Does it please you in all ways, all* is a separate word and must not be written solid with the word that follows. It is only when these three words are used as single adverbs meaning respectively *previously, wholly, at all times* that they are written as single words with one *l*

amiable means agreeable and good-natured, *amicable,* friendly and satisfactory and harmonious The former pertains chiefly to persons, the latter to human relationships, especially to negotiations You say that those at the conference were all amiable, and that amicable arrangements were made

angry may apply to the physical, as an angry sore, that is, a painful sore, to the emotional, meaning vexed, resentful, wrathful, you say angry *with* a person and *at* a thing *Mad* means insane, it is an impropriety used in the sense of angry which carries no connotation of insanity *Irascible* denotes chronic anger, given by temperament to wrathfulness more or less continuously, hence, approaching a state of madness

a posteriori is reasoning from effects to causes; *a priori*, from causes to effects. The one is reasoning by induction, the other, by deduction (page 359). These terms, like induction and deduction, are antonyms

apparent conveys the idea of being clear to the senses and, thus, to the mind, *evident*, that of certifying to the mind some of the facts sensed or perceived If Willie is not hungry at dinner time, it is apparent that he must have had some refreshment before If the jam sandwiches have disappeared and his fingers are stained with jam, it is evident that he has had refreshment

appropriate connotes propriety, thus very often involving taste; *fit* means ready for or adapted to or conformable to, *suitable*, in accord with circumstance or occasion Your dress is appropriate, you are fit for work, and your desk is suitable for the task of registration

apt pertains to inherent or habitual inclination or tendency; *liable*, to responsibility under some burden or misfortune or disadvantage, as liable for damages and liable to catch disease as result of exposure; *likely*, to probability by no means always associated with unpleasant things, as likely to succeed and likely to be married and likely to misunderstand, *subject*, to basic or regular liability, as subject to headaches and subject to moroseness. *Apt* and *likely* may often be used interchangeably except when *apt* indicates quickness or readiness to learn, as apt pupil, and special fitness, as apt word and apt quotation

artful denotes indirect or insinuating in gaining an end, as *By artful manner she won his permission, crafty*, secret and deceptive and studied devising, as in *His crafty dealing has lost him the respect of the community, cunning*, inherent or natural slyness and skill, as *The gypsy has a cunning look in her eye* Colloquially *cunning* is used for pretty or piquant or attractive, thus usurping the meaning of *cute* to a certain extent. A cute person is attractive or pleasing as result of daintiness in details of appearance and behavior, a cunning person, as result of unsuspected keenness or cleverness

acetic (pronounced *a see' tik*) is a chemical term pertaining to the production of vinegar. *Ascetic* (pronounced *a set' ik*) means austere, self-denying, it is also a noun meaning one who lives a life of rigorous self-denial and discipline

average is colloquially used to mean ordinary or common—"average run"—regular, normal, technically it is the medial sum or estimate or arithmetical mean of unequal quantities, as 3 is the average of 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 It should not be confused with *typical* which is the adjective form of *type* and which means running true to type or class, or combining and manifesting the underlying characteristics of a group, as *the typical*

American town and *the typical schoolmaster.* The word *average* in these senses violates standard usage

aware pertains to the external, to what is without oneself, *conscious,* to the internal, to what is felt within oneself You are aware that it is raining, you are conscious of the presence of a stranger in your room Do not confuse *conscious* (or its noun equivalent *consciousness)* with *conscience* in either spelling or pronunciation The latter is "the still small voice within," the sense or *consciousness* of moral values The adjective form of *conscience* is *conscientious*

awkward is ungraceful, without deftness, without fitness, mental or physical, *clumsy,* heavy, stiff, bungling, distorted, *uncouth,* boorish, rude in bearing, evincing more particularly lack of breeding and refinement than lack of bodily grace You are awkward at driving a car, clumsy in making an explanation, uncouth in conversation or in manner

aye and *ay* are almost archaic Pronounced *i,* the former is both adverb and noun (usually plural), as adverb it means yes or yea, and as noun it means affirmative vote, as in *The ayes have it* Pronounced *a, aye* is an adverb meaning ever, always, forever *Ay* is colloquially used interchangeably with *aye* It is pronounced either *i* or *a,* and its one special meaning not shared with *aye,* is interjectional ah or alas The seaman's expression *Ay, ay, sir* is correct as here written, but it is frequently seen as *Aye, aye, sir,* and is preferably pronounced *i, i, sir* but *a, a, sir* is colloquial

barbaric pertains to the uncivilized and primitive, and thus to crudeness in taste, wild, showy, unrestrained *Barbarous* means cruel, harsh, foreign, raucous *Their tents were furnished in barbaric sumptuousness* and *They were barbarous in their treatment of prisoners* are correct

bearish, applied to financial markets, means falling prices (a bear throws its victim down in an attack), *bullish,* rising prices (a bull tosses its victim up with its horns)

biannual is semi-annual or every half year, *biennial,* every two years, or continuing or lasting two years *Bimonthly* means taking place once in two months, *biweekly,* once in two weeks *Semi-monthly* means taking place twice a month, *semi-weekly,* twice a week

but is not a synonym of *than* or *more than* Say *It is not possible in the space assigned me to show you more than a few specimens,* not *It is not possible in the space assigned me to show but a few specimens.* Say also *Your success or failure now lies in no other hands than your own,* not *Your success or failure now lies in no other hands but your own But* is often unnecessarily correlated with *however, nevertheless, notwithstanding* It may in such usage add to emphasis but it does not usually do so. Say *He is a good student, but he could be a better one,* not *He is a good student but notwithstanding (however, nevertheless) he could be a better one.* This is also correct *He is a good student, however (nevertheless, notwithstanding) he could be a better one* (page 23)

candid implies in particular a lack of prejudice or bias or bigotry, whereas *frank* implies freedom in general in expressing oneself, and *plain*

implies without mask or reserve or disguise. You pass candid judgments, evince frank attitude in dealing with any one, and are plain with a friend in regard to what you consider his shortcomings

casual means occasional, without regularity, unconcerned, random, offhand This word is often visually confused with *causal* meaning pertaining to cause, implying cause, containing cause The noun *casualty* is likewise frequently confused with *causality,* the former meaning accident (usually severe) of mischance rather than of recklessness, the latter, the relationship between causes and their results

cater-cornered means diagonal *Cater* is from French *quatre* meaning four *Catty-cornered* and *kitty-cornered* are provincial forms of the term

characteristic (page 357) pertains to whatever expresses the quality of a person or a thing without comparison with other persons or things, *distinctive* to whatever sets a person or a thing apart in differentiation from others, separative You say that affection is characteristic of a sheep dog, and that bad vision (because of hair covering the eyes) is a distinctive feature of such dog. *Distinguished* means notable, famous, marked in such manner as to be well and favorably known. You say that George Saintsbury was a distinguished scholar

chronic implies of long duration and of slow or lingering movement or progress, more or less constant or continuous It should not be used to mean out of the way or unusual or severe *Confirmed* means fixed or rooted as result of dislike of or aversion to change, *inveterate,* stubbornly persisted in, immovably established, usually in an unfavorable or harmful way You speak of chronic nervousness, of confirmed habits, of inveterate enemies

climactic is the adjective form of *climax, climatic* of *climate.* You say that the events of a story should be arranged in climactic order, that climatic conditions are not conducive to health *Climacteric* (sometimes *climacterical)* is used in reference to a critical or momentous period in life or in history, or to an epochal turn of events

cognizant of means aware of through understanding or observation or intelligence in general; *sensible of* means awareness through feeling or consciousness, *sensitive to,* susceptible to or affected by The verb *sense* is more general than any of the foregoing terms, it means to perceive more vaguely and objectively

complacent means satisfied, self-satisfied, *complaisant,* disposed to please, courteous, obliging, to acquiesce as a favor You say that some one evinces a complacent attitude, that you found some one complaisant when you asked for assistance. *Complacence* and *complaisance* are the corresponding noun forms

comprehensible means understandable, conceivable, intelligible, *comprehensive,* wide, large, full, extensive. You speak of a comprehensive survey, of a person's point of view as being comprehensible

congenial means adaptable or suitable; a person who is congenial with you has similarity of likes and dislikes, tastes and distastes, interests and aversions. *Genial* is a general term meaning pleasant, kindly, sym-

pathetic, without any specialized or focused object or direction of the general good will. Do not confuse the former term with *congenital* which implies something existing from birth, acquired during development in the uterus

contemporaneous, like *contemporary,* means existing at the same time or in the same period But the former pertains more frequently to events and the latter to persons You say that Washington and Jefferson were contemporary statesmen, that the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor was contemporaneous with Russia's defeat of Germany in 1941. *Contemporary* may be a noun as well as an adjective—*Washington was a contemporary of Jefferson*

contemptible means deserving of contempt, *contemptuous,* evincing contempt, *scornful* implies the contempt of pride and mockery, and is stronger than contemptuous, *disdainful* implies contempt approaching insolence You think a person's manner contemptible, you give him a contemptuous look, he is scornful, and, being afraid he may become disdainful, you turn your back

continual pertains to frequently repeated, *continuous,* to uninterrupted The former has reference only to time in the sense of recurring, the second, to both time and space in the sense of non-intermittent. *The continual use of the steps has worn down the stone* and *The continuous flow of the river makes up-stream swimming difficult* represent correct usage

contrary usually connotes some degree of antagonism arising out of mutual divergence of feeling or opinion; *opposite* pertains merely to the fact of position or nature, diametrically opposed without antagonism necessarily; *contradictory* is stronger than either, contradictory terms are mutually exclusive, as *hopeful* and *hopeless, existent* and *nonexistent,* whereas contrary terms have a margin or fringe of agreement, as *up* and *down, cool* and *warm, high* and *low* Contradictory terms are positive opposites, contrary terms, modified opposites

correlative implies complementary in the sense of mutual relationship, *reciprocal,* interchangeable The conjunctions *either—or* are correlative, that is, one completes the other in expressions in which they are correctly used But they are not reciprocal or interchangeable, that is, you cannot use *or* for *either,* or vice versa, in expressions in which they are correctly used

credible means capable or worthy of belief; *creditable,* deserving praise, praiseworthy, meritorious, *credulous,* easy to believe, inclined to believe, prone to accept the improbable as true. Your story is credible, your record is creditable, your parents are too credulous regarding your escapades

deadly pertains to anything that causes or may cause death; *deathly* means like death or resembling death You speak of a deadly thrust and of a deathly appearance *Mortal* refers to cause of death other than direct agent or weapon, as mortal ailment and mortal wound, but not mortal pistol or mortal capsule. *Fatal* pertains to anything that causes, has caused, or may or will cause death

decided means free from all doubt and vacillation, resolute, determined; *decisive,* final, conclusive, terminating. The former is said of both persons and things, as *a decided young man* and *a decided victory,* the latter of things or issues only, as *a decisive ruling* and *a decisive test.* Neither word is to be confused with *obstinate* which implies persisting in a course of action or in an opinion under pressure of opposition

definite implies fixed limitation; *definitive,* that which fixes limitation A definite opinion is one that is explicit, one that is the opposite of indefinite. A definitive opinion is one that is final

desirable denotes worthiness of desire, *desirous,* possessing desire. The former is objective, the latter subjective You see a desirable article and are desirous of owning it. The latter is usually followed by *of* but it may also be followed by an infinitive *(to)—desirous to improve himself*—and sometimes (rarely) by *that—He was desirous that his report be kept secret*

dextrous and *dexterous* are variant spellings of the same word meaning skilful or expert *Deft* implies certain neatness in the exercise of skill, and *adroit* pertains in particular to the exercise of perception in the handling or management of situations *Dextrose* is a crystaline sugar, or glucose Do not confuse with *dextrorse* (page 343)

discreet means tactful, cautious, judicious, *discrete,* separate, unjoined, distinct from another You say that a person is discreet in his attitude, that a plan has two discrete parts

distinctly implies acuteness or sharpness or freedom from confusion, *clearly,* lack or absence of everything that tends to darken or obscure, *distinctively* means in some special or distinguishing manner, individually, peculiarly You say that a speaker defined his subject distinctly, spoke clearly, and by experiments performed on the platform showed himself to be a distinctively competent scientist

divers means several or sundry, without emphasis upon differences, if any, *diverse* means distinctly unlike and different and separate. You say that divers efforts have been made to accomplish something, and that the opinions of the two men are diverse as day and night The first word is accented on the first syllable, the second, on the second

due is an adjective meaning owing, adequate, sufficient, payable, arriving, appointed, or required, it is also a noun meaning that which is owed You say that the rent is due, the train is due, death was due to pneumonia, due process of law must be awaited, we must give every man his due. Do not use *due to* in the sense of *because of* or *owing to.* Do not say *Due to illness John staid away,* but, rather, *Owing to* (or *Because of) illness John staid away*

each has individual signification, *every,* collective signification, in the sense of all. The one is always definite and singular, the other, indefinite and, though grammatically singular, may have plural meaning. *He leaves for work every day at eight* is therefore preferable to *He leaves for work each day at eight,* for all work days are spoken of, not each day as a unit *Every cloud has a silver lining* means all clouds *Each cloud*

has a silver lining has the absurd meaning of a countable number of clouds the lining of each of which is thought of as a single unit

easterly, northerly, westerly, southerly are adjectives, and also adverbs of direction. These forms are correct Do not insert *n* between the *r* and the *l*. ***Eastern, northern, southern, western*** are adjectives, but not adverbs, and they are preferably not used in application to the wind Like ***east, north, south, west*** they are used for location or position. Used as nouns to denote sections of the country, ***east, north, west, south*** are always capitalized

elder applies to persons as a rule, and usually to related persons; ***older*** is general, and is thus applied to both persons and things. The same distinction is made between the superlative forms ***eldest*** and ***oldest*** You say that a certain tree is older than another, not elder, that your eldest (or oldest) sister has just been married

electric is general in usage now in such expressions as electric supplies, electric battery, electric furnace, electric car, ***electrical*** has come—is coming—to be applied only to a few specialized uses, such as electrical storm, electrical engineering, electrical appliances (inconsistently retained thus far)

elemental pertains to ultimate or primal forces and principles, as elemental passions and elemental superstition, ***elementary,*** to rudimentary or introductory or simple ones, as elementary arithmetic and elementary schooling

eminent means reputedly high standing especially in a particular calling; ***distinguished*** (page 397) adds to this the receiving of marks of public recognition, ***celebrated*** implies that one is widely esteemed and reputed but not necessarily according to discerning or discriminating judgment and only as a rule in a temporary way You speak of an eminent statesman, of a distinguished scholar, of a celebrated actor

empty means containing nothing, without contents, that which has nothing in it; ***vacant,*** unoccupied in the sense of having once been occupied or intended to be occupied You speak of an empty bucket and a vacant house, of an empty cabin (without furnishings) and of a vacant cabin (without occupants or inmates)

enumerable means countable; ***innumerable,*** uncountable because there are too many to be counted, numberless

enviable means to excite envy or to desire to be like; ***envious,*** to feel envy. Your enviable position in society makes me envious of you. You say envious *of* somebody *for, because of,* or *on account of,* not envious *at* or *against*

equable means uniform; ***equitable,*** fair, just, valid, impartial You speak of an equable climate, and of an equitable adjustment of a dispute

exceedingly means extremely or extraordinarily; ***excessively,*** beyond just measure or quantity or amount You say that your boy did exceedingly well in the examination, and that you have been excessively supplied with something *Exceeding* is now archaic as an adverb meaning exceedingly Say *You have been exceedingly kind,* not *You have been*

exceeding kind. But *Your exceeding thoughtfulness is undeserved* is correct, *exceeding* being an adjective meaning unusual or exceptional. *Exceeding* is also the present participle of the verb *exceed* meaning going over or beyond, or surpassing, as in *He is exceeding his authority.* It has the idea of comparison in it, it is therefore wrong to say *If what you give me exceeds more than a bushel I shall be embarrassed* Say rather *If what you give me exceeds a bushel I shall be embarrassed*

exceptionable means objectionable, open to exception or objection or criticism, *exceptional,* out of the ordinary or taking exception to something. You say that a person's conduct is exceptionable, that is, blamable or liable to reproof. You speak of a book as having exceptional value for you, that is, it is more than ordinarily important or valuable to you

extant means not destroyed by time and tide, and thus outstanding or conspicuous as result of having weathered vicissitudes, as a painting or a manuscript or a statue, *existing,* living, continuing, actually being, as our existing form of government You say that under existing methods of warfare very few of the precious tokens of civilization will be extant when the war is over

extempore denotes speaking without the use of manuscript; an extempore speech is not memorized or even perhaps fully written but it has been prepared *Impromptu* means offhand or unexpectedly, an impromptu speech is one made on the spur of the moment, the speaker being surprised at the call

extra is not a synonym of unusual or especial, but it is colloquially used with either meaning, particularly by the newsboys Basically it means in addition or additional Do not use it in modification of an adjective, as in *extra fine* and *extra good* or *extra special,* though it is listed as adverb by the dictionaries It may be a noun or an adjective, as, respectively, an actor employed by the day in moving pictures an edition of a newspaper, a workman, a run in cricket, and as in *extra fee* or *extra fare*

farther is preferable to *further* when the meaning is the comparative of *far (farthest* is the superlative); that is, it is used in reference to space. *Further* is preferable in reference to degree, quantity, time (the superlative is *furthest,* the positive form is really wanting though it is sometimes given as *fore* or *forth* which is an approximate only) You walk farther than your friend walks, you discuss a subject further than he does

few and *fewer* are used, as a rule, in reference to number or countable items, *little* and *less,* to mass or quantity But *less* is used in case a given number is thought of as sum or amount or quantity, as *I have less than ten dollars in bank.* But *I have fewer dollars and less credit (few dollars and little credit)* is correct. Both *little* and *small* may pertain to size; *few* may not. *I have a little* (or *small) amount of sugar* and *He is a little* (or *small) fellow* are correct, as is also *He is only a few inches in height. Few* is antonymous with *many,* as *Many were called but few were chosen.* The same is true of *the few* and *the many.* But

a few is antonymous with *none,* as in *A few were called but none appeared. A few* is synonymous with *some*

fine, good, grand, some, and similar adjectives, must not be used as adverbs (page 124). *You played fine, You danced good, You sang grand, You went some* or *He objected some* are all improprieties. Say *You played well, You danced charmingly, You sang beautifully, You went rapidly* or *He objected somewhat*

first is both adjective and adverb, and it is therefore preferable to *firstly* even though followed by *secondly, thirdly, fourthly,* and so on But the other ordinals—*second, third, fourth*—may also be either adverbs or adjectives, and the present tendency is to use the *ly* forms decreasingly Do not use *first* for *just* or *at first.* Say *Just after I was appointed I was taken ill,* not *When I was first appointed I was taken ill* Say, preferably, *I was at first surprised, and then flabbergasted,* not *I was first surprised and then flabbergasted*

forceful means possessing force; *forcible* (or *forceable*), exercising force, done by force You make a forceful speech; you use forcible methods to eject some one from your house

formally means conventionally, affectedly, stiffly, precisely, "starchedly", given to ceremony; *formerly,* in past time, before, once, heretofore. The two words are frequently confused, partly because they are all too frequently pronounced alike. Be sure to make the *r* heard in the latter

funeral, as adjective, means pertaining to a funeral, as in funeral procession and funeral oration, *funereal* is an adjective of broader application, meaning sad, solemn, downcast, dark of outlook, as in funereal expression, funereal atmosphere, funereal costume

funny should be applied in general to that which is amusing rather than to that which is odd or strange or (worse) tragic or catastrophic, *laughable* to that which makes one laugh or causes merriment; *droll,* to that which makes one smile or brighten as result of tongue-in-cheek humor, *comic (comical),* to that which in presentation before one, such as cartoon or writing, "tickles the sense of humor" You speak of a comical person or situation, of a comic supplement (newspaper), of a droll (quietly humorous) remark, of a laughable mistake, of a funny incident

gray and *grey* are synonyms (Anglo-Saxon *græg*), but the latter is falling out of use

Greek is preferable to *Grecian* as either proper adjective or proper noun Say *Greek architecture, Greek history, Greek life,* and so on, say *He is a Greek* and *The Greeks were a wonderful people,* not *Grecian* or *Grecians* respectively The terms *Grecian scholar* and *Grecian Jew* linger but the use of the old adjective is passing in these senses also

grisly means horrifying, gruesome; *ghastly* implies the idea of death or shedding of blood; *grim* pertains to an especially forbidding appearance of a gruesome thing Do not confuse the first word with *grizzly* which means simply gray or mixed gray or brownish yellow in color, or with *gristly* which means like gristle or consisting of gristle

healthful is said of that which conduces to health, such as food or climate; *healthy,* to that which is in a state of physical well being; *wholesome,* to that which promotes mental or physical or spiritual health; *salubrious* is the same as *healthful* in respect chiefly to air and climate; *salutary* pertains principally to moral health or welfare

human pertains to man as a natural physical being, and to all characteristics of him as such, *humane,* to whatever evinces sympathy and compassion toward other beings, *merciful* implies forbearance and sympathy in the face of opposition and behavior that, strictly speaking, does not merit tender treatment. Do not use *human* as a noun Say *There are fifty persons present,* not *There are fifty humans present*

imaginary means pertaining to or existing in the imagination, *imaginative* applies to the act or the result of imagining The doctor may tell you that your illness is imaginary, you speak of an imaginative novelist or of a novel as being very imaginative

immanent means inherent, intrinsic, and, as a rule, subjective, *imminent,* ominous, threatening, close at hand. You say that God is immanent in the human makeup and that declaration of war is imminent Do not confuse either of these words in use, pronunciation, and spelling with *eminent* (page 400)

incident, as adjective, means apt to occur, as in a subordinate or subsidiary way, association or dependence is always denoted by it *Incidental* means casual or contingent or fortuitous You speak of incidental expenses as separate and apart from others You speak of the minor accidents incident to automobile driving Do not use *incident* in the sense of happening by chance, do not use *incidental* in the sense of attaching to

inflammable means combustible, easy to set on fire, and, figuratively, easily angered or excited, *inflammatory,* tending to excite or anger or inflame You say that your old woodshed is inflammable or that hungry men constitute an inflammable group of citizens, you say that the soap box orator made an inflammatory speech Note that both words are spelled with two *m's* *Inflammable* is frequently used as a noun, often plural, as in *Keep these inflammables carefully wrapped in asbestos cloth*

ingenious means clever, inventive, shrewd, contriving; *ingenuous,* frank, open, candid You invent an ingenious device, you like your friend's ingenuous attitude

intelligent means having or containing intelligence, as in *He is an intelligent speaker* and *This is an intelligent article* (shows intelligence on the part of the writer) *Intelligible* means understandable, as in *His speech was intelligible* (could be understood) *but not intelligent* (did not reveal intelligence on his part)

intolerable means unbearable, it is usually applied to things and circumstances, but a person may make himself intolerable by his manners or his beliefs, or otherwise *Intolerant* means illiberal or narrow or bigoted, it usually applies to persons, as *He is intolerant of the views of others.* But a dog may be intolerant of teasing

inward is both adjective and adverb, *inwards,* adverb only Say *Make an inward search* and *Turn inward,* not *Make an inwards search.* But *Turn inwards* is likewise correct

-ish is a suffix used in forming adjectives, mostly from nouns, as *bookish* and *Turkish* Sometimes it adds derogatory meaning, as *childish* and *womanish* Added to an adjective to form another adjective, it means somewhat, as *whitish* and *grayish* (see *-like*)

just and *quite* are not synonyms Say *You did it quite well enough,* not *You did it just well enough* *Just* may mean *exactly* or *only* or *precisely* or *at,* though tautology results if *just* is used with these terms in direct modification, as in *I came just exactly at twelve* Say, rather, *I came at twelve* But *just twelve* is correct in the sense of exactly twelve *Just* is also tautological in such expressions as *just about to* and *just going to* (though both are colloquial) *Quite* means certainly, positively, really, completely, entirely, wholly It is not synonymous with *rather* or *very,* though it is colloquially so used, as *quite nicely* and *quite well* *Quite interested* means really interested, *quite alone* means entirely alone The article preferably follows quite, as in *quite an attentive audience* rather than *a quite attentive audience* Observe that *just the same* and *just as well* are not interchangeably used, the former indicating manner and the latter comparison *This car runs just the same as mine* and *This car runs just as well (quite as well) as mine* mean different things The expression *but just* is a foreignism (French) and an affectation, as in *When did you arrive? But just* Sometimes the answer to such question is, equally affectedly, *only just* or *just only* *Just as* is not a phrasal preposition or phrasal conjunction Say *You will be rewarded according as you deserve,* not *You will be rewarded just as you deserve,* for the latter is patently ambiguous

juvenile means merely young or immature, childlike; *puerile* is derogatory—childish, petty, trivial, *youthful* is a covering term for both, that is, it may be used either in a good or constructive sense or in an opposite sense *Youthful* also pertains to the characteristics of youth; *young,* as a rule, to the calendar, that is, to mere age, but it is sometimes used condescendingly *Boyish* is for the most part colorless as far as connotations are concerned, meaning pertaining to boyhood and the characteristics of boyhood

last means at the end, following all others in either time or place; *latest,* following all others in time only, but not necessarily at the end. You say the last day of the year or the last boy in the row, not *latest* in either instance You say the latest bulletin and the latest fashion, not *last* in either instance unless you mean that there are to be no more bulletins and no more fashions Both words are the superlative degree of *late,* and *last* is really a contraction of *latest* *Last* may also mean least likely, most remote, utmost, beyond or beneath others, as the last thought in my mind, the last outpost, the last mile, the last word, the last judgment, the last straw

later and *latter* are comparative forms of *late,* the one confined chiefly to matters of time, the other to matters of place or position, as in *They are coming later* and *I shall take the latter of the two books mentioned*

Later is the antonym of *earlier, latter* of *former. Latter* is preferably used in relation to the end of a period, as *the latter part of the month; later,* in indicating afterward or toward the end, as *the later part of the month* Neither of these forms should be used in relation to more than two items or groups, *latest* is the superlative form of both The adverb *latterly* is used in the sense of lately or recently or of late. There is no such adverbial form as *laterly. Former,* like *latter* and *later,* is correctly used of two only, *last* of three or more.

lifelong means enduring or lasting or continuing through life, as in *lifelong friend* and *lifelong interest. Livelong* is merely an extensive and intensive form of *long* meaning whole or entire or long in passing, and in much usage it has taken on the meaning of pesky or tedious, as in *He hammers away at the piano the livelong day*

-like and *-ly* are suffixes used in forming adjectives, mostly from nouns; they mean like in appearance or manner, characteristic of, as *childlike, lifelike, manly, womanly* They are usually constructive in signification. The word *like* should not be added after an adjective or an adverb in such phrases as *brittle like* and *slovenly like* Say, rather, *like something brittle* or *in a slovenly manner* in case you do not wish to use the adjective or the adverb alone Joined to words ending with *l, like* is usually hyphened, as *bell-like* and *angel-like* (see *-ish*)

long conveys merely the idea of length, *lengthy,* the idea of tediousness as result of being unnecessarily long A long novel does not have to be a lengthy one, but a lengthy one is always too long

ludicrous implies an element of absurdity or inconsistency or incompatibility, *ridiculous,* an element of contempt or scorn or mockery. It is ludicrous for the pot to call the kettle black It is ridiculous to attempt to build "a tower whose top may reach to heaven"—"Thus was the building left ridiculous, and the work confusion named" (Milton)

luxuriant means profuse or exuberant in growth, or in show or display; *luxurious,* abounding in luxury of material things, *rank,* coarse or excessive in addition to luxuriant You speak of a luxuriant garden, of rank growth (of weeds), of a luxurious room or wardrobe

-ly (see *-like*), the so-called adverbial suffix, must not be omitted from the adjective root when modification clearly belongs to the action word. In *Harry, previous to entering the navy, went home to see his parents* the adjective *previous* is wrong The adverb *previously* is required because it modifies the verb *went Comparative* and *proportionate* and *relative* are also commonly confused in this relationship with their respective *ly* forms. Say *One should contribute relatively to his income,* not *relative to his income* The adverb is required in modification of *should contribute* But *This quantity, proportionate in every respect to the one you mentioned, will be substituted* is correct, for here the adjective *proportionate* modifies the noun *quantity*

-ly is also a suffix used to form adverbs from adjectives, verbs, and sometimes nouns, as *grandly, advisedly, partly* But it is not added to an adjective when by such combination an awkward word would thus be

formed. *Ghostly* may for this reason be used as both adjective and adverb, *in a ghostly manner* being preferable even to *ghostlily* though not so economical In the same way *cleanlily, friendlily, goodlily, holily, jollily, kindlily, kinglily, lovelily, masterlily, sillily, worldlily* are to be avoided Even *healthily, juvenilely, militarily, senilely,* though not quite so awkward as the foregoing, should be used sparingly

manifest means clear or evident by outward sign, especially to the senses; *obvious,* arresting or highly noticeable, *palpable,* easily perceptible, readily understood, plain, *visible,* exposed at first sight, apparent, capable of being seen at once You may manifest your dislike of a person but you should not make it too obvious The deceit of a person's grief may be palpable in spite of his being visibly affected

masterful means imperious and self-willed, *lordly,* superior or lofty or condescending, *domineering,* overbearing or tyrannical or insolent, *masterly* characteristic of a master, in a worthy sense, as *masterly stroke* and *masterly performance*

moral, as adjective, means right or virtuous, as noun, right conduct, the lesson or inner meaning of something, its use as noun is frequently plural; *morale* is noun only, meaning mental and emotional state—zeal, spirit, hope—usually of a group or corps (page 412)

more pertains to two, *most,* to three or more You say *This is the most interesting of the six, this is the more interesting of the two.* You therefore say *I like this most of all,* for *this* is singled out as the most likable of many *(all)* But you say *I like this more than any other,* for *this* is compared with one other *(any other)* at a time, though there may be just as many spoken of in the latter sentence as in the former. *More* is additional, not alternative. Do not use it for *other.* Say *We have sugar, butter, eggs, and other camp supplies,* not *We have sugar, butter, eggs, and more camp supplies.* Its substitute use for *other* may sometimes lead to ambiguity, as in *Here are Alice and Helen and Daisy and more enthusiastic girls.* The meaning here may be additional girls who are enthusiastic also, or others who are more enthusiastic than the three mentioned (pages 66 and 67)

much pertains to mass or quantity; *many,* to number or countable items. *Many* is used with plural nouns as a rule, as *many boys, many books, many trees.* In the idiomatic *many a man* the idea is plural but the specific use or modification is singular, and a singular verb is required, as *Many a man has been defeated Much* is not used with plural nouns. You say that you have much sugar or many pounds of sugar

musical is an adjective meaning pertaining or relating to music, or like music, *musicale* is a noun meaning an entertainment consisting of music. *Musicale* is accented on the last syllable But the adjective *musical* is increasingly used as noun in the same sense as *musicale*

mutual means reciprocal or interchangeable, *common,* having equal or similar claims upon. If A and B are firm friends there is mutual regard between them, and they may have common interests in a community and reciprocal (page 33) responsibilities in it The term *mutual friend* is colloquial but not strictly recommended. Macaulay called it a vul

garism, but it has gained in general use since his day. There may be a third person who is a friend of both A and B, and he is therefore properly called their *common friend* *Mutual* is sometimes used instead of *common* in this connection because the latter may have unpleasant connotation. *Mutual friendship* is correct, for it denotes reciprocal relationship But in *mutual friends, mutual* represents waste by means of repetition If two persons are really friends, it may be taken for granted that their friendship is mutual

near is adjective, adverb, preposition, verb, *close,* riming with *gross,* is adjective and adverb. The latter implies more immediate proximity than the former. The adverbial forms in *ly—nearly* and *closely*—are by no means always interchangeably used with the simpler *near* and *close* respectively *I am not nearly done* is better than *I am not near done, I am closely watched* than *I am close watched* *I came near* (or *near to) falling* and *I came close to the mark* are better than *I came nearly* and *I came closely* The former is wrong for the reason that it makes a preposition of *nearly* Observe the difference between *He is very close to the president* and *He is very near to the president,* the first indicating intimacy, the second location *Near* may be a preposition; *close* may not be *Near-by* is a colloquial adjective, adverb, and preposition, *close-by* a colloquial adverb *Proximity* is tautological after close, as in *close proximity*

new means not old, not existing before for any length of time, *novel,* strange, out of the ordinary, as well as new in its strikingness, *new* pertains to time, *novel,* to kind *New* is the antonym of *old, novel,* of *common* *Late* and *recent* pertain to anything that has ceased to exist as it was, *recent* denoting time somewhat closer to the present than *late.* A new device may not be novel, a novel one, not entirely new A recent report may say that the late philanthropist died a poor man

negligible means unimportant, trivial, so small as to be safely disregarded, *negligent,* careless or thoughtless or remiss. The hole in your trousers may be negligible but you should not have been negligent about mending it

none such is a two-word expression (in spite of the trade name *"none-such")* It is incorrectly used for *no such,* in the mistaken idea, doubtless, that it has greater emphasis. If you are asked whether you have the name of Hartley on your list, reply *There is no such name here,* not *There is none such here.* The former would be wrong if name were omitted—*There is no such here*—for *such* is preferably not used pronominally except in such expressions as *Such as I have I give you* and *Such is my opinion* and *Such is life* (see *such)*

notable carries with it the idea of being worthy of note, favorably and meritoriously known, *notorious,* the idea of being unworthily and unfavorably in the public eye

official means authorized or authoritative, pertaining to office, *officious,* carrying out the duties of an office in an objectionably obtrusive manner. Official services are rendered in accordance with the proprieties of office; officious services are meddling and, perhaps, impertinent

opposite is stronger than *contrary* (page 398), implying diametric difference without necessarily suggesting antagonism. Fowler gives *All men are mortal* and *No men are mortal* as opposite statements; *All men are mortal* and *Not all men are mortal* as contrary statements *

oral pertains to whatever is spoken by word of mouth, stressing the act of utterance; *verbal,* to words spoken or written, and to anything that deals with words as distinguished from ideas. An oral message is a spoken message, a verbal message, a written one. But *verbal* is similarly used and there is much colloquial confusion in the interchangeability of these two words It is not simplified at all by the fact that *verbal* means not only pertaining to words but is also the adjective form of *verb,* and thus means pertaining to verbs or action words *Verbal* is also a noun used to designate infinitive, participle, and gerund *Oral agreements are regarded as less binding than verbal ones* represents correct usage

paramount denotes supreme or above all others in order or rank; *predominant,* ascendant or superior in influence, *prominent,* outstanding to a degree that attracts notice or attention; *conspicuous,* protruding, standing out so prominently as to be striking and inescapable. You speak of a paramount issue among issues, of a predominant trait, of a prominent feature or person, of a conspicuous action or absence or example The term *paramount importance* is now hackneyed

partly should be used to indicate not all, not wholly, fractionally; *partially,* to indicate bias or prejudice, or partiality or unduly favorable. Colloquially the latter is unfortunately used for the former in the sense of fractionally, as *I have my work partially done* for *I have my work partly done*

passable means possible of being passed, as a road or a bridge or a school subject, *passible,* susceptible of feeling or capable of suffering or given to sensitiveness, as *His eyes are highly passible* The negative forms *impassable* and *impassible* (probably more used) are similarly distinguished

perannual is a term applied to a plant that lives but a single year; *annual* is also applied to such plant *Perennial* is a plant that lives more than two years. All three words are used as nouns and as adjectives

perspicacious means having clear insight and discernment, *perspicuous,* evincing clearness and intelligibility The former applies to persons; the latter, to expression, as a rule You say that an author is perspicacious, that his writing is perspicuous The noun forms are *perspicacity* and *perspicuity*

piteous pertains to that which excites emotion, as a piteous appeal for help, *pitiable* and *pitiful,* to that which deserves pity, the former being less objective than the latter You see a pitiable object, and are moved to sorrow or contempt You hear a pitiful story and permit your thoughts to dwell upon the incidents narrated

* *Dictionary of Modern English Usage* by H W Fowler, published by Oxford University Press

plentiful means great sufficiency, *abundant,* much more than enough; *copious,* more than abundant, *exuberant,* much more than abundant, usually in application to native growth. These words are therefore here listed in order of climactic meaning

practicable means capable of being accomplished or carried through, not the accomplishing itself; *practical,* capable of being put into practice. *Practicable* means feasible, *practical* is the antonym of *speculative* or *theoretical.* It follows that that which is practicable is not necessarily always practical. You speak of practical gardening, that is, actual gardening—the raising of vegetables You speak of practicable gardening, that is, the method of gardening as laid out on a plan and the calculated results of putting the plan into operation

presumptive means giving ground for an opinion or belief, probable, as presumptive proof and presumptive judgment. In the terms *heir apparent* and *heir presumptive* the adjective follows the noun. The former means an heir whose right to succession is indefeasible if he survives the ancestor, the latter, an heir who would succeed if his ancestor were to die, but whose right to inheritance might be defeated if a nearer relative were to be born *Presumptuous* means arrogant or audacious or insolent, it is always used in an uncomplimentary or derogatory sense

rare pertains to anything of which there are few instances or items or examples at any time, *scarce,* to that which is temporarily lacking or diminishing The former has to do with the unusual and superior; the latter with the ordinary and customary Apples may be scarce in New England during a given season, they may never be said to be rare there Perfect diamonds are rare, as are great leaders and geniuses and comets and eclipses

re (page 546) used to mean regarding or in the matter of or in regard to (from Latin *in re)* does not require *in* before it in commercial expression, does not require a period after it, does not require underlining. Do not use *re* or *in re* or *re* or *re* in business or other writing It is affected, superfluous, impolite, and dull It is, of course, never spoken (we hope)

refractory is an adjective meaning disobedient, stubborn, wilful, obstinate, *refectory* is a noun meaning a large dining hall, community restaurant, refreshment room

remediable pertains to that which may be remedied, *remedial,* to that which remedies. You say that the remedial treatments you took were a success because your case was remediable

repairable is decreasingly used, but it is correct in connection with making material things right, as *a repairable table, a repairable car. Reparable* may be used similarly, but it is preferably used in broader significance, as *reparable damage, reparable injustice, reparable consequence.* The negative form of the latter—*irreparable*—is in much more general use than the positive. *Irrepairable* is correct but rare

respectfully means with respect, in a respectful manner; *respectively,* severally, as each to each, as each belonging to each, *respectably,* worthily,

deserving respect. Do not use either of the last two for the first in the complimentary closing of a letter. You sign yourself respectfully yours Joe and Mary will be respectively ten and twelve years old next week You behave yourself respectably (in a respectable manner) on all occasions

same may be an exact synonym of *identical* But the latter means perfect identity, and the former is more generally used as of like sort or unchanging or practically alike. *Identical* is, thus, the stricter term as a rule *Similar* denotes mere likeness, almost corresponding. Do not use *same* as a pronominal substitute for *it*, as in *I have your letter and have turned same over to the management. Same* is wasted after such words as *also, likewise, repeat,* as in *I shall do the same also* (or *likewise*) and *Repeat the same process* (page 2). Do not use *of* for *as* after *same* Say *This is the same size as mine* (or *as that of mine),* not *This is the same size of mine* Do not use *same* superfluously before a relative clause, as in *This is the same trunk that I brought from Chicago.* Say, rather, *This is the trunk that I brought from Chicago* or *This is the same trunk as that* (or *as the one that) I brought from Chicago*

sanatory means conducive to health, *sanitary,* pertaining to health. *This resort is not sanatory because its sanitary equipment is old and defective* illustrates correct usage

Semitic is correctly used to denote a group of languages—Phoenician, Hebrew, Arabic, Aramaic, Ethiopic It is also the adjective form of *Semite* meaning a member of the Caucasian race represented now for the most part by Jews and Arabs, but in ancient times including also Babylonians, Assyrians, Aramaeans, Phoenicians, and still others. *Semitics* is the study of Semitic languages or of Semitic peoples. *Hebraic* means pertaining to the Hebrews or to their language, that is, the Semitic language of the ancient Hebrews. *Hebrew* is both noun and adjective, meaning, respectively, a member of one of a group of northern Semitic tribes (an Israelite), and pertaining to the Hebrews and to their language *Jew* originally meant one of the tribe of Judah but is now used to mean any member of the Hebrew race or of any one whose religion is Judaism. Both the noun *Jew* and its adjective *Jewish* are more generally used to denote the race—its art, literature, religion, customs, nation—than the other terms above. *Yiddish* is the name given to a High German dialect spoken and developed under central European influence and written with Hebrew characters Yiddish is primarily German with admixture of Hebrew words, the word *Yiddish* itself being a corruption of the German *judisch* meaning Jewish *Yiddisher* and *Yid* are vulgar derivatives from *Yiddish*

sensual means given to the gratification of the senses, fleshly, worldly, lewd, it is derogatory in meaning *Sensuous* pertains to the senses in a neutral or a favorable way *Voluptuous* implies luxurious yielding or abandonment to the pleasures of the senses, sensuous or, more likely, sensual You speak of sensual appetites and indulgences, of sensuous response to a physical test, of voluptuous music and dancing and entertainment *Sensory* is a technical physiological term, meaning relating to sensation and the sense organism, or their psychological reactions by way of sense impressions

social means pertaining to society, as social graces, social affairs, social problems, it is general in its application to functions and studies and pursuit *Sociable* pertains to persons, meaning fond of society, agreeable and genial, "at home" with company

special is the antonym of *general* *Especial* is an intensive form of *special,* denoting a higher degree of out-of-the-ordinary than *special* But the intensive form is passing out of use. The same distinction is to be made between *specially* and *especially*

suppositious means assumed, hypothetical, taken for granted, *supposititious,* false, fraudulent, counterfeit These two words are not, therefore, synonymous You say that a suppositious instance was used as argument and that a writing of some kind is supposititious. *Suppositional* has now almost supplanted the first

stationary means stable, fixed in position, it has *a* in it to indicate Atness. *Stationery* means materials such as writing paper, pens, ink, pencils. blankbooks, anything sold by stationers, but principally writing paper for letters, it has *e* in it to indicate lEttEr

such is adjective and pronoun. It is colloquial as an intensive exclamation, as *such a pleasure* and *such a mess* in which it is overdone for *very* or *what a* or *great. Such* and *suchlike* are also provincial for *similar,* as in *I have books, papers, pencils, and such* (or *suchlike)* As pointed out under *none such* above, *such* is used pronominally in only certain constructions It is incorrect as a pronoun in *I never heard of such* and *I haven't such as you ask for* and *I saw such in the museum* The use of *a* or *an* after *such* is regarded by some authorities as solecistic *Such sentence as this* is correct, and is tighter and more economical than *such a sentence as this.* Moreover, if *one* is the meaning of *a (an)* the reading of the latter is quite as absurd as *kind of a sentence* and *sort of a sentence* After *such as* the nominative case is usually required for the understood elliptical clause, as in *I have never seen such as these (are)* and *She is not such as I (am)* *Them* for *these* and *me* for *I* would be incorrect. In *There was such confusion so that the police were called* the word *so* is incorrect, a result clause following *such* requires only *that* for its introduction But *such* is followed by *as* if a result infinitive follows, as in *There was such confusion as to make the police necessary* And a relative clause following *such* is introduced by *as* rather than by *that,* as *He took such steps as were required* and *She had such qualities as wear well*

therefor is an adverb meaning for it, for this, for that, for them, *therefore* is a resultant conjunction or conjunctive adverb meaning consequently, for that reason, on that account You say that you have bought things and made payment therefor, and that you are therefore justified in requesting a receipt

tortious is a legal term meaning pertaining to torts, *tortuous* means winding or twisted or devious, *torturous* means pertaining to torture. Accurate pronunciation must be depended upon to keep these three words distinguished one from the other

treble and *triple* both mean threefold They may be nouns, adjectives, verbs, and they may very often be used interchangeably. But *treble* is more commonly used as noun and verb than *triple* is. As adjective, *treble* means three times as many, whereas *triple,* as adjective, may mean three-part or tripartite, a meaning that *treble* never has You say that attendance was trebled last evening and that you had in the audience treble over the attendance of the preceding night You speak also of treble motors (three motors) but of a triple motor (a three-part motor) *Treble* is also a musical term meaning high-pitched, *triple* has no such use

unmoral, *amoral, nonmoral* are synonyms meaning without moral quality or perception, not concerning or involving morality, negative toward morality, not moral *Nonmoral* is regarded by some authorities as preferable to *unmoral,* and *amoral* is sometimes said to be best used in connection with questions and problems and considerations in no way related to morals A textbook in social hygiene would thus be called amoral *Immoral* means contrary to the laws of morality, licentious, wicked Its antonym *moral* means right, proper, correct, virtuous, pertaining to the good life (page 406)

venal means capable of being bought or otherwise procured, especially under corrupt practice such as bribery, "basely buyable" *Venial,* often confused with *venal* in pronunciation and use, means excusable, capable of being forgiven, it pertains, as a rule, to minor or trivial faults, as venial omissions of courtesy and venial mistakes in writing

-ward and *-wards* are suffixes denoting motion to or course or tendency in direction of *Wards* is adverbial, *ward,* sometimes adjectival, sometimes adverbial. They may be added to adverbs, nouns, prepositions, as *backwards, backward, afterwards, afterward, inward, inwards, toward, towards, eastward, eastwards* Though it was once customary to attempt distinction of meaning between them euphony is now the only deciding factor as to which shall be used

-ways is a suffix forming adverbs from adjectives and nouns, as *longways* and *endways,* thus indicating manner or position or direction. It is usually equivalent to adverbs in *wise* and used interchangeably with them, as *topways* and *topwise, wideways* and *widewise.* But some authorities recommend *wise* in signifying manner, means, degree, respect, and *ways* in signifying mere extension in space. Do not use the singular form *way* in these compounds

CONTEST *

NO	YES
1 I shall leave around three o'clock	I shall leave about three o'clock
2 Addicted to his friends and devoted to nicotine, he is never without pastime	Devoted to his friends and addicted to nicotine, he is never without pastime

* See page 3

	NO	YES
3	He has made statements averse to my character	He has made statements adverse to my character
4	She is after going to the show with Bill	She is going to the show with Bill
5	I think that we made a very amiable agreement	I think that we made a very amicable agreement
6	He was mad at me because I took his hat	He was angry with me because I took his hat
7	It is apparent that a straight line is the shortest distance between two points	It is evident that a straight line is the shortest distance between two points
8	Your manners are not apt to make a very good impression, I fear	Your manners are not likely to make a very good impression, I fear
9	His acetic habits invariably make him misunderstood	His ascetic habits invariably make him misunderstood
10	The average spinster takes to her knitting as a duck takes to water	The typical spinster takes to her knitting as a duck takes to water
11	I was not conscious that the train left so early	I was not aware that the train left so early
12	Her costume was beautiful but barbarous, her manners, barbaric	Her costume was beautiful but barbaric, her manners, barbarous
13	I get my statement biennially, every July first and every January first	I get my statement biannually, every July first and every January first
14	I am engaged every second Wednesday, inasmuch as our meetings are held bimonthly	I am engaged every second Wednesday, inasmuch as our meetings are held semi-monthly
15	I thought he was very causal in his attitude toward her	I thought he was very casual in his attitude toward her
16	He declares himself to be a chronic bachelor	He declares himself to be a confirmed bachelor
17	The climatic qualities of his address were stirring	The climactic qualities of his address were stirring
18	I am sensible of your qualifications for the position you seek	I am cognizant of your qualifications for the position you seek
19	You must take a comprehensible view of this important problem	You must take a comprehensive view of this important problem
20	I found a most congenial atmosphere prevailing at the old tavern	I found a most genial atmosphere prevailing at the old tavern
21	Their opposite opinions frequently lead to open breaks	Their contrary opinions frequently lead to open breaks
22	The conjunctions *both-and* are reciprocal	The conjunctions *both-and* are correlative
23	Such report is hardly creditable; at least, I am not credible enough to believe it	Such report is hardly credible, at least, I am not credulous enough to believe it
24	As soon as the deathly poison began to circulate she became deadly pale	As soon as the deadly poison began to circulate she became deathly pale

	NO	YES
25	He has been reading Edward S Creasy's *Fifteen Decided Battles of the World*	He has been reading Edward S Creasy's *Fifteen Decisive Battles of the World*
26	He has written a definite biography of Henry D Thoreau	He has written a definitive biography of Henry D Thoreau
27	He considers the Whateley the most desirous car in the market	He considers the Whateley the most desirable car in the market
28	I saw a great many gadgets at the fair but nothing distinctly new	I saw a great many gadgets at the fair but nothing distinctively new
29	Your friends and your enemies may usually be relied upon to make divers estimates of your character	Your friends and your enemies may usually be relied upon to make diverse estimates of your character
30	Due to ill health he has been obliged to give up his fine position	Because of ill health he has been obliged to give up his fine position
31	You go in a westernly direction from here, but the boats will not sail if there is an eastern wind	You go in a westerly direction from here, but the boats will not sail if there is an east wind
32	The elder of those elder bushes has been struck by lightning	The older of those elder bushes has been struck by lightning
33	My new electrical iron has come, and I can now be more economic in using current	My new electric iron has come, and I can now be more economical in using current
34	Billy has passed in all six of his elemental subjects	Billy has passed in all six of his elementary subjects
35	There is the historical spot where George Washington once slept	There is the historic spot where George Washington once slept
36	Please bring this vacant bucket over to the empty lot and take me some water from the spring	Please take this empty bucket over to the vacant lot and bring me some water from the spring
37	Enumerable applications have been made to join the service	Innumerable applications have been made to join the service
38	I am enviable of any person who is richly endowed with an equitable disposition	I am envious of any person who is richly endowed with an equable disposition
39	For a little while he was excessively interesting, but later he became, I thought, exceedingly superficial	For a little while he was exceedingly interesting but later he became, I thought, excessively superficial
40	You will find that this heavier fabric is of exceptionable value	You will find that this heavier fabric is of exceptional value
41	The end of the war was in sight when the Russians stopped being merely repulsive and became offensive	The end of the war was in sight when the Russians were able to shift military strategy from the defensive to the offensive

SECTION FORTY-TWO OBSERVATION

The foregoing sections indicate ways and means whereby a Roman holiday may easily be given the English language by such "exemplars" of garrulity as Dogberry and Mrs Malaprop and Alice in Wonderland. Antonyms and homonyms and synonyms have led astray many a more "precise" person than any of them. More scholarly persons than they have all unconsciously swung a synonym by its tail until it has well nigh become its own antonym, and such belaboring of diction by tongue or pen—or both—has had its tragic as well as its comic effects.

The homonym that "saved a murder case" is now a trite example: "I killed him," said the accused under stress of severe cross-examination. "Oh, so Ike killed him," cued the defense lawyer jumping abruptly into homonymous breach. A low character called Ike had been under suspicion during the trial. "That's what I said," quickly put in the witness, seeing the chance of his lifetime. And thereby *hung* an acquittal.*

"Operation successful. Much infection" read the telegram sent to a mother regarding her son in a hospital hundreds of miles away. She did not wait, and was at the hospital within forty-eight hours where she found that *infection* had been dangerously transmitted for *affection.*

In the course of a bitter feud between sects of Quakerdom, the headline *Fiends in Council* appeared in the organ of the party opposed to the one holding a special meeting, but the editor disclaimed all responsibility, charging the error to a typesetter who had temporarily mislaid his glasses.

A prominent speaker finding it impossible to keep a lecture engagement because of storm damage to a railway, wired that he was obliged to cancel the engagement because of a *washout on the line.* But the telegram, as received, read "Can't come. Wash out on line," to which came the reply "Buy new shirt and come anyway." Such was the difference made by a little space left between *wash* and *out.* The typesetter who turned out Campbell's line "God shall assuage thy pangs—when I am laid in dust" to read "God shall a sausage pain—when I am laid in dust" retained at least a sense of rhythm.

* From Lewis Allen *The Joke on Preston,* published by Doubleday, Page, and Company (1916)

But misprints and mispronunciations are by no means always without their compensations. An elderly somewhat sensitively constituted maiden lady—Miss Ivy Bottom—was so delighted when her local newspaper misprinted her surname *Botham,* that she immediately adopted the spelling legally and ordered the *o* pronounced long. Incidentally, the word *bottom* (like the French *derriere*) has for centuries carried a connotation of vulgarity, and as a surname or part of a surname it has been subjected to many changes if for no reason other than to avoid susceptibility to word play. The addition of *ly* or *ley—Bottomly* or *Bottomley*—has always been helpful but has by no means always removed temptation to punning, for this suffix yields the meaning "little bottom." The *Bottome* variation, either dissyllabic or trisyllabic, the former pronounced *Bot tomé* to rime with *not home* and the latter *Bot' to me* to rime with *lot o' me,* has been a more successful disguise. The *Botham* revision, as in *Higginbotham* and *Winterbotham,* dates from the seventeenth century, and with the rank and file it passes unsuspected.

The first typographical "error of note" to occur in the history of printing is said to be that of *spalm*—for *psalm*—in the *Psalter* issued by Johann Fust in association with Peter Schoeffer, his son-in-law. This *Psalter* was the first book to contain a colophon and a printed date—August 14, 1457. For satisfaction of mortgage Fust had seized the office, the types, the presses, and the books of Johann Gutenberg, the inventor of printing (the Dutch Coster is now usually accorded equal honors in the invention), and with this equipment had gone forward to outdo with his *Psalter* the famous Gutenberg Bible completed in 1455, the first book to be printed from movable types. Superstitious partisans of Gutenberg regarded Fust's typographical error as a visitation of God's wrath against one who had treated the respected Gutenberg so badly.

The Bible has, of course, come in for its share of typographical slips. Two of these were so serious as to win for the Good Book the paradoxical title *The Wicked Bible.* In the first of these, (sometimes also called *The Adulterous Bible*) issued in 1631, the word *not* was omitted from the Seventh Commandment; in the second, issued in 1653, I Corinthians vi·9 was made to read "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall inherit the kingdom of God?" For the first of these errors Archbishop Laud imposed a fine of three hundred pounds. All such serious errors invariably

created some suspicion of deliberateness, of unchristian or atheistic rebellion on the part of an individual printer, but they are with greater likelihood—and certainly charity—set down as tragic examples of the diabolical perversity of type.

Other issues of the Bible that derived titles from misprints are *The Placemakers Bible* (1562) in which the word *placemakers* was set for *peacemakers* in Matthew v:9, *The Vinegar Bible* (1717) in which the title to Luke xx stood as *The Parable of the Vinegar* instead of *The Parable of the Vineyard, The Murderers' Bible* (1801) in which the word *murderers* occurred for *murmurers* in Jude xvi, *The Standing Fishes Bible* (1806) in which *fishes* appeared for *fishers* in Ezekiel xlvii 10, *The Discharge Bible* (also 1806) in which the word *discharge* appeared for *charge* in I Timothy v 21, *The Ears-to-Ear Bible* (1810) in which *ear* was misprinted for *hear* in Matthew xiii.43, *The Wife-Hater Bible* (also 1810) in which *wife* occurred for *life* in the last line of Luke xiv 26. Most precious of all, perhaps, was the so-called *Printers Bible* which for Psalm xvix:161 carried "Printers have persecuted me without a cause" instead of the true version "Princes have persecuted me without a cause."

Disputes in scholarship have yielded other interesting biblical titles—*The Bug Bible* (whether *bug* or *terror* in Psalm xci 5), *The Breeches Bible* (whether *breeches* or *aprons* in Genesis iii·7), *The Rosin Bible* or *Treacle Bible* (whether *rosin* or *treacle* for *balm* in Jeremiah viii 22), *The He Bible* or *The She Bible* (whether *he* or *she* in Ruth iii 15), *The To-Remain Bible* (whether *to remain* in place of the comma in Galatians iv 29), *The Idle Bible* (whether *idle* or *idol*—or *worthless*, as the Revised Version has it—in Zechariah xii:17). But these are aside and apart from typographical slips.

Many a sensitive author has looked forward with fear and trepidation to the ordeal of having his copy set up in type, feeling and knowing that misprints are inevitable and that the embarrassments that they bring are likely to become controversial and even damaging. In addition to the sheer error in typesetting that inevitably "gets by", no matter how many readers may be employed on proof, or how meticulously compositors may do their work, the conventions of printing are very often such as to annoy to silence an author of highly sensitive nature In his *Housman· 1897–1936* * Grant Richards says that, as both poet and

* The Clarendon Press, Oxford

scholar, Housman thought accuracy an absolute virtue, and that he wrote to his publishers about errors in printing—especially errors in punctuation—with a good deal of acidity. He felt that to be misprinted by even so much as a comma was to be misunderstood, and it was on this ground that he refused as a rule to be re(mis)printed in anthologies. There have been writers—poets in particular—who have insisted upon a printer's paying a dollar for every inaccuracy in the reproduction of their works. It is not reported that they ever waxed wealthy by the enforcement of this measure, but it is not beyond peradventure that they may have laid the foundation of fortune upon it.

The use of the antonyms for the purpose of effective antithesis (page 51) has been recognized by all good writers and speakers The so-called "smart" dramatist in turning out his sparkling and witty balances in dialog needs to know the happy opposites of words if he should make his pointed and challenging antitheses ring true. If his balanced terms present no actual keenness or sharpness as result of being truly opposite, then his antithesis is faulty and is worse than the correct literal equivalent could possibly be. Burke and Macaulay are generally regarded as the masters of antithesis that is wrought by means of the true antonym. Both, however, have been accused of overdoing this particular figure of arrangement, even if sometimes having been willing to sacrifice truth to the cleverness of an antithetical turn of phrase. Besides, a too continuous arrangement of opposing terms, no matter how piquantly selected and arranged they may be, may easily pall, and may deceive a reader or a listener into attending to words and phrases rather than to the thoughts behind them Antithesis, in its simplest form depending upon the contrast of words, should be so arranged that the opposed terms or antonyms stand in corresponding positions Note not only the words themselves but their relative positions as well as in the following (1) by Macaulay and (2) by Burke

(1)

The Puritan hated bear-baiting not because it gave pain to the bear, but because it gave pleasure to the spectators

(2)

This I offer to give you is plain and simple, the other full of perplexed and intricate mazes. This is mild, that harsh This is found by experience effectual for its purposes, the other is a new project This is universal, the other calculated for certain colonies only. This is im-

> mediate in its conciliatory operation, the other remote, contingent full of hazard. Mine is what becomes the dignity of a ruling people, gratuitous, unconditional, and not held out as matter of bargain and sale.

But note now that in the following the mere clumsiness of expression batters the thought until it is beaten to a pulp of wordiness:

> Away from home he always finds great pleasure in whatever is new to him, but at home he suffers whenever he is surrounded by new things.

Stated by means of well-placed antonyms antithetically, this expression is made readable and perhaps memorable (the balanced antonyms are italicized):

> *Elsewhere* he is *delighted* with the *presence* of what is *new, there tormented* by the *absence* of what is *old.*

Garrick's now famous quip in regard to Goldsmith

> He wrote like an angel, but talked like poor Poll

was justly condemned as being only half worthy its author or its purpose. *Wrote* and *talked* are perfect antonyms and are perfectly placed in contrast, but the antithesis becomes anticlimax when so good a start is followed up by the ill (if not distasteful) teaming of *angel* with *Poll.*

It has been seen (page 50) that a word identifies or denotes an idea, and that it may also suggest or connote other ideas. Its margin of synonym is concerned in the latter process, as is also its power for figurative or pictorial suggestion. Figures of resemblance—simile, metaphor, personification—and figures of association—synecdoche, metonymy—carry words far beyond their ordinary denotations and connotations, and run the danger always of getting so far afield as to become confused. They may thus be futuristic pictures, meaning this to one and that to another, or meaning nothing at all. Figures of arrangement—antithesis, climax, inversion, litotes—stand in less danger of such confusion. But, as has been seen above, they may miss their mark entirely by an awkwardness or ineptness that retards and confuses comprehension quite as seriously as do appeals to mere imagery that are affected or too ingenious or far-fetched.

But figurative language aside, almost every important word you use in a sentence has in it such power of suggestion by way of synonym that, unless you exercise great care in word choice, you

may fail utterly to say what you mean. It is because of this quality in words—this quality of over-meaning which carries with it the antonymous quality of under-meaning—that word usage becomes both opportunity and danger. Even the so-called masters have, on occasion, failed, as result of this very complexity, to say all they meant or what they meant or anything they meant, else why all our biblical exegesis, why the Variorum Shakspere, why the hundreds of interpretive volumes on the law, why so many books on the meaning of this and that and the other? Because, of course, thinking processes are in and of themselves highly complex, and the expression that reflects these processes must perforce be complex also. It is all very well to say that if one wishes to address himself solely to the mind, he must use the cold and calculating diction of the intellect, that if one wishes to address himself solely to the emotions, he must use the warm and engaging words of the heart, that he must use denotative language in the one situation, and connotative language in the other. But the problem of clear expression is by no means so simple as this, because in the human make-up—yes, in the human mind itself—knowledge and feeling, intellect and emotion, are themselves inextricably mixed—perhaps confused—in most individuals. There can be no such expression as the purely intellectual, as the purely emotional, though close approaches may be made to either. The two elements are inescapably blended in all sincere and worthy speaking and writing, and therein basically lies the common human frailty of being unable to say exactly what is meant.

There are four particular passages in literature that have been used time and time again as illustrative of English expression as nearly perfect as it is possible for it to be, the chameleon quality of English words being what it is.

The first of these is the following passage from *The Song of Solomon* (viii:6-7) so frequently singled out by the author's former professor of English, the late George Saintsbury, as the only example of perfect prose that he knew:

> Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm: for love *is* strong as death, jealousy *is* cruel as the grave: the coals thereof *are* coals of fire, *which hath* a most vehement flame. Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it if a man would give all the substance of his house for love, it would utterly be contemned.

The second is *The Sermon on the Mount,* the tremendous purport of which is to declare and illustrate the spiritual character of re-

ligious experience, with particular emphasis upon the value of love, but which, in spite of its grandeur of motivation, is set forth in the simplest of language that is nevertheless rich in synonym and local-color figure. And these qualities are not confined to *The Sermon on the Mount* in the preachments of Jesus Christ, but are characteristics, rather, of His every utterance. Note in particular Saint Luke xi.11-12:

> If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? Or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent? Or if he shall ask an egg, will he give him a scorpion?

Bread, fish, egg—the commonest of Nature's blessings in Palestine—are contrasted simply and directly with stone, serpent, scorpion—the commonest of her curses there.

The third is Saint Paul's words to the Philippians (iv 8):

> Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things

in which the synonyms *true, honest* (the Revised Version has *honorable*), *just, pure, lovely, of good repute,* building as they do toward *virtue* and its resultant *praise,* are all sufficiently distinctive to mean much to a people such as the Philippians who at the time these words were delivered to them had been manifesting a spirit of rivalry and discord. The slow-paced building of synonym upon synonym, with the climaxing in *virtue* and *praise,* was as eminently adapted to their mood as it was varied and painstaking in its coverage.

The fourth passage is the speech of the dying John of Gaunt (*Richard II,* Act II Scene i) which, unlike the two preceding passages, abounds in figure but in figure of such point and power and, at the same time, of such beauty and simplicity, and of such eloquent patriotic fervor, that it has long been regarded by many authorities as the richest passage in all of Shakspere.

> GAUNT Methinks I am a prophet new inspir'd,
> And thus expiring do foretell of him.
> His rash fierce blaze of riot cannot last,
> For violent fires soon burn out themselves,
> Small showers last long, but sudden storms are short;
> He tires betimes that spurs too fast betimes,
> With eager feeding food doth choke the feeder;

Light vanity, insatiate cormorant,
Consuming means, soon preys upon itself
This royal throne of kings, this sceptred isle,
This earth of majesty, this seat of Mars,
This other Eden, demi-paradise,
This fortress built by Nature for herself
Against infection and the hand of war,
This happy breed of men, this little world,
This precious stone set in the silver sea,
Which serves it in the office of a wall,
Or as a moat defensive to a house,
Against the envy of less happier lands,
This blessed plot, this earth, this realm, this England,
This nurse, this teeming womb of royal kings,
Fear'd by their breed and famous by their birth,
Renowned for their deeds as far from home,
For Christian service and true chivalry,
As is the sepulchre in stubborn Jewry
Of the world's ransom, blessed Mary's son·
This land of such dear souls, this dear, dear land,
Dear for her reputation through the world,
Is now leas'd out, I die pronouncing it,
Like to a tenement or pelting farm
England, bound in with the triumphant sea,
Whose rocky shore beats back the envious siege
Of watery Neptune, is now bound in with shame,
With inky blots, and rotten parchment bonds:
That England, that was wont to conquer others,
Hath made a shameful conquest of itself
Ah, would the scandal vanish with my life,
How happy then were my ensuing death!

CHAPTER CONTEST *

NO	YES
1 You have made an ingenuous contrivance for parking your bicycle	You have made an ingenious contrivance for parking your bicycle
2 Our column is the latest in the lengthy line of march	Our column is the last in the long line of march
3 You are too sensitive of criticism, too sensible to what others say	You are too sensitive to criticism, too sensible of what others say
4 You will never become predominant as a minister until you give up certain luxuriant habits	You will never become prominent as a minister until you give up certain luxurious habits
5 Be human, especially whenever and wherever anything so serious as humane sacrifice is concerned	Be humane, especially whenever and wherever anything so serious as human sacrifice is concerned
6 For all practicable purposes the	For all practical purposes the Bill of

* See page 3

	NO	YES
	Bill of Rights is the best protective document the body political has ever known	Rights is the best protective document the body *politic has ever known*
7	Farther discussion is unnecessary inasmuch as we have decided on our procedure for wiping out extant evils	Further discussion is unnecessary inasmuch as we have decided on our procedure for wiping out existing evils
8	Your committee has done an extra fine job, partly constituted, as it originally was, of political appointees	Your committee has done a very fine job, partially constituted, as it originally was, of political appointees
9	He formally lived in the healthy climate of the Blue Mountains where he breathed lots of healthful air	He formerly lived in the healthful climate of the Blue Mountains where he breathed much wholesome air
10	The instructor made many oral changes in my essay but the "errors" he corrected were chiefly imaginative	The instructor made many verbal changes in my essay but the "errors" he corrected were chiefly imaginary
11	Though there are less clouds in the sky now, a heavy storm nevertheless appears immanent	Though there are fewer clouds in the sky now, a heavy storm nevertheless appears imminent
12	As result of his inflammable speech volunteer groups were quickly organized in each city block	As result of his inflammatory speech a volunteer group was quickly organized in each city block
13	Mr Osgood and I left the luncheon with common good feeling, and I am intolerable of any one who reports our interview as a failure	Mr Osgood and I left the luncheon with mutual good feeling, and I am *intolerant of any one who reports* our interview as a failure
14	He did not make himself intelligent to me, especially in the later part of his speech	He did not make himself intelligible to me, especially in the latter part of his speech
15	Dressed partially as clown and partially as devil, he made a very funny appearance	Dressed partly as clown and partly as devil, he made a very ludicrous appearance
16	The moral of this branch of the army is visible	The morale of this branch of the army is obvious
17	He has been negligible to a notable degree in looking after the prisoners	He has been negligent to a notorious degree in looking after the prisoners
18	We tried a novel kind of entertainment last week, a new feature of which was the juggling act	We tried a new kind of entertainment last week, a novel feature of which was the juggling act
19	"Oh, sergeant!" I said, "I think you are entirely too official in carrying out your officious duties."	"O sergeant!" I said, "I think you are entirely too officious in carrying out your official duties"
20	"You should have gathered from	"You should have gathered from my

	NO	YES
	my perspicacious remarks," said the officer, "that the road is impassible"	perspicuous remarks," said the officer, "that the road is impassable"
21	It was piteous to hear the culprit's plea for help, even though we knew he had for years been refectory	It was pitiful to hear the culprit's plea for help, even though we knew he had for years been refractory
22	I am going to take a course in remediable reading, and shall therefor have little spare time from now on	I am going to take a course in remedial reading, and shall therefore have little spare time from now on
23	I sent you the goods promptly, and I must refuse to "remain respectively yours" until you pay therefore	I sent you the goods promptly, and I must refuse to "remain respectfully yours" until you pay therefor
24	He indulges his voluptuous appetite at table until he becomes sociably objectionable	He indulges his sensual appetite at table until he becomes socially objectionable
25	The treble fold in this new stationary makes it well-nigh tortuous for the typist	The triple fold in this new stationery makes it well-nigh torturous for the typist
26	His venial career in politics has proved him to be unworthy and unmoral in civic affairs	His venal career in politics has proved him to be unworthy and immoral in civic affairs
27	After I fixed the doorplate, I fixed the window and then turned my hand to fixing the furnace	After I repaired the doorplate, I adjusted the window and then began work on the furnace
28	Flaunting the authorities the prisoner leaped from the wall, swam the strongly fleeing river, and by this time has probably flown beyond the border	Flouting the authorities the prisoner leaped from the wall, swam the strongly flowing river, and by this time has probably fled beyond the border
29	I am in no way implicated in your little outbreak of gossip, and I would not humiliate myself to join you	I am in no way involved in your little excursion into gossip, and I would not humble myself to join you
30	I imply from reading the testimony that the new prison policy was inaugurated shortly before the prisoner was released	I infer from reading the testimony that the new prison policy was initiated shortly before the prisoner was released
31	The motion to have the commission inquire into the scandal was lain on the table	The motion to have the commission investigate the scandal was laid on the table
32	After you get your affairs liquified I should love to take a simple cottage in the country	After you get your affairs liquidated I should like to take a simple cottage in the country
33	I am loathe to turn the dog lose until I have had time to negotiate that break in the fence	I am loth to turn the dog loose until I have had time to repair that break in the fence
34	Please take note that I shall per-	Please take notice that I shall prose-

	NO	YES
	secute you to the full extent of the law	cute you to the full extent of the law
35	After you have put all the papers in the cabinet, you may precede with the accounts	After you have put the papers into the cabinet, you may proceed with the accounts
36	The doctor has proscribed a new medicine for me, and he purposes that I go away for a little while	The doctor has prescribed a new medicine for me, and he proposes that I go away for a little while
37	After I told her I could not give her a raise in wages, she reeked vengeance upon me by writing my letters bad	After I told her I could not raise her wages, she wreaked vengeance upon me by writing my letters badly
38	I shall repulse any attempt to take my desk from me, as determinedly as the Russians repelled the Germans	I shall repel any attempt to take my desk from me, as determinedly as the Russians repulsed the Germans
39	While Tanta set knitting by the fire, I sold her on the idea of buying me a new car	While Tanta sat knitting by the fire I prevailed upon her to buy me a new car
40	He strained his ankle badly and will have to stop at the hospital for at least a month	He sprained his ankle badly and will have to stay at the hospital for at least a month
41	She has been proven disloyal and her name will be stricken from our lists	She has been proved disloyal and her name will be struck from our lists
42	I suspicioned him the minute I lay eyes upon him	I suspected him the minute I laid eyes upon him
43	When I learned what transpired at the end of the story, I was able to explain the underlaying theme	When I learned what took place at the end of the story, I was able to explain the underlying theme
44	Every piece of copy you write must radiate the feel of public favor	Every piece of copy you write must radiate the feeling of public good will
45	If you realized the weight of his responsibilities you would understand why the bulk of our members sympathize with him	If you realized the gravity of his responsibilities you would understand why the majority of our members sympathize with him
46	The funeral aspect of the party on my right disturbed me	The funereal aspect of the person on my right disturbed me
47	The remarkable genus of the merchant is still in evidence at his mercantile institution on Broadway	The remarkable genius of the merchant is still in evidence at his mercantile establishment on Broadway
48	Irregardless of the physical limits of the old man, no one loaned a hand toward lightning his burdens	Regardless of the physical limitations of the old man, no one lent a hand toward lightening his burdens
49	Narrative is by no means easy to write, it really requires genius to write a good narration	Narration is by no means easy to write, it really requires genius to write a good narrative

	NO	YES
50	Your tie is lose, your hair uncombed, your shoes unpolished—your whole appearance bespeaks personal neglect	Your tie is loose, your hair uncombed, your shoes unpolished—your whole appearance bespeaks personal negligence
51	Our patriotic organism has always made observation of the Sabbath an important part of its policy	Our patriotic organization has always made observance of the Sabbath an important element of its policy
52	He asked us for a large amount of books and for even a larger quantity of typewriters	He asked us for a large number of books and for even a larger number of typewriters
53	His part of the estate came largely out of the personnel reality	His portion of the estate came very largely out of the personal realty
54	I have a presentment that Harry will shatter many a precedence when he becomes a Benedick	I have a presentiment that Harry will shatter many a precedent when he becomes a benedict
55	The principle preventative of bad sewage is all-steel piping	The principal preventive of bad sewerage is all-steel piping
56	The farmers arrive at the markets early with their production, as do the manufacturers with their produce	The farmers arrive at the markets early with their produce, as do the manufacturers with their products
57	The proposal urges that resource be had to the law in case of trouble	The proposition urges that recourse be had to the law in case of trouble
58	Every refuge must give his name to our register	Every refugee must give his name to our registrar
59	His comment was that his relations have been very inconsiderable	His remark was that his relatives have been very inconsiderate
60	I now own every volume in the sequence, and I now have before me a series of delightful evenings	I now own every volume in the series, and I have before me a succession of delightful evenings
61	Please give me an exact assertion as to why this solicitude for money is made	Please give me an exact statement as to why this solicitation for money is made
62	The significance of your words is just as important as the signification of your acts	The signification of your words is just as important as the significance of your acts
63	Sam is something better than I am at this work, but, then, he has greater stimulation by way of salary	Sam is somewhat better than I am at this work, but, then, he has greater stimulus by way of salary
64	Various of the team objected to the substitute of Bill for Harry in the center of the game	Various members of the team objected to the substitution of Bill for Harry in the middle of the game
65	Thee factory weals must role and wring until wee pay awl we oh, until our joust dews and debts are adjusted	The factory wheels must roll and ring until we pay all we owe, until our just dues and debts are made right
66	What is novel will always chal-	What is really novel may challenge

	NO	YES
	lenge and interest; the merely new thing may bore us if, indeed, we do not find it distasteful	and interest; what is merely new, bore and displease us
67	Wee must male this letter befour knight, sew we must seize, bed yew ado, and thank yew four thee knews	We must mail this letter before night; so we must cease, bid you adieu, and thank you for the news
68	They didn't find it difficult at all to get up the mountain but coming down was much more difficult of achievement	The ascent of the mountain was easy; the descent, difficult
69	You made your start in public life with an unconscionable betrayal of the general public, and you have brought it to a close with similar deception toward the Crown	You began with betraying the people, you conclude with betraying the King

6

DON'T MISSPELL

SECTION FORTY-THREE — POSSESSIVE

The possessive case in classical languages is called the genitive case, though the classical genitive does not correspond completely to the English possessive. *Genitive* is from a Latin word meaning begetting or sourcing and thus, by extension, possessing. But in addition to denoting actual possession, the possessive case in English may, like the genitive, denote many other relationships that are really not possessive at all, such as extent—*day's journey* and *stone's throw,* origin or source—*goat's milk* and *labor's gold,* invention and discovery—*Edison's bulb* and *Grimm's law;* authorship of any kind—*Beethoven's sonatas* and *Ruskin's Sesame and Lilies,* measure and amount—*earth's circumference* and *dollar's worth;* mere classification—*men's shoes* and *hunter's accessories;* fraction of or part of (partitive genitive, usually after such words as *half, more, portion, some, such*)—*some of my time* and *half of his wealth,* sheer emphasis—*holy of holies, miracle of miracles, heart of my heart.* Sometimes the possessive is merely an idiomatic form, as *the world's way, a night's rest, a moment's pause, the day's work, your money's worth, the mind's eye, the law's delay, a week's wages, a hair's breadth, a night's lodging, a year's absence, for pity's sake, at wit's end.* Sometimes it has merely article signification, as *Your climate is unbearable* and *Your prairies are inspiring,* in which *your* shows no more of actual possession than the preceding types do but has really the meaning and force of *the.* This is sometimes called the ethical genitive.

The possessive case of nouns not ending with *s* or other sibilant sound (*x, z, ce, ge, j, se*), regardless of number, is formed by the

addition of apostrophe *s ('s)*, as *treasurer's report* and *woman's intuition, men's shoes* and *children's books* (see pages 96, 239, 428, 460, 486 for other uses of the apostrophe). As late as the seventeenth century *-es* or *-is* was the sign of possession and the apostrophe now denotes the omission of *e* or *i*. *Arthur his sword* for *Arthur's sword* and *Jesus Christ his sake* for *Jesus Christ's sake* (from *The Book of Common Prayer*) are archaic forms which originated in confusion with the old possessive ending *-es* or *-is*.

Singular nouns ending with *s* or other sibilant sound and having one syllable only, likewise add apostrophe *s ('s)*, as *James's car, boss's office, church's steeple.* Singular nouns ending with *s* or other sibilant sound and having two or more syllables with accent on the last, add apostrophe *s ('s)* also, as *Hortense's hair* and *Celeste's complexion.* But singular nouns ending with *s* or other sibilant sound, and having two or more syllables the last of which is not accented, take apostrophe *s ('s)* only provided the last syllable is not preceded by *s* or by other sibilant sound, as *Thomas's friend* and *Jenkins's tie* and *his highness's welfare.* If the last syllable is preceded by *s* or by other sibilant sound, the apostrophe only is added, as *Moses' seat, Jesus' disciples, Essex' defeat, Xerxes' army, conscience' sake, hostess' charm* This provision in the rule is made to obviate sigmatism (page 10).

The possessive plural of nouns ending with *s* or other sibilant sound is formed by adding the apostrophe only, as *ladies' gowns* and *boys' games* and *Joneses' neighbors.*

Though the possessive of proper nouns ending with *s* is formed regularly, as above shown—*Enos's lamb, Dolores's book, Gladys's gown*—that of proper nouns ending with *es*, it should be observed, is formed by the apostrophe only provided the accent is on the penult or before—*Achilles' heel, Ulysses' adventure, Demosthenes' orations.* The latter is a forward-looking provision of an old rule (see below).

The possessive case of a noun having the same form in both singular and plural is now written with *'s*, though the old rhetoricians held strictly to rule and used *'s* for singular possessive and *s'* for plural possessive. Context must sometimes be relied upon to clarify possessive meaning of such nouns; thus, you say *a deer's horns* and *two deer's horns, a heathen's answer* and *the heathen's customs, a sheep's wool* and *two sheep's wool.* But *the wool of two sheep* and *the squeal of a dozen swine* are preferred possessive

forms (see below). There are still many writers who, however, follow the older forms, as *a sheep's wool* and *two sheeps' wool*, *a heathen's cruelty* and *the heathens' cruelty*. In many instances, of course, the noun may take on pure adjective quality, as *a deer skin* and *a heathen custom* and *a swine squeal*.

Observe that such monosyllabic names as *Burns*, *Grace*, *James*, *Miles*, taking apostrophe *s* (*'s*) to form the possessive singular, thus become dissyllabic in pronunciation, as *Burns's (burn zes) works* and *Grace's (gra ces) hair*, and so on. And dissyllabic and longer names ending with *s* or with other sibilant sound also add an extra syllable in pronunciation by the regular formation of the possessive, as *Dickens's (dick en ses)* novels and *Basingbrooks's (bas ing brook ses) emporium*. But many dissyllabic and longer words (such as *Basingbrooks*)—no matter what their syllabic make-up—become awkward and troublesome in pronunciation if an additional (possessive) syllable is added, especially when it is followed by sibilant sounds. In all such instances the apostrophe alone, regardless of purist rule, may be used to denote the possessive singular; and *fox' skin*, *Hastings' sweetheart*, *your highness' service*, *Basingbrooks' store*, are preferable, as far as most ears are concerned, to *fox's skin*, *Hastings's sweetheart*, *your highness's service*, *Basingbrooks's store*.

Those advocates of radical language reform or simplification who would go so far, for example, as to make all imperfect tenses and past participles end with *ed* (*buyed* for *bought*, *flinged* for *flung*, *sinked* for *sank* and *sunk*), who would write *yu* for *you* and *enuf* for *enough*, *fantom* for *phantom* and *sithe* for *scythe* (page 463), would likewise rule that, regardless of number, the apostrophe only be used in forming the possessive case of all nouns ending with *s* or other sibilant sound (*nce*, *ses*, *sess*, *sses*, *ssess*, *sis*, *siss*, *ssis*, *ssiss*, *xes*, *zes*), as for instance *duchess' soiree*, *oasis' (oases') stagnation*, *molasses' sweetness*, *Keats' poems*, *Powers' music*, *Inglis' cars*, *Dickens' novels*, *Knox' hats*, *Baltz' shoes*, *James' residence*. Such simplification has the merit of logic as well as of convenience to recommend it, but it would sometimes be attended by ambiguity, at least as far as the ear is concerned. In *Nichol's game* and *Nichols' game*, *Power's house* and *Powers' house*, for example, pronunciation does not tell us whether the surname is *Nichol* or *Nichols*, *Power* or *Powers*, whereas there can be no doubt in *Nichol's game* and *Nichols's game*, *Power's house* and *Powers's house*. There are numerous surnames in connection

with which such ambiguity may occur, many of them monosyllabic names, as, for example, *Burn, Burns, John, Johns, Mark, Marks.**

Before attempting the possessive formation of a surname, every writer and speaker should make certain what the name really is, whether it does or does not end with *s* or other sibilant. To write *Dicken's novels* for *Dickens's* or *Dickens' novels, Keat's poems* for *Keats's* or *Keats' poems, Burrough's essays* for *Burroughs's* or *Burroughs' essays,* is to confess to an inaccuracy of ear and eye that may easily amount to illiteracy The extra *s* has long since been omitted in such colloquial forms as for *goodness' sake* and *for politeness' sake* which may now be regarded as falling under the rule above that covers *for patience' sake, for conscience' sake, for righteousness' sake, for Jesus' sake. Knox' hats* and *Heinz' pickles* and *Burns' cigars* are illustrative of trade simplifications that are increasingly accepted in general use Even *Christ' sake* is sometimes seen, and, as a matter of fact, it is always heard, for inevitably the final and initial *s's* in *Christ's sake* get themselves heard as one, unless a speaker is unduly and affectedly precise in pronunciation. And studied precision is never likely to be the case in expressing exclamations.

If you are called upon to talk about a Mr Power and a Mr Powers in the same breath, you are obliged to pronounce the possessive of the latter as a trisyllable; thus, you say *Mr Power's house* and *Mr Powers's (pow er ses) house.* It is, of course, the business of expression to make itself clear to both ear and eye. If there is one place in English expression where this ideal is likely to become frustrated, it is where such possessives as those under discussion have to be used. You may resort to *of,* but the *of*-possessive, as is pointed out below, is more likely to cause ambiguity than not. However, *the suite of the princess* and *the suite of the princesses* are always better, in both writing and speaking, than *the princess's suite* and *the princesses' suite.* The *of*-possessive is generally more emphatic than the inflected possessive, as well as more poetic in some instances and more idiomatic in others (poetry and idiom very often being twin sisters). *Gilead's balm,* for example, is without distinction, whereas *balm of Gilead* has a rhythm and a dignity and a distribution of stress that makes it part and parcel of poetry. Such idioms as *the long and short of it* and *the likes of her* and *for the life of me* and *for the death of me* and *for the fun*

* See page 481 in *Get It Right* by the same author, published by Funk and Wagnalls Company

of it are vastly more rhythmic and emphatic and characterful because of the *of* form. *Its long and short* and *her likes* and *for its fun,* and so on, are prosaic indeed by comparison; besides, they by no means always say what is meant in the phrasal form. In the same way *a friend of mine* is more personal and "more certain" than *my friend, this country of ours* than *our country, those lovely children of yours* than *your lovely children.* And note that the phrasal forms have in them also a power of praise or reproof or ridicule that the simple inflected possessive is incapable of expressing with equal emphasis.

The rule of antecedence (page 140) may enter into choice between the inflected possessive and the phrasal possessive. Use of the former as antecedent of a pronoun constitutes loose English; thus, the inflected form is really a misuse in *I shall place it to his account who will not spend it foolishly.* The *of* form must be used here—*I shall place it to the account of him who will not spend it foolishly.* On the other side of the issue, observe that *my soul's longing for contentment* is better form than *the longing of my soul for contentment,* for here the important ideas reside in *longing* and *contentment,* and the possessive form *(soul's)* is subordinated as far as possible in order that none of the proper emphasis be thwarted. And it has been noted that the inflected form of the possessive is always more subordinate than the *of*-possessive.

The latter is preferably used in connection with things and the lower animals unless they are customarily personified, the inflected form being confined to actual personal possession. This rule, probably as frequently violated as observed, harks back to the old rhetorics which explained that only human beings are capable of ownership. But even they exempted the poet from such restriction, and he has always been privileged to use such possessives as *river's edge, the sunset's glow, the heart's desire, the forest's dark, the ship's crew.* And it is seen on page 428 that the idiomatic possessive defies this ruling without limit. The important interpretation of the rule, however, is that such prosaic possessive expressions as *top of the desk, leg of the chair, height of the ceiling, act of Congress* be written with *of* (as here) rather than with the apostrophe—the so-called personal possessive—as *desk's top, chair's leg, ceiling's height, Congress's* or *Congress' act.* The highly inflected pronouns are here as elsewhere (see *whose* below) an exception to rule, indeed, a repudiation of rule. You do not say in ordinary intercourse *the hat of him* for *his hat, the car of you* for

your car, the books of them for *their books* (see page 140). Abstract nouns are as frequently preceded by possessive case as followed by it (with *of*); thus, you say *by the chairman's leave, in John's absence, in the convict's defense, to the culprit's credit, in your stead, in the plaintiff's behalf, of the man's own free will and accord.* But you also say—idiomatically—*on Mary's account* or *on account of Mary, Reilly's life* or *the life of Reilly, to Harry's credit be it said* or *be it said to the credit of Harry.* Rhythm, which is very often an unconscious factor in determining idiom and colloquialism, has more influence than is generally recognized in deciding whether the *of* form of possessive or the inflected form be used. In poetry, of course, meter may very often decide whether one form of possessive or another shall be chosen—the apostrophe *s ('s)* which may add a full syllable or the *of* form which with its object may add two or more syllables.

There have been prolonged arguments in regard to such possessive expressions as *in our midst* and *in their midst* and *in your midst.* Some critics of usage have insisted that *in the midst of us* and *in the midst of them* and *in the midst of you* represent the more careful and thus the preferable forms. But both should be avoided, not only because of the questionable use of possessive form but also because of the word *midst* itself which means middle or interior or central part of. Substitute any of these meanings in the above phrases and absurdity results. This, however, makes no difference where idiom is concerned, few idioms will bear close analysis without revealing absurdity (page 280). Nothing whatever is lost to meaning and much is gained by way of ease or grace by saying *among us, among them, among you* respectively for these phrases. *Among* may therefore be helpful in obviating ambiguous possessives, both inflected or apostrophe forms and phrasal or *of* forms.

Honors—dishonors—are almost even between these two forms as far as causing ambiguity is concerned. The expression *John's picture* may, for example, mean a likeness of John, a picture that John owns, a picture painted by John. The expression *the President of Mexico's council* may mean a council appointed by or presided over (or both) by the President of Mexico, or it may mean the president—any citizen other than the President—of some national council. *A picture of John* means a likeness—painting or photograph of John. *A picture of John's* means either a picture owned by John or a picture painted by John—*a picture*

of (among) John's pictures—and is thus as ambiguous as the inflected form above. Context alone must be relied upon to make such expressions as *love of God* and *the invasion of the enemy*, *Edna's books* and *Tom's trophies* clear. If in the phrase *the officer's arrest* the officer did the arresting the possessive is said to be subjective; if the officer was acted upon, that is, arrested, the possessive is objective. The former is very often expressed by *by*, as *arrest by the officer*. By context the *child's whipping* is probably objective, but the child may have been whipping the cat and, if so, the possessive is subjective. The extended form—the whipping *of* somebody *by* somebody—is sometimes the only solution for complete clearness.

In view of the fact that such indefinite pronouns as *all, both, each, either, neither, none* do not have special possessive forms, their use in connection with subjective possession very often leads to constructions that are vague or loose, to say the least. In such expressions, for example, as *I was sorry for all their sakes, Both our fathers are on that ship, Each of your interests will be protected, That is not either of your affairs, The accident was neither of their faults, That was due to none of our shortcomings* possessive construction is loose and muddled. There is no short-cut to the correction of such badly constructed possessives as these, different arrangements must be devised. Though *all their, both our, each your, either your, neither their, none our* are really appositional in idea, they are not so grammatically. *I was sorry for the sakes of all of them* (or *for the sake of each of them*), *The father of each of us is* (or *The fathers of both of us are*) *on that ship, The interests of each of you will be protected, That is not the affair of either of you, The accident was the fault of neither of them, That was due to the shortcomings* (or *shortcoming*) *of none of us* are correct readings. In *Bill's defect is tardiness; Bob's untidiness. But neither of their defects is insurmountable*, the indefinite *neither* is clearly and coherently identified with the antecedence *tardiness* and *untidiness*, but *their* is loose in reference. The second sentence should read *But neither of these defects is unsurmountable.*

The expression *a servant of his sister's* contains what is called the double possessive, that is, it contains both *'s* and *of* in connection with the same term. All such forms as this involving nouns are, like many of those connected with proper nouns (page 430), ambiguous to the ear. The word *sister's* may be *sisters'* as far as hear-

ing is concerned. No such ambiguity occurs, of course, in the use of the inflected pronouns, as *a friend of mine, a fault of his, the fun of it, a book of hers.* But *a servant of his sister's* (or *sisters'*) means *a servant of (among) his sister's* (or *sisters'*) *servants* or *one of his sister's* (or *sisters'*) *servants* as far as the ear is concerned. The use of the double possessive of nouns was rare before Shakspere, but the pronominal double possessive—*a friend of mine, a charger of his, a fault of thine*—antedates Chaucer.

It should be noted that *I am Mary's friend* and *I am a friend of Mary* can mean only one thing, namely, that Mary has a friend in me. But *I am a friend of Mary's,* used colloquially to mean the same as the two foregoing expressions, may be taken to mean, not that Mary has a friend in me, but that Mary's friends have a friend in me, my relationship to Mary being unexpressed in the sentence. In all such expressions as the last the plural of a preceding noun is usually understood—*a friend of Mary's (friends).* If the meaning of the double possessive form is that I am Mary's friend, *of* has the force of *among,* that is, *Among Mary's friends I am one* (see above). Again, *Tom's old hat is shabby* may mean that Tom has but one hat, and that a shabby one, or it may mean that Tom's old hat, in differentiation from his better hats, is so old that it is shabby. But *That old hat of Tom's is shabby* may very logically mean that among Tom's hats there is an old one that is shabby, *hats* being understood after *Tom's.* It is manifestly wrong, therefore, to say *They were guests at the highland castle of Lord Ronmer's* unless Lord Ronmer owned more than one castle, only one of which was in the highlands. If he owned more than one highland castle, the indefinite article *a* (page 82) should be substituted for the definite article *the,* as *They were guests at a highland castle of Lord Ronmer's* (that is, at one of his highland castles). The simple meaning is probably best expressed as *They were guests at Lord Ronmer's highland castle* or *at the highland castle of Lord Ronmer.* But the double possessive is stubbornly idiomatic, in spite of the fact that there are many expressions in which the understanding of the plural noun after it makes ridiculous meaning, as for example *that bad temper of Bill's* and *that gentle disposition of Alice's* in which *tempers* understood after *Bill's,* and *dispositions* after *Alice's* make nonsense.

The basic rule for guidance in the formation of the possessive case is that the sign of possession (apostrophe *s* or apostrophe

alone) should be placed next to the name of the thing possessed; that is, the apostrophe *s* or the apostrophe alone is properly placed at the end of a possessive expression, as in *the Earl of Cranmore's castle* and *Kaiser Wilhelm the Great's defeat, my mother-in-law's rights* and *everybody else's business* and *the sisters' property*. *Castle, defeat, rights, business, property* are, in order, the names of the things possessed, and they are properly preceded by the sign of possession.

It was once fashionable—and correct—to write the *else* expressions with the sign of possession on the word preceding *else—no one's else, somebody's else, nobody's else.* Then there was a period during which either *any one's else* or *any one else's* was allowable or, at least, accepted. Now, the sign is correctly carried only at the end of *else.* And this is as it should be, for *else* stands for *other* or *other person,* the expression *somebody else's book* standing for *some other person's book* in which the possessive sign could not logically be placed anywhere but on the term substituted for *else* (page 193). The revision has not been made in old printing plates, however, and the three phases of this particular possessive form are to be met with in books in the circulating libraries today.

Inasmuch, however, as personal pronouns and the relative *who* are inflected for case, their possessive case forms are not devised by means of the apostrophe. Many of them do not even contain the letter *s. My, mine, your, her, our, their* are possessive pronominal forms that are written without either the apostrophe or *s; yours, hers, his, its, ours, theirs, whose* are possessive pronominal forms that are never written with the apostrophe but that retain an *s* that is reminiscent of early possessive formation. The possessive pronouns *hers, mine, ours, theirs, thine, yours* are called absolute possessives for the reason that they are not as a rule followed by nouns, as *Hers is larger* and *Yours is more practical. His* may also sometimes be used as an absolute, as *This hat is his* and *His has been hanging on the rack all day.* But indefinite pronouns form their possessives regularly as *one's, other's, anybody's, everybody's, either's.*

Nouns, like certain pronouns, may also be used as absolute possessives: that is, their possessive form may be used alone without the name of person, place, or thing following Such expressions as *This is Mary's* and *I am going to the grocer's* and *I am staying at*

Pierre's are illustrative. But caution in the use of the absolute form is necessary in some constructions if you would say exactly what you mean. For example, *I have been visiting at my father and mother's* means that I have been visiting at my parents' home. But *I have been visiting at my father's and mother's* means that I have been visiting at my parents' homes, and that my father and my mother are not living in the same home. Observe further that *Bill's plane cost more than my brother's and my sister's* really says Bill's plane cost more than my brother's plane and more than my sister's plane, but that *Bill's plane cost more than my brother and sister's* really says Bill's plane cost more than the plane that my brother and sister own jointly (page 80).

The use of *mine* before a noun or another pronoun is now archaic, as *mine host* and *mine own.* The apostrophe in *it's* stands for *i in is, and the form is not possessive at all but is a contraction of it is.* Similarly, the apostrophe in *who's* stands for *i*, and the form is a contraction of *who is* rather than a possessive. *Else* is used after none of these pronominal forms but *whose,* the ready-made (inherited) possessive form of *who* To say *whose else's* would be superfluous repetition of possessive notation therefore. But in current usage *whose else* and *who else's* appear to stand in about the same confusion that bedeviled the usage of *anybody else's* and *some one else's,* and the rest, fifty years ago. In such colloquial expressions as *Who else's car could it be* in which *else* is followed by the name of the thing possessed, the sign of possession is correctly placed on *else* (as here). *Whose else* is correct when *else* is not followed by such name and thus stands as the name itself, as *Whose else could it be* and *Whose else could the car be* The compound forms of the relative *who* follow the same construction, that is, *Whosever else could it be* and *Whoever else's car could it be.*

Mistakes in forming the possessive case of hyphened compounds (especialy the *in-law* forms) is frequently caused by confusion with plural forms. It is likely to be assumed that, since the principal word in a compound takes pluralization (page 459), it also takes the sign of possession. But this is not true, the basic rule holds—sign of possession nearest the name of the possessed—and you say *mother-in-law's rights* rather than *mother's-in-law rights.* The plural possessive form follows, first, rule for plural; second, rule for possesssive, namely, *mothers-in-law's rights.*

If a possessive word or phrase is preceded by an article, the apostrophe or the apostrophe *s* may be automatically dropped, whether or not actual possession is shown. The word or words preceding the name of the thing possessed must in such usage be regarded as adjectival, as *the James B Duke estate, the Horace Hurlburt record, a Shaw book, the Shakspere museum.* Where no real possession is indicated or where the possessive form has become worn down to merely adjectival quality, inflections are omitted. You write *Teachers College* and *Farmers Market* and *Times Magazine* and *The King James Translation of the Bible,* for instance, without apostrophe or apostrophe and *s* after *Teachers* and *Farmers* and *Times* and *James,* first, because there is no actual possession indicated, and, second, because these words are regarded as elements in an accepted title. Such forms are sometimes called title or name or habitual possessives.

In the expression *I bought this stationery at Klein's the stationer* the last word is in apposition with *Klein's* and the word *shop* or *store* or *place* is understood after *Klein's* Since *stationer* means the same as *Klein's,* it too automatically has one of these words understood after it. And there is a rule in grammar to the effect that nouns in apposition must be in the same case. In strictly logical form, therefore, the sentence should read *I bought this stationery at Klein's, the stationer's, shop* or *I bought this stationery at Klein's, the stationer's.* Appositional terms are as a rule set off by commas, as *Harold Bergman, last winner of the trophy, is here to make the presentation today.* But when such terms are so closely knitted as to constitute a kind of title or epithet, the commas are omitted, thus, you say *Frederick the Great, Cedric the Saxon, William the Conqueror.* Used in possessive expressions, these titles would follow the general rule and carry the sign on the last member, as in *Frederick the Great's victories* and *Cedric the Saxon's hospitality* and *William the Conqueror's cruelty.*

It very often happens that colloquial expressions containing nouns in apposition come to have the same sort of title signification, and in both colloquial and standard usage today the sign of possession is increasingly carried on the second term only of an appositional expression, the first term standing uninflected. When the appositional terms are not closely related or unified, the better practice is to retain both commas as would be done in independent appositional constructions, as *Harold, my youngest son, has just left for the wars;* thus, you write *Harold, my youngest son's, departure.*

There is, however, excellent authority for *Harold, my youngest son's departure.* The latter may in certain instances cause ambiguity of person. If you say *Harold, my youngest son's departure has been scheduled for tomorrow, Harold* may at first be taken as of second person, that is, you may be saying to Harold that your son's departure is to take place tomorrow. Logic is frequently browbeaten by usage, however, and this is as it should be for the progress and convenience of expression. Though "at present writing" the expressions below represent the best that is being spoken and written, usage exercises its precious privilege of change without notice. Nevertheless, they summarize the foregoing exposition of the appositional possessive

My friend Coe's book has just been published
I sold my colts to Harrison, the racing man's, stable
We attended Vittorier, the costumer's, showing last evening
I hereby give notice that I am not responsible for my wife, Delila's, debts

But in the last *wife Delila* is acceptable, just as *brother John* and *sister Sue* and *my friend Coe* are written without the appositive commas, the closeness of relationship making the two words a relational unit name. The law with necessary precautions would write *wife (Delila), brother (John), sister (Sue—Susan,* more likely).

Explanatory matter placed in parentheses should be kept in harmony with preceding matter to which it pertains. *Isaac Newton's (1642—1727) discovery of the law of gravitation revolutionized the scientific world* illustrates a somewhat general error in the relationship between possessive case and parenthetical matter. The dates do not explain the possessive form of *Isaac Newton—Isaac Newton's* was not born in 1642, did not die in 1727. The explanatory dates must pertain to an uninflected term. The ridiculous forms *Isaac Newton (1642—1727's)* and *Isaac Newton (1642—1727)'s* are sometimes seen, but needless to say, they are incorrect. The date *1727* is not involved with possessive form, and apostrophe *s* is correct after) only provided it is desired to indicate the plural of the sign (page 460). The only solution lies in rephrasing the sentence, as *Isaac Newton (1642—1727) revolutionized the scientific world by his discovery of the law of gravitation.*

Two or more consecutive possessive terms containing *s* are called tandem possessives. They are almost invariably bad not only be-

cause of sigmatism (page 10), but also because they are likely to be puzzling in meaning and to tempt into incorrect construction. *Peter's wife's brother's assistant* is more awkward than *Peter's brother-in-law's assistant,* but the latter is not good; it is helped by calling upon *of* for relief, as *the assistant of Peter's brother-in-law.* On the other hand, those who are trying to master the intricacies of English for the first time may fall into the equally objectionable error of using *of* to excess—a tendency that easily develops from over-emphasis upon the short simple sentence as a beginner's device for learning the language; thus, *the assistant of the brother of the wife of Peter* leans too far in the direction of sparing inflection and takes on a house-that-Jack-built quality (page 212). And the too-conscious effort to avoid apostrophe *s* may result in such expressions as *He lives at his friend's uncle* and *We are going to stay at my secretary's brother.* Here it is obvious that both *uncle* and *brother* should be written with apostrophe *s,* and thus be made absolute. The tandem possessive has been avoided at the expense of absurd construction Correction is possible again by resorting to an *of* phrase and filling out the construction, as *He lives at the residence of his friend's uncle* and *We are going to stay at the home of my secretary's brother.*

The general rule above applies likewise, of course, to unhyphened expressions that denote possession, as in *the head of the company's desk* and *the last of the family's possessions.* This form is sometimes called phrasal possessive. If, however, such phrase preceding the name of the thing possessed becomes too long, the preposition *of* must be looked to for relief. You would not say, for example, *The Society for the Propagation of the Faith's President,* for the name of the organization is too long to permit of such remote possessive inflection. You say, rather, *the President of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith* By *joint* or *group possessive* is meant the use of a single possessive inflection on the last of two or more nouns indicating joint ownership or interest in the person or thing named in the modified noun, as *Procter and Gamble's soap* and *Lord and Taylor's shop* and *Reed and Kellogg's grammar* or *Procter and Gamble's soaps* (if they manufacture more than one brand) and *Lord and Taylor's shops* (if they conduct more than one shop) and *Reed and Kellogg's grammars* (if they collaborate in more than one grammar).

The *separative possessive* is the opposite of the joint possessive, that is, possessive inflection is carried on each of two or more

nouns modifying a noun representing separate interests; thus, *Shakspere's and Shaw's plays* means Shakspere's plays and Shaw's plays as groups of plays separate and apart from each other, and *Shelley's and Byron's poems* and *Ford's and Chrysler's plants* and *Mary's and Alice's marks in English* denote similarly separative constructions. *Joe, Bill, and Harry's father* means one father of three sons *Joe's, Bill's, and Harry's father* is a more accurate—and more logical way—of saying the same thing, but the succession of apostrophe *s's* is unwieldy, and idiom has wisely adopted the former and simpler style. In any event, *the father of Joe, Bill, and Harry* is to be preferred. Note that *Joe's, Bill's, and Harry's fathers* is ambiguous, for three fathers may be indicated (would be, probably, in colloquial usage), or only two—*Joe's father and Bill and Harry's father* or *Joe and Bill's father and Harry's father* or *Joe and Harry's father and Bill's,* and so on. Again, *of* may be resorted to for clarification and grace of expression.

The number of a verb must be kept in accord with such possessive constructions as the foregoing. If you say *Beaumont and Fletcher's style is engaging* singular *is* is correct because Beaumont and Fletcher were collaborators whose united efforts resulted in an engaging style. If you say *Wilde's and Marlowe's style are now regarded as manifestations of the decadence of their respective periods* plural *are* is correct because Wilde's style and Marlowe's style are two different styles, moreover, the plural *manifestations* implies two rather than one. *Wilde and Marlowe's style is now decadent* is therefore incorrect. In this kind of expression, the principal noun is preferably stated after the first possessive, as *Wilde's style and Marlowe's. Wilde and Marlowe's styles* means that Wilde and Marlowe were collaborators and together wrote in more than one style. This form is to be avoided for another reason, namely, the awkward pluralization of the abstract noun. Even though the style of Wilde and that of Shaw have many points in common, it is nevertheless ambiguous to say *Wilde and Shaw's style is always scintillating,* for this sentence, while correct as to the style of the two writers, seems to imply collaboration, and they were not collaborators. *Wilde's style and Shaw's are always scintillating* and *Wilde's style, like Shaw's, is always scintillating* are better readings.

The possessive pronoun, like the article (page 80), must sometimes be used in order to avoid ambiguity, such use very often consisting of repetition. If you say *I have Shakspere's plays and*

sonnets you imply that you have one book in which Shakspere's plays and sonnets are contained. If you say *I have Shakspere's plays and his sonnets* you convey the idea of two books. Similarly, if you say *My uncle and employer may go to the convention tomorrow* you imply that your uncle and your employer are one and the same person. But if you say *My uncle and my employer may go to the convention tomorrow* you clearly indicate two persons by means of repeating the possessive *my*.

But expressions in which noun and pronoun possessives are combined may be attended with some degree of danger. Dickens wrote *our and the Wilfers' mutual friend,* which is right (though *the Wilfers' and our mutual friend* is more in keeping with the first-person courtesy form—putting ourselves last). The expression may also be written *a mutual friend of the Wilfers and us* (or *ourselves*). Other correct forms of possessive combinations are *your and my agreement, her, his, and your mother-in-law; Tom's and my sled; his and Harry's contract,* the modified noun in each to be pluralized if the meaning is separative. But *your agreement and mine, his mother-in-law and yours,* and so on, are preferable forms. And note that *the Jones'* (or *Joneses'*) *and my friends* refers to two sets of friends, one set belonging to the Joneses and one belonging to me; that *the Jones and my friends* means friends of both the Joneses and me. *The Jones' (Joneses') friends and my friends* may, however, refer to the same friends, as may also *friends of the Joneses and friends of mine.* Context alone is sometimes the only solution to clarification, as in *The Jones' (Joneses') friends may sit here, and my friends there* and *Friends of the Joneses and me are always welcome.*

It has been pointed out (page 150) that nouns and pronouns preceding participial forms (gerunds and verbal nouns) should as a rule be in the possessive case, that only rarely does a major or independent idea reside in nouns and pronouns so placed. You say *The teacher insists upon the children's going out to play* and *We are happy about father and mother's coming to visit us,* using possessive form before *going* and *coming* because these verbals carry ideas of greater importance than those of the preceding modifying possessives. It is the going in the one example and the coming in the other that are important. Note that, inasmuch as *coming* represents one action common to both preceding nouns, the apostrophe is carried on the last only (see above). Here also the personal or apostrophe form (page 432) of possessive should

as a rule give way to the *of* form in such impersonal or inanimate connections as *The likelihood of war's being declared against South America has been sufficiently discussed* and *He commented bitterly on our policy's having been so suddenly changed.* Though these sentences comply with rule, and are not to be considered incorrect, they are nevertheless heavy and awkward. *The likelihood that war may be declared against South America has been sufficiently discussed* and *He commented bitterly on the fact that our policy has been so suddenly changed* are preferred readings.

CONTEST *

	NO	YES
1	Every childs' porridge must be hot	Every child's porridge must be hot
2	Mens' and womens' clothing for sale	Men's and women's clothing for sale
3	Jim Wright's, the postman, car is stalled	Jim Wright, the postman's, car is stalled
4	Barnum's and Bailey's circus was the greatest show on earth	Barnum and Bailey's circus was the greatest show on earth
5	This poem of Wordsworth is best for the occasion	This poem of Wordsworth's is best for the occasion
6	I had no idea of Mary meaning to hurt me by that remark	I had no idea of Mary's meaning to hurt me by that remark
7	The president of the newly organized steel company's name is Carter	The name of the president of the newly organized steel company is Carter
8	Clara is going to spend the weekend at her teacher's brother	Clara is going to spend the weekend at the home of her teacher's brother
9	Our and the Curtis's garden are the best in the neighborhood	The Curtis's garden and ours are the best in the neighborhood
10	The Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children's charter is being rewritten	The charter of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children is being rewritten
11	Him coming when he did was a surprise to our as well as the Thomas's guests	His coming when he did was a surprise to our guests as well as to the guests of the Thomases
12	Warren Hasting's impeachment was a historic event	The impeachment of Warren Hastings was a historic event
13	The bathtub's plug is lost; me taking a bath is therefore out of the question	The plug of the bathtub is lost; my taking a bath is therefore out of the question
14	I must have taken some one's else hat at the party, but who else's I do not know	I must have taken some one else's hat at the party, but whose else I do not know

* See page 3.

	NO	YES
15	Harold's statue is to be placed on the library's onyx pedestal	The statue of Harold is to be placed on the onyx pedestal in the library
16	Whose else's book can this possibly be	Who else's book can this possibly be
17	This platter was one of Ferdinand's the Great most precious possessions	This platter was one of Ferdinand the Great's most precious possessions
18	Whose else's car did you see in the parking place	Who else's car did you see in the parking place
19	You going swimming in Millie's, the architect's daughter, pool at this hour is ridiculous	Your going swimming in Millie, the daughter of the architect's, pool at this hour is ridiculous *better* Your going swimming in Millie's pool at this hour is ridiculous Millie, by the way, is the daughter of the architect
20	My wife Mary's having left my bed and board, I am no longer responsible for her debts	Since my wife, Mary, has left my bed and board, I will no longer be responsible for her debts
21	I insist that it is neither the principal nor the teachers' duty to tell us this	I insist that it is neither the principal's nor the teachers' duty to tell us this
22	What are the chances of the qualifying examination being held soon	What are the chances that the qualifying examination will be held soon
23	I must say that I like Jameson better than Irving's method of treatment	I must say that I like Jameson's method of treatment better than Irving's
24	This play is one of Shaw, and this, I think, is Funk and Wagnalls dictionary, not Webster	This play is one of Shaw's, and this, I think, is Funk and Wagnalls' dictionary, not Webster's
25	There has been some objection to the new butcher setting up his slaughter-house in this community	There has been some objection to the new butcher's setting up his slaughterhouse in this community
26	Fancy them holding a sale of ladies and gentlemens coats on New Years eve	Fancy their holding a sale of ladies' and gentlemen's coats on New Year's eve

SECTION FORTY-FOUR — PLURAL

In French, German, Latin, Greek, and still other foreign languages, adjectives as well as nouns are inflected for number. In English they are not. And pronouns and verbs in other languages are much more highly inflected for it than are English pronouns and verbs. This is fortunate indeed, inasmuch as pluralization of

English nouns alone offers sufficient difficulty to be overcome, especially by those who study the language for the first time.

The simplest rule for the pluralization of English nouns is that of adding *s* to the singular, as *desk* and *desks, girl* and *girls, toe* and *toes, tree* and *trees.* In all of these words *s* joins the singular without adding another syllable. Almost as simple is the next rule—really a corollary of the foregoing—to the effect that *es* is added in case the singular form ends with the sounds *ch, j, sh, s, x, z,* as *trench* and *trenches, hadj* and *hadjes* (hadj is the pilgrimage to Mecca required of every free Mohammedan at least once in his life), *sash* and *sashes, sinus* and *sinuses, grass* and *grasses, fox* and *foxes, buzz* and *buzzes.* In these plural formations syllabication is increased, it will be observed.

From this point onward irregularities in the formation of English plurals tend to make both spelling and pronunciation difficult if not hazardous. There are, for example, the old *en* plurals—*brother* pluralized *brethren* (see below), *child* pluralized *children, ox* pluralized *oxen.* There are the old plurals made by a change of internal vowel—*foot* pluralized *feet, goose* pluralized *geese* (*gooses* for tailoring irons), *louse* pluralized *lice, man* pluralized *men, mouse* pluralized *mice, tooth* pluralized *teeth, woman* pluralized *women.* And there are variable plurals. In such nouns as *alderman, bondsman, chairman,* for example, the word *man* is compounded with the first part of each, and it is thus pluralized *men—aldermen* (*alder* means elder or parent), *bondsmen, chairmen,* and *Englishmen, Frenchmen, seamen, yeomen* (*yeo* means district; hence, district men). But in certain nouns ending with *man* (most of which are now little used) *man* is not compounded but is itself an intrinsic part of the stem, thus, you say *desmans,* not *desmen* (*desman*—musk—is Swedish), *Germans,* not *Germen* (Latin *Germanus*); *Mussulmans,* not *Mussulmen* (Turkish *musulman*); *Normans,* not *Normen* (Danish *Normand*), *Ottomans,* not *Ottomen* (Turkish *othman*); *talismans,* not *talismen* (Greek *telesma*). *Man* in its special (now almost archaic) meaning of ship or vessel is pluralized *men* in *Indiamen, men-of-war, merchantmen.*

All along it may be helpful to remember that the third person singular, present indicative active of verbs follows suit; that is, these rules for pluralization are likewise general spelling rules. So you say *He toes the mark* and *The bell buzzes* and *The man*

wrenches his back. Such words as *alias, fuss, lass, minus, surplus, tax, waltz* sometimes give pause, but they follow rule by adding *es—aliases, fusses, lasses, minuses, surpluses, taxes, waltzes.* Note, however, *bus, fez, gas, plus, yes,* and refer to the final consonant rule on page 477. These words may be pluralized regularly *—buses, fezes, gases, pluses, yeses*—and may thus defy the final consonant rule. But the plural of *fez* may also be *fezzes,* and the plural of *bus* may be *busses,* the remaining three never double the final *s* before adding the pluralizing suffix *es,* though it begins with a vowel.

Gentile nouns (nouns denoting race or nationality or, sometimes, class) ending with *ese* (sometimes with *is*) have the same form in both singular and plural, and this form is also used as adjective; thus, *Burmese, Chinese, Japanese, Portuguese, Siamese, Singhalese, Iroquois, bourgeois* (page 249) may take either singular or plural verbs, may be modified by singular or plural pronouns, may themselves modify either singular or plural nouns. Some nouns other than gentile nouns are also the same in both numbers, as for example, *chassis, corps, deer, hose, milreis, series, sheep, species, swine.* These are called identical plurals. Any singular noun that may be used as a collective plural may be classified as an identical plural. If you say *fifty cannons* you refer to cannons separately and distributively, and use the regular plural. But if you say *Their cannon are all in battle line* you use the singular form of *cannon* in a plural collective sense. *Fish, fowl, heathen, Moslem, shot,* and, especially, the names of grains, minerals, quadrupeds and other creatures, such as *barley, bass, cattle, cod, cord, duck, grouse, mackerel, moose, partridge, peas, plover, quail, rye, salmon, trout, wheat,* are used both collectively and distributively. In the collective sense either *peas* or *pease* may be used; in the distributive, *peas* only. But *pease* is now almost archaic. You may speak of the ryes of Canada and of Scotland, of the shads of the United States, of the golds of the Rocky Mountains, by which you mean species or varieties of rye and shad and gold. You may say that the wheats have outgrown the corns this season, and that the fowls of the air devoured the seed and that a great multitude of fishes was enclosed in their net, meaning in each instance many kinds.

Certain nouns denoting quantity, measure, weight, such as *brace, couple, dozen, foot, gross, head, hundred, mile, sail, score, stone, yoke,* tend colloquially to be used in the singular after numerical

adjectives; thus, you may say *five score, twenty sail, eight gross.* And it is probably because of this tendency that some authorities rule that *three couples* and *four yokes* and *eleven grosses* represent more precise and elegant usage. Idiom, however, precludes these forms in many instances, as for example *twenty head of cattle* and *thirty sail of the line.* When the number word is indefinite it is invariably pluralized, as in *hundreds of men* and *miles of ribbon* and *scores of years.* The second part of a compound is never pluralized when the first part is a numeral adjective, as *two-foot rule* and *three-story house* and *four-mile walk.* It is a tendency of provincialism (page 249) to overdo the use of singulars for plurals in this way. *I have three hand working for me today* and *We use four quart daily* and *I just bought five gallon* illustrate the kind of provincial usage that carries the above rule to illiterate extreme.

Some nouns are plural in form but singular in meaning and use, such as *acoustics, aeronautics, alms, analytics, chromatics, civics, conics, dynamics, economics, esthetics, ethics, hydraulics, hydrodynamics, hydromechanics, hydrostatics, hysterics, linguistics, magnetics, mathematics, means, measles, metaphysics, mnemonics, molasses, mumps, news, optics, phonetics, phonics, physics, pneumatics, poetics, polemics, politics, pyrotechnics, rickets, spherics, statics, statistics, tactics, United States.* Note that most of these words end with *ics* and that many of them pertain to science. Their *ic* form is usually adjectival (page 126), sometimes with a meaning different from that conveyed by the corresponding noun form. These are not to be confused with the *ic* nouns the pluralization of which is regular—*antics, arithmetics, attics, critics, logics, rhetorics, rustics,* and the like. Spelled with *ic,* these, of course, require singular predicates; spelled with *ics,* plural predicates. But do not say *News are* for *News is, Politics are* for *Politics is, Mathematics are* for *Mathematics is.* The noun *athletics* meaning various kinds of sports is plural; meaning a system of training, it is singular. You therefore say *Athletics are his sole interest* and *Athletics has made him a fine physical specimen.*

Some nouns that end with *s* may have no corresponding singular, or, at least, no singular that is customarily used in a corresponding way. They are therefore plural in form *and* in meaning and use, their *s* ending not being a token of pluralization. A few of them denote inseparable pairs, and are thus called twinned plurals or false plurals. Some nouns in this group are *annals, ashes, bel-*

lows, billiards, bitters, breeches, cattle, clothes, drawers, draughts, dregs, eaves, entrails, forceps, gallows, goods, lees, links, nuptials, oats, obsequies, pincers, pliers, proceeds, quoits, reins, remains, riches, scales, scissors, shears, spectacles, suds, suspenders, thanks, tongs, trousers, tweezers, victuals, vitals, wages. You say *scissors sharpener,* not *scissor sharpener; spectacles case,* not *spectacle case; trousers pocket,* not *trouser pocket; oats granary,* not *oat granary. Wages* is today generally used as a plural in spite of the biblical *The wages of sin is death* in which emphasis for the sake of discipline was consciously placed upon singular *death—Death is the wages of sin*—in climactic position. And *death* is, moreover, subject of the idea, though not technically the subject.

The nouns below are sometimes called mixed plurals for the reason that, though most of them are customarily used as plurals, some may be used also as singulars; but most may be used in some sense, as some part of speech, without final *s,* and some form their plurals regularly. A few have no corresponding singular form: *aborigines, antipodes, archives, arms, assets, auspices, bagpipes, barracks, belongings, blues, bowels, braces, brains, chaps, commons, compasses, credentials, creeps, doings, dumps, environs, falls, fetters, fries, grounds, gums, hangings, headquarters, Hebrides, hindquarters, Indies, intestines, knickers, leavings, lodgings, manacles, manners, matins, middlings, odds, outskirts, pains, pantaloons, plus fours, premises, quarters, quits, shambles, sharings, shivers, snuffers, stairs, straits, summons, sweepings, teens, theatricals, tidings, tights, trappings, vespers, winnings, woods, works, yards, zippers.*

Plurals of nouns ending with *o* are formed with some irregularity. There are two general rules for the spelling of such plurals, but one of them at least is attended with so many exceptions that it is by no means a safe guide. Both are worthy of consideration, however, because such words, being chiefly of foreign origin, are difficult enough to spell even in the singular.

The first rule is that nouns ending with *o* preceded by a vowel are pluralized regularly—by the addition of *s,* as *adagios, cameos, capriccios, embryos (y* being equivalent of *i), folios, imbroglios, intaglios, Leos, nuncios, oratorios, pistachios, radios, ratios, rodeos, Romeos, seraglios,* and this rule, of course, covers double *o* endings, for the final *o* is preceded by a vowel—another *o—bamboos, cockatoos, cuckoos, hoodoos, kangeroos, shampoos, tattoos, voo-*

doos. (It may help to think of these double *o* words in relation to their double *e* sisters—*absentees, bees, committees, knees, jubilees, pedigrees,* and the like.) Some of the foregoing are still pluralized according to their foreign origin.

The second rule is that nouns ending with *o* preceded by a consonant are pluralized by the addition of *es* without increasing syllabication, as *archipelagoes, barricadoes, bastinadoes, bilboes, cargoes, dadoes, echoes, farragoes, grottoes, heroes, innuendoes, jingoes, lingoes, manifestoes, mosquitoes, mottoes, mulattoes, Negroes, noes, potatoes, tomatoes, tornadoes, torpedoes, vetoes.*

But here are twenty-two final *-o* words that are correctly pluralized in either way: *bravados, bravadoes; bravos, bravoes, buffalos, buffaloes; calicos, calicoes; desperados, desperadoes; didos, didoes; dodos, dodoes, dominos, dominoes; flamingos, flamingoes; frescos, frescoes; halos, haloes; hobos, hoboes; indigos, indigoes; mangos, mangoes; mementos, mementoes, palmettos, palmettoes; peccadillos, peccadilloes; porticos, porticoes; stuccos, stuccoes; viragos, viragoes; volcanos, valconoes; zeros, zeroes.*

As in other instances (pages 456 to 458) the third person singular, present active indicative of verbs follows these *o* rules, and they are, therefore, general rules; thus, you say *He radios* and *It echoes.*

And now comes the rub—the numerous exceptions to the second rule above, far outnumbering those that follow the rule. These, however, do not invalidate the rule, for the tendency to pluralize such words by means of *es* increases as words ending with *o* become fixed in the language. It will be recognized that most of the exceptions below have become anglicized comparatively lately or are by way of becoming anglicized, and that many of them are still used in highly special senses. At present, however, the following words as used in English are pluralized by the addition of *s* even though final *o* is preceded by a consonant. A few will be found listed below under foreign plurals, still wavering, as they are, between the land of nativity and the land of adoption: *albinos, altos, armadillos, autos, banjos, bassos, boleros, bronchos (broncos), buffos, burros, caballeros, cantos, casinos, Catos, cellos, chromos, contraltos, decimos, dittos, dynamos, Eskimos, fandangos, Filipinos, generalissimos, Gestapos, gringos, guanos, hidalgos, inamoratos, juntos, kimonos, lassos, major-domos, merinos, octavos, pianos, piccolos, pimentos, Platos, Plutos, ponchos, pros, provisos, quartos, ranchos, ridottos, rococos, rondos, salvos,*

scherzos, set-tos, silos, siroccos, solos, sombreros, sopranos, stilettos, tobaccos, torsos, tyros, violoncellos, virtuosos.

Unfortunately it cannot be claimed that the above lists are entirely reliable as far as general usage is concerned. Words in each of them are to be found written with plural forms other than those given. The first rule is the most consistently followed—the addition of *s* after *o* preceded by a vowel. But one thing is certain: There is no more revealing form of expressional affectation than that which would hold to a foreign plural a final *-o* word that shows every possibility of becoming a good English word and for which there is evident need in English. For Madame Elegance to say *The virtuosi performed the scherzi to bravi* instead of *The virtuosos performed the scherzos to bravos* is not only to put on dictional airs but also to retard linguistic progress. (A more consistent writing—and one that may come to pass—would be *The virtuosoes performed the scherzoes to bravoes.)*

Nouns ending with *i* tend to form their plurals regularly, as *alibis* and *antis* and *Tivolis*. But *rabbi* and *alkali* may be pluralized either *rabbis* or *rabbies, alkalis* or *alkalies,* the former in each case being preferred. *Macaroni,* meaning the food, is preferably pluralized *macaronis;* meaning young men of the world who affect foreign mannerisms, *macaronies.* But *macaroni* may, like wheat and fish, be a collective plural.

Science is privileged in retaining foreign plurals for the reason that by drawing upon foreign terms and keeping to them it can very often the more accurately designate what it means. The adoption of English plural terminations—*s* and *es*—tends to generalize a term. But sometimes such generalization takes place though science retains its foreign plural with the same meaning as the English or with a different one. True, foreign plurals—like foreign terms themselves—always hold for certain persons a little glamor;* they are part and parcel of the "paraphernalia" of scholarship, honorable ancestors of the persisting Latin prescription written by physicians and of the Latin diploma still presented at college commencements (to those who very often cannot read them). The happy tendency of English is to make foreign words comply with its own plural formations.

They do this haltingly and slowly enough in many instances. But unless the shock of such pluralization is too great or unless a

* See introduction to *Harper's English Grammar* by the same author

foreign word evinces no likelihood of ever becoming "naturalized" because it does not fit or is unnecessary, regular English pluralization should be applied. The tradition that "learning belongs to Latin" (or to Greek, or to anything else that is foreign) will not down. The mathematician would not think of giving up his precious *foci* for *focuses,* the biologist his *fungi* for *funguses,* the educator his *curricula* for *curriculums,* the astronomer his *nebulæ* for *nebulas.* It is probably true that—as many an editor has insisted—*errata* takes the curse off *mistakes* as *erratums* or mere *errors* could never do. Not so long ago *mediums* was set down by the dictionaries as correct only in reference to those capable of being agents of the supernatural, as *spiritualistic mediums;* and *media* was indicated as the preferred plural in all other uses. But this distinction is no longer drawn by the dictionaries, though the differentiated usage persists to some extent (page 366).

It will be observed in the list below that foreign singular nouns in *us* tend to be regular in English pluralization, that is, they add *es* to form their plurals; that foreign singular nouns in *sis* retain their foreign plural in *es, e* being pronounced long. The latter tendency makes for both euphony and convenience. If these nouns were pluralized by English rule we should have such clumsy forms as *analysises* and *antithesises.* It is important to remember that the *e* in *es* plurals is long; if it is not made so, plural forms may sound the same as singular—*crisis* and *crises* are differentiated by this sound alone, as are *axes* (plural of *ax)* and *axes* (plural of *axis), ellipsis* and *ellipses, parenthesis* and *parentheses.* The French plural *x* endings yield more easily than any others to English pluralization; the Latin *um* endings are next in ease of assimilation, the *a (memoranda)* foreign plural giving way to *ums* except in special (usually scientific) terms. Since most foreign terms are of Latin origin, knowledge of the Latin declensions is of importance in pluralizing Latin nouns—the first declension feminine plural *æ* for singular *a (alumna, alumnæ),* the second declension masculine plural *i* for singular *us (alumnus, alumni)* having the greatest nuisance value (page 488).

The *alumnæ-alumni* differentiation has been such a bugbear that *alumni* is gradually being adopted as of common gender for use in coeducational schools and colleges. Sometimes even in general usage the foreign plural has a meaning different from that of the anglicized plural. *Cherubs,* for instance, applies to children or

their representation or to beautiful (young) persons, but the Hebrew plural *cherubim (cherubin* in the Vulgate) means angelic beings ranking second to seraphim. And *seraphs* itself pertains to art representations, but its Hebrew plural *seraphim* denotes a group or order of angelic beings. The less common (because more special) *teraph* is also pluralized *teraphim,* not *teraphs;* it is a small image representing a household god, consulted as an oracle by the orthodox Hebrews. The addition of *s* to any of these Hebrew plurals—*cherubims, seraphims, teraphims*—is incorrect, though unfortunately often seen. One plural of *index*—*indices*—is confined to mathematical use to mean the figure or letter or expression showing the power or root of a quantity, but the other plural—*indexes*—means a list or table or file (usually alphabetical) made to facilitate reference to contents of a book or collection or library, and the like. *Appendices* as plural of *appendix* is now almost archaic, *appendixes* being preferred form in most uses. But the former is still correct in general usage to mean anything added, as supplementary content in a book, it is incorrect used in reference to the vermiform appendix. The regular plural of *genius*—*geniuses*—means persons having distinguished ability or talent; its foreign plural—*genii*—means spirits or titular deities. *Genuses,* so-called "straight" plural of *genus,* means kinds or classes or types; whereas its Latin plural *genera* is a scientific word applied principally to scientific classifications. *Stamens,* as regular plural of *stamen,* means male fertilizing cells in plants, but its Latin plural—*stamina*—meaning warps or threads or fibers is now rarely used even as a scientific plural, but, rather, as a singular general noun meaning vigor or force or endurance. *Stigmas* in general usage means spots, brands, marks of any kind that set apart, especially in an unfavorable sense, but the Latin plural *stigmata* is used in connection with botany and medicine in highly special senses. In flowers, for example, stigmata are the parts that receive pollen grains for germination. The Latin word *opus* has long since been an English adoption meaning a work, especially a musical or a literary composition. Its plural *opera,* in the original meaning work or pains, is used in English chiefly in the sense of musical drama. Foreign terms should be adjusted to the number required by syntax; otherwise their dictional grandeur may suffer anticlimax. *Procès-verbal* (authenticated statement), for example, is *procès-verbaux* in the plural; *arrière-pensée* (mental reservation) is *arrière-pensées; faux pas* (false step) is—comfortably—the same in both numbers.

There are many other double plurals among foreign nouns but the foregoing suffice to illustrate the characteristics of all such forms. Here as elsewhere there is a leveling or regularizing tendency in the language that makes for uniformity and simplification —and that mollifies error in the use of a foreign plural for an English, or vice versa. A few native nouns still persist in the double-plural field. Those that differentiate between distributive and collective meaning serve a useful purpose (see above); those that are remnants of a former day tend to become archaic. *Brethren,* for example, indicating a social relationship as of a club or society is falling out of use except in religious and poetical expression, whereas *brothers* is now correctly used to mean blood relationship as well as social relationship, as *fraternity brothers* and *Masonic brothers, Baptist Brethren* and *United Brethren.*

But it is dangerous to resort to the collective plural just to cover ignorance of the exact plural ending of a noun, foreign or other. By no means all singular nouns may be used as collective plurals. *One of the matrix is defective* makes nonsense, for *matrix* cannot be used collectively in this way, any more than *pie* and *cake* can (page 249). *Please give me five of the gladiolus* said a customer to a gardener—and he plucked her one stem with five flowers on it. Similarly in *fifty different kinds of larva, four sets of axis, three types of erratum, larva, axis, erratum* may be regarded as, at least, misleading collective plurals, for these expressions really say *kinds of one, sets of one, types of one.* But in *I never could discover how many different sorts of man you are,* the singular *man* is correctly used in a generic collective sense, the meaning being how many different men in one are exemplified in one man's make-up. This is evidently not the kind of meaning in the other examples above.

The word *twin* means one of two; *twins* means two—one pair of twins. *Two twins* means four; *three twins,* six; *four twins,* eight, and so on. Sometimes two different plurals have entirely different meanings. *Cloths,* for instance, means kinds of cloth, and *clothes* means garments. One plural of *die* is *dies* meaning metal forms for stamping; another is *dice* meaning cubes for gaming. *Pennies,* plural of *penny,* means individual coins; *pence,* another plural, means a sum or totality in pennies (the latter is archaic in the United States but not in England).

Sometimes the same plural form may have a meaning widely different from that of its corresponding singular form. *Compass* may mean extent, and *compasses,* measuring instruments, *effect* may mean change or result, and *effects,* property; *ground* may mean earth or basis, and *grounds,* field or cemetery or dregs or foundation; *iron* may mean ore or metal, and *irons,* fetters; *leaving* may mean departure, and *leavings,* leftovers; *pain* may mean suffering, and *pains,* care or diligence; *part* may mean fraction of, and *parts,* qualities or talents; *return* may mean a coming back, and *returns,* profits or goods or statistics, *shroud* may mean the dress of a corpse, and *shrouds,* ropes leading from a ship's mastheads; *stock,* goods or merchandise, and *stocks,* investments. These are representative trouble-makers in this pesky group. When you say you have the *blues* you do not necessarily mean that you possess many different tints and shades of the color blue. When you say you ate some *greens* for lunch, you do not mean that you obligated your in'ards to digest several public parks. When a dear old Victorian lady faints because her *stays* (not *stay*) are too tight, you politely administer smelling *salts* (not *salt*) to revive her.

The following list of foreign plurals is to be taken as illustrative only, not by any means as exhaustive or inclusive. A longer list of foreign plurals will be found on page 464 of *Get It Right,* and even the unabridged dictionaries may be depended upon to carry the plural forms of the more commonly used foreign nouns. With the exception of some of the strictly scientific foreign nouns, most will be seen to take an English pluralization regularly and euphoniously.

Foreign Singular	*Foreign Plural*	*Generally Used English Plural*
ambo	ambones	ambos
antrum	antra	antrums
arboretum	arboreta	arboretums
arena	arenae	arenas
auditorium	auditoria	auditoriums
aura	aurae	auras
basis	bases	bases
basso	bassi	bassos
buffo	buffi	buffos
calyx	calyces	calyxes
capriccio	capricci	capriccios
chrysalis	chrysalides	chrysalises
cicerone	ciceroni	cicerones

Foreign Singular	*Foreign Plural*	*Generally Used English Plural*
crux	cruces	cruxes
decennium	decennia	decenniums
dictum	dicta	dictums
drachma	drachmæ	drachmas
emporium	emporia	emporiums
excursus	excurses	excursuses
executrix	executrices	executrixes
flambeau	flambeaux	flambeaus
fungus	fungi	funguses
gravamen	gravamina	gravamens
hiatus	hiatus	hiatuses
honorarium	honoraria	honorariums
hypothesis	hypotheses	hypotheses
intaglio	intagli	intaglios
interregnum	interregna	interregnums
iris	irides	irises
lacuna	lacunae	lacunas
larva	larvae	larvas
matrix	matrices	matrixes
miasma	miasmata	miasmas
momentum	momenta	momentums
nucleus	nuclei	nucleuses
radix	radices	radixes
rhinoceros	rhinoceri	rhinoceroses
sarcophagus	sarcophagi	sarcophaguses
scherzo	scherzi	scherzos
seraglio	seragli	seraglios
seraph	seraphim	seraphs
sinus	sinus	sinuses
sphinx	sphinges	sphinxes
stamen	stamina	stamens
stigma	stigmata	stigmas
teraph	teraphim	teraphs
triumvir	triumviri	triumvirs
virtuoso	virtuosi	virtuosos

Most nouns ending with *f* or *fe* or *ff* form their plurals regularly, that is, by simply adding *s*, as *bailiffs, beliefs, bluffs, briefs, carafes, chefs, chiefs, clefs, cliffs, cuffs, dwarfs, fiefs, giraffes, griefs, gulfs, handkerchiefs, hoofs, kerfs, mischiefs, muffs, plaintiffs, proofs, puffs, reefs, reliefs, roofs, safes, skiffs, strifes, waifs, whiffs, woofs.*

But some nouns ending with *f* or *fe* change the *f* to *v* and add *es* to form their plurals, without increasing the number of syllables. In many such nouns the final *f* is preceded by a long vowel or by *l*, as *calf, calves; elf, elves; half, halves; knife, knives; leaf, leaves; life, lives; loaf, loaves; self, selves; sheaf, sheaves; thief, thieves;*

wife, wives; wolf, wolves. Words in this group are as a rule of Anglo-Saxon origin. Those in the former group are about evenly divided as between Anglo-Saxon and foreign origin.

Beef, used in reference to oxen ready for killing, is likely to be pluralized *beefs* in the United States; but otherwise and elsewhere *beeves* is the preferred plural. *Dwarf* is no longer pluralized *dwarves,* though *wharves* is the preferred plural of *wharf* in the United States, *wharfs* in England. *Scarf* may be pluralized *scarfs* or *scarves,* preference going to the former. *Staff* is pluralized *staffs,* used in the sense of a group of persons—officers, personnel, employes, corps; it is pluralized *staves* used in the sense of sticks or poles or cudgels. Used figuratively in the sense of prop or support (as in *the staff of life*) *staffs* is preferred plural though it is rarely pluralized in this meaning. The horizontal lines on which music is written is called either *staff* or *stave,* and either corresponding plural may be used in this connection. In compounds *staffs* is now preferred form, as *flagstaffs, plowstaffs, tipstaffs,* though *tipstaves* persists to some degree. (A *tipstaff* is an officer—constable, bailiff—who bears a staff). *Turf* may be pluralized either *turfs* or *turves,* the former being the more generally used.

The corresponding verb forms of nouns ending with *f* or *fe* or *ff* frequently cause confusion in spelling. *Half,* for example, is not a verb, its corresponding verb form being *halve—He halves, He halved, He has halved.* The noun *gulf* is also a regular verb as it stands—*It gulfs, It gulfed, It has gulfed. Engulf* is synonymous with *gulf* as verb, and is more commonly used. Neither, be it noted, changes to the *v* form—*gulved* and *engulved* are wrong. *Shelf* is noun only, its corresponding verb form being *shelve—He shelves, He shelved, He has shelved.* But the slang verb *wolf,* meaning to evince greed or to be ravenous, is regular—*He "wolfs" his dinner* and *He has "wolfed" the booty. Knife* is also a slang verb and, as such, retains the letter *f* in all parts—*He knifes, He knifed, He has knifed.* But *life, strife, wife* are nouns only, the corresponding verb forms being *live, strive, wive.* The last, common enough in Elizabethan times, is now almost archaic—*He wives* (that is, *He takes a wife*), *He wived, He has wived. Roof* is a regular verb—*He roofs, He roofed, He has roofed*—as is the colloquial (if not slang) verb *hoof.* But *proof* is noun only, its corresponding verb form being *prove.* The verbs corresponding to *belief, grief, relief, thief* are respectively *believe, grieve, relieve,*

thieve. But *brief* as verb meaning to outline or draw up an argument retains *f* in all parts—*He briefs, He briefed, He has briefed. Bluff, cuff, muff, puff* are all regular verbs, retaining both *f's* in all parts. *Dwarf,* as verb, remains true to noun form—*It dwarfs, It dwarfed, It has dwarfed*—and *turf* preferably follows suit, though gardening publications occasionally use such expressions as *turning the lawn* and *Turve just before a rain, if possible.* (The dictionaries inexplicably dodge this verb.) *Leaf* in the sense of to turn pages or to shoot out and produce leaves retains *f*—*He leafed the book slowly* and *That tree has leafed late this year.* But *leave* meaning to go away or depart or deliver becomes *left* in the imperfect tense and past participle. *Sheaf* may or may not follow suit; provincially *He sheafed the wheat* passes muster, but in more general usage *sheave* is the correlative verb of the noun *sheaf—He sheaves, He sheaved, He has sheaved.* The slang verb *loaf,* meaning to idle, and the provincial verb *loaf,* meaning to round or pile, are both regular—*He loafs, He loafed, He has loafed. Reef,* meaning to reduce sail, is likewise regular—*He reefs, He reefed, He has reefed.* The old nautical verb *reeve* (imperfect *rove* or *reeved,* past participle *roven* or *reeved*) is now rarely used. *Staff* is a regular verb—*He staffs his office* and *He has staffed his office,* that is, taken on an office force. The verb *stave,* meaning to break holes in or to keep at a distance, is unrelated to the verb *staff,* its imperfect being either *stove* or *staved* and its past participle *staved.*

The foregoing represent some of the pitfalls in spelling that words ending with *f* and *fe* and *ff* present. Owing to the versatile transference of function that characterizes the English language, almost any noun above listed in this category may be used as verb. The dictionary—even the unabridged—may not always be depended upon to help out, inasmuch as it by no means always gives parts of verbs. Euphony and rhythm may occasionally be depended upon to make a wise decision as between *f* and *v*; word origin may sometimes help. But rather than invent a verb from an *f* or *fe* or *ff* noun, and thus fall into slang or barbarism, look up a synonym of the noun the correlative verb form of which gives you pause.

Nouns ending with *y* preceded by a consonant usually change *y* to *i* and add *es* to form their plurals, as *ally, allies; berry, berries; body, bodies; city, cities; dairy, dairies; diary, diaries; enemy, enemies; fly, flies; lady, ladies; quantity, quantities; sty, sties;*

tragedy, tragedies. Ambiloquy (use of ambiguous terms), *alloquy* (act of speaking for another), *colloquy* (conference), *pauciloquy* (sparing or rare speech), *soliloquy* (talking to one's self), *ventriloquy* (speaking "from the belly") similarly change *y* to *i* and add *es* to form their plurals, inasmuch as *quy* is equivalent to *kwy* in pronunciation, as *colloquies, soliloquies.*

Nouns ending with *y* preceded by a vowel usually retain *y* and add *s* to form their plurals, that is, they form their plurals regularly, as *alley, alleys; boy, boys; buoy, buoys; day, days; guy, guys; key, keys; kidney, kidneys; monkey, monkeys; turkey, turkeys; valley, valleys; volley, volleys. Money* is pluralized regularly—*moneys*—in general use, but used to refer to sums of money the old form *monies* is still insisted upon by many authorities though this usage is passing. Usually *money* may be used collectively to cover *monies,* as *The king's monies are invested in various countries* and *The king's money is invested in various countries.*

The rules pertaining to the pluralization of nouns ending with *y* applies also to the third person singular, present indicative active of correlative verbs, as *He plies (ply) his trade* and *He fancies (fancy) this* and *He allies (ally) himself with the cause, He journeys far* and *He strays from home* and *She plays well.* The rules also repeat in part those given on page 486 in regard to the treatment of *y* before suffixes—its change to *i* when preceded by a consonant, its retention when preceded by a vowel.

Titles are pluralized regularly but there are alternatives that are sometimes decided by social usage. You may say *the Miss Blaines* or *the Misses Blaine* or *the Misses Sara and Dorothy Blaine; the Messrs Hockman* or *the Mr Hockmans* or *the Messrs John and William Hockman; Professors Graham and Hampton; Doctors Hurlburt and Anderson.* Never pluralize both title and name; the pluralization of either makes both plural. Say, therefore, the *Doctors Ferguson* or *the Doctor Fergusons,* not *the Doctors Fergusons.* In using titles and names together it is preferable to pluralize titles in order thus to leave no doubt as to the exact surnames. *The Misses Larkin* is, therefore, preferable to *the Miss Larkins; the Misses Larkins* to *the Miss Larkinses.* Inasmuch as there is no plural form for *Mrs,* surnames following it have to be pluralized when plural forms are required, as *the Mrs Lamberts* or *the Mrs Abrams* (page 430), or *the Mrs Henry and Horace Hurlburts.* The word for which *Mrs* stands is really *mistress*

(plural *mistresses*) but it is not used in the sense of *Mrs. Missis* is an illiterate form in writing, though it is the pronounced form of *Mrs. Madam* is the English equivalent of French *Madame;* there is no English plural, the French plural *Mesdames* being used to some extent in English. But *Ladies* is increasingly used in correspondence as elsewhere as plural of *Madam.* Do not use *Madams* (page 94). The conjunction *and* is preferably used in the joining of two names, as in *the Messrs Harrison and Matthews* (page 366). The ampersand—*&*—is never correct in social usage; it persists in business uses, but today quite as many business firms use the *and* as the ampersand.

The royal plural is almost dead and done with—as is royalty itself. Its most emphatic form is that in which plural and singular forms are joined in apposition, as in Caesar's "What touches us ourself shall be last served." The use of a plural of general reference or signification is called indefinite plural, as in *He was born in the nineties* and *They all say.* The use of *we, our, us, ourselves* to indicate that a writer or a speaker is expressing the beliefs or policies of a group rather than of himself alone is called the editorial plural. Used by any one in mock modesty to refer to himself alone, it is an annoying affectation, but used by some one in actual reference to the members of a committee or firm or board it is correct and very often necessary (page 314).

The plural of solid compounds is formed regularly, as *airplanes, cupfuls, mantraps, stepsisters, workmen.* You say *two spoonfuls,* not *two spoonsful.* You may say *two spoons full,* but you must mean exactly what you say, namely, two spoons that are filled, not spoonful as a unit of measure.

The plural of hyphened compounds is formed by adding *s* or *es* to the major part; thus you say *sons-in-law* because *sons* is the fundamental part of the term, being a noun modified by the prepositional phrase *in law.* Similarly you say *aides-de-camp, billets-doux* (*billets* note, *doux* sweet), *brothers-in-law, chefs-d'oeuvre, commanders-in-chief, courts-martial* (military courts), *cousins-german* (*german* first), *hangers-on, knights-errant* (*errant* wandering), *lookers-on, mother-of-pearls* (nothing to do with motherhood, emphasis upon pearl), *postmaster-general* (general postmaster, that is), *sergeants-at-arms, sergeants-major* (*major* is an adjective), *stoppers-by, five-per-cents, vicars-general* (page 525).

The plural of "spaced compounds", that is, of two-word terms commonly written together but written neither solid nor with hyphen, is similarly formed by adding the sign of the plural to the basic member of the term, as *attorneys general* (an attorney general is really a general attorney, *general* being an adjective modifying *attorney;* there is no consistent practice yet in regard to hyphening this term), *beaus ideal* (*ideal* is an adjective), *brigadier generals, major generals, notaries public, poets laureate* (*public* and *laureate* are adjectives), *rights of way, tables d'hote* (tables of the host), *valets de chambre, vice presidents* (there is no consistent practice yet in regard to hyphening this term). In all such terms it is important first to decide which part of the compound is the more (most) important. Do not be deceived by the fact that the adjective follows the noun (as French double terms invariably do) and thus pluralize the adjective.

Some spaced compounds consisting of nouns of equal importance in the combination are pluralized on both parts, as *knights bachelors, Knights Templars, men servants, women servants* (practice in writing the last two varies widely; they are sometimes written solid, sometimes with hyphen, sometimes as here). But *man-eaters* is an exception, *men-eaters* never being used, not because cannibal or shark or other man-eating animal satisfies his appetite with one man only but, rather, because the *eater* idea of the term is the more arresting one. But the first element of a hyphened compound composed of two nouns is rarely pluralized even though it may refer to a whole class. Such hyphened terms as *forget-me-nots, go-betweens, will-o'-the-wisps* take final pluralization, first, because any other arrangement would be awkward and ineuphonious, and, second, because there is no single unit more important than another but all units are merged to convey a single impression. If an apostrophe occurs on the first term of a hyphened compound, pluralization follows rule, as *cat's-paws* and *bird's-eye-views.*

Figures, letters, signs, and symbols are usually pluralized by the use of apostrophe *s ('s),* as *p's, 4's, &'s, ¾'s,* the two *s's* in *necessary.* In financial statements, however, the *s* alone is used, as *Consolidated 3s* and *United States Steel 4½s.* In some instances the use of *s* alone after a figure may be mistaken for shillings, inasmuch as it is used to designate this word in British usage. But in American stock quotations such confusion is not likely to occur. Words referred to as words, regardless of meaning, are sometimes plu-

ralized by *'s*, as *if's* and *oh's* and *as-it-were's*. But the tendency of usage here is to simplify and use *s* alone, as *ifs* and *ohs* and *as-it-weres*, context making clear that reference is made to the word as a combination of letters rather than as the symbol of an idea.

If a word requires two apostrophes of different signification, the pluralizing one is better omitted; thus, *don'ts* is better than *don't's*, *can'ts* than *can't's*, though the latter in each illustration is exact. *Pros and cons, ins and outs, ups and downs, You use too many buts and won'ts in your conversation* are acceptable today, and are recommended in the cause of simplification. If, however, the omission of the apostrophe in pluralization of a letter is likely to cause misunderstanding, it should of course be retained. The plural of *a* or of *i*, written *as* or *is*, may at first sight be taken for the word *as* or the word *is;* whereas *a's* and *i's* would hardly be so misunderstood. The rule of pluralization by apostrophes applies to abbreviations, as *The YMCA's are holding a convention* and *The DAR's are a formidable body* and *The H H Harrison, Jr's school days are over.* In the verb barbarisms *He OK's me* and *He PDQ's me all the time* and *He sir's me to death,* the apostrophe may or may not be used *(OKs—PDQs—Sirs).*

Proper names are pluralized as common nouns are, as, for example, *Browns, Bruns, Carolinas, Charleses, Cohens, Ednas, Johns, Joneses, Thomases, Thompsons, Virginias.* But they stop with *s* and *es,* that is, they do not follow the final *y* rule or the final *o* rule completely. You write *Harrys,* not *Harries; Shapiros,* not *Shapiroes; Marys,* not *Maries* (*Maries* is the plural of *Marie*); *Anthonys* and *Levys* and *Colombos* and *Moroccos,* not *Anthonies* and *Levies* and *Colomboes* and *Moroccoes.*

CONTEST *

	NO	YES
1	She is an alumnus of Bryn Mawr	She is an alumna of Bryn Mawr
2	I have two bureaux in my room	I have two bureaus in my room
3	We love these hills and vallies	We love these hills and valleys
4	He just loaves the livelong day	He just loafs the livelong day
5	Aren't they the most lovable cherubims	Aren't they the most lovable cherubs
6	Our heros will soon be marching home	Our heroes will soon be marching home
7	One of my suspender buckles is lost	One of my suspenders buckles is lost

* See page 3

	NO	YES
8	Measles are a pesky disease	Measles is a pesky disease
9	We admired the red tile rooves so much	We admired the red tile roofs so much
10	We have two ne'er-do-well in the family	We have two ne'er-do-wells in the family
11	They have been engulved by the avalanche	They have been engulfed by the avalanche
12	The Misses Wilkinses called while you were out	The Misses Wilkins called while you were out
13	Keeping up with the Jones is quite an effort	Keeping up with the Joneses is quite an effort
14	The Chiefs Justice of the United States are in session	The Chief Justices of the United States are in session
15	The editor in chiefs will meet tomorrow	The editors in chief will meet tomorrow
16	Our secretary of states have always been distinguished men	Our secretaries of state have always been distinguished men
17	The two brigadiers general are coming to dine with us	The two brigadier generals are coming to dine with us
18	You forgot to put in the two cupsful of flour	Yor forgot to put in the two cupfuls of flour
19	This invention by the Coe brothers prove them genii	This invention by the Coe brothers proves them geniuses
20	We observed two very strange phenomenas	We observed two very strange phenomena
21	We are going to attend the Atkinson nuptial tomorrow	We are going to attend the Atkinson nuptials tomorrow
22	Mother has put up twenty jar of canned peaches today	Mother has put up twenty jars of canned peaches today
23	The news this morning are the worst we have had	The news this morning is the worst we have had
24	This book has two indices, one for words and one for other items treated	This book has two indexes, one for words and one for other items treated
25	There are three Henries and two Dorothies in our class	There are three Henrys and two Dorothys in our class
26	Doctor Cutter has removed twenty appendices during the past month	Doctor Cutter has removed twenty appendixes during the past month
27	Dot your eyes, and cross your teas; close your owes, and open your ease	Dot your i's, and cross your t's, close your o's, and open your e's
28	Your data regarding the specieses is incorrect, but thanks is due you for assembling it nevertheless	Your data regarding the species are incorrect, but thanks are due you for collecting them nevertheless
29	The summons are to be issued tomorrow, and every means are to be taken to see that justice is done	The summonses are to be issued tomorrow, and every means is to be taken to see that justice is done

SECTION FORTY-FIVE ASSIMILATION

English spelling has always been more considerate of the ear than of the eye, chiefly because the tongue has forced it to be. In other words, the human tongue is so intolerant of sound and fury signifying nothing that, regardless of word derivation, it sometimes "lops off" letters that do not please it—refuses to be unduly twisted by clumsy letter combinations and awkward syllabication. This is one good reason for calling our native language the Mother Tongue. And it has a close ally—in many instances a very aggressive one—in the human ear, ever insistent upon "concord of sweet sounds." This is not to say that all difficulties in spelling and pronunciation are by way of being ironed out. This can never be the happy consummation of a language that is always putting off the old and taking on the new. There still abound many, many words containing unwieldy and useless letter combinations that speakers and writers must master by sheer determination and stubbornness of attack rather than by any logical rule or process. But there is a power in language that makes for simplification as its use continues, that power being among other things the conscious or unconscious insistence upon convenience and upon adaptation to physical equipment. Speech, of which writing is a later accessory, is a phase of evolution, and evolution is at best a slow and lumbering process. The miracle of it all is that man has done as well as he has by way of speaking (and writing), his physical limitations being what they are. The Simplified Spelling Board (page 510) in its laudable but ambitious attempt to accelerate evolution has done something to be thankful for by way of eliminating excess spelling baggage. Here is one of its earliest lists.

abridgment, acknowledgment, addrest, affixt, altho, arbor, ardor, ax, behavior, blest, blusht, bur, candor, carest, catalog, center, chapt, check, civilize, clamor, clapt, claspt, clipt, clue, color, comprest, comprize, confest, coquet, criticize, crost, crusht, dasht, decalog, defense, demagog, deprest, dialog, dike, dipt, discust, dispatch, distrest, draft, drest, dript, droopt, dropt, dulness, endeavor, envelop, exprest, fantom, favor, fiber, fixt, flavor, fulfil, fulness, gage, gelatin, gild, gipsy, goodby, gript, harbor, harken, heapt, hiccup, honor, humor, husht, idolize, imprest, instil, kist, labor, lapt, lasht, leapt, lodgment, lookt, lopt, luster, mama, meager, mist, mixt, mold, molt, neighbor, nipt, odor, offense, opprest,

parlor, past, pedagog, plow, possesst, practise, prefixt, prest, pretense, primeval, profest, program, prolog, propt, pur, quartet, rapt, recognize, rime, ript, rumor, savior, scepter, silvan, sipt, sithe, skilful, skipt, slipt, smolder, snapt, somber, specter, splendor, stedfast, stept, stopt, stript, suffixt, sulfur, supprest, surprize, tapt, theater, tho, thoro, thorofare, thoroly, thru, thruout, tipt, topt, tost, trapt, traveler, tript, valor, vext, vigor, washt, whipt, wilful, wisht, wo, woful, woolen, wrapt.

But many of these reformed spellings are still found shocking by the purists who stolidly insist that *thorough* has a beauty of tradition and *thoro* an ugliness of modernity. In spite of them, however, such reforms as are suggested by words in the above list have been going on slowly for centuries, and are still going on—would still go on—Simplified Spelling Board or no Simplified Spelling Board.

Ease of pronunciation and agreeableness of hearing have had at least something to do by way of simplifying the Latin prefix *ab* to *a* before roots beginning with *v*, the happy result being *avert* and *avocation* instead of the awkward and ineuphonious *abvert* and *abvocation*. It may accommodate still further by becoming *abs* before roots beginning with *t*, as in *abstain* (*abs* and *teneo* hold from) and in *abstract* (*abs* and *traho* draw from).

The Latin prefix *ad* is perhaps the most versatile of word beginnings in making such convenient adaptations. The final consonant *d* assimilates to the initial consonant of a root by becoming *c* before *c* (*accept* rather than *adcept*), *f* before *f* (*afflict* rather than *adflict*), *g* before *g* (*aggrandize* rather than *adgrandize*), and so on in *allude, announce, appear, arrest, assume, attribute,* in which the *d* "melts" respectively into *l, n, p, r, s, t.*

The Greek prefix *anti* remains intact in *antiseptic,* but before a vowel it is likely to become *ant,* as in *antarctic.* Sometimes, however, the *i* is retained before a vowel, whereupon pronunciation pace is comfortably slackened by a hyphen between prefix and stem, as in *anti-imperialistic* and *anti-immigration* (page 531). This Greek prefix means against, and it must not be confused with the Latin prefix *ante,* meaning before, which stubbornly clings to its final *e,* but without inconvenience, as in *antecedent, antechamber, antedate, antediluvian, ante-Edwardian, antemortem, antemundane, antenuptial, antepenult, anteprandial, anteroom.*

The Greek prefix *cata (kata),* meaning concerning or in accordance with, holds its own in *catastrophe,* but before aspirate *holos,* meaning whole, it drops final *a* and merges gracefully to become *catholic;* and in *category* it becomes *cat* to assimilate to an initial vowel in a Greek root.

Co in *cohabit, cog* in *cognate, col* in *collapse, cor* in *corroborate, con* in *converse* are all "accommodations" of *com* (Latin *cum* meaning *with*) which keeps its identity only before the letters *b, f, m, p,* as in *combat, comfit, command, compare.* The Latin *di, dif, dis—divert, different, discommode*—are likewise one and the same prefix similarly adjusted to ear and tongue, as are *en* and *el* and *em* in, respectively, *encourage* and *ellipsis* and *empiric.* (The Latin separative *di* is not to be confused with the Greek prefix *di* meaning two.) *Ex* is easy to say and hear in *except,* but it would not be so easy in *elude* so the *x* is dropped and *e* alone is used, and it is changed to *f* in *effort* and to *c* in *eccentric (ek sen'trik).*

The Greek prefix *epi,* meaning on or upon or over or beside or in addition to, as in *epigram* (written upon) and *epithet* (placed beside), becomes *ep* before a vowel in order to prevent awkward combining, as in *epoch* (*epi* upon and *echein* hold), and also before aspirate *h,* as in *ephemeral* (*epi* over and *hemera* day—short-lived, over in a day).

The Latin prefix *in* is almost as obliging as *ad* in adapting itself to roots. There are really two such prefixes, one meaning *in* or *within* or *into* or *on* or *upon,* and one meaning negation—*non* or *not* or *un.* The first of these is seen at work in *incline,* and in such adjustments as *il* (before *l*) and *im* (before *b, m, p*) and *ir* (before *r*), in *illustrious* and *impend* and *irradiate* respectively; the negative *in* is similarly illustrated in *infidel, illimitable, immaculate, irrefutable.* This latter or negative *in* is never changed to *en* as the former sometimes is. *Inactive, incapable, incompetent, incredible, infrequent, insufficient, invalid, invisible* are but very few of the numerous negative *in* words that must always be spelled in this way. But the former, constant as it is in many words, such as *include, income, incur, induce, inflict, inform, inject, insert, intrude, invert,* may become *en,* thanks (or otherwise) to French influence as the Roman tongue spread northward; thus, you have *enable, enact, enamel, enchant, encompass, endeavor, endow, enfeeble, enforce, engage, enhance, enjoy, enlarge, ennoble,*

enrage, enrich, ensue, entreat, and numerous others. Some of the words belonging in the latter category may, however, be written with either *en* or *in*. The tendency is to regularize spelling by keeping to the *in* form. But both *encase* and *incase, enclose* and *inclose, encrust* and *incrust, endorse* and *indorse, engraft* and *ingraft, enquire* and *inquire, ensure* and *insure, entrench* and *intrench, entrust* and *intrust, enure* and *inure, enwrap* and *inwrap* are correct. The British prefer *en,* as a rule, and write *encase, encrust, enfold,* though usage varies widely in England, as it does in the United States. Until comparatively lately *insure* was a commercial spelling in England, and *ensure* a general one. *Incrust, ingrain, inquire, inquiry, insure, inure, inweave,* and *endorse, enthrone, entwine, enwreathe* are a few of the spellings that appear to be common to both countries. The prefix *im* (modification of the first Latin *in* above) is subject to the same fickleness that besets *in,* the British again preferring *em.* If you look up the *in* and the *im* words in the dictionaries, you will be given a "merry chase" from the *e's* to the *i's,* or vice versa, for usage is by no means established with many of them.

In *occupy,* in *offer,* in *oppress,* the second letter is in reality a modification of *b* in the Latin prefix *ob* which has accommodatingly become *oc* before *c, of* before *f, op* before *p.* In *obstinate,* however, and *obnoxious* this prefix, meaning to or toward or against or over, stands intact, being neither difficult to pronounce nor disagreeable to hear.

The Latin prefix *per,* meaning through or thoroughly (Anglo-Saxon *thurh* is the original of both *through* and *thoroughly*), as in *permit* (*per* and *mitto* send) and *pertain* (*per* and *teneo* hold), becomes *pel* in *pellucid* (*per* and *luceo* shine). As it was passing through France on its way from Rome to England, the French pronounced it *par,* and as result there is *parboil,* meaning to boil partly or to heat thoroughly, and *pardon,* meaning to give—to "give in"—thoroughly. Frequently confused with *per* metathetically (page 297) is the Latin prefix *pre* meaning before. It retains its identity but is frequently hyphened to a root beginning with a vowel, especially with *e,* as *pre-eminent, pre-engage, pre-establish, pre-exact, pre-examine, pre-exposure. Prehaps* for *perhaps* is the most common error made in confusing these two prefixes, but *pervail* for *prevail, persume* for *presume, perdicament* for *predicament, perdominate* for *predominate* are close seconds to it, as are *presevere* for *persevere, prespiration* for *perspiration, prespec-*

tive for *perspective* on the other side of the case. And such words as *precept* and *percept, pre-emptory* and *peremptory, prefect* and *perfect, preform* and *perform,* each correct in its own realm of use and meaning, seem not only to offer opportunity for error but to insist upon it very often (page 328).

Sur is really the Latin suffix *super* holding on to French influence. It means over, and it keeps its identity, as may be observed in such terms as *surfeit, surmise, surmount, surprise, surround, survey.* The Latin prefix *sub,* meaning under, is obsequious to the initial consonant of roots, changing to *su, suc, suf, sug, sum, sup, sur, sus,* as, respectively, in *supine, succeed, suffer, suggest, summon, suppress, surrogate, suspect.*

The Greek prefix *syn* as in *synonym* (page 348) contracts to *sy* before *s,* as in *system* and *systole;* becomes *syl* before *l* in *syllable* and *syllogism,* and *sym* before *b* and *m* and *p* in *symbol* and *symmetry* and *symposium* respectively.

The much used Latin prefix *trans,* meaning across, is easily recognizable in *translate* and *transverse.* But it conveniently drops final *s* before root *s* to prevent sigmatism, as in *transpire* and *transubstantiate,* and even more conveniently drops both *n* and *s* in *tradition* and *traduce* and *travesty.*

A comprehensive *and-so-forth* may be set down here, for the examples of letter and sound assimilation above given represent a few only of those that may be accumulated in a short time by even a cursory leafing of the dictionary. Some of the most important prefixes are, however, treated here, enough certainly for illustration of a principle. It is by no means to be assumed that euphony and ease of pronunciation are the only causes of such assimilation of alphabetic sounds as has been briefly explained above, important as these forces are. There have been other forces at work—geographic, climatic, racial, physical, linguistic (the influence of the language of adoption upon the forms adopted)—each with its own particular contribution to modification. Pure linguistic strains are almost as rare as are pure racial strains. Mongrels are at once the highest and the lowest forms of progeny, in words as in men.

Neither is it to be assumed that such assimilation is always an unmixed blessing. Indeed, such assimilative processes as are discussed above may cause mere spelling to be more rather than

less difficult by way of making the speller self conscious. For the merging of sounds very often occasions the doubling of letters, and doubling is the bugbear of all spellers—good, bad, or indifferent. It will be observed that assimilation takes place chiefly before the initial root letters *b, c, f, g, l, m, n, p, r, s, t, z;* that, conversely, the final letter of a prefix is not likely to be assimilated before a root beginning with letters other than these even when it begins with the same letter with which a prefix ends. The confusion in spelling double-letter words resides here in very large measure. Though *attire, commute, dissent, dissolve, ennoble, innovation, occasion, suppose,* and a host of other words, are spelled with double letters—one at the end of the prefix and one at the beginning of the root—only one is, as a rule, heard in pronunciation. Two letters coming together as result of joining two-word elements, such as prefix and root or suffix and root (see below), or for the sake of lengthening or emphasizing the sound of a letter, as in Anglo-Saxon *good* and *need,* or for simplifying impractical ligatures as *seed* for Anglo-Saxon *sæd* and *deed* for Anglo-Saxon *dæd,* or other linguistic reason, are colloquially called double letters. But they are double only in the sense of being two together, not in the sense of being complementary or twofold. Many so-called double letters are remnants of formation. In *attire, commute, dissent, dissolve, ennoble, innovation, occasion, suppose,* for example, and a host of other words like them retaining the final letter of the prefix and the first of the root when they are the same, the two letters are pronounced as one. But they are likely to be pronounced separately in similar combinations in which contradiction or negation is implied and in which vowel repetition has to be emphasized, such as *dissatisfy, dissymmetry, misspell, misspend, misstep, overreach, cooperation, pre-eminence, re-enter, nonnegotiable, unnecessary, unnail, unnamed, unnatural, unnavigable, unneedful, unneighborly, unnerve, unnumbered* (both *n's* are always pronounced in such words; you do not say *un-erve* or *un-umbered,* and so forth). The prefix *s* may or may not be pronounced in the tantalizing *dissyllable.* The word *trisyllable* is regular, *tri* being the prefix. The spelling books carry a rule to the effect that when a prefix ends with the same letter as that at the beginning of a root both letters are retained. Though highly modifiable through assimilation, as seen above, this rule may be very helpful and, like all other spelling rules, it is worthy of noting in spite of exceptions. (The "twinned" letter forms called ligatures—*æ, œ, ff, fi, fl,* for

example—are now disappearing, partly as result of the spelling reform movement. They are always pronounced as a single sound.)

In addition to all this, doubling spreads a direful doubt or a contagion of error. Are there two *s*'s or two *p*'s, or both, in *disappear, disappoint, misapply, misapprehend;* two *c*'s or two *m*'s, or both, in *accommodate, accompany, accomplish, accumulate;* two *m*'s or two *t*'s, or both, in *commitment, committal, committee;* two *r*'s or two *s*'s, or both, in *harass* and *embarrass?* Rules may not help much but the dictionary should always be at the elbow. *Accommodate* is easily the major pest in this department of spelling. Fix its composition in mind: *ad(ac)* to, *com* with or together, *modus* measure or method. The above prefix rule works, that is, the combining *c*'s and *m*'s are retained.

The joining of double *l* monosyllables in prefixal positions leads to much misspelling. As a rule one *l* is dropped, as in *almost* (all most), *alone* (all one), *already* (all ready), *also* (all so), *although* (all though), *altogether* (all together), *always* (all ways), *fulsome* (full some), *welcome* (well come), *welfare* (well fare) (page 480). But *fulfil* and *skilful* and *wilful* are very much "on the fence," *fulfill* and *fullfill, skillful* and *skilfull, willful* and *wilfull* still persisting strongly enough to keep even the most poised of spellers in a state of befuddlement. The words *all right* have not yet grown together into *alright,* though at the rate the younger generation is simplifying this spelling it will not be long before the latter is acceptable. The dictionaries now include it with the note that it is not recognized by "authorities"—an ominous compromise. When double-*l* words are combined with others beginning with *l,* the hyphen is usually resorted to to prevent the tripling of *l* or to indicate independent pronunciation (usually both), as in *bell-like* and *shell-lacquer.* This is likely to be the case also even when two *l's* meet, as in *girl-like* and *pearl-lovely* (pages 480 and 525).

Both *for* and *fore* are Anglo-Saxon, and were once the same word. The former as prefix means off, away, apart, and is used also as alternative or negative or intensive; the latter is used in the sense of before, beforehand, in front, preceding. Some confusion exists even in the dictionaries in regard to a few words in which these prefixes are used. *Fordo* and *foredo* are, for example, both correct but the latter spelling is marked archaic by some lexicographers; *forbear,* meaning ancestor, is a variant of *forebear*

according to one dictionary, and *forebear* is marked archaic in another. But both spellings are correctly used. As verb *forbear* means to abstain or refrain from, to be patient, and the nouns *forbearance* and *forbearer* are preferably spelled without the prefixal *e*. *Forfend* and *forefend* are both correct, though the latter is in some places marked archaic. In the same way, usage varies as between *forgather* and *foregather, forjudge* and *forejudge, forwarn* and *forewarn,* the latter form in each pair being preferred. But note that these words are spelled with *for: forbid, forby, forget, forgive, forgo* (give up, relinquish—page 386), *forlorn, forsake, forsay* (but *aforesaid*), *forsooth, forswear;* and these with *fore: forearm, forebode, forecast, forecastle, forefather, forefinger, foregather, forego* (precede), *foreground, forehand, forehead, foreknowledge, foreleg, forelock, foreman, foresee, foreshadow, foreshorten, foreshow, foreshore, foresight, forespeak, forestall, forestay, foretaste, foretell, forethought, foretime, foretoken, foretooth, foretop, forewarn, foreword, forewoman, foreyard.* Prefixed to form nouns, *fore* usually carries the accent, especially in dissyllabics; prefixed to form verbs, it does not, as a rule; thus, *fore' tok en* is *noun, fore tok' en* is verb; *fore' doom* is noun, *fore doom'* is verb, *fore' cast* is noun, *fore cast'* is verb. Prefixed to form either nouns or verbs, *for* is, as a rule, unaccented. The foregoing exposition at any rate reflects the best authority at the time of the publication of this book, but further simplification is due as new issues of the dictionaries are made. *For* is no longer an active or adaptable prefix in English, especially in the meanings of away and off. It is primarily now an intensive only, as in *forbear* and *forbid* and *forgive.* But *fore* is active and alive and useful in new word formations.

As with prefixes *for* and *fore,* the dictionary must be your guide—when it can be—in the use of the negative prefixes *in* and *non* and *un.* There is no hard and fast rule in regard to these—can not be—inasmuch as usage itself varies in regard to so many words bearing these prefixes. Even the abridged dictionaries carry, as a rule, long lists of *in-* and *non-* and *un-* words for guidance, the lexicographers recognizing thereby, as they do in many other instances, the uncertainty of usage. Euphony of both pronunciation and context may again decide the issue. It may be said in general, that the prefix *un* in verbs carries with it the sense of reversal, as in *undo* and *untie;* that in nouns and adjectives, it is likely to be colorlessly negative, as in *unconcern* and *uncon-*

stitutionality, uncertain and *unborn,* in which *un* has merely the meaning *not.* It is used occasionally to intensify an idea, as in *unloose* which connotes not only releasing but also faintly pictures the fastening from which something is to be loosed, and *unpardonable* which means not only not pardonable but emphasizes the offense a little. The prefix *in* is more generally—and more satisfactorily—adapted to words from the Latin, and it conveys negation chiefly, rather than privation, as *un* is likely to do. You say, for example, that a room is unartistic, meaning that it lacks what is necessary to make it artistic, that a room is inartistic, meaning that it is merely not artistic though it may contain all that is necessary to make it so. The prefix *non* is the Latin equivalent of Anglo-Saxon *un* and of *in* meaning not. It denotes simple negation, and is neither privative nor antithetical as *un* may be; it is therefore less emphatic than either *un* or negative *in.*

If you say that a person is *nonreligious,* you express a merely colorless negative; if you say that a person is *irreligious,* you imply an opposite quality to a degree. Similarly, *non-Christian* is a mere negative implying nothing whatever by way of lack of charity or goodness, *unchristian* means unbecoming to a Christian, uncharitable, ungracious. Sound and expressional custom are very often, however, the only decisive factor in the choice of these three negative prefixes. You say *nonnegotiable* and *unparalleled* and *inaccessible, noncommissioned* and *unavailable* and *intolerable,* not at all because nice prefixal distinctions are to be made in the use of these everyday terms but, rather, because these forms have been adopted and are thus taken for granted, just as colloquialism and provincialism are. The *Standard Dictionary* and *The Webster International Dictionary* differ widely in the use of the hyphen after *non.* It is preferably not used except in such combinations as are explained on page 527.

The prefix *demi* comes from the Latin through the French and means half, literally *from the middle—di* or *dis* from and *medius* middle. The prefix *hemi* comes from the Greek through the Latin, and means half. The prefix *semi* is from the Latin; it means half, partly, coming or taking place twice, in some way or particular, in a small degree or incompletely, little more than, as, respectively, *semisolid, semitropical, semiweekly, semivowel, semiformal, semivocal.* The final *i* of these prefixes does not assimilate, and the prefixes themselves combine with stems without hyphening. Of the three *semi* is by far the most generally used;

demi occurs most frequently in terms introduced from the French, especially such as are used in connection with fashions and society; *hemi,* the least used, occurs most frequently in scientific terms. The *demi* in *demijohn* is a corruption of *dame* (*dame-jeanne,* that is, *Lady Jane*). The first four letters in *democracy* are not related to *demi,* but are rather from the Greek word *demos* meaning people The second part of the word is Greek *kratos,* the full word meaning authority of the people, not half authority—*demi kratos*—as the enemies of democracy would have you believe.

Of the few words beginning with *ei,* most are special and are little used. The Scottish *eident* or *eydent*—busy, diligent—is pronounced *eye'dent;* the Icelandic *eider*—sea duck—is similarly pronounced with long *i*—*eye'der;* the Greek *eidograph*—instrument for enlarging or reducing drawings—is pronounced *ide' o graf,* and the Greek *eirenicon*—proposal for peace—likewise has long *i* for *ei*—*ire ee'nye kon;* the Greek *eidolon* (plural *eidola*)—image—is pronounced *eye doe'lon;* the Anglo-Saxon *eight* is pronounced *ate,* and the long *a* sound of *ei* follows in its derivatives and combinations—*eighteen, eightfold, eighth, eighty,* the Scottish *eild*—variant of *eld,* that is, old—is pronounced *eeld* to rime with *field;* the word *aerie*—nest of a bird of prey built at great elevation, and, figuratively, a place of residence perched on a mountain top—is spelled also *aery, eyrie, eyry,* and *eirie,* the last form (not to be confused with *eerie*) being pronounced with long *i*—*ire'e;* the Welsh *eisteddfod* (plural *eisteddfods* or *eisteddfodau*)—annual congress of bards and literati of Wales—is pronounced *ess teth'vod;* the Anglo-Saxon *either* may be pronounced *ee'ther* or *eye'ther,* the former being the more common, and *neither* follows suit—*nee'ther* or *nye'ther.* The proper names *Eiffel* (Tower) and *Einstein* are pronounced with the long *i* for *ei,* as *eye'fel* and *i(eye)ne'stein.* But *Eire,* Gaelic name of the Irish Free State, is preferably pronounced *air'ă* though both *era* and *ira* have sanction.

Of the fewer words begining with *ie* most are proper (biblical) names, such as *Iezer (I e'zer)* and *Iezias (I e zi'as),* there is a Scotch dialect word *ier-oe (err owe')* meaning a great-grandchild; there is (occasionally so written for *hieromancy)* the word *ieromancy (i'er o man cy)* meaning the act of divining through sacrifice. Many such words—*hierarch, hieroglyph, hierology, hierophant*—were

written with initial *i* (pronounced long) in the early centuries, aspirate *h* being absorbed by the final vowel of a preceding word.

But these are unimportant to the purpose here, except perhaps in regard to pronunciation. It has been noted in the foregoing illustrative words that initial *ei* is always pronounced as a single letter, sometimes long *a*, sometimes long *e*, sometimes long *i*; and that initial *ie* is separated into two syllables, *i* being pronounced long as a rule. As to which letter comes first—*e* or *i*—in words beginning with *ei* or *ie*, there is no closer rule than this. Inasmuch as there are so few words with such beginnings, and inasmuch as these are unusual (with the exception of *eight* and *either*), no rule of precedence would be of very great help or importance. But in connection with the many words spelled with *ei* or *ie* in their roots, any general rule—no matter how many exceptions it may have—had better be given welcome, for it can be both helpful and important in unsuspected letter combinations, in the spelling even of those persons who "almost never make a mistake but would like to for variety's sake."

In words spelled with ei or ie sounded as long e, as in be, e is placed first after the consonant c, and i is placed first after any other consonant, as in *ceiling, conceit, deceive, perceive, receipt* and in *achieve, belief, bier, brevier, brief, chief, field, fierce, fiend, frieze, grief, lief, lien, liege, mien, niece, piece, pier, pierce, priest, relieve, reprieve, retrieve, shield, shriek, siege, thief, wield, yield.* As far as the ear is concerned all of these words might just as well be spelled with *ee* instead of *ei* or *ie*. There are two other ways of stating this basic rule, both involving pronunciation, be it observed:

I before *e*
Except after *c*,
Or when sounded as *a*,
As in *neighbor* and *weigh*.

The other is less elementary: In words spelled with *ei* and *ie*, pronounced *ee*, the *e* or the *i* comes first according as the preceding letter in the word stands nearer to the *e* or the *i* in the alphabet. But this variation of rule is also somewhat less trustworthy than the first; it lets such words as *bier* and *field* and *fiend* and *fierce* sift through as exceptions, just as the preceding rime rule fails to cover some of the sounds of *ei* and *ie*.

Two pesky exceptions to all forms of the rule are *seize* and *weird.* The first is a true exception inasmuch as *ei* is pronounced *ee* and *s* rather than *c* precedes. But the sound of *ei* in *weird* is not quite *ee;* it is *ę́* as in *fear,* not *ē* as in *ēve,* though to most ears the two sounds are probably the same. The spelling of *seize* is sometimes fixed by remembering that words with *z* in them are somewhat exceptional, and that *s* is equivalent to soft *c* in the pronunciation; the spelling of *weird* is sometimes fixed by the fact that the word itself means anything that is strange or out of the ordinary.

When these two troublesome vowels are pronounced as *a* or as long *i,* their order is *ei,* as in (long *a* pronunciation) *deign, feign, freight, heinous, heir, inveigh, inveigle, neigh, neighbor, obeisance, reign, rein, seine, skein, sleigh, veil, vein, weigh, weight,* and (long *i* pronunciation) *Fahrenheit, gneiss, height, kaleidoscope, leitmotiv, meiosis, meistersinger, seismic, seismograph, sleight, Zeitgeist.* As far as the ear is concerned, the words in the first group might just as well be spelled with *a* instead of *ei,* those of the second group, with *i* instead of *ei,* as *dane* and *fane,* and *Fahrenhite* and *nice.* The word *inveigle* may be pronounced *in vee'gle* or *in vay'gle;* the word *seine* may be pronounced *sane* or *seen.* The latter pronunciation in each instance therefore makes the word an exception to the first rule above. And the word *neither* is likewise an exception to that rule when it is pronounced *neether; either* evades rule in view of the fact that *ei* has no preceding letter upon which to hang. It has been seen that *ee'ther* or *i'ther, nee'ther* or *nye'ther,* may be used. The pronunciation of *ei* as *a* in these two commonly used words is provincialism (Irish).

These two troublesome vowels are sometimes pronounced as short *e* as in *end,* sometimes as short *i* as in *ill;* thus, in *friend* the *ie* is sounded short *e,* and the *i* usually precedes the *e* in such words as *ancient, coefficient, omniscient, patient, quotient, sentient, transient,* and others having *cient, scient, sient, tient* endings pronounced *shent;* but in *foreign* the *ei* is sounded short *i,* and the *e* usually precedes the *i* in such words—*counterfeit, forfeit, mullein, sovereign, surfeit.* Note, however, two exceptions to each of these provisions: *heifer* and *nonpareil,* to the first; *sieve* and *mischief* (in spite of *chief*) to the second. *Leisure* is in a class by itself. You say *leezh'er* or *lee'zhur* (not *lay'zhur*—except in England—and on the American stage which has always affected British pro-

nunciation), and the word thus violates the first provision above as well as the first *ei-ie* rule given on page 473.

CONTEST *

	NO	YES
1	My letter antidates yours	My letter antedates yours
2	The argument is inrefutable	The argument is irrefutable
3	The doctor amministered a perventive	The doctor administered a preventive
4	The actor gave a prefect preformance	The actor gave a perfect performance
5	Her singing was inchanting	Her singing was enchanting
6	Do your best on every ocassion	Do your best on every occasion
7	Tourists are acomodated here	Tourists are accommodated here
8	Make no comittment you cannot fullfill	Make no commitment you cannot fulfil
9	He cannot play because of a broken forarm	He cannot play because of a broken forearm
10	She will never foresake him	She will never forsake him
11	Your behavior is nonexcusable	Your behavior is inexcusable
12	These tags are untransferable	These tags are nontransferable
13	This magazine comes demiweekly	This magazine comes semiweekly
14	He keeps a semijohn under his bed	He keeps a demijohn under his bed
15	I have never seen such conciet	I have never seen such conceit
16	Beleive it or not he has secured the lein	Believe it or not he has secured the lien
17	He is just a wierd unweildy mass of flesh	He is just a weird unwieldy mass of flesh
18	He did his work with unbeleivable proficeincy	He did his work with unbelievable proficiency
19	He is charged with counterfieting	He is charged with counterfeiting
20	Write a disyllabic word here, and a trissyllabic one there	Write a dissyllabic word here and a trisyllabic one there
21	Please forebear from abusing my forbears	Please forbear from abusing my forebears
22	His nonpoliteness is nonparalleled in my experience	His impoliteness is unparalleled in my experience
23	To be forwarned is to be forarmed	To be forewarned is to be forearmed
24	He is more willfull than skillfull but his work is nevertheless alright	He is more wilful than skilful but his work is nevertheless all right
25	I felt anything but innobled by his pre-emptory and dissagreable atitude	I felt anything but ennobled by his peremptory and disagreeable attitude
26	Much to the general's embarassment his men were harrased, not by the enemy but by the locusts	Much to the general's embarrassment his men were harassed, not by the enemy but by the locusts

* See page 8.

SECTION FORTY-SIX RULE

More mistakes are made in spelling at the ends of words than at their beginnings or at their half-way points. Not only are there more suffixes than prefixes, but they are more difficult of adjustment to roots and more perplexing in their combining processes. In addition, they strike more deeply into the basics of grammar than do prefixes, inasmuch as there are suffixes that form or are identified with one part of speech, suffixes that form or are identified with other parts of speech. The suffix *able,* for example, forms adjectives as a rule; the suffix *ly,* adverbs; *tion,* nouns; *ize,* verbs. Prefixes have no such determining grammatical values in the vast majority of cases, and are thus simplicity itself by comparison. Suffixes, again, are much more variable in both form and attachment than are prefixes, and though assimilating processes are less accommodating in adjusting suffixes to roots, rules for such suffixing are more numerous than are rules for prefixing and they are in the main extremely helpful, or may be made so.

The correlative of the prefix rule on page 468 reads as follows: If a suffix begins with the same letter with which a root ends, both letters are usually retained, as *barren, barrenness, drunken, drunkenness; legal, legally; mean, meanness; real, really; stubborn, stubbornness; sudden, suddenness, virtual, virtually; wool, woolly.* The letters *l* and *n* are the ones chiefly involved in this rule, and more misspelling occurs in connection with *n* than with *l.* As in the case of prefixes, one letter only is pronounced in such combinations.

The final-consonant rule—sometimes called the father rule in spelling because so many words come under its provisions—says that monosyllables, and longer words *accented on the last syllable, ending with a single consonant preceded by a single vowel,* double that consonant before a suffix beginning with a vowel. This is done for two reasons—to prevent confusion and to preserve the short sound of the vowel. Take the word *plan,* for example: If the *n* were not doubled before the suffix *ed* and the suffix *ing—planned* and *planning*—its imperfect tense and its present participle would be indistinguishable in both spelling and pronunciation from the same parts of the verb *plane—planed* and *planing.* And *bar* and *bare, bid* and *bide, can* and *cane, din* and *dine, dot* and *dote, grip* and *gripe, hat* and *hate, pin* and *pine, rid* and *ride,*

rip and *ripe, rob* and *robe, tub* and *tube* are a few other verbs in the language that would cause "inconvenience" but for the father rule of spelling. There are hundreds of words that come under this final-consonant arrangement among which the following serve as the merest illustration: *allot, allottable, allotted, allotting; bag, baggage; beg, beggar; bud, budding; clan, clannish; commit, committal, committed, committee, committing; control, controllable, controlled, controller, controlling; drug, druggist; grip, gripping; grub, grubbing, hot, hottest; occur, occurred, occurrence, occurring; omit, omitted, omitting; rag, ragged; regret, regrettable, regretted, regretting; ship, shipped, shipper, shipping; thin, thinner, thinnest; wet, wetted, wetter, wettest, wetting; wit, witted, witticism, wittier, wittiest, wittily, wittiness, witting, wittingly, witty.*

There are, as always, a few exceptions—to enliven rule: The letters *h, u, w, x, y,* for example, are never doubled, though they occur together in compounds, as *beach-head, glowworm,* especially invented ones, as *boy-yen, you-urge.* You say *hurrahing,* not *hurrahhing; crowed* and *growing,* not *crowwed* and *growwing; annexed* and *perplexity* and *vexing,* not *annexxed* and *perplexxity* and *vexxing; annoyance* and *annoyed* and *annoyer,* not *annoyyance* and *annoyyed* and *annoyyer.* The little word *gas* will bear watching: It follows rule in *gassed, gassing, gassy,* but departs from it in *gaseity, gaselier, gaseous, gasiform, gasify.*

The accent provision in the father rule bears down with special significance upon the *fer* endings. Accent is pressed either forward or backward when any suffix but *ed* or *ing* is added. You get, according to rule, *conferred* and *conferring, inferred* and *inferring, preferred* and *preferring, transferred* and *transferring,* and so on, just as, according to the accent provision, you normally get *merited* and *meriting, profited* and *profiting.* But add *able, ee, ence, ent, ential, or* to the *fer* words, and accent, as a rule, transfers to an earlier syllable or to a later one. Sometimes the rule in regard to these words is changed to say that they do not double final *r* before these suffixes. But this is too sweeping for there are too many exceptions even to this. Observe the following, and treat each one as an individual problem: *conferee* (or *conferree), conference, deference, deferent, deferential, deference, differential, inferable, inference, inferential, preferable, preference, preferential, referable, referee, reference, transferable, transferee, transference, transferential, transferor.* The *r* may or may not be doubled in the *or* forms, preferably not. In the *er* forms

(little used) it is always doubled—*conferrer, inferrer, referrer, transferrer.* The spellings *inferable* and *referable* are now preferred to the old *inferrible* and *referrible* in all uses. The letters *w* and *y* represent vowel sounds in diphthongs—*dew, few, how, now, pay, ray, employ, journey*—and do not really come under the father rule. Words ending with a consonant preceded by a vowel which is, in turn, preceded by *qu* pronounced *kw,* are spelled according to rule, as *squat, squatted, squatter, squatting* and *acquit, acquitted, acquitter, acquitting, acquittal, acquittance.*

One of the most troublesome words falling under the accent provision of the rule is *benefit;* it is accented on *ben,* not on *fit;* thus, you write *benefited, benefiting, benefiter.* But by the same token observe, *alterable, brightened, carburetor (er), counseling, developer, difference, enameled, endeavoring, enveloped, labeled, leveler, marshaled, marvelous, modeled, offering, parallelism, parceling, profiting, quarreling, rendering, reveled, sufferer, summoning, traveler, utterance* Only one form of each word is here given but the application holds in all other forms. Some words—*banquet, conquer, lacquer, occasion*—have two reasons for not doubling the final consonant—two vowels preceding it and accent on some syllable other than the last; thus, *banqueting, conqueror, lacquered, occasional* appear to be doubly safe (the pronunciation of *qu* in the second and the third is not *kw* but *k*).

But here again there is the greatest possible variation in the spelling of such words. Many authorities insist that verbs ending with unaccented *el* must double the *l* before *ed, ing, en, ery, ist, ize,* and it is in particular the British custom to do so (the *Oxford English Dictionary* prefers doubling). The following words are as likely, therefore, to be written with double *l* as with single before such suffixes, accent falling on some syllable other than the last: *apparel, bevel, cancel, carol, cavil, channel, council, counsel, cudgel, dial, dishevel, duel, empanel, enamel, equal, gambol, grovel, imperil, jewel, label, level, libel, marshal, marvel, medal, metal, model, parcel, pencil, quarrel, ravel, revel, rival, shrivel, total, travel, wool, yodel.* The simpler spelling of the derivatives of these words is increasingly used and recommended by this book —*marvelous, traveler, yodeling,* and so on.

In *humbug* and *zigzag* the final *g* is doubled before *e* and *i* to prevent its being pronounced *j,* as *humbugged, humbugging; zigzagged, zigzagging.* The British prefer the doubling of *p* in

kidnap and *worship,* but the American does not, and *kidnaped, kidnaping, kidnaper, worshiped, worshiping, worshiper* are in general use in this country. The words *equal* and *tranquil* almost make the grade of *banquet, conquer, occasion* above (see also *acquit* and *squat*), and we write *equaled, equaling, equalize* and *tranquilize, tranquilizer, tranquilization* logically enough. But the Britisher doubles the *l* in all these forms. The noun *tranquility* has been a die-hard even in the United States. But the one *l* spelling is correct—and preferable—now in this country though not in England. In the same way *biassed* and *carburetted* are preferred British spellings; *biased* and *carbureted* preferred American. And strange as it may be, the British do not double the *l* in *parallel,* writing, as we do, *paralleled, paralleling, parallelism,* their "fondness" for double *l* in the words above listed notwithstanding. Perhaps four *l*'s in a single word are too many for even conservatives to sanction.

There are a few other "spelling specters" to be considered under the foregoing classifications. One pertains to derivatives of *crystal.* Though the accent is on the first syllable, the final *l* is always doubled in *crystalline, crystallite, crystallize, crystalloid, crystallose,* but *crystallic, crystalliferous, crystallization, crystallography* follow rule. The same is true also of *metalloidal, metallurgist, metallurgy,* and was true up to a very short time ago (until *The Standard Dictionary* "broke the ice") of *chancellery* and *chancellor,* both of which may now be spelled in the United States with one *l*—but not in England and by no means generally even here. The stubborn retention of the two *l*'s in these words, as in the commonly used words *excellence* and *excellent* and *excellency,* is the result of their originals *(crystal* from Greek, and the others from Latin) in which the double letter is solidly established in the roots.

The provision made in the father rule in regard to a final consonant preceded by two vowels has been seen at work in some of the illustrations above. The following typical words in everyday use—frequently misspelled—may be added to those already given: *appear, appeared, appearance; avoid, avoiding, avoidance; brief, briefer, briefest; conceal, concealed, concealing, devour, devoured, devourer, devouring; entreat, entreating, entreaty; obtain, obtained, obtaining, obtainable; repeat, repeated, repeater, repeating, squeal, squealed, squealer, squealing.*

By the same token—that is, by the use of the word *single* before *consonant* in the father rule—words ending with two consonants offer no doubling problem. You write *accepted* and *accepting, accept* itself ending with the two consonants *p* and *t;* and *attracted, attracting; descended, descendant; disappoint, disappointed; suspender, suspending; thirsted, thirsting, thirsty.*

The final consonant is not doubled before a suffix beginning with a consonant, no matter where the root accent or whether vowel or diphthong precedes it, as *fretful, neglectful; government, preferment; frolicsome, handsome, rigidly, totally; eagerness, redness.* And this part of the rule modification applies in most words when the final consonant is itself doubled, whether or not the suffix begins with a vowel, as *add, addition; address, addressing; buzz, buzzed; dull, dully; ebb, ebbing; egg, egged; embarrassing, embarrassment; err, error; full, fully; harass, harassed; odd, oddity, oddment; possess, possession; profess, professor; shrill, shrillness; small, smallness; stiff, stiffness, success, succession, successful.* Note by the way that prefixing is without influence, as *erringly* and *unerringly, embarrassed* and *unembarrassed, harass* and *unharassed, possession* and *dispossession, assessment* and *reassessment.*

Final *l* and final double *l* have been mentioned in the preceding section (page 469). If *less* is added to a word ending with *ll,* one *l* should be dropped to prevent the tripling of *l,* as *skilless* and *thrilless,* rather than *skill-less* and *thrill-less.* The greatest possible variation exists in both British and American printing in regard to such words as *enrol, enthral, fulfil, instal, instil; enrolment, enthralment, fulfilment, instalment, instilment.* The spelling as here given is acceptable and correct, but so also is the spelling with double *l* in each word. In the cause of simplification the one-*l* spelling is recommended, even as to *dulness* and *fulness.* To say that *enrollment* and *thralldom* should be spelled with double *l* in order to retain the long sound of *o* and of *a* is to lose sight of the fact that vowel length is much more variable—is subject to many more exceptions to rule—than are spelling rules themselves. In no other department of English speech is "ear" of such controlling force as in the acquisition of vowel sounds, associated consonant sounds being little if ever considered very much (though the purist has much on his side in saying that they should be).

One final consonant—*c*—must have consideration all to itself: Words ending with *c* have *k* inserted between *c* and a suffix beginning with *e* or *i* or *y*, as *colic, colicked, colicky; frolic, frolicked, frolicker, frolicking; havoc, havocked, havocker, havocking; mimic, mimicked, mimicker, mimicking; physic, physicked, physicker, physicking; picnic, picnicked, picnicker, picnicking, picnicky; shellac, shellacked, shellacker, shellacking; traffic, trafficked, trafficker, trafficking; zinc, zincked, zincker, zinckic, zincking, zincky.* But the last word—*zinc*—is in a most unsettled condition, the forms *zinced, zincer, zincing, zincic, zinciferous, zincify, zincite, zincy,* and *zinky,* and still other spellings being sanctioned by the dictionaries. *Zincate, zincograph, zincous* are, of course, regular inasmuch as *c* before *a* or *o* or *u* is pronounced *k,* while before *e* and *i* and *y* it would have the soft or *s* sound if *k* were not inserted to "harden" it. In the eighteenth century terminal *c* was regularly followed by *k* in such words as the foregoing—*mimick, musick, physick, publick.* Note the soft *c* in *publicize* and *musician;* hence, no *k.* There is, of course, no *k* in *mimicry* because the *c* is followed by a consonant. And in *physical, c* coming before *a* needs no re-enforcement.

Words ending with silent *e* drop the *e* before a suffix beginning with a vowel, as *argue, arguable, argued, arguing; believe, believable, believed, believer, believing; breeze, breezy; bride, bridal; contrive, contrivance; debate, debatable, debated, debater, debating, file, filing; guide, guidance; hate, hatable, hated, hater, hating, like, likable, liked, liking; love, lovable, loved, lover, loving; oblige, obliged, obligee, obliger, obliging, obligor; plume, plumage; recite, recital; revere, reverence; sale, salable; stone, stony; true, truism; use, usable, usage.* This rule is sometimes called the mother rule in English spelling because of its importance and comprehensiveness. Like the father rule (page 476) it applies to hundreds of words in the language and is—or should be made—a fundamental principle in the study of English. In the above brief illustrative list it will be observed that the verbal suffixes *ed* and *ing* are those most widely concerned, but that such noun and adjective suffixes as *able, age, al, ance, ence, er, ible, ism, or, y* are also covered by rule. The only purpose of the final silent *e* in the roots of most words in this classification is to "trademark" the preceding vowel as long. If it were not silent it would in numerous words add another syllable to the primitive. *Bake,* for example, would be pronounced *bā kĕ* and its imperfect

tense would become *bakeed—bā'keed.* This would add to the already troublesome double-letter difficulties, and would in some instances impair euphony. Moreover, in words ending with *ee,* a third *e* might be added, and the result would be *agreeed, decreeed, feeed, freeed, freeer, freeest, seeer,* instead of *agreed, decreed, feed, freed, freer, freest, seer.*

Words ending with *ie* usually drop the *e* and change the *i* to *y* before *ing,* as in *die, dying; hie, hying* (or *hieing); lie* (falsify), *lying; tie, tying* (or *tieing); vie, vying.* But the imperfect tense forms of these verbs follow rule—*died, hied, lied, tied, vied.* If this change were not made in the spelling of the present participle, that is, if these verbs followed the mother rule precisely, *diing* and *hiing,* would result. At present there are only two words in which two *i*'s are thus permitted to stand together. One is the Norwegian *skiing,* the primitive of which was adopted in English almost before any one was really aware of either its correct spelling or its correct pronunciation. Its original (and correct) pronunciation is *she,* but our young sportsmen saw the *k* and their loyalty to that letter has given us here in America the pronunciation *skee* (though it is always pronounced *she* abroad). True, the primitive is *ski,* not *skie,* and the spelling of the present participle requires *ing.* A short trial was given to *skying,* but this deservedly failed because, riming with *dying,* it falsified the basic pronunciation of the root (which, moreover, became confused with *sky).* So *skiing* it will probably have to remain. The other double-*i* word is the barbarism or, at least, low colloquialism *taxiing* The word *taxi,* both noun and verb, also sprang into use practically without notice, and it has now taken on all verb forms—*taxies, taxied, taxiing.* Standard gives the participle as *taxying,* but Webster's gives *taxiing* and most newspapers follow the latter. *Dye* retains final *e—dyeing*—for no reason other than to distinguish it from *dying;* its imperfect tense form is *dyed.* But the reason is a good one, and it operates in the present participle forms of *singe, springe, swinge, tinge—singeing, springeing, swingeing, tingeing.* Unless the *e* is retained in these present participles, the words become ambiguous, easily mistaken for the present participles of *sing, spring, swing, ting.* In *ge* words presenting no such problem—*edge, hedge, hinge, pledge, sledge, syringe,* for example—the mother rule is followed—*edging* and *hinging* and *syringing,* and so on.

The *g*'s in the above words are pronounced soft. In primitives the letter *g* like *c* (page 481) is hard before *a* and *o* and *u*, soft before *e* and *i* and *y*. Words ending with *ce* and *ge* therefore retain the *e* before suffixes beginning with *a* or *o* in order to prevent the hard sound of those letters in pronunciation; thus, you have *entice, enticeable; notice, noticeable; peace, peaceable; service, serviceable; trace, traceable,* and *advantage, advantageous; change, changeable; charge, chargeable; courage, courageous; manage, manageable; marriage, marriageable; outrage, outrageous. Mortgagor* and *mortgager* are exceptions to this provision.

It has been seen that before the suffix *age* root *e* is usually dropped —*cleavage, dotage, plumage, storage, usage.* But *mileage* is preferred in the United States; *milage,* in England. And *acreage* must retain the *e* if it would pass from dissyllabic to trisyllabic in adding the suffix—*a cre age,* not *ake rij.* The same excuse is offered by *lineage* and *lineal—lin e age* and *lin e al.* As in *acreage,* the excuse is a good one and it is thus accepted. But there can be no similar excuse offered for *likeable, loveable, saleable, useable* (page 481)—the *e* does not in these spellings provide a new or a necessary syllable. The word *linage* or *lineage,* meaning number of lines or alignment, is at present in a state of confusion. The former spelling is preferred for the reason that it differentiates from *lineage* meaning progeny or race, and it has been seen that this may be the best of reasons. In any event the latter is always trisyllabic; the former (pertaining to lines) always dissyllabic spelled with *e* or without *e.*

Words ending with silent *e* usually retain the *e* before a suffix beginning with a consonant, as in *change, changeling; hate, hateful; peace, peaceful; hire, hireling; prince, princeling, love, lovely; sincere, sincerely; vile, vilely; arrange, arrangement; settle, settlement.* But many words ending with silent *e* immediately preceded by another vowel (usually *u*) drop the *e* before a suffix beginning with either a vowel or a consonant, as *ague, aguish; argue, argument; awe, awful; blue, bluish, due, duly; intrigue, intriguing; pursue, pursuance; rogue, roguish; subdue, subduing; true, truly; virtue, virtual, virtuous; woe, wobegone, woful, wosome* (but the *e* persists in the *woe* derivatives in a large percentage of usage). The mother rule applies, therefore, in such words as *pursue* and *subdue.* It applies also in such words as *fatigue (fatigued, fatiguing); intrigue (intrigued, intriguer, intriguing); tongue (tongued, tonguing). Harangue* follows suit *(harangued,*

haranguer, haranguing); but its simplified form *harang* is spelled without *u* in the inflected *haranged, haranger, haranging.* In the United States the *e* is preferably not retained, however, after the *dg* and *j* sound, as in *abridgment, acknowledgment, judgment, lodgment,* but in England the *e* is likely—yet—to be retained after the *g* in these words. And *fledgeling* and *nurseling* are more generally British spellings; *fledgling* and *nursling,* American. But both spellings are correct.

The suffix *ly* following silent *e* is the cause of some confusion. You write *possible* and *probable* and *supple* and *wrinkle.* But you drop the *le* bodily when you come to suffix *ly—possibly, probably, supply, wrinkly.* The next to last looks like the verb *supply (sŭ plī')* but it is pronounced *sŭp'lī. Whole,* in a niche by itself, drops *e* only and becomes *wholly. (Holey,* meaning having holes, is an exception to the mother rule, and unlike *bony* and *stony,* retains the final silent *e* for differentiation from *holy.)*

There are few *oe* words in English that are subject to suffixing. The few that are in general use—*canoe, hoe, shoe, toe*—retain final *e* before suffixes, as in *canoed, canoeing, canoeist; hoe, hoed, hoeing; shoe, shoeing* (the imperfect tense is *shod); toe, toed, toeing.* But the nouns of agent—*hoer* and *shoer*—drop final silent *e.* The present participle of the verb *eke* is *eking;* of *eye,* either *eying* or *eyeing,* the former being preferred; of the dialectic *traipse (trape* and *trapes* are variants), *traipseing (trapeing, trapesing).* Final *e* is pronounced, as a rule, in words adopted from the French, thus, *chas sé',* meaning to cross from right to left in dancing, is *chassed (chas sed')* in the imperfect tense and *chasseing (chas se' ing)* in the present participle; *fricassee* is *fricasseed (fricas seed')* and *fricasseeing (fric as see' ing).*

Words ending with *y* preceded by a vowel and preceded by a consonant have been discussed on page 457 in connection with the formation of plurals. But beyond the realm of pluralization, it remains true that words ending with *y* preceded by a vowel usually retain *y* before any kind of termination, and that words ending with *y* preceded by a consonant usually change *y* to *i* before any termination except one beginning with *i.* To the first group belong such words as *convey, conveyance; employ, employment; enjoy, enjoyable, enjoyed, enjoying, enjoyment; gay, gayer, gayness; obey, obeyed, obeying; pay, payable, payed, payee, payer, paying, payless; play, playable, played, player, playful, playing.*

To the second group belong such words as *apply, appliance, applied, applier,* but *applying; busy, busied, busier, busiest, business,* but *busying* and *busyish; copy, copied, copier,* but *copying* and *copyist; defy, defiance, defier,* but *defying; foggy, foggiest, fogginess; icy, iciest, icily; modify, modifiable, modifier,* but *modifying; worry, worried, worrisome,* but *worrying.*

The word *cozy* is in a class by itself. The preferred spelling is the one here given—with z. But it is permissibly spelled *cozey, cosy, cosey, cozie, cosie,* the last two forms being common in Scotland, fatherland of the word. It follows rule, as *cozily, coziness, cozeyly, cozeyness, cosily, cosiness, coseyly, coseyness.* But make *cozy* and its derivatives your regular spelling.

Certain words in the first *y* group above require explanation, namely, *day, gay, lay, pay, say, slay, stay,* and those ending with *wy.* Though you have *daybreak, dayless, daylight, daytime,* you must have *daily,* not *dayly.* Though you have the forms of *gay* above given, and though your parents or, at least, your grandparents had *gayly* and *gayety,* you should prefer *gaily* and *gaiety.* You may no longer write *layed* and *payed* but rather, *laid* and *paid,* though the nautical verb *pay* is *payed* in its imperfect tense and its past participle. Similarly, *say* becomes *said,* not *sayed; stay* preferably becomes *staid,* though *stayed* is not incorrect; and *slay,* though true to rule in *slayer* and *slaying,* goes completely wayward in its imperfect tense *slew* and its past participle *slain.*

Words ending with *wy—awy, ewy, owy*—may safely be regarded as belonging to the second part of the rule, the *w* being regarded as a consonant. This yields *flawiness* from *flawy; strawiness* from *strawy; dewier, dewiest, dewiness* from *dewy; showily* and *showiness* from *showy; snowily* and *snowiness* from *snowy,* and as far as mere formations are concerned the same process would be used with *billowy, pillowy, "screwy", shadowy, sinewy, willowy.* But further suffixing may render such words awkward though *billowiness, shadowiness, willowiness,* and still other extensions occur.

The retention of *y* in the present participle gives notice of a syllable and prevents doubling of *i—stud-y-ing,* not *studing* or *studiing.* It is retained in *busybody* because this term is really a two-word combination, not a single word. It is retained in *busyness* to differentiate it from *business.* This word is very often written *busy-ness* to denote that it is used in a special way (in the sense of being meticulous or intrusive or officious).

The comparatives and superlatives of monosyllabic adjectives in *y* very often have two forms, one beginning with *i* and one with *y*, as in *dry, drier* or *dryer, driest* or *dryest* and *spry, sprier* or *spryer, spriest* or *spryest.* The *i* forms are preferable—*shier* and *shiest, slier* and *sliest, wrier* and *wriest*—but both are correct, and the British lean toward the *y* spellings. Monosyllabic adjectives ending with *y* are also sometimes confusing when the suffix *ly* or *ness* is added to them. The retention of *y* is preferred usage in all such words—*dryly, dryness; shyly, shyness; slyly, slyness; spryly, spryness, wryly, wryness*—but *drily, shily, slily* are not incorrect; *sprily* and *wrily,* though sometimes seen, are unauthorized. The adjectives *clayey* and *skyey* make use of the *ey* ending to avoid the doubling of *y*. Before *like* and *ship, y* is usually retained, as in *countrylike* and *babylike, secretaryship* and *ladyship.* Before *hood* suffixed to a noun, *y* is retained, as *boyhood, babyhood, ladyhood,* before *hood* suffixed to an adjective to form a noun, *y* is changed to *i*, as *hardihood, likelihood, livelihood, lustihood.*

Words ending with a vowel sound usually retain the letter or letters conveying that sound before a suffix beginning with a vowel, as *agree, agreeable; dough, doughy, echo, echoed, echoing; hollo, holloed, holloing; huzza, huzzaed, huzzaing, lasso, lassoed, lassoer, lassoing; radio, radioed, radioing; vow, vowed, vowing* (see above). Conversely, a final silent *e* following *u* is usually dropped before a suffix beginning with *e* or *i* or *a*—*blue, blued, bluing* (also *blueing*); *rue, rued, ruing; sue, sued, suing, suable.* Some of the imperfect and past participle forms of the *oe* words treated on page 484 come under this provision, but the present participle forms do not.

Formation of the possessive case does not influence final *y*, whether preceded by a vowel or by a consonant; thus, you write *journey's end,* and *city's welfare* and *country's flag,* and also *cities' service* and *countries' flags* (page 457).

In hyphened compounds and in independent compounds (words usually associated but written neither solid nor hyphened) the rule is to retain all letters so put together, as in *carry-all, cure-all, stiff-necked, well-bred, well-off* and *dry dock, eye opener, free trade, Milky Way, way station.* In solid compounds one letter in a double form is usually dropped, the suffix *ness* being a fixed exception to the rule; thus, you write *armful, cupful, rueful, welfare, withal, Candlemas, Christmas* (not *mass*) (page 469).

The feminine endings are *a, ess, ena* (*ine*), *trix* (*ar, er, or* may be common or masculine endings). Feminine gender endings are passing, and few of them today hold a speaker or a writer to strict accountability. Since it has become customary for women to enter any field of commercial or industrial activity—since, that is, few, if any, fields are now to be regarded as for men only—emphasis has come properly to be placed upon work, and *worker* is common gender. The sex of the worker is of little consequence. The feminine termination *ess* persists most stubbornly in *actress, hostess, mistress, patroness, sculptress, waitress;* it is of comparatively low frequency in *abbess, adulteress, adventuress, baroness, countess, benefactress, deaconess, duchess, empress, enchantress, giantess, goddess, huntress, Jewess, lioness, marchioness, murderess, Negress, poetess, preceptress, priestess, prophetess, protectress, seamstress, shepherdess, songstress, sorceress, tigress, victress, votaress.* Though *governess* is a good feminine form meaning nurse-teacher, it is not the antonym of masculine *governor;* it is, as a matter of fact, used only jocularly in reference to a governor's wife. And *contractor, creditor, curator debtor, director, dictator, educator, instructor, juror, monitor, operator, lawyer, legislator, minister, orator, pastor, professor, rector, senator, sponsor, supervisor, tutor, violator,* and a host of other agent nouns (chiefly in *or*), are today regarded as nouns of common gender and are used as such. We write *actress,* but not *competitress* or *doctress* or *ministress* or *monstress* or *rectress.* These few illustrations of the weird workings of gender are yet sufficient—or should be—to evoke but sympathy for the child who writes *adulteress* (or the archaic *adultress*) as the feminine of *adult, Cypress* as the feminine of *Cyrus, jointress* as the feminine of *joint, Mattress* as the feminine of *Matthew.* Neuter gender in English has no special ending.

Authoress and *editress* are now archaic; *postmistress* is still used in government papers, but *postmaster* may correctly be used in reference to a woman in charge of a post office, as may *chairman* in reference to a woman who presides at a meeting of any kind. The latter may be preceded by *Madam—Madam Chairman.* But *Madam Chairwoman* is really as absurd as *Madam Presidentess* would be. *Chairlady* is even worse, if possible, than *charlady, saleslady,* or *scrublady.* The feminine forms *directress* and *instructress* and *operatress,* and others like them, are sometimes affected, but they are affectations merely.

The law as usual is the great stickler (page 46) for "propriety" in this field of expression. The *(t)rix* feminine ending belongs in particular to the legal profession; thus, in legal papers such masculines as *adjudicator, administrator, coadjutor, executor, inheritor, mediator, moderator, proprietor, prosecutor, testator* must take on the feminines *adjudicatrix, administratrix, coadjutrix, executrix, inheritrix, mediatrix, moderatrix, proprietrix, prosecutrix, testatrix.* Such papers have been known even to adopt *contractrix* and *legislatrix,* and still other "bastard precisions." In general usage, however, all of these *or* forms are common gender.

Now that women serve on juries, it remains to be seen what the law will do about *juror.* If it is wise it will let the word stand, rather than commit some such dictional atrocity as *juress* or *jurotrix.* In one respect, at least, general usage has stolen the thunder of legal usage, namely, in the adoption or near-adoption of *aviatrix* as the feminine form of *aviator.* This one was brought down upon us almost before we were aware by a newspaper affectation, and it appears to hold. But it is unnecessary—and retards simplification.

Of the *a* feminine forms *alumna* is the one in commonest use—and it is the peskiest; its plural is *alumnæ* (cf *alumnus, alumni* on page 451). But the Spanish *doña* and *infanta,* the Italian *signora* and *donna,* the Turkish *sultana* occur in English, as does the feminine *ina* form in *czarina.* The latter—*ina*—like *ine,* is associated chiefly with the feminine of proper names, as *Albertina, Alexandrina, Clementina, Justina, Paulina, Regina, Wilhelmina.* But some names in this category have equivalents in *a,* some in *ine,* as *Alexandra, Alberta, Clementine, Justine, Paula, Pauline, Wilhelmine.*

Regina is feminine of *rex;* it may also be a feminine adjective meaning pertaining to the queen. Among common nouns *ine* is used only in *heroine,* the German titles *landgravine* (feminine of *landgrave*) and *margravine* (feminine of *margrave*) being now practically archaic.

As far as suffixing is concerned, then, most agent nouns should be used as common or indeterminate gender, and gender differentiation be clarified by context. This does not apply, of course, when masculine and feminine correlatives are quite different words, such as *bachelor, spinster; beau, belle; boar, sow; boy, girl; groom (bridegroom), bride; brother, sister; buck, doe; bull, cow; bullock,*

heifer; cock, hen; colt, filly; dog, bitch; drake, duck; earl, countess; father, mother; fox, vixen; gander, goose; grandsire, grandam; gentleman, lady; hart, roe (hind); husband, wife; king, queen; lord, lady; man, woman; milter, spawner; monk (friar), nun; nephew, niece; ram, ewe; sir, madam; sire, dam; sloven, slut; son, daughter; stag, hind; stallion (horse), mare; swain, lass; uncle, aunt; wizard, witch.

The suffix *ette,* it has been seen on page 4, is used primarily to denote small or diminutive, as in *cigarette* and *kitchenette* and *statuette.* It has also been adopted by commerce and industry to denote imitation of materials, as *linette* and *leatherette* and *satinette.* It is least of all justified as a feminine ending, in such words, for example, as *farmerette* and *suffragette.* Prefixing or compounding is probably preferable to such forms as these which but add confusion to an already greatly confused issue in English. We say *buck-rabbit, doe-rabbit; bull-calf, cowcalf; cock-sparrow, hen-sparrow; he-goat, she-goat; he-wolf, she-wolf; landlord, landlady; maidservant, manservant; peacock, pea-hen; male giraffe, female giraffe; male elephant, female elephant* (the biblical *manchild* and *woman child* are now archaic). The suffix *ster* was once used as the feminine correlative of masculine *er,* as in *seamster, songster, spinster.* It later came to be identified with masculine forms, and was a proper noun suffix as well as a common noun suffix, as *drugster, teamster, Webster (weaver), Baxter* or *Bagster (baker), Foster (feeder).* In such words as *dabster, gamester, rimester, trickster,* this suffix is used in a derogatory sense, and is indeterminate in gender. The suffix *en* was once used to form both plurals and feminines, as *eyen* and *oxen,* and *vixen;* but it is no longer so used in new formations though plural *oxen* and feminine *vixen* are current.

Today, the woman who works in a machine shop, like the man who works beside her, is called a *machinist;* and similarly, regardless of inflectional endings, *assorter, buyer, carrier, chauffeur, citizen* (Dickens made much of *citizeness), driver, fighter, friend, guard, helper, joiner, lecturer, marker, messenger, pioneer, pitcher, riveter, sailor, seller (saleswoman* too, but never *saleslady), soldier, speaker, stapler, tester, trimmer, volunteer, warden, watcher, welder,* and hundreds of other agent nouns are, as they stand, masculine or feminine, or both, as context dictates, without any lumbering inflectional aid. This wholesome simplification is taking place in every field of human endeavor, marking a far call

indeed from the Elizabethan multiplication of feminine terminations, such as *butleress, championess, vassaless, wagoness, warrioress.*

CONTEST *

NO	YES
1 The cleaness of the prison surprised us	The cleanness of the prison surprised us
2 You haven't doted any of your i's	You haven't dotted any of your i's
3 They are dinning out tonight	They are dining out tonight
4 He was gased in the last war	He was gassed in the last war
5 I was benefitted by that course	I was benefited by that course
6 They have transfered him to Boston	They have transferred him to Boston
7 It never before ocurred to me	It never before occurred to me
8 He has comutted for twenty years	He has commuted for twenty years
9 Pursueant to your wishes I shall go	Pursuant to your wishes I shall go
10 We profitted by that deal	We profited by that deal
11 They have banquetted sumptuously	They have banqueted sumptuously
12 We were very much dissapointed	We were very much disappointed
13 They are picnicing in the park	They are picnicking in the park
14 His dissapearance has shocked them	His disappearance has shocked them
15 You belong on the receiveing line	You belong on the receiving line
16 He tyed the parcel securly	He tied the parcel securely
17 She has become a weldress to help out in war work	She has become a welder to help out in war work
18 You have been very obligeing	You have been very obliging
19 This has been a servicable dress	This has been a serviceable dress
20 He suffers from a mental derangment	He suffers from a mental derangement
21 Tell me truely what you think	Tell me truly what you think
22 You are wholey wrong about that	You are wholly wrong about that
23 A beautiful young aviatress has just arrived at the field	A beautiful young aviatrix has just arrived at the field
24 I must refuse to pass judgement	I must refuse to pass judgment
25 I am a regular voter at elections, and my wife a regular votaress	My wife and I are regular voters at elections
26 Tomorrow is a holey day	Tomorrow is a holy day
27 Her willowyness appeals to me	Her willowiness appeals to me
28 The room has a lovly cozyness	The room has a lovely coziness
29 He slayed the man in cold blood	He slew the man in cold blood
30 We just foolled around all day	We just fooled around all day
31 The machinettes are working hard for victory	The machinists (or women machinists) are working hard for victory
32 He has been studiing too hard	He has been studying too hard

* See page 3.

	NO	YES
33	He moved sprily from desk to desk	He moved spryly from desk to desk
34	I last saw him at Michaelmass	I last saw him at Michaelmas
35	The driness of the air is beneficial	The dryness of the air is beneficial
36	He was entirly too arguementative	He was entirely too argumentative
37	He takes a spoonfull every hour	He takes a spoonful every hour
38	They are planning down to Brazil	They are planing down to Brazil
39	They will not find her easyly subdueable	They will not find her easily subduable
40	Sincerly and faithfuly yours	Sincerely and faithfully yours

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SECTION FORTY-SEVEN — ASSOCIATION*

So much for rule—and exception to rule. There are many word endings that give the conscientious speller pause—if not prostration—for which there are no rules, not even rules beset by exceptions. Knowledge of foreign language (especially Latin) may help a little; association may be made to help a little more. But for the most part sheer memorizing is the only—usually the best—aid for the vast majority of us in connection with such terminations as are listed below in their proper company.

By sheer force of will you must make yourself remember the only *sede* word—*supersede,* the only three *ceed* words—*exceed, proceed, succeed.* The other homonym of these two suffixes is *cede* as in the seven words *accede, antecede, concede, intercede, precede, recede, secede.*

Similarly you must fix the *cion* (pronounced *shun*) words in mind —*coercion* and *suspicion.* The old word *cion,* like present-day equivalent *scion,* is pronounced *sigh'un,* and has nothing whatever to do with the suffix; it is used literally by horticulturists chiefly to mean the shoot of a plant, and *scion* is used figuratively as a rule in the sense of descendant. But the two words may be synonyms.

Again, train both eye and ear upon *sacrAment* and *sacrAmental,* upon *sacrIfice* and *sacrIlegious,* upon *sacrOiliac* and *sacrOsanct.*

* Chapter eighteen in *Get It Right* should be consulted in connection with this section, especially for extended association-lists.

And by the same force of will settle for all time the two *yze* words —*analyze* and *paralyze*. The Oxford English Dictionary spells them with *s*, to be sure. They are never so spelled in America. But both Britain and America are in a dither about *ise*—and *ize* —words (*yze* is, of course, the equivalent of *ize*). The pronounced trend is, both in England and here, to use *ize* as generally as possible, as well as the derivative *ize* forms *izable, ization, izer*. Words coming from the Greek with *izein* ending conform in English with *ize*—*baptize, catechize, characterize, dramatize, tantalize*, for example. But regardless of derivation, usage has forced the dictionaries to offer a choice—either *ise* or *ize*—even with such dyed-in-the-wool Greek adoptions as *anathematize* and *catechize* and *exorcize* (*exorcise* is the more common form). The following words are written—or should be—with *ise*: *advertise, advise, apprise, arise, chastise, circumcise, comprise, compromise, demise, despise, devise, disguise, emprise, enterprise, excise, exercise, franchise, improvise, merchandise, premise, revise, supervise, surmise, surprise*. These remain *s* words also preferably in prefix and suffix derivatives, if any. Some in this short list, it will be seen by consulting page 512, are written with *z*. All are pronounced with hard *s*. It is almost safe to say that when doubt arises, use *z*.

As has been previously noted (pages 478–479) there are certain other pronounced differences between British and American spellings at the ends of words though there is rightly enough a strong tendency to make them uniform. In England, for instance, all of the following words are spelled with *u* between the *o* and the *r* (usually terminal) but in the United States they are spelled as here: *arbor, ardor, armor (armorer, armory), behavior, candor, clamor (clamoring), clangor, color (colorable, colorist), demeanor, dolor, enamor, endeavor, favor (favorite), flavor, glamor, harbor, honor, humor, labor (laborer, laborite), neighbor, odor (odorless), parlor, rancor, rigor, rumor, savior, savor, splendor, succor, tumor, valor, vapor (vaporish), vigor (vigorless)*. But the Britisher never spells *horror, pallor, torpor, tremor* with *u* before *r*. And there are still further difficulties to be overcome by the American who would "go British" in the spelling of *or-our* words. The forms *clamorous, clangorous, coloration, colorific, dolorous, flavorous, humorous, laborious, odoriferous, odorific, odorous, rancorous, valorous, vaporize, vigorous, invigorate* are thus spelled—without *u* before *r*—in England, as they, of course, are in America. In

the main, primitives to which *able, er, ite, less* are suffixed retain *u* before *r* in British spelling; those otherwise suffixed—with *ary, ation, ific, ise* or *ize, ism, ist, ous*—do not. And so, as above illustrated, *clamouring* and *clamorous, honour* and *honorary, odorous* and *odorize,* result. Better stick to the American forms which, simpler though they are inasmuch as they always omit *u,* nevertheless offer more than enough perplexities to be clarified.

It should be added in this connection that even in the middle of a few words the British are likely to favor (favour) *ou* to simpler *o,* as *mould, moult, moustache, plough, smoulder* for our *mold, molt, mustache, plow, smolder.* The word *draught* has been supplanted by the simpler *draft* for all uses in the United States. In England, however, the simpler form is used only in special senses, as in connection with financial and military matters. This is true also of its derivatives, as, for example, in the American *drafter, drafty, draftsman, draftsmanship, draft horse* contrasted with the British *draughter, draughty, draughtsman, draughtsmanship, draught horse. Draught beer* persists in America, as in England, though *draft beer* is increasingly used here, the meaning being *drawn beer* in contradistinction to *bottled.* The *au* digraph in *gauge* is now recorded by *a—gage*—even by the Oxford English Dictionary, though the word is still spelled *gauge* in England, and to a considerable extent also in the United States.

The British prefer the termination *re* to *er,* and many American writers affect it. It is to be preferred in this country only when association makes for harmony, as in such terms as *Theatre Guild* and *Ye Olde Centre Shoppe.* The first of these is dubious, for *guild,* though an old word, is still a very live one; the second illustration may represent a deliberate play-up of archaism, for sales and advertising purposes. But the *re* termination is logically to be preferred only in words in which it indicates the hard sound of *c,* as in *acre, chancre, euchre, lucre, massacre, nacre, ochre.* It has no such laudable purpose in words like *accouter, auger, caliber, center, eager, fiber, liter, luster, maneuver, mauger, meager, meter, miter, niter, oger, reconnoiter, saber, saltpeter, scepter, sepulcher, somber, specter, theater.* All of these but *auger* are spelled *re* in England, the other *g* words (with the exception of the adjective *eager)* being so spelled for the sake of keeping the *g* hard. The noun *eagre,* meaning tidal wave, is spelled *re* in both England and America. These *re-er* forms remain constant in derivatives, that is, the participial and adjective forms are (Brit-

ish) *centring, metring, sabring,* and *ochreous, ochrous, ochry,* and (American) *centering, metering, sabering,* and *ocherous, ochery.* American dictionaries give choice between *ocher* and *ochre* as well as with most other noun and adjective forms in the category. But *ocher* has just about decided to "go" *er* on both sides of the Atlantic, and, special word though it is, its spelling forms are confused in usage.

In American usage the diphthongs *ae* and *oe* have to a large extent been supplanted by *e* (page 506). In England, however, this is not only not the case but the diphthongs are usually printed as ligatures (page 468); thus, conservative British *æsthetics, anæmia, anæsthesia, encyclopædia, fœtus, homœpathy, œdema, œsophagus* are preferably written *esthetics, anemia, anesthesia, encyclopedia, fetus, homeopathy, edema, esophagus* in the United States, as are all other words in the same (mostly scientific) category. When the diphthong is initial the change in dictionary alphabetization is met by cross reference.

It has been seen (page 229) that English nouns derived from Latin nouns in *xio* retain *xion* in England—*connexion, deflexion, genuflexion, inflexion*—whereas in the United States they are given the *ction* ending. But this departure is passing in England. Even yet, however, a British philosopher, lost in *reflection* before his open fire, may be diverted by the *reflexion* of the flames. But not so long ago the American was equally inconsistent in his use of the word *practice (practise).* Every dictionary until recently sanctioned *practice* as noun and *practise* as verb, so that *Feeling herself badly out of practice Mary practised four hours this morning* represented correct usage. It still does in England. *The Oxford English Dictionary* still carries this distinction. The *Standard Dictionary* says that either *practice* or *practise* may be used as either noun or verb. *The Webster International Dictionary* says that either *practice* or *practise* may be used as verb, that *practice* is noun only. But as noun of agent it permits either *practicer* or *practiser;* as adjective, either *practiced* or *practised.* The British hold to the *c* in *defence, offence, pretence;* we spell these words with *s* preferably, though either spelling is correct in the primitives as in the derivatives—*defenceless* or *defenseless, offenceless* or *offenseless.* But *c* is never used in them before suffixes beginning with a vowel, as *defensive, offensive, pretension,* rather than *defencive, offencive, pretencion.*

As for the troublesome *able* and *ible* endings there is no rule at all for guidance. There is very little association that is helpful. It may be of some assistance for those whose Latin is not too rusty to remember that *able* adjectives (and *ably* adverbs) are suffixed to verbs that come from the first conjugation, verbs with infinitives in *are;* thus, the Latin *alienare* and *tolerare* and *vegetare* transfer that infinitive *a* to the English adjectives *alienable* and *tolerable* and *vegetable.* The suffix *able* is used on many more words than is *ible,* and it is suffixed not only to verbs but to nouns—*actionable, marriageable, objectionable, treasonable*—and to word and phrase inventions (slang and barbarisms oftentimes)—*un-give-up-able, un-lay-down-able, re-do-able, can't-do-able.* The suffix *able,* that is to say, is a live and "going concern", like *fore* (page 470), whereas *ible,* like *for,* is not adaptable to new and varied (and coined) uses. It is because of this that there are—or may be—more *able* words than *ible* words.

The suffix *ible* appears in English adjectives derived from Latin verbs having infinitives in *ere* and *ire;* thus, the Latin *admittere* and *dividere, exhaurire* and *ignire* sponsor the suffix in *admissible* and *divisible, exhaustible* and *ignitible.* In the Latin *are* originals, the *a* carries through not only in the suffix *able,* but also in the suffixes *ate* and *ation,* as *alienate, alienation; tolerate, toleration; vegetate, vegetation.* But the *ible* suffix is by no means so accommodating, having no such general carry-over into *ite* and *ition.* Its correlative nouns end with *ion,* sometimes preceded by *s,* sometimes by *t,* sometimes by *c,* sometimes by *x,* depending upon the root, as *division, extension, suppression; ignition, exhaustion, production; inflexion; coercion.* It should be observed that the part of the mother rule requiring final *e* after soft *c* or *g* (page 483) does not hold before the *ible* suffix. The *i* in this suffix retains the soft sound of these letters; thus, you write *producible, reducible, tangible, unintelligible. Forcible* is preferable to *forceable* but the latter is not yet quite archaic. (For an extended list of words spelled with final *able* and *ible* see pages 546 to 548 in *Get It Right.*)

Perhaps the next most troublesome suffixes are *er* and *or,* used principally to indicate nouns of agency. The latter occurs with nouns only, frequently those having legal or official quality; the former is attached to verbs primarily, and is also used to denote the comparative degree of adjectives and adverbs. The suffix *ar* is less commonly used than either *er* or *or,* but like *er* it may be

used with either adjectives or nouns. The following list of *ar* nouns and adjectives represents daily use pretty closely: *angular, beggar, burglar, bursar, calendar, caterpillar, circular, collar, dollar, familiar, globular, grammar, guitar, hangar, hussar, insular, jocular, jugular, liar, lunar, mortar, muscular, nectar, particular, peculiar, perpendicular, pillar, polar, poplar, popular, registrar, regular, scholar, secular, seminar, similar, singular, solar, tabular, vicar, vulgar.*

The number of *er* agent nouns is legion for the reason that they are so easily formed from verbs, native verbs in particular. The following are a few that are perhaps most frequently misspelled: *admirer, advertiser, adviser, appointer, assayer, atomizer, beginner, betrayer, brewer, briber, caterer, censer, commander, contender, destroyer, deviser, discoverer, dispenser, dissenter, distiller, eraser, fertilizer, follower, freezer, golfer, interpreter, laborer, lingerer, loiterer, lover, manufacturer, modifier, mower, organizer, owner, plotter, pointer, printer, producer, promiser, promoter, provider, purser, renter, rioter, ruler, soothsayer, speaker, stenographer, subscriber, writer.*

A *bowyer* is one who makes or sells bows, the suffix *yer* being *ier*. The same device of inserting *y* for *i* between *w* and *er* is used in *lawyer* and *sawyer*. But *y* is by no means always inserted after *w* when *er* is added to form the noun of agent. A *vower* is one who vows; a *bower,* one who bows; a *sower,* one who sows, and one who saws may be called a *sawer* as well as a *sawyer*. There is confusion, too, in regard to the spelling of *pedlar*. The *Standard Dictionary* prefers *pedler* (Middle English was *pedlere*). *The Webster International Dictionary* gives *peddler* first and *pedlar* second. *The Oxford English Dictionary* prefers *pedlar,* and derives it, as Standard does, from *ped* meaning basket. You will do well to hold to *pedlar*. You will do better not to let the analogy with *meddler* confuse you. A meddler is one who intrudes or interferes unnecessarily. Like so many other *er* forms, this noun is derived legitimately from the verb *meddle*. But it is frequently misspelled *medlar,* probably by association with *pedlar*. There is a word *medlar* meaning a small tree bearing fruit somewhat like the crabapple.

Most *or* agent nouns are derived from Latin. Very often the *or* noun represents a special sense or meaning, as contrasted with the *er* noun which is likely to be of general signification. The word

bailer, for example, means a person or thing that dips or throws water out of a container, but a *bailor* is one who legally delivers money or goods to another in trust. The same kind of distinction is to be made between *deviser* and *devisor, promiser* and *promisor, voucher* and *vouchor,* and numerous other words in these categories, the *er* representing generic use and the *or* specific. Much confusion arises in the use of *adviser* and *advisor* in this connection. An *adviser* is any one who advises in a general way; *advisor,* one who advises in a special way. But the dictionaries have succumbed to the momentum of error in using the one form for the other, and the two spellings may now be used interchangeably.

Certain *or* agent nouns—those usually of legal or official signification—have antonyms in *ee,* the *or* form representing agent and the *ee* form representing the recipient or the one to whom an action is done or upon whom a right is conferred. The list of *or* nouns below, most of which are special agent nouns (a few have general *er* correlatives), is longer than the two preceding lists because words ending with *or* are more frequently misspelled than are those ending with *er* or *ar.* The *ee* correlatives of certain *or* nouns are placed in parentheses.

actor, addressor (addressee), aggressor, agitator, ambassador, annotator, appointor (appointee), assessor (assessee), assignor (assignee), auditor, author, aviator, bachelor, bargainor (bargainee), censor, chancelor, coadjutor, collector, conductor, confessor, conqueror, consignor (consignee), constructor, contractor, contributor, corridor, councilor, counselor, curator, debtor, decorator, defalcator, depositor, devisor (devisee), director, distrainor (distrainee), distributor, divisor, doctor, donor (donee), duplicator, editor, elector, equator, executor, factor, gladiator, grantor (grantee), guarantor (guarantee), illustrator, imitator, incisor, incubator, indicator, inspector, instigator, intercessor, interlocutor, inventor, investigator, investor, janitor, juror, legator (legatee), legislator, lessor (lessee), licensor (licensee), mirror, moderator, monitor, mortgagor (mortgagee), motor, navigator, objector, obligor (obligee), operator, oppressor, orator, perambulator, percolator, perpetrator, pledgor (pledgee), possessor, precentor, precursor, predecessor, proctor, professor, promisor (promisee), proprietor, prosecutor, protector, purveyor, radiator, razor, rector, realtor, reflector, refrigerator, sailor, sector, senator, solicitor, separator, spectator, speculator, sponsor, surveyor, tailor, testator, tractor, traitor, trans-

lator, tutor, vendor (vendee), ventilator, vibrator, victor, violator, visitor, vouchor (vouchee), warrantor (warrantee), warrior.

The *eer* and *ier* endings are forms of *er,* the *ier* ending showing French influence. They form nouns of agency for the most part, though many of the *eer* forms may be verbs. The *eer* words are sometimes used in a derogatory sense, as *poeteer* and *pulpiteer* and *racketeer;* the *ier* words in such affected barbarisms as *bootier* to men and *linenier* to households. Perhaps such simple forms as *beer, cheer, deer, peer, seer, sheer, sneer, steer, veer, veneer* may be helpful associates for keying *auctioneer, buccaneer, cannoneer, chantecleer, charioteer, circuiteer, commandeer, electioneer, engineer, garreteer, gazetteer, harponeer, motorneer, mountaineer, muleteer, musketeer, mutineer, pamphleteer, pioneer, privateer, profiteer, pulpiteer, scrutineer, sonneteer, volunteer.*

And the simple forms *bier, osier, pier, soldier* may be helpful associates for keying *arquebusier* (or *harquebusier*), *bombardier, boulevardier, brazier, brevier, brigadier, carabinier, cashier, cavalier, chandelier, chevalier, chiffonier (chiffonnier), clothier, collier, cordelier, courtier, couturier, crosier, croupier, dernier, espalier, financier, frontier, fusilier, gaselier, glacier, glazier, gondolier, grazier, grenadier, halberdier, pannier, premier, rapier, vizier.* The dissyllabic agent endings derived from verbs—*magnifier, denier, supplier,* for example—and the comparative forms of adjectives and adverbs—*happier, steadier, worthier*—do not, of course, fall within this category.

The *iar, ior, ear* words may profitably be segregated in follow-up to the foregoing. There are not so very many in everyday use, but even these are seriously "mauled" by careless spellers. Note, then, in particular *auxiliar* (now little used since *auxiliary* has become both noun and adjective), *briar, caviar, familiar, friar, liar, peculiar,* as differentiated from *anterior, exterior, inferior, interior, junior, posterior, seignior, senior, superior.* The *ear* forms in everyday use are only slightly more numerous, their varying *eer* or *air* pronunciation sometimes being the cause of misspelling: *appear, bear, blear, dear, drear, ear, fear, gear, hear, linear (curvilinear, rectilinear), near, pear, rear, sear, shear, smear, spear, swear, tear, wear, year.*

Perhaps nouns and adjectives in *ary* and *ory,* and nouns in *ery* (adjectives are not generally formed with *ery* but nouns in *ery* are, of course, used adjectively, as *archery contest* and *millinery*

show) stand well up on the list of "inducements" to incorrect spelling. In ordinary pronunciation these three suffixes are homonyms, but in writing they must, naturally, be kept separate and distinct. Here is everyman's list of *ary* endings: *actuary, adversary, antiquary, apiary, apothecary, arbitrary, auxiliary, aviary, beneficiary, breviary, canary, capillary, centenary, commentary, complementary, complimentary, contemporary, contrary, corollary, culinary, customary, diary, dictionary, dietary, dignitary, elementary, estuary, extraordinary, functionary, glossary, granary, hereditary, honorary, imaginary, incendiary, infirmary, itinerary, judiciary, lapidary, legendary, legionary, library, literary, luminary, mercenary, missionary, momentary, monetary, necessary, notary, obituary, ordinary, ovary, pecuniary, penetentiary, plenipotentiary, preliminary, primary, pulmonary, reactionary, reliquary, revolutionary, rosary, rotary, rudimentary, salary, salutary, sanctuary, sanitary, secondary, secretary, seminary, solitary, stationary, statuary, subsidiary, summary, supernumerary, supplementary, tributary, veterinary, visionary, vocabulary, voluntary, votary.*

The everyman's *ory* list is of about the same length and importance: *accessory, accusatory, advisory, amatory, auditory, compulsory, conciliatory, conservatory, contradictory, consistory, contributory, crematory, cursory, declamatory, depository, derogatory, desultory, dilatory, directory, exclamatory, exhortatory, explanatory, expository, glory, history, illusory, interrogatory, introductory, inventory, laudatory, lavatory, mandatory, manufactory, migratory, nugatory, obligatory, observatory, offertory, oratory, peremptory, perfunctory, pre-emptory, prefatory, preparatory, prohibitory, promissory, promontory, propitiatory, purgatory, rectory, refectory, refractory, repertory, repository, salutatory, satisfactory, savory, story, territory, trajectory, transitory, valedictory, victory, vindicatory.*

Both *depositary* and *depository* persist but they are used interchangeably (the former is the less used). Both mean the person to whom a deposit is intrusted and a place of deposit. The *ary* form is more or less legal; the latter, general in use. And *mandatary* and *mandatory* are still differentiated, though both may mean the one to whom a mandate is given. The former is, however, preferred as noun and the latter as adjective meaning pertaining to an obligation, as in the term *mandatory powers.* The noun *mandate* means an order or commission granted, for example, by

the League of Nations as *mandator* (that is, the body or person granting a mandate) to a member nation as its *mandatary*. (This old word was resurrected by Woodrow Wilson during the World War.) *Mandate* is also verb meaning to administer or assign under a mandate. The word *storey*, like *depositary* and *mandatary*, is bowing out. The dictionaries now list it as a variant of *story*. But it was formerly used to mean—and still is to some extent—a tier of pointed windows or sculptures, as in a cathedral, or a floor or level of a building.

The *ery* words are much more numerous than either the *ary* or the *ory* ones, this suffix being easily adaptable for the formation of nouns, as *refine* and *refinery*, *rogue* and *roguery*, *scene* and *scenery*, *tan* and *tannery*. These words also are broader in scope than *ary* or *ory* words, that is, they reflect a greater variety of human activities and interests. Here are a few of only the most generally used—and misspelled—*ery* terms: *adultery, artery, artillery, bakery, baptistery, battery, bindery, bravery, brewery, bribery, buffoonery, butchery, buttery, cajolery, cannery, cemetery, chancery, chicanery, cookery, confectionery, creamery, crockery, cutlery, deanery, debauchery, delivery, distillery, drudgery, dystentery, effrontery, embroidery, every, fernery, finery, fishery, flattery, foolery, forgery, fruitery, grocery, gunnery, haberdashery, hatchery, hosiery, imagery, joinery, jugglery, knavery, livery, lottery, machinery, mastery, millinery, mockery, monastery, mystery, napery, nursery, perfumery, piggery, pottery, presbytery, prudery, psaltery, quackery, query, raillery, recovery, refinery, revery, robbery, rookery, saddlery, savagery, scullery, slavery, snobbery, sorcery, stationery, surgery, thievery, treachery, trickery, vinery, watery.*

There are few *ury* words, and they are not particularly troublesome. But they are added here by way of full measure: *augury, bury, century, fury, jury (injury, perjury), luxury, mercury, penury, savoury* (see page 492 for other British formations), *treasury, usury*. The few additional ones in this category are of very low frequency.

The suffix *-ian*, variant of *-an*, is a commonly used and easily adapted one, being attached conveniently and euphoniously to proper names, both personal and geographical, as well as to common. It shares these honors frequently with *-ean* especially in those cases where the name itself ends with *e;* thus, you write

Austrian, Babylonian, Baconian, Caesarian (or *Caesarean*), *Christian, Ciceronian, crustacean, Epicurean, Etonian, Euclidean* (or *Euclidian*), *European, grammarian, librarian, Parisian, Prussian, Shaksperean,* (or *ian,* and *Shakespearean* or *ian*), *subterranean, Victorian, Voltarian, Washingtonian.* The simple everyday *bean, clean, dean, glean, lean, mean, ocean, wean, yean,* are not, perhaps, very helpful as keys to the spelling of such words as *empyrean, Herculean, Mediterranean,* especially since the *e* and the *an* (like the *i* and the *an*) in longer words part company to form separate syllables (page 517). The ear may usually be depended upon to distinguish the *ean* termination from the *ian* inasmuch as *e* is generally accented whereas *i* is not—*em py re' an, Her cu le' an* (written also without capital), *Eu ro pe' an, Gal i le' an,* but *Eu clid' e* (or *i*) *an, Med i ter ra' ne an, Pro me' the an.* The dictionary must be relied upon for these unregulated spellings and accents. The number of such formations in the language is legion, and they may be "Greek" to the average person when the corresponding Latin proper adjective forms are used, as, for instance, *Calesian* for *Calais, Cantabrigian* for *Cambridge, Frisian* for *Friesland, Haligonian* for *Halifax, Mancunian* for *Manchester, Martian* for *Mars, Norwegian* for *Norway, Oxonian* for *Oxford, Shavian* for *Shaw, Venetian* for *Venice.*

There are certain *-eon* nouns that may be helpfully grouped, such as *bludgeon, chameleon, chirurgeon, curmudgeon, dudgeon, dungeon, escutcheon, galleon, habergeon, luncheon, Napoleon, Pantheon, pigeon, sturgeon, surgeon, truncheon.* And the following *-ion* nouns, apart from the *-sion* and *-tion* forms (page 504), may as well join the company; *accordion, battalion, billion, bullion, carrion, centurion, champion, clarion, coercion* (page 491), *collodion, communion, companion, complexion, contagion, criterion, crucifixion, cushion, dominion, fashion, medallion, million, mullion, oblivion, onion, opinion, pavilion, rebellion, region, religion, scorpion, scullion, stallion, stanchion, suspicion, union, vermilion.*

There are not many *ince* words—*convince, evince, mince, prince, province, quince, since, wince* are all that matter for the average speaker and writer. But *ance (ant)* and *ence (ent)* words abound, and the lists given on page 544 of *Get It Right* should be consulted in case association for spelling defense is felt important in their connection. Here, as in many other similar word groups, ear or pronunciation cannot be depended upon to differentiate;

The *-ty* and *-ity* endings are commonly regarded as "terrors", and they become more and more troublesome as they move forward into roots—*-acity, -icity, -ocity, -osity (sity), -ucity.* Observe the words in the following groups (separated by semicolons) nearly all of which are of high frequency:

anxiety, casualty, cruelty, dynasty, frailty, guaranty, loyalty, mighty, modesty, penalty, poverty, property, royalty, society, specialty, variety; ability, absurdity, adversity, audacity, authority, capacity, community, complexity, credulity, curiosity, diversity, equality, equity, humanity, impunity, laxity, majority, necessity, oddity, rapidity, reality, severity, stupidity, velocity, vitality; audacity, capacity, didacity, fugacity, mendacity, minacity, mordacity, nugacity, opacity, perspicacity, pugnacity, rapacity, sagacity, salacity, sequacity, vivacity, voracity; authenticity, catholicity, complicity, domesticity, duplicity, eccentricity, elasticity, electricity, felicity, lubricity, mendicity, multiplicity, periodicity, plasticity, publicity, pudicity, rusticity, simplicity, triplicity, vorticity; atrocity, ferocity, precocity, reciprocity, velocity; animosity, callosity, curiosity, globosity, impecuniosity, impetuosity, jocosity, luminosity, monstrosity, necessity, obesity, pomposity, preciosity, sinuosity, sparsity, spinosity, verbosity; caducity, paucity, raucity.

Close second to the *-ty* and *-ity* words in peskiness, are the *-ious, -ous,* and *-uous* words. The first is sometimes pronounced *shus,* sometimes *ĭ us;* the second is always *us;* the third is usually *u us* but after *t* it tends by combination to soften into *ch.* In the main, pronunciation should keep these endings clear and distinct from one another, but it does not do so because the average person is careless to the point of slovenliness in distinguishing vowel sound nicely by voice. Page 545 in *Get It Right* contains lists of some of the most commonly used words with these endings.

Neither does ordinary pronunciation make any distinction among the suffixes *-al, -el, -le.* But here pronunciation would sound affected and artificial if any one were to attempt to make these endings sound unlike. Inasmuch as spelling so often follows the ear—as it could safely do if it were made phonetic—these three endings are sometimes badly confused as they are transferred from ear to paper. One *el*-word in particular needs watching today, namely, *materiel—ma tēr ĭ el'.* The word *material* is from the Latin *materia* meaning stuff or matter; *materiel* is the same word bearing two marks of French influence—the *el* ending and the

last-syllable accent. The meaning of the latter is apparatus, supplies, equipment; in the language of the military it is the antonym of *personnel.* (The most troublesome words in all three of these categories are listed on pages 544 and 545 in *Get It Right.)*

The *-ic* and *-ical* endings have been explained briefly as to meaning on page 126. The *-ical* endings are by no means so fixed or stable as are the *-ic* endings. You say, for example, *basic, epidemic, forensic, photographic, volcanic,* not *basical, epidemical, forensical, photographical, volcanical.* But you may say *cylindric* or *cylindrical, diabolic* or *diabolical, geographic* or *geographical, philanthropic* or *philanthropical, rhythmic* or *rhythmical,* sometimes without any difference in meaning, sometimes, to be sure, with an important difference in meaning. (The lists on pages 555 and 556 in *Get It Right* may profitably be consulted.)

Here are most of the *sy* words. Nearly all of them belong in the daily vocabulary of the average person. Remember that *sy,* like *asy* and *esy,* is a word ending, not a suffix. Do not confuse it in spelling with *cy,* a suffix meaning state or rank or quality, and occurring chiefly in the compound suffixes *acy, ancy, ency, cracy, mancy: apostasy, argosy, autopsy, bossy, busy, catalepsy, cheesy, clumsy, controversy, courtesy, curtsy, daisy, drossy, drowsy, dyspepsy, easy, ecstasy, embassy, epilepsy, euphrasy, fantasy (phantasy), flimsy, frowsy, fussy, geodesy, gipsy (gypsy), glossy, grassy, greasy, heresy, hypocrisy, hussy, idiocrasy, idiosyncrasy, jealousy, leprosy, lousy, mossy, mousy, noisy, palsy, pansy, peasy, phrensy (frenzy), pleurisy, poesy, posy, pursy, queasy, quinsy, rosy, sassy, tansy, theocrasy, tipsy.*

There are many more *cy* words, as even a casual leafing of your dictionary will reveal. It is sometimes called a semi-suffix for the reason, as pointed out above, that it occurs as a rule in compounds. One of these—*cracy* meaning rule or power or government—is, like *able* and *fore,* especially alive and kicking, lending itself easily to new and popular formations, such as *dollarocracy, oilocracy, rubberocracy, steelocracy* (the *o* thrown in for good rhythmic measure). The *acy* and *ecy* words are not interchangeable with the *asy* and *esy* words, as is sometimes wishfully thought by careless spellers. *(Theocracy* means a state governed by God; *theocrasy,* confusion of deities, or union of the soul with God.) *Prophecy,* for example, is a noun; *prophesy,* a verb. *Ecstasy* is no longer spelled *cy,* as it was in Doctor Johnson's day, though

the *cy* spelling is still reproduced from the old plates. But these differentiations are luckily few and far between, and tend to disappear. The list of *cy* words below is a short one indeed compared with what it might be made. But it represents the *cy* words most commonly misspelled through confusion with *sy* words, and it is interesting as revealing helpful associations toward correct spellings—those marked [1] having *ate, atic,* or *acious* correlatives, or all three *(accurate, aristocratic, fallacious),* those marked [2] showing the change of *t* in the adjective form to *c* in the *cy* noun form (*pregnant* and *pregnancy*): *accuracy,*[1] *advocacy,*[1] *aristocracy,*[1] *autocracy,*[1] *bankruptcy, brilliancy,*[2] *bureaucracy,*[1] *candidacy,*[1] *captaincy, celibacy,*[1] *chaplaincy, clemency,*[2] *confederacy,*[1] *conspiracy,*[1] *constancy,*[2] *contumacy, curacy,*[1] *decency,*[2] *degeneracy,*[1] *delicacy,*[1] *democracy,*[1] *diplomacy, dormancy,*[2] *efficacy, efficiency,*[2] *effeminacy, episcopacy,*[1] *fallacy,*[1] *flippancy,*[2] *fragrancy,*[2] *gramercy, gynecocracy, idiocy, incumbency,*[2] *infancy,*[2] *intestacy,*[1] *intimacy,*[1] *intricacy,*[1] *latency,*[2] *legitimacy,*[1] *leniency,*[2] *lieutenancy,*[2] *literacy,*[1] *lunacy, malignancy,*[2] *mercy, mobocracy,*[1] *monocracy,*[1] *necromancy, neocracy,*[1] *obstinacy,*[1] *papacy, pharmacy, physiocracy,*[1] *piracy,*[1] *plutocracy,*[1] *policy, pregnancy,*[2] *prelacy,*[1] *presidency,*[2] *privacy,*[1] *proficiency,*[2] *profligacy,*[1] *regency,*[2] *repugnancy,*[2] *saucy, secrecy,*[2] *supremacy, vagrancy.*[2]

Words ending with *-sion* and *-tion* are, like those ending with *-able* and *-ible,* only somewhat less numerous, seemingly, than the sands of the sea. And with them as with other endings pronunciation does not help spelling a bit. Both are pronounced *shun.* A knowledge of Latin root endings will help in spelling these words—English words derived from Latin *s* roots naturally taking *sion;* those from *t* roots, taking *tion.* But it may be more difficult to recall Latin roots than to memorize these two comparatively brief lists:

abrasion, abscission, accession, admission, affusion, aggression, allusion, apprehension, ascension, aversion, cession, collision, collusion, commission, comprehension, compression, concession, conclusion, condescension, confession, confusion, controversion, contusion, conversion, convulsion, corrosion, decision, declension, depression, derision, descension, diffusion, digression, dimension, dissension, dissuasion, diversion, division, effusion, elision, elusion, emersion, erosion, evasion, exclusion, expansion, explosion, expression, expulsion, extension, fusion, immersion, impression, impulsion, inclusion, incursion, infusion, intercession, intermis-

sion, introversion, invasion, inversion, manumission, obsession, obtrusion, obversion, omission, oppression, permission, persuasion, pervasion, perversion, possession, precession, precision, preclusion, pretension, procession, profession, profusion, progression, propulsion, protrusion, provision, recession, remission, reprehension, repression, repulsion, retrogression, reversion, revision, seclusion, submersion, submission, subversion, succession, suffusion, supersession, suppression, suspension, tension, transfusion, transgression, transmission.

absorption, accommodation, acquisition, action, addition, affection, affliction, ambition, ammunition, attention, attribution, caption, caution, coalition, combustion, conception, condition, collection, congestion, connection, constitution, consumption, constriction, construction, contention, contortion, conviction, correction, corruption, deflection, description, denunciation, desertion, destruction, detection, devotion, digestion, dilution, direction, discretion, disinfection, disruption, distention, distortion, distribution, ebullition, emotion, erection, eruption, execution, exemption, exhaustion, expedition, extortion, extradition, eviction, ignition, infection, inflection, injection, inquisition, inscription, insertion, inspiration, instruction, intention, interrogation, intuition, nutrition, objection, occupation, option, partition, perception, perdition, persecution, petition, pollution, prediction, predilection, preemption, prescription, presumption, prevention, projection, promotion, prosecution, prostitution, protection, reception, recollection, redemption, reflection, rejection, rendition, repetition, requisition, resumption, resurrection, satisfaction, section, selection, subscription, substitution, suction, suggestion, tuition, volition.

There is no greater pitfall in spelling, especially for the beginner in the study of English, than (1) that of the silent letter—initial or internal or final, or any two of these in a single word, or all three; and (2) that of the "disguised" letter or digraph pronounced like some other letter. The following abridged list may be helpful to those who may from time to time make the mistake of thinking that words are always pronounced according to appearance:

a silent, as in such words as *bread, breakfast, head, health, heavy, leather, pleasure, weather; bereave, weave*

ae and *oe* pronounced *e*, as in *aesthetics* and *oesophagus, alumnae* and *phoenix, encyclopaedia* and *subpoena.* These letters are decreasingly printed as ligatures in the United States. Thanks in large measure to the Simplified Spelling Board the dictionaries now sanction the phonetic spelling of these words, and others like them, and supply cross reference from the *ae* or the *oe* to the more logical *e.* (Even the unusual geographical word *Djibuti*, in which *D* is silent, is simplified by the dictionaries to "see *Jibuti*".)

ai pronounced *e*, as in *again, said*

b silent before *t* and after *m*, as in *debt, debtor, doubt, indebted, redoubt; aplomb, bomb, comb, crumb, dumb, lamb, limb, plumb, thumb, tomb, womb*

c silent before *z* and after *s*, as in *czar; scene, scenery, scented, scepter, science, scimitar, scissors*

ch silent, as in *yacht*

d pronounced *t* in the imperfect tense forms of many regular verbs, as, for example, *dreamed, dressed, dripped, expressed, heaped, kissed, nipped, propped, pushed, skipped, spelled, supped, tapped, tossed, trapped, vanquished, vexed, whipped, worshipped, wrapped*

di pronounced *j*, as in *soldier (sōl' jẽr), soldiered, soldiering, soldierly, soldiery, soldiership*

double consonant before final silent *e.* As in the case of most double letters, only one is pronounced (page 468), as in *cigarette, cretonne, giraffe, quadrille, quartette.* These are now generally spelled—thanks again to the Simplified Spelling Board—*cigaret, creton, giraf, quadril, quartet*

double consonant, as in *add, bill, bluff, class, doll, egg, glass, less, loss, mass, pass, shall, will.* The Board would spell all final-double-*l* words with one *l* after a short vowel, and all final-double-*s* monosyllables with one *s.* But general usage has not yet accepted this reform, in spite of its pronunciation logic

e initial, silent, as in *euchre, Euclid, eugenics, eulogy, euphony*

e internal, silent, as in *heart* and *hearth;* in imperfect tense and past participle forms, such as *hurled, rubbed, wronged,* and

addressed, rushed, wrecked; in final-*ey* words, such as *donkey, journey, money, pulley, turkey, trolley*

e final, silent, in words falling under the mother rule (page 481), such as *live, love, receive, relieve, seize, squeeze, serve, swerve, foe, hoe, roe, toe, woe;* in *are, gone, were;* and in short-*i* final syllables *ide, ile, ine, ise, ite, ive—bromide* (*i* may be long), *textile, imagine, promise, infinite, relative*

ei pronounced or disguised as *a,* as in *deign, feign, rein, reign, weight* (see rule on page 474 for other disguised pronunciations of *ei* and *ie*)

g silent, as in *gnarl, gnash, gnat, gnaw, gneiss, gnome, gnostic, gnu; align, cologne, benign, fight, might, poignant, reign, resign, right, sign; diaphragm, phlegm, paradigm* (cf with *gh*)

gh pronounced *f,* as in *cough, draught, enough, laugh, tough;* and *gh* silent, as in *bough, brought, caught, drought, thought, wrought*

h silent, as in *heir, hour, aghast, ghastly, gherkin, ghost, ghoul; khaki, ohm, rheumatism, rhetoric, rhubarb, rhythm; burgh*

i silent (see *ai* above) in *ei-ie* combinations pronounced *ee* or *a,* as in *receive, grieve* (page 474); in *ai* combinations pronounced *a,* as in *braid, raid*

k silent, as in *knack, knapsack, knave, knead, knee, kneel, knew, knick, knife, knit, knob, knock, knoll, knot, knout, know, knuckle*

l silent, as in *almond, alms, balk, balm, calm, could, half, palm, psalm, should, stalk, talk, walk, would*

m initial, silent, as in *mnemonic, Mnemosyne*

me final, silent, as in *programme*

n silent, as in *column, condemn, damn, limn, solemn*

o silent, in such words as *touch, you, young, youth*

p silent, as in *pneumatic, pneumonia, psalm, pseudonym, pshaw, psychology, ptarmigan*

ph pronounced or disguised as *f,* as in *phantom, phantasy, pharmacy, phase, phonetic, phrase, phosphorous; alphabet,*

diaphragm, diphthong, sulphur, telephone; phonograph, photograph, telegraph

qu pronounced *kw*, as in *acquit, banquet, equal, quarter, quench, quiet, quit, quiver, requite, quotient, squat, tranquil;* pronounced *k*, as in *conquer* and *lacquer*

re pronounced *er* (page 493)

s internal, silent, as in *aisle, isle, island*

s final, silent, as in *corps*

t silent following *st*, as in *apostle, bristle, bustle, epistle, hustle, rustle, thistle, whistle, wrestle;* and in *crochet* and *mortgage*

u silent preceding *l*, as in *boulder, moulder, shoulder* (page 493); and before medial vowel, as in *build, conduit, guaranty, guard, guess, guide, guild* (for silent *u* in final *our*, see page 492).

ue final, silent, after *g*, as in *catalogue, decalogue, demagogue, dialogue, epilogue, monologue, pedagogue, prologue, synagogue*, all of which are now, owing to the influence of the Simplified Spelling Board, generally spelled without final silent *ue*. But *brogue, fugue, harangue, league, rogue, vague, vogue* stubbornly retain the *ue* (pages 484 and 512)

ugh final, silent, as in *although, borough, dough, furlough, though, thorough*

w initial, silent, in such words as *wrangle, wrap, wraith, wrath, wreath, wreck, wren, wrench, wrest, wrestle, wretch, wriggle, wright, wring, wrinkle, wrist, write, writhe, wrong, wry;* and internally in *answer*

y sounded but not used in spelling, as in such words as *ewe, use, unite, value;* used for the short *i* and for the long *i*, as, respectively, in *physic* and *type, nymph* and *style*, and so on; spelled as *j* in *hallelujah*, as *g* in *vignette*, as *e* in linear *(līn'-yēr*, though *līn' ē ēr* is also correct); silent in *yew*. It is sometimes confused with the Anglo-Saxon character þ (called *thorn*), and advertising writers occasionally use it for an atmosphere of archaism, as in y^e for *the*, thus making it represent *th*. But this is an affectation merely—ye was never seriously used for *the* in either writing or pronunciation.

These are representative only of the hundreds of spellings in English calculated to give pencil-chewing pause, not only to the beginner in the study of the language, but to many who are skilled in its unphonetic combinations of letters to form words. Exclusive of many Welsh and many British proper names, no spellings could possibly be more deceptive in regard to pronunciation, or vice versa, than most of those indicated above. And the worst of it is that there is no rule—not even one to which there are a thousand exceptions—that may be relied upon to give even a little guidance. They are without rime or reason—or rule. It would be very difficult to devise a rule for *phthisic* pronounced *tiz'ik* and *phthisis* pronounced *thī'sis,* or for *tizik* spelled *phthisic* and *thisis* spelled *phthisis.* The "way" of a language with hardly more than half enough letters to represent all its pronunciation sounds is peculiar—more than merely peculiar when a word contains not only one silent or disguised sound, but more than one, as some of the above illustrative words do.

The Simplified Spelling Board, of course, advocates phonetic spelling for all of the words above that, as they stand, are beclouded by silent letters or by letters or digraphs that belie their appearance as far as sound is concerned. The now famous *twelve words,* the first group to be promoted in a unified effort by the spelling reformers, and adopted by the National Educational Association, are *catalog, decalog, demagog, pedagog, program, prolog, tho, altho, thoro, thorofare, thru, thruout.* The *Standard Dictionary* is the only dictionary that records all simplified spellings in its vocabularies, including the imperfect tenses in *t* which were adopted by the National Educational Association in 1916. (There was a brief interregnum—from about 1920 to 1924—during which the Association abandoned these reformed spellings for the reason that, in its campaign for a federal department of education, its lobbyists felt that such radical departures in spelling were likely to handicap the movement with Congress, conservative even in matters of spelling. But the spellings were later resumed and are today used in the *Journal of the N E A.*)

The principles of simplified spelling are here given for the benefit of those who are sincerely interested in spelling reform but who may not as yet have had the opportunity to examine the logic of the elementary principles upon which it is established: *

* Reproduced from *Handbook of Simplified Spelling* by permission of the Simplified Spelling Board, Godfrey Dewey, Secretary.

RULES FOR SIMPLIFIED SPELLING

RECOMMENDED BY THE SIMPLIFIED SPELLING BOARD

EXPLANATORY NOTES

Rules Self-indexing

For convenience of reference the rules for simplified spelling hav been made self-indexing and ar arranged in the alfabetic order of the letters or combinations of letters simplified.

Inflections and Derivativs

In forming inflections and derivativs of words simplified in the primitiv, if the suffix is not simplified, the spelling follows the prevailing practis In doutful cases this has been indicated iether in the examples or in an appended note.

According to an "orthografic rule" cited in the leading dictionaries, if the suffix begins with a vowel, and the primitiv ends in a single consonant, the consonant is doubld only when it is preceded by a single strest vowel, and even then not always, since **h, j, v, w, x,** ar not normally doubld in English spelling.

The Simplified Spelling Board accepts this principle, but does not recommend the doubling of the final consonant of the primitiv in cases in which the current orthografy calls for only one consonant in the inflected or derived form. Thus the Board spels *ad,* added, *ruf, ruffer; det, dettor* (for debt, debtor); but *ded, deden* (for dead, deaden); etc.

Tipografy of Rules and Examples

Words used as illustrations in the rules and examples ar printed in *italics,* if new spellings, in roman, if given as preferd or alternativ spellings by one or more of the leading American dictionaries (Century, Standard, Webster's) and not qualified as "simplified," "new," "obsolete," or the like. Examples of incorrect forms ar printed in ***boldface italics;*** index words and letters and illustrativ letters, in **boldface;** regulativ words, in SMALL CAPITALS

RULES

æ, œ, initial or medial. SPEL **e.**

EXAMPLES *ciclopedia,* esthetic, medieval, *fenix,* maneuver, subpena; BUT: alumnae, striae, etc.

NOTE æ, œ, ar now usually written **ae, oe.** Other cases of **ae, oe,** medial, as in canoeist, Gaelic, subpenaed, etc., ar not affected.

bt pronounst **t.** DROP silent **b.**

EXAMPLES: *det, dettor, dout, indetted,* redout.

NOTE RETAIN **b,** when pronounst, in *subtil*(e).

ceed final. SPEL **cede.**

EXAMPLES: *excede, procede, succede.*

ch pronounst like **c** in car. DROP silent **h,** EXCEPT before **e, i, y.**

EXAMPLES. *caracter, clorid*(e), *corus, cronic, eco, epoc, mecanic, monarc, scolar, scool, stomac, tecnical,*

BUT: architect, chemist, monarchy.

double consonant before e final silent. DROP last 2 letters.
EXAMPLES: *bagatel, bizar,* cigaret, creton, *crevas,* gavot, *gazet, giraf,* gram, program, *quadril,* quartet, vaudevil.

double consonant final. REDUCE double to single; BUT in **-ll** only after a short vowel, and in **-ss** only in monosillables RETAIN gross, hiss, off, puss.
EXAMPLES: *ad, bil, bluf, buz, clas, dol, dul, eg, glas, les, los, mes, mis, pas, pres, shal, tel, wil;*
BUT NOT: ***al*** for all, ***rol*** for roll, ***needles*** for needless, etc.

e final silent. In the following cases DROP **e**:
a) After a consonant preceded by a short vowel strest.
EXAMPLES. bad (bade), *giv, hav, liv,* centiped (when so pronounst)
b) In *ar*(e), *gon*(e), and in *wer*(e) when not pronounst to rime with there
c) In the unstrest final short sillables **ide, ile, ine, ise, ite, ive,** pronounst as if speld **id, il, in, is, it, iv.**
EXAMPLES *activ,* bromid, *comparativ, definit, determin, engin, examin, favorit, genuin, hostil,* iodin, *imagin, infinit, nativ, opposit, positiv, practis, promis, textil*
NOTE. The ordinary use of **e** final after a single consonant is to indicate that the preceding vowel has a pronunciation different from that which it would normally hav if the consonant in question wer final, as in bar, bare; hat, hate; her, here; them, theme; sir, sire; bid, bide, con, cone, run, rune. Hence the **e** final is retaind in such words as arrive, care, confuse, fine, mile, polite, ride, rode, and also in bromide, iodine, etc., when pronounst with the **i** of line, side.
d) After **lv** and **rv.**
EXAMPLES: *involv, resolv, twelv, valv; carv, curv, deserv, serv.*
e) After **v** or **z** when preceded by a digraf representing a long vowel or a difthong
EXAMPLES *achiev, believ, deceiv, freez, gauz, leav, reciev, sneez.*
f) In **oe** final pronounst **o.**
EXAMPLES. *fo, ho, ro, to, wo.*
NOTE. RETAIN **e** in inflections **-oed, -oes;** as foes, not ***fos;*** hoed, not ***hod.***

ea pronounst as in head or as in heart. DROP the silent letter.
EXAMPLES *bred, brekfast, hed, helth, hevy, insted, lether, plesure, welth, wether; hart, harty, harth.*

ed final pronounst **d.** When the change wil not suggest a wrong pronunciation, DROP silent **e,** REDUCING a preceding double to a single consonant.
EXAMPLES: *anserd, cald, carrid, delayd, doubld, employd, examind, fild, followd, marrid, pleasd, preferd, recievd, robd, signd, troubld, sneezd, struggld, traveld, worrid, wrongd;*
BUT NOT: ***bribd*** for bribed, ***cand*** for caned, ***changd*** for changed, ***fild*** for filed, ***pricd*** for priced, ***usd*** for used, etc
NOTE. The **e** is retained only in cases where it has by conven-

tion a diacritic use, to indicate a preceding long vowel, or in the case of consonants, c sibilant or g pronounst j.

ed final pronounst t. When the change wil not suggest a wrong pronunciation, SPEL t, REDUCING a preceding double to a single consonant, and CHANGING ced, sced, final, to st.
EXAMPLES: *askt, fixt, helpt, indorst, wisht, addrest, kist,* past, *shipt, stopt, stuft, advanst, announst, commenst, invoist, notist, acquiest, effervest,*
BUT NOT ***bakt*** for baked, ***deduct*** or ***dedust*** for deduced, ***fact*** or ***fast*** for faced, ***hopt*** for hoped, etc
NOTE. The e is retaind only in cases where it has by convention a diacritic use, to indicate a preceding long vowel, or in the case of consonants, c sibilant or g pronounst j.

ei pronounst like ie in brief. SPEL ie.
EXAMPLES: *conciet, deciev, invregle, iether, reciev,* wierd.

ey final unstrest pronounst like short y final. DROP silent *e*.
EXAMPLES: *barly, chimny, donky, journy, mony, pully, trolly, vally,* whisky.

gh pronounst f. SPEL f; DROP the silent letter of the preceding digraf.
EXAMPLES *cof,* draft; *enuf, laf, ruf, tuf.*

gh pronounst like g in gas. DROP silent h.
EXAMPLES: *agast, gastly,* gerkin, *gost,* goul.

gm final. DROP silent g.
EXAMPLES. apothem, *diafram, flem, paradim.*

gue final after a consonant, a short vowel, or a digraf representing a long vowel or a difthong. DROP silent ***ue;*** tongue SPEL *tung.*
EXAMPLES: catalog, dialog, *harang, leag, sinagog,*
BUT NOT ***rog*** for rogue, ***vag*** for vague, etc.

ise final pronounst as if speld ize. SPEL ize.
EXAMPLES: advertize, *advize,* apologize, enterprize, *franchize,* itemize, merchandize, *rize, surmize,* surprize, *wize.*

mb final after a short vowel. DROP silent b.
EXAMPLES. *bom, crum, dum, lam, lim, thum;*
BUT NOT: ***com*** for comb, ***tom*** for tomb, etc.

ou before **l**, pronounst like **o** in bold. DROP silent **u**, EXCEPT in soul.
EXAMPLES *bolder,* colter, mold, molt, *sholder.*

ough final. SPEL **o, u, ock,** or **up,** when pronounst as if so speld, SPEL plow.
EXAMPLES: altho, -boro, *boro, do, donut, furlo,* tho, *thoro; thru,* hock, hiccup.

our final, with **ou** pronounst as a short (obscure) vowel. DROP **u.**
EXAMPLES: color, favor, honor, labor, Savior.

ph pronounst **f.** SPEL **f.**
EXAMPLES: *alfabet, emfasis,* fantasy, fantom, *fonograf, fotograf,* sulfur, *telefone, telegraf.*

re final after any consonant except **c.** SPEL **er.**
EXAMPLES: center, fiber, meter, theater,
BUT NOT: ***lucer*** for lucre, ***mediocer*** for mediocre, etc.

rh initial. DROP silent **h**.
EXAMPLES: *retoric, reumatism,* rime, *rom* (rhomb), *rubarb, rithm.*

sc initial pronounst as if speld **s**. DROP silent **c**.
EXAMPLES: *senery, sented, septer, sience,* simitar, *sissors;*
BUT: scatter, *scooner,* sconce, etc.

u silent before a vowel medial. DROP **u**.
EXAMPLES: *bild, condit, garantee, gard, ges, gide,* gild.

y between consonants SPEL **i**.
EXAMPLES. *analisis, fisic,* gipsy, *paralize,* rime, *silvan, sithe, tipe.*

SPECIAL LIST

Words in recommended spellings not governd by the preceding rules:

aker	**frend**	**slight** (sleight)
anser	**grotesk**	**sorgum**
beleager	**hemorage**	**sovren**
burlesk	**hemoroid**	**spritely**
buro	**iland**	**tisic**
campain	**ile**	**tisis**
catar	**ilet**	**tuch**
cask (casque)	**mark** (marque)	**yoman**
counterfit	**maskerade**	**yu**
delite	**morgage**	**yung**
diarea	**picturesk**	**yungster**
foren	**receit**	**yunker**
forfit	**siv**	

CONTEST *

	NO	YES
1	You precced and I shall follow	You precede and I shall follow
2	I was paralised with laughter	I was paralyzed with laughter
3	There must be no coersion about this	There must be no coercion about this
4	It was a very tantalising experience	It was a very tantalizing experience
5	He received an honourary degree	He received an honorary degree
6	The good teacher moulds character	The good teacher molds character
7	They have gone out to reconnoitre	They have gone out to reconnoiter
8	He did not mean to be offencive	He did not mean to be offensive
9	He is a most un-get-at-ible man	He is a most un-get-at-able man
10	Four is divisable by two	Four is divisible by two
11	The road is altogether impassible	The road is altogether impassable
12	They found him ineligable for service	They found him ineligible for service
13	They found the road almost interminible	They found the road almost interminable

* See page 3.

	NO	YES
14	He was impassable to my appeals	He was impassible to my appeals
15	That decision is irrevocible	That decision is irrevocable
16	They say the ship is indestructable	They say the ship is indestructible
17	Bill is an interior decorater	Bill is an interior decorator
18	He was the first to volunter	He was the first to volunteer
19	Who is the leaser of this building	Who is the lessor of this building
20	Please go to the apothecery for me	Please go to the apothecary for me
21	The canery chirps unconscionibly	The canary chirps unconscionably
22	Don't yield to such cajolory	Don't yield to such cajolery
23	He became violent and unmanagible	He became violent and unmanageable
24	The prevalance of illness is alarming	The prevalence of illness is alarming
25	He has great curiosity about the penality	He has great curiosity about the penalty
26	Do not use superfloıs words	Do not use superfluous words
27	The accident was both mysterous and disastrious	The accident was both mysterious and disastrous
28	You have made a grieviously malicous remark	You have made a grievously malicious remark
29	Stop tickeling me with that tassal	Stop tickling me with that tassel
30	He is subject to epileptical fits	He is subject to epileptic fits
31	That seems to be a logic argument	That seems to be a logical argument
32	Democrasy is not an ideal theory	Democracy is not an idle theory
33	I have no intension of meeting her	I have no intention of meeting her
34	That contorsionist created some avertion	That contortionist created some aversion
35	In anser to my letter he says he wil sel me an aker	In answer to my letter he says he will sell me an acre
36	A yung foren sovren has shipt me twelv grotesk but picturesk costumes	A young foreign sovereign has shipped me twelve grotesque but picturesque costumes

SECTION FORTY-EIGHT — SYLLABLE*

A syllable is a single unit of utterance—an articulated vocal (vowel) sound uttered by a single vocal impulse. In writing, it is the representation by letters of such vocal impulse or effort. It always consists of a vowel sound, often with a consonant (or conso-

* By kind permission of Funk and Wagnalls Company the author has drawn to some extent upon the introduction to the *Standard Dictionary of the English Language* in the contents of this section

nants) preceding or following, or both. The written syllable is—should be—a perfect picture of the pronounced syllable, but it by no means always is. In the words *acceptance* and *circle,* for example, the written syllabication should be *ac cept ance* and *cir cle* but these words are usually pronounced *(ak sep tans)* and *(surk l).* In the vast majority of words syllabic pronunciation is usually in accord with derivation or etymology.

The devices used to indicate syllabic division in words vary among the three leading dictionaries. *The Webster International Dictionary* separates syllables by dots, except those after which primary and secondary accent marks are used. These marks, of course, supply sufficient spacing to make syllabication clear. The *Standard Dictionary* uses hyphens to separate syllables, except, as in the case of Webster, where accent marks are used. *The Oxford English Dictionary* sets apart only the accented syllable of a word by placing a dot after it (thus reflecting somewhat the British tendency to make the accented syllable all important at the expense of slurring other syllables, as *sec try* for *secretary* and *diksh nry* for *dictionary*). This word follows Webster: *ir're me'di a ble;* this, Standard *ir''re-me'di-a-ble;* this, Oxford: *irreme diable.* In hyphened compounds both Webster and Oxford use the heavy single hyphen, as *self-interest;* Standard uses the light double hyphen, as *self=interest.* In the syllabic division of words between lines the single hyphen is used uniformly in English, the dictionaries themselves burying their differences and following this usage in their own composition. The hyphen and the dieresis (see below) are not really punctuation marks at all, though they are usually classified as such. They are, rather, syllabic inflections.

An open syllable is one that ends with a vowel sound, such as *be* in *be-tray.* A closed syllable is one that ends with a consonant, as *ac* in *ac-ro-bat.* A word of one syllable is called a monosyllable, as *brave, strength, drowned.* A word of two syllables is called a dissyllable, as *after, weapon, tested.* A word of three syllables is called a trisyllable, as *definite, happiness, interest.* Words of more than three syllables are usually grouped under the name *polysyllable* (*poly* Greek for many), as *aggravating, accidentally, internationally, constitutionality, incomprehensibility, extraterritoriality, superlatitudinarianism.* But these may be called, in order, (4) quadrisyllable, (5) quinquesyllable, (6) hexasyllable, (7) heptasyllable, (8) octosyllable, (9) nonasyllable, (10) decasyllable.

Monosyllables are, naturally, not syllabized and not divided. It is a mark of illiteracy to divide such words as *strength, tacked, crowned, drowned* in this way—*stren-gth, tack-ed, crown-ed, drown-ed* (see below). As a general rule it is preferable not to divide between lines a word of from three to six letters inclusive. This means that, as a rule, short dissyllables and trisyllables are better not divided, such as *any, icy, ivy; bevy, bury, busy, cozy, dual, duel, duly, duty, easy, even, ever, into, lady, levy, odor, only, sofa, ugly, upon; average, denial, history, icicle, medium.* But there are long dissyllables, such as *knowledge* and *vengeance;* and short dissyllables, such as *ado* and *era.* And there are also, long trisyllables and short ones, as *idea* and *audacious, area* and *harborage.*

It was once the custom in both oral and written spelling training to spell by syllable. Not only were the letters of a given syllable thus set apart, but their pronunciation as a syllabic group was likewise made clear; thus, in spelling *workmanship* a pupil would say w-o-r-k, *work;* m-a-n, *man;* s-h-i-p, *ship—workmanship.* This came to be regarded by educators as a slow and laborious process, and so-called *straightaway* spelling was substituted for syllabic spelling. A word was first pronounced, then spelled through at one fell swoop, pronounced again—and the spelling job was done. Perhaps this change did not matter so much in the days when one "took pen in hand" in order to express himself on paper. But with the introduction of the typewriter and its widespread use, it soon became evident that something important had been lost in dropping the syllabic method, for typists who had never been trained by this method were at a loss about the division of words at the end of lines. And apprentice printers had to be given special training in syllabication, since it was no longer available in their public schools. Even today printing stylebooks and business office manuals include syllabication in their tables of contents in order that awkward and forbidding word division may be avoided. Following are a few of the more general rules regarding word division including the related uses of the hyphen and the dieresis.

Prefixes and suffixes are usually divisible from roots in both pronunciation and writing, as *dis-honor-able, sub-divi-sion, non-combat-ant, un-chang-ing.* In these words both prefixes and suffixes stand apart from roots by independent sound. But sometimes assimilation takes place, as, for example, in *pref er a ble* and *prov o ca tion* and *rec og nize* and *symp tom.* The first three of

these are from Latin; the fourth, from Greek, as follows: *pre* and *fero,* as in *prefer; pro* and *voco,* as in *pro voke; re* and *cognosco,* as in *re cog ni zance; sym (syn)* and *pipto.* But if this last word were syllabized *sym ptom,* the second syllable would be unpronounceable. Dissyllabic (and longer) prefixes and suffixes may themselves be syllabized or divided, used either with or without root association, as *an-te, an-ti, ex-tra, sub-ter, su-per.* In usage, however, it is preferable to avoid dividing them in line breakage. It is preferable, indeed, not to divide a separable prefix or suffix—one that in and of itself constitutes a complete word, such as *be, in, out* or *age, an, ate*—lest it be mistaken for an independent word and thus cause confusion. Most prefixes and suffixes are inseparable, that is, they are not capable of use as independent words. The suffix *ed* may or may not be pronounced—and written—as a separate syllable. It is preferably never written separately but it is frequently pronounced so. Monosyllabic *arm* remains monosyllabic as *armed,* but monosyllabic *waste* becomes dissyllabic as *wasted.* The assumption that *ed* added to a verb to form the imperfect tense, adds necessarily to syllabication is therefore wrong, sometimes leading to such mistakes as *drown-ded* and *attack-ted* for *drowned* and *attacked,* and even *arm-ed.* It is therefore wrong to divide *armed* before *ed.* True, poetic license permits such division in pronunciation as *arm-ed* and *ask-ed* and *pledg-ed,* for the sake of rhythm, but such word division is preferably not made in prose, even when the *ed* is pronounced as a separate syllable.

There are more suffixes than prefixes that undergo syllabic division. Though in Elizabethan times *sion, tion, ean, ian, ion,* and other suffixes containing two vowels, were pronounced as dissyllables—*am-bi-ti-on, oc-ca-si-on, o-ce-an*—they are in most words today monosyllabic (page 501), as are the *cial, cious, geous, gious, tial, tious* endings, and they are therefore preferably not divided between lines. The noun-forming suffix *ism* (Latin *ismus)* is usually derived from verbs in *ize,* and is pronounced and written always as monosyllabic. The suffixes *a-ble* and *i-ble* are always dissyllabic, as are *a-tion, a-tive, a-ceous, a-cious, as-ter, arch-y, es-cence, es-cent, i-tis, i-ty, ger-ous, mon-ger, scop-y, vor-ous,* and still others.

Root influence in syllabication is an important consideration here also; thus, *mi-cro-scope* stands logically syllabized according to derivation, but in *mi-cros-co-py* the *s* of the suffix *scopy* is assimi-

lated (moved forward) to the second syllable. *Omnivorous* is from Latin *omnis* all, and *voro* eat, but it is syllabized *om-niv-o-rous.* This kind of assimilation is more common with suffixes than with prefixes for the reason that the former requires more complex changes for adaptation—changes in spelling and sometimes in accent. Note, for example, *ex-plain* and *ex-pla-na-tion, re-pair* and *rep-a-ra-ble, ap-ply* and *ap-pli-cant* and *ap-pli-ca-tion,* and the similar pronouncing assimilation of double suffixes in *hap-pi-ness* (*y* plus *ness*), *quiz-zi-cal* (*ic* plus *al*), *in-ten-sive-ness* (*ive* plus *ness*), *mag-i-cal-ly* (*al* plus *ly*). The suffix *er* does not, as a rule, absorb the last letter of the root but *or* does, as *read-er, work-er, in-ves-tor, sur-vi-vor.* The former, along with most other suffixes, divorces *l* in final *-le,* from its primitive, as *as-sem-bler, as-sem-bling, muf-fler, muf-fled; swin-dler, swind-ling; tick-lish, tick-ler; strang-ler, strang-ling, stran-gles.*

When the addition of a suffix requires doubling of a final consonant (page 476) the consonant thus added attaches to the suffix, as *glad-den, control-ling, redden-ning.* But care must be exercised to distinguish such words as these from roots that end with double consonant. The doubling final consonants are *b, d, f, g, l, (m, n, p* rarely), *r, s, t, z,* as *ebb, ebb-ing; add, add-ed, bluff, bluff-er; egg, egg-ing; loll, loll-ing; lamm, lamm-ing* (archaic); *Finn, Finnish; Lapp, Lappish* (also *Lap*); *err, err-ing; guess, guess-ing; putt, putt-ing; buzz, buzz-ing.* Internal double consonants should be divided, as a rule, as in *accom-modate, embar-rass, mir-ror, suc-cess, vil-lain.*

The consonants *d, s, t, z,* pronounced *ch, j, sh,* or *zh,* do not end syllables, as *proce-dure, sen-su-ous, crea-ture, sei-zure.* But if the preceding short vowel is accented, it may attract the consonant to its own syllable, as *ed-u-cate, cas-u-al, nat-u-ra-list, treas-ure.*

The letter *r* does not begin a syllable when it follows *a* or *e,* as in *av-er-age, bear-a-ble, car-ing, gen-er-al.*

The letter *x* pronounced *z* may begin a syllable, as in *non-zy-lic* (*zĭ'lĭk* or *sĭl'ĭk*), but pronounced *ksh* or *gz* it may not do so, as *nox-ious (nŏk'-shŭs)* and *ex-ist (ĕg-zĭst').*

Such internal consonant combinations as *mb, mp, mph, nc, nk, nd, phth, rs, rt, stl,* which are impossible of pronunciation in word and syllable initial positions, are syllabized separately, one part going to a preceding vowel and another to a following one,

as ram-ble, com-pare, cam-phor, rec-on-cile, ran-kle, con-dole, diph-theria, wor-sted, hur-tle, wres-tle. Each consonant is thus brought into its own sound values. If, however, the spelling or the accentuation of the primitive is retained and the meaning is derived, certain ones of these digraphs may "keep company", as *art* and *art-ist, bank* and *bank-er, dance* and *danc-ing.*

The foregoing observation is particularly important in connection with such digraphs as *ch, ck, gh, gn, ng, ph, sc, sh, th,* each of which may represent single sound (and usually does) but most of which are likewise separable. When the former is the case they should not, of course, be divided; when not so pronounced, they should be separated. The ear will guide in most instances. You write *rich-er,* not *ric-her; lick-ing,* not *lic-king; laugh-able,* not *lau-ghable; a-lign-ment,* not *a-lig-nment; sign-er,* not *sig-ner; sing-er,* not *sin-ger; graph-ing,* not *grap-hing; re-scind,* not *res-cind; rush-ing,* not *ru-shing; cath-o-lic,* not *cat-ho-lic.* But you also write *ac-knowl-edge, long-hand, mag-net, in-got, hap-haz-ard, dis-ci-pline, mis-hap, boat-house,* and you write *ab-rupt, can-dor, es-teem, mag-net, res-cue,* because an accented syllable attracts to itself one of two or more combined consonants. And note in particular that the consonant combinations *sc, sp, st, str* are separated when they precede or follow an accented syllable, as in *sus-cep'ti-ble, sus-pi'cious, bus'tle, as'tral.* The *st* digraph is, however, very often an exception to this tendency as in such combinations as *boast-ed, coast-ing, hast-ily, post-age.*

In general, a consonant (or a digraph or a trigraph) preceded and followed by vowels is attracted by the following syllable, especially when the preceding vowel is long or medial or obscure, as in *ca-pac-i-ty, fa-tal, fa-ther, fa-vor, pro-gram, sea-son.*

Two or more vowels, like two or more consonants, coming together but pronounced separately are assigned to separate syllables, as *be-at-i-tude, cre-a-tion, var-i-a-tion, vi-o-la-tion.* But two or more vowels coming together, pronounced as a single or inseparable sound should be kept in the same syllable, as *beau ti ful* (not *be you ti ful*), *ma neu ver* or *ma-noeu ver* (not *ma-nu e ver*).

It has been said that a word should not be divided between lines by a letter or two, or by a syllable that may suggest an independent word. Such "short-margin" division is also bad when it violates derivation or denotes inflection; thus, *a-way, e-dict, o-bey, ebon-y, iron-y, radi-o* are bad divisions, as are, for different reasons. *glad-ly,*

James-es, prince-'s, should-n't, wast-ed and *way-ward* and *thor-ough-bred.* It has been seen that the formation of plural number and of possessive case (pages 430 and 445) may increase syllabication. But the increase is oral rather than written. You pronounce an extra vowel—and thus an extra syllable—in *Charles's (Charleses).* But you do not write the possessive syllable. In writing, that is, the word is monosyllabic; in pronunciation, dissyllabic. It is a form of illiteracy in writing to separate from one line to another the token of pluralization or of possession. It is, as a rule, only somewhat less bad to divide words by gender and tense syllables.

Such prefixes and suffixes as *ex, im, in, non, un* and *ed, el, er, ly, or* are, of course, seen in print divided between lines from their roots. The exigencies of printing, as of typewriting, are such as to make this kind of word division sometimes justifiable. But most printers would themselves prefer not to separate *ed* from its primitive, and the flesh of all printers would creep at the thought of separating between lines such contractions as *n't, 're, es, 've (have-n't, you-'re, box-es, we-'ve).*

Compound words should be divided between lines by the complete units of their composition, as *air-way, back-bone, self-sustained, jaw-breaker.* Hyphened compounds should be divided on a hyphen; thus, divide *mother-in-law* after *mother* or after *in;* do not make a third hyphen necessary by writing *moth-er-in-law,* or *sis-ter-in-law.* The hyphen at the end of a line thus does double duty in such words, and it was once suggested that it be written heavier than other hyphens. But this suggested reform luckily never gained favor. Proper names, titles, abbreviations, contrac tions, numbers, addresses, dates, symbols, should never be divided between lines. Do not write

Theo- dore	Wash- ington	Ralph Waldo Emerson	53 Dey Street New York City
Mr H G Fiske	Henry G E- vanston, LL D	$31,327, 456.18	Three * 's and sem- icolons (;' s)

Between lines it is better always to divide a word as nearly in the middle as syllabication will permit. It is by no means always

possible to divide a word strictly by an equal number of letters for syllabication is not so conveniently arranged. But *inval-uable* is a better division than *in-valuable* for the reason that *in* is a separable prefix, that it is a prefix of such general and thus indefinite application, and that mid-word division is preferable whenever possible. Similarly, *protu-berant* is better than *pro-tuberant, perse-verance* than *per-severance, oner-ous* than *on-erous, ador-able* than *a-dorable.* There are certain expected or anticipated "carry-overs" in word division between lines. Two of these are *able* and *ible.* It has been seen above that *a-ble* and *i-ble* are correct and therefore permissible, but the division is not recommended unless a preceding letter is attracted to the *a* or the *i.* They are better kept intact. The same is true of *cious, ceous, geous, tious, ary, ery, ory, tual, ture, tion, sion,* and other similar suffixes, even though they may be pronounceable as dissyllables and may thus be correctly syllabized. A single vowel standing before such suffixes may have come to form habitual syllabic picture, as *acious, ageous, ation, ature,* and such separative arrangement is not only permissible but it is to be desired when it helps to divide a word nearer the middle than it otherwise would be.

Word division at the ends of lines is an ugly necessity at best. But it is comparatively easy never to allow end-division to occur in more than two or three consecutive lines. When such consecutive division appears to be required, change diction if possible—and this will as a rule be found possible without doing damage to thought. Do not divide a word between pages. Try to make the first part of a divided word suggest the entire word. The prefixes of two letters may rarely do so; those of three or more may. The prefix *de* may have several follow-ups—*spair, tail, tain, tect, test,* and so on. *Deter* may have only two groups of derivatives in common use—those associated with *deterrent* and those with *determine.* The same wide choice exists after *pre,* but *preter* is comparatively limited. Textual pick-up may be quickened by paying a little attention to such details as these. But they are probably precious.

The foregoing are only the most general "rules and regulations" pertaining to syllabication. There are others, but they belong to the field of philology rather than to popular usage. Niceties of vowel sounds and of vowel and consonant combinations are not likely to be weighed when a typist is rushed to get a piece of copy ready for the printer. He will consult the dictionary for the

quick and accurate settlement of his syllabic problems. As a rule he will find them solved there. But occasionally he will not. Sometimes the dictionaries themselves disagree regarding syllabication, as they disagree about hyphening. According to the *Standard Dictionary,* for example, the letters *l, n, v,* followed by *i* with the value of consonantal *y,* may not initiate a syllable; according to *The Webster International Dictionary* they may. In the one you find *a-lien, be-ha-vior, con-ve-nient;* in the other, *al-ien, be-hav-ior, con-ven-ient.*

In no other phase of English study is the changing—fickle—nature of the language more strongly evidenced than in the writing of compounds. Here more than anywhere else it may be clearly seen that the language is always in solution. Words that speakers and writers associate because of the convenience and explicitness of such association, are constantly on the move to become solid or hyphened terms, or to remain separate but nevertheless accepted associates. Little wonder, therefore, that dictionaries are in disagreement in regard to the compounding of English words, and that there can be so few (if any) reliable principles upon which to fix the writing of such terms.

But a few rulings are fairly well established: Compound and reflexive pronominal forms are written solid, as *myself, ourself, themselves, whoever, whosoever, oneself* (page 142). *Any, every, no, some* are usually written solid with *body, thing, where* (and *how* and *when,* though such combination may be colloquialism or barbarism); and *all* drops one *l* to combine solidly with *ready, together, ways;* thus, you write *anybody, anything, anywhere, everybody, everything, everywhere, nobody, nothing, nowhere, somebody, something, somewhere, already, altogether, always.* It is a mark of illiteracy to write the members of these compounds separately unless special emphasis so requires (page 394). *One* is compounded solid with *any, every, some* but not with *no.* But *anyone, everyone, someone* are synonymous with *anybody, everybody, somebody; any one, every one, some one* are emphatic forms and are, thus, not quite synonymous (page 362). And *all ready, all together, all ways* are not synonymous with *already, altogether, always.* The words *all right* are written separately; it is, again, a mark of illiteracy to write or spell them in any other way. Do not make the mistake of writing such expressions as *by way of, by the way, et cetera, in spite of, per cent, some day, some place* as solid or hyphened terms. Do not make the equally bad mis-

take of writing such expressions as *downtown, indoors, midnight, outdoors, today, tomorrow, tonight, upstairs* as hyphened or separate terms. *Today, tomorrow, tonight* have but comparatively recently been adopted as solid terms.

Words used in normal grammatical relationships and constructions are not compounded. It is only when there is some unusual or abnormal relationship or construction set up that the compounding of two or more words takes place. Only when two or more words are put together in a special sense—in a sense that they could not convey singly or independently adjoined—is compounding justifiable.

Two words that are almost invariably written next to each other but nevertheless separately are sometimes called independent compounds in contradistinction from solid compounds and hyphened compounds. Such terms are somewhat like epithets (page 18) in that one word suggests and more or less obligates the other. They are, as a matter of fact, compounds or complements in idea. But the independent compounds *free trade, rock candy, scarlet fever* are normal grammatical expressions; *free* and *rock* and *scarlet* are adjectives modifying *trade* and *candy* and *fever* respectively, and there would be no unusual relationship set up—no special purpose served—in putting them together. They are neither hyphened nor written solid, though usage may eventually hyphen them for a period and then make them solid. This is the way with such terms very often. But for the present *artesian well, bank draft, blood pressure, breeches buoy, carrier pigeon, cash register, chafing dish, chicken pox, coast guard, galley slave, gas mask, ice water, India rubber, Milky Way, mother tongue, olive oil, savings bank, shower bath, toilet water, woman suffrage, water lily, word usage, youth movement, year book, yellow fever, Yom Kippur, Yorkshire pudding,* and a host of other habitually paired terms, are independent compounds. The average person, however, is likely to become hyphen conscious in regard to such expressions as these, and to take it for granted that it is safer to hyphen them, but he should be guided by the general principles set forth above. And when in doubt he should not hyphen. Many such word groups as these that are now hyphened were not so very long ago written as separate words; many terms that are now written solid were not so very long ago written as hyphened terms.

Most hyphened compounds are devised adjective terms that convey special meaning not possible of exact expression by any other means. This is the primary function—and justification—of the hyphen. Sometimes the devised adjective consists of an adjective linked to a verbal, such as *blue-eyed, deep-seated, old-fashioned, quick-witted;* sometimes of two adjectives, as *music-loving* children, *red-hot* poker, *white-hot* iron, *silver-gray* hair, *blue-black* ink (compound color specifications are usually hyphened); sometimes of an adjective and a noun, as *long-distance* telephone and *blue-sky* copy; sometimes the hyphened adjective compound is "mongrel," consisting of two or three or even four different parts of speech linked for the sake of special unified meaning, as *happy-go-lucky man, ne'er-do-well child, never-to-be-forgotten day.* In this category of hyphening belong invented combinations used, not only for convenience, but for strikingness and emphasis, such as *step-lively youth, get-it-done attitude, rosy-hued beliefs, black-market disloyalty.* There can be no strict rule by way of associated parts of speech. The idea to be conveyed by hyphening is the all important consideration.

The foregoing does not pertain to adverbs arranged in "legitimate" modification (see below). You say a *beautifully played* selection, an *ever increasing* deficit, a *proudly declared* conviction, a *never ending* supply, an *artistically designed* rug, the *ly* or other adverb in each expression being in correct grammatical order in direct modification of the participial adjective following it. It does not pertain, either, to proper names, as *South America* trade, *New York City* traffic, *South Dakota* mines, *New Hampshire* resorts, *Latin America* area, *United States* unity. But proper noun and adjective (or combining form) compounds are hyphened, as *Sino-Japanese* war and *Anglo-American* relations and *Indo-Germanic* alliance and *French-Indian* wars. A series of independent adjectives modifying the same noun cumulatively are, of course, not hyphened, if their cumulative effect is climactic they may not even be separated by commas; thus, you write *dilapidated old shack* and *rare old French brandy.*

The "hyphened invention" plays an important part also in the formation of nouns and verbs made up of various parts of speech to convey different or "pick up" meanings. A hyphened noun may, for example, be formed from a verbal and an adverb, as the *summing-up* and the *checking-out* and the *kicking-in* and the *wasting-away,* or from some other combination, such as to *turkey-*

trot, to *white-lead,* to *copper-wire.* Here, as in the case of the hyphened adjectives above, ambiguity may result if care is not exercised in regard to hyphening. To hyphen or not to hyphen may take on almost the tragic quality of to be or not to be in such noun and verb compounds as *to black-eye* and *to black eye, to dry-clean* and *to dry clean, to wet-nurse* and *to wet nurse.* The adjective and the noun perform their natural functions in the terms *dry dock* and *high hat* and *motor cycle.* But used as unit verbs they take on an unusual grammatical signification, and are, therefore, preferably hyphened, as *dry-docked, to high-hat, motor-cycling.* Combined to form special nouns, verbs and nouns are in general hyphened to prepositions and adverbs though these combinations tend to become solid; thus, you write *go-between, lean-to, lying-in, stand-in,* and *passer-by, looker-on, hanger-on, stopper-by.* It has been seen (page 459) that in such compounds as the latter pluralization goes to the noun or main part of the compound, as *tippers-off* and *callers-by.* But compounds composed of words not nouns, such as the former, are pluralized regularly, as *go-betweens* and *lean-tos, show-offs* and *stand-ins* and *stay-at-homes. Dugout, lookout, washout, hookup, backfire* have cast out the hyphen and become solid terms, as have numerous other similar expressional conveniences. The dictionaries agree that *network* must be written solid, but *hook-up* is hyphened by Standard and written solid—*hookup*—by Webster. Foreign terms and scientific terms, especially those pertaining to chemistry, stand out stubbornly to remain unhyphened or separate, as *a posteriori argument, laissez faire policy, carbon monoxide gas, de luxe copy.*

Do not use the agent suffix *er* on both members of a hyphened compound, though you will find it difficult to resist the present-day momentum of *stander-upper* and *looker-inner* and *finder-outer,* and similar vulgarisms, that unfortunately creep and intrude into much present-day expression.

Hyphening serves many other purposes one of which has been pointed out on page 469, namely, it prevents tripling of a consonant in some instances—*cell-like, skiff-ful, Caithness-shire, Inverness-shire.* It has been pointed out also (page 2) that the use of a hyphen in such words as *re-call, re-collect, re-cover, re-form,* prevents confusion of meaning with these words written as solid compounds, and that the hyphened prefix retains more of its original signification than it does as a solid prefix—to call again, to collect again, to cover again, to form again; whereas

recall, recollect, recover, reform have more or less derived and special meanings, namely, to revoke or take back, to remember, to get well, to change. Closely allied to this use of the hyphen is its use in such terms as *morning-glory* and *first-rate* and *man-eater* and *woman-hater.* Written as separate words these have very different meaning indeed. *Morning glory* means the glory of a morning, not a flower, *first rate* means a first price or rating or degree, not excellent, *man eater* is a man who eats, not a particular animal which eats men; *woman hater* means a woman who hates, not a person who hates women. The difference between a *high-grade school* and a *high grade-school* is at once apparent, the one term meaning a school of superior grade or of upper elementary grade, and the other, perhaps, a high building in which children are trained in the elementary subjects. If you speak of a *mechanical-tool designer* you mean one who designs mechanical tools; if you speak of a *mechanical tool-designer* you mean a mechanically minded person who designs tools. If you say *Robert Shapland is the Catholic orphanage supervisor* your meaning is ambiguous. Is there also a Protestant supervisor? Is this an orphanage for Catholic children only, or for both Catholic children and Protestant children? Is *orphanage supervisor* the title of an official position? Is *Catholic orphanage* a compound adjective modifying *supervisor*? Either *Robert Shapland is the Catholic orphanage-supervisor* or *Robert Shapland is the Catholic-orphanage supervisor* must be the reading, according to intended meaning. To say *Father Shapland* in the one, and *Mr Shapland* in the other does not sufficiently clarify, does not answer all of the queries. Moreover, the use of *Father* makes *Catholic* superfluous in all probability.

The hyphen clarifies further in similar instances where the adjective follows the noun. The adjective *general* is the most perplexing. The term *postmaster-general* means general or chief or head or principal postmaster. If it were written in natural order, no hyphen would be required—*general* or *chief postmaster*—for the adjective precedes the noun it modifies. The same analysis applies to *attorney-general, commissary-general, governor-general,* and other similar terms. They mean general attorney, general commissary, general governor, and are thus preferably hyphened in their reverse and popularly used forms. But there is disagreement even among the dictionaries in regard to hyphening in these cases. Observe that in *major general, brigadier general, lieutenant*

general, lieutenant commander, lieutenant governor, the first word in each term has the force of an adjective modifying its following noun. Standard hyphens all of them and all others like them, Webster does not.

Prefixes, with the exception of the few specially treated below, are written solid with roots, as *afterthought, antedate, antisocial, biennial, bygone, circumnavigate, co-operation, contradiction, countercharge, demimonde, extracurricular, foreclose, hypersensitive, hypodermic, interlinear, introduce, microscope, misunderstand, monotone, noninterference, offspring, outdo, overdone, polytechnic, postpone, precedence, proceed, resign, semicircle, subterranean, superman, transcontinental, undertow, uphill, wayfarer.* In general, however, a prefix ending with the letter with which a root begins is hyphened to that root in case awkward doubling is caused by not doing so, an *anti-imperialist, co-ordinate, re-examination.*

Prefixes to proper nouns and adjectives are also hyphened, as *ante-Norman, anti-Masonic, non-Christian, post-Renaissance, pro-British* As to the use of the hyphen after *ex, non, quasi, self, semi, vice, well,* there is disagreement among dictionaries as well as confusion in general usage. Meaning formerly, *ex* is hyphened, as *ex-chairman, ex-mayor; non* is written solid by Webster, hyphened by Standard, as *nonresident, nonconductor* and *non-resident, non-conductor.* The solid form is recommended. As prefix *self (unself)* is hyphened; the prefix *semi,* usually written solid. The dictionaries are agreed about these last two, as they are about *vice* and *well* which they would always hyphen; thus, *self-interest, semiconscious, vice-admiral, well-wisher* are accepted as correct, though here again there are wide variations in usage. Inasmuch as these prefixes are not adjectives, there is no question of writing them as independent compounds; hence, the hesitancy evinced by usage as to making them solid or hyphened. The term *vice president* is as yet written as two separate words in federal official documents; the terms *viceroy* and *vicegerent* are always written solid; *vice-regent* with hyphen. Other terms involving *vice* are preferably written, without much rime or reason, as follows according to the latest revised edition of the *Style Manual of the United States Government Printing Office: vice admiral, vice-admiralty, vice chairman, vice-chairmanship, vicecomital, vicegeral, vicegerency, vice governor, vice-governorship, vice-*

president-elect (sic), vice-presidency, viceregal, viceroyal, viceroyalty.

There is even greater inconsistency in usage in regard to the prefixes *cross, half, great, ill,* and the dictionaries are, again, by no means in agreement. Webster hyphens twelve out of twenty five *cross* compounds—*cross-bearer, cross-bias* (noun and verb), *cross-eye, cross-eyed, cross-feed* (noun and verb), *cross-handed, cross-index* (verb), (but *cross index*—noun), *cross-legged, cross-purpose, cross-question, cross-town* (adjective), *cross-refer* (but *cross reference*). Others are written solid as a rule. Standard is in proportionate agreement but by no means always in regard to the same words. Webster says you may write either *half-tone* or *half tone;* Standard gives *half-tone* only. They agree on *half-mast* and *half-moon.* But *half* is the most inconsistently used and "authorized" of combining forms as to hyphening. The *ill* compounds are fairly well agreed upon: *ill-advised, ill-bred, ill-boding, ill-fated, ill-humored, ill-mannered, ill-timed, ill-use, ill-used. Great* is hyphened in words pertaining to family relationships, as *great-grandchild, great-grandmother, great-aunt.* But other *great* compounds are by no means settled. *Greatcoat* is a solid compound; *great-hearted* is hyphened by Standard, written solid by Webster. *Fellow, master, world* are preferably written as separate words, as *fellow man, master workman, world domination.* But there is some inconsistency in regard to *master.* Note *masterpiece, mastersingers, master-at-arms.* And *masterwork* is preferably solid, in spite of *master workman, master mason, master mechanic, master seaman.* Webster plays fast and loose with *good—good fellow, good-fellowship, good humor, good-humored, goodhearted, goodman, good nature, good-natured.* Standard is in general agreement, *good-humor* being a conspicuous disagreement. They are agreed on *good-by* and *good-bye. Good will* is written as an independent compound by Webster, as a hyphened compound by Standard, and as a solid compound by most business writers. The solid form is gaining ground in general usage. Accent is equally distributed. *Good looking* is still a waif of the streets, ignored by the dictionaries but widely used and confused. It should be hyphened according to the general rule, that is, when used as a unit term in modification, as *He is a good-looking fellow* and *He is good-looking.*

How stand the suffixes, the final combining forms? There is less disagreement and inconsistency. *Elect* is generally hyphened, as

bride-elect and *president-elect. General* is discussed above. *Fold, ful, hood, less, like, proof, self, some, square, ward* are almost invariably written solid, as *fourfold* (but separate if the preceding part is dissyllabic or longer—*eighteen fold, twenty fold*), *armful, manhood, hopeless, homelike, fireproof, myself* (page 522), *loathsome, foursquare, forward. So* stands out smugly and rigidly for hyphening both "fore and after", as *so-called* and *so-and-so. Room,* as in *drawing room* (withdrawing room) and *dining room* and *standing room* and *retiring room,* is preferably written separately, as here. But confusion abounds in usage. Webster writes the first of these terms as separate words, and Standard hyphens. In business copy all are usually written solid.

The rule in regard to normal grammatical structure—an adjective modifying a following noun, for example—does not apply unfortunately to an adverb modifying a following verb. Such terms as *well-known, well-disposed, well-made* are, as here, written with hyphen, though *well* is an adverb modifying the verb in natural grammatical order. But these terms have taken characteristic unto themselves—have become epithetical (page 18)—say the hyphenators. Logically, there is no more reason for hyphening them than there is for hyphening *very* and *good* in *very-good book.* And we do not hyphen epithets and epigrams and idioms.

Compounds containing prepositional phrases are properly hyphened, as *mother-in-law, son-in-law* (and all other *in-law* terms) *hand-to-mouth* and *four-in-hand* and *man-of-war* and *mother-of-pearl* and *Jack-in-the-pulpit.* The same sort of hyphening is correctly used when the prepositional phrase is indicated by apostrophe *s,* as *bird's-eye (bird's-eye view), cat's-paw, dog's-ear, jew's-harp.* In all such phrasal forms the hyphen "freezes" into a single unified term words that without such connection would cause confusion of grasp. It serves as a leveling or equalizing link, as it does between two nouns associated to indicate double capacity, as *director-manager, author-editor, owner-operator;* in such compounds the hyphen has the force of *and.* It usually has the force of *as* or of some preposition in the coupling of a noun and an adjective, as *knee-deep* and *world-wide* and *sky-high.*

Two or more words, therefore, regardless of what part of speech they may be, associated to form a useful and convenient term, tend to become a solid compound, though, as before indicated, they may have to serve an apprenticeship as a hyphened com-

pound. But such solid compounds as *bedroom, dressmaker, eyesight, fireman, gateway, heartbroken, nevertheless, notwithstanding, postmaster, schoolhouse, textbook, yearbook* would now appear strange written in any other way. This tendency is noticeable in compounds made up of monosyllabic nouns one of which sacrifices accent to the other in such association, as *moonbeam, statehouse, sunstroke, workman.* Experiment is always in order in such compounding, appearance and spelling and sound having more to do with its acceptance than is usually considered. The general caution may be repeated: When in doubt about compounding, either solid or hyphened, write the individual terms separately.

Compound numerals are hyphened in accordance with the first general rule above, that is, when joined to form a single adjective modifying a following noun, as *twenty-two* men, *ninety-one* days. They are usually not hyphened beyond two digits, not because the modification is not similarly constructed, but because of the labored appearance of the hyphening; thus, you write *one hundred twenty* hours, not *one-hundred-twenty* hours, though the latter is technically correct, and the rule is arbitrary. Fractions used as adjectives are similarly hyphened, as *one-third* share and *one-half* interest. Standing alone as independent nouns they are not hyphened as *I shall give you three fourths* and *Please give me two thirds.* Again, following the first general adjective rule above for hyphening, a numeral added to another word to form a unit modifier is hyphened to it, as *two-sided game, three-cornered hat, five-o'clock tea, four-footed creatures.* Used as nouns with special signification, such terms as these are also hyphened, as *He is a six-footer* and *He was a forty-niner.*

To prevent awkward repetition the first part of two or more compounds in succession attached to the same term may be followed by a hyphen and the common term used after the last only; thus, *We looked at six-, ten- and twelve-room apartments* is less burdensome and awkward than *We looked at six-room, ten-room, and twelve-room apartments, in- and out-fielders* than *in-fielders and out-fielders, elementary- and high-school training* than *elementary-school and high-school training.* This is sometimes called the suspended hyphen. A solid compound must not be divided for the sake of this convenient usage. It is used with hyphened compounds only. You must say *Frenchmen and Frenchwomen,*

not *Frenchmen- and women,* and of course not *Frenchmen and women* for this may mean Frenchmen and women of French or other nationality. The hyphen is used also in linking a sign or symbol or capital letter to indicate a unified term, as *$-mark, -indention, T-rule, U-boat, V-shape, X-ray.*

When it is necessary to use the same word twice in succession to form modification of special meaning, the two words should be hyphened rather than written solid, even though additional hyphening is required. This occurs more frequently in connection with naming the points of the compass than elsewhere; thus, though you write *northwest* and *southwest* solid, you may not do so with *north-northwest* and *south-southeast.* Observe also *great-great-grandmother* and *great-great-grandfather.* But the hyphen is not used when the repeated word is intensifying only, as in *too, too kind* and *very, very much.*

The dieresis (*diaeresis* is the old spelling) is a sign consisting of two dots placed over the second of two adjoining vowels to indicate that they are to be pronounced separately, as in *Chloe, reecho, zoology.* It is falling out of use deservedly, for it is a remnant of the complex inflectional marks that characterize ancient languages. The hyphen is a later sign of such separation. The use of the dieresis over *i* is complicated by the fact that three dots are required. The two dots of the dieresis should be placed slightly above the dot of the *i.* But such words as *anti-immigration* and *anti-imperialistic* are preferably written, as here, with hyphen, if for no reason other than to avoid the three dots. And the dictionaries now use the hyphen to denote this separate pronunciation, except in foreign words. There is a growing tendency in copy of all kinds to write such common words as *coeducation, coequal, cooperation, coordination, preeminent, reorganization, reorient* without either the dieresis or the hyphen. The word *dieresis* is from the Greek *diairesis* meaning division.

Though in no other department of English will the dictionary be found more unsatisfactory than in the compounding of words (especially in hyphen compounding), it must, both for this reason and in spite of this reason, be consulted all the more frequently for help and clarification in this connection. Hyphening grows primarily out of thought to be expressed; it should be made to comply as logically as possible with grammatical rule and practice.

CONTEST *

	NO	YES
1	This is a four engine plane	This is a four-engine plane
2	The weather is very fallike	The weather is very fall-like
3	That was a nevertobeforgotten picnic	That was a never-to-be-forgotten picnic
4	I'm afraid the children will be drownded	I'm afraid the children will be drowned
5	Our friend-ship has for years been a very close one	Our friendship has for years been a very close one
6	Our Christmas-tree was laden with gew-gaws and nick-nacks	Our Christmas tree was laden with gewgaws and nicknacks
7	They walked from the road-house to the school-house beyond the poor-house	They walked from the roadhouse to the schoolhouse beyond the poorhouse
8	The boy who lives in the green-house works in the green-house after school	The boy who lives in the green house works in the greenhouse after school
9	They have lived on Twenty eighth Street for thirty five years	They have lived on Twenty-eighth Street for thirty-five years
10	He writes plays, acts in them, and manages his company; he is therefore author, actor, manager	He writes plays, acts in them, and manages his company, he is therefore author-actor-manager
11	The rail-way ties are so rotted that express-trains have to slow-down	The railway ties are so rotted that express trains have to slow down
12	They have some very nice four and five room suites at low figure rentals	They have some very nice four- and five-room suites at low-figure rentals
13	This up grade is too much for my little four cylinder jeep jalopy, I fear	This up-grade is too much for my little four-cylinder jeep-jalopy, I fear
14	On the twenty-fifth of the month I propose to let thirty one employes go	On the twenty fifth of the month I propose to let thirty-one employes go
15	This make up is not attractive and the copy lay-out is positively awkward	This make-up is not attractive and the copy layout is positively awkward
16	My brotherinlaw has been awarded a Carnegie-medal for heroism	My brother-in-law has been awarded a Carnegie medal for heroism
17	Though Lot's wife was a very matteroffact person, she was never-the-less a looker-backer	Though Lot's wife was a very matter-of-fact person, she was nevertheless undisciplined
18	We had fun at the fair on the merrygoround but the rhythm of the machinery made us all sea-sick	We had fun at the fair on the merry-go-round but the rhythm of the machinery made us all seasick

* See page 3.

NO	YES
19 Mr Johnston earned more than 34-00 during the first half of 19-45 but he has remaining only $3-21 cents	Mr Johnston earned more than $3400 during the first half of 1945, but he has remaining only $3 21
20 The Honorable Stephen B Cohen, 2435 North Clinton Boulevard, West New York, New-Jersey	The Honorable Stephen B Cohen 2435 North Clinton Boulevard West New York New Jersey

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SECTION FORTY-NINE — INFERENCE

The printer is and always has been the writer's unsung hero of spelling and punctuation. He has, usually without so much as a thank-you, corrected an infinite amount of bad spelling as it confronted him in copy. His most notable service in this connection probably remains the transposing of Jane Austen's *e*'s and *i*'s in her numerous misspellings of such words as *believe, niece, view,* which she naively wrote *beleive, neice, veiw.* But this is only one of the few known instances; there are thousands of similar acts of "spelling mercy" occurring in every field of printing at this very moment, just as there are thousands of punctuation corrections for which the printer should be credited.

But he is by no means perfect in these details, though he is much better than he formerly was, thanks to increased educational facilities and the introduction of printing machinery that is in and of itself almost capable of correcting mistakes in English. It has been likened to the intelligent dog that seems just ready to speak to us—but decides not to do so because he fears the bad conversational company such an innovation would incur. In the old days of hand composition the printer misspelled not only for the same reasons that most others misspelled—misreading, defective eyesight, bad memory, ignorance of spelling principles, and the like. He misspelled a good deal because of muscular reflex action in reaching for types, because of misjudging arm-reach to the various type compartments (especially if he were an apprentice), because of "foul case"—the spilling of types from one compartment to another, because of careless distribution of types after a job was done and the set was broken up. These and other mechanical reasons for misspelling have now for the most part

passed. Even errors that were formerly the result of misreading and defective eyesight are now obviated to a degree by the fact that the typesetter's copy and the center of manual operation are brought closer together in the use of the linotype machine.

The revolution in printing procedures that was brought about by the introduction of the "miracle machines" in the late nineteenth century, ran parallel with the renascence of advertising copy and with the rejuvenation of the content of school and college textbooks in English. The individual literary classic came into wide use about this time, as did the composition book per se, set apart from the old combined grammar and speller and etymology. And it was in the late nineteenth century, too, that the present reform movement in spelling was initiated (there had been lesser ones all along the centuries). The Simplified Spelling Board concentrated its reform efforts upon the educators of the country, always a professionally conservative group. Suspicious of innovation and change as they frequently are, they nevertheless responded favorably. The National Education Association adopted the twelve words (page 509) in 1898, and this favorable action by the leading educational organization in the world had an incalculable influence which is still felt in every field of writing.

But the thought must occur that, had the Simplified Spelling Board concentrated its approach upon the printers with their new wonder-working machinery, and the advertising writers with their expansive program of educative and inspirational copy, most of its recommended spellings would probably now be in use—and re-use by way of printing from old plates. This may be a somewhat too roseate conclusion, especially in view of the fact that two closely allied enterprises, the newspaper publishers and the book publishers, did not react with unanimous favor to the simplified spelling movement. But these two "dealers in print" would doubtless have been much more influenced by such close allies as printers and advertisers than they could ever be by the more or less (chiefly more) removed educators. This point of view is retrospective merely—hope in the past tense—and, as such, is now worth nothing at all perhaps. It may be one of those rare instances in which it is ever too late to mend. But to the layman, reform is usually shocking, unless it is so gradual or slow as to be imperceptible. There is still among us many a patient who is suspicious of quick recovery, and who, if "brought around" to normal health sooner than he expects, is amply capable of accus-

ing his doctor of false stimulation for the sake of profitable re-. lapse.

Here is English as "she was writ" about 1200. It is from Orm's (or Ormin's) *Ormulum,* and the author was really a spelling-reformer in his day

> **Forr lāmb iss soffte ȝ stille dēor,**
> **ȝ mēoc, ȝ mīlde, ȝ līþe;**
> **ȝ itt cann cnāwenn swīþe wēl**
> **hiss mōderr þær ȝhō blæteþþ**
> **bitwēnenn ān pūsennde shēp,**
> **þohh þatt teȝȝ blætenn alle.**

The passage quaintly informs us that the lamb is a soft and quiet animal, and meek and mild and gentle, that it can recognize the bleat of its mother among a thousand sheep all bleating together.

This is from a late thirteenth-century translation of the book of *Genesis*

> For sextene ger Joseph was old
> Quane he was into Egypt sold,
> He was Jacobes gunkeste sune,
> Brictest of wasme and of witter wune;
> If he sag hise brethere misfaren,
> His fader he it gan un-hillen and baren

These are fourteenth-century specimens of English from Geoffrey Chaucer

> I say that in the feldes walkid we,
> Til trewely we had such dalliaunce
> This clerke and I, that of my purvyaunce
> I spake to him, and sayde how that he
> If I were wydow, schulde wedde me.
>
> .....
>
> Now as to the secounde poynt, where as youre wise counseilours warnede yow to warmstore youre hous with gret diligence, I wolde fayn wite how that ey understoode thilke wordes, and what is youre sentence.

Here William Dunbar of the fifteenth century is speaking

> There saw I May, of mirthful monthes queen,
> Betwixt Aprile, and June, her sister sheen,
> Within the garden walking up and down,
> Whom of the fowles gladdeth all bedeen:
> She was full tender in her yeares green.

And here Edmund Spenser of the sixteenth century is quaintly "spelling out his thoughts"

> To see those folks make such jovisance,
> Made my heart after the pipe to dance.
> Tho to the greenwood they speeden hem all,
> To fetchen home May with their musical;
> And home the bringen in a royal throne,
> Crowned as king

This is "rare Ben Jonson" speaking out of the seventeenth century

> I remember the players have often mentioned it as an honour to Shakspere, that, in his writing (whatsoever he penned) he never blotted out a line. My answer has always been, Would he had blotted out a thousand. Which they thought a malevolent speech I had not told posterity this but for their ignorance who chose that circumstance to commend their friend by, wherein he most faulted, and to justify mine own candour: for I loved the man, and do honour his memory on this side idolatry, as much as any.

Following is an illustration of the English into which William Tyndale (1484–1536) translated the Bible

> In the begynnynge God created heaven and erth. The erth was voyde & emptie, and darcknesse was upon the depe, & the spirite of god moved upon the water.

The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries are close enough to the present century as far as expressional forms are concerned, to make quotation from them unnecessary to the purpose here. That purpose is to register by illustration which might easily be multiplied a thousand fold, the obvious fact that English has from its earliest days adapted itself to the progress of time. This adaptation has meant for the most part simplification in spelling as well as in other elements. But this is not at all the same thing as saying that there has been a subtle unconscious evolutionary process taking place with the worthy motivation of making the language simpler for us. It means simply that language forms come and go with the times, as the times themselves come and go. We have the language of Chaucer because his was the language of the times; the language of the Elizabethans, because that was the language that they used and understood. But along with all this, be it borne in mind that in language as in other things individual effort for improvement, or, at least, for change that means improvement, has always been in order—and will always be.

Chaucer himself "took a flyer" at *til* for *until;* Spenser tried *tho* for *though;* Marvell thought *valt* worth substituting for *vault;* Milton's *turney* for *tourney* was "unheard of"; Gray's *extasy* for *ecstasy* was prophetic but paralyzing. "*Delight* came into the language as *delite,* and has no relation to any of the words ending with *-ight.* Its changed spelling, to accord with a more complex analogy, was made without justification. A similar attempt to change *sprite* to *spright* was not permanently successful, but by a curious perversity the form *sprightly* has persisted in use. The adjectiv should, of course, be regularly formed from the noun by the simple addition of *-ly,* and should not involv a change in the spelling of the primitiv." *

Writers have time out of mind felt the urge to get words somehow simpler and more phonetic in their make-up, just as engineers have felt it imperative to improve and shorten routes of travel, doctors to improve and simplify medical treatment, educators to improve and intensify instructional methods, farmers to improve and quicken crop turnover. Aside, therefore, from any considerations of language progress from the thirteenth century to the twentieth as token of evolution, that progress, like progress in other fields, is the sum-total of continuous individual effort the momentum of which always eventually makes itself realized in reform, despite opposition enlightened or otherwise.

The opposition that the Simplified Spelling Board has been obliged to meet in its long, hard, righteous fight to establish a modicum of simplified spellings is a sad commentary, not upon the movement itself, but upon the genus homo. This opposition cannot be made to see that the moving finger writes ever more simply, that in the excerpts above the difference between the first and the last is almost the difference between one language and another, and that, as above emphasized, reforms in language like other reforms have always been initiated and accelerated by individual movement rather than by some vague and tenuous evolutionary process. Space does not here permit the inclusion of all the irrefutable arguments that the Simplified Spelling Board has brought to bear in its excellent *Handbook* toward meeting this opposition but a few of the salient ones are herewith reproduced by special permission of the Board:

* *Handbook of Simplified Spelling* Used by permission of the Simplified Spelling Board.

The "Etimological" Bugaboo

The objection to the proposed changes in spelling that they wil "destroy etimology"—by which is only ment that they wil obscure the derivation of words—is stil heard, tho much les frequently than formerly. It is never heard from etimologists, who know . . . that the present spelling is misleading as to the true derivation of many words; that a rational spelling would correct these etimologic blunders, and that it would not "obscure derivation" to those familiar enuf with other languages to derive plesure or benefit from tracing English words to foren or ancient sources

Interesting to Few

How many of those who use English know anything about its etimology, or about the languages that hav contributed to its vocabulary? What percentage of college-graduates, even, has sufficient acquaintance with Anglo-Saxon, Old German, Old French, the Romance languages, for example, to find our present unpronounceable spelling of any real service to their better understanding of their nativ tung? Opposition to spelling-reform on etimologic grounds most frequently comes from those who hav some familiarity with Latin and Greek, but who seem to be unaware, or to ignore, that a large proportion of the words we commonly use ar derived from other than "classical" sources

Etimologists hav alredy discoverd and recorded the essential facts in regard to the history and derivation of English words. This information is available to all who ar interested in the subject. Such questions as remain open wil be settld without reference to the present or future spelling of English.

Present Meaning Important

Knowledge of the derivation of words, moreover, is often misleading as to their present meaning. What possible help can it be to the correct use of the word *prevent,* for example, to know that it comes from a Latin word meaning to precede, to go before, and had that meaning at first in English?

What really concerns us today is the present meaning of words, not what they ment to others one, two, three, or more thousands of years ago Misuse of a word in current speech or literature can come only from ignorance of English, no matter how learned in Greek and Latin the speaker or writer may be.

The time that can be given to English in the scools is so largely taken up in imperfectly successful efforts to teach pupils to read it and to spel it with accuracy, that too little attention can be spared for instruction in its proper use. Even if the so-cald "etimologic" spelling wer as helpful to a few classical scolars as its admirers claim it to be, to retain it would deny to the hundreds of millions who hav no Latin or Greek the social and economic benefits that a simplified spelling would confer.

Etimologists Advocate Simpler Spelling

Etimologists ar ardent advocates of spelling-reform. Professor Walter W. Skeat, of Cambridge University, the great English etimologist, and author

of the "Etimological Dictionary of the English Language," sumd up the views of most other etimological scolars, when he said.

"In the interests of etimology we ought to spel as we pronounce To spel words as they used to be pronounst is not etimological but antiquarian."

The "Esthetic" Objection

Many persons ar prejudist against simplified spelling because the familiar words in their unfamiliar forms appear "ugly" to them To oppose spelling-reform on this account is not to act in accordance with reason, but to obey an emotional reaction.

Whoever defends our present spelling on esthetic grounds must be prepared to uphold the principle that beauty of design should control the choice of letters in forming words But as standards of taste ar constantly changing, and differ widely in individuals at all times, to admit the validity of such a principle would be to sanction orthografic caos.

Words Hav No Intrinsic Beauty

Few, however, would maintain that what they find pleasing in our present word-forms procedes from intrinsic beauty of design. If such exists, it must be entirely fortuitous, due to the agreeable association of certain letters in combinations made for another purpose. Accordingly, any change in the scheme of notation is likely to giv rize to as many pleasing combinations as it disturbs.

Those who have studied the principles of esthetics wil know, and others may be assured, that what appears pleasing, or to giv literary dignity or propriety to any word-form, is due, not to any intrinsic quality, but to visual habit and mental association

Ghost and Gost

Take the word *ghost,* for example Always having seen it speld in this way, we hav come to associate the feelings arousd by the idea *ghost* with its accustomd form of visual representation To meet the word in our reading instantly and instinctively excites those feelings in our minds To meet the same word speld *gost,* shorn of its familiar *h,* shocks us, and causes a temporary mental inhibition of the idea. The word seems to hav lost, with the missing letter, something of the wierdness and mistery we hav always associated with it. To deny this would be to deny an experience common to every one who has used or red simplified spelling.

A Dutch Superfluity

Ghost was originally speld in English, however, without the *h (gost, goost, goste,* etc). The extra letter was inserted by printers imported from Holland, whose Dutch spelling-habit led them to believ that it was needed to indicate that the *g* was to be pronounst as in *gun* and not as in *ginger* That the superfluous *h* would increase the emotional reaction excited by the word was far from their thoughts, since they inserted it likewize in such words as *gospel, gizzard, gossip,* etc., producing the forms *ghospel, ghizzard, ghossip,* etc., from which the *h* was

in time simplified away, as it was also, in Holland, from the Dutch equivalent *gheest,* later *geest.*

It can not be supposed that our forebears faild to get the same emotional reaction from *gost* that we do from *ghost.* No more is it to be expected that future generations, reverting to the earlier form, and bilding their mental associations around it, wil hav a different experience.

Homonims

Another objection sometimes heard is that simplified spelling wil abolish the distinction now existing between words having the same sound but different meanings, like *ail, ale, bare, bear, bough, bow; beau, bow; to, too, two;* etc.

If that seems an objection, it wil be offset by the service the simpler spelling wil render in indicating the distinctiv sounds of words now speld the same way, but pronounst differently, like *bow* (a knot, to incline the hed); *lead* (a metal, to go before); *read* (present tense, past tense); *slough* (a swamp, to cast off); *sow* (a female pig, to plant), *tear* (water from the eye, to rend apart), etc.

As a matter of fact, easily demonstrable, different spellings ar not needed to distinguish homonims No such distinction is made or is possible in the spoken language The meaning is plainly indicated by the position of the word in the sentence, by its obvious relation to the other words. Write the sentence down, and the meaning wil be as apparent in one spelling as another. Try it. "He said a glas of ail was good for what aled him" "He fought the bare with his bear hands" "Oh, that this to, two, solid flesh would melt!" Such spellings and worse, by illiterate persons, may cause amusement, but do not hide the sense. Not only is it unnecessary to distinguish homonims by different spellings, but they ar actually so distinguisht in comparativly few instances There is scarcely a word in the English language that is not used in more than one sense—some of them in many very different senses. *Box* is a good example. *Bank* is another. *Point*—a word, by the way, speld with fonetic precision—is used in more than a hundred different senses A suggestion that more than a hundred different spellings should be invented to distinguish these separate meanings would be greeted with horror or lafter, as it was taken seriously or as it ought to be

Bad Spelling Costs Good Dollars

The United States Commissioner of Education, in his Report for 1917, estimates that $855,000,000 was spent for education in this country in 1915 Of this, approximately $215,000,000 went for education in high scools, normal scools, tecnical scools, and institutions of higher learning. This leaves $640,000,000 as the cost of elementary education in all public and private scools and other institutions where it was carrid on.

Assuming that the use of a rational spelling would effect a savings of one year's time in the grades, we hav only to divide $640,000,000 by 8, the number of grades, to find that the saving in 1915 would hav been $80,000,000. The number of children decreases in each successiv grade, it is true, but the expense for each pupil advances, so that it seems fair

to strike an average. The saving in 1920 would be actually, even if not proportionally, much larger, probably in excess of $100,000,000.*

Utilization of Savings

The Board does not consider it necessary to go farther into the financial consideration—to figure out, for instance, the possible earning power, to themselvs and to the state, of children releast at an earlier age to industry, or the concurrent saving to parents. It believs that this wasted mony could be better used by keeping the children in scool another year, in order that they should go into the world better educated, better fitted mentally and fisically, to take up the battle of life. The lamentable and unnecessary waste has been shown. Whether, if it shal ultimately be stopt, the savings shal go into the pockets of parents or into the heds of children is a question that the Board must leav to public conscience and good judgment.

Waste of Nervous Energy

To the appalling and calculable waste of time and mony must be added the no les appalling, if incalculable, waste of nervous energy on the part of teachers and pupils alike. The spelling-lesson sets a brake against the orderly, reasonable, and natural course of education that not only impedes its progress as a whole, but impairs the efficiency of the working parts of its human machinery. It introduces an element of friction that raises the nervous temperature above normal, causes needless wear and tear, and is destructiv of both temper and material. Better methods of spelling, accordingly, wil effect savings that can not be adequately represented in their entirety; but it is at least obvious that the more thoro the betterment the les wil be the waste To those who love children, and their neighbors as themselvs, the indeterminable saving of human energy and efficiency wil appear no les worth while than those economies that may be set down in terms of time and mony.

CHAPTER CONTEST **

NO	YES
1 This is her's, not hisn	This is hers, not his
2 He is a very-good pen man	He is a very good penman
3 The Jones's are coming to-day	The Joneses are coming today
4 Your suit is made of good materiel	Your suit is made of good ma terial

* For a half century, now, the newspapers of the English-speaking world have continually published letters written by enthusiasts for the cause of simplified spelling. One of the most recent (and most eloquent of these) ventures the claim that simplified spelling would have saved enough money to pay for the Allied offensive in the Global War. He cites the use of *fone* for *phone*, and emphasizes the fact that the saving of this one letter would conserve labor, machinery, and paper, that could, for example, be made to increase the number of plays a Shakspere might write in a lifetime. Most of these letter writers, among whom the late Frank H Vizetelly is remembered as perhaps the most notable, advocate an alphabet of from forty-two to sixty characters wherewith such words as *though* and *through* and *thorough* may be spelt with but two characters each.

** See page 3.

	NO	YES
5	He objects to me running in the games	He objects to my running in the games
6	They are holding a pronounceing contest	They are holding a pronouncing contest
7	Some of the words are almost unpronouncable	Some of the words are almost unpronounceable
8	A young swimstress is dinning with us to-night	A young woman swimmer is dining with us tonight
9	Please give me immediately a receipt for this paiment	Please give me immediately a receipt for this payment
10	I thought that he was almost too casual	I thought he was almost too casual
11	It must be insisted that students obey the rules	It must be insisted that students obey the rules
12	I do not think that his materielism does him credit	I do not think that his materialism does him credit
13	Mary has been caning and perserveing all day	Mary has been canning and preserving all day
14	He did not acept his transferrence with good grace	He did not accept his transference with good grace
15	We had a pleasant visit to the cathedral	We paid a visit to the cathedral
16	I gave my card to a Mr Harry Robinson	I gave my card to a Mr Harry Robinson
17	These packages have all been carefully labelled	These packages have all been carefully labeled
18	These stories have been grosly exaggeratted	These stories have been grossly exaggerated
19	He was arested because he trafficed in stolen goods	He was arrested because he trafficked in stolen goods
20	People were taxing down-town because the buses were so crowded	People were taxiing downtown because the busses were so crowded
21	He began hedgeing as they questioned him severly	He began hedging as they questioned him severely
22	He always has taken great pride in his linage	He always has taken great pride in his lineage
23	Jimmy looked at her rogueishly out of the corner of his eye	Jimmy looked at her roguishly out of the corner of his eye
24	He radioes every noon over a national net work	He radios every noon over a national network
25	Our charlady, who is a worrysome person, comes in every Friday	Our charwoman, who is a worrisome person, comes in every Friday
26	The proceeds is to be spent for a new books case	The proceeds are to be spent for a new bookcase
27	Of all the oasis in the dessert this was the most dangerous	Of all the oases in the desert this was the most dangerous
28	We saw them turning out new chassises by the hundreds	We saw them turning out new chassis by the hundred

	NO	YES
29	Me and the James's oldest friend—Harold Coe—has gone abroad	The James' and my oldest friend—Harold Coe—has gone abroad
30	The old Association for the Improvement of Economic Conditions' policy has been drastically changed	The old policy of the Association for the Improvement of Economic Conditions has been drastically changed
31	Those two little minx's eyes are full of mischief, and Mr Harrigan's, the instructor, patience is sorely tried by them	The eyes of those two little minxes are full of mischief, and Mr Harrigan, the instructor's, patience is sorely tried by them
32	When we last saw the Misses Perkinses they presented a phenomena in sisterhood that still puzzles us	When we last saw the Misses Perkins they presented a phenomenon in sisterhood that still puzzles us
33	You your-self are really to blame for all this, especially since you overdrew your account at the Farmer's and Mechanic's Bank	You yourself are really to blame for all this, especially since you overdrew your account at the Farmers and Mechanics Bank
34	My mother's-in-law appearance at the door took us all by supprise, and Harrie's face turned both red and pallid in quick succession	My mother-in-law's appearance at the door took us all by surprise, and Harry's face turned both red and pallid in quick succession
35	Of the seven soliloquys delivered by Hamlet, the To be or not to be masterpiece is the most philosophic	Of the seven soliloquies delivered by Hamlet, the To-be-or-not-to-be masterpiece is the most philosophic
36	The alumni of Miss Yerke's finishing school for girls have set themselves the task of raising a ten thousand dollars minima	The alumnae of Miss Yerkes's finishing school for girls have set themselves the task of raising a minimum of ten thousand dollars
37	She wears different chapeaux for different beaux, and she has two bureaux filled with trousseaux which she calls her "hope drapes"	She wears different chapeaus for different beaus, and she has two bureaus filled with trousseaus which she calls her "hope drapes"
38	He thot he had put his spectacle case in his trouser pocket, but he found it oddly enuf, on the radio's top	He thought he had put his spectacles case in his trousers pocket, but he found it, oddly enough, on top the radio
39	Among the stopper-bys at our booth were the Duke of Windsors and of Atholls, but their purchases were inconsiderible	Among the stoppers-by at our booth were the Dukes of Windsor and Atholl, but their purchases were inconsiderable
40	The strata of purple rock is discernable in the dark, a phenomena that attracts thousands of sight seers	The stratum of purple rock is discernible in the dark, a phenomenon that attracts thousands of sightseers
41	Economics are really the most diff-	Economics is really the most diffi-

	NO	YES
	icult of subjects, but if politics are to be your career you must study them	cult of subjects, but if politics is to be your career you must study it
42	Ten variety of fishes were brought in by the men among which was a ten feet tarpon	Ten varieties of fish were brought in by the men, among which was a ten-foot tarpon
43	Gilbert's and Sullivan's opera are all most tuneful, but the famous collaborators never dreamed that their works would be made the criterion of light operatic entertainment for generations to follow	Gilbert and Sullivan's operas are all most tuneful, but the famous collaborators never dreamed that their work would really be made the criterion of light operatic entertainment for generations to follow
44	The ladies in waiting were lavishly be jewelled, and though the ceremony was pro European it was quite as naturally un democratic	The ladies-in-waiting were lavishly bejeweled, and though the ceremony was pro-European it was quite as naturally undemocratic
45	Though this new materiel is a non conductor, it is never the less usually found more satisfactory for such purposes as your's	Though this new material is a non-conductor, it is nevertheless usually found more satisfactory for such purposes as yours
46	Harry is attending high school at that new high high school building at the corner of Everett Avenue and Eighty third Street	Harry is attending high school at that new high high-school building at the corner of Everett Avenue and Eighty-third Street
47	No matter what sort of pay as you go policy you may adopt, you will always find many who interpret an I owe you as a serial-story	No matter what sort of pay-as-you-go policy you may adopt, you will always find many who interpret an I-owe-you as a serial story
48	Please let me have twenty one yards of some black all cotton fabric to be used in blacking out completely my drawing-room windows	Please let me have twenty-one yards of black all-cotton fabric to be used in blacking out my drawing-room (drawing room) windows
49	The brides' maids had drunk so much champagne and eaten so much pâté-de-foies-gras before the ceremony that the brideelect was terrorstricken as to how her wedding would be carried-through	The bridesmaids had drunk so much champagne and eaten so much pâté de foie gras before the ceremony that the bride-elect was terror-stricken as to how her wedding would be carried through
50	Harrison McKinstry's, the ambassador at large's, first-secretary was hurt yesterday by a large motortruck as it was backing-up to the main entrance of the Henderson green house	Harrison McKinstry, the ambassador-at-large's, first secretary was hurt yesterday by a large motor truck as it was backing up to the main entrance of the Henderson greenhouse

7

DON'T MISPUNCTUATE

SECTION FIFTY — TERMINALS

The purpose of punctuation is not only to make expression clear, but to make it clear on reading sight—to make it capable of grasp at a glance. If it does not do this, then repunctuation is in order, or, more likely, rephrasing. For convenience of treatment the marks used in punctuation are here grouped as follows:

period	.	comma	,	dash	—
question mark	?	colon	:	quotation marks	" " ' '
exclamation mark	!	semicolon	;	parentheses ( ) and brackets [ ]	

Those in the first group are called *terminals* because they are used chiefly at the ends of sentences; those in the second are called *internals* because they occur within sentences, those in the third are called *pairs* for the reason that they are used in pairs. Though the dash is quite as frequently used alone as with another dash, it offers greatest difficulty in paired usage. The parenthesis and the bracket are also occasionally used singly.*

The Greek grammarians and rhetoricians called a complete sentence a period. They placed a dot or a small circle after it and called this mark a period also. The former use of the word is now almost archaic though it is occasionally affected by writers and speakers, and its adjective form *periodic* is still used in the study of English to denote a sentence that is cumulative in arrangement of ideas (page 214). The Greek word *periodos* (*peri* round and *hodos* way) means circuit, a complete round, a full stop. The expression *well-rounded sentence* has in it this derived

* For the apostrophe see pages 96, 329, 423, 460, 486.

signification. The serpent swallowing his tail is perhaps the best symbol of a circuit or a period—the deeper the swallow the more perfect the symbol.

Like all other marks of punctuation, the period has certain technical or conventional uses; certain other uses based upon the fundamental principles of thought expression. The latter are sometimes arguable and fluctuating, and have more than once been the cause of grave misunderstanding and even of litigation. The former, though subject to change, are nevertheless likely to be arbitrary and fixed.

The old rule as to placing a period after abbreviations or after parts of an abbreviation pertains to the technical use of this mark. It is at present undergoing change (page 94), abbreviations being written almost as often today without periods as with them. In some advanced styles of printing, spacing is even omitted between letters in an abbreviation that denotes separate terms; thus, *LLD* is seen instead of *LL D* and instead of the older *LL.D.; D'DS,* instead of *D D S* and *D.D.S.* But these are considered radical departures when they are used in connection with scholastic abbreviations. And they are rarely made even yet when such abbreviation consists of both capitals and lower-case letters, as *Ph D.* and *Phar. D.,* though there is no logical reason why *PhD* and *PharD* should not be used, if *MD* and *CPA* are. Governmental and industrial and commercial abbreviations increasingly follow the simplified form, as *ICC, ICS, OTC; exch, disc, cr.*

Much irregularity has always existed in the use of the period after an abbreviation or the parts of an abbreviation. The abbreviation *OE,* for example, standing for Old English, and *MHG,* standing for Middle High German, have never carried periods; and periods are omitted from practically all other glossarial abbreviations, as they are also from chemical symbols, and from letters added to figures (see below). But usage varies widely in connection with *s* for *shillings* and *d* for *pence,* some mediums preferring *£10 2s 6d* and some *£10. 2s. 6d.* The latter is conservative: the former, simplified. Both are correct; the former is preferred.

The letters *d, mo, nd, rd, th, to,* as in *3d, 12mo, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 4to,* are not abbreviations, and are never correctly written with a period after them unless they come at the end of an expression. Such Latin terms as *ante, circa, en route, infra, passim, post, re, supra, via, vide* are complete words, not abbreviations; it is there-

fore wrong to treat them as abbreviations by placing the period after them.

Used in French text the abbreviations *M* and *Mme* and *Mlle* are not followed by a period, and *MM* and *Mmes* and *Mlles* usually are not. The greatest possible variations occur in the English usage of these abbreviations, and the same comment applies today in regard to *Mr, Mrs, Messrs, Dr, Rev, Hon, Esq, Sr, Jr, Co, Bro, Bros.* It is important for both individual and organization, or company, to follow either the conservative form or the simplified form *consistently;* that is, to use periods after abbreviations and abbreviation parts as prescribed by old plates, or to omit them in accordance with the modern movement. Here, as in word usage (page 240), the practice of the best writers the country over should be the ultimate guide.

The period is not used, as a rule, after running heads, after titles or sub-titles, after items in lists, after signatures. Time was when a signature was not considered complete unless it was followed by a period. But it gradually dawned upon the human mind that when a baby is named and christened, punctuation plays little, if any, part (with the exception of an occasional apostrophe). A few newspapers and magazines still carry a superfluous period after their titles, notably *The New York Times.* (which also carries, it has been noted, prefatory *The* as if to double trouble).

The period is preferably not used after notation symbols, though in this connection also there is much inconsistency in present usage. Let the Authorized Version guide in this (as in other concerns): of its almost thirty-two thousand numbered verse paragraphs, periods are omitted after the verse numbers. The accepted method of notation is

I Creature
A Animal
1 Man
a American
(1) Northerner
(a) Bostonian

or

I Creature (see below)
A. Animal
1 Man
a American
(1). Northerner
(a). Bostonian

The space between the notation symbol and the following term is in each instance a sufficient break, and no period is thus required. But here, as elsewhere, consistency is the most important consideration. Since either style is correct, follow one or the other rigidly in the same composition. Roman numerals used as

titles and intended for pronunciation, should never be followed by periods—*Henry VIII founded the Church of England.*

It has been indicated in the preceding paragraph that a period is not necessary after each item in a list or an outline, even when it constitutes a complete sentence. But if the separate items in an outline are so constructed as to make continuous reading in spite of their notation, such punctuation as would be required in straight matter may be followed, as

I The first course is impossible, for
  A it involves too much expense, and
  B it requires techniques impossible to provide
II The second course may be followed only provided:
  A materials are procurable,
  B equipment can be adjusted, and
  C working hours may be increased.

It is sometimes ruled, especially by conservative punctuators, that if periods are used after notation symbols, they are in the name of consistency required after the following items, as

I Creature
  A Animal.

Letters, capital or lower-case, used to signify fictitious persons, as in algebraic problems and illustrative examples, should not be followed by periods. It was once considered somewhat better form to place a period after a letter used to designate the name of an actual person. Modern practice, however, tends to omit not only the period but also the spacing after a personal initial (page 94).

The period is sometimes used between figures that are written together but that indicate two different categories, as of time or content. But the colon (page 577) is preferable in such combinations for the reason that the period may at first sight be mistaken for a decimal point. It is better, therefore, to write *10:30 p m* than *10.30 p m; Genesis IV:29 1,* than *Genesis IV.29.1; Hamlet II:1:14* than *Hamlet II.1.14.* Do not use the comma for such separations as these.

The period as decimal point should be used, though it usually is not, after a whole number representing dollars. It of course belongs after such whole number followed by cents, as $135.21, but *$135.* is preferable to *$135* in straight matter. Its use in this connection prevents the fill-in of an extra figure, or of more than

one in the event the space following is accidentally increased by typewriter slip, or otherwise. In tabulations the whole number should be followed by two ciphers for convenience of the eye, as *$135.00;* and this form may be followed in straight copy also, but the ciphers are unnecessary if the period is used. The cipher is preferable before the period in decimal tabulations denoting no whole parts, as *0.1 gr,* again, for convenience of the eye. But in straight copy it is also probably better to precede the period with *0* for the sake of accuracy. *Please put in .1 gr of cyanide* may easily be misread *Please put in 1 gr of cyanide.* The difference between one grain of cyanide and one tenth of a grain may safely be regarded as considerable.

The period is used after the last line of the heading (the date line) and of both the inside address and the envelope address in a letter that is written with conservative punctuation. Printed letterheads should not carry punctuation at the ends of individual lines, though conservative companies still hold to the commas at the ends of all lines but the last, where a period is used. Periods are never used after telephone numbers, cable and telegraph code names or numbers, or letters or numbers used to indicate the sequence of pages or papers.

A convention of printing requires that the period be placed within quotation marks and reference signs, and this convention should be observed in both typing and longhand, the writer not to reason why even though the rule may sometimes operate illogically. It very often happens that a quotation ends where a complete statement ends; the period and the final quotation marks should thus be "simultaneous," as would the period and a reference symbol. But observe *He concluded with these words from a Psalm of David: "The wicked walk on every side, when the vilest men are exalted."* To write the quotation marks directly above the period where they logically belong, makes a blurred and confused appearance. They might just as well be written within the period—". but this gives a less tidy and finished appearance. The convention—placement of period within quotation marks—is thus probably the best arrangement that can be made (page 597). Note also *This will be found in Shakspere's Cymbeline.** Here logically the asterisk should pertain to the whole statement, as if a footnote were to say **It is found also in Twelfth Night.* If the statement ended with . . . *Cymbeline**. the footnote should logically refer to *Cymbeline* alone, as **Act II Scene i.*

But, again, practice derives from appearance, and the asterisk (or other reference mark) belongs without the period no matter what the scope of footnote reference. The same rule pertains to the comma in relation to reference marks.

The period is placed without a final parenthesis when parenthetical matter is used in direct reference to a preceding word or phrase, as *I paid him the fifty dollars ($50.).* and *I told him what I thought of him on that memorable day (December seventh).* It is placed within a final parenthesis when parenthetical matter is completely detached, thrown in by way of gratuitous comment in general reference to an entire statement, as *I told him what I thought of him on that memorable day. (Those present said I looked very angry indeed.) But he made no reply, and his silence was interpreted as a confession of guilt.* In such use as this the parentheses constitute a kind of apology for the break in coherence caused by the thrown-in expression.

Periods are sometimes used in a row (as are—less often—hyphens, dashes, asterisks, colons, or designs of some sort) to lead the eye across a space to the right connection. They may also indicate omitted letters or words—ellipsis (page 110)—though the number of dots used for such purpose is variable. A period for each omitted letter is usual, as *De .l take it* and *Marg t and Arch d,* but there can be no such rule for words inasmuch as too many dots would sometimes be required. Three or four at most represent the best practice to indicate omission of words. If one or more lines, or entire stanzas or paragraphs are omitted from an excerpt a full line of dots is customarily run across the page. Omission of figures from a number is according to standard practice filled in with hyphens. Note the following: *December 7, 19—. What crime, what atrocity, what . . . . occurred on this date? . . . . Say what you will, it shall be avenged! . . . .* The period is correctly placed after the second dash in the date for the conservative style of punctuation, the two dashes completing the year number. The first four dots denote omission of words or phrases; the next four must denote the omission of at least one sentence, or *Say* would not be capitalized. The last four denote word, phrase, or clause, or more, omitted. A large printing company once plausibly tried to establish the rule that periods should be used to denote the omission of letters or words; asterisks, that of sentences and longer passages; hyphens, that of figures.

The rule has not been generally adopted unfortunately, but there are houses that abide by it.

The increasing vogue of using a series of dots or periods to separate a list of detached remarks, introduced and widely used by the columnists, is not to be encouraged, in spite of its evident convenience and its economy of white space. The latter justifies the device in newspapers and periodicals, no doubt; to begin every one of fifty or one hundred, or more, observations at the lefthand margin as a new paragraph would be extremely wasteful inasmuch as they may never be guaranteed to come out even with the righthand margin. But the use of a row of periods for the same purpose in books, circulars, letters, and other mediums, cannot be enthusiastically recommended.

A period is placed at the end of a declarative sentence, that is, of a statement; at the end of an imperative sentence, that is, of a command; at the end of a "courtesy question," that is, at the end of an expression placed in the interrogative form out of courtesy to the one addressed, thus, the period rightly follows *He asked me to open the window.* and *Open the window.* and *Will you open the window.* Inflection of voice must decide whether the third sentence requires a question mark rather than a period, whether the second requires an exclamation mark rather than a period.

It hardly needs to be explained that the period at the end of a sentence, and a capital letter at the beginning of a succeeding one constitute repetition. Naturally, if a period denotes a full stop, whatever follows must represent a "full beginning," and no such signal as capital letter is required to notify a reader that a beginning is being made. Either the period or the capital is logically unnecessary. There is some slight tendency at present to omit the period at the end of a declarative sentence that closes a paragraph, especially in business letters, reports, and statements. For here conventional form may give three notices—period for ending, spacing between lines or paragraphs, capital letter for the first word of the new paragraph. And this convention holds in most composition today. As a general principle it may be stated that wherever spatial arrangement denotes ending, no period is really necessary. This is the principle applied in omission of the period after running heads, titles, partition heads, and the like. But strangely enough the purist is shocked when it is suggested that

the period be omitted at the end of a paragraph that is brought to a close by a declarative sentence. Space here, however, speaks with the same finality with which it speaks in the running title at the top of this page.

The period is used after any word or phrase or clause occurring in straightaway matter, the meaning of which is made clear by what precedes or by what follows, or both. The exclamation mark and the question mark may be similarly used. This does not pertain to the awkward and ungrammatical incompleteness explained on page 102, but rather to natural expression so surrounded with connotation that misconstruction and misunderstanding are not likely to result because of incompleteness. This sort of abbreviated sentence abounds in modern fiction and drama and poetry and journalism, and objections by the purists must (as elsewhere mostly) be thrown overboard. This, for example, is clear, and is more vivid and colorful and emphatic than it would be if the independent words and phrases were "set in rounded periods": *He had done it once. But never again. No sir! Absurd to expect him to take the rap twice in rapid succession. Henceforth, the straight and narrow for him. Then—work, money, success, position—and the time and the place and the girl.* The purist would, perhaps, prefer this splendidly perfect but pedestrian version: *He had done it once. But he would never do it again. No, he wouldn't! It is absurd to expect him to take the rap twice in rapid succession. Henceforth he would follow the straight and narrow path. He would work, make money, gain success and position. Then he would find the girl, marry, and settle down.*

Grammarians have for many years found it necessary to explain away the old belief—"superstition"—to the effect that it is incorrect to end a sentence with a preposition. The trouble arose in the tendency on the part of speakers (writers were more or less exempt) to fall into such expression as *With whom did he go with* (page 148). Some very much annoyed grammarian, thinking to end this nonsense for all time, foolishly offered himself for sacrifice by italicizing in his text *You must never use a preposition to end a sentence with.* His sufferings were out of all proportion to his deserts, for the contradiction between his precept and his example has had a highly corrective value. Closely akin has been the persistent belief or feeling on the part of students of English that it is wrong to start a sentence with *and* or *but,* particularly

and. It is in no sense wrong to do so. But many mistakes are made in such sentence beginnings. Before placing a period at the end of a statement and beginning a following one with *and,* make sure that the new sentence really represents a new thought, not just a part of the former one strikingly initiated by *and* with capital *A.* If you say *Mary told us that she is studying Spanish. And her fiancé is her instructor* you unnecessarily use two sentences for one thought. There should be no period after *Spanish,* no capital *A* to follow it. *Mary told us that she is studying Spanish and that her fiancé is her instructor* is correctly punctuated. But if you say *Mary's mastery of Spanish has been as remarkable as it was unexpected. And she has set a stern example to the many frivolous girls in her set* your period and your capital *A* are justified in the fact that your second sentence constitutes an independent thought growing out of what precedes, to be sure, but having a detached additive quality. Two complete thoughts are expressed, set apart by a period.

If you say *Harry's report card is deplorable. But Harry is the "Peck's Bad Boy" of the school. Bill's card is "looking up", however, and this young man may make the team after all* your evident intention is to contrast the two report cards. After each major statement about the boy there is a minor one. But the added statements are not consistently treated. Moreover, the third sentence does not follow logically or grow out of the preceding one. It belongs in sequence after the idea of the first sentence. The first added clause is wrongly made a complete sentence beginning with *But.* The second added clause is properly incorporated with the second element in the contrast. The expression should read *Harry's report card is deplorable, but Harry is the "Peck's Bad Boy" of the school. Bill's card is "looking up," however, and this young man may make the team after all.*

The question mark (called also interrogation mark and interrogation point) is used after a word or a group of words asking a direct question. This usually means that in an interrogative sentence the order of words is somewhat transposed; thus, *Are you going?* is the transposed or interrogative form of declarative *You are going.* But it has been pointed out (page 551) that the latter may by voice or contextual inflection indicate interrogation, and may therefore be followed by the question mark. *You don't mean to say he is dead* is declarative in form, and may be merely declara-

tive in meaning. But it may be an exclamation of surprise—*You don't mean to say he is dead!*—and it may be a question—*You don't mean to say he is dead?*—inflection depending upon circumstance or mood or reaction. In Spanish two question marks are used, one at the beginning of a question and one at the end, the former being set upside down (page 281).

Direct question must not be confused with indirect question. In *He asked, "Are you going?"* the interrogative part is said to be direct quotation, or direct discourse, for the reason that the actual words of a speaker are given. In *He asked whether I am going.* the last four words are said to be indirect quotation, or indirect discourse, for the reason that they are not the actual words spoken but are the words of another conveying the same interrogative idea. In the latter example these four words constitute a kind of substantive; they are the name of a question, not a question itself, and they are thus followed by a period rather than by a question mark. If uncertainty exists as to what is direct discourse and what is not, dramatize the questioner to see whether the words indicate his actual presence in the words, or the presence of some one else (yourself, for example).

The question mark is placed within or without a final quotation mark in accordance with meaning. In *Under his breath the boy whispered, "Who told you so?"* for example, the part quoted is itself a question and the question therefore belongs entirely within the quotation marks. But in *Who whispered "Who told you so"?* the interrogative sentence begins with initial *Who* and it does not end until after the quoted question is expressed. Logically two question marks should be used, since there are two questions—*Who whispered "Who told you so?"?*—but this would be a bungling practice, and an unnecessary attempt at precision, since such expression may be made clear by the use of one mark.

The question mark is used similarly within or without parentheses in accordance with meaning. *Have you seen your poem in Prescott's new anthology (page 121)?* and *He was pale and nervous as he confronted the judge (where was all that famous bravado now?), and as sentence was pronounced he had to be supported by the court attendants* and *He slapped me familiarly on the back and called me by my first name. (Who does he think he is, anyway?)* illustrate correct uses of the question mark in relation to parentheses (page 601).

The question mark is sometimes used in parentheses or brackets to indicate doubt in regard to something that precedes it, but this usage should be sparingly resorted to, for the sake of unity and coherence in expression, if for no more salient reasons. Parentheses should be used to enclose it in a writer's own expression; brackets, in expression quoted by a writer. By no means should such parenthetical or bracketed question mark be thrown into writing without serious purpose. Its use for ridicule or irony is a violation of expressional etiquette (page 314). In such statement as *He was born in 1485 (?)* it is tautological to use *about* or *ca, (circa)* for *in* and also the parenthetical question mark. Use one or the other. Note that brackets are required in *When I asked him the year of Latimer's birth, he replied, "Latimer was born in 1485 [?]."*

Serial questions may have a question mark after each unit, or, if they are short, at the end of the series, and the units may be separated by commas (page 618); thus, *Where has he been? What has he done? Who are his friends? How much money has he?* and *What is your name, your age, your occupation, and your present address?* represent present usage. In the former, the initial words, after the first, are preferably capitalized, and they usually are if the question unit is a complete grammatical form; otherwise, they are not. Do not use both the question mark and *or* in an alternative question such as *Are you going with me? Or are you going to the concert?* There is really only one question here, and only one question mark is thus required. Write *Are you going with me, or are you going to the concert?* or *Are you going with me or to the concert?*

Questions that are referred to as such and are therefore used substantively rather than as real questions, answers to which are expected, are preferably not followed by the question mark; thus, you say *His won't you sing for us was rather forced, I thought* and *Your how much money will it take is an impertinence.* Here the questions are embodied as forms merely, and as such are interrogative substantives to be treated grammatically as unit forms. They are sometimes hyphened, sometimes placed in single or double quotation marks, the former being the preferred usage, as *He said my how-do-you-do was not very cordial.* These are, as a matter of fact, forms of indirect question.

Though the period is not used in titles and running heads, as a rule, the question mark may be. Usage varies in regard to this. But ? is generally regarded as having some advertising value, and interrogative headlines and titles are salably emphasized by the question mark.

There are a thousand-and-one "handy" uses of the question mark, chief of which is that in printing and editorial offices to query the accuracy or desirability of words or statements in copy or proof. But it is used as reminder token in business offices, as tickler in letter files, as curiosity stimulus in advertising copy, as warning in notices, and so on.

The exclamation mark (or point) was once called *ecphoneme,* a Greek word meaning to voice out; and the word *exclamation* is itself from Latin *ex* and *clamo* meaning cry out (page 627). It is, in general, used after any expression—exclamation—that evinces strong feeling of whatever kind. Its exclusive identification with expressions of joy or happiness is a Pollyanna mistake. Any word or any group of words may constitute exclamation, and thus may be followed by the exclamation mark, as, briefly, *Heavens! Great guns! Say that again! What a beautiful new dress!* Facial expression or tone of voice, or both, may cue the exclamation. The third expression may, for instance, not be an exclamation at all, but merely a request for repetition. But, spoken with surprise or impetuosity or special emphasis of any other sort, it becomes exclamatory and requires the exclamation mark after it.

O and *oh* are generally accepted as exclamatory expressions, but they are by no means always so. The former is used in direct address and is usually followed by the name of an addressee. It is not followed by the exclamation mark or the comma, or by any other mark of punctuation, in normal usage. Used in an exclamatory manner *O* invariably ties a word group under its influence and the exclamation mark thus comes at end of the group, as *O Lord, have mercy upon us!* But in *O no, my dear, I won't let you carry that* there is no quality of exclamation, and no exclamation mark is required at the end of the expression. *O* is more poetical than *oh.* Used before *that* or *for—O for the wings of a dove!—O* is merely ejaculatory.

The word *oh* is not used in direct address. It may be used to intensify an expression of pain or sorrow or fright or longing or disapproval; it is usually followed by a comma, rarely by an exclamation mark. It occurs quite as frequently within a sentence as at the beginning of a sentence, and like *O* it may often be used without any exclamatory quality at all. *Oh, he has taken my pistol and is aiming at her!* and *He is too ill to go, but oh, how he wishes he could be with you* illustrate correct usage of punctuation in relation to *oh*. Used within a sentence, as in the latter example, *oh* is preferably not capitalized but usage varies in regard to this, some authorities preferring and recommending capitalization.

Note in the two examples following that the exclamation mark belongs within or without final quotation mark according as meaning dictates: *The crazed woman shouted, "Heaven forbid!"* and *Curses upon that woman who is forever calling "Heaven forbid"!* The whole of the latter expression is exclamatory, and the exclamation is thus properly placed at the very end. Only a part of the former is exclamatory, and the character of the shouting, indicated by the exclamation mark, must be kept within quotation marks. As in the case of the question mark (page 554) strict logic requires two exclamation marks in the latter, as *"Heaven forbid!"!* But this would appear equally ridiculous.

Like the question mark, the exclamation mark is sometimes used in parentheses or brackets to indicate contempt or incredulity or irony or surprise, but this usage is discouraged (page 555). Parentheses should be used to enclose it in a writer's own expression; brackets, in expression quoted by a writer (page 603).

And like the period and the question mark, the exclamation mark is used after or before a final parenthesis in accordance with meaning of context. Observe the following: *How dare you say such a thing about me (Times, December tenth)!* and *He was just about to give the lock a final twist (Brother, Beware!) when a hand clutched firmly at his throat* and *He slapped me familiarly on the back and called me by my first name. (What a nerve some people have!)*

The use of the exclamation mark for emphasis or strikingness is not recommended. Its primary function is that stated in the first paragraph above. Any perversion of that function is likely to weaken rather than strengthen copy in which it is made.

CONTEST

	NO	YES
1	Oh! It is raining again. Hang it all	Oh, it is raining again. Hang it all!
2	I enclose twenty-one dollars ($21)	I enclose twenty-one dollars ($21).
3	He wanted to know why I wished to go?	He wanted to know why I wished to go.
4	She is gone, and O! how I miss her	She is gone, and oh, how I miss her!
5	He inquired, "Will you go with me"?	He inquired, "Will you go with me?"
6	Please give me .3 gr of that new rat poison?	Please give me 0.3 gr of that new rat poison.
7	We shall go on the 4th. via. the eastern route	We shall go on the fourth via the eastern route.
8	This essay is by Francis Bacon (Baron Verulam)	This essay is by Francis Bacon (Baron Verulam).
9	When I arrived. There he was waiting for me.	When I arrived, there he was waiting for me.
10	"Which route do I take here, she inquired anxiously?"	"Which route do I take here?" she inquired anxiously
11	"Oh, Harry, how could you do such a thing," she exclaimed.	"O Harry, how could you do such a thing!" she exclaimed.
12	He said "that taxation without representation is tyranny".	He said that taxation without representation is tyranny.
13	The burning question is what is to become of us?	The burning question is what is to become of us.
14	"Who said," he asked sharply, "taxation without representation is tyranny?"	"Who said," he asked sharply, " 'Taxation without representation is tyranny'?"
15	"Let us go," they shouted miserably. Ugh, I can never forget those cries	"Let us go!" they shouted miserably. Ugh, I can never forget those cries!
16	"What I mean," said the orator, "is 'that taxation without representation is tyranny' ".	"What I mean," said the orator, "is that taxation without representation is tyranny."
17	Mlle. Defoe gave her little brother G twenty-five ($25) dollars for his birthday	Mlle Defoe gave her little brother G. twenty-five dollars ($25) for his birthday.
18	"Can you tell me," he asked, "what is meant by taxation without representation is tyranny?"	"Can you tell me," he asked, "what is meant by 'Taxation without representation is tyranny'?"
19	Hurrah, Hurrah, he shouted excitedly. I have at last found my precious copy of Charles Kingsley's "Westward Ho".	"Hurrah! Hurrah!" he shouted. "I have at last found my precious copy of Charles Kingsley's *Westward Ho!*"

* See page 3 Certain numbers here should be considered also under quotation marks on pages 592 to 598

	NO	YES
20	"Do you think you have a nibble?" asked a passer-by of a fisherman whose boat was rocking dangerously as result of the pull on his line "I don't think I know," the fisherman nervously replied	"Do you think you have a nibble?" asked a passer-by of a fisherman whose boat was rocking dangerously as result of the pull on his line "I don't think I know!" the fisherman nervously replied

SECTION FIFTY-ONE INTERNALS

Comma is the Greek word *komma* meaning clause or part of a sentence; and this is in turn from Greek *koptein* meaning to cut off. Derivatively, therefore, a comma would appear to be a mark used to cut off a clause or other part of a sentence. Sometimes it is just this—no more, no less; sometimes it is much more or much less.

Practically all of the many uses of the comma may be classified under two broad divisions: it functions to prevent misunderstanding as result of run-on reading; it functions as substitute for omitted terms. The many detailed applications of the comma to expression, oral (by inflection) as well as written, may without too much strain be blanketed under these two main headings. But such elementary classification as this must not be permitted to make the uses of the comma appear too easy or simple. The comma is ubiquitous and omnipresent in speech and writing. No mere section in a book—no entire book itself—can explore all the nooks and corners in which it may legitimately reside. Besides, its applications are sometimes the result of individual taste or idiosyncrasy. One will put a comma here, another will not; and both may be correct. The conservative punctuator revels in the use of the comma; the liberal punctuator will punish a construction to the death to be rid of one. Between the two there are all degrees and kinds of comma users—conscientious, indifferent, careless, ignorant, bewildered. The constructional uses of this pesky mark of punctuation and even the technical ones, as explained below, will be found to be loosely classifiable under one of the two grand categories above.

The substitution of a comma for a period or a semicolon between two completely independent or nearly independent expressions has long been regarded by grammarians as its most serious mis-

use. Such misuse of the "pesky point" is sometimes referred to as the "comma splice." There is also a semicolon splice—the use of the semicolon where the period is clearly required—but the comma is the major offender in this type of punctuation misusage. Do not write *He has gone to Albany, I expect to hear from him tomorrow* for *He has gone to Albany. I expect to hear from him tomorrow.*

On trial for murder a witness under cross-examination said· "I did not go out to buy the medicine because I was ill." The lawyer for the plaintiff was quick to take his cue: "Ah: then why did you go out to buy the medicine?" But the lawyer for the defense was equally quick to have the witness repeat. This time under guidance he said: "I did not go out to buy the medicine, because I was ill." Tone and inflection now made the comma clear, whereas in the first answer they had not done so. Without the comma the expression made the witness say that he had gone out to buy the medicine not for his own illness but evidently for some other reason—or person (perhaps a poisoned victim). With the comma it made him say that he did not go out to buy the medicine because he was too ill to go. The comma had, in other words, made the meaning of the latter favorable to the accused; its omission in the first statement had incriminated him. The first answer of the witness is representative of the run-on error in relation to the comma. Insignificant as it may appear in both form and use, the little comma has more than once been a deciding factor in momentous affairs. Its omission or its misplacement may convey meaning directly opposite to that intended and yielded by its use. *Lead on my man,* spoken by the executioner, may mean that the block is set, the axe is whetted, and that execution is to be swift and sure. *Lead on, my man* means merely that somebody is going to follow another.

Mrs Fiske says Miss Anglin is the greatest actress in the world gives the compliment to Miss Anglin. *Mrs Fiske, says Miss Anglin, is the greatest actress in the world* gives it to Mrs Fiske. Quotation marks could not make the meaning any clearer. *I read half of the poem and the story* may mean that I read half the poem and half the story or all the story. *I read half of the poem, and the story* means that all the story was read. Diction rather than punctuation had here better be depended upon to convey the fact that half the story was read, as *I read half the poem and half the story.* On the other hand in *Chickens like these are*

great layers the two words *like these* are so intimate to *Chickens* that any breakage by commas would mar the required run-on reading; whereas, in *Chickens, like cows, require much attention* their omission would destroy the natural and logical pause before *like* and after *cows,* and the consequent run-on reading would be almost ridiculous. The first sentence says *These (leghorn* or *Rhode Island Red,* or some other species) *chickens are great layers;* the second says *Chickens require much attention, as cows do.*

In other words, omission of comma gives a run-on meaning that is very often widely different from intended meaning or from meaning that results when construction is closed by its use. If punctuation is to clarify, and to clarify instantaneously, the comma cannot be spared in such expressions as *Just as I was about to ask, the officer stopped traffic* and *Man caught stealing, tires of policeman's questioning* and *Waiting for Tom, Jones caught cold,* short though they are. At reading glance the eye sees, respectively, *I was about to ask the officer* and *Man caught stealing tires* and *Waiting for Tom Jones.* Initial absolute constructions frequently, but not always, require a comma after them to prevent this kind of merging. The old rule was that all such introductory matter—from single word to dependent clause—must be separated from major parts or limbs, just for the sake of "being on the safe side." As a matter of fact the comma separation may be quite as necessary when such terms follow as when they precede principal construction; thus, the comma is as necessary in *The horse being old and tired, Higgins decided to walk* as in *Higgins decided to walk, the horse being old and tired.*

A long complete subject may sometimes have to be separated from its predicate to prevent the last word from running headlong into the predicate, and thus from being mistaken as the simple subject. In *The octogenarian's running along with the boy delights the crowd* and *The men that are wanted by the police have arrived* the words *boy* and *police,* standing immediately before the respective predicates and agreeing with them in person and number, may on sight be taken as the actual subjects.

If you say *On the floor, we saw the victim* the initial phrase is really out of modifying order, and the comma is correct though not strictly necessary. It is unlikely that we were on the floor

when we saw the victim. But *We saw the victim on the floor* requires no punctuation, and the open punctuator would omit the comma in the first version also. Similarly, *We shall be ready, when you call* is unnecessarily punctuated after *ready,* inasmuch as the expression invites straightaway expression without pause before *when. Indeed you are a lucky lad* and *On the whole his work has been satisfactory* and *When he arrived everybody was agog* represent open punctuation, *Indeed, you are a lucky lad* and *On the whole, his work has been satisfactory* and *When he arrived, everybody was agog* represent closed punctuation.

Here, as elsewhere, in the whole field of punctuation, marks must be applied with reason. If words and phrases such as *absolutely, certainly, indeed, perhaps, second, third, moreover, in the main, by and large, in conclusion, on the other hand, for instance, on the whole,* are built into construction as modifiers of degree, they should no more be set off by commas than any other direct modifier should be, as *You are indeed lucky* and *He is contented in the main.* When they are thrown-in terms modifying an expression as a unit rather than any particular word in it, they are preferably set off by commas since the run-on reading would seem absurd. But even in this office, they may stand without punctuation in case expression is short, and in case neither vagueness nor ambiguity is likely to occur by omitting commas; thus, *Certainly you may go* and *You must of course remain* and *In the last analysis you are right* and *By and large we get what we give* are unmistakable on sight and really require no commas, though the conservative punctuator would again insist upon a comma after *Certainly,* before and after *of course,* and after *large,* respectively.

But commas or no commas, care should be exercised to place such words where they should be. Too many writers put them "just anywhere" and then apologize for their misplacement by "surrounding" them with commas. In *I think, perhaps, that this gadget should be placed here* the word *perhaps* does not modify *think.* Though the commas signify that it does not, they are a "lazy way out" of the punctuation problem. The reading should be *I think that this gadget should perhaps be placed here* in which the close modifying relationship of *perhaps* to *should be placed* is so carefully respected as to make commas unnecessary really. But the conservative punctuator would nevertheless use them.

Platform speakers are frequently reported to this effect: *In conclusion on this memorable evening I should like to remark that . . . . .* What they invariably mean is *I should like to remark in conclusion that . . . .* for *in conclusion* pertains to *remark.* In the examples above given it should be observed that when an introductory word colors an entire expression it ceases to be a modifier of degree and takes on a little of the quality of an interjection. The difference between *Surely you may have it* and *You may surely have it* is at once apparent, *Surely* in the first being more or less expletive, and *surely* in the latter being an adverb of degree modifying *shall have.*

Most writers appear to take it for granted that such expletives as *yes, no, of course, undoubtedly,* standing at the beginning of an expression, should be followed by a comma. When they stand in close covering relationship with what follows, they may be. When they do not, the semicolon is in order. But the following matter may come under the rule for the use of the colon as given on page 575, and the colon must thus be used after them. Observe *Do you think he is fully prepared for the journey? Yes: he has medicines, clothing, food, maps, guides—everything* and *Do you think his experiments will be successful? Yes; his foresight and courage guarantee his success* and *Do you expect him to return soon? No, of course not* and *Ugh, it is disgusting!* and *Alas, I cannot go!*

When an independent member precedes a dependent one, or vice versa, a comma may or may not be required between the two limbs. The old grammars set it down as a rule that dependent members beginning with *as, because, for, inasmuch, since, though, unless,* must be separated from independent members by a comma, whether they came first or last in a sentence. But this rule has long since been modified in respect to short expressions and in respect to the requirements of logic; thus, *They arrived as we were going* requires no comma because it is short and is clear at a glance, and *He failed inasmuch as he didn't work* and *She has worked indefatigably since she came* and *He remains though he is ill* are similarly correct as they stand without commas (the conservative would insist upon them). Turn these sentences around *—As we were going they arrived, Inasmuch as he didn't work he failed,* and so on—and the comma is still unnecessary, for there is no likelihood that the first clause will run into the second. But the conservative would here even more strongly insist upon the

comma between the two limbs in each expression. And note that in each of these four sentences, expressed in either order, the close consecutiveness between the independent member and the dependent member makes any breakage, even so slight a breakage as the comma indicates, not only unnecessary but undesirable. But here, as elsewhere, desired meaning must be considered. In *They departed, as they had taken offense* and *She works indefatigably, since she is ambitious for promotion* the dependent (consequential) limb is clearly gratuitous or "tacked on," and separation by comma is thus in order. Observe also that in *You can hardly make the lid stay down unless you use this fastener* the second member is so inextricably linked with the first as to make consecutive reading without breakage necessary. The first member has an unfinished quality without the rapid follow-up of the second. Very different is *If you put it on with this fastener it will stay down, unless the clip is bent or the catch broken,* for here the relationship between the two parts of the expression are detached in signification. The conservative punctuator would place a comma even after *fastener* in the last example (page 630).

"To comma or not to comma" is somewhat similarly problematical in connection with word groups (clauses) used as adjectives. If such groups are necessary to the exact meaning of an expression they are not set off by commas, if they are not really necessary, if they do not restrict or specify or make definite in any way but are thrown in as so much gratuitous information, they are set off by commas (page 147). This is mechanical rule that has been passed down the generations. But here as elsewhere let meaning or logic decide what is restrictive, what is non-restrictive, and whether commas are accordingly required. In *The car that I want is not in the garage* no comma is necessary before *that* or after *want* for the reason that this group of words is so closely woven into relationship with the other words as to make uninterrupted consecutiveness imperative. And there is no likelihood that *want* will be taken as subject of *is*. The clause *that I want* is restrictive; it specifies and makes definite; it is reducible to *wanted—The wanted car is not in the garage.* But in *The car, which seems always to be in need of repair, is at the service station* the clause *which seems always to be in need of repair* belongs in the same category as thrown-in expressions; it is gratuitous and unnecessary. Such word group is sometimes referred to as a by-the-way group. The rule is stated in old grammars to the effect that when

such clause may have *by the way* coherently inserted, it is a comma clause, that is, a clause to be set off by commas. In the preceding example *that I want* is in no sense a by-the-way remark but, rather, a positive provision that dominates the thought.

Note, now, the difference between *The boy who heard the shot called the police immediately* and *The boy, who heard the shot, called the police immediately,* the former implying that perhaps other boys were present but that only one heard the shot; the latter, that the boy might have called the police for reasons other than hearing the shot and his hearing the shot was merely an added incident prompting the call. The latter may correctly read *The boy, who incidentally (by the way) heard the shot, called the police immediately.* This kind of distinction pertains also to phrases, as *The boy hearing the shot called the police immediately* and *The boy, hearing the shot, called the police immediately,* the first specifying or pointing out the boy as perhaps one in a group, the second indicating no such selective or restrictive quality.

Coordinate terms expressed in a series and not connected by conjunctions, are separated individually or in groups by commas in order that they may be kept intelligibly apart, that is, that they may be prevented from running together confusedly or ambiguously. If the last two terms are connected by a conjunction, a comma should precede the conjunction. It is traditional, however, for company names to ignore the rule of comma before the conjunction, as *Little, Brown and Company;* and *Hart, Evans, Smathers and Green.* The ampersand (&) was formerly used for *and* in all such names or titles, and there was a rule of convention to the effect that the comma should not be used before a sign. The ampersand is still used to some extent, especially in business, but it is giving way gradually to *and.* The omission of the comma, however, persists. A person addressing a letter to a business concern should make it a point to follow the style on the letterhead of the firm addressed, regardless of "comma conviction."

Terms are separated by commas individually in *He wrote the letters b, d, f, h, k, l, and t at different angles of ascending stroke;* they are separated in groups in *The letters g and j, p and q, y and z, are called letters of descending stroke in longhand writing.* If the conjunction is not expressed before the last in a subject series, the comma is placed after it in order to notify the reader that the end is reached; if the conjunction is expressed no comma is

necessary after the last subject because the conjunction notifies. But the comma is never placed before the first term of a series, as *I am going to, Chicago, Dubuque, Sacramento, and Seattle;* or after the last of a series of modifiers, as *I met a large, breathless, agitated, person on the road.* These are illiterate uses of the comma. The foregoing rule applies in both individual and group expression, as *Pride, covetousness, lust, anger, gluttony, envy, sloth, are the seven deadly sins* and *Pride, covetousness, lust, anger, gluttony, envy, and sloth are the seven deadly sins; Tom and Harry, Bill and Joe, Mary and Alice, will be there* and *Tom and Harry, Bill and Joe, and Mary and Alice will be there.* The rule applies also to short phrases and clauses as well as to single words, and to signs and symbols, letters and figures, as *Dot your i's, cross your t's, close your o's, and open your e's* and * *and* **, †, ‡, §, *and* ′ *may all be doubled and tripled in footnote usage, as may letters, figures, degree symbols, and still other marks.*

Note that, if the comma is omitted before the *and* in such expressions as in *John, James and Harry have arrived,* the expression may be taken to mean either that John is being told that James and Harry have arrived, or that three boys have arrived. The use of the comma, in other words, decides whether *John* is in second person or in third. Again, in *I am related to him on my mother's side and on my father's side, and in ideals and ambitions also* a comma is required before the second *and* to separate the two categories of relationship indicated, one of blood preceding it and one of attitude following it.

In case commas are required within expressions to indicate omissions or thrown-in terms, or in compliance with other rules of punctuation, the members of the series may themselves be separated by semicolons, as in *I have one; Mary, two; Bill, three; and Henry, seven.* But the open punctuator will insist that such expression is quite clear written *I have one, Mary two, Bill three, Henry seven,* as it is. This conventional rule of semicolon with comma had better be observed, however, in case sentence limbs in this kind of construction are long and involved (page 580).

Discernment is important in the separation of modifiers, especially adjectives used in a series. The general rule above holds. Webster lists the term *wild rose* as an independent compound (page 523). If, therefore, you say *He gave me a beautiful wild rose* no comma is required after *beautiful* for the reason that

beautiful modifies the compound term *wild rose, wild* not being treated as an adjective modifying *rose* but as part of the name of a particular flower. If you say *He gave me a beautiful, wild rose* you must mean that he gave you a rose that was both beautiful and wild, but not the specific type of rose popularly known as the single-petaled wild rose. If you say *They lived cozily in their little, white, ivy-covered cottage* you point out serially three independent qualities of *cottage,* and properly separate your modifiers by commas. *Little* and *white* and *ivy-covered* make individual contributions to the cumulative picture. But in *They have made that ramshackle old barn look new* and *He was smoking a long black cigar* the intimacy of the noun with the preceding adjective in each sentence makes of each pair a unit term modified in the one by *ramshackle* and in the other by *long.* Commas are not needed to set off the adjectives in these sentences. The sentences are, moreover, unmistakably clear on sight. Such word groups as *careful young woman, dear old lady, sweet girl graduate, dilapidated old house* do not require commas between the adjectives for the same reasons, namely, the last two terms are a unit and the three words are together unmistakably clear—near-idioms, as a matter of fact. But these expressions must not be confused with such as *very good boy* and *really bad record* in which *very* in the one and *really* in the other are adverbs of degree modifying a following adjective and in which, therefore, constructional relationship bars punctuation. If, in a series of any sort of coordinate terms, all conjunctions are expressed, separation of terms by commas is obviously superfluous (page 89).

Any intermediate group of words that tends to suspend thought amounts to a thrown-in expression, and is always set off by commas by conservative punctuators, sometimes also by liberal punctuators, in order to prevent confusion. The words *not* and *but* are chiefly concerned in this phase of comma usage; thus, in *He has scaled the heights of fame and fortune, not by assistance from without, but solely by ambition, hard work, and determination* the *not* group of words is set off by commas because it interrupts the logical consecutiveness of the thought. In a short sentence such as *He succeeded not by luck but by hard work* commas are not necessary for the expression is clear immediately it is seen. The conservative will, however, stand by old rule and insert a comma before *not* and one after *luck.* When a contrastive *not* or *but* group ends a sentence, the conservative rule again is to set

it apart by comma, as *I come to bury Caesar, not to praise him* and *You shall not in your funeral speech blame us, But speak all good you can devise of Caesar.* Here the general run-on rule is invoked, for unless such contrastive groups are assisted by punctuation they tend to merge with other members of an expression or lose something by way of antithetical pause. The comma is necessary in *True worth is in being, not seeming* to prevent the reading *being not.* It is necessary in *And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil* to emphasize the breakage even further than *but* is able to do. The last example illustrates another rule that the conservative punctuator insists upon observing, that the liberal punctuator observes only in long sentences; the rule, namely, of placing a comma before *and* and *but* when they do not connect terms immediately before them with similar or coordinate terms immediately after them, as in *The orders were that we were to come home early from the party, and we were more than conscientious in obeying them* and *The orders were that we were to come home early from the party, but we were not very conscientious in obeying them.* But in short expressions, again, this provision would not apply; thus, *He fell in and they let him drown* and *He fell in but they rescued him* are immediately clear.

Mistakes are sometimes made in the use of the comma with *or.* There can be no question in such sentence as *John or James will go,* for here the names connected by *or* are coordinate, and the expression really says *Either John or James will go* which is unmistakably clear on sight. But observe *John will take the station wagon, or the family car; James will take the coupe or the sedan* in which the first member indicates one conveyance with two names, *family car* being in apposition with *station wagon;* the second member indicates alternative, that is, *either the coupe or the sedan* (see *John or James* above). The comma is needed before the one *or* but not before the other. The former may even be written in parentheses—*John will take the station wagon (the family car);* the latter can not be because *or* connects two different but coordinate terms, and its correlative *either* is clearly implied. Now note *This is his fancy, or, worse yet, his superstition* in which *or* connects *fancy* and *superstition.* But these two words are not strictly coordinate; the speaker has indeed made them uncoordinate by the insertion of the parenthetical phrase *worse yet* which must be set apart by commas because it is a thrown-in

expression. The comma is placed before *or* because *superstition*, is a modified appositive of *fancy*, a substitute for *fancy*, and it would be correct even if there were no thrown-in expression.

Such appositives as *The word **caucus** is from Indian (Algonkin) **caucawasu*** and *The word **metabasis** means transition from one subject to another* are called technical appositives for the reason that they should be separated and usually are separated by means of change in type face rather than by commas. In *My sister Alice baked this cake* and *My sister, Alice, baked this cake* the proper name *Alice* is called a grammatical or constructional appositive. In the first of these sentences *Alice* is in addition a differentiating appositive, that is, *not my sister Jane or my sister Mary* is understood after *Alice*, and this expression absorbs the commas in accordance with the instruction above in regard to *not*. The sentence is equivalent to *One of my sisters made this cake*. In the second sentence, in which commas are used, the word *Alice* is similar to a nonrestrictive clause, that is, *My sister, who is Alice, baked this cake*. But in *Let me introduce to you my sister Alice* the words *sister Alice* really constitute a single name and a comma is superfluous between them, as it is in *Brother Bill* and *Uncle Josh* and *Cousin Mary* (the relating word is, indeed, usually capitalized—page 613—further to justify the term as a unit). Moreover, if you say *Let me introduce you to my sister, Alice*, you may place *Alice* in second person, that is, you may be asking her to permit you to introduce your sister to her. The conservative punctuator would place a comma before *Alice* in either case, depending upon voice inflection to make the expression clear in speech, upon context in reading.

Many other kinds of appositive terms are sometimes too close to be separated by commas. This is particularly true of reflexive pronouns which are never so separated. You say *Alice herself baked this cake*, not *Alice, herself, baked this cake*. And you say *William the Conqueror and Richard the Lion-hearted were notorious as well as notable* without setting *the Conqueror* and *the Lion-hearted* apart, because these terms have become intimate parts of the respective names (page 18). Explanatory titles and locations following personal names are usually set off by comma, as *Henry Morrison, S J* and *James Havens, chairman* and *Miss Mary Ellinson, of Radcliffe College, will address us*. But commas are being increasingly omitted in such expressions as the last, and there is some good usage to justify their omission before college

degrees and other notations after proper names, space being permitted to clarify. *Jr* and *Sr* (*jr* and *sr*) are the abbreviations most commonly used after proper names today without a preceding comma.

Object and attribute clauses beginning with *that* or *whether* may or may not be preceded by a comma. Conservative punctuators are likely to write *I contend, that you are in the wrong* and *The fact is, that he has never driven a car in his life;* the open punctuator would not use the commas in these sentences, and he has logic on his side because the sentences are unmistakably clear without commas. It may be that, as some writers contend, there is usually a slight pause after the verb in such sentences as the second, and that, thus, a comma is naturally in order. It is not wrong, but it is unnecessary. In the first example, however, the reading is pauseless and straightaway, and by most authorities a comma is considered superfluous.

In *The fact, that I am to be the first speaker, disturbs me* the clause following *fact* is appositive and parenthetical. The commas therefore appear justifiable. But the clause is also restrictive. According to instruction on page 561 a comma is desirable after *speaker* to separate a long complete subject from the predicate so that the last word may not be mistaken for subject. The idea is not *speaker disturbs.* The best punctuation of the sentence therefore is *The fact that I am to be the first speaker, disturbs me.* Now *that* retains its intimate association with *fact* without breakage, and *speaker* is separated from *disturbs.* In legal papers the word *that* introducing a clause is usually preceded by a comma. This is in most instances merely a customary safeguard. More legal controversies have resulted from underuse of the comma than from its overuse. It is a precautionary measure, therefore, for the law to lean backward in regard to "commacality."

In the sentence *It gives me pride, that I have raised twice as many vegetables as all my neighbors together* conventional rule provides a comma before *that* because what follows is in apposition with *It; that* is merely introductory of the noun clause and has nothing whatever to do with *pride.* But in *He has a pride that no defeat can conquer* no comma is provided before *that* for the reason that it is "close-up" to *pride,* that is, it refers to *pride* and follows directly upon it. Even so small a break as the comma would mar immediacy of sequence. Now suppose you say *I am proud that*

I have raised twice as many vegetables as all my neighbors together. The liberal punctuator will use no comma before *that,* contending rightly that closely-woven, consecutive construction makes punctuation break of any kind superfluous. The conservative punctuator will insist upon a comma before *that* to denote the omission of the phrase *of the fact.* There are few if any better examples than this one to distinguish the policies of the two schools of punctuation.

Words repeated in succession, of whatever part of speech, are separated by a comma to prevent confusion at first sight, as *Whatever is, is right* and *You have a sad, sad story to tell.*

Any term used in direct address is properly set off by commas in order to emphasize the change of person entailed, as *Take it easy, my lad, and you'll do better* and *Mr Chairman, I second the motion* and *Believe me, sir, you are marvelously changed.*

It is explained on page 562 that the comma is usually required before and sometimes after such terms as *for instance, for example, and so forth, and so on, and the like, namely, such as, that is,* when they introduce parenthetical explanations or examples or lists, as *You know that November eleventh, namely, Armistice Day, is a legal holiday* and *He is known by many names, such as Hal, Zam, Toe, Red, and Lee.*

Direct quotations that are informal and that are representative of general conversation are set apart by commas (page 593). Stated conversely, the rule says that words used as interrupting signposts in conversation are set apart by commas. But observe that indirect quotation introduced by such words as *how, that, what, whether* is not so set apart, that is, *He said, "I shall go"* and *"Will you," he asked, "accompany me?"* become *He said that he would go* and *He asked whether I would accompany him* in indirect discourse, without any comma breakage before *that* and *whether* respectively.

Commas are used to set off numbers containing five or more digits. Such marking makes them easier to read, and in tabulations helps to hold alignment. In straight copy a number of four digits should never be written with a comma after the first digit; in tabulated matter, it should always be. The rule is sometimes made that, so placed, the comma denotes pronunciation, *$1,842.* being pronounced one thousand eight hundred forty-two

dollars, and *$1842.* being pronounced eighteen hundred forty-two dollars. But the rule is now deservedly defunct. Carried to logical conclusion it would require the latter to be written *$18,42.* These are correct *$11,435.25* and *$1,531,011.32* and *1,947* (in tabulation) 1947 (in straight copy).

Commas are not used, though hyphens or dashes may be, in separating numbers of more than four digits when they pertain to street addresses, telephone calls, book paging, footnote reference, and so forth. But they are frequently used to separate volume, page, stanza (paragraph), and line references, as Opdycke's *Don't Say It, page 431, entry 2, line 3.* Other designations are permissible in such reference; thus, after the title you may write *431·2.3,* as is customarily done in play reference—*Macbeth II·i·41*—capital and small roman numerals being used for act and scene respectively, and arabic for line and page (the latter is rarely given in play reference).

In simple admission notices, such as *Admission, two dollars,* the comma is a sufficient separation between terms. When two or more terms are indicated, however, the comma alone is insufficient to indicate sequence, as *Admission: orchestra, three dollars ($3.); balcony, two dollars ($2.); gallery, one dollar ($1.)* The parenthetical numbers are advisable for the prevention of misunderstanding.

In listings in which surname precedes given name a comma is used for separation, as *Lincoln, Abraham.* This form is sometimes followed in credit lines after excerpts, as Shakspere, William: *Cymbeline.* But the exact names of an author in regular order, without apostrophe after the surname, are preferable, as William Shakspere *Cymbeline* rather than William Shakspere's *Cymbeline.* The title is preferably written in italics; the author's name in body face. Though many printing establishments make use of the comma in credit lines—William Shakspere, *Cymbeline*—the practice is not to be recommended for the reason that typographical variation, which is usually followed, makes a sufficient breakage.

The following letter beginnings and endings illustrate the uses of the comma—or its omission—in the formal parts. It should be noted, in relation to the two-part rule given at the beginning of this section, that in closed form, the commas used after date of the month and after the first and second lines of the inside ad-

dress, stand for omitted words, as they do everywhere else in such formal use; thus, June 5 *in* a certain year, and Mr Henry Dey *of* a certain place.

Closed Form	*Open Form*
June 5, 0000.	June 5 0000
Mr Henry Dey 12 Wall Street, New York City, 5.	Mr Henry Dey 12 Wall Street New York City 5
Dear Sir:	Dear Sir
Very truly yours,	Very truly yours
James Archibald, Office Manager.	James Archibald Office Manager

Modified Form

June Fifth 0000 *or* June Fifth 00 00

or

June 5 0000 *or* June 5 0 0 0 0

Mr Henry Dey
12 Wall Street
New York City 5

Dear Sir.

Very truly yours,
James Archibald
Office Manager

In letters in which strictly open punctuation is followed commas are used only as required in the formal parts and in the body, spacing and arrangement being depended upon to keep matter clear. The comma or the comma followed by a dash is never used after the salutation in a business letter. In printed letterheads the comma is preferably used for internal punctuation only, not for terminal, as

AINSWORTH and PETTINORE
Cement, Coal, Lumber, Oil
18 Loring Place
Chicago, Illinois

Though one of the most serious mistakes that can be made in punctuation is that of inconsistency as between conservative and

liberal styles, the modified, or mixed, example above is probably more widely followed in letters than is either of the others. Do not make the mistake of using commas in one letter part (inside address, for instance) and of omitting them in another (complimentary closing, for instance).*

Do not use a comma for a colon after the word *following* when it precedes a list or an example. Do not use a comma after the name of a month when it immediately precedes either the year or the date of month; *March, 15, 0000* and *March, 0000* are wrong. Do not use a comma after a street number and a following street name, though in England this is common practice; *245, Duffield Street* is wrong in the United States.

Colon is a Greek word meaning limb or member. The Greeks gave this name to a sentence part, especially a long part or important limb or member. It is a more important punctuation mark than is generally felt or believed, and it is almost completely ignored by many good writers as an agent in constructional grouping of words in a sentence. Almost everybody recognizes and uses it in technical ways—before a series of items or listings, in the separation of notations, and so on. But in sentence construction the comma or the semicolon is nine times out of ten slipped loosely and irresponsibly into places where the colon ought to be; where, as a matter of fact, it is imperative.

One of the most sensitive and discerning uses of the colon, for example, is that of separating two members of a compound or compound-complex sentence when they are antithetical or balanced, and are not connected by a conjunction, as in *Where no wood is, there the fire goeth out: so where there is no talebearer, the strife ceaseth* and *The rich man's wealth is his strong city: the destruction of the poor is their poverty.* The subtlety of the colon in such position as is here illustrated cannot be fully realized until the comma or the semicolon is given fair trial as substitute. The comma is clearly too frail for the separation of such important limbs. In the first example, moreover, it is already used in one kind of separation. The semicolon would, of course, be stronger than the comma, but it would merely separate without terseness or delicacy or even a suggestion of true coordination.

* See *Take a Letter, Please* by the same author, published by Funk and Wagnalls Company.

One authority on punctuation calls the relationship here illustrated one of the very few in the entire field of punctuation that must be felt. If you do not feel the rightness of the colon here, then you probably do not use it, and your expression may accordingly be deprived of subtlety.

A conjunction after a colon is usually superfluous, but it is sometimes used for emphasis, especially when what follows it is cumulative or adversative. When following matter is sheer antithesis, the conjunction is rarely used after the colon. Note the following:

> Reprove not a scorner, lest he hate thee: rebuke a wise man, and he will love thee. —*Proverbs* IX 8
> The liberal soul shall be made fat: and he that watereth shall be watered also himself. —*Proverbs* XI·25
> The proud have forged a lie against me: but I will keep thy precepts with my whole heart. —*Psalm* CXIX:69

But usage is at present highly variable in such constructions as are here illustrated. Most variable of all, perhaps, is the use of the colon preceding *for*. The Beatitudes stand as the most eloquent example in literature of this relationship—*Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.* What follows the colon in all of them is not causal but climactic. In merely causal expressions *for* would be preceded by a comma or a semicolon, and in some instances by a period. In the Beatitudes it is used as token of suspense (the Greek New Testament contains an "edited" comma). Where language is less strong, even in the Authorized Version, *for* is preceded by the semicolon, as *Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life* (*Proverbs* iv:23) and *Rejoice with me; for I have found the piece which I had lost* (*Saint Luke* xv:9). In present-day usage the colon is not generally used preceding *for*.

The colon is correct again between limbs or members of a sentence when the latter limb amplifies or specifies or supplements the former limb, as in *Your writing holds particular attraction for me: it is always clear; it is always interesting; it is always vivid* and *He did not do himself justice on the witness stand: he was nervous; he had difficulty in understanding the questions put to him; he was obviously trying to shield some one by his answers.* It is obvious in these examples also that neither the comma nor the semicolon will cover the break with nicety. The slapdash punctuator will very likely be satisfied to place periods where the colons are; there is much rough-and-ready writing in which pe-

riods are so used. But this is another constructional situation in which the colon comes into its own, in which any usurper reveals its impotence.

Akin to the foregoing use of the colon, and growing out of it really, is that of its placement before an example or illustration or restatement or formal quotation, as in *There be three things which are too wonderful for me, yea, four which I know not: The way of an eagle in the air; the way of a serpent upon a rock; the way of a ship in the midst of the sea; and the way of a man with a maid* and *This "character definition" is one of the most vivid passages Carlyle ever wrote:* "He [De Quincey] was a pretty little creature, full of wire-drawn ingenuities; bankrupt enthusiasms, bankrupt pride; with the finest silver-toned low voice, and most elaborate gently-winding courtesies and ingenuities in conversation: 'What wouldn't one give to have him in a Box, and take him out to talk!' (That was *Her* criticism of him, and it was right good.) A bright, ready, and melodious talker; but in the end an inconclusive and long-winded. One of the smallest man-figures I ever saw; shaped like a pair of tongs; and hardly above five feet in all: when he sat, you would have taken him, by candle-light, for the beautifullest little Child; blue-eyed, blonde-haired, sparkling face,—had there not been a something, too, which said, *'Eccovi, this Child has been in Hell!'* "

Though the above excerpt is introduced to illustrate the use of the colon before formal quotation, the other marks of punctuation should be studied also in the light of the instruction of this chapter. Erratic as Carlyle frequently was in his use of capitals and in the liberties he took with grammatical structure, he is "peculiarly accurate" in his pointing. True, he was given to excessive use of the exclamation mark, but he felt strongly. And it was the fashion of his day to use two marks together, such as the comma and the dash.

The colon is correct only before long and formal quotation such as the above. It gives way to the comma (page 571) before short informal quotation. But unlike the comma it makes quotation marks unnecessary, though they are often used with it for the sake of assuring clearness—and for safety. As to capitalization following a colon, practice is, to say the least, variable, if not confused. Basically the period is the only point after which it may be said that a capital is required in continuous matter. But when, as in

the two quotations above, a quotation begins with a capital letter, that capital should be retained after the colon; when a quotation is begun midway or at some point after its beginning, it should not start with a capital letter after the colon unless the first word is a proper noun, and a row of dots should be placed between the colon and the first word of the quotation (page 550). There is a printing rule, as often ignored as observed, to the effect that matter constituting a complete grammatical statement, that is, having complete subject and predicate, should start with a capital letter after the colon; that it should not start with a capital letter when it consists of words or phrases or clauses only, that is, of fragments. But observe the illustrative sentences above in which such matter does not start with a capital letter. In these there is an intimacy of thought relationship between the two limbs in each sentence that seems to make a new capitalized start a forbidding detachment, and the small letter seems to make for both unity and coherence. Moreover, let it be remembered that the colon *is* an internal mark, not a terminal one.

The colon is used after introductory terms in announcements and formal questions, especially in questions for debate. These are correct though practice is unfortunately loose and wayward

> *Resolved.* That the lack of discrimination in administering social security laws constitutes a menace to our economic order
>
> The attorney put his question: If now you were not present at the time, and if, as you say, you were unaware that your uncle had been left alone in the cabin, why did you take such pains to conceal your whereabouts

The word *That* in the statement of questions for debate is always capitalized. In the second example *If* is capitalized because it is the first word of a complete quotation.

The colon is used technically to separate generic from specific references, that is, to separate letters and figures and other items that come together but represent different categories, as *Matthew xii.3* and *4:30 p m* and *2 4 6* (proportion) and *Canto XX:12.1* (page 548) and *Boston: Little, Brown, and Company* (page 565). But no line mark of separation is required where there is a separative exponent, as *14′ 6″* and *234° F.* The conservative punctuator still uses a colon after the salutation in a business letter, as *Gentlemen:* and after any formal salutatory term, as *Friends:* and *Ladies*

and Gentlemen· but in the open form of punctuation this is not done. It is sometimes ruled that when matter following such terms begins on the same line with them, not only should the colon be used but it should be followed by a dash for separative purpose. The colon and dash, however, as twinned punctuation mark is passé, though it was once fashionable; and it is not good form to start a letter or a writing of any other kind on the salutatory line. It may be desirable or necessary to begin a list of items immediately or closely after the word *following,* as *We bought the following: sugar, coffee, cereal, fruit* and *We bought the following hardware: hammer, nails, hatchet, spikes, axe;* and in business writing the dash is very often substituted for the colon in this usage. But the deliberate substitution of a dash for a colon represents loose and even slovenly punctuation. No punctuation whatever is necessary when items listed are placed on a line below the word *following,* thus, you may write *We bought the following furniture*

bedsteads
desks
tables

The conservative punctuator may insist, however, upon *We bought the following furniture:*

1 *Bedsteads.*
2. *Desks.*
3. *Tables.*

There is an old rule to the effect that the word *following* always makes the colon imperative at the end of the expression in which it stands, if that expression implies that a list or an explanation is to be given (page 591). The conservative punctuator observes this rule today. The open punctuator may do so, but he will not if there is possibility of distinction by way of type variation, as in *Note the use of the colon in the following* ***New York City: The Edgeworth Company*** *or* ***The Edgeworth Company: New York City.***

What is said here regarding *following* pertains likewise to *as follows* and *as follow.* Unfortunately distinction is not always made between the former, which is singular, and the latter, which is plural. Note *We bought merchandise, as follows:* and *We bought kitchen utensils, as follow:* the first meaning *merchandise such as*

(or *which*) *follows;* the second, *utensils such as* (or *which*) *follow.* It is a mistake to use the colon after a verb that is immediately followed by a list of any kind. *Among those attending the party were: Harry Tenor, James Brown, Frieda Sekker* is wrong, for the names following *were* occur in regular grammatical construction (attribute complement) and should no more be broken from their sequence than *John* should be in *I am John.* The placement of a colon after *am* amounts to "illiterate punctuation."

The semicolon is used to indicate a greater separation than a comma, a less than a period. It has about the same degree of separation value as the colon but it is different in signification. The semicolon, in other words, separates word groups that are not sufficiently independent of each other to justify separation by periods, not sufficiently dependent to justify separation by the comma. And it is not permitted to encroach upon the offices of the colon as defined and illustrated above.

In *I came; I saw; I conquered* the semicolon is thus used as a halfway mark between the comma and the period. Commas would make this construction too loose; periods would make it too stiff and tight. Commas are, in other words, too slight for the separation of the momentous consequences involved, periods, too sharply segregating for such telescopic climax. To omit all punctuation from this famous but hackneyed expression, and insert *and* after *came* and *saw,* would dull its climactic and epigrammatic sharpness, and make it seem stuffed and artificial. True, such short clauses as these are sometimes seen—and in good writing—with the parts separated by commas or periods, or run together by *ands.* This very often means that writers are "semicolon shy," that they look upon the semicolon as a sort of "high-brow" affectation in punctuation, or that they know and care little or nothing about the niceties of its usage. Sometimes an author, finding himself hopelessly involved in an unmanageable construction, will drop a semicolon into it here and there to relieve long-windedness. But the average of lucky hits in such policy is not high.

In extension of the foregoing example, it may be said that the semicolon is required to separate the members (limbs, groups) of a compound or a compound-complex sentence when they are centered in a single idea and when they cannot be easily added to or

subtracted from without marring unity and coherence. In *The soldier and the sailor have always been the true democrats; the founders as well as the protectors of democracy are the army and the navy; without them democratic government very soon finds itself the prey of envious and ruthless despots* the central idea would be dismembered if periods were used to separate the parts, just as they would crowd one another confusedly if commas were used. To use *ands* for the semicolons would be labored and ponderous, and would make ridiculous reading into the bargain.

Such sentence as the foregoing may require commas to mark word groups within the larger members. The semicolon between the larger members thus serves a twofold purpose: it permits the comma to manage breakage in the lesser category of separation, and functions itself in the greater; thus, in *If you think to break him on the wheel, you have reckoned without his power to endure; if you think to burn him at the stake, you have reckoned without the people's power to provide one of you as substitute for him* the comma in each limb separates a conditional *(if)* group from an independent group, the semicolon separates the two larger limbs.

Even in such short sentence as *I had four; Bill, five* the conservative punctuator uses the semicolon after *four* for the reason that here, in a sentence of five words, there are nevertheless a greater and a lesser category of punctuation requirement, the semicolon being used to separate clauses and the comma to denote the omission of *had.* But the open punctuator will write *I had four, Bill five* without fear of misunderstanding and with laudable simplicity (page 566).

This "comma-relief" use of the semicolon is, however, important in listings in which two or more different kinds of entries must be distinguished, as in Pinero's ***His House in Order, Act I;*** Sheridan's ***The Critic, Act II,*** Shakspere's ***Hamlet, Act III.*** Parentheses may here be used to indicate locations, as ***His House in Order (Act I); The Critic (Act II); Hamlet (Act III).*** The liberal punctuator would use a comma after each parenthesis, or he might take the extreme of using no punctuation at all, regarding the parenthesis as sufficient stop. The conservative would use semicolons, as here, and they represent standard library and annotation practice

The semicolon and the colon work together in much the same way as the semicolon and the comma, as, for example, in *John has done well in four subjects: English, Latin, history, and hygiene; Bill, in only two: arithmetic and geography.* And like the comma, the colon "teams with" the semicolon in listings and annotations such as *Genesis XIX:2–8; Exodus IX:2–5; Psalm LI.4–9.*

Semicolon, colon, and comma, working in association in a single sentence, must thus be held strictly to their individual functions and to uniform categories, if they are to serve as really clarifying agents. In this sentence, for example, *You must know how to pilot a plane, or fire its guns, or there is no place for you in the air service* the two commas do not function correlatively. The two kinds of ability mentioned belong in one category and the first comma properly separates them. (The open punctuator would probably not use it.) What follows *guns,* however, does not belong in the same category. It is, rather, a conclusion growing out of the two preceding limbs. Clearly, the comma after *guns* is "out of company" as well as too weak to cope with the breakage at this point. But since the statement consists of conditions and related consequence, the two limbs should not be separated by a period. This is correct for closed punctuation *You must know how to pilot a plane, or fire its guns; or there is no place for you in the air service;* this for open *You must know how to pilot a plane or (how to) fire a gun, or there is no place for you in the air service.* The open punctuator would probably insert the *how to.*

A series of clauses or long phrases following or preceding a generalizing or summarizing clause, are correctly separated from one another by semicolons. If the last member of such series is preceded by *and,* a comma rather than a semicolon is preferably used before it unless there are commas to indicate slighter breaks here and there. The breakage between the generalizing clause and the series is correctly marked by a colon or a dash: the former preferably when the series follows the covering clause; the latter when it precedes. Note *We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness* and *To struggle for gold, and get it; to strive for fame, and win it; to long for adventure, and find it; to scheme for power, and have it—all are but shabby achievement indeed compared with the spiritual realities of life* and *To work*

eight hours by day; to sleep eight hours by night, and to play between the two—here is the perfect schedule for man's well-being.

In closed punctuation a semicolon is used before and a comma after *as, for example, for instance, namely, that is, thus, to wit,* and their Latin equivalents *id est (i e), scilicet (scil* or *sc), videlicet (viz),* when they precede illustration or particularization of any kind. In open punctuation a comma is used both before and after them, especially in short expressions. The comma may be omitted after such terms in case what follows is in different face or is placed on a new line. These are correct *There were only two present, namely, Mary and Alice* and *Certain books must be read; namely, those on the top shelf to your right* and *Certain books must be read; namely* ***Ivanhoe, Silas Marner, and The Vicar of Wakefield.*** A comma is sufficient before *namely* in the last example; a comma both before and after it would not be incorrect. When these particles occur within a word group rather than at the end of it, they are set off by commas only, as in *Your movements should, for example, run in this order: up, down, right, left.* Note that in *Your movements should run in this order; for example, up, down, right, left* the four movements stand in a kind of apposition with *example.* But note again that in *Your movements should run in this order, for example: up, down, right, left* the words *order* and *example* have a kind of correlative or even appositive relationship.

The writers of bills of sale are apparently in some confusion in regard to the punctuation of these constructions. Sometimes such bills read *On October tenth we shall offer these articles for sale: namely and to wit,* and sometimes *On October tenth we shall offer these articles for sale, namely and to wit:* the former indicating a close modifying relationship between *namely and to wit* and the names of the articles following, and the latter a close modifying relationship between *namely and to wit* and *articles* (the repetition of *namely* by means of *to wit* is merely legal fol de rol). Though the point is one of tweedle-dee and tweedle-dum, authorities have debated it. Dictionaries are in disagreement; the great DeVinne himself preferred the latter form. Much better than either form—but arguable—is . . . *we shall offer the following articles for sale:* the word *following* being the solution to many a punctuation problem of the kind (page 578).

There is another group of connecting words before which the semicolon is usually placed when they fill the gap between independent word groups (clauses) and dependent ones, namely *accordingly, besides, consequently, hence, however, moreover, nevertheless, otherwise, still, then, therefore, thus.* But these words, too, occurring within word groups rather than at the point of breakage, are set off simply by commas. Observe these examples *The thermometer had suddenly fallen to three below during the night; accordingly, he condescended to wear not only a sweater and an overcoat but sweaters and overcoats* and *I think your papers are unworthy of you; however, I shall re-examine them for you* and *I think your papers are unworthy of you; I shall, however, re-examine them for you.*

The semicolon is also used before *and* or *but* in compound and compound-complex sentences when they separate limbs that denote distinct partitions in the thought expressed and when commas are used within the limbs themselves. But in short sentences of such construction the open punctuator would use only a comma before *and* or *but;* he would use no mark at all in a very short, otherwise unpunctuated sentence. Note *I am willing to go but you must accompany me* and *John said that, if you will accompany him, he is willing to go; but he prefers to take the early morning train, inasmuch as he must return before dinner.* Like *accordingly* and *besides,* and the other words listed above, *and* is conventionally preceded by a semicolon in formal resolutions, as *Whereas, it has been brought to our notice that our building is not properly protected against fire; and, whereas, a devastating fire has this day caused great damage and great loss of life; and* . . . Here, again, the open punctuator would rest easy with merely a comma before the *and whereases* in simple consequences page 630).

The semicolon, by virtue of the length of pause it indicates within a sentence, may be effectively used for emphasis. The young man who "proposed by comma" *I love you, I worship you, I want you* was summarily dismissed on the grounds that his expression was too precipitate and "run-on" to guarantee permanence of feeling. Later he tried the dignity and the deliberateness of the semicolon, and fared better, *I love you; I worship you; I want you* having a more serious and convincing tempo. Periods would probably have been considered too slow and artificial and calculating. Similarly *You will be irresistibly called by lofty hills and snowy*

runs; by expansive sky and generous sun; by tinkling bells and swishing skiers yields "contemplative pace" and is thus more appealing as result of the semicolons.

Sometimes, the semicolon, like other marks of punctuation, must be used to keep word groups homogeneous, to keep them from running together and thus causing misunderstanding. Note how the semicolon classifies in *We planted the following in our garden: peas, beans, corn; potatoes, turnips, beets; cucumbers, watermelons, pumpkins.* Commas may, of course, be substituted for the semicolons, but they would reflect loose and unclassified mental processes and would waste reader attention In this connection it may be pointed out that the conservative punctuator would separate by semicolon the *up-down* phrase from the *right-left* phrase on page 582—*up, down; right, left.* If it is the job of punctuation to make reading matter clear *on sight,* then *and* in the following sentence must be preceded by a semicolon *If I were you I should associate with rich, with poor, with learned, with ignorant, and all people in the neighborhood should know me as a friend.* It is obvious that at first sight *with* will be taken for granted after *and* unless a semicolon is used to lengthen the break before it.

Note, again, what the semicolon does for this sentence by way of preventing run-on reading *We have an invitation for a luncheon; and a dinner is to be given for us tonight at the Parker House.* Omit the semicolon, or even substitute a comma for it, and the reader gathers *We have an invitation for a luncheon and a dinner. . . .*

Consecutive dependent clauses, especially noun clauses, belonging in different constructions, are likely to run together unintelligibly unless a semicolon is used to separate them. Observe, for instance, that in *He does not think that mere scholarship will be enough to get him the position; but that it will go far toward doing so is, he thinks, reasonably certain* the first predicate *(does think)* will appear to have a double noun clause object if there is no mark before *but* or if only a comma is used there.

If you write *I am going with Dick, my first cousin; Jack, my second cousin; George, my third cousin; Harry, and the others* your punctuation after *Harry* makes your meaning uncertain. Is Harry, perhaps, a fourth cousin? Are *the others,* perhaps, fifth, sixth, and further cousins? Or are Harry and the others just

unrelated friends? A semicolon after *Harry* will clarify. But a complete rephrasing is recommended, as *I am going with my first cousin, Dick; with my second cousin, Jack, with my third cousin, George, with Harry, and the others.* The sentence now follows the rule given in the first paragraph on the preceding page.

In the early centuries double titles, or major title and subtitle, were made practically "airtight" as far as punctuation is concerned; thus, Shakspere's *Twelfth Night; or, What You Will* and Fletcher's *The Woman's Prize; or, The Tamer Tamed* (humorous continuation of *The Taming of the Shrew*) carried the semicolon before *or* and the comma after it as fixed practice. Today, even the conservative punctuator omits both, and typographical variation and spatial arrangement differentiate more clearly and more beautifully.

Do not use the semicolon after the salutation or the complimentary closing in a letter; do not use it before a direct quotation; do not use it before a listing of any kind, do not use it between word groups that are intimately related. These are wrong, not to say illiterate: (1) *Dear Sir;* (2) *Very truly yours;* (3) *He said; "Where are you going?"* (4) *She bought the following articles; hats, gloves, shoes; stockings.* (5) *We arrived; in the morning.* (6) *When we saw them; we blew the horn.*

CONTEST *

NO	YES
1 He ran into a truck as he turned, however no damage was done	He ran into a truck as he turned; however, no damage was done
2 Girls like women are intuitive, for instance they always know when a fellow is hungry	Girls, like women, are intuitive; for instance, they always know when a fellow is hungry
3 Resolved that the conflicting theories of nationalism and internationalism mean permanent war	*Resolved:* That the conflicting theories of nationalism and internationalism mean permanent war
4 With no one to turn to Harry decided that his best bet was not resigning and leaving town but holding on harder than ever	With no one to turn to, Harry decided that his best bet was, not resigning and leaving town, but holding on harder than ever
5 See Silas Marner, chapter 4, page 50, Ivanhoe, chapter 18, page 444, and David Copperfield, chapter 6, page 211	See *Silas Marner* (chapter 4, page 50); *Ivanhoe* (chapter 18, page 444); *David Copperfield* (chapter 6, page 211)

* See page 3.

	NO	YES
6	He conjured up those early days of his, the adventures in the West, the unbelievable voyages on the Pacific, the Australian bush	He conjured up those early days of his: the adventures in the West, the unbelievable voyages on the Pacific, the Australian bush
7	Boys, like Timothy, are certain to succeed, you will do well therefore to study his qualities and emulate his industry a little	Boys like Timothy are certain to succeed; you will do well, therefore, to study his qualities and emulate his industry a little
8	We have been assigned for no reason whatever to Harrisburg, you to Columbus, and they to the mysterious heights of Albuquerque	We have been assigned, for no reason whatever, to Harrisburg; you, to Columbus, and they, to the mysterious heights of Albuquerque
9	Studying in the real sense means being alone and concentrating on an assignment not dawdling with it while the radio entertains you	Studying, in the real sense, means being alone and concentrating on a problem, not dawdling with it while the radio entertains you
10	The cloth, that was imported, sold immediately but this domestic fabric which is really just as good lags on the market	The cloth that was imported sold immediately; but this domestic fabric, which is really just as good, lags on the market
11	He keeps his skis, and skates in the closet; she stores her galoshes, and sleds in the garage	He keeps his skis and his skates in the closet; she stores her galoshes and her sleds in the garage
12	Young woman accustomed to traveling desires position with congenial well-to-do elderly old-school gentleman obsessed with wanderlust	Young woman accustomed to traveling, desires position with congenial, well-to-do, elderly, old-school gentleman obsessed with *wanderlust*
13	Tom Dick and Harry danced with her in turn and sometimes all at once and all things considered the young folks had a hilarious evening	Tom, Dick, and Harry danced with her in turn—and sometimes all at once, and, all things considered, the young folks had a hilarious evening
14	When he saw Helen Trenholme called Bill James and Anderson and they came on a run	When he saw Helen, Trenholme called Bill, James, and Anderson; and they came on a run
15	He dipped his handkerchief into the solution and the effervescence sizzled and sprayed his new apron with the burning acid	He dipped his handkerchief into the solution, and the effervescence sizzled, and sprayed his new apron with the burning acid

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SECTION FIFTY-TWO — PAIRS

The most commonly misunderstood punctuation usage is probably that of paired dashes. Though one dash is by no means always paired with another, it frequently has to be, and it is unfor-

tunately the tendency of the average writer to treat double dashes as synonymous with commas or parentheses. But dashes denote less separation than parentheses, more than commas. This sentence, for example, is correct: *If they want to go to the game—and I'm certain that they do—let them go by all means.* Commas may not be used here for the dashes, because the meaning of the part they set off is not coordinate with the conditional clause preceding and is too "foreign" in both idea and syntax to be set apart by such slight marks. Semicolons would cause too great a break, because the part set off by dashes is after all continuous though disconnected. Parentheses are wrong, because *and* indicates at least mental intention of grammatical connection, and it is seen below that parenthetical matter has little if any suggestion of grammatical relationship. Thus, by elimination, dashes are seen to be the only points that will do in such construction as this, though commas or parentheses are often loosely used for them in newspapers, periodicals, and books. Parentheses are probably most frequently substituted. Note, again, *She couldn't tell me—nor did she seem to care—where her husband is* in which *nor,* like *and* in the above example, attempts a grammatical connection that "isn't there." Parentheses are thus ruled out, as are commas and semicolons for the reasons stated in the foregoing exposition.

It is in such sentences as these that the special functioning of paired dashes is best represented. But they operate in at least one other important construction, commonly mispunctuated, that, namely, of the quasi-appositive. In *Mary's boys—all of her friends and acquaintances in fact—seem to me to be very ordinary,* the part between dashes is likely to be taken at a glance as appositive matter, but on analysis it is clearly seen to be much more. *Friends* and *acquaintances* have a much broader coverage than mere *boys.* The commas that are correctly used to set off an appositive (page 569), are thus seen to be incorrect here, as are parentheses, for the reason that there is an intended grammatical relationship. The same reasoning in behalf of double dashes applies to *Mary's boys—even those in the school clubs—seem to me to be very ordinary* in which the coverage of the quasi-appositive is too narrow to measure up to full appositive value. The double dashes are again required, inasmuch as there is no other punctuation "team" that can logically do their work.

Explanatory matter, then, that enlarges the meaning of a term or that reduces it—that is too big or too little to fit appositively—

and that is included within a sentence, should be set off by dashes. If, however, such matter begins or ends a sentence and is generalizing in its nature, the single dash only is used. Sentences do not begin or end with dashes, according to the conventional standards of printing. Logically they sometimes should; but it has been seen (page 554) that logic is very often sacrificed to appearance and convenience. You therefore write *We shall never forget that lecture—a lecture that gave us so much information and inspiration* and *Then entered a man uniformed in medaled military splendor —my Daddy.* But your thinking really follows ". . . *military splendor—my Daddy—.*" To round out appositive matter in such expressions as these by the use of two dashes would be to emphasize mechanics at the expense of thought. And it is clear at a glance that the breakage in thought denotes something far too important for mere commas or parentheses to signal.

If you say *He was apparently willing to turn his affairs over to the proper authorities, lawyers, trustees, and executors,* you fail to differentiate by punctuation the generic name word *authorities* from the specific name words that follow it. Commas, as used, give a blurred meaning. Inasmuch as *lawyers* and *trustees* and *executors* are an extended appositive of *authorities* the best punctuation rendering of the sentence is *He was apparently willing to turn his affairs over to the proper authorities—lawyers, trustees, and executors.* The omission of the comma after *authorities* and the enclosure of the three following name words in parentheses is an allowable punctuation but it is not the best.

Though the dash should not be added to the comma, the colon, the semicolon, the period (page 592) these marks, as well as others, are required very often to follow the dash for the sake of retaining logic to an expression. Observe, for example, *Great books went for a song at that auction—books that are really beyond price—, and we didn't even bid on them.* Here the dash enclosure should be completed before correct punctuation between the two independent clauses is completed. To omit the second dash would be very much the same as omitting a final parenthesis. Yet, here again, for the sake of appearance, many punctuators would omit the second dash in such expression as this one, allowing the comma (or the semicolon which the conservative punctuator would insist upon) to do double duty. The liberal punctuator might even omit all internal punctuation here but the dashes.

The two sentences below are taken from a popular novel. The author apparently "forgot" to "close his dashes," for in the first his first dash is "teamed" with a comma, and in the second his first dash is "teamed" with a semicolon.

> If his plan of action were not interfered with—if he could arrange to see her before any of his enemies had done so, he felt certain of the outcome
>
> They cared for each other as much as ever—more, perhaps, than they had cared before; still, there was now this inevitable breach between them

The comma in the first of these sentences separates the introductory dependent *if* clause from the independent clause beginning with *he felt.* The semicolon in the second separates two independent clauses, one beginning with *They cared* and the other beginning with *still, there* Neither the comma nor the semicolon has anything at all to do with matter immediately preceding which should have punctuation of its own both before and after, namely, dashes. Correctly punctuated these sentences should therefore read

> If his plan of action were not interfered with—if he could arrange to see her before any of his enemies had done so—, he felt certain of the outcome
>
> They cared for each other as much as ever—more, perhaps, than they had cared before—, still, there was now this inevitable breach between them

The open punctuator would probably omit the comma from the first sentence, as he would do if there were no intervening matter between the two limbs, as *If his plan of action were not interfered with he felt certain of the outcome.* But the conservative would certainly frown upon this, as would many of those who consider themselves liberals in the use of points.

A similar looseness is likely to occur in connection with the dash and the parenthesis, as, for example, in such construction as *Tables displaying all sorts of merchandise—laces and linens and satins, caps, pillows, rugs and carpets, jewelry (both real and artificial)—did a brisk business whenever he attended the fair.* Here the parenthetical part clearly belongs within the dashes provided. To omit the second dash or to substitute a comma for it, leads to a run-on confusion and incoherence. And both the question mark and the exclamation point must "work with" the dash in

such pairing, as *He felt that everything in his life had been strangely reversed—shouldn't he be the helper rather than the one to receive help?—and that he had made a sorry mess of the whole affair* and *I have only now heard of his latest escapade—how could he do such a thing!—and have told the reporters that I will not see them.*

Dashes are sometimes used in pairs to relieve the necessity of placing one parenthetical expression within another. In *Harrison Young (class of 1930—or was it 1931?—) has just been elected to office* the dashes set apart matter that really belongs in parentheses. But such arrangement as (( )) would make an unusually awkward appearance, and would give to the expression a confusing mathematical quality. Dashes are used for this sort of relief in the textual matter of this book on pages 550 and 569, and elsewhere.

Double dashes are used to mark off any sudden break or turn or suspension of thought within a sentence. The break may be followed by a surprise climax, by anti-climax, by sarcasm or irony, or by words and phrases indicating indecision. In all such cases they add an emphasis in writing that to some extent takes the place of voice inflection. If such sudden turn ends a sentence, a single dash before it is, of course, all that is required. Sometimes the single dash is loosely used to follow an initial exclamation in a short expression that is followed by an exclamation mark, as in *Stop—let him go!*

In *Never do that again—never!* the dash before *never* adds to the emphasis of the imperative. In *He never failed in anything—except at trying to succeed at everything,* though no punctuation is required, the dash adds tongue-in-cheek pause and stress. In *She has been snubbed—dreadfully and ignominiously snubbed* the dash assists the building of climax. In *Well—if you insist—but—yes—I'll take a chance* the dashes reflect a hesitant frame of mind and almost picture a person in the throes of indecision.

The single dash has many uses which are purely technical. It is, for example, an old printing custom to use a dash before the credited source of a quotation. If such credit notice appears on the same line as the conclusion of the quotation, the dash comes between terminal punctuation and the credit term. These illustrate

He that hath knowledge spareth his words.
—*Proverbs* xvii 27
He that hath knowledge spareth his words —*Proverbs* xvii·27

Such numeral notations as xvii:27 are quite as frequently separated by a dash as by a colon. But this is loose practice. The rule is that where extension or continuance is indicated by such references, the dash should be used between them; where definite location is indicated, as with different types of symbols, the colon should be used. These are correct *pages 321–390, chapters x–xx, 1940–1950* and *Othello III.i:31, Genesis xii:3–8.* Do not permit use of the dash or the hyphen to stand for figures in such terms as *pages 321–329* and *1948–1952; pages 321–9* and *1948–52* are clipt forms that may easily be misunderstood. They are not "unmistakably clear" at a glance.

The dash is used promiscuously to separate a list of terms in horizontal set-up, as *Ice—Coal—Wood;* and to preface them in vertical set-up, as

—Ice
—Coal
—Wood

The notation symbol is sometimes followed by a dash, unnecessarily but perhaps accommodatingly for some eyes, as *I—Merchandise II—Service III—Credit.* A series of dashes merged into a solid line may be used to take the place of ditto marks, as

Milton's *Paradise Lost*
———*Paradise Regained*
———*Lycidas*

In running question-and-answer copy and in running items of any kind, separation is frequently made by dashes to prevent confusion, as *Were you present at the time and place of the fire?—No.—Where were you?—In Chicago.* The proper mark after the word *following* used to precede illustration or example is the colon, but the dash is frequently loosely used in this relationship, especially in business expression (page 578).

The hyphen is technically only about half as long as the dash. Strictly speaking, therefore, it should be used rather than the dash to denote the omission of a letter from a word, and a figure from a number, when other mark is not used (page 550), and the

dash should be used to denote a larger-space omission, such as syllable or word or phrase; thus, you write *D-v-l take your nonsense* and *No, —— you, I don't want any.* But this rule is generally ignored, and is perhaps too technical for the practice of the average person.

The dash is easily the most capriciously and arbitrarily used mark of punctuation. It is sometimes called the general-utility mark for the reason that it is loosely used to "fill in" for almost any other mark when a writer is in doubt as to accuracy. And it has been called the most rowdy mark for the reason that it is used for such a variety of technical purposes without rime or reason. It would seem to be the rule of many writers and of some printers to fill all undue spacing with a dash, to make of the dash the great open-space stand-in. Young writers and old, especially in their letters and themes and reports, are much inclined to permit the dash to do service for the comma and the period, and for other marks, and to make it a kind of apology for incoherence and indefiniteness. It was once common practice to use the dash after a comma or a colon or a period in technical punctuation, but this has now happily passed for the most part. In the main the general rule holds: one mark of punctuation at a time at a place. Do not use :— or ,— after *following* or *as follows,* or after the salutation in a letter. The period and the dash, as pointed out on page 588, are still used together to some extent, but chiefly for the eye rather than for the mind.

Dashes are sometimes used, as dots are (page 551), to save space in a succession of short sentences or paragraphs. The usage is recommended only where economy of space is imperative, as in newspapers and periodicals and sales literature. It cannot be sanctioned in more formal writing. The aim of the careful punctuator should be to make the dash logical and purposeful.

Quotation marks have been called the nuisance points in punctuation practice, and this uncomplimentary comment has been aimed by writers and copy-readers, by typists and printers. It is likely that in time to come all quoted matter within a piece of copy will be signaled or differentiated by means of variations in type face—italics and small capitals. This is, indeed, done to some small degree today. But printing machinery—marvelous as it is—does not yet make the transition from one type face to

a variety of other faces quickly and easily possible. Quotation marks "clutter up" a page of print, as they do a page of longhand. But at present they represent standard practice, and change such as that here mentioned would amount to revolution in the average print-shop and at the average desk.

The marks themselves are usually referred to as inverted commas or as inverted commas and apostrophes written above the line. But in much usage they are written, not " ", but " " or " ". The same variation of usage occurs in connection with the single quotation marks ' ' or ' ' or ' ', used for indicating a quotation within a quotation. The British custom of using the single marks for a first quotation and the double ones for quotation within quotation is simplification devoutly to be wished for in the United States, inasmuch as quotation within quotation occurs more or less infrequently. In print-shop slang quotation marks are called quotes, a commendable simplification of name which may help to pave the way for simplifying the thing itself.

The primary function of quotation marks is that of identifying the exact words of a writer or a speaker as they are contained in the writing of another. This means that direct discourse is always indicated by quotation marks. By implication it means that indirect discourse—the language of some one converted or "translated" into the words of another—is not set off by quotation marks (see below). Direct discourse *"I bought my dress in Denver," said Clara* thus becomes *Clara said that she bought her dress in Denver* in indirect discourse. Note the punctuation of the direct form when quotation is interrupted, as in *"I bought my dress," said Clara, "in Denver."* It will be observed that there must be a double set of quotation marks when such break occurs, and that the continuing element of the quotation does not begin with a capital letter. But any mark of punctuation besides the comma may be involved in such break as this, and sometimes capitalization may be required when quotation is resumed, as in *"I bought my dress in Denver," said Clara. "Do you like it?"* and *"I bought my dress in Denver," said Clara; "it has been very serviceable."* In indirect discourse these expressions should read *Clara said that she bought her dress in Denver, and asked whether I liked it* and *Clara said that she bought her dress in Denver and that it has been very serviceable.*

The following illustrates the punctuation of a sentence containing a quotation within a quotation *"Let every American remember," said the speaker, "those stirring words spoken by Charles Cotesworth Pinckney: 'Millions for defense, but not one cent for tribute.'"* And this illustrates quotation within quotation within quotation *He asked, "Who inquired just now, "Who was the author of the famous line: "He serves his party best who serves the country best?"'"* It will be noted that the double marks and the single marks alternate as quotation involvement develops, as "'"' '"'" each mark at the beginning of a quotation necessarily having its rounding-out companion at the end. This paralleling must be strictly observed no matter in what part of a sentence the involved quotation occurs.

Quotation within quotation is at best a somewhat awkward and bungling construction, and is a pesky one to manage and a confusing one to look at. Though it rarely occurs in speaking, it is difficult to follow when it does. Indirect discourse may always be relied upon to eliminate some of the difficulties if not all of them. These readings are, for example, much better from every point of view than the preceding ones *The speaker said that every American should remember those stirring words of Charles Cotesworth Pinckney: "Millions for defense, but not one cent for tribute"* and *He asked who it was who wanted to know the author of the famous line to the effect that he serves his party best who serves the country best* or *. . . the famous line: "He serves his party best who serves his country best."*

A quasi-quotation is one that contains some of the words used by another but not all of them, it is a quotation reference or allusion, rather than a direct quotation. In *Lincoln was never more convincing than when he applied the "house divided" argument to the Civil War,* the expression in quotation marks are Lincoln's exact words, and the exact words of the Bible, but no other words are quoted. If you say *I assure you that his exact words were "criminal offense"* you use indirect discourse until you reach the words that you wish to reproduce, when you quote, as if for a record. Such quasi-quotation is common in the law for the sake of accuracy and verification and protection.

Consecutively quoted paragraphs take quotation marks at the beginning of each but at the end of the last only. Quoted letters and legal documents (contracts, leases, agreements) take quotation

marks also before each paragraph and at the end of the last one. If such papers carry date and place lines, and complimentary closing and signature, the marks are correctly placed before each unit, and at the end of the completed set, as

"58 Putnam Avenue
"Brooklyn, N Y
"June 30, 1950"

But all such punctuation machinery may easily be obviated by the placement of quoted paragraphs and documents in a type face smaller than that of the writing into which it is introduced, and by setting them in from the established righthand and lefthand margins (page 538). This style of set-up requires no quotation marks at all, and it is happily being increasingly adopted.

It was once general practice to place quotation marks at the beginning of every line of quoted matter and at the end of the quotation. Sometimes they were placed at the end of every line as well as at the beginning, especially in legal documents in which precision for protection seemed to require particular safeguards. This practice is still followed in such documents, as it is in the editorials of certain newspapers. But, again, typographical devices may be relied upon to do this work less cumbersomely and just as protectively.

Broken quotations are never to be recommended. But if only a part of a line or a sentence or a paragraph is quoted, it is customary to fill out with periods or asterisks at the point of omission (page 636). Quotation marks in such case are so used as to include the substituted periods or asterisks. If the broken quotation begins in the middle of a sentence, the first word is not capitalized unless it is a proper noun.

Words and word groups used "out of character," that is, with meanings or connotations other than those usually conveyed, are properly set in quotation marks. Technical terms introduced into general copy, word inventions, deliberate misnomers, irony, slang, may all be apologized for by quotation marks. The rule is sometimes made that neither slang nor barbarism should be permitted to appear in formal and dignified writing without quotation marks as token that the user is aware of what he is doing and is telling his reader that he has a better equivalent in reserve.

Observe *He gave me a "zip" in geometry* and *Billy has a new "deluxibus"* and *"Cocktail cozies" are not for me, thank you* and *I've overdrawn my "private fortune" at the bank* as illustration of this particular use of quotation marks. Sometimes it is applied to nicknames, as in *"Bud" Wilkins* and *"Puffy" Higginbotham.* This is in general an unnecessary practice, however, though it is regarded by some authorities as a symbol of courtesy parallel to that of placing slang terms in quotation marks.

Sometimes a term to which attention is called as a term is placed in quotation marks. This is not incorrect practice, but it is not the best practice. Italics (page 607) or small capitals have very largely been substituted for quotation marks in such connection; thus, you write *There is a nice distinction to be made between* ERADICATE *and* OBLITERATE, preferably not *There is a nice distinction to be made between "eradicate" and "obliterate."* The two words are not quoted from anything; they are merely called to the attention.

Individual contributions to a conversation are placed in quotation marks. Such discourse usually has such terms as *he said, she replied, we answered* to identify each particular unit. But whether these always appear is decided by the author. If he is able to make the give-and-take clear without such signposts, they may sometimes be omitted, and the responsibility may be thus placed upon the quotation marks to make the alternation intelligible. But in dramatic dialog in which the name of each speaker is printed before his remark, no quotation marks are required. In the Authorized Version, where no quotation marks are used, conversation is clearly noted merely by means of comma and capital letter, as *And one of the company said unto him, Master, speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me. And he said unto him, Man, who made me a judge or a divider over you?*

Titles are preferably italicized (page 607). But if it is necessary to use two titles, a greater and a lesser—a permanent and an ephemeral—in the same expression, present printing practice requires that the greater be italicized and the lesser placed in quotation marks, as I have just read "Men at the Front" in *Collier's Weekly.*

Such introductory terms as *titled, entitled, known as, specified as, mentioned as,* very often require the use of italics or quotation

marks in follow-up, with preference going to italics. Either He mentions himself as *James Alias* or He mentions himself as "James Alias" and The order specifies *all books closed* or The order specifies "all books closed" may be used.

Quotation marks should not be used for emphasis, especially around place and personal names, titles of papers and other printed or written matter, trade names and slogans. Here again type may be completely relied upon for emphasizing in print, underlining in handwriting and typewriting.

Quotations to which footnote reference is made by means of letter or figure or sign, take the sign after rather than before the final quotation marks, as *"Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth."* * Here the asterisk probably means that *Matthew v:5* is placed in a footnote. But if the footnote pertains to the word *earth,* the asterisk should appear between the period and the quotation marks—*earth.**" Reference annotations usually precede the colon, the semicolon, the question mark, and the exclamation mark. They follow or precede final parenthesis and quotation mark in accordance with their relationship to textual matter (page 549).

Such well known and frequently used quotations as the one above do not as a matter of fact require quotation marks at all. The Beatitudes, the Ten Commandments, familiar quotations from Shakspere and Milton and Lincoln and Washington, and numerous other similarly great names, are so much a part of the English heritage that their source is recognizable on sight—and suit for plagiarism is not at all likely to be brought.

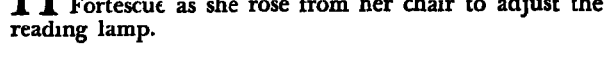
There is one exception to the pairing of quotation marks. It is a printing convention, nothing more; but, as such, it is worthy of observance If the first expression in a chapter or section of printed matter is direct quotation beginning with an ornamental letter, the initial quotation mark is customarily omitted in order to permit the ornamental letter to stand without any extraneous or discordant element. Sometimes this rule is made to apply to ascending ornamental letters only; sometimes to both ascending and descending ornamental letters. It should be observed incidentally that the base of initial ornamental letters should always be aligned with printed matter; that is, they should never be extended into space between lines. Note these four setups

Ascending ornamental letter without quotation mark

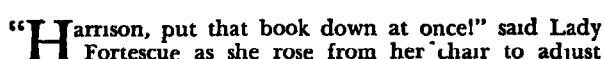


Descending ornamental letter without quotation mark

Descending ornamental letter with quotation mark



Inartistic placement of ornamental letter



It is a printing convention that the period and the comma always precede final quotation marks, as they do any footnote reference letter or number or sign. But the colon, the semicolon, the question mark, the exclamation mark, precede or follow final quotation marks according as the meaning of text requires. The dash used for an unfinished quotation (or, just as frequently, a series of dots) belongs within quotation marks; used after quoted matter (or, again, a series of dots or asterisks) in the sense of *and so on,* it belongs without final quotation marks. If matter, or any part of it, within parentheses is quoted, quotation marks belong within parentheses; if a parenthetical expression is itself quoted bodily, the quotation marks surround the parentheses. The following expressions may be worthy of study in illustration of the foregoing

—I asked him how to pronounce *Anak* "(the same is Hebron)."
—He remarked smugly, "A word to the wise ——."
—Just before he jumped he shouted, "Good-by forever." . . .
—"Blest," said he, "art thou"; but he didn't ring sincere to me.
—Here it is ("1820 by the book," it says) and you're welcome to it.
—His epithet (you *old* "galoot"!) caused Harrison to "exit homo."
—"What," he asked, "had happened to make him say, 'The devil can quote Scripture, and here's the "quote": "To him that hath shall be given'"?

Parenthesis is from three Greek words—*para* beside, *en* in, *tithenai* put or place; it means put in beside, gratuitously inserted or attached to something already complete without addition, thrust into. One of the curved marks ( ) is a *parenthesis;* the two curved marks, or more than two, are *parentheses.* The singular form is little used for the reason that one of the curved marks is rarely used alone, or referred to. You speak of an expression in *parentheses,* not of an expression in *parenthesis.* An expression cannot be placed in one of these marks (page 451).

Inasmuch as the word *parenthesis* means something that is forced into an expression that is already complete, it follows that matter placed in parentheses has no grammatical relation with the sentence in which it appears. It is without grammatical relationship, but it is not without idea relationship. It is likely therefore to have importance of convenience or verification. But in general usage the rule as to grammatical relationship is by no means always followed, sometimes it is not possible of observance because the relationship may so easily be established. If you write *Witness (after examining the letter): This is not my handwriting* or *The booklet says (page 3) that the road has been improved* you follow conventional usage; the grammatical connection between the phrases in parentheses and surrounding copy is obvious but it is not technically made. The phrases obtrude; they are forced into copy. The word *said* is implicit in the first expression; the word *on* in the second. But such uses of the parentheses as are represented by *The general and (as we understand it) the more practicable desire is this* and *The word* ***lo*** *(sometimes explained as an abbreviated exclamatory form of* ***look****) is from Anglo-Saxon* ***la*** and *The booklet says (on page 5) that the road has been improved* are to be found in the best writing, and must be accepted. None of these sentences could be considered incorrect if commas were substituted for parentheses. The liberal would consider the last sentence better punctuated by commas, since *on* is expressed. Otherwise, even he would insist upon parentheses.

Parentheses come into their very own, however, when they are used to enclose disconnected matter that confirms or verifies or conveniences, as in *This problem (number 2 on page 30) puzzles me* and *The Rochester (Minnesota) Times carries the story* and *During the first year of the Global War (1941) I was in Paris* and *Woodrow Wilson (1856–1924) was one of our very greatest*

statesmen and *He paid each of four (4) workers five dollars ($5.) a day.*

It is important to remember that matter within parentheses pertains to what precedes You therefore do not begin a sentence with parentheses, as *(1809–1865) Abraham Lincoln was our great Civil War president.* And the last sentence above is obviously wrong written *He paid each of (4) four workers five ($5.) dollars a day.* (The newspaper hybrid form *$6 million* has neither logic nor economy to recommend it but it inexplicably persists even in the leisurely editorial pages.) Only in connection with signatures may parentheses precede a name but even here they may follow on a line below, as *(Miss) Alice Johnson* or *Anna Ferguson*
(Mrs James N Ferguson)

Note that in some constructions parentheses must be used for classification or subordination or differentiation. If you write *I appoint the following investigating committee: James Blanchard, chairman, Harold Brown, Frank Macgregor, and Richard Pearson* your commas do not differentiate the name category from the position category denoted by *chairman.* The part following the colon must be written either *James Blanchard (chairman), Harold Brown, Frank Macgregor, and Richard Pearson* or *I appoint the following committee: as chairman, James Blanchard; as associate members, Harold Brown, Frank Macgregor, and Richard Pearson,* the former being preferable.

Note again the insufficiency of commas and the consequent necessity for parentheses in such expression as *This closet is for the bulbs, the automobile tools, the wrench, the jack, the pliers, and the sweeper.* Here the three specific names following generic *tools* are out of categorical focus as result of their separation by commas. For clarity the sentence must be punctuated in such way as to make the word groupings homogeneous, as *This closet is for the bulbs, the automobile tools (the wrench, the jack, the pliers), and the sweeper.*

In run-on notation parentheses, as a rule, supply sufficient separation, for the liberal punctuator at least. In *She spoke to us (1) about entrance requirements (2) about competitive examinations (3) about trainee courses* the conservative punctuator would place a comma before (2) and (3); a semicolon in case the listed statements were longer or themselves required commas. The liberal would permit the parentheses to bear the whole burden of separa-

tion. In very long divisions periods may be required before all parentheses after the first, and the first word of each noted statement (including the first) would be capitalized. The best usage appears to be to use commas or semicolons or periods as required in accordance with the grammatical construction of the tabulated parts (pages 555 and 618).

In *Examine this one (2115a in the catalog) and tell me what it is worth* the conservative punctuator would place a comma before *and;* the open punctuator would not. The break is really sufficiently covered by the final parenthesis. In the correct form of the illustrative sentence two paragraphs above, the comma after the final parenthesis [*(chairman),*] is the comma that would normally be used after the second item in a series (page 565). It would belong where it is if there were no parenthetical matter at all. So, also, a comma after a parenthesis is necessary in *Mary Brown (Kate's sister), Harold (the new boy), and I will undertake this job for you,* a colon is necessary after a parenthesis in *Bear in mind the dictum of Thomas Jefferson (1743–1826): We mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor.* If a declarative expression ends with a parenthetical question or exclamation inserted by way of comment or reaction, a period is placed after the final parenthesis by the conservative punctuators, not by the open punctuators; thus, the one would write *At this, I decided to burn the will (why not?).* and *Just as the flames began to crackle I heard a step on the stair (O Lord!).* but the other would omit the final period in each case.

Parentheses are not used for the sake of emphasis. They are, as a matter of fact, unemphatic tokens rather than emphatic ones. They may be used to enclose marks of emphasis, such as the exclamation mark or the question mark (page 555), but typographical variation is the best method for emphasis in printed matter, underlining once or twice or thrice in longhand copy. If one author reproduces some phrase or sentence or longer excerpt from another author, and in doing so takes the liberty of italicizing some part of that author's language, he should tell the reader so by inserting in parentheses after the italicized part the words *the italics are ours* or *the italics are not in the original.* But these words themselves should not be italicized when they appear in parentheses at actual work.

Parenthetical matter in catalogs and statements and lists should be uniformly expressed; thus, you write *Item four (page 6, par. 2, line 3)* and *item five (page 8, par. 4, line 4)* rather than *Item four (p 6–2, l. 3* and *item five (page 8, par. 4–l. 4).*

Parentheses should not be used in copy or in printed matter to indicate deletion or cancelation. A deliberate crossing out with red or blue pencil and the ℌ on the margin is the better and more generally understood method of indicating deletion.

Parentheses may be used, as above, to enclose letters or figures that label words or sentences or paragraphs in a series. This may make for both clearness and easy reference. They are unnecessarily so used in tabulations and general outlines until other devices of subordination have been exhausted, as *I A 1 a (1) (a).* Even in the later degrees of subordination, prime marks are preferred, especially in science, to the parentheses, as *1′* and *1″* and *1‴*. It has been pointed out (page 547) that open or closed punctuation may be used after such notations in tabulated lists. The use of the righthand parenthesis in notation is German style, as *a)* and *b)* and *c);* it is sometimes preciously used to indicate a subdivision under a letter or a figure enclosed in parentheses, as

(a)
a)

but it is in any event an unnecessarily detailed tabulation form, inasmuch as there is an abundance of notation symbols to draw upon without it.

When matter placed in parentheses occurs within a sentence it does not begin with a capital letter, unless the first word is a proper noun; and this rule applies even though the parenthetical matter constitutes a complete sentence; thus, you write *I like what he says about humility (you will find it on page twenty) but I disagree with him about meekness.* If parenthetical matter at the end of a sentence refers to the last word or to the last few words of the sentence, it does not constitute a new sentence and is treated as parentheses are treated within a sentence. If it refers to the sentence as a whole or to a large part of it, or if it is a commentary or elucidation, it constitutes a new sentence and it begins with a capital letter and ends with a period within the final parenthesis. Observe *I did not like his use of* ***elan*** *(foreignisms annoy me).* and *I did not like his use of* ***elan.*** *(He affected*

foreign terms throughout his speech.) But I understood what he meant.

Parentheses and brackets are sometimes referred to as the unliterary marks of punctuation. This is unfair to parentheses which are found in literature, of course, because they are necessary. It is not entirely unfair to brackets because they are much more commonly used for technical purposes than for literary ones. There are no brackets in the Authorized Version, and few parentheses. Brackets were called crotchets by the old grammarians. The word *crotchet* is from old French *croc* meaning hook.

The technical differentiation between parentheses and brackets is this: The former are used by a writer to enclose matter of his own composition; the latter, to enclose matter composed by some one other than the writer who quotes it. This differentiation does not apply, of course, to the many technical uses to which both parentheses and brackets are put, but, rather, to their uses in connection with straightaway writing. But even here the rule is almost a dead letter as far as the best of newspapers and periodicals and books are concerned, though it ought not to be. More than one libel suit has hinged upon the misuse of these marks, as of others. "Did 'e call me a liar in brackets or in parentheses?" asked an offended imbiber. "Oh, in brackets, my good man," replied his companion. "Very well, then," said the first, "I'll make nothin' of it. But if it'd been parentheses, I'd've knocked 'is bloomin' 'ed off 'm."

For the average writer brackets are used to enclose matter that is even more remote or foreign or gratuitous in copy than that enclosed by parentheses is, and this is a sufficiently close distinction for most practical purposes. But observe *Billy writes me that he has heard from Uncle Robert who said to him, "Bill, my lad, you'll get a new kyar* [*sic*] *if you make the team"* in which *sic* is enclosed in brackets because it was inserted by Billy in his letter, not by the person speaking and reading. The word *sic* has been explained on page 315, it is here used as ironic comment on Uncle Robert's writing and probable pronunciation of *car*.

Such terms as *laughter, applause, cheers* are customarily bracketed in copy, for the correct reason that they are in a manner of speaking "quoted" by a reporter from audience reaction. It is a mere convention that they are usually capitalized and usually followed

by a period, as [PROLONGED APPLAUSE.] but the convention is an appropriate one as indicating a quality of remoteness.

Brackets are used by the editor of an author to enclose corrections or explanatory notes in his work. Sometimes the editor writes in "lost words" or whole passages, and these too he places in brackets. Such "supplies" or fill-ins in the Authorized Version are printed in italics. Brackets are used also to enclose in legal papers quotations from the law and from the history of cases, to enclose prices and estimates in catalogs and inventories, to enclose stage directions as inserted by a dramatist and retained by an editor, and so on. But usage varies, parentheses often being used for such purposes since they may be typed and brackets may not be. A single bracket is sometimes placed before a letter, word, or figure that overruns its line measure and is thus placed above or below at the end of its assigned line to prevent awkward and unequal appearance. The rules for punctuating bracketed matter are the same as those for punctuating parenthetical matter, with the exception noted in the preceding paragraph.

Brackets are correctly used to relieve parentheses, that is, to prevent one parenthesis from following another without printed matter between. The necessity for this is rare, to be sure, but when it arises, brackets clarify as they do in algebraic quantities. At the top of page 601 there is a correct example of this usage. Attention is called to a parenthetical word with comma following. Unless the parenthetical word is itself somehow enclosed, the sentence will not be clear. It could be written *((chairman),)* but this makes nonsense to the eye, and it is not the form followed in mathematics. English must here borrow from algebra and other mathematical subjects, and write the term as it is written—*[(chairman),]*.

CONTEST *

NO	YES
1 Think *nothing* of it unless they catch you red-handed	Think *nothing* of *it*—unless they catch you "red-handed"
2 This is the eenty-teenth time he has done it and it will be the last	This is the "eenty-teenth" time he has done it—and it will be the last
3 The girl I refer to, she of the titian hair and titanic size, is an actress	The girl I refer to—she of the titian hair and the titanic size—is an actress

* See page 3 See also contest on page 558 for additional uses of quotation marks.

	NO	YES
4	He quoted from Tennyson king So like a shattered column lay the	He quoted from Tennyson: [king." "So like a shattered column lay the
5	This problem, number four on page twenty, is too much for me	This problem (number four on page twenty) is too much for me
6	The judge reminded the culprit that the quality of mercy is not strained	The judge reminded the culprit that "the quality of mercy is not strained."
7	They have been hurt beyond words, beyond belief as a matter of fact	They have been hurt beyond words —beyond belief, as a matter of fact
8	There can be no disagreement about the fact that John is a fastidious worker for himself	There can be no disagreement about the fact that John is a fastidious worker—for himself
9	During the first year of the Global War, 1941, we lived in Rochester, Minnesota	During the first year (1941) of the Global War we lived in Rochester (Minnesota)
10	I was shocked, who wouldn't have been, when I saw him coming up the drive	I was shocked (who wouldn't have been?) when I saw him coming up the drive
11	I could never forget that book, a work of genius if ever there was one	I could never forget that book—a work of genius if ever there was one
12	Heaven forbid, he cried piteously, that I should ever come to such demoralization	"Heaven forbid," he cried piteously, "that I should ever come to such demoralization!"
13	Well, yes, no, yes, I think I may venture to take the trip with you after all	Well—yes—no—yes—I think I may venture to take the trip with you after all
14	We shall always remember your record a record that has given the school first place in athletics	We shall always remember your rec ord—a record that has given the school first place in athletics
15	It is my sincere hope that I shall never have to deal with you again, never	It is my sincere hope that I shall never have to deal with you again—never
16	He has consulted the members of his family, parents, sisters, brothers, even uncles and aunts	He has consulted the members of his family—parents, sisters, brothers, even uncles and aunts
17	After great ado the Countess Bedelia Muchadiddle then emerged, a swelling flood tide of gown and gewgaw	After great ado the Countess Bedelia Muchadiddle then emerged—a swelling flood tide of gown and gewgaw
18	Be not deceived with ornament but deceive others with it if you can, was his bad advice to the sweet girl grads	"Be not 'deceived with ornament'—but deceive others with it if you can," was his bad advice to the "sweet girl grads"
19	There they were at last—Harry, Alice, Uncle Ben, and the twins (those Incorruptible Incorrigibles) with their customary bun-	There they were at last—Harry, Alice, Uncle Ben, and the twins (those Incorruptible Incorrigibles!)—with their customary bundles and

	NO	YES
	dles and their infinite rugs and topcoats	their infinite rugs and topcoats
20	They were planning to go by way of Chartres—would that be exciting, and to stop on their way back to have tea with Maxine	They were planning to go by way of Chartres—would that be exciting?—and to stop on the way back to have tea with Maxine
21	They had grown tired of her everlasting chatter—it palled today as never before, nevertheless they were glad to have her with them	They had grown tired of her everlasting chatter—it palled today as never before—; nevertheless, they were glad to have her with them

SECTION FIFTY-THREE TYPES

Italics are used to emphasize words and phrases and larger groups, and to make them stand out typographically from other printed matter. In longhand a writer indicates italics to the printer by underlining once, small capitals by underlining twice, and large capitals by underlining thrice. It has been indicated on page 592 that italicization may be made to minimize the use of certain punctuation marks, chiefly the comma and quotation marks. Italics are more difficult to read than plain open roman type. The setting of long passages in italics is therefore to be avoided. And their use for emphasis should be restrained inasmuch as, excessively resorted to for this purpose, they weaken rather than strengthen. The person who accents every other word, that is, who "italicizes" to excess in conversation, loses attention. If he habitually emphasizes every other word, as in "I *never* in my *life* saw *such* a *bore* as *you*," he runs the risk of being thought a bore himself.

In *The word **italicat** for a woman who emphasizes her conversation to excess is a barbarism* and *Your **h's** look like your **b's*** and *Not only do you not **amuse** me; you **disgust** me* italics are used to call attention to special terms. The last example illustrates their use in antithesis when the opposite terms themselves are not regarded by a speaker or a writer as strong enough to point the contrast. But note that in *The judge said something about* "straining the quality of mercy" *but the culprit was too nervous to hear what was said* italics should not be used to denote reference to Portia's line; quotation marks are in order here even though the original is not fully reproduced but represents rather a quasi-quotation (page 594).

In the first example above it will be noted that italics make appositive commas unnecessary. *The word, **italicat**, for a woman,* is unnecessarily detailed in punctuation. Commas are likewise rendered superfluous by italics in such expressions as *Dickens' novel **Bleak House** is one of the few English novels that will bear reading once a year.* The title ***Bleak House*** may be set off by commas —it may even be placed in parentheses. Since, however, it is a conventional printing rule to place titles in italics (page 596) they should be used here also, whichever of the two punctuation devices are used. Italics cannot take the place of parentheses, and should not be used for them, when identical matter is designated, that is, when one term is just a different designation for the same person or thing, as *Mark Twain (Samuel Langhorne Clemens) lived in Connecticut* and *This train (the three twenty) is never on time.* But if you say ***Ethel Vance** (pseudonym of Grace Zaring Stone) has a clear, frank, honest sound* you refer to the name ***Ethel Vance*** itself, not to the person it stands for, and italics are thus in order.

Italics may be used for writing conversation, but the rule above in regard to their continuous use should be observed. ***Never she said have I seen a show like this one*** and ***Wherever he may be she cried I will find him*** illustrate this usage. Note that here too, as in the example above, the use of italics makes commas unnecessary, change of type face affording sufficient breakage for change of discourse.

Subtleties of emphasis are indicated by italics in writing and by corresponding accent in speech. If you say *Harry **played** yesterday,* you mean by accenting ***played*** that he played better than usual or that he played as he only can play when he cares to. If you say ***Harry** played yesterday* you mean that ***Harry*** rather than some one else played yesterday. If you say *Harry played **yesterday*** you emphasize ***yesterday*** in distinguishing it from today or the day before yesterday, or some other time.

Annotations, whether body or footnote, such as *concluded, continued, see page, see, see also, errata provided, resolved, whereas,* are customarily—conventionally—set in italics, as are such directive or footnote abbreviations as *ad lib* (at pleasure), *ad loc* (to the place), *ante* (before), *circa* or *ca* or *c* (about), *et al* (and others), *e g* (for example), *ibid* (the same place or thing), *etc* (and so forth), *idem* (the same person), *i e* (that is), *infra* (forward or below or

later), *in re* (in regard to), *loc cit* (place cited or given), *op cit* (work cited or referred to), *passim* (here and there), *post* (after), *sc* (namely), *supra* (above or before), *v* or *vs* (opposed), *via* (way or by way of), *v* or *vide* (see), *viz* (namely). But practice varies in this usage, many houses preferring to follow body style in smaller face, some reserving italics for footnote use, and setting in body face all such terms appearing elsewhere. The basic rule as to foreign terms and their abbreviations is that they must be set in italics in case they have not yet been adopted into English. Inasmuch as all of those above given have long been at home in English usage, they do not have to be italicized under this rule. But they still are to a great extent, as are *appliqué* and *demitasse* and *nom de plume* and *pro rata* and *señor,* and a host of other foreign terms, that are now well established in English.

Scientific terms expressed in Latin or other foreign language, whether they indicate species or genera, are preferably italicized, but names of general classes or groups or families should not be; thus, you say *Skunk cabbage* (***Spathyema foetidus***) *is a stemless perennial herb* (page 617).

The letters and symbols *¢, cts, s (shilling), d (pence),* %, *$, &,* may or may not be written in italics. But chemical symbols should not be italicized except when they are referred to as such. Exponents may or may not be. Since, however, they are usually printed in much smaller face than the term they accompany, some houses rule that italic face makes them more likely to be seen as result of contrast.

Major titles in music, literature, art, law, and other fields, are properly carried in italics; lesser titles, in quotation marks. But here again usage varies. In *I read "On Calling a Spade a Spade" in* ***Printers' Ink*** *and "On 'a Nice Derangement of Epitaphs' " in* ***Sentence, Paragraph, Theme*** the first quotation marks and the first italics respectively denote an article and a magazine; the second, a section or chapter and a book. Note that the second minor title quotes Mrs Malaprop's famous slip and that single quotation marks within double ones are therefore supplied. Inasmuch as in the mechanics of typing it is necessary to go back in order to underline for the purpose of signifying italics to the printer, quotation marks are very often substituted, especially when typing is done directly from dictation, quotation marks being easily capable of insertion straightaway, without pulling back the roller. This

makes for speed but not for conventional accuracy. In some publications, however, the rule is made that all titles, regardless of subordination, are to be run in quotation marks.

Italics and quotation marks are rarely used in reference to divisions and books and chapters in the Bible or other sacred literature. They are preferably not used in long lists of titles and subtitles, for the reason that they tire the eyes and make a page confusing and illegible. Neither device is required in giving a definition of a term, unless there is something in the definition that it is desired to emphasize or call attention to, or unless some part of the definition constitutes a legitimate quotation. Italics are frequently used in legal documents for such terms as *whereas, therefore, party of the first part, party of the second part, hereinbefore.* Titles of cases are likewise sometimes italicized, as *Murphy vs Wingate* and *Third Avenue Elevated Railway Case.* But there is no strict rule in regard to these forms, much depending upon the type faces of surrounding matter in such papers The word *versus* and its abbreviations *v* and *vs* are preferably italicized when they stand between parts that are not, as *The State of Virginia vs The Potomac Waterway Company* or ***The State of Virginia vs The Potomac Waterway Company.***

The names of vessels and carriers—air, land, sea—are sometimes italicized, sometimes placed in quotation marks, sometimes signaled by both italics and quotation marks, as *U-45* and "Twentieth-Century Limited" and *"The Hallelujah Spitfire."* Italics alone represent preferable usage, but this preference is by no means respected by newspapers or magazines or books. Usage here may be said to be not only variable but haphazard.

Salutations in printed letters, names of offices and of official positions in public documents, titles to reports and findings, may or may not be italicized. Typographical harmony of the completed set-up should be the deciding factor in all such cases. You may write *To the Members of the Diagnothian Literary Society, Ladies and Gentlemen:* and *Henry Harrison, President.* If before an actual signature the word *signed* is used, it should according to the best usage be capitalized and italicized and placed in parentheses. Terms used in a letter to denote correspondence machinery, such as *From, To, Date, Subject, Dictated but not read* (avoid this one), should be underlined if typed, italicized if printed in the letterhead.

Punctuation marks that are a part of italicized matter should be italicized; thus, the commas in *Sentence, Paragraph, Theme* and the quotation marks, the comma, and the question mark in *"Whither dost thou fare, my friend?" was the title of his sermon* should be set in italics. But parentheses and brackets used to enclose italicized matter are not themselves usually italicized. If, however, they belong within italicized matter, they follow the rule for other marks, even though the difference is so slight as to be indiscernible to the average eye.

In the pluralizing of italic letters and figures and symbols, the 's should not be marked for italicizing, thus, *e*'s means more than one e, *e's* means more than one plural form of *e* (page 460). This principle applies also to a word printed in italics and carrying the apostrophe or the apostrophe and *s*. *Charlotte Bronte's (**Currer Bell**'s) somewhat vindictive novel **Jane Eyre** was not an immediate success* is a sentence from a standard history of English literature, but extraordinary as it is, it nevertheless serves as an example of the use of italics in relation to possessive case. ***Currer Bell*** is in apposition with *Charlotte Bronte;* it was her pen-name, and it is correctly italicized. But the apostrophe *s* is no part of the pen-name, though a part of the appositional form; it is thus not italicized.

Care should be taken by typists and printers to indicate whether punctuation marks belong or do not belong in italics. As a rule they do not when isolated words are italicized, they do when word groups are italicized (see above). Printing convention leans toward italicizing punctuation that adjoins italicized expressions, but it is by no means always a logical procedure. Seldom are both italics and parentheses necessary as setting-off devices. If you write *This novel **Our Mutual Friend** is my favorite among English novels* you do enough by way of differentiating type face to set the title apart. *This novel (**Our Mutual Friend**)* is wasteful of identification, either italics or parentheses being sufficient mark, preferably the former in this example as well as in the example above.

Both lower-case italics and capital italics are widely used for display purposes in copy. Used with restraint and appropriateness, they may be made to add a note of beauty and distinction; used loosely or excessively, they may constitute a discordant note. Do not use them in headings or subheadings, or elsewhere, unless

some logical reason may be revealed for their use—unless they may be clearly seen and felt to do something constructive for the copy in which they appear.

There are certain words that should never be placed in italics, such, for example, as those that have a preponderance of *i*'s and *m*'s and *n*'s and *u*'s and *v*'s in close succession. They are difficult enough to read set in the most open and legible of type face. Set in italics, they may easily become illegible even to the average eye. It has been said that *minimum* is the most monotonous word; *minim, mumm, mim, nimmy,* are closely akin. Write them in spencerian or in italics, and they take on the "flowing illegibility of wheat in the wind," as Princess Ida's running hand did.

The personal pronoun *I* should always be capitalized, as should the interjection *O*. Latin *ego,* Greek εγω, Saxon *ic,* French *je,* Italian *io,* Spanish *yo,* Portuguese *eu,* Dutch *ik* even German *ich,* corresponding forms to English *I,* are always written with small letter. There have been writers who affected *i* in reference to themselves, *I* in reference to others, as in quotation. And writers have sometimes used the foreign first personals with capital letter by way, perhaps, of caustic comment upon others. But these usages are affectations merely. The first-personal *we* is not capitalized as a form—pluralization makes common.

Personal names, that is, given names and surnames and well established nicknames as well as epithets applied to persons, are capitalized, as are also the initials of such proper names and of titles and degrees applied to them, as *Harold O Donahue, Buddy Wainwright, Richard the Black Knight, G B S, Dr Wilbur Harrison, Hon Stephen Woolworth, James Treadwell LL D.* The words *reverend* and *honorable* are descriptive titles rather than technical ones, and they are preferably always followed by the given name. They are never abbreviated when preceded by *the;* thus, you write *Hon Harlan Robinson* and *Rev Thomas Agnew,* not *Hon Robinson* and *Rev Agnew; The Honorable Harlan Robinson* and *The Reverend Thomas Agnew,* not *The Hon Harlan Robinson* and *The Rev Thomas Agnew,* and, of course, not *Hon* or *Honorable Robinson* and *Rev* or *Reverend Agnew.* Capitalization of *the* in this connection is variable, harmony of typographical set-up often being the deciding factor. If such title is run in with other

matter *the* is generally not capitalized; if it is displayed on a line by itself, as in social forms, it generally is.

It is by no means the best practice to multiply degrees and titles in association with a name, unless it is desired to make them serve as a record of some sort, as in a catalog or a citation. In this case they should be arranged in chronological order, as *The Reverend Doctor Charles R Bliss, A B, A M, D D, LL D* which means that the person named was a clergyman before he received his doctorate, that he received his college degrees in the order indicated. In no event does the technical title precede the descriptive before a name; you do not say *The Doctor Reverend Charles R Bliss* or *The Professor Honorable Horace Wainwright.* In general composition one title or degree is all that should be used with a name, and the one title or degree used should be adapted to copy; that is, in listing the corps of a hospital, medical degrees should be given first importance, and such degrees as *Litt D* and *B L,* if held, should be omitted unless some special reason exists for their being used in such connection.

When an individual is unmistakably referred to, the title itself standing alone without identifying name should be capitalized, as *The Rabbi has arrived* and *I shall consult the Acting Secretary* and *We shall have the Archbishop with us.* The abbreviations *jr* and *sr* may or may not be capitalized, just as they may or may not be preceded by a comma and followed by a period, thus, you may write *Harry Blaine jr* or *Harry Blaine Jr* or *Harry Blaine, sr* or *Harry Blaine, Sr.* But a comma is preferably used before all abbreviations following a surname to prevent the name itself from running into the abbreviation.

Display policy must decide the question of capitalization in such expressions as *John Tone, Professor of History* and *John Tone, professor of history.* The former is preferably used in catalog listing, the latter in run-in copy in which many capitals already appear. But usage is highly variable. The ruling is sometimes made that dignity or importance of office is the deciding factor, but this is a dangerously arbitrary rule; thus, you would write *Franklin D Roosevelt, President of the United States* and *Harry Jones, plaintiff; Winthrop Marshall, Chairman of the Ways and Means Committee* and *Tom Morgan, leader of the band. A Manual of Style of the University of Chicago Press* and *The Style Manual of the United States Government Printing Office,* the two

leading stylebooks on English usage, are themselves in some disagreement in regard to the capitalization of titles following nouns, such as those above. It must be remembered that such words as *secretary, governor, chairman, president, speaker, professor,* are common nouns in general usage, and are raised to the dignity of capitalization only when they are used in association with "special and proper company." You say *The Governor of Pennsylvania has signed the bill* and *I hope to be president some day.* The general rule in regard to the sign of possession on page 435 has an important parallel in regard to capitalization: *Words are capitalized according to the company they keep.* It applies in practically all capitalizing instances except those that are purely technical and conventional.

Such surname particles as *d', da, de, della, di, l', la, le, van, von,* preceded by a given name or by a title of any kind, are not capitalized; not so preceded, they are. But the rule is by no means consistently observed, and it very often happens that individual family taste or tradition reverses it. Some consolation is to be had in the fact that it is characteristically American eventually to merge such particles with surnames, as the telephone book abundantly illustrates; thus, *de la Noye* becomes *Delano, le Fevre* is often *Lefevre, van de Water* is simplified to *Vandewater, opp den Dyck* to *Opdycke.* But observe, in compliance with the above rule, such names as *Count von Zeppelin, Leonardo da Vinci, Guy de Maupassant, Sig de Cicco, the Van Gogh pictures, the De Courcey arms.*

Words indicating blood relationship—*father, mother, sister, brother, uncle, aunt, cousin*—are capitalized when used in direct address, but preceded by pronouns or articles such terms are not capitalized. These words are preferably capitalized also when they precede proper names to which they correctly belong; thus, you write *Where have you been, Father* and *She gave it to my mother* and *Take this to the child's sister* and *We are expecting Cousin Jane at any time.* Such ordinary terms of direct address as *sir* and *madam* and even *ladies and gentlemen* are not capitalized in running copy. But used as salutations in letters and other documents they are capitalized. Personal titles in direct address should always be capitalized; thus, you write *I think, Your Excellency, that this is the preferred course* and *Let me remind you, Senator, that this is not the case* and *If, sir, this be true we are*

lost and *Observe, ladies and gentlemen, that he does not say that it is true.*

All such religious names and references as the following are capitalized, as *Almighty, Blessed Virgin, Brahma, Buddha, Christ, Creator, First Cause, Holy Ghost, Holy Mother, Holy Spirit, Jehovah, Jupiter, King of the Jews, Krishna, Madonna, Messiah, Mother of God, Our Lady, Providence, Redeemer, Savior (Saviour), Son of God, Supreme Being, Virgin, Virgin Mary,* as are also such terms as *Fatherhood, Goddess, Messiahship, Sonship,* when used in personal reference to deity and to the offices and functions of deity. Closely related to these are such capitalized church titular names, as *Pope, Pontiff, Holy Father, Archbishop, Cardinal, Apostolic Delegate,* used either before or after personal names, or alone in direct reference to them.

Beelzebub and *Moloch* and *Satan* are proper names, and, as such, should be capitalized. But they may be used in a generalizing sense, and may thus be written with small letter. Conversely, *devil, adversary, evil one, evil eye,* are common nouns, and, as such, are not as a rule written with capital. But used in a specifically personal way, they may be correctly capitalized. You may write *This system is a moloch for the employes* and *The Evil One hath consumed them,* thus leveling a proper term to common usage, a common one to capitalized usage. This sort of transference of function must very often decide whether a given word is to be written with capital letter or with small letter. It was once fashionable to capitalize all terms used figuratively—*Hats off! The Flag is marching by;* later, such capitalization was confined to personification. Today the poets use capitals very seldom indeed for figurative purposes, the quality of the figure itself being relied upon to supply sufficient emphasis without the assistance of such technical device as the capital letter.

Capitalization and other typographical devices should be resorted to as little as possible for emphasis. Used to excess for this purpose they become ordinary and weakening. But for occasional emphasis italics and capitals are excellent devices. Resort should not be had even to them, however, until a writer is quite certain that he has exhausted every constructional means at his disposal to secure emphasis to his composition.

The general principle of association above referred to holds with special application to terms denoting documents, events (time),

and places. Such words, for example, as *academy, administration, avenue, boulevard, bureau, cathedral, cemetery, chantry, chapel, church, city, college, commission, committee, commonwealth, confederation, constitution, department, government, high school, institute, office, paper, park, party, power, river, school, seminary, service, state, station, statue, statute, street, synagog, treaty, union, university, war,* are, of course, common nouns, and, as such, are not capitalized in ordinary usage. But used in association with proper names to form special terms, they are correctly capitalized; thus, you write *Second Avenue* and *This was the second avenue to be paved, Central Park* and *This is a very central park, Teachers College* and *The teachers college is the most important educational institution there is, Constitution of the United States* and *He has a strong constitution, Declaration of Independence* and *I am going to make a declaration of independence about my work here.*

Note, further, the capitalization of such documentary and organization names as *Nicene Creed, Authorized Version, Pentateuch, Beatitudes, Ten Commandments, Interstate Commerce Commission, United Brethren, Swiss Confederation, South African Union, Senate Finance Committee, Young Men's Hebrew Association, Chi Phi Fraternity, Knights of Columbus.*

Gentile words—words that denote race or country—and names of particular places usually follow fixed capitalization, as *American, Aryan, French, Italian, Jew, Mexican, Negro, Swedish; Athens, Bridgeport, Charleston, London, Russia, Siberia, Sweden.* Most denominational names are likewise fixed, as *Quaker, Moravian, Unitarian, Presbyterian,* but *Catholic, Methodist, Reformed, Universalist, Episcopal,* and still others, may be common adjectives or nouns (or both) in general usage, and, as such, are written with small letter.

Usage is about evenly divided between *Republican Party* and *Republican party, Democratic Party* and *Democratic party,* as far as the newspapers are concerned. The best practice follows the general rule of association. Used as the names of special parties, these terms should be capitalized. But if a word such as *club, company, order, party, association,* stands at the end of an excessively long title, the better practice is to write it with small letter. This exception to rule is made in order to relieve such title from capitalization awkwardness and heaviness. Sometimes

the generalizing term comes first, and in such title it is, of course, capitalized, as *Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor,* which is exact but labored. Note, on the other hand, *The John J Blanchard Cooperative Commercial and Industrial society* and *The University of Minnesota Economic and Financial Service bureau,* a lower-case usage which the conservatives regard as "shocking."

The words *committee* and *commission* should be capitalized when they are used in reference to bodies appointed by Congress. The word *government* written with capital *g* is taken, as a rule, to refer to national government rather than to state government. The word *cabinet* is capitalized when it pertains directly to the President's departmental heads, as *The President held a Cabinet meeting today; secretariat,* when it pertains to a national or an international body, as *The Secretariat of the South American Union is in conference; court,* when it pertains to a national or an international court, a district court, or a state court. You say *The Supreme Court is in session* and *He was taken to the police court or to the magistrate's court. Convention* and *conference* follow the company or association rule.

Names of the days of the week, of the months of the year, of holidays, of great world events, further illustrate this principle, as *Labor Day, New Year's Day, Rosh Hashana, Yom Kippur, Moscow Pact, September, Alaska Purchase, Air Service, Dark Ages, Armistice Day, Global War, White Paper, Fourth of July, Good Friday.* It will be observed that in a few the common term precedes the proper, that in some both terms are common terms that are combined to form a proper one. The names of the four seasons are not capitalized unless they are used figuratively or are associated in use with some special historical signification. The newspapers are themselves very undecided and fluctuating in their capitalization of military and naval terms, and the style manuals are in disagreement. There is no established practice. The following may be helpful but they are not to be taken as final: *Adjutant General, the Army officer, army shoe, British Army, the brigade, Brooklyn Navy Yard, the Cavalry, Coast Artillery, Coast Guard, Coldstream Guards, Sixty-ninth Regiment, Field Artillery, General Headquarters, General Staff, General Staff Corps, Marine Corps, Hospital Corps, the Infantry, infantryman, the Navy, naval officer, naval station, navy yard, Nurse Corps, Paymaster General, Regular officer, Reserve officer, Revolution-*

ary Army, Royal Air Force, Surgeon General, United States Army, United States Navy, volunteer officer, War College.

The names of geographical areas and sections follow suit, as *Tenth Ward, East Side, The Hub, Vatican State, Commonwealth of Texas; The Orient is thickly populated, He hails from the South, We are going to visit the Northwest, He is a mining engineer in Western China.* In the last example *Western China* denotes a specific area or section that has come to have individual signification, just as *South America* and *Greater Pittsburgh* have. But in *We were motoring through eastern Arkansas* and *We like southern cooking* the sectional terms are merely descriptive and should not be capitalized.

Capitalization of such terms as *Westerner* and *Southerner* is correlative with that of the names of geographical areas and sections. They are in the same category of capitalization as *Californian* and *New Yorker* and *Russian* and *European.* In *New York City* and *New York State* the otherwise common nouns *city* and *state* are capitalized because of "the company they keep." They are capitalized also without the company when they clearly stand for specific names, as in the *City of Chicago* and in the *State of Illinois,* in the *City election* and the *State prison.* The words *country* and *nation* used to refer unmistakably to a specific country or nation are usually capitalized in highly formal composition, not otherwise. But usage is variable here. Usage varies also in regard to capitalizing the generic term when it precedes the specific one, as *the river Nile* and *the River Nile, the valley of the Yosemite* and *Yosemite Valley.* The first in each group represents the better practice. But do not write *Tenth avenue* and *Fourth street.* When two proper names precede a plural generic, preferred style is *Amherst and Dartmouth colleges, Greeley and Sheridan squares, Coolidge and Boulder dams.* Pluralizing a noun tends to make it generic in treatment and consideration. But here again there is wide variation in usage. Some of the more important terms involved in this principle of capitalization are *beach, boro, branch, camp, canal, cape, channel, creek, dam, desert, dock, dome, falls, forest, gulf, highway, hill, island, lake, mountain, oasis, ocean, park, peninsula, pier, port, reservoir, river, sea, ship, sound, spring, strait, tunnel, valley, woods.* In scientific classifications it is customary to capitalize the name of genus or order and to write the name of species with small letter, as *Canis familiaris* and *Daucus carota. Earth, hades, heaven, hell, hereafter, moon, para-*

dise, planet, purgatory, star, sun, are capitalized only when they are used with figurative force, or in combination to form a proper term, and by no means always then (see above). They are primarily common nouns. But the specific names of stars and constellations, such as *Mars, Saturn, Ursa Major, Milky Way,* are capitalized.

The first word of every sentence and of every group of words made to stand as an independent expression should be capitalized (page 552). The first word of every line of poetry should be capitalized, though in much free verse this rule is now ignored and only those words that begin independent expressions are capitalized. Quotations from conventional poetry that do not follow lineage but are run end to end should be capitalized in accordance with original set, as "It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven Upon the place beneath."

The first word of every direct quotation should be capitalized, but if such quotation is broken by intervening words the first word of the resumed part is not capitalized unless it starts a new phase of the quotation; thus, you write "We are not going," said he, "until you are safe again" and "And God said," continued the preacher, " 'Let there be light.' " The first word of each of a series of short questions and exclamations is preferably capitalized if each unit is followed by punctuation, as *Who is he? Where does he come from? What does he want?* and *The very idea! You rascal! Don't you dare!* But if the units in such series are separated by commas, no capitals are required after the first, and a single final mark is used (page 555). Do not, however, capitalize the first word of an indirect quotation. *He said That he felt ill* is wrong.

The first word and the last word of the salutation in a letter should be capitalized; intervening words should not be. The first word only of the complimentary closing in a letter should be capitalized. Observe *Dear Friend* and *My dear Friend, Yours very truly* and *Sincerely yours* If the date of the month is written out it should be capitalized, as *January Thirtieth 1872.* If this date consists of two words, they should be hyphened, and the first one only should be capitalized, as *October Twenty-ninth 1872.* In social forms the year is sometimes expressed by words, all of which are preferably capitalized, as *Eighteen Hundred Seventy Two.* The use of *and* after *Hundred* is superfluous; if

used, however, it should obviously not be capitalized. It is traditional, especially among newspapers, to capitalize the names of decades, as *It happened in the Thirties.* But this is a convention merely, not to be recommended from any logical point of view whatever. It has been pointed out above (page 617) that pluralization tends to justify lower case. Though it is true that names of great periods—*Paleozoic Age, Elizabethan Era*—are correctly capitalized, just any decade does not in itself constitute an outstanding period.

The words *resolved* and *whereas,* and their equivalents or extensions, should be capitalized when they are used in formal writing. The former should be followed by a colon, the latter by a comma. The first word of the resolution introduced after *resolved* should be capitalized, as should the first word of the condition introduced by *whereas.* Observe *Resolved:* That might makes right and *Be it resolved:* That might makes right, *Whereas,* The disease is spreading alarmingly . . . *And whereas,* The disease is spreading alarmingly . . .

It is not the best practice to capitalize terms referring to sections, parts, chapters, departments, unless there is some unusually good reason for doing so. Do not write *I have just finished Chapter Four* or *Look in the Index* or *Please inquire at the Hosiery Department.* Capitals are here used not only superfluously but incorrectly, and such usage is likely to beget the bad habit of over-capitalization. In a book itself the words *chapter four* standing at the beginning of chapter four constitute a title, just as the words *hosiery department* do on a display poster in a shop, and their capitalization is correct and expected. Entire capital or other letter display may, of course, be used. But taken out of their titular office and placed in running expression they become "common word company" containing neither proper adjectives nor proper nouns.

All important words in a title should be capitalized—the words that convey the salients of the title idea. The first word, usually the last word, nouns, principal verbs, important pronouns, adjectives, and adverbs are capitalized in most titles; prepositions and conjunctions are not. But judgment must be exercised. In the title *Speaking Of* the preposition *of* is properly capitalized. In the title *Found the Man—But* the conjunction *but* is properly capitalized. Needless to say quoted titles should be exact. *The*

is a part of the title in *The New York Times.* and *A* is a part of the title in *A Tale of Two Cities.* Noun parts of hyphened terms used in titles should be capitalized; other parts need not be as a rule. Observe these titles *Twentieth-Century Limited, Twenty-eighth Street, Sixty-ninth Congress, Colony-Union Desirable, Well-known Pests, High-Power Engines, A Report on the Famous Frustrations in Literature, Try Try Again, That is the Question, Ask the Man Who Owns One, Driving to Gehenna in a Jeep.* Trade and other industrial and commercial names constitute titles, and, as such, are properly capitalized, as *The Orange-Blossom Special* (train), *The Super-Chief* (train), *The X-7, The Hell-Splitter, Pebeco, Listerine, Glycothymoline.* In a few instances trade names have become such commonly used household words that they are sometimes written as common nouns—*kodak, multigraph, sapolio*—and the advertiser's golden ambitions are thus realized.

Capital letters are used for signaling main divisions in an outline, and for follow-up divisions in a writing, provided such writing is partitioned according to outline divisions. Roman numerals used for the same purpose are similarly capitalized. But for subordinate divisions, small letters and small roman or arabic numerals are used.

Words following lettered or numbered divisions in an outline may or may not be capitalized, but they should consistently follow one style or the other. If a main heading runs into subordinate headings to make a complete statement (page 548), the subordinate headings should logically be written with small letters, as

I The qualifications are
  A college graduation
  B good health
  C sobriety
  D experience

But usage is variable, and the words following the capital letters are found capitalized quite as often as they are found written with small letters.

In cross reference, consisting of major and minor annotations, the same rule applies; thus, you write *Volume IX, chapter iii* and *Chapter III, page 345.* If there are three or more entries, the first only is capitalized, as here, and the following ones are written with small letters and figures. It will be observed that nouns preceding

capital roman numerals and letters should be capitalized; nouns preceding small roman numerals and letters should not be. Single-item references, usually abbreviations, are not capitalized, as *art* for *article, sec* for *section, div* for *division, par* or ¶ for *paragraph* (page 96).

Another logical rule, as frequently violated as observed, says that abbreviations of common nouns or of words that are not generally capitalized, should not be capitalized; thus, it is logical to write *a m, p m, ft, lb, i e, etc,* inasmuch as these abbreviations do not stand for proper nouns or customarily capitalized ones. But they are frequently written with capitals nevertheless; and it is conceivable that, in writing to a person who is notoriously tardy, you may reform him by capitalizing *a m* and *p m,* as in *Meet me at one P M.* But you may use other devices of emphasis with perhaps better effect.

Verbs that are formed from proper nouns are not capitalized, according to preferred usage. You write *americanize* and *europeanize* and *pasteurize* and *boycotted.* But most abstract nouns formed from proper names retain capitalization, as *Americanization, Americanism, Anglicization, Anglicism.* Adjectives formed from proper nouns are called proper adjectives, and they retain capitalization when they are used with the signification of the derivative noun; thus, *Canadian* means pertaining to Canada, *Darwinian* to Darwin, *Wilsonian* to Woodrow Wilson. But observe that many adjectives so derived have fallen into such general usage as to lose their strict relationship to the proper noun from which they come, and are thus not written with capital. This removed relationship is true also of abstract nouns sometimes, such, for example, as *boycott, fletcherism, pasteurization.* The adjectives *apocryphal, apostolic, biblical, koranic, gospel, pentateuchal, proverbial, scriptural, talmudic* are preferably not capitalized, though usage is variable. Their noun equivalents are, of course, written with capital letter when used in direct reference to the specific religious writings, as *Apocrypha, Gospel* (in reference to the Bible only), *Scripture* (in reference to the Bible only), *Talmud.* Probably the greatest divergence of usage in the whole field of capitalization occurs in connection with *biblical.* Small letter is preferred, but *Biblical* is to be found in leading newspapers, magazines, and books. *Federal* and *national* are not capitalized unless they are used in titles or as direct substitutes for United States, as in *Federal troops* and *National election.*

Even in such connections these adjectives are increasingly written with small letter. The adjective *presidential* is in the same category of uncertain usage. The rule is that it should be capitalized when it unmistakably refers to the president of the United States, but many newspapers do not observe this rule. The adjective *satanic* should not be capitalized.

Names of places that have come to be identified with business and industry or the general activities of life, cease to take capitalization, as *brussels sprouts, canada thistle, cashmere shawl, chinese red, derby hat, dutch windmill, german silver, gothic lettering, india rubber, italics, lima beans, london purple, lyonnaise potatoes, manila paper, morocco (leather), palm-beach suit, panama hat, paris green, portland cement, prussian blue, roman numerals, scotch plaid, ulster coat, venetian blinds.* And note such small-letter nouns and adjectives derived from personal names as *artesian, babbitt, lynch, macadamized, mansard, messianic, roentgen (rays),* which are now in daily use completely dissociated from derivation in meaning.

It was once the rule to capitalize all pronouns used in direct reference to deities, but this has now been relaxed until it is no longer considered improper to write them with small letter. The rule persists to some degree, however, in connection with the personal pronoun *he* used in reference to *God* or *Christ* or *Jesus,* or *Our Father in Heaven.* And in sacred writings both personal and relative pronouns used in such reference will usually be found capitalized.

Such prefixes as *anti, ex, non, pro, un,* are not capitalized when hyphened to proper nouns, but the proper nouns themselves retain capitalization; thus, *anti-Bolshevik, ex-President, non-Celtic, pro-British,* but *unchristian.* The rule regarding the noun following *ex,* as in the second example, is that it is capitalized in case the person referred to is still living, not capitalized if he is not living; thus, you accordingly write *ex-Governor* and *ex-governor, ex-Mayor* and *ex-mayor, ex-President* and *ex-president.* It has been seen (page 602) that the first word of a parenthetical expression is capitalized when it stands independently and does not break into the grammatical functioning of a sentence; that it is not capitalized when it is inserted abruptly into other matter and more or less splits or delays it, even though it constitutes a complete sentence.

Capital letters grew out of two highly personal qualities. One was man's desire to add emphasis to what was written so that it would be felt and heeded and have influence; one was man's desire to make writing beautiful and appealing and dignified. Both were forms of conceit—part of the glamor that formerly went along with learning and the ability to read and write.* It is pointed out on page 635 that the old hand illuminator allowed his conceit to get the better of him, to the extent that he over-ornamented his capital letters until they were undecipherable. He also used too many curves and hooks and points and strokes in order to emphasize, and he thus weakened expression. He overdid the Gothic pointing in his lettering as in his architecture, and thus "killed the thing he loved." It is fashionable even today to use capital letters for emphasis, but it is a practice that easily leads to excess, and thus, to futility. The Germans have for centuries capitalized all nouns—and this may or may not have psychological significance.

Small letters—lower-case type—are more legible than capitals; they make for quicker and easier reading. This is why the ascending-stroke letters—*b, d, f, h, k, l, t*—and the descending-stroke letters—*g, j, p, q, y, z*—are sometimes shortened by professional longhand writers as well as by type-face makers (*z* is not a descending-stroke letter in type). The conventional capital letters never descend below the line, though they rightly—and often beautifully—ascend, as *G, J, P, Q, Y, Z*. If in longhand you write these letters as capitals with descending stroke, then you do not write capitals at all but, rather, enlarged small-case letters — *gjpqyz* — as many people write caps in longhand. The letter *J* is the only capital that needs to be extended below line in longhand writing.

Another objection to the excessive use of capital letters for emphasis is that, intermingled too frequently with lower-case type, they cause eye strain. Besides, care is not always taken by handwriters and type-makers to have capital types proportioned to body or regular face, with the consequences that out-of-focus eye reach is required of the reader.

* See *Harper's English Grammar* by the same author.

CONTEST *

	NO	YES
1	My Dear Jennie . . . Very Truly Yours	My dear Jennie . . . Very truly yours
2	The governor of Maine is expected here	The Governor of Maine is expected here
3	He told his Mother what you said	He told his mother what you said
4	Please, sister, come along with me	Please, Sister, come along with me
5	I have been visiting uncle Harry	I have been visiting Uncle Harry
6	"The Last Supper" was painted by Leonardo Da Vinci	*The Last Supper* was painted by Leonardo da Vinci
7	The very reverend Doctor Tompkins has just arrived	The Very Reverend Doctor James R Tompkins has just arrived
8	The presidential yacht is anchored off York harbor	The Presidential yacht is anchored off York Harbor
9	The Missouri and Mississippi Rivers are most picturesque	The Missouri and Mississippi rivers are most picturesque
10	If you will permit me, madam chairman, I shall do this	If you will permit me, Madam Chairman, I shall do this
11	I think, Sir, that you have left your bag in the car	I think, sir, that you have left your bag in the car
12	We visited the new city prison on Ward's island	We visited the new City prison on Ward's Island
13	St Patrick's cathedral is as beautiful as many of the European Cathedrals	St Patrick's Cathedral is as beautiful as many of the European cathedrals
14	I read it in "The Chicago Tribune" and the "New York Times"	I read it in the *Chicago Tribune* and *The New York Times.*
15	His new novel is called "the fifty-eighth Street Murder case"	His new novel is called *The Fifty-eighth Street Murder Case*
16	Remember the fourth commandment: thou shalt not steal	Remember the Fourth Commandment: "Thou shalt not steal"
17	I have just read a good story—*Addled Angels* in "The monthly Outlook from Heaven"	I have just read a good story—"Addled Angels"—in the monthly *Outlook from Heaven*
18	His manners are disgusting but his conversation is inspiring	His manners are *disgusting* but his conversation is *inspiring*
19	The word "fop" is probably from Danish "foppen" meaning "to prate or cheat"	The word *fop* is probably from Danish *foppen* meaning to prate or cheat
20	His attitude is both Un-british and Anti-american, and his manners, I should say, are Pro-hottentot	His attitude is both un-British and anti-American, and his manners, I should say, are pro-Hottentot
21	We visited them on Memorial day of that fateful spring of 1866, when the land was still soaked with the blood shed in the Civil war	We visited them on Memorial Day of that fateful Spring of 1866, when the land was still soaked with the blood shed in the Civil War

* See page 3

NO	YES
22 There is no Biblical passage more worthy of repeating and memorizing than the twenty-third psalm	There is no biblical passage more worthy of repeating and memorizing than the Twenty-third Psalm

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SECTION FIFTY-FOUR POSTSCRIPT

Though punctuation marks may truthfully be said to be as old as the proverbial hills, their use is still in a state of confusion and arbitrariness. In ancient writings words were run together without breaks or pauses or marks. Perhaps it would not be far from the truth to say that much modern writing would be clearer if this ancient custom were followed, made unintelligible as it oftentimes is by the misuse of marks. Most writers have been and still are slovenly punctuators. They punctuate by the skin of their teeth, as it were; and if they did not have the printer to lean upon, the reader would need more than the patience of Job to interpret them. Fortunately they may shunt the responsibility upon the printer with increasing safety, inasmuch as punctuation is now a major department of the printing craft, and the large and influential houses are no longer in such harassing disagreement about the use of marks as they were until comparatively recently.

There was no consistent use of even a few marks before about 400 B C. Most of the present marks are of Greek origin. But the present system of punctuation dates, fitly enough, from about 1450 when printing was invented. The person most largely responsible for the systematic use of punctuation was one Aldus Manutius, a Venetian printer. Long before his time many different marks of separation were used, but without any attempt to make them clarifying agents of word grouping. They were sometimes called points, sometimes stops, sometimes pauses, sometimes marks. The last is used today for the most part, though the word *point* is frequently used and somehow "sticks" in the term *exclamation point.* But *exclamation mark* is preferable for the sake of uniformity with *question mark* and *quotation mark.* Period, comma, colon, semicolon, dash, parentheses, brackets, stand alone as nouns; they are names of points or stops or marks, and you do not speak of period marks or colon stops. *Question, exclamation, quotation,*

standing alone, do not specifically refer to punctuation. Originally—primitively—the "marks" were mere spaces; then the spaces were filled with dots, or vertical or diagonal lines were used for separation. Caxton often used the diagonal line for a comma, and it was more or less common as such well into the sixteenth century. But long after our present system of punctuation became general the diagonals were so indiscriminately used that they were more of hindrance than of help.

Aristotle said that it was difficult to point the words of Heraclitus on account of their obscurity. Leo Allatius in one of his famous epigrams said that a certain Cometas had revised and "pointed" the poems of Homer. Seneca expressly asserted that the writers of his time were accustomed to punctuating their *words.* Cicero called points the "marks of transcribers" *(librariorum notae).* The professional transcriber was in the old days the "punctuation middleman" between a writer and his public. There is much additional textual reference in both Greek and Latin works to give testimony to the fact that punctuation of a sort is of great antiquity.

Though the history of individual marks as they are known today is by no means accurately traceable, there are enough extant historical details about most of them to justify the conclusion that writers have from earliest times been aware that reliance upon mere syntax is by no means always sufficient to make expression clear. They have always felt, if they have not always seen, that no matter how tightly constructional arrangement may be drawn, there remains an impotence in much word grouping that requires the prop of period and comma and semicolon. They could have taken greater pains down the centuries to make pointing less imperative, had they looked a little more carefully to their syntax. But paradoxically enough involvement of syntax increased with the evolution of the human mind, making punctuation more rather than less essential. The more deeply the philosopher and the scientist think, the more imperative and valuable punctuation marks—especially internal marks—become in their expression. The juvenile mind has little if any use for them. The child needs nothing more than the terminal marks (especially the question mark!); the philosopher needs these hardly at all, but relies upon the comma (the quarter-stop) and the semicolon (the half-stop) for niceties in the turns of his expression that the lay reader

is oftentimes able to gather only with the greatest difficulty even after it is expertly pointed.

The exclamation mark (point)—once called the note of admiration—was probably not used by the Greeks, its introduction or invention usually being attributed to the Latins. The mark itself is sometimes popularly accounted for as being the Latin word for joy or gladness or exultation—*io* written vertically $\frac{i}{o}$; sometimes as being the word *lo* similarly written $\frac{l}{o}$–$\frac{l}{o}$. Joseph Robertson in his priceless little book *An Essay on Punctuation* (1789) says that the exclamation mark represents the voice of nature when she is agitated, amazed, or transported.

In the ninth century the Greeks used the semicolon for our question mark. Our present-day question mark is probably derived from the Greek semicolon with the comma written above the period ;, the comma having degenerated into the present hooked form. There are popular theories to the effect that ? is a symbolic representation of the human ear, that it is a perverted form of the letter *q* standing for *query*.

The colon was used by Latin writers, but they called it comma; and they called the comma *virgula* because they used for the comma the short slanting stroke above referred to, *virgula* being the diminutive of *virga* meaning rod. The stroke sometimes used at present to denote addition or alternative, as *and/or*, is called a *virgule*.

The first record of the use of the colon in English printing appears to be in Thomas Elyot's *The Governor* (1531) in which it was used to indicate more to come. The semicolon had the hardest fight to make a place for itself, and the number of those who wish it had never succeeded is probably legion. It does not appear in old Latin or English books before the fifteenth century. The early editions of the Bible did not use it, and it did not make its debut in Shakspere's works until the First Folio edition of 1623. This was seven years after the Bard's death, and it may be a fact that he himself did not use the semicolon. But his awareness of the importance of punctuation is clearly attested in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (page 639) in which one of his players "doth not stand upon his points." His facetious play upon the stops had, however, been anticipated by the Latins. The following, for example, was sometimes written with commas where the colons are—and there *is* a difference:

Omnes eodem cogimur: omnium
Versatur urna· serius, ocius
Sors exitura, et nos in aeternum
Exilium impositura cymbae.

Horace *Lib II Ode 3*

The colons are the "ineluctable points" also in the following free, rhymed translation of this excerpt, neither the comma nor the dash being quite able to do the punctuation trick in either place:

One limit bounds each one of us·
And every mother's son of us
Has lots decided by the urn.
From exile's boat there's no return.*

It is sometimes said—guessed—that the comma, or some early substitute sign, is the oldest punctuation mark, older even than the period for the reason that the full-stop is much more easily discerned than the casual intermediate stop. It is acknowledgedly the hardest mark "to get along with," though this fact probably has nothing whatever to do with its age. Pope gave it special mention in the prolog to his *Satires*

Commas and points they set exactly right,
And 'twere a sin to rob them of their mite.

He was hitting the critics who were laudably trying to make something of exact and helpful punctuation. Even a brief examination of Pope's early editions will reveal the fact that he had good reason to be self-conscious about his use of the comma. It was, moreover, "in character" for him to relegate to the realm of tweedle-dee any critical attention paid to punctuation. But the word *mite* "backfired" as *might* even in his own time.

Though it had been used on the Continent from a very early period, the comma did not come into its own in England until about 1521 when it is said to have been used, not only for line stoppage but for above-line notation in connection with quotation and elision. The word *the,* for example, was written *th',* that is, with above-line or raised comma; it was also written with inverted comma, as *th*', and it has been seen (page 593) that practice is still variable in this respect in the use of both single marks and double marks. (Anglo-Saxon þ is the direct ancestor of *the,* a sign that in the early centuries degenerated into *y,* as in *y*^{e}.)

* Rendition kindly contributed by Franklin P Adams (F P A).

Until late seventeenth century inverted commas were used above the line to call attention to sententious remarks, but they were very often forgotten at the end of such remarks (a not uncommon slip of memory even today in the use of quotation marks). It was probably not until the eighteenth century that quotation marks as we know them were used for directly quoted matter. Up to this time parentheses were often used for direct quotations.

Though the question mark and the period made their formal appearance in English about the middle of the sixteenth century, they had struggled for consistent use and meaning long before. The former was regarded as representing a longer stop than the latter inasmuch as it implies an answer which, however short, requires time. The period represents no such expectancy but, according to the old grammarians, was devised merely to give the reader opportunity to catch his breath. It was used in the early centuries both before and after roman numerals, and is found in such use as late as 1580, namely, *.lxiii.* and *.XV.;* and it was so used also before and after abbreviations, as *.s.* for *scilicet* and *.i.* for *id est.*

Much punctuation today is mere compliance with convention, especially the terminal marks and those that are used in technical ways. The internal marks are the more difficult to handle, for the reason that they are grouping agencies in grammatical construction, used to assort and classify and characterize the units of expression so that they may be unmistakably and instantaneously taken in by the reader. And this, as has been said, is the major consideration of punctuation, or should be. The arrangement of word groups—phrases and clauses—is at best fluid and uncertain as far as long sentences are concerned. Punctuation is thus a sort of confession that words and their groupings cannot be left to themselves no matter how clear thought may be. They must be arranged end on; they cannot be piled by a brace after the single word that they may qualify, as

I went { to the party / with Mary / yesterday / to my great regret }

In the train of thought, reflected as it must be by a train of phraseology, such "hieroglyphs" as commas and semicolons and colons

are necessary to render coupling service. We punctuate, therefore, through force of necessity. Careless writers seemingly interpret this to mean that punctuation marks were devised to be inserted into loose expression to make it tight. They make it an excuse for writing "precipitously"—and then attempt to "doctor" by going back to insert a plenteous supply of marks. Needless to say, this is a cart-before-horse method of writing. The precise writer tries, first, to get the arrangement of his words and phrases so coherent and logical as to make punctuation unnecessary. This, he finds, he can rarely do in long sentences. His next major effort is to get them so arranged as to require the minimum of punctuation for complete clarification.

The conservative punctuator is sometimes called a *close* punctuator and his punctuation is called *closed.* In reference to punctuation itself, *closed* is preferable to *close* for the reason that it is the true antonym of *open,* though books are at variance in the use of these terms, some using *close punctuation* and some using *closed punctuation* in contradistinction to *open punctuation.* The conservative is formal and "fidgety" in his use of marks, and his closed punctuation is likely to prevent the easy and natural flow of language which open punctuation permits. He holds strictly to the conventional use of marks even when word grouping and spatial arrangement make matter clear without them. His writing is closed with marks, especially with the comma and the semicolon, in accordance with the rules of the eighteenth century and the early nineteenth. The open or liberal punctuator avoids all marks not actually required for constructional clearness. His writing is opened by spatial arrangement and, as far as possible, by accurate arrangement of phraseology. The former is likely to over-punctuate, the latter may under-punctuate. The former will use colon and dash, and comma and dash, and other combinations; the latter never will. The one will use a period after an abbreviation, a colon after the salutation of a letter, a comma after the complimentary closing, and will never fail to set off by commas thrown-in words and phrases that have for years been so set off even in short sentences. The other will observe none of these "pet" conventional uses, and will as far as he can make use of spacing and typographical variation to obviate marks and to enhance reading grasp.

This is closed form

Dear Sir
I cannot be present at your meeting, but my partner will, of course, be there
Very truly yours,
Silas Tinkham, Sr.

This is open form

Dear Sir
I cannot be present at your meeting but my partner will of course be there
Very truly yours
Silas Tinkham jr

This is closed form

Authorized Version

Judge me, O lord, for I have walked in mine integrity
Psalm xxvi 1

I have hated the congregation of evil doers, and will not sit with the wicked
Psalm xxvi 5

This is open form

Revised Version

Judge me, O Jehovah, for I have walked in mine integrity

I hate the congregation of evil-doers, and will not sit with the wicked.

This is not to say that the one version follows closed punctuation, and the other open. The Revised Version is, however, less conservative than the Authorized Version. The examples both here and above are used simply to show briefly that commas and semicolons and colons are the marks chiefly involved in the two styles.

Punctuation is a difficult and involved subject. The nice use of stops has been exhaustively debated by scholars. The old scholastics who argued so laboriously as to how many angels can dance on the point of a needle would themselves have been baffled doubtless by some of the problems concerned in the question as to where to put the comma. Of the many critical punctuation instances in literature three only may be mentioned here by way of illustration.

In Hamlet's *To be or not to be: that is the question,* for example, the second limb is appositive to the first, and the breakage is acceptably signaled by a colon. The pronominal reference is, however, indefinite and beclouded, and there have been pages written in argument for the dash, other pages for the colon. It is, again, tweedle-dee or tweedle-dum, but the instance is cited to illustrate the importance, false or otherwise, that has sometimes been attachd to punctuation.

The first four lines in Act I Scene vii in Shakspere's *Macbeth* are still being written and spoken in pursuit of doubtful punctuation,

now one style, now another. Perhaps most editions and actors follow this reading

> If it were done when 'tis done, then 'twere well
> It were done quickly: if the assassination
> Could trammel up the consequence, and catch
> With his surcease success;

But many justifiably prefer the first line written as a solid independent statement, with period after *well,* and the second with a comma after *quickly.* And to the average person this makes much better sense than the above reading because it disposes of the *if* clause which is otherwise left suspended. The point has been debated almost ad infinitum. The crux appears to be whether Macbeth is saying "If I could be assured that this premeditated murder would be over and done with, once it is committed, everything would be right and easy and proper; I could do it quickly if I could feel sure there would be no serious consequences", or whether he is saying "If this murder is to be actually committed then it had better be done quickly and got over with: oh, if I could only be assured that the assassination would entail no terrible consequences." It is easy to see that the argument is endless—and fruitless. The Variorum Edition devotes almost two pages to it.

In *An Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard* Gray in the first line used a comma to break the appositional construction, allowing the noun *knell* to stand for *The curfew tolls,* or for *tolls,* really. (Inasmuch as a knell is a stroke or sound of a bell when tolled, the line is tautological only as all apposition is). But the debaters say that he might have written the line better as

> The curfew tolls: the knell of parting day
> or
> The curfew tolls—the knell of parting day

Doctor Warton suggested a pause with a "note of admiration" after the word *tolls.* The poem was handed around so extensively after Gray sent it to Walpole, that when it finally came to printing it was, to say the least, garbled, and the poet's original comma after *tolls* was "lost," the result being

> The curfew tolls the knell of parting day

and *tolls* is made a cognate verb very much like *Fight* in *Fight the good fight.* Though *toll* is correctly used as a transitive verb, it is not easily found in literature as a cognate. Gray begged that his manuscript be given to Dodsley, his official printer and publisher, in order that it might be correctly typed. But the momentum of interference was too strong for his reticent nature, and the line as it has become known constitutes both a grammatical and a punctuational anomaly.

Though punctuation is an important subject, its importance must not be permitted to give it major place in expression, as such discussion as the foregoing runs the risk of doing. After all, it is to be made the servant of expression, not the master of it. It assumes false importance only when it is forced to substitute for loose or faulty expression. For the doubtful punctuator there can be but one safe and simple rule: Keep expression so short and direct and exact that it requires the least possible pointing; do not venture into the wilderness of punctuation complexities until you are certain that you are able to manage the simpler, more obvious uses.

The present-day punctuation system in English (and in most European languages) is roughly classified into *grammatical punctuation* used to indicate greater or less degree of separation—"grouping to grasp;" *rhetorical punctuation* used to call attention to some unusual or peculiar use of marks; *etymological punctuation* used to denote something regarding the formation or use or omission of words; *reference punctuation* used to refer readers to other matter in a unit of writing. The last two classifications are sometimes called technical; the first two, logical. The marks principally involved under each classification are given below. All footnote reference marks may be repeated (doubled, tripled, quadrupled, and so on) for adding notes in related matter. Exponent letters and figures are now more frequently used for footnotes than are asterisks, and daggers, and the rest. The latter are sometimes said to belong to the "old learning." Their order is, as a rule, asterisk, dagger, double dagger, section, parallel lines, paragraph sign, index finger.

Grammatical marks	. : ; , —
Rhetorical marks	¡ ¿ " " () [] —
Etymological marks	´ (acute accent) ` (grave accent) ^ (circumflex accent) ʌ (caret) ¨ (dieresis) - (hyphen) ¯ (macron—quantity, long) ˘ (quantity, short) . (period)
Reference marks	* (asterisk) † (dagger or obelisk) ‡ (double dagger or double obelisk) ‖ (parallel) § (section) ¶ (paragraph) ☞ (index) ⁂ or ** (asterism)

To Aldus Manutius goes credit also for the invention and use of italics. This came about, probably in association with the artist Francia of Bologna, during the first year of the sixteenth century. Italics are sometimes referred to as *Aldine face* (there are few cities, by the way, that do not boast of having an Aldine Press or an Aldine Printshop); sometimes as *cursive face* from their resemblance to a running hand (*cursive* is from Latin *curro* meaning run). There was a popular tradition to the effect that italics were originally taken from the handwriting of Petrarch. The practice of using italics for substituted or written-in material was a very early one. The italic words in the Bible are those having no equivalent in Hebrew and Greek; they were added by the translaters to complete the sense (page 604).

The deadly dryasdust type-face of the typewriter has done more than is generally supposed to make typewritten manuscript uninteresting—perhaps to get it misjudged. True, it may make bad copy look clean and uniform, but it holds exceptional copy to the same dead levels. And print may of course undeservedly glorify. Longhand, provided it is not too illegible or otherwise bad, is

always more challenging than typewriting, and it is capable of much more stimulating variation. Attempts have worthily been made to give distinction and individuality to the keyboard of the typewriter but they must necessarily fail because of the requirements of manufacture and market. When the typewriter was introduced, many firms refused to use it for their correspondence, because they felt that their old hand-written letters radiated a much more salable tone and quality and individuality than typewritten letters could ever convey. They have lived to learn. Grateful as man must be for the little machine that so conveniently makes the worst of writers legible, he must by this very token agree that it makes all literature look the same—perhaps worse than it is.

Print does not do this so patently. Its scope is broader; its facilities more versatile. It has in recent years made such strides in the attainment of beauty and variability and adaptability to matter as well as to eye, that it may even unconsciously cheat by way of making every piece of literature appear better than it really is. DeVinne and Goudy and Updike are the three distinguished members of the modern typographical school who are most largely responsible for the esthetic delight of much present-day printing. They have provided an additional stimulus for the modern writer to live up to.

In one respect these three typographers seem like reincarnations of the old illuminators who saw in hand lettering and in printing blocks, not convenience and utility merely, but opportunity for the development of a really high and enduring art. The old masters could give to their black Gothic lettering the pointed and graceful glories of Gothic architecture itself, to their roman types the dignity and symmetry of Roman architecture itself, and to both a seductive beauty that invited irresistibly to the page. But here the comparison must end. For the ancients fell afoul of their own talents in craftsmanship, as has so often happened with the artist in other fields, and preciosity, as usual, became the dead flower of genius. Their initial letters, for instance, became so involved in ornament as to be unrecognizable. Their Gothic and roman faces forgot adaptability and readability to mere perversity of line and curve. And as result, many of their extant manuscripts are curious rather than interesting and exemplary.

It is not at all contended that printing is today a perfected craft. On the contrary, it is still too much of the inventive miracle to be

given time to perfect itself. It was all very simple in the "good old days" of the Italian Renascence, when the affinity between lettering and illuminating on the one hand, and architecture and metal carving and wood carving and painting on the other, could be realized in practice, to produce masterpieces in all artistry. It was all very simple later, when the artist-printer was himself compositor, pressman, binder, type-founder, paper-maker, ink-maker, all in one, to turn out printing that was harmonious to the least detail. But it became very difficult in the later centuries, with complex organization in printing establishments and widespread demands made upon type foundries and printing presses, to maintain high standards of art in printing output. DeVinne, Goudy, Updike have saved the day to a highly appreciable degree, against almost insuperable odds.

Every writer should know something about typography and printing, not merely every newspaper writer who must perforce learn something about them, but every novelist and dramatist and poet as well. Their works come to life and live (when they do) through the printed page much more really than through the manuscript page, whether typed or written in longhand. If, as has been said, a successful piece of advertising copy owes ninety per cent of its power to the subtle invitation of the type in which it is set, it follows in part at least that type may be made to enforce and compel other kinds of copy. Ruskin's universal law that neither architecture nor any other work of man can be good unless it be imperfect should be a major consolation to writers and printers alike, and thus to punctuators. But Ruskin did not mean that the incessant search for perfection should be slackened by so much as one jot or tittle simply because of its elusiveness. He meant, rather, that it should be intensified if possible, so that those elements of perfection attained will stand out the more distinctly by the contrast that inevitable imperfection brings to bear. Says Goudy:

> Type must be finely and boldly designed to be beautiful. In the majority of cases where these points are claimed for a type, it will be found that the claims rest on their perfect finish, exact lining or ranging, perfection of curve, precise angles, straightness of stem, or sharpness of serif and hair line. None of these points give beauty or legibility, although they may be present in a type both beautiful and legible Finish in the design of a letter is a merit only when it improves, but if made at the expense of design it constitutes a defect. . . . Types are made to use, and when spontaneous in design, the natural irregularities and deficiencies are signs of life and sources of beauty, giving credit to the designer

for careful craftsmanship according to his ability. The demand for perfection is evidence of a misunderstanding of the true ends of art.*

CHAPTER CONTEST **

	NO	YES
1	What do you think of that, captain	What do you think of that, Captain?
2	What do you think of that Captain	What do you think of that captain?
3	She is visiting her uncle George	She is visiting her Uncle George
4	She is visiting her Uncle, George	She is visiting her uncle, George
5	Scholarship gains respect and industry too	Scholarship gains respect, and industry too
6	They ran as fast as they could for the bus was leaving	They ran as fast as they could, for the bus was leaving
7	Please let me have it otherwise Orr will be disappointed	Please let me have it; otherwise, Orr will be disappointed
8	Where he is? I don't know but what he is doing? I can guess	Where he is, I don't know; but what he is doing, I can guess
9	During the winter when the demand for coal is excessive the firm operates fifty trucks	During the winter, when the demand for coal is excessive, the firm operates fifty trucks
10	He stood it is reported like a statue carved in stone and he never for a moment lost self-control	He stood, it is reported, like a statue carved in stone, and he never for a moment lost self-control
11	I shall give Jim's books to John, Bill's to Mary, Harry's to Jane, Jane's to Sarah, and all will be well	I shall give Jim's books to John, Bill's, to Mary, Harry's, to Jane; Jane's, to Sarah—and all will be well
12	I ask you to do this for me not because you are under any obligation to me but because I shall be lost if you don't help me	I ask you to do this for me, not because you are under any obligation to me, but because I am lost if you don't help me
13	His outstanding characteristics, industry, loyalty, generosity, make him an enviable friend as well as an inspiring example for the rest of us	His outstanding characteristics—industry, loyalty, generosity—make him an enviable friend as well as an inspiring example for the rest of us
14	I did not take that paper, because my father wanted it but because the cartoons attracted my eye, as I glanced at it over your shoulder	I did not take that paper because my father wanted it, but because the cartoons attracted my eye as I glanced at it over your shoulder
15	He has been successful, he has been more than successful, but praise, distinction, money and fame have not turned his head	He has been successful—he has been more than successful—; but praise, distinction, money, and fame have not "turned his head"

* Used by permission of Frederic William Goudy.

** See page 3.

	NO	YES
16	He has been associated with this office for years in work and achievement, and in those subtler relationships of the heart and spirit	He has been associated with this office for years in work and achievement, and in those subtler relationships of the heart and spirit
17	Do you think, asked the anxious father, that my boy will succeed with you? Yes, he is honest, industrious, ambitious, and courageous, I replied	"Do you think," asked the anxious father, "that my boy will succeed with you?" "Yes; he is honest, industrious, ambitious, and courageous," I replied
18	Those at the corner table are playing seven-up or high-low-jack, those at the center table whist or euchre, those on the terrace cribbage or gin-rummy	Those at the corner table are playing seven-up (high-low-jack), those at the center table, whist or euchre, those on the terrace, cribbage or gin-rummy
19	The bells in the church tower are ringing the call to service, you will not be in time even to hear the benediction pronounced unless you hurry	The bells in the church tower are ringing—the call to service, you will not be in time even to hear the benediction pronounced, unless you hurry
20	In learning to play golf you will probably experience a few embarrassments You may gouge the earth with your club. You may swing too far and lose balance. You may indeed fling the club entirely out of yours hands	In learning to play golf you will probably experience a few embarrassments you may gouge the earth with your club; you may swing too far and lose balance, you may, indeed, fling the club entirely out of your hands
21	True young people today do not want to be preached at or to, moreover the older generation has no desire to waste its breath and energy in preaching but the good old standard virtues are still marketable and at a premium	True, young people today do not want to be preached at or to, moreover, the older generation has no desire to waste its breath and energy in preaching. But the good old standard virtues are still marketable —and at a premium
22	The least trustworthy of all advertising is the statistical advertisement, the advertisement that makes an undreamed-of claim by means of tables and figures, but in any event advertising, good advertising, that is, is business electricity	The least trustworthy of all advertising is the statistical advertisement —the advertisement that makes an undreamed-of claim by means of tables and figures. But, in any event, advertising—good advertising, that is —is business electricity
23	You ask what does he mean by flaming youth Well my answer is he means what Bulwer-Lytton meant when he said every street has two sides, the shady side and the sunny When two men shake hands and part mark which of the two takes the sunny side, he	You ask, "What does he mean by *flaming youth?*" Well, my answer is: "He means what Bulwer-Lytton meant when he said 'Every street has two sides—the shady side and the sunny. When two men shake hands and part, mark which of the two takes the sunny side; he will be

NO	YES
will be the younger man of the two	the younger man of the two.' "
24 In that great social organ which collectively we call literature there may be distinguished two separate offices that may blend and often *do* so but capable severally of severe insulation and naturally fitted for reciprocal repulsion. There is first the literature of *knowledge* and secondly the literature of *power*. The function of the first is to *teach*. The function of the second is to *move*. The first is a rudder. The second an oar or a sail	In that great social organ, which, collectively, we call literature, there may be distinguished two separate offices that may blend and often *do* so, but capable, severally, of a severe insulation, and naturally fitted for reciprocal repulsion. There is, first, the literature of *knowledge*, and, secondly, the literature of *power*. The function of the first is—to *teach*, the function of the second is—to *move:* the first is a rudder; the second, an oar or a sail Thomas DeQuincey
25 If we offend, it is with our good will. That you should think, we come not to offend, But with good will To show our simple skill, That is the true beginning of our end. Consider then we come but in despite. We do not come as minding to content you, Our true intent is All for your delight We are not here That you should here repent you, The actors are at hand, and, by their show, You shall know all that you are like to know *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Act V Scene i)	If we offend, it is with our good will That you should think we come not to offend, But with good will to show our simple skill That is the true beginning Of our end Consider then We come, but in despite We do not come. As minding to content you, Our true intent is all for your delight We are not here, that you should here repent you. The actors are at hand, and by their show You shall know all that you are like to know.

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