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ASSIGNMENTS IN EXPOSITION

ASSIGNMENTS IN EXPOSITION

SECOND EDITION

By Louise E. Rorabacher

Purdue University



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HARPER & BROTHERS
P U B L I S H E R S

New York

ASSIGNMENTS IN EXPOSITION, SECOND EDITION

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TO THE INSTRUCTOR 1111111111111111

The principal change in this second edition of *Assignments in Exposition* is the inclusion of a fourth section, "Further Readings," containing a score of additional essays. The first edition was designed for use as a simple rhetoric in conjunction with the handbook and the book of readings commonly used in required writing courses; this section of "Further Readings" appears in the second in response to the suggestions of many who felt that such an addition, obviating the need for the book of readings, would be both economical and convenient.

The book will continue, it is hoped, to live up to the implications of its title by saving the instructor much of the time and energy necessarily required in making effective theme assignments. By replacing the too often aimless assignment of theme *topics* with a progressive series of writing *problems*, it is intended to encourage both student and instructor to concentrate on matters more significant than the elimination of gross errors in mechanics. For those who prefer, however, to work at times through a *body* of thought, rather than a *pattern* (as in preparation for themes to be written in class, for example), a new table of contents has been provided (pages vii-xi), classifying under a few general subject headings not only the new "Further Readings," but also the models included in each unit as well (with the exception of such single-paragraph illustrations as were felt to be too brief to deserve such listing).

Assignments in Exposition remains designed for use in the composition courses required of the average college student—courses intended to develop not writers, but men and women who can write. It grew originally out of two beliefs: first, that too many rhetorics are still aimed at students who aspire to make of writing either a profession

or a hobby, and are thus concerned with stylistic matters too complex and subtle for the far more numerous group today, to whom composition will be only a useful tool in a non-literary career; second, that too many books of readings provide selections of such length, difficulty, or literary type as fail to serve either for motivation or for model, for student writing.

The results of the first belief remain incorporated in Parts I-III (which continue largely unchanged save for the replacement of a few models); the second has continued as a guide in the choice of the essays which constitute Part IV. The "further readings" will be found, it is believed, to be as generally clear-cut, concise, and readable as the earlier models which they supplement; yet greater space has permitted them to offer a much greater variety of length, subject matter, style, and literary type. In these added essays, for instance, the student can see that blending of thought patterns of which he has been told (page 21), but which the limitations of the original Parts I-III, with their emphasis on single patterns rather than combinations, did not permit to be adequately illustrated.

Organization continues to be unremittingly stressed, in the belief that since clear thinking must precede all effective exposition, *a sense of form* is the best contribution that the required composition course can make to its various students, whose more specific writing needs cannot be discovered and served until later in their college work, in their particular fields of specialization. To this end, the purpose of the earlier sections of the book remains unchanged: to combine compactly a simple, practical rhetoric with brief, clear-cut writing models. The eighteen units of Parts I-III, providing ample material for the writing to be done in the customary year of required composition, deal with the expository aids, patterns, and problems most likely to be useful to the average writer, in college and beyond.

Each unit consists, as before, of two sections:

1. A discussion of the type, including
 - a. a definition of it,
 - b. a mention of the occasions which require it, and
 - c. concise directions on how—and how not—to write it.
2. Illustrative material, made up of
 - a. several selections showing the use of the type by both professional and student writers,
 - b. study questions designed to bring out the construction (rather than the content) of each selection, and
 - c. suggested subjects for student practice in the type.

In this new edition, however, the units conclude with additional study problems, where applicable, leading to an analysis of the more extended and varied essays of Part IV.

The writing models of Parts I–III were chosen less for stylistic nuances than for trueness to type, each providing a clear-cut example of a particular thought pattern or writing form, of a length which the student himself might reasonably be expected to write, or even shorter—a single paragraph, sometimes, for the sake of illustrating most briefly and clearly the pattern involved. To these the essays in Part IV will be a welcome addition, offering opportunity for more extended reading, more involved prose analysis, and more demanding vocabulary study, without loss to the basic simplicity of the original text.

TO THE STUDENT **!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!**

The student is often disturbed because his college grades are not always as high as those he was accustomed to receiving in high school. One of the reasons is that competition at the college level is keener; another is that college standards of accomplishment are necessarily higher. The punctuality, neatness, and accuracy which may have served to satisfy your high school composition teacher will not suffice at the college level; in addition, you must have something worth while to say and a clear-cut plan for saying it.

What you have to say, your plan for saying it, and your accuracy in setting it down on paper—these three indispensables in composition are discussed at some length in "The Preliminaries" under the headings "Content" (pp. 2 ff.), "Organization" (pp. 6 ff.), and "Mechanics" (pp. 19 ff.). Your success in the mechanics of writing will depend not only upon your background (your training in grade and high school, and your ability at self-discipline) but also upon your attention to your college handbook, to your class work, and particularly to your instructor's notations concerning errors in your own writing. Your success in content will depend not only on the living and reading and thinking you have done, but upon your ability to recognize what aspects of that experience, that reflection, are worth relating. The freshman who, assigned a paper setting forth some personal experience, sighed, "I guess I'll have to go out and get run over by a truck first—nothing has ever happened to me," was wrong—his seventeen years had inevitably been filled with much that was worth recounting, once he began to ponder it.

Accuracy in the mechanics of writing is required: your reader should be able even to take it for granted, on the college level. Interest of content is essential: you will someday need to appeal to a wider reading public than is provided by your instructor in composition. But with me-

chanics and with content, this book has little to do; with organization, it has much. For it recognizes that even inherently interesting material may become a maze of incoherent wanderings, unless it is kept firmly in hand. This book has been designed, therefore, to give you training in organization: to that end it sets forth clearly the thought patterns commonly employed in expository prose, and indicates how you can best adapt those patterns to your chosen material.

The two themes which follow will illustrate the need for having some such clear-cut plan in mind before setting pen to paper. Both were written by newly entering college freshmen as part of an orientation test that determined to which of three levels of composition courses students should be assigned: to a remedial non-credit course for those with inadequate previous training, to a standard course for average freshmen, or to an advanced course offering extra credit to superior writers. As for mechanics: both were satisfactorily correct in spelling, punctuation, and grammar. As to content: both were written on the same topic, chosen by their writers from a list of twenty-five. Yet, largely on the basis of these papers, one student was assigned to the lowest level course, the other to the highest. The difference between the two papers is primarily a matter of organization, of planning.

NATURE IS WONDERFUL—SOMETIMES

Student X

Nature is really wonderful most of the time, I think. Think of all the beautiful flowers we see growing. She gives us trees so that we can be in the shade when it is very hot.

It really thrills one to take a trip and see all the beautiful sights of nature. Somehow it gives you a wonderful feeling to think of it all and wonder how it is possible.

It is remarkable how Nature changes the seasons. In the spring everything blooms with new life. Then in the fall,

when the leaves begin to turn all colors, the scenery is beautiful.

Nature usually gives us rain and sunshine when it is needed so that the crops will grow. Of course there are exceptions, such as when it rains and we do not need it.

There are the creeks, rivers, seas, and oceans that we can swim in or travel over.

Nothing is more beautiful than the skies with all the stars and a big moon at night.

There are many beautiful things in Nature that have life, and I think it is marvelous the way she keeps producing more life to start in where the old life left off.

Think of all the various animals Nature gives us. There are many of these from which we get food to help us in our growth. There are many beautiful fowls given to us by Nature. Some have so many different colors that it doesn't look possible for them to exist.

The mountains are so wonderful with their snow-capped tops.

As we are walking along the road, we see many beautifully colored stones.

All in all it seems to me that nature is wonderful about all of the time.

NATURE IS WONDERFUL—SOMETIMES

Student Y

Nature is wonderful—sometimes. Nothing is more beautiful than dawn. The sky brightens, the birds twitter melodiously, and the milk truck whirls to a hasty stop at the back door. The sun, fresh as a daisy even after its all-night vigil over the other half of the world, peeks coyly over the distant horizon, sending amber and rose streaks across the sky. Yes, dawn is beautiful—except when the sun waves a beckoning sunbeam into the eyes of us late-to-bedders. Why weren't nights made longer?

That meadow, that brook, that lovely wood—just the place for our family picnic. The daisies dance in the bright

sunlight of the pasture, while lazy cattle graze or lie and chew their cuds. Eagerly we unpack our lunch box in the verdant grass beneath the shady trees. Why do ants exist?

The view up the river is marvelous. Hazy vapor clouds rise languidly from the lazy ripples of the bend. The lights of a distant river boat twinkle in the dusk as powerful searchlights seek out the hazards of the stream. Shadows dance upon the levee, the waves created by a passing speed-boat lap upon the banks, and the Katydids sing the only song they seem to know. Night and a canoe—the moon and the stars, an aged birch overhanging the shore—but why, when we are parked beneath those overhanging boughs, does the mosquito have to be?

Nature is wonderful—sometimes.

Both papers were written in thirty minutes. X wrote fifty words (over one-fifth) more than Y who, perhaps recognizing that quality always matters more than quantity, evidently spent part of his half hour in planning what he was going to say. As a result Y says much more, of course, in less space, than X does.

1. **Title.** X missed the point. His first sentence, as well as his last, indicates that he has taken the first three words of the topic literally, and sees the fourth only as something he vaguely doesn't agree with. Yet he chose this subject in preference to twenty-four others on a variety of subjects adapted to the freshman's experience. Y, on the other hand, got the point, recognizing that in choosing this topic he was perforce committed not to a sentimental eulogy of Nature, but, by implications of the dash and the fourth word, to a contrast, with a satirical twist.

2. **Plan.** X, obviously, had none, other than to set down, as they came to him, all the items he could think of that might be regarded as Nature's wonders. One can fairly see him chewing his pencil as he tried to recall yet one more—in order to fill up his time and his space. Y, having determined the trend his paper was to take, decided to use three (a good number, for a short paper) examples of the

inconsistency of Nature's joys, and to develop each in turn. Note the balance gained by the similar treatment of the three, even to the question which concludes each. And note the care with which the three are arranged, in chronological order: from an experience in early morning, to midday, to evening. The use of the title sentence to open and close makes an emphatic kind of introduction and conclusion for this brief paper (see page 18, item 7). X's paper could be made longer or shorter at any point, without disruption; Y's is the kind of organic whole with "a beginning, a middle, and an end" (see pp. 6-7) such as all good writing should aspire to be.

3. Content. X not only misinterpreted the topic, but had nothing original to say on the subject as he interpreted it. Yet the statements he does make, inane as they are, could have been given some measure of coherence had he taken the trouble to organize—to group his comments into units according to some kind of logical pattern. (Obviously the mountains of ¶ 9, for instance, belong in the same area as the oceans and skies of ¶¶ 5 and 6.) Y, having first of all thought through the general pattern that the development of his central idea should take, was then free to devote himself to thinking up vivid concrete examples to illustrate his "thesis." Form can demand content, just as content dictates form.

4. Paragraphing. X's paper appears to have eleven paragraphs; but since we define a paragraph as a development of a thought, these are not such, in reality, but mere indented jottings. Y's paragraphs are such unified developments that we would be able to count them even if they were to be printed as a single unit.

5. Point of view. The looseness of X's thinking is further evidenced by his constantly shifting point of view, from "we" to "one" to "you" to "I." Y strikes the first-person-plural viewpoint in the opening example, and maintains it throughout.

Whenever you write, have something to say; but don't start until you have decided on a plan for saying it.

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ASSIGNMENTS IN EXPOSITION



THE PRELIMINARIES

This beginning training is not concerned, then, with any one particular type of writing need—with journalism or report writing, for instance, courses in which may be elected later on by those who wish them. It deals instead with the problems common to all composition of a practical sort—to that useful kind of expression most frequently demanded of the average man or woman, which is known as informative, or expository, writing. This book presents the common logical patterns, "brainpaths," which the mind must follow in order to be understood by

INTRODUCTION

other minds. But mere intelligibility is not always enough; the process of communication presupposes a reader as well as a writer, and it is often necessary, in order to hold him, to interest as well as to inform him. For this reason there will also be some consideration of the devices by which even workaday prose may be made not only comprehensible but interesting.

CONTENT

Your success in college composition, as in all your writing, will depend upon your attention to three things: the content, the organization, and the mechanics. In other words, your writing will be judged by what you have to say, how you say it, and what care you exercise in transcribing it on the written page. Each is important. Yet when, with a spare hour before you, you leaf through a magazine, what determines your choice of the article you will settle down to read? The subject matter, of course. Never forget that in your own writing, as well, content is the first consideration; for it is the subject that you choose, above all, that will make your writing a delight or a bore.

Sometimes, particularly in classroom writing, your instructor may limit your choice to a list of timely, or timeless, topics. Your first task then will be to choose the particular one which interests you most—and in which you can consequently hope to succeed in interesting others. The assignments in this book call rather for a designated pattern of thought or type of composition, leaving you free to choose your own subject.

Subject Limitation

You will be somewhat guided in your choice, however, by the nature of the task assigned; a problem in definition, for example, necessarily confines you to a certain type of experience which you could not well utilize in one of contrast or analysis. The length of your paper sets another kind of limit upon your choice of subject, as the sad fresh-

man found who is said to have chosen as the topic for his first college essay, "The Beginning and Development of All Things and Their Results." If you are assigned the usual short paper—around 300, or 500, or perhaps 1000 words—you will realize that a topic like the decline and fall of the Roman Empire (to which Edward Gibbon devoted six volumes), or world peace, would be far beyond your immediate scope. On the other hand, that of how to tie a shoestring or open a door is too trifling to merit your serious attention. Most of your college themes will be brief—compared to the average magazine article, for instance—and you must choose a subject which is worth while, yet capable of receiving adequate treatment within the limits imposed.

Remember that it is always better to take a subject small enough to be treated thoroughly, rather than one so large that you can do little more than sketch its main outlines. Take as a rule for your writing the specialist's motto, "More and more about less and less." And, having chosen and limited your subject, be sure to *stay within it*, shutting your eyes to the numerous enticing digressions in which it may tempt you to indulge. For unity of content is a "first" in all successful composition.

Reader Interest

Length of treatment, however, is a mere matter of convenience or appropriateness; your choice of which magazine article to read is determined less by length than by the inherent interest of the subject matter itself. But someone else in the same circumstances will choose differently, for the same things do not interest all. One person may have a passion for even the most obscure and learned bits of information about vacuum tubes, which to another would be dull even if comprehensible. Who, then, shall determine whether or not a subject has interest?

As a writer, you must remember your reader, thinking not alone of the thing you feel like saying, but of what

he will care to hear. And who is your reader? Except in letter writing, he remains unknown. In your college writing he is obviously your instructor; but do not direct your writing primarily at him (or relax in the happy thought that he *must* read it). Write as though you were a professional, obliged to sell your wares to the public. Write for your classmates, your college group, your family or neighbors—in other words, for the “general reader,” that layman on whose education and intelligence you can increasingly rely, but who is in no sense a specialist in any field. *If in your college writing you practice well the art of interesting him, you will have no difficulty in adapting your skill to whatever restricted or specialized group you may be called upon to write for later.*

Reader interest should always be one of your first considerations as a writer, even though you are writing only a college examination or a hasty letter home. But you need not resort to cheap or flashy “journalistic” practices to obtain it. Your reader can be interested without being either startled or amused, and will judge you on the inherent value of what you have to say rather than on its merely superficial attractions.

Personal Experience

What determines the worth of a subject? For one thing, the fitness of the writer to deal with it. You can assume that the general reader is interested in all the topics of the day—of local, national, or international significance. *But unless your own experience of doing or thinking gives you something original to add to the facts and opinions current in the daily news, avoid them in your writing.* If you must say, with Will Rogers, “All I know is what I read in the papers,” avoid that area of your knowledge when you come to choosing subjects; your reader has access to the papers too, and thus stands in little need of any rehashing that you may contemplate.

Recognize, then, that your chief claim to an audience lies

in yourself, and refrain, as far as possible, from a mere reworking of other men's ideas. You are your own best source for material. You have now lived for something like a score of years, through experiences shared only in their general outline with others; in their precise pattern and in your reaction to them, they are as highly individual as your fingerprints. Human existence has enough in common, happily, to make possible its communication; yet it is always enough different—more happily still—to remain interesting. The simple topic, "My First Day at School," assigned to a class of twenty-four, will reveal not only an experience shared by all of us, but twenty-four aspects of that experience so varied that if each author but succeeds in revealing the significance of his own part in it, our interest will remain undiminished through the entire two dozen papers. The difference between the good and the poor news commentator, as you may have noticed, does not lie in the news.

Do not assume too hastily that these remarks are intended to limit you to an account of the things you yourself have experienced directly. Man lives on two levels: that of his own life, and that of the existence of others through observing them and reading about them in books. You are as much entitled to report on these vicarious experiences as on your own actual ones, *provided that you have, through sympathy and reflection, made them your own*. Every college class gives you a chance to choose whether to remain among those students who merely memorize the facts of the course in order to parrot a response, or to join those who master them by relating them intelligently to the whole human picture. The world is overfull of "wise fools" crammed with unintegrated data.

✓ Take, then, as your first rule in subject choosing, the fact that only your personal experiences—the things you have done and the impressions they have made on you, the things you have seen and the way you have seen them, and the thoughts you have made your own—constitute a legiti-



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mate source of material for the original writing which most of these assignments will require; for only through these can you hope to make a real contribution to the experience of your reader. And otherwise—why write?

ORGANIZATION

So much for your choice of content, always the chief determining factor in whether or not a given paper is worth while. But you have perhaps experienced the reading of several versions of the same event in the press and wondered why, with the same subject matter, one was so fascinating, another so deadly dull. Why, for example, did Ernie Pyle's reporting of life at the front stand head and shoulders above that of other newsmen equally experienced and well intentioned? Why, of those twenty-four essays on "My First Day at School," would some inevitably be far more readable than others?

These questions can receive no simple answer, for the problem is a very complex literary one in which a number of differentiating factors are at work: attitude toward the subject, choice of details, that literary intangible known as "style," and so on. But one of the most important of them for you, as a student writer of expository prose, is the matter of primary organization—of planning the order in which your material is to be grouped and arranged so as to produce a clear, easy-to-follow pattern of ideas rather than an incoherent jumble of related mutterings.

Every composition must have a beginning, a middle, and an end. This statement may appear to be a mere commonplace at first sight, but it is actually a piece of very sound and ancient literary advice. You have had the annoying experience of turning to another page in search of the end of a story or an article because the author failed to close on that note of finality which would have left you with a satisfying sense of completeness. Similarly, the inexperienced writer may irritate by plunging too abruptly into the middle of his subject, without the grace of any in-

troductory gesture such as would set the reader comfortably on his way. Even the middle is sometimes slighted, so that we get a distorted accomplishment with a pleasing introduction and an adequate conclusion, but without enough development of the central portion—the main body of the paper—to justify such dignified extremities.

We might go so far as to say that your composition has three particularly important parts: the beginning, the middle, and the end. The most noteworthy of these is surely the beginning, which is likely to determine, after all, whether you will have a reader or not! But who would minimize the value of the end, through which you make your final and lasting impression on him? And yet, to disregard the importance of the middle, which bears almost the full weight of your ideas—that would be folly indeed. Each of these three sections of the composition, you may wisely conclude, is of such significance as to merit your particular attention.

Introduction

Length. How long an introduction you should have is of course a matter of proportion. A full page of introductory material in a two-page paper is obviously top-heavy, whereas a whole chapter of introduction may be appropriate in a full-length book. Your beginning may be a paragraph or two, or only a sentence or phrase; the important thing is that it gives the reader an agreeable sense of “having the situation well in hand.”

Content. What your introduction shall contain depends upon your subject and your purpose. It should, first of all, aim to attract your reader—to lure him into going on. It ought, then, to be interesting, and to lead gracefully and naturally into the subject to which the body of your paper is devoted.

1. It may be a rhetorical question designed to set your reader to thinking along the lines of the answers which your paper will provide:

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a. What is Homecoming? Homecoming is trouble. Homecoming is joy. Homecoming is hurry, excitement, splendor, labor, fun, sentimentalism.

b. Is my personality at the mercy of a group of ductless glands? Modern science would seem to say so.

/2. It may be a statement designed to attract by startling:

a. Robot! The very term sets the imagination to work, and evokes scenes in which giant monsters are killing off hordes of people, blood is flowing in streams around the wreckage of buildings, and women and children are running helplessly to and fro.

b. If you are an "I don't believe it" reader, don't go on.

3. A narrative opening with its "what happened?" interest may be useful:

a. A bugle sounds. The band strikes up the processional march.

b. Sweat dripped off my face. My new shirt stuck to me. My hands were smeared and my shoes muddy. My wet hair strung over my face. But it didn't matter—I was showing pigs.

4. Better still if the liveliness of actual dialogue is added:

a. The announcer said, "And now, ladies and gentlemen, one of the Flying Illini will try to break last year's record of seventy-eight turns on the high trapeze."

b. "That must be the town," I said. We had just crossed a divide and were looking on a small western town about a mile ahead and to the right of us.

5. Beginning with a quotation—an appropriate stanza of poetry or line of prose—is an old device that may still be used effectively:

a. As Francis Bacon once wrote, "Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested." One of those "few" is certainly S. I. Haya-kawa's *Language in Action*.

- b. "Southern trees bear a strange fruit,
Blood on the leaves, and blood at the root,
Black bodies swingin' in the southern breeze,
Strange fruit hangin' from the poplar trees."

This is the grotesque ballad of a southern singer. It is indeed a strange fruit that southern trees bear at a lynching.

Note: All the above are rhetorical devices, none of which should be overdone. Do not come to lean upon the rhetorical question, for instance, or the exclamatory statement, but practice various types of beginnings in order to test their relative effectiveness in a given paper.

6. A beginning which gives the **history or background** of a subject is often called for:

- a. Surrealism has been in existence now for about a quarter of a century.

- b. The business of rehabilitating and improving men and their families is a relatively young one.

7. A **condensed statement** requiring the explanation that follows in the body of your paper may attract the reader to your fuller version:

- a. Even the undignified word "rushing" is too placid to give an indication of the cutthroat activity involved in a university sorority rush week.

- b. "You would have understood me had you waited." Dowson in that line from his poem of the same name writes the story of his life.

8. Your introduction may, of course, merely state clearly the **problem** to be discussed or the **fact** to be established. In many of the more technical types of writing, such directness is to be preferred to the more decorative beginnings.

- a. Housing for independents should be as desirable and healthful as for fraternity students.

b. The woman in tennis today is a type entirely different from the one of yesterday.

The introduction should be adequate in length, and well suited to the particular kind of task it takes upon itself. An excellent type of beginning for many of your papers may be that in which you indicate your own experience with the subject to give the reader confidence in your ability to discuss it. But for a theme on a manufacturing procedure to begin, "I worked as an inspector in a factory," and then to plunge directly into a discussion of the product of that plant is unduly abrupt. With the intrusion of the personal element, the reader is inevitably left asking such questions as "When? Where? Why?" Expanded into "Last year, in order to earn money for my college expenses, I worked as an inspector in a South Bend factory," it becomes an agreeable testimony to the fitness of the writer to undertake the discussion which follows. Do not go to the opposite extreme from abruptness, however, and precede such a paper with your life story or a history of manufacturing.

Body

The detailed plan necessary to the writing of a long and involved exposition will be taken up more fully in the unit devoted to the outline. But even the briefest of papers requires at least a mental working-through before the writing itself is begun, in order to avoid the error of setting down a jumble of ideas as they happen to flash into your mind, and to insure an orderly and coherent presentation of the important points.

Grouping. The business of organizing involves two steps: the grouping of like ideas together, and the arrangement of the groups into a logical sequence. The various kinds of order resulting depend upon your material and your purpose, and are taken up in detail in various later assignments. But to explain in general what the problem

of organization means, we shall assume that you wish to write an essay of several pages on a typical day in your life as a college student.

You will start by setting down in the simplest of all order patterns—the chronological, or time arrangement—the activities which you feel you might perhaps include in such a discussion. The result will be a dozen or more items which may look like this:

1. Getting up
2. Washing and dressing
3. Eating breakfast
4. Going to English class
5. Working in chemistry lab
6. Going home for the mail
7. Eating lunch
8. Taking a nap
9. Going to economics class
10. Having a coke date
11. Studying in the library
12. Eating dinner
13. Going to a show
14. Studying at home
15. Writing letters
16. Going to bed

To go ahead with the writing of your paper from such a scattering of notes will be unwise, however, even if you decide to keep to the order of time in your presentation. For you—and consequently the reader—will be confused with the number of small details, which read rather aimlessly when merely set down one after another. Your next step, then, is to group them into larger units of related items which will prove more manageable. Your plan may then look like this:

- I. *Early morning activities*
 - A. Getting up
 - B. Washing and dressing
 - C. Eating breakfast

II. Forenoon activities

- A. Going to English class
- B. Working in chemistry lab
- C. Going home for mail
- D. Eating lunch

III. Afternoon activities

- A. Taking a nap
- B. Going to economics class
- C. Having a coke date
- D. Studying in the library
- E. Eating dinner

IV. Evening activities

- A. Going to a show
- B. Studying at home
- C. Writing letters
- D. Going to bed

You may well ask what has been accomplished by this grouping, since the items and their order have been left unchanged. The answer is that your approach to your material will be changed, for instead of handling sixteen small items you are now planning in terms of four larger points made up of varying numbers of subpoints. The effect on your sense of proportion resulting from this new perspective will be as useful to the reader who sets about to follow your train of thought as to you, the writer who must construct it.

So much for the chronological order, which involves a mere grouping of items in a time relationship. But perhaps, looking again at the same sixteen items, you feel that the time in which these events take place is relatively unimportant—that there is a logical order of another sort which will provide a more satisfactory pattern for your thought. Some items, for instance, like dressing and eating, are the mere routine of daily existence anywhere, and might well be handled briefly together, or even omitted; others, your classes and study periods, are more vital matters peculiar to academic life; while still others constitute

the social contacts, near and far, which enliven the collegiate routine. Your main headings, if you follow this arrangement, might be :

- I. Routine activities
- II. Classes and study
- III. Recreation

Arranging. But now, chronological order removed, there appears a second problem—how to arrange these main headings. Here, numerous principles of order may operate, depending on your subject :

- 1. from the known to the unknown
- 2. from the simple to the complex
- 3. from the specific to the general
- 4. from the general to the specific
- 5. from the less important to the more important

In the simple subject of how you spend your day, matters of mere routine might reasonably be handled first, briefly, to get them out of your way. Which of the two remaining topics to place next will depend upon what your purpose is—what you want to emphasize. If the education is more important, stress the fact by writing last and longest of your classes and study periods ; if your social contacts with others are more significant to you, reverse the order. However difficult your subject and however many main points you may have, always arrange them in an ascending order of difficulty or importance. Such an order will be easy for your reader to follow and will avoid giving him the “let-down” feeling that may result if at any time you fire your bigger guns before the smaller.

Subpoints. Good preliminary organization involves not only the determination of main points and their logical arrangement but also a careful discrimination between what is really of first order in importance, what secondary, and so on. A student writing on the harvest of gladiolas on a

commercial scale first saw his material as falling into four main divisions :

- I. Picking
- II. Wrapping
- III. Tying
- IV. Putting in water

But a reconsideration showed him that the last three steps were so closely allied as to be parts of one phase of the process, comparable to Division I as a whole rather than in parts. This plan then emerged :

- I. Picking
- II. Preparing for sale
 - A. Wrapping
 - B. Tying
 - C. Putting in water

Notice that this change did not affect the order of the items, since they are controlled by a time pattern ; but it did insure the writer's seeing the true relationships existing among the various divisions of his subject, and consequently his properly apportioning the space to be devoted to them in the finished theme.

In the suggested plan for your day's activities above, a completed outline of Division I might show these subordinate relationships :

- I. Routine
 - A. Preparations
 - 1. Getting up
 - 2. Washing and dressing
 - B. Food
 - 1. Eating breakfast
 - 2. Eating lunch
 - 3. Eating dinner
 - C. Rest
 - 1. Taking a nap
 - 2. Going to bed

For a short theme you will not need to work out your plan in such detail; but you must nonetheless keep your sense of proportion as you write, to avoid devoting too much space to a logically minor point, or too little to a major one.

Paragraphing. You may be tempted to construe your completed outline as a paragraph outline—one in which each main point calls for development into a single paragraph. In the short paper this assumption may often be correct, but merely because the length of treatment makes it reasonable. Treated very briefly, for instance, your four-point outline might conceivably be handled in a single paragraph; developed to book length, each point might require hundreds. *There is no necessary relationship between the number of main points and the number of paragraphs in which you develop them.* A student writing on how to make facial masks jotted down this plan:

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- I. Preparing the materials
- II. Applying the materials to the head
- III. Removing the negative mask
- IV. Making the positive mask from the negative

As he wrote his essay from these points, the Introduction became three paragraphs; the subject being an unusual one, he felt the need of introductory material covering his first acquaintance with masks, his experience with them, and their usefulness. One paragraph each sufficed to handle Divisions I, II, and III, while two were devoted to IV. In brief, the writer recognized that the main divisions of his outline covered material of varying length and importance, and he developed his paper accordingly.

Transitions. There is always a danger for the beginning writer that, as he writes his paper from a few carefully thought-through main points, it will seem to break up into as many little essays. You can overcome this tendency by the skillful use of devices known as transitions, which

serve to tie together the separate parts into a unified whole.

In a long work, a transition may be a paragraph in itself. Note how the following, which appeared at the end of the second chapter of a full-length book (Jeans' *The Universe Around Us*) eases the reader into a new section by summing up what has been done in Chapters I and II and suggesting what is to come in Chapter III:

We have explored space to the farthest depths to which our telescopes can probe; we have explored into the intricacies of the minute structures we call atoms, of which the whole material universe is built; we now wish to go exploring in time.

In the short paper, a transition usually need be no more than a sentence, a phrase, or even a word (sometimes at the end of one paragraph, but more often at the beginning of the next) which indicates the shift in thought. The paragraph openings which follow are clearly not the beginning sentences of the works from which they are taken, for they indicate that something has gone before, and help to tie it up with what is to come:

In the second place, there was no room available.

As the job progressed, there was more bleating.

On the last subject, the one of gossiping, I wax indignant.

Nevertheless I like working on a farm.

There is one section, however, in which no change was made.

I must mention the cheering, too.

Besides the chroniclers, we have another unquestionably reliable source.

As I have said, I sell my wool through the pool.

Such transitions are equally valuable within a paragraph, to connect its parts by expressing the proper relationship between them. Among the most common transitional words are these:

1. The personal and demonstrative pronouns which, by harking back to their antecedents expressed earlier, help to tie the new thought to the old (*he, they, this, that, etc.*).

2. Numbers designating parts of an orderly arrangement (*first, second, third*).
3. Words indicating order in time (*next, then, in the meantime*) or space (*beside, above, behind, below*).
4. Words indicating additions to what precedes (*and, furthermore, moreover, in addition, besides, again, likewise, similarly*).
5. Words indicating contrast to what precedes (*but, however, on the other hand, nevertheless*).
6. Words indicating results of the preceding (*therefore, hence, thus, for, consequently*).

Watch for such transitional devices in your reading, and make a deliberate effort to include them appropriately throughout your writing, varying them enough so that none becomes monotonous through repetition. Not every paragraph, by any means, demands a transitional opening. On the other hand, your transitions between the main sections of your essay will need to be stronger than those merely between or within paragraphs, in order to insure your reader's awareness of your movement from one division to the next.

Having completed our preparations, we may now turn to the actual procedure.

Before beginning the study of integral calculus, let us review what we have found out about the differential calculus.

In contrast to this monotonous use of cymbals, consider for a moment what I believe to be a highly artistic use.

Conclusion

Like the introduction, the conclusion will of course vary in length with the length of the paper, being a chapter, a paragraph, a sentence or phrase, or merely a sense of finality created by your closing words. It may accomplish its purpose in many ways:

1. It may summarize the content of the essay, reducing it in a brief statement to its main points, in order to drive

them home to the reader and to leave them clearly in his mind.

2. It may announce the main point for the first time, the essay having been devoted to building up, inductively, to it. (This is difficult but emphatic, and worth trying occasionally.)
3. It may leave a question in the reader's mind, to insure his thinking further on the subject.
4. It may come to conclusions or suggest results and significances reaching far beyond the nature of the subject itself.
5. It may indulge in prophecy, suggesting the possible future of the subject to whose past and present the essay may have been devoted.
6. It may hark back to the situation presented by the introduction, thus creating a particularly unified effect through the so-called "picture-frame" device.
7. With similar effect, it may repeat a sentence or slogan used to open the essay, or perhaps refer to the title.
8. It may close with an apt quotation from poetry or prose.

Whatever the method used, the conclusion must exist, in spirit or in fact, in order to save the end of your essay from creating an unpleasant sense of abruptness. It should not be unnecessarily long-drawn-out, but should be designed to make a lasting impression on the reader.

Title

This may seem a rather belated mention of the thing which stands first of all in the presentation of any paper; but only now, perhaps, with the paper planned and written, are you in a position to decide definitely what to call it. You know your *topic*, of course—your choice of plan and treatment has been entirely determined by it. But every composition must have a *title*, and you will do well to choose it only after you have seen the exact shape to which your material has been formed in the creative process.

A title ought to be reasonably brief, a word or phrase being generally preferred to a complete sentence. What it says will depend not only upon the specific content of the paper but upon its purpose. For matter-of-fact informative writing such as reports, a descriptive title stating the actual content of the paper as clearly as possible in brief space is recommended. But for more creative types, a so-called "trick" title, which arouses rather than satisfies the reader's curiosity as to what follows, is to be preferred. The authors of a modern textbook entitled *Down to Earth* indicate by its title, as surely as by its content, a shift in educational approach since the days of its early predecessor, *A Textbook of Geological Science*. A book called *Exploring the Heavens* leads a reader rightly to expect a book on astronomy which is intelligible to the layman.

The topics suggested in the assignments in this book, you will discover, indicate subject matter only. Whether you use one of them or choose another subject of which they remind you, you will be obliged to decide on an original title suited to your own treatment of the material. Always keep in mind the fact that your title is your first chance to win or lose your reader, and should consequently be chosen with care.

MECHANICS

Your grade on your college writing will result from a combination of the impressions made on your instructor by your subject, your plan, and your accuracy in the details called *mechanics*. It may sometimes appear, from the marks in the margin, that his chief concern is with accuracy in spelling, punctuation, grammar, usage, and sentence structure. True, these matters loom large in the work of the many students who have yet to master the mere decencies of accurate composition; it is for this reason that some do better work in speech courses, oral English freeing them from such nuisances as the apostrophe.

Care in such details is an essential to satisfactory writ-

ing; yet, sadly enough, you will gain no readers by accuracy alone. Correct spelling is no more praiseworthy than good manners and appropriate dress, and, like them, is conspicuous only by its absence. Yet just as the most worthy young man may create an unfavorable effect in a sweat shirt at a formal dance, so the best of subjects and plans can make but a poor impression if the reader is continually jarred by nagging errors in mechanics.

It is the dream of every instructor to be able to read and judge student papers purely on their intrinsic merits, unannoyed by such superficialities as inaccurate mechanics; it should be your aim to free your own writing of such distractions, which, bear in mind, make their inevitable impression on other readers than your instructor in English. Depending upon your previous preparation and habits, your task may be simple or difficult, but it can be accomplished, in time.

If you are actually ignorant of good use, conscientious drill with a good handbook and thorough revision of returned themes will gradually enable you to overcome your handicap. Often more troublesome, however, are the little careless mistakes which creep in because your mind is always traveling ahead of your pen. You know the difference between "to" and "too," but just "didn't think." To overcome such errors, you must develop the eagle eye of the proofreader, who is to be credited with the almost flawless pages of books and magazines. Careful revision is a natural part of the preparation of term papers and themes written outside of class, when time is relatively plentiful; but you should remember that it is likely to be even more important in letters, examinations, and class themes, written under stress. Under such conditions write less, if necessary, in order to save time for revision. It is a good rule never to let any manuscript leave your hands without a careful rereading, *letter by letter*, for possible slips of the pen.

COMBINATIONS

Patterns

When men think, speak, or write clearly, they avail themselves of a number of types of patterns which the human mind in general recognizes, grasps, and uses. Because of the importance of your learning to express your ideas logically, some of the assignments in this book will offer you the opportunity to practice arranging your thoughts according to some one particular pattern in common use. You will be asked, for example, to define, to classify, to divide, to contrast—in other words, to devote your attention, for practice purposes, to the problems arising in the use of one particular pattern of thought.

Such exercises are valuable for the purpose of analyzing a given pattern into its particular uses, procedures, difficulties, and results. But you must remember that they are only exercises, and have about the same relationship to professional writing that the practice of scales has to a finished solo. The best of writing is a skillful combination of as many of these patterns as can contribute to the desired effect; it may make use of definition, classification, division, and contrast, for example, within the limits of a single essay, as the need arises.

Forms

Similarly, the writing to be done in this course is, as mentioned earlier, primarily expository; yet the best of expository writing will avail itself of a happy mixture of other forms as well. The problem of communication is met by four means, conventionally known as the forms of discourse. Two of these, exposition and argumentation, aim primarily at instruction; two, narration and description, at entertainment.

Exposition is devoted to the expression of ideas—of opinions and explanations. It is the form used in textbooks, essays, magazine articles, and reports of scientific research.

You will use it in writing examinations and term papers in college, and for other purposes, now and later, that demand an expression of what you know or believe.

Argumentation is similar to exposition in content, different in purpose. It too is interested in the communication of ideas, but it is further concerned with their being accepted and acted upon by the reader. The newspaper editorial, the political pamphlet, advertising, and pleas for this and that cause all call for the use of argumentation. You will use it in campus journalism and politics—and sometimes in letters home.

Narration relates events; its charm springs from our persistent human curiosity to know "what happened." It appears not only in novels and short stories but in biographies, newspaper reporting, feature articles, and all other accounts of personal experience. You use it whenever you write a letter or a diary entry recording your own activities.

Description, strictly speaking, is a mere record of sense impressions—the communication through words of the thing seen, heard, tasted, smelled, felt. It seldom appears at any length alone, but is mingled throughout the other forms, to which it adds the same vividness that your senses are constantly giving to your daily existence.

In fact, this fourfold division is merely an academic distinction, for, as you will discover in both your reading and your writing, one form is seldom used unmixed with others. *Aesop's Fables* are delightful animal stories which read like narrative, certainly—until we come up against that final line and discover that the story of the fox and the grapes was merely a sugar-coated means of arguing us into swallowing the moral, "It is easy to despise what you cannot get."

Pure argumentation is unthinkable (except for those unpopular persons who are willing to "argue without saying anything"), for its basis, as has been mentioned, is exposition. Narration, similarly, can scarcely exist without

description, for it is almost impossible (and certainly unwise) to tell what happened without an accompanying account of the sights and sounds involved. Page after page of pure description, however, would tempt many a reader to "skip."

Effective writing is likely to involve such a combination of these four forms as would defy you to name the result—until you realize that the important consideration is not the *form* but the *purpose*. Your problem as a writer is not "Which form shall I use?" but "What do I wish to accomplish, and by what means can I best do it?" The assignments in this book are intended primarily to provide training in the writing of exposition, that serviceable, idea-carrying form which is and will be demanded of you far more frequently than any other in this workaday world. Its first requirement is accuracy and clearness. But the pressure of competition provided by the modern world cannot be withstood by accuracy and clearness alone; he who succeeds must express himself forcefully as well. As you write exposition, then, keep in mind the vividness which bare expository fact can gain through a skillful admixture of the other forms of discourse; if you would define a new term, remember the strength of narrative incident; if you would explain a new mechanism, remember the value of descriptive details; if you would be convincing, remember the power of argumentative devices.

Because of the importance of learning to mingle these forms, the first three units in this book are concerned not with the problems of exposition as such, but with the possibilities of skillfully blending into it the virtues of description, narration, and argumentation. You may thus be reminded, when you come to the later assignments in expository patterns and problems, of the value of a free and flexible mingling of the forms, that your writing may become effective as well as accurate, memorable as well as clear.

ASSIGNMENT

1. Make for each of the following omnibus subjects a list of a half dozen phrases which you feel would be suitable topics on which to write, from personal experience, papers of 500 to 1000 words, of interest to the general reader: chemistry, religion, aviation, music, agriculture, art, sports, electricity, literature, nature.

Example: Education—my first day at school
the little red schoolhouse
games at recess
our high school physics class
my favorite extracurricular activity
the best teacher I have known
why I came to college

2. For any one of the subjects you have suggested above, write five different openings, a sentence to a paragraph in length, suitable for different purposes or directed to different types of readers. Discuss the various effects gained.

3. Prepare a plan for a paper on a day spent at a fair, in a city, at a picnic, with relatives (or elsewhere).

a. Set down in chronological sequence the dozen or so items you wish to discuss.

b. Group them under appropriate headings into a few manageable units.

c. Regroup them according to some other order than time sequence.

d. Arrange your groups in c into what you consider the most effective order, and explain why you think it to be so.

4. Go through a unit of this book (both text and examples), a chapter of another textbook, or a current magazine article, searching for transitional devices, both between paragraphs and within them.

5. a. Bring in a list of ten titles of non-fiction books or of magazine articles which caught your attention, listing after each the subject with which it deals.

b. For six of the theme subjects you chose in 1 above, write titles which will be more appealing than the mere descriptive wording of your topics.

Example: Choosing a career—"Eeny Meeny"

////////// P A R T I //////////
AIDS TO EXPOSITION

UNIT 1 **////////////////////**

DESCRIPTIVE EXPOSITION

The human mind must often deal with the abstract—concepts like theft, nature, mankind; but it is much more readily impressed by the concrete—a bad check, a tree, a boy. Yet even these things are general, and the mind still more dearly loves the specific—a check for ten dollars signed by George Henderson and stamped “No Funds”; a stately elm towering alone above the horizon against a ruddy sunset; a tousle-headed urchin *trudging* dejectedly along a dry creek bottom, fishing pole in hand. Such addition of details and choice of words renders vivid and lasting to the reader what would otherwise be but a vague and fleeting impression.

Description as an Aid

Description, as you have noted, is a form of discourse which seldom appears at any length alone; great chunks of it written for its own sake, in fact, are likely to be wearisome. The older novelists were fond of introducing a new character with a long descriptive passage in which was catalogued every detail of his face, physique, and dress. But a steady bombardment of the senses, even vicariously through the printed page, soon numbs them; and the bored reader begins thinking, “Yes, yes, but go on—what is going to *happen?*” Modern practice, therefore, tends rather to reduce such a catalogue to a few significant details (the reader’s imagination will supply such others as are required), and to bring them out gradually in the course of the narrative.

You will do well to scatter your descriptive details in like manner throughout your expository writing, so that the reader will never impatiently complain, “A pretty picture—but what are you driving at?” Instead, he will unconsciously absorb your report of sense impressions, which

will clarify and enliven, without impeding the progress of your explanation. If in this unit you are asked to write short pieces of almost unadulterated description, the purpose is to call your attention to the keen observation and skillful word choice necessary to the successful use of this form of discourse. But you will remember that description is best used only as a handmaiden to your larger purpose—of telling a story, winning an argument, or clarifying an explanation. In the practical type of expository writing which will most frequently be required of you, be particularly certain that any description you indulge in actually aids, by furnishing necessary details or creating a desired mood, in carrying out your primary purpose. Do not yield to the temptation to spread it on as mere ornament.

The Five Senses. Description has been defined as that type of writing which endeavors to recreate for the reader the sense impressions of the writer; and you will do well to remember that there are still five senses, even though for civilized man they have all lost much of their keenness. We are most of us too visual-minded, and tend to think of description only in terms of what we see. But the things we hear and smell and taste and feel are also important in the sum of human experience, and the sensations of sound and scent, touch and flavor, should have their place in your descriptive writing. Imagine trying to recreate verbally for a foreigner the experience of attending an American county fair in terms of sight alone, without including the shouts of the barkers at the amusement concessions and the clatter of machinery operating the various rides; the odors from the food-stands, the barns, the crowd; the festive flavors of the hot dogs and the cotton candy; and the grittiness of the dirt on everything you touch.

One reason why description tends to depend overmuch on mere sight impressions is that how a thing looks can be told much more readily than how it tastes or smells. The English language, thanks to its extensive borrowings, is particularly rich in adjectives, but far more of them

designate size, shape, and color than flavor, sound, or feeling.

Descriptive Devices

You will find certain devices—the literal comparison, the basic image, the figure of speech—essential to making clear many kinds of impressions, and valuable to all.

Literal Comparison. Once you have classified a new taste sensation into sweet or sour, bitter or salty, you have pretty well exhausted the descriptive adjectives available; but you haven't done much to translate that experience—to recreate for the reader, in words, the sensation that you received through the taste buds. You will find yourself seeking, then, for some common experience with which you can compare it: "Venison tastes like roast beef, but has a more pronounced flavor."

Basic Image. Another kind of comparison useful in description involves establishing a basic image through the use of a simple analogy. In this device there is no identity between the things compared, but a certain illuminating point of similarity: a building may be likened to an L, for instance, in order to present its shape quickly and clearly; or the main streets of a city may be described as radiating from the center like the spokes of a wheel.

Figures of Speech. The literal comparison and the basic image are useful descriptive devices because they help to clarify—to make the unknown known by comparing it with the already familiar. The chief virtue of the figure of speech is that it adds vividness to the sensation described.

1. ***The simile*** is a comparison (directly expressed with "like" or "as") of two things essentially unlike save in a single quality, for the sake of registering that quality unforgettably on the reader's mind. In "Jack is like a wild beast when he gets angry" there is no attempt at literal truth, but the quality of dangerous fierceness in the beast is invoked in order to intensify the reader's impression of Jack's loss of self-control.

2. **The metaphor** is like the simile but more direct. Where the simile clearly labels itself a comparison by using "like" or "as," the metaphor says that "Jack is a wild beast when he gets angry"—an even more forceful way of accomplishing the same end. "I took one swallow, and immediately a swarm of devils started chasing each other with red-hot pitchforks down my throat" is no account of fact, but it succeeds admirably in getting across to the reader the kind of sensation experienced.
3. **Hyperbole** further intensifies by deliberate exaggeration—well beyond the point where belief is expected or possible. "The sink held a mountain of dirty dishes." "The minute hand galloped toward twelve."
4. **Personification** is a figure of speech in which human qualities are given to animals, objects, or concepts in order to explain those non-human things in terms familiar to mankind. "The motor coughed once, then died." "The trees groaned in the evening breeze."

These common figures of speech are powerful aids to vividness in descriptive writing, but they should be used with caution.

1. **Avoid triteness.** The fact that a figure has been used until hackneyed may be a tribute to the one-time strength that caused such popularity, but there is little vigor remaining in expressions like "as red as a beet," "a carpet of flowers," and "died laughing."
2. **Do not mix your figures.** "You must dig deep in order to climb the ladder of success" is an unfortunate attempt to blend two different metaphorical images.
3. **Do not pile up figurative language** in such quantities that it impedes your thought. "He expected the act to be duller than a financial report, but it was as lively as a colt newly let out to pasture and the heroine was as fascinating as a snake charmer." An occasional figure is more effective than a flood.
4. **Avoid poor taste in figurative usage.** To liken the sun to a bright copper penny may convey accurately enough

your impression of its color, but the accompanying connotations of insignificance in size and value may destroy some more important effect that you desire to produce. "As we started up, the old stairway groaned like a sick man whose stomach has been stepped on" is too repulsive a figure for the simple impression requiring description. Avoid, for serious purposes, the use of a figure that tends to attract attention to itself rather than to the subject which it is meant to illuminate. "Under his management the business began to branch out like a potato in a damp cellar" tends to make one visualize the potato and forget the business.

Diction

Helpful as the devices discussed above may be in adding clarity and vividness to your picture, your description must depend primarily upon the power of your general diction, or choice of words. Avoid, of course, the abstract and the general in favor of the concrete and the specific, for only the latter have picture-making powers. To tell us that a room is clean or a girl beautiful is to leave us still very hazy as to how either the room or the girl looked; it will take mention of a highly polished floor or crisp black curls to start our imaginations to actual visualizing.

Use a few strong words rather than many ordinary ones. The process of describing brings to your mind those modifying parts of speech, adjectives and adverbs, and you are likely to proceed to use them in too great profusion. Search first for the vivid noun and verb; a concrete verb like "shuffle," is not only briefer but also more effective than the general "walk" plus modifiers. Consider the many and various shades of meanings packed into these other more specific words for the idea of "walk": prowl, stroll, saunter, patrol, march, pace, trudge, plod, wander, ramble, stride.

Denotation and Connotation. Most words have two levels of meaning: the denotative, or basic, and the conno-

tative, or suggestive. On the first level, the language is full of synonyms; on the second, it is safe to say that no two words mean exactly the same thing—witness the so-called synonyms for “walk” listed above. To draw mental pictures which are vivid as well as accurate, you must consider not only the fundamental idea behind the words you use, but the shades of associated meanings of which they have become possessed. “Famous” and “notorious” both mean “well known”—basically—yet they have come to connote two very different senses of renown. “House” and “home,” similarly, are denotative synonyms; but the difference in their emotional value makes a song about “House, sweet house” ridiculous. Learn to use not only the dictionary but a book of synonyms and a thesaurus, and use them carefully and well. The little girl who (eager to vary her vocabulary and finding that “chaste” meant “pure”) wrote of the chaste water supply in her city is better remembered for her effort than for her success.

Kinds of Description

Description, as you will discover from the model passages printed at the end of this unit, can be of two very different kinds, depending on your purpose in using it. You may wish merely to inform, or you may desire in addition to give pleasure—to add enjoyment to whatever may be the essential purpose of your prose. Either type of description is an aid to exposition: the first, a necessity; the second, an agreeable luxury.

(Informative Description. If you are called on to explain a mechanism or a process, you will be obliged to use description; but for this purpose the briefest and clearest terms you can muster, through which you can communicate the essential facts, will be sufficient. You will be concerned with terms in their simplest denotative and unequivocal meanings; and if they do not suffice, you may turn to analogical comparisons with more familiar objects: “The plunger looks like a fountain pen”; “The handle is

T-shaped." If you invoke senses other than sight, you will do so for equally practical reasons—"Sand until it is entirely smooth to the touch"; "Allow to stand until you can detect the faint odor of rotten eggs." Drawings may well supplement or supplant words in such description; brevity, so far as is consistent with clarity and completeness, is always to be sought. For information, and information alone, is your goal. Such description is the type demanded in technical reports and in all other circumstances calling for mere information.

¶ *Evocative Description.* Not all writing situations, however, will limit you to the presentation of facts; and those that do may often be best met with material which transcends mere information-giving and adds vividness by appealing to the emotions and evoking moods. In "Your community-fund dollar will help to feed this hollow-cheeked mother with her sad-eyed, rickety-limbed brood," what might have been bare fact becomes a plea, through the emotional value of details which *suggest* as well as *mean*. A general idea (your money is needed) is given life by particularization, in which "money" becomes your tangible dollar, "need" the hunger of a definitely pictured woman and children. Such descriptive particularizing, with its appeal to the reader's imagination, is essential to the entertainment of narrative and the appeal of argumentation; and it may add greatly, as you will discover in the selections throughout this book, to all but the most workaday of exposition, for it is a valuable corrective to exposition's tendency to generalize.

Organization

Since description is usually a matter of details scattered throughout other forms of writing for the sake of enlivening them, rather than something written for its own sake, we cannot talk, as we do of exposition, in terms of definite logical patterns. But the writing of description is nonetheless governed by certain laws of design.

Selection of Details. Whether your purpose is information or emotion, the thing to be described confronts you with a maze of sense impressions, out of which you must select the few relevant to your purpose. If you are describing a machine in terms of its function, its color isn't worth mention; if you are trying to create a mood of gloom, you will deliberately eliminate such details as distract from that atmosphere (except as you may deliberately include them for the sake of contrast). Your selection will be governed not only by this mental point of view, your purpose, but by your physical point of view, which limits you to the sensations you would actually have at a given time or place. You do not see the apron strings of the woman who meets you at the door, or smell the flowers on a distant hillside. And if you are moving around an object or down a river, your description must take into consideration your change of view.

Arrangement of Details. Much of your writing of descriptive exposition will probably involve only the occasional use of a descriptive detail to illuminate a point in your explanation. But when you are obliged, as you may be, to describe at greater length, the arrangement of your details becomes an issue.

1. Inasmuch as description deals primarily with items in space, it is possible to arrange your details in the **order of place**. In describing a room, for instance, you may start at one side and work across, mentioning the objects which meet your view as you progress; a man might similarly be described from head to foot. In describing a landscape, you may work from near to far, or far to near.
2. More selective than mere space relationships is the **order of outstanding feature**, such as may lead you to mention first a piano in the room, a man's big nose, a large tree in the landscape—and to work out and around from them.
3. You may be guided by a **sense of relative importance**,

centering your description around the thing which you plan to have make the greatest impression: an unmade bed, a cold and calculating eye, a tumble-down shack—including then such other details as you have chosen to bear out that impression and disregarding any that might be irrelevant to it.

EXAMPLES

A. THE HELLBENDER

The hellbender is an ugly looking but perfectly harmless creature from 18 to 24 inches long, with the head and body much flattened and a prominent wrinkled fold of skin along the sides. Although it is entirely aquatic, no gills are present in the adult, and only a single pair of small pores represents the gill-clefts; the lungs are simple sacs. The limbs are functional, the anterior with four, the posterior with five digits, and the tail is provided with a wide fin. A wide mouth with teeth in both jaws, very small eyes, and a slimy skin of a deep mottled brown color are further external characteristics.

1. This paragraph from an encyclopedia aims at nothing but fact-giving. It is typically informative description in which essential details are listed in a completely objective manner. Scientists in all fields use such description as an aid in explaining life forms, mechanisms, and all sorts of natural phenomena.

2. What principle has been used in the arrangement of the details?

B. THE OCEAN DEPTHS

Allan L. Benson

We know what the ocean looks like, feels like, and is, down below, because soundings have been made at thousands of places, thermometers and other devices have been let down and dredges have brought up what is on the bottom and what is living next to it.

Most of the ocean floor is a dreary undulating plain under about two and a half miles of water, relieved here and there by mountains, the peaks of which appear on the surface as islands. In a general way it may be said that there is a depth in the ocean to correspond with every great mountain peak on land. Mount Everest, in the Himalayas, with its 29,000 feet, is balanced by the Swire Deep, off the island of Mindanao, with its 32,088 feet of depth—eleven and a half miles from the bottom of the deep to the top of the mountain, the greatest irregularity on the planet.

The deeps are as dark as pitch and down almost to the freezing-point of salt water. The water would freeze if it were fresh and at the surface. Muck taken from the bottom, even at the equator, is so cold that it cannot be comfortably handled. The depths are kept cold by the constant creeping of the water from the polar regions. Little of the sun's light penetrates farther than 1500 feet, though a photographic plate is slightly affected at 3000 feet. Below that is utter darkness, with a temperature that remains changeless, or practically so, throughout the year.

There is no plant life whatever in the depths, but plenty of animal life. Moreover, the deep-sea fish look very prosperous and thriving, though all they have to eat is what rains down to them from above. An English scientist comments on the fact that "there are no slums in nature."

1. The description used in this explanation is essentially informative, but in places the author appears to be interested in impressing his readers imaginatively, in addition to informing them. Note the use of "dreary" in ¶2, suggestive of mental point of view rather than scientific fact. Find other words designed to arouse feeling rather than merely to communicate information.

2. Being a brief account, it has paragraphs corresponding to the main points presented. List the four main topics in as many phrases. Is ¶1 parallel to the other three in importance and thus to be outlined as Point I, or is it rather Introduction?

What logical order has the author followed in arranging his material? (See pages 34–35 for principles of arrangement.) Is the present order a logical necessity, or could the topics be transposed with good effect?

C. TAKE-OFF

Anne Morrow Lindbergh

The spray sluiced over the windshield as we started to take off—faster now—we were up on the step—we were trying to get off the water. I held my breath after each pounding spank as the pontoons skipped along from wave to wave. Weighed down with its heavy test load of fuel, the plane felt clumsy, like a duck with clipped wings. It met the coming wave quivering after each effort to rise. Now the spanks were closer together—quick, sharp jolts. I put my hand on the receiving set. It was shaking violently. Suddenly all vibration smoothed out. Effortlessly we rose; we were off; a long curve upward. The squat ferryboats below plowed across our wake, and great flat barges carrying rectangular mounds of different colored earth like spools of gold and tawny silk. I found the little black mass of people on the pier where we had been. Small and insignificant it looked, now I could see the whole life of the river: many piers and crowded ferryboats, ships and roofs and fields and barges, dredges and smokestacks and the towers of New York. We looked insignificant, also, and small to them, I knew, now that our bulk on the end of the pier no longer blocked the horizon. It had become simply a boat in the river of many boats; then a plane in the sky with other planes; now, only a speck against the blue, mistaken easily for a gull.

1. Here is definitely evocative description—an account of a personal experience designed to recreate in the imagination of the reader the sensations experienced. Compare the diction with that of "The Hellbender," and notice how many words

here have a connotative as well as a detonative significance. Check some of the more vivid ones.

2. How many kinds of figures of speech can you find here?

3. In the last sentence, notice the care with which a shifting point of view has been indicated.

D. THE OPENING OF THE SAN FRANCISCO CONFERENCE

I. F. Stone

This is a splendidly vigorous and beautiful city. Its lofty hills, great bay, clear skies, and fresh breezes make it an exhilarating place. The cable cars that crawl up and down its steep streets provide almost as exciting a ride as the chute-the-chutes of Coney Island, and the view from luxurious Nob Hill, where one feels closer to the stars at night, goes to one's head.

For the press this has been a glamorous week spent scooting around between press conferences and plenary sessions. We saw and heard the bright, bird-like Dutch Foreign Minister, Van Kleffens; the school-masterish Deputy British Prime Minister, Clement Attlee; the monolithic but quick-witted Molotov; Nehru's fragile but intense sister, Mrs. Pandit; dapper George Bidault, the French Foreign Minister, who looks more like a care-free boulevardier than an underground leader; and, of course, Mr. Stettinius, our matinee-idol Secretary of State, whose press conferences are remarkable chiefly for his extraordinary facility in remembering the faces and names of reporters. . . .

The press is housed in the huge Palace Hotel on Market Street, down near the wharves, and the correspondents, for whom this is a kind of old-home week, obtain much of their mysteriously authoritative inside information by interviewing each other at the crowded bars and in the high glass-ceilinged dining-room. We are perpetually in transit, like skating bugs, from the Palace to Union Square, which

is neat and fashionable and quite unlike its New York namesake; there, at the St. Francis, the Russians and the French are housed. Thence we go to Nob Hill, where the British and the Chinese are in the de luxe Mark Hopkins, with its famous rooftop bar, and the American delegation in the equally plushy if less famous Fairmount. Down hill again we speed to the domed Opera House, where the conference sessions are held, and the big Veterans' Administration Building next door, which is the "press room" of the conference; there are batteries of typewriters and telegraph machines and a most delightful clatter. . . .

The main event, the opening of the conference Wednesday afternoon, might have been an M-G-M opening. Crowds strained against the ropes for blocks around the Opera House to watch the arriving notables; the press flashed its cards with pride; the foreign delegates poured out of their black limousines, trying hard to look dignified and unmoved. Within, in an interior that seemed to have been done by Maxfield Parrish, floodlights lit up the gilded gesso, red plush, and stainless steel; against the blue background of the huge stage stood four brown pillars, symbols of the four freedoms, connected at the top by what appeared to be large segments of a boa constrictor. The press was with difficulty confined to the triple-tiered galleries by the feminine elite of San Francisco, among whom many heart-rending battles were fought for the honor of ushering at the occasion. But down below, camera men swarmed among the delegates of the forty-six nations, kneeling in the aisles and all but hanging from the boxes to get their shots. Flashlight bulbs kept going off like summer lightning, and statesmen obediently composed their faces for the camera.

1. "Vigorous and beautiful," in the first sentence, are not in themselves picture-making words; but in the second there are four details which make us see and feel the sources of the vigor and the beauty.

2. Note the strength of the highly specific verbs "crawl" and "scoot" (§§1 and 2) compared to the general idea of "go." Find other examples.

3. A mere adjective or two, carefully chosen, is capable of supplying us with remarkably vivid descriptions and even characterizations of the important figures at the conference (§2).

4. Note the *literal* comparison of the cable cars with the chute-the-chutes (§1); find another in §2, and still another, used negatively this time, in §3. Compare them with the *figurative* use of skating bugs to describe the movement of the newsmen (§3). What kind of figure of speech is involved? Find another in §4.

5. Note the mental point of view inherent in the "glamorous week" (§2) and in the "delightful clatter" (§3). (What is the writer? Would everyone there have found them equally glamorous and delightful?)

6. Let your imagination play over the implications of the "mysteriously authoritative inside information" the newsmen get by interviewing each other at the bars (§3); of the foreign delegates "trying hard to look dignified and unmoved" and "the heart-rending battles fought for the honor of ushering" among the feminine elite (§4). These are good examples of packing words with a full load—of denotative meaning plus connotative overtones.

E. EDUCATION ON THE FARM

Walter Magnes Teller

Healthy children hunger to learn—not from reading, because the most significant things in life are learned and taught long before letters are conned—but from the feel of a lamb's nose and a cat's whiskers and the itchy leaves of radishes and the smooth skins of the cucurbits and the sting of the bee; from the smell of fresh cow manure and well-rotted horse dung and tomato vines and live chicks and buck goats and whitewash and nicotiana; from the cry of the newborn calf and the sound it makes while sucking its dam and the rustling of the leaves of the

tulip tree and the grunting and chomping of hogs; and from the color of the furrow slice as it keeps turning and of young wheat standing in rows and of ripe grain that waves in the wind, and from how the barn looks by day and how different it looks by night. And the child, he or she, absorbs the arts of cultivating and the skills of tractoring, and growth becomes development.

1. State in one sentence the expository purpose of this paragraph.

2. How many of the five senses are drawn on in the descriptive details through which that idea is developed?

3. Words like "suck" and "rustle," called *onomatopoeitic*, are particularly useful in describing sounds, because their sound suggests their meaning. What other onomatopoeitic words can you find here?

F. THE MICROVIVARIUM

Frank Thone

So brilliant and lively are the pictures produced by the Microvivarium that it is difficult for a movie-accustomed public to realize that they are not simply motion pictures. But here are no photographic shadows on films; the pictures are the projected images of the living organisms themselves, leaping across the illuminated screen as their originals move on the glass slide under the microscope. . . .

A Microvivarium projector consists of an arc light as an illumination source, a train of lenses and a vessel of liquid to direct and cool the light, a mirror to direct it up through the slide of living creatures into the powerful lenses of the microscope, and finally a second reflector that throws the moving image on the screen.

What a world of astonishing life is displayed before your eyes, as the operator slips one slide after another under the object-lens of the microscope!

One-celled animals shaped like trumpets, like slippers, like little globes, whirling and swimming and darting across the brilliantly illuminated field. Here is a trumpet animalcule that has swallowed a worm, an animal higher in the evolutionary scale than itself. Here is the transparent larva of a mosquito, obligingly showing the wave-like motions of the walls of its digestive tract. Here is the equally transparent water-flea, showing its rapidly beating heart, and even the cluster of unborn young water-fleas in its brood-pouch.

Here is the fresh-water hydra, which produces offspring by throwing out branches, exactly as a plant sprouts branches—and then letting go of them. Here is a larger view of the same hydra, showing a whole population of parasitic beastlets crawling about on it, like fleas on a dog. Here is a spinning colony of the primitive plants called *Volvox*, a swarm of dancing vinegar worms, and grotesque larvae of damsel-flies and day-flies.

But the part of the show that gets the most fascinated attention from the crowd is a veritable Roman holiday of the microscopic world, a display of fierceness and flesh-hunger on the part of invisibly small one-celled creatures that is as awesome as though they were tigers or leopards.

First, the operator shows you his little beasts of prey. They are small, apparently completely round objects that swim about actively, but do not look at all formidable. Indeed, they look more like a lot of rolling marbles than anything else. But each of them has a tiny, nose-like beak, which it can use most effectively when occasion demands.

Then he displays a screenful of the animals that are to be the victims in the coming show; they are the common, harmless one-celled creatures called slipper animalcules or, more learnedly, *Paramecium*. They are larger than their prospective devourers, but as defenceless against them as cattle are against leopards.

The operator now pushes the edges of the two slides

together, permitting the liquid drops under each to mingle. The round animalcules swim in among the slipper-shaped ones.

There is a second's swimming about, as they orient themselves; then, with a ferocity that makes you shudder, each beastlet selects its victim, seizes it with an unshakable grip, and proceeds to devour it alive. Sometimes two will seize the same victim at opposite ends and eat away until they meet in the middle. Then they let go and pursue their separate ways. The predators never fight each other, and, strange to say, never attack anything but just one species of victim.

These are only a few glimpses of the vivid, dramatic life that goes on in the little cosmos bounded by the curved walls of a water drop. There are thousands upon thousands of species in this world of little living things, so that if we wanted to become acquainted with all of them we might very well keep our eyes forever on the Microvivarium screen, or on the eyepiece of a microscope. It might be a weird world to live in permanently, but it would be no less interesting than the one we are used to.

1. The appeal here is necessarily to the sense of sight alone, and the things seen are without color, yet the effect is vivid. What descriptive words, literal comparisons, and figures of speech seem to you to contribute especially to the effectiveness of the account?

2. Compare the description of the Microvivarium projector (¶2) with that used in picturing the scenes projected. What is the difference in purpose? In effect?

3. To what extent is this selection expository and narrative, as well as descriptive?

ASSIGNMENT

1. Expand the following sentences with descriptive details, using concrete nouns and verbs as well as adjectives and adverbs.

Example: A child was looking out of a window.

A chubby girl of six with a tangle of red curls pivoted on her stomach across the window ledge as she surveyed the empty street with a bored stare.

- | | |
|-------------------|---------------------|
| a. A car stopped. | d. The train came. |
| b. The wind blew. | e. He got the ball. |
| c. The dog left. | f. The flag flew. |

2. Choose a fresh, appropriate adjective or two to describe each of a half dozen of your classmates or professors as briefly but vividly as I. F. Stone has described the principals at the San Francisco Conference (page 38).

3. Replace these trite figures of speech with fresh and original ones.

Example: His gloves were as white as snow.

His gloves were as white as a penguin's vest.

- This book is as dry as dust.
- Her aunt is as old as the hills.
- My purse is flatter than a pancake.
- We nearly laughed our heads off.

4. Try describing your sensations when you are somewhere in the dark, obliged to rely on senses other than sight.

5. Write (a) a paragraph of informative description of your classroom, your study, a campus building, the interior of the library, a church, a store, a barroom; (b) a paragraph of imaginative description of the same place, assuming a definite mental point of view and attempting to recreate in your reader's imagination the sensations with which it fills you.

6. Write an exposition in which you use description heavily. Suggested topics are getting up on a cold morning, a ride on a roller coaster (tractor, elevated, motorcycle), a meal at a quick-lunch counter, butchering (housecleaning, canning, threshing) day, a trip to the fair (stockyards, church, lake).

7. Read "Wolf Song" (page 400), "La Grande Trappe" (page 415), and "More Power to You" (page 470), checking what seem to you the most revealing details in each. Notice that good description is equally necessary in writing of nature, of men, of machines.

NARRATIVE EXPOSITION

The essence of description, as we have seen, is its appeal to the senses; of narration, its reporting of events. Description adds reality to all sorts of writing by giving the reader an illusion of experiencing the sensations described; narration accomplishes the same end by creating in him a similar illusion that he is himself experiencing the events disclosed. By satisfying our ever-present human curiosity as to what happened, it adds both immediate reading interest and lasting effect to what otherwise might be tedious, though useful, matter.

Your uses of narration as an aid in fulfilling an expository purpose may be various, ranging from the insertion of a little narrative incident attached to explanatory matter to enliven it, to the construction of a complete narrative framework through which your expository purpose may be only implied.

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to a piece of serious discussion in order to gain reader interest, as the after-dinner speaker begins with a bit of humor in order to get his audience into a receptive mood for his address. Such an anecdote may be merely humorous, or thought-provoking as well; but in either case it should be related in thought to your main idea and used not for its own sake alone but for the purpose of leading your reader pleasantly into the main subject of the essay. For instance, the story of the three blind men who each felt of a different part of the elephant and came away with as many different ideas as to what the animal is like might be used appropriately to begin a discussion of some serious social problem which you felt existed largely through misunderstanding.

2. You may intersperse such relevant narrative incidents throughout, as the minister brings little stories into his sermon at various points. Used thus, they not only help to maintain the interest which the introduction may have aroused, but serve a continuing purpose of illustrating and thus making more understandable and vivid various difficult points or turns in your thought.
3. You may expand an introductory narrative incident into a longer single narrative occupying half the essay or more, followed by an expository discussion of the point made by it. Such are the parables of Jesus, wherein an applicable story is told and then interpreted at some length, the interpretation not only explaining but expanding the idea which it was the purpose of the story itself to introduce with a vivid and lasting effect. *Aesop's Fables*, as we have already noticed, are similar in handling and purpose.
4. Your writing may be entirely narrative in form and yet, because it is clearly expository in purpose, come under the heading rather of "narrative exposition." An account of a process or an activity, for instance, being a listing of consecutive actions or events, is essentially

narration; yet it is intended, of course, to explain, and as such is basically informative rather than entertaining writing. Even more obviously narrative are the allegory, such as Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, in which what appears at first sight to be mere storytelling is really a symbolic presentation of deeper moral meanings; the satire, such as Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*, in which the adventures in the lands of the little and the big peoples afford children sneer narrative delight, but to adults form a series of thought-provoking commentaries on civilization in general and eighteenth-century England in particular; and the increasingly popular "social purpose" novel of the present day, which purports to be fiction, yet is easily distinguished from the fiction which aims merely at entertainment by its desire to inform us of some abuse or other of which the story itself is merely an illustration—as the Joads in Steinbeck's *Grapes of Wrath*, for instance, exemplify the economic distress of the dust-bowl peoples. In all of these forms the "moral," or meaning, is only implied, but it is nonetheless clearly present. Completely narrative in substance, such works are thoroughly expository in purpose, and might well be classed under the heading of "narrative exposition."

Narrative Technique

You too may use narrative as such an over-all device, or you may merely introduce it as anecdote in order to lighten up your otherwise strictly expository writing. The longer the narrative element, the more important your understanding of the problems and techniques involved in its writing. In any event it will be well to look briefly at the particular effects which narrative can achieve, and its ways of achieving them.

The strength of narrative, as mentioned earlier, lies in its ability to particularize—to create (often, strangely enough, through the reporting of things that never hap-

pened) an illusion of reality. This it does through three things necessary to narrative and present only through it in exposition: **characters** (men, or animals, or personified concepts), **setting** (a place and a time), and **plot** (an ordered series of events participated in by those characters in that setting).

Selection of Details. The secret of successful narrative as such lies in selection—in choosing, out of the many persons, details of background, and events occurring during a given trip, for example, only those which are relevant to the purpose of the storyteller. Novels and biographies are long narrative forms, yet no writer ever attempts to include every known detail of character, background, or action concerning even his central figures. You have doubtless been duly bored by the returned traveler whose idea of entertaining you with his trip is to recount to you every mile he drove, every stop he made—almost literally every breath he drew. The wise conversationalist—and writer—will recognize that only such details as contribute to the central effect that he is attempting to obtain are worthy to be included, and that the eating of a meal, the buying of a stamp, or the blowing of a nose, unless it delineates character, builds up necessary background, sets in motion a chain of events, or otherwise contributes definitely to a sense of reality, may well be omitted from his account. An encounter with a bear in Yellowstone Park is better narrative material than the trip there and back.

Central Purpose. Your selection of details presupposes a purpose that determines which shall be chosen. Contrary to popular opinion, some of the most successful storytelling springs from the commonplaces of existence. But neither a train wreck nor a ball game, a trip around the world nor a picnic in your own back yard can, as such, supply you with a successful story. Rather, the handling is the thing.

1. Whatever event you may choose to relate, it must be one that at the time and in some way had significance

for you—an emotional force or an intellectual meaning which you can recreate successfully for your reader. Just as in description a definite mental point of view is necessary in determining what details you will include, so in narration a mood (be it humor, whimsy, or more serious intent) must be decided upon in order to give unity and purpose to the whole.

2. As the purpose of narrative is to entertain, so the narrative element in your exposition should add pleasure to your larger desire to inform. Whether anecdote or novel in length, it accomplishes its purpose largely through *suspense*—through the creation of a desire on the part of the reader to know what happened, who won.
3. Such an interest in the outcome may be mild or intense, but in any event it is based primarily on *conflict*—between characters, between character and circumstance, between conflicting desires within a single character's mind. Two boys striving to win the same honor, a man attempting to recover his lost health, a girl torn between love for parents and for a lover—all these conflicts and others like them create suspense.
4. Narrative incidents should build up progressively to the highest point of interest, known as the *climax*. Some narrations stop short at that point (see O. Henry's "surprise endings"); others coast more slowly to a close. Unnecessary material included after the peak of interest has been reached is likely to be dull and anticlimactic.

Handling of Time. While description deals primarily with objects in space, narration is concerned first of all with events in time.

1. For short incidents, the normal time order of start to finish may be successfully retained; for longer ones, it is often more effective to begin in the midst of the action (at an exciting point, of course, for the sake of reader interest), returning later to fill in briefly any necessary introductory material. Compare:

A. One fine April afternoon three of us sixth-grade boys decided to skip school. We wandered indecisively for an hour or two through the outskirts of the town, and finally landed at the ball park, where we began a game of old cat, doubly delightful because illicitly enjoyed. Bill finally hit the ball over the fence, where it went through the window of the caretaker's cottage.

B. "Home run!" yelled Bill triumphantly, leaning on his bat while he watched the ball he had just struck sail over the park fence. But his triumph was short-lived—a shattering of glass from the caretaker's cottage struck us all numb. A broken window on top of our earlier sin! For we three sixth-grade boys had skipped school that fine April afternoon, and after an hour or so of indecisive wandering through the outskirts of town had wound up at the ball park for a game of old cat—doubly delightful because illicitly enjoyed.

2. You are free, in narration, to compress or expand the time element to suit your purpose, getting rid of ten unimportant years in less than a sentence and spending pages, if need be, recounting the profound events of ten seconds. Such a handling of time, skillfully done, will help you to emphasize the importance of the incidents which you have selected as relevant, and to ignore those which are unimportant to your purpose.

The Illusion of Reality. Such violent compression and expansion of the time element can be justified on the grounds that we sometimes live through moments which seem like years, and through years which, from a later point of view, may appear like moments. Since the purpose of narrative is to produce an illusion of reality, every device which will help to establish that illusion should be considered.

1. The **present tense** is often used in relating events from the past, for the sake of the greater impression of immediacy thus gained—a good device if consistently maintained. "Then I start to run, and he throws to first, but Mac fumbles the ball."

2. **Concrete and specific diction** is as important to the narrative proper as to the description by which it will be accompanied; don't be content with writing "said" if your character actually yelled or whispered or drawled or sighed.
3. **Dialogue**, directly transcribed (with proper regard for the conventions of punctuation and paragraphing), is much to be preferred to any indirect reporting of "He said that." If you are obliged to make up the dialogue instead of reproducing it, be sure that both the speech and the manner of speaking are in keeping with your character.
4. **Characters and setting** should be as real and vivid as the events of the narrative, for these three elements of storytelling are so closely interrelated as to be inseparable in their effect. Action doesn't occur in a vacuum; show us, through the interweaving of a few carefully chosen details, when and where it is taking place. Show us briefly also—through little references to appearance, speech, and action rather than through long expository characterizations—the kind of people to whom it is happening; the reader cannot get up much interest in "us" if he is never told who and how many "we" are. Compare:

A. We had been working for an hour to get our truck jacked up so that my companion could change a tire which had gone flat on our way to town. Once more the jack slipped, but he started to try yet again.

B. The slab of wood on which the jack was resting slipped gently into the roadside ooze and let the rear of the heavy truck down again for the third time in that hour of mud and sweat.

"Dang it! Er—pardon me, miss," was the only reaction of the patient, elderly "hired hand" whom Dad had sent along with me and my load of hogs to help in just such an emergency as this flat tire represented. Without another word he gave his suspenders a hitch and crawled doggedly under the truck to try again.

5. **Personal experience** is always the best source for student narrative. A coed once wrote very vividly of a drop by parachute; but even a hasty reading revealed, through errors in the reporting of fact, what she later confessed—that she had never so much as been up in an airplane. The professional writer of fiction is capable of producing the illusion of reality imaginatively, whether or not he has actually known the people, visited the scenes, or experienced the events he describes; as a beginning writer you will do well to draw entirely on your own experience in your storytelling, to assure it of the virtues of firsthand material and sincerity. This suggestion does not, however, rule out the artistic selection and handling of events which will give your results a unity and concentration that actual life, viewed unselectively, too often lacks.

EXAMPLES

A. PROFIT FROM MATHEMATICS

Mayme I. Logsdon

A pupil of Euclid, when he had learned a proposition, inquired: "What advantage shall I get by learning these things?" Euclid called a slave and said, "Give him a six-pence, since he must needs gain by what he learns."

It is not the purpose of this book to attempt to give to the reader a knowledge and skill in the use of mathematics which will make of him a better money-gatherer, but rather to come to the aid of the many who reach adult years with a distaste for mathematics and a pronounced inferiority complex with regard to it, and who at the same time suffer an occasional feeling of embarrassment at their inability to understand some apparently simple natural or mechanical law.

The use of the opening anecdote is even more common in speaking than in writing, but serves the same purpose in either

—to give a concrete illustration of a later expository generalization. Such an anecdote is often humorous, adding to clarity the relaxation of the joke. Its use here as the beginning words of a popular book on higher mathematics is typical. It not only clarifies the following point but suggests an easy familiarity of style which encourages the general reader to go on, instead of frightening him away as a more formal and technical introduction might do.

B. THE TRAGEDY OF WASTE

Stuart Chase

You and three others are approaching a spruce-clad island on a lake in the virgin wilderness of northern Ontario. You have two canoes and between their thwarts lie your food, your tent, your axes. The nearest Hudson Bay Post is 100 miles to the south. You are on your own. Completely. It is after six in the evening and storm clouds are banking in the east. It promises a wet night in camp.

What precisely is your procedure as the canoes ground on the beach? With small variations depending upon the expertness of your technique, your procedure is this. The tent is slung and ditched on a high level spot. If time allows, bedding is cut. Blankets and spare clothing are safely stowed inside. The canoes are turned over and supplies stored beneath them. A small cooking fire is lighted between two upright stones and supper started. To be fed after a twenty-mile paddle, to keep warm and dry against the storm—every motion is conserved to that end. To defy it may turn a summer holiday into a tragedy.

But suppose one of you had roamed the woods and brought back poisonous toadstools for a mushroom soup; one had lain down on the beach and gone to sleep; one had cut down tall trees for tent-poles when all that was demanded was a rope slung between two standing trees; and one had built a fire fit for the roasting of an ox, which presently began to eat its way into the forest.

Even those who picnic in Fords would quail before such

a mad performance. But for 100,000,000 of us living under the blessings of *laissez faire* in America, its industrial counterpart is known and practiced as business-as-usual. For in this mad camping party we have illustrated the four great channels of waste which normally obtain in the going structure of industry.

1. The toadstool broth represents the man-power which flows into the furnishing of vicious or useless goods and services—patent medicines, opium, super-luxuries, the bulk of advertising, war.

2. The sleeper on the beach represents the man-power which on any given working day is doing nothing—by virtue of unemployment, strikes and lockouts, preventable accidents and diseases, the idle rich and the wandering hobo.

3. The hewer of tent poles represents the excess man-power required to produce and distribute necessities and comforts because the technical arts—the best way of doing the job—are not made use of. Failure to use scientific management, standardization failures, excess plant capacity, restriction of output, lack of cost control, cross hauling, failure to utilize by-products, excessive distribution costs, and above all the failure to co-ordinate national production to national requirements—demonstrated as not beyond the range of human administrative capacity, by the war—all combine to force the taking of two steps where one would suffice.

4. The fire builder represents the waste of natural resources. In lumber, in coal, natural gas, oil, minerals, soils, fisheries, a continent has been gutted, and for every ton reclaimed a ton and more has been needlessly and irretrievably lost.

No analogies are ever exact, but I believe that this is a fair analogy. As one goes deeper and deeper into the statistical studies, the government reports, the findings of specific surveys, the great mass of quantitative data already available covering these four main channels of waste, it becomes increasingly evident—with an evidence which

stuns—that what is madness and folly in a camping party is normal and unchallenged in a great industrial society considered as a whole.

Here narrative is used as a long introductory analogy which the author later applies, point by point, to the economic situation which he wishes to clarify. Compare the reader interest and memorability of this selection to one covering the same material and beginning, "There are four great channels of waste in modern industrial society," then proceeding to enumerate them in the language of economics alone.

C. AN EXPLANATION OF SOUND

Sir James Jeans

You stand in the middle of a room and clap your hands. In common language you are making a noise; the physicist, in his professional capacity, would say you are creating waves of sound. As they approach one another, your hands expel the intervening molecules of air. These stampede out, colliding with the molecules of outer layers of air, which are in turn driven away to collide with still more remote layers; the disturbance originally created by the motion of your hands is carried on in the form of a wave. Although the individual molecules have an average speed of 500 yards a second, the zig-zag quality of their motions reduces the speed of the disturbance to about 370 yards a second—the ordinary velocity of sound. As the disturbance reaches any point the number of molecules there becomes abnormally high, for the stampeding molecules add to the normal quota of molecules at the point. This of course produces an excess of pressure. It is this excess pressure acting on my ear-drum that transmits a sensation to my brain, so that I hear the noise of your clapping your hands.

1. When you have a difficult concept to make clear to the average reader, you will do well to resort to simple, familiar

means of presentation. This explanation of sound not only is more readily grasped but is also easier to remember than a purely abstract exposition, because of the vividness which the action of the handclapping has, compared to the colorlessness of molecules and sound waves.

2. Note that the author did not merely begin with a narrative incident, but carried the account of the handclap along with his scientific explanation throughout the paragraph, even to the final line.

3. The fact that this is basically exposition is never lost sight of. The chief interest remains in the general problem of what causes sound, and is not at all disturbed by the handclap, which we recognize as no more than a device that clarifies without distracting.

In the three preceding selections, the narrative element has been made up and tacked onto or incorporated into the exposition for the sole purpose of making an idea more vivid or clear. In the three which follow, all of which grew out of personal experiences, the narrative is not a mere device but an integral part of the writing, existing for its own sake as well as for the expository purpose which it reveals.

D. NIGHT FLYING

Antoine de Saint Exupéry

Flying, in general, seemed to us easy. When the skies are filled with black vapors, when fog and sand and sea are confounded in a brew in which they become indistinguishable, when gleaming flashes wheel treacherously in these skyey swamps, the pilot purges himself of the phantoms at a single stroke. He lights his lamps. He brings sanity into his house as into a lonely cottage on a fearsome heath. And the crew travel a sort of submarine route in a lighted chamber.

Pilot, mechanic, and radio operator are shut up in what might be a laboratory. They are obedient to the play of dial-hands, not to the unrolling of the landscape. Out of doors the mountains are immersed in tenebrous darkness ;

but they are no longer mountains, they are invisible powers whose approach must be computed.

The operator sits in the light of his lamp, dutifully setting down figures; the mechanic ticks off points on his chart; the pilot swerves in response to the drift of the mountains as quickly as he sees that the summits he intends to pass on the left have deployed straight ahead of him in a silence and secrecy as of military preparations. And below on the ground the watchful radio men in their shacks take down submissively in their notebooks the dictation of their comrade in the air: "12:40 A.M. En route 230. All well."

So the crew fly on with no thought that they are in motion. Like night over the sea, they are very far from the earth, from towns, from trees. The motors fill the lighted chamber with a quiver that changes its substance. The clock ticks on. The dials, the radio lamps, the various hands and needles go through their invisible alchemy. From second to second these mysterious stirrings, a few muffled words, a concentrated tenseness, contribute to the end result. And when the hour is at hand the pilot may glue his forehead to the window with perfect assurance. Out of oblivion the gold has been smelted: there it gleams in the lights of the airport.

1. How do you account for the shift from the past tense and first person of the first sentence to the present tense and third person of the rest of the account?

2. Is this an account of a particular or a typical flight? Is it primarily expository or narrative in form? In purpose?

3. Note the inseparability of descriptive detail from a relation of what happens.

E. HARD LESSON

K. L. Compton

It was a fine June afternoon. I had had an enjoyable week-end, and my spirits were high. I sang lustily, if not

tunefully, to the rhythm of the motor. The car seemed not to mind the singing, for it had never worked better. I was only one and one-half hours out of Indianapolis and was now within two miles of the Illinois-Indiana line. The hills on Federal Route Number Thirty-six had been fun. Sixty to seventy miles an hour had made quick work of the grades and curves, and now I was sailing along on level pavement with the car really in high.

I don't know how fast I was travelling when the incident occurred, but I suspect it was somewhat too fast for any degree of safety. I do know that the sparkle of the day and the high spirits were quickly extinguished. As I cleared the crest of a small rise, I could see the state-line signs almost two miles ahead. There was only one car to mar the beauty of the landscape. This intruder was about a mile ahead of me and was going in my direction but at a slower speed.

In a surprisingly short time I had gained on the other car to the point where I had to turn out to go around. I didn't sound my horn, for in another second I would have been past and on down the road. But Fate had other plans. As my front wheels reached the rear of the other car, its driver abruptly and without apparent premeditation decided to turn to the left.

What happened in the next few seconds can be only related, not explained. Surely instinct rules in these extreme emergencies.

I must have turned to the left to avoid the collision. I shot across the narrow shoulder and down into a ditch approximately four feet deep and five feet wide. The opposite bank deflected the front wheels, and I roared along the bottom for what seemed a century. Finally something inside me decided I should get back onto the road, and up the shoulder bank I came. But now instinct failed me, for I went on across the pavement and down into the ditch on the right-hand side. I was still travelling fast enough not to feel the bumps. The urge to be on the road-

way persisted, and again I came up over the shoulder. This time by some miracle I stayed on top. At last the thought came to me that I might be able to remedy the situation, and I put my foot on the brake pedal. I stopped on the shoulder as soon as I could muster enough power for the brake. I got out and looked back down the road. A quarter mile away the other car stood, untouched, in the middle of the highway. The driver was coming toward me on a dead run. My knees deposited me on the grass to wait for him.

He approached with his hand extended. We shook hands. Neither could speak. There was nothing to say; we were both wrong and knew it. I can't imagine being as white as that lad was, but I suppose I was then. We walked around my car.

"There's no danger, I guess," I said.

"I'm sorry," he said slowly. "My girl fainted watching you take ditches on two wheels. I'd better get back to her."

That was all the conversation. We didn't need conversation. We were both enjoying the first benefits of a hard lesson on safe driving.

1. The accident that didn't happen can make at least as good a narrative as one that did. What is the expository idea underlying this student-written narrative? Is it sufficiently expressed? Is there too much "moralizing"? Compare in reader interest with a strictly expository essay on "Safe Driving."

2. Which element of narrative is here most emphasized—character, setting, or plot? Is any one of the three unduly neglected?

3. In what lies the narrative conflict which creates the suspense? Where is the climax? Is the material that follows anti-climactic? Explain.

4. Notice how the joyful mood of the opening scene contrasts with the danger which follows, and the excitement of the near-accident with the commonplaceness of the closing dialogue. White looks whiter next to black; contrast is always a good means of accentuation.

5. What is the effect of reporting the final remarks in dialogue form instead of in indirect expository statement?

F. ORDEAL

Anne Cullerton

It was Easter vacation. I had been home two days and had not yet kept the promise I had determinedly made myself. I sprawled out on the bed up in my room and worried. Should I tell them or shouldn't I? Why did I have to tell them? After all, wasn't I my own boss? Yet Mother and Dad had always told me that, if I ever wanted to smoke, I must smoke at home. Yes, I had readily promised them I would, little dreaming that I would ever have occasion to light a cigarette in front of my parents. Oh! blast it! Why hadn't I told Mother before this? She probably wouldn't like it, but she, at least, wouldn't look at me with that wounded look that Dad always assumed when he wanted to win me over to his way of thinking. Yet neither Dad nor Mother had ever forbidden me to smoke. They only wanted me to be fair with them and not sneak cigarettes when I was out of their sight. After all, that's only right—I guess.

I swallowed hard, arose to a half-sitting position, and began to glance around that awful, junk-cluttered room for my other shoe. Just as I spied the thing under a pile of books, hat boxes, and dirty clothes, I thought of my two older brothers. Horrors! What would they say? I could just hear their teasing wisecracks. "Little sister went to college. Little sister thinks she's grown up now. Well, Miss Femme du Monde, what brand of cigarettes do you like best? Don't you think Chesterfields are just wonderfully mild on the throat?"

I never could bear to have my brothers tease me. Exhausted, I slumped down on the bed again and thought nasty thoughts of how brothers were necessary evils, and of how beautifully one could get along without them.

Just as I was about to have all brothers tarred and feathered for the crime of existing, I suddenly struck upon a bold idea. Why not go downstairs now and, very nonchalantly, smoke a cigarette? They're all down there now, Mother and Dad—and even the boys. Might just as well take the bull by the horns. Have to do it sometime.

With this very resolute thought I got out of bed, slipped on my shoe, and nervously lit a cigarette. My hands were shaking so that it took three matches to get it properly going. With another brave gulp I proceeded to the stairway. I then did what I thought was a very good imitation of a mannequin's sophisticated walk. I held my cigarette loosely between my fingers and thought I looked very casual. In reality, though, I had scarcely any control over my knees. They buckled as though I were a marionette, and they hung on to the rest of me just because they were supposed to be there.

As I descended those stairs, wishing fervently that my perilously high-heeled slippers were some place in China and that I had on my safe and sane "flats," I saw my Dad's face half hidden behind a newspaper. He glanced at me as he turned a page and quickly glanced back at the paper, as if he were absorbed in the article he was reading. I'm certain that he noticed me, for I know Dad isn't interested in the woman's page of the newspaper, and from where I was standing I could see an assortment of beautiful ladies wearing monstrous Easter bonnets.

When I entered the room I saw Jim, who was supposed to be examining his pet camera, stamp heavily on Bill's toe and point in my direction. Both boys could hardly suppress their laughter. They made some kind of an excuse about a date and a telephone call and left the room in a hurry.

I squirmed around a bit hoping that Mother would notice me and that someone would say something. I looked at Dad. He was still engrossed in women's Easter bonnets. I looked at Mother. She was deeply interested in making

me a new dress, which I had begged her for weeks to begin. She sewed and sewed, and suddenly without the slightest change in her expression, she reached for her scissors and said, "Dear, you're getting those ashes all over the rug. There's an ash tray over there."

And Dad turned to the sports page.

1. This piece of student writing is pure narrative—an incident told for the sake of enjoyment rather than to illustrate an expository point. You will find such writing not only fun for its own sake, but valuable in loosening up your literary muscles in preparation for writing more readable expositions.

2. "Ordeal" is a good example of the fact that a student needn't have lived through any blood-and-thunder events in order to write a good personal-experience narrative. Many little family conflicts (in this case the "conflict" was primarily in the writer's mind) will provide similarly entertaining material.

3. This is also a good example of the skillful handling necessary to the successful retelling of such an incident. Notice the way in which little things she does (sprawling on the bed, looking for her shoe) not only keep us aware of the fact that she is a real person going through an actual experience, but also increase the suspense by slowing up the telling. It *could* be told, of course, in fewer words: "I was afraid of what would happen when I smoked my first cigarette in front of my family, but they all just pretended to pay no attention to me"; but it would lose its charm.

4. Notice how skillfully, without any pause for deliberate characterization but through apt little touches, she gives us a clear impression of the various members of the family—including herself—and of their relationships to one another.

ASSIGNMENT

1. Retell a brief anecdote and suggest the content of an expository paper to which it might serve as an effective beginning.

2. Write a brief narrative (preferably from personal experience) which will exemplify the expository idea expressed in some old proverb (a stitch in time saves nine, better late than never, he who hesitates is lost, penny-wise and pound-foolish, etc.). Make your point through the narrative itself, without tedious expository moralizing.

3. Write a longer narrative retelling, as effectively as you can, some memorable incident in your life (school, sports, social events, other activities). Suggested topics are my first date, job, party, day at school, proposal. To be certain of choosing an incident which can supply you with some sense of climax, search your memory for one which resulted in a strong emotional reaction (fright, embarrassment, grief, terror, triumph, joy, horror, confusion). Let your central purpose determine the selection of details, mood, and handling of time element, and determine, before you begin writing, the relative importance which should be given to character, plot, setting.

4. Study the varying degrees of importance which narrative assumes in the following selections:

- a. "The Method of Scientific Investigation" (page 462) and "Right and Wrong" (page 420). Numerous small incidents serve as vivid illustrations in otherwise expository selections.
- b. "Wolf Song" (page 400) and "La Grande Trappe" (page 415). The narrative is a framework supporting writing which is primarily other than narrative in purpose.
- c. "Shakespeare and I" (page 397) and "Mr. Mookerjee" (page 402). These are single narrative incidents through which an expository purpose is revealed. (Note how careful each author has been to exclude tempting irrelevant narrative detail.) Express the "theme"—the central idea—of each in a single generalized expository statement which makes no direct mention of these specific experiences.

5. In a brief paragraph, express in pure expository form the meaning of "The Persian Sage and the Yokel." (It was once reprinted in a magazine devoted to semantics.) Then, starting with some favorite expository idea of your own, try your hand at expressing it through a similar fable.

UNIT 3 *////////////////////*

ARGUMENTATIVE EXPOSITION

"Argumentative exposition" is a mere courtesy title for the writing to be considered here, given for the sake of making clear the relationship between this unit and the two preceding, and of all three to the general problem of good expository prose. For argumentative exposition is nothing but argumentation, since, as explained earlier (see the definitions of the four forms of discourse, pages 21-22), argument and exposition are similar in kind, differing chiefly in purpose.

You can find an analogy for this situation in the four kinds of sentences which you learned as a child: declarative, imperative, interrogative, and exclamatory. The distinctions among the first three types are clear, requiring different grammatical modes or word orders; but the exclamatory sentence is only a declarative sentence to which a new purpose—that of startling—has been added. "The house is on fire" (declarative) differs from "The house is on fire!" (exclamatory) only in spirit (and punctuation), not in form.

So it is with the forms of discourse. The readily identifiable distinctions of content and plan to be found among description, narration, and exposition fade away between exposition and argumentation, both of which purpose to explain, to inform; the remaining difference is one of spirit, of purpose, since argument merely adds to information a more or less urgent desire to convince.

You may write home the fact that you need twenty dollars; that is exposition. But if you attempt, as likely, to convince your family of your need and to persuade them to send you a check, that is argumentation. The scientist is concerned essentially with a straightforward account of his discovery, permitting us to "take it or leave it";

the salesman and the politician, on the contrary, are vitally concerned that we "take it." Yet the line between exposition and argumentation cannot be drawn by profession. The sanitary engineer may be concerned with giving only a factual account of an improved method of sewer construction; or he may find himself obliged to urge the city council to adopt it. Check briefly through a list of your daily communications with family, classmates, teachers, and friends, and notice how slender is the line between the occasions which require of you mere information and those which demand that the information be arrayed convincingly. Then you will understand why it is well for the writer of exposition to be familiar with the main principles underlying successful argument.

All communication, as we have seen, should be aimed at and adapted to the reader; but because in argumentation you go beyond the desire to entertain or inform him and become vitally concerned with changing his way of thinking or living, you must give him a more than ordinary degree of consideration. How to accomplish your purpose? Chiefly by proving and persuading, by appealing to both his intellect and his emotions.

Proof

Assertion is not conviction, no matter how loud the voice in which it is uttered. It must be backed by evidence, which is composed chiefly of facts and opinions, and of conclusions drawn from both by certain logical processes.

Facts. Distinguish carefully between fact and opinion. That your town has a population of a certain size is a fact, easily ascertained and verified; that it needs a low-cost housing program is only an opinion, not acceptable to others until it has been established by evidence.

1. See that your facts are truly facts—that you don't quote from hearsay or guesswork. Use reputable and unbiased sources—atlasses, yearbooks, and other compilations which have no ax to grind.

2. **Use only pertinent facts.** There is better proof of your town's need for a safe water supply than its size or its interesting history.
3. **Be sure that your facts are up-to-date.** The census figures of 1900 will have little direct bearing on the civic problems of 1950.

Opinions. Opinions may be worthless or valuable evidence, depending on their source; what the town "crack-pot" says about sanitation is probably worthless; but what the town doctor says is important.

1. **Quote authorities.** They may be persons who are well known as individuals, or members of professions or holders of offices or titles which prove their right to speak.
2. **Do not expect a well-known name to carry weight in every field.** A prize-winning physicist is not, as such, qualified to speak with authority on foreign affairs or economic programs.
3. **Choose persons who are known to be not only competent but disinterested.** A wide knowledge of finance does not necessarily make a man a reliable authority on an investment in which he himself has a considerable interest.

Reasoning. Facts and opinions will probably occupy a less sizable and important place in your argument than what is sometimes called "circumstantial" evidence, which is obtained by various types of reasoning from basic data. Such reasoning constitutes the soundest of argumentative procedures, if properly handled. But carelessly or intentionally misused, it may lose you the confidence of your reader and give to your opponents material with which they may appear to destroy your whole case, even though it may be basically sound.

1. **Cause and effect.** Your argument may be based on known causal relationships. A severe frost on a critical spring date is sufficient reason to expect a consequently light fruit crop in the fall, and a wave of juvenile de-

linquency may reasonably indicate a background of improper home conditions.

Do not misinterpret a mere time sequence to be a causal relationship; such an error is the basis of most superstitions and of much faulty argument. A black cat's crossing the path may be followed by bad luck, a dog's howling by a death in the household; but this conjunction of events is coincidence, not cause and effect.

2. **Induction.** Induction is the method of science—the establishment of a general truth by an examination of numerous instances which support it. A sufficient number of cases of a disease being contracted by the patients' having come into contact with someone suffering from it will establish the conclusion that the disease is contagious.

Beware of hasty generalization. The fact that you once knew an Italian who stole does not justify the conclusion that all Italians are thieves.

3. **Deduction.** Deduction is the reverse of induction, being used to arrive at a conclusion about some particular through reference to a general statement which is assumed, or has already been proved inductively, to be true. If it is true that all children like candy, one can safely assume that candy will please a certain child. Arranged according to the formal pattern called in logic the syllogism, such reasoning would appear as follows:

Major premise: All children like candy.

Minor premise: John is a child.

Conclusion: John likes candy.

Such deduction is one of the most relentless of logical processes; but the conclusion thus arrived at is never any sounder than the major premise on which it is based. If the Smith family are all morons and John is a member of the family, he too is inescapably

a moron; but perhaps the original assumption was a false generalization, leaving room for exceptions.

4. **Comparison.** Effective argument can be based on the likeness existing between two similar situations. If the high school of a certain town has already succeeded with a certain new program, it is reasonable to suppose that another high school in a comparable town can likewise succeed with it.

The strength of such argument lies in the absence of any differentiating circumstances—of race, or wealth, or civic pride—which would actually invalidate the comparison.

5. **Analogy.** The form of argument known as analogy involves an expansion of the "basic image" device discussed in Unit 1 (page 29). It involves a comparison between things or situations which are not identical but between which there exist certain resemblances that the writer believes justify the assumption of others. In attempting to prove the need for a government-owned merchant marine, he may show how handicapped would be the doctor who depended upon hired transportation in making his calls.

Such an analogy is effective in argument, having the virtue of making simple and clear an involved and abstract idea. Its vice lies in assuming similarities where none actually exists. The drug clerk who argued that a certain fountain drink must be destructive to the stomach because a wrench which he accidentally dropped into a barrel of the syrup was later recovered in a badly corroded condition was guilty of such an error. An analogy is a rhetorical aid to argument, not evidence in its own right, and it is less an instrument of true proof than of the other avenue of conviction, persuasion.

Persuasion

It would be pleasant, perhaps, to assume that man is an entirely rational animal, capable of being moved to a

change of opinion or to action by intellectual evidence alone. Actually, however, not only our reason but our emotions are involved in the directing of our will, a fact that the writer of argumentative prose must always remember. Evidence alone will not suffice; it must be accompanied by measures designed to persuade as well as convince.

1. **Attitude.** Be agreeable. The personality of the salesman often gets results that the virtues of the goods cannot alone produce. Be friendly, tactful, amusing, conciliatory, as best suits the occasion. Few people care to be scolded into righteousness, although an occasional writer succeeds with such tactics. Make yourself one with those who wish to find out rather than pose as one who already knows all the answers.
2. **Fairness.** Be just. Those who already agree with you may enjoy a biased diatribe, but your argument is not aimed primarily at them. To win the opposition, and even the fence-sitter, you must appear to be governed by inescapable fact rather than personal prejudice.
3. **Concessions.** Insofar as you can, agree with the opposition. Such an attitude not only will establish your reputation for fairness, but will allow you to concentrate your power effectively on a few significant points instead of scattering it over the whole subject. Besides, such concessions leave the opposition relatively little opportunity for counterargument.
4. **Refutation.** Even the points which you cannot concede to the other side should be mentioned. Anticipate the opposite arguments, either showing them to be insignificant or refuting them with superior points of your own. By taking both sides into consideration, you will strengthen your own.
5. **Appeal.** Strengthen your case by appeals to your reader's interests or to his better nature—to his sense of justice or to his humanitarianism. Draw on all the other forms of discourse to contribute vividness and color to

your argument, remembering that it must not only explain but convince. And let your proof and your persuasion be a pleasant intermingling rather than two separate attacks.

EXAMPLES

A. CONSCRIPTION VS. DEMOCRACY

Ellsworth Barnard

Compulsory military training, as a permanent policy, is indefensible. We must of course maintain a fairly large army for the occupation of enemy territory for some years after the war, but this cannot be done by short-term trainees. We must also have a vigorous navy and air force to help implement the Dumbarton Oaks agreements. The thing we do not need is the only thing that compulsory military training could give us—a permanent mass army.

Even if the outline of a third world war were already visible, what good would compulsory military training do us at this point? What good would it have done at the time of Pearl Harbor to have a trained army of ten million unless we also had the arms? There will always be time to give men a year of training before their weapons are ready—unless we are to fight with obsolete weapons or maintain war production almost at present levels. Both are unthinkable. What we shall need is a relatively small, alert, well-paid force of expert planners, researchers, and technicians, to provide a foundation and framework for the quick building of a great citizen army if we ever need one.

But, it is argued, compulsory military training is good in itself—it provides valuable experience for those who undergo it. Ask anyone from the armed forces whether he was ever taught anything except one specific job aimed at one specific goal—winning a particular war. Do we want the army, after all, to teach men anything else? Can it, under a system of compulsory military training, permanently improve health more than a well-planned civilian

program? Can it provide better training for a technical civilian job than a civilian technical school? Can it educate men for democratic citizenship better than a civilian system of education? Even to ask these questions is absurd.

And what will army life teach our peace-time conscripts? It will teach them to obey orders—with a minimum of exertion and intelligence; to use leisure time—in the most unrewarding ways; it will teach some of them how to avoid suffering in body or conscience—while casting aside the moral restraints that civilian life imposes; and it will try to teach them not to think for themselves, not to be free individuals in a democratic community.

In war these evils are part of the price that we must and can afford to pay. In peace time they offer no return.

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1. What concessions are made in ¶1?
 2. What comparison is made in ¶2?
 3. What opposing argument is refuted in ¶3? What counterarguments are advanced?
 4. What further arguments are advanced in ¶4?
 5. What is accomplished by the brief concluding paragraph? Would it be more effective if it were developed at greater length?

B. THE PRESENT HYSTERIA

Henry Steele Commager

1. Four times in our history we have given way to fear of ideas and indulged in measures of suppression and oppression.

2. The first example occurred in the Seventeen Nineties and early Eighteen Hundreds, when "the wise, the rich, and the well-born," that is, the Federalists, frightened out of their wits by the excesses of the French Revolution abroad and Thomas Jefferson at home, enacted the lamentable Alien and Sedition laws.

3. The second example came in the Eighteen Fifties when the slave-owning South, convulsed by fear for the

"peculiar institution," drove out those who criticized it, gagged the press, censored the mail, purged colleges, and, in the end, seceded from the Union.

4. In the third example, in the Eighteen Nineties, respectable gentlemen, especially in the East, deluded themselves that the Populist party was made up of anarchists, that all labor leaders carried sticks of dynamite in their pockets, that Peter Altgeld was a new Benedict Arnold and William Jennings Bryan an anti-Christ.

5. The fourth instance of hysteria came after World War I when Americans whipped themselves into a frenzy over a bugaboo of bolshevism sweeping the United States, deported hundreds of harmless aliens, sent Eugene Debs to a Federal penitentiary, purged Legislatures of Socialists and spread syndicalist laws and teachers' oath laws on their statute books.

6. It is a sobering thought that none of these past hysterias was a reaction to anything that really threatened the American Republic, the Constitution, or our democracy and, moreover, that we have acknowledged and repented these mistakes of the past. The Alien and Sedition Acts were repealed and their victims compensated. Southerners are satisfied now that slavery was a great wrong. Practically every plank in the Populist platform of 1892 has since been enacted into law. We are not proud of our record of the Twenties.

7. Yet we have not, it seems, learned anything from history. With all these precedents to give us pause, we are now embarked upon a campaign of suppression and oppression more violent, more reckless, more pervasive, and ultimately more dangerous than any in our history.

8. What is the explanation of the present hysteria? Are we, in fact, in danger? Are we disunited, and torn by dissension? The contrary is true. Never before have the American people shown themselves to be as united as in this last decade.

9. It was not always thus. Jefferson in his First In-

augural Address said this was the only country "where every man, at the call of the law, would fly to the standard of the law, and would meet invasions of the public order as his own personal concern." But that was not true during the Revolution, when about one-third of the American people were loyalist and another third neutral. It was not true during the War of 1812, when large numbers of the people bitterly opposed the war and effectively sabotaged it. It was not true during the Mexican War, when opposition to war was widespread and ardent in the North. It was not true during the Civil War, when both North and South were torn by internal dissension. Yet it is an interesting fact that we fought all these wars without sedition acts or loyalty oaths.

10. In the first World War there was considerable opposition from pro-German and pro-Irish segments and from unregenerate isolationists, but for the most part Americans were united. In the second World War the American people were united as never before in their history. There was less opposition to war, less sabotage than in any previous war. Political parties sank their differences; racial and national groups, labor and capital united in the common cause.

11. We emerged from World War II incomparably the strongest, the richest, the best armed nation on the globe. We are almost tempted to say, with Horace Walpole back in 1763, "throw away your Greek and Latin books: histories of little peoples." Nor is our strength purely material or military. We are the oldest republic, the oldest federal system, the oldest democracy, in the world. Our nation, and our Constitution, has withstood the vicissitudes of 160 years. Our people are intelligent and they are moral.

12. Nevertheless, we see evidences of anxiety and hysteria all around us—in the stir and bustle of federal and state un-American activities committees, in loyalty investigations, in the purging of schools and colleges, in witch-hunting and censorship, in our frenzy over such silly but

innocuous things as the Cultural Conference at the Waldorf, in a hundred other manifestations, governmental and popular. This hysteria has certain marked characteristics.

13. *First*, this hysteria is concerned with rooting out subversives generally—a justifiable objective when revolutionary activity has gone underground or into labyrinthine ways. However, the hue and cry goes on without regard for the fact that the Department of Justice and the FBI, ceaselessly active in the enforcement of the forty-some laws against treason, espionage, and so on, have as yet adduced no evidence that traitors and spies and subversives have been able to work substantial harm to the nation.

14. *Second*, the current program is directed, clearly, toward subversives of the Left rather than of the Right, toward Communists and fellow-travelers or—as the House Committee on Un-American Activities once put it felicitously—against the “New Deal in various shades of communism.” Thus, it is relevant to note that several teachers lost their jobs because of activities in behalf of Henry Wallace’s Progressives, but none because of activity for the Dixiecrat organization. Yet it was the States Rights party that was openly engaged in activities designated by the Attorney General as subversive in its denial of rights under the Constitution.

15. *Third*, the drive is proceeding without any clear-cut idea of what it is aimed at. Notwithstanding a decade of intensive concern with disloyalty, subversive conduct, and un-American activity, we do not yet have definitions of any of these terms. The House committee has not defined them, nor has Congress or the Attorney General. It is easy to sympathize with this situation, for definition of these terms is all but impossible. But the Constitution is clear enough on treason, and so, too, are existing laws on espionage. Who, then, is to determine and by what criteria just what is un-American or subversive?

16. Some efforts have been made, but they illustrate admirably, and alarmingly, the danger inherent in all such at-

tempts. Thus J. Edgar Hoover listed among the "easy tests" to determine a Communist-front organization: "Does the organization have a consistent record of support of the American viewpoint over the years?" But he does not tell us what the "American viewpoint" is, or who is to determine the consistency of record. Another of his tests: "Does the organization receive consistent favorable mention in Communist publications?" Clearly, all that is needed here is for The Daily Worker to give consistently favorable mention to the Daughters of the American Revolution and the American Legion for these organizations to come under the ban.

17. *Fourth*, the campaign against "subversives," like all campaigns of its kind, here and abroad, has an inherent and inevitable tendency to spread out, and, in the end, to proscribe any ideas which the dominant forces in the community may not like.

18. How else explain the attack on the loyalty of Senator Graham of North Carolina in the Senate itself; the proposal of the Regents of the University of Nebraska to bar discussion that may "plant the seeds of subversion"; Louis Bromfield's argument that sale of colored oleomargarine will advance communism; Representative Brown's comment on the decision of the British court to free Gerhart Eisler:

What gratitude. What a shining example of international co-operation. What a great demonstration of appreciation by the British Government of the sacrifices we have been making to aid the British people!

In this statement the basic assumption is that justice is for sale.

19. What are the fears behind the present hysteria and the dangers created by each of these fears?

20. First is the fear of Communist infiltration into the Government. This fear has led to a vast and expensive series of investigations into "un-American" activities, plus

widely inclusive "loyalty" checks. The shabby antics practiced in the past by the House Committee on Un-American Activities are so familiar that they do not require rehearsal. President Truman attempted to provide the loyalty check with proper safeguards; what is most impressive about it is the paucity of returns so far. Out of 2,500,000 employees checked fewer than 10,000 required further investigation.

21. The precise number dismissed for alleged disloyalty or subversive activities, or merely because they were "poor security risks"—whatever that phrase may mean—is almost impossible to determine. It is, apparently, well under 500, though it should be added that an additional 3,000 or so have resigned under investigation. Even more impressive is the fact that, so far as the public has been informed, none of all those investigated or dismissed has been formally charged with any crime against the United States.

22. The danger created by this first fear is in the techniques evolved to prevent Communist infiltration. The safeguards which Mr. Truman hoped to establish have proved completely inadequate. It is probably improper to lay responsibility for this at the door of Mr. Truman or of Attorney General Tom Clark; it is rather that disregard of elementary principles of fair play is implicit in any such program. Though we do not, to be sure, know the whole story or even much of it, we do know that the Attorney General was authorized to draw up his own list of "subversive" organizations; that organizations thus branded had no opportunity to have a hearing; that the mere creation of such a list introduced to our law the odious principle of guilt by association.

23. We know something of the kind of questions asked of employees suspected of disloyalty. The first rule adopted by the Civil Service Commission, back in 1884, reads as follows: "No question in any form of application or in any examination shall be so framed as to elicit information concerning the political or religious opinions or affiliations of

any applicant, nor shall any inquiry be made concerning such opinions or affiliations, and all disclosures thereof shall be discountenanced."

24. Yet here are some of the questions asked at loyalty examinations: What do you think of the third party formed by Henry Wallace? Is your wife a churchgoer? Do you read a good many books? How do you explain the fact that you have an album of Paul Robeson records in your home? Do you believe that Negro blood should be segregated in the Red Cross blood bank? Which newspaper do you read? Would you say that your wife has liberal political viewpoints?

25. J. Edgar Hoover advised the chairman of the National Labor Relations Board that an employe of that office "is known to have radical tendencies leaning toward communism. It is further reported that X has studied anthropology and has been affiliated with the NLRB for three years. It was also reported that X visited Mexico City to observe the Presidential election (of 1946) in that country."

26. A second fear—that Communists or subversives will give away military or scientific secrets—has encouraged the dangerous notion that secrecy and security are synonymous, strengthened the demand for the return of control over atomic energy to the military, given impetus to the current attack on David Lilienthal, Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission, and threatened the whole program of scientific research with confusion. That foreign spies are active may be taken for granted; it should be taken equally for granted that the FBI and our military counter-intelligence are on the job.

27. The danger created by this second fear concerns our national security. There can be no secret of atomic energy that foreign, let us say Russian, scientists will not discover. Our security lies not in secrecy but first in the preservation of peace, and second in the encouragement of the best scientific brains in the country to work on atomic energy and

other scientific measures. They can work properly only in an atmosphere of freedom.

28. It is well to remember that the military did not develop the atomic bomb but civilians did ; and that scientists, who are presumably as patriotic as Congressmen, are opposed to loyalty checks. Dr. W. A. Higginbotham has noted that 100 competent scientists have been barred from Government work without a hearing, and without reasons. If we discourage or fail to use our available scientific talent we may find ourselves dropping behind in the atomic race.

29. A third fear sweeping the country is that of subversive teachings in schools and colleges. Half a dozen states have already enacted teachers' oaths and similar legislation ; others may confidently be expected to follow the examples of New York, Illinois, and Washington in proscribing not only Communists but "subversives."

30. In New York the Board of Regents is authorized to draw on any list prepared by any Federal agency for its own list of subversive organizations. When we recall that the Attornel General's and House Committee's lists run to several hundred, and that among these are such harmless organizations as the Southern Conference for Human Welfare, we can realize the dangerous potentialities of such a program.

31. The real danger created by this third fear is that legislatures will produce an atmosphere of suspicion and timidity, that they will discourage independence of thought, original investigation, and association. Before we put a premium on conformity in our schools, we would do well to note the admonition of Dean Wilbur J. Bender of Harvard University :

The world is full of dangerous ideas, and we are both naive and stupid if we believe that the way to prepare intelligent young men to face the world is to try to protect them from such ideas while they are in college. Four years in an insulated nursery will produce gullible innocents, not tough-minded realists who know what they believe because they have faced the enemies of their beliefs.

32. These are some major manifestations of the current hysteria; scores of others could be added, but they would merely elaborate the pattern rather than enlarge it. That there is a pattern is clear; it is a pattern of fear and suppression. The peril is perhaps more serious today than in the days of the Alien and Sedition Acts or the slavery controversy, for now the whole world is interested in our effort to maintain the traditional liberty with order.

33. The current program of suppression seriously endangers effective operation of our democracy. It lowers the morale of the civil service, puts a premium there on conformity, and discourages men of real ability from entering government service. It endangers the morale of American science by putting a premium on mediocrity in a field requiring independence, originality, and full freedom of inquiry and of communication. It strengthens the hand of the military in areas traditionally and wisely entrusted to civilian control.

34. It imperils freedom of teaching in elementary, secondary, and higher schools by requiring conformity in standards, by introducing the grave peril of censorship of textbooks and ideas, and by driving away from the teaching profession men and women of independent minds. It creates an atmosphere in which teachers find safety not in orthodox ideas—for they will never know surely just which ideas are orthodox—but in no ideas. In the end we will get a generation of children taught by teachers who are afraid of ideas. Such children cannot grow up into wise and competent citizens.

35. The current program threatens the right and the necessity of criticism. No government can operate successfully without criticism, and no government that tries to distinguish between "safe" and "subversive" criticism will get the kind of criticism that it needs. The more we learn of the inner history of the Nazi and the Fascist regimes, the more we realize that perhaps the basic reason for their self-destructive policies was precisely this suppression of criticism.

36. Finally, the current program strikes at one of the most precious of all rights, one essential to the effective operation of democracy—the right of association. The practice of voluntary association is a peculiarly English and American practice. The Pilgrim Fathers associated themselves into a compact—incidentally it was a subversive one from the point of view of the English Government—and since that time Americans have customarily operated through thousands of voluntary associations: political parties, parent-teachers, veterans, business, fraternal, philanthropic, recreational, learned, and others. It is in these associations that the average American has found more training for self-government and real democracy than the famed town meeting. A policy that discourages or crushes voluntary associations will dry up the very roots of American democracy.

37. The danger that confronts us, then, is graver by far than any danger that arises from the activities of Communists or subversives in America. The American system is strong enough to stand competition from communism or any other ism. The American people are intelligent enough to resist subversive doctrines. Only at our peril may we depart from those traditions of freedom of thought, speech, inquiry, and communication which have carried us triumphantly through the vicissitudes of the past and brought us to our present proud position.

38. Since the conquest of Greece by Rome, history has frequently recorded instances where the vanquished have imposed their ideas upon the victors. Will history record that the great American democracy, at the moment of its greatest triumph and its greatest strength, yielded to the thought-control technique of the Japanese, the intolerance of the Nazis, the police-state psychology of the Russians?

1. This argument against a prevalent attitude bears out the remark that "good argument can't be brief"—for the argument which goes beyond assertion into evidence must necessarily be

supported by considerable detail. Notice the care, however, with which this mass of material has been marshaled into clarity by the use of transitional devices, notably clear enumerations.

2. The essay begins inductively. Four historical incidents presented chronologically (§§2-5) are shown to have proved regrettable (§6), with the implication (sometimes called a "suppressed major premise") that all such incidents will prove regrettable. Working deductively from that established premise, the author proceeds to the main business of the essay, establishing his contention that our present comparable behavior (§7) is therefore similarly unwise.

3. The negative aspect of the assertion at the end of §8 is proved by the five historical facts which follow (§§9-10), and its positive aspect is developed at length in §§10-11.

4. Only after this long and carefully built-up background does the author proceed to an examination of his subject, giving examples to prove its existence (§12), and analyzing it into its four major characteristics (§§13-18), each carefully illustrated by specific incidents.

5. His refutation in §16 is known as *reductio ad absurdum*—the device of reducing an opponent's argument to absurdity by showing what the result would be if it were carried through to its logical conclusion.

6. He refutes Brown's comment in §18 by calling attention to the suppressed major premise on which it is based—a premise which needs but to be exposed to be disagreed with by all reasonable people.

7. Having analyzed his subject into its characteristics, he turns to a second analysis, of its causes—the fears which produce it and their accompanying dangers (§§19-31)

8. This argument attempts to establish two points: that the present hysteria is needless (§§1-18), and that it is dangerous (§§19-38). Why are they treated in this order? The first appeals to reason, the second to reason plus emotion (fear). Note the long list of dangers toward the close of the essay (§§33-36), and the appeal to our national pride in the closing question.

9. After you have studied this argument in detail, check back to pages 65-70 and evaluate it in terms of the suggestions there listed.

ASSIGNMENT

1. Choose a subject on which you feel deeply enough to argue sincerely and well, and with which you are sufficiently familiar to speak convincingly. Suggested topics (take either side): the abolishment of fraternities and sororities, of intercollegiate athletics, of house rules, of regulations governing coeds' hours, of entrance requirements, of a certain required course; the adoption of a thirteen-month calendar, a twenty-four hour clock, the metric system, cremation. A glance at any newspaper will remind you of a number of subjects on which you feel strongly; but choose one which is small enough to be covered thoroughly (the case for or against world government can't be adequately handled in a brief theme).

2. Attempt both to prove and to persuade, using as many of the argumentative techniques listed on pages 65-70 as suit your purpose; marshal your material in an orderly fashion. Scan your completed paper for any illogicalities which might give your readers an opening for breaking down your case.

3. Read "Research Has a Moral Responsibility" (page 388) and compare its opening sentence with that of "Conscription vs. Democracy" (page 70). What would be the probable effect of the two introductions on readers who held views differing from those of the writers? What is Lilienthal's implication about those who oppose his views? What analogy does he use in his third paragraph? Is it effective?

////////// P A R T II //////////
COMMON EXPOSITORY PATTERNS

UNIT 4 //////////////////////////////////////

PROCESS: HOW TO DO IT

One of the uses to which exposition is most frequently put is that of giving directions—of telling someone how to do something. Such is its use in cook books and laboratory manuals, on seed packets and instruction sheets accompanying mechanisms. On the simplest level it may consist of no more than the druggist's hastily scribbled "Dissolve slowly on back of tongue" on the label of a box of throat lozenges. It may vary from such simple directions to accounts of long and complicated procedures like knitting a sweater or building a radio, fighting a battle or winning a peace. It is the basis of most educational procedures, both in school and out, and you will frequently find yourself forced temporarily into the role of teacher.

On any level, direction-giving requires extraordinary care on the part of the giver; for while many types of expository writing merely satisfy our curiosity or add to the sum of our general information, the explanation of a procedure usually leads us to action. It therefore behooves you to give your directions carefully and well.

Clearness

The first requirement in direction-giving is clearness. Your reader may lose little if an expression of your opinion is befogged by careless planning and wording; but in giving directions you are dealing with procedures which will be valueless unless you present them so that they can be grasped readily and exactly. At no time is it more important that you, as writer, not only know your subject well but also keep the needs of your reader constantly in mind.

1. **Choose a suitable subject.** It should be some process which you have actually done yourself, for if your in-

formation is merely secondhand, your reader will do better to learn it from your source than through you. Be sure, furthermore, that it is a subject on which it is possible to give real "directions" such as a reasonably intelligent reader, with sufficient care and practice, can follow with success. The advice, "Choose a small subject and develop it thoroughly," is particularly in order here, for overcondensed directions may be little better than none at all. In making your choice, then, consider the length of the paper you are assigned to write, and the time you have available for writing it.

2. **Give complete details.** You are something of a specialist in the field in which you are giving directions, or you would not have chosen it; but you are writing, you must remember, not for those who, like yourself, already know, but for those who wish to learn. The specialist's main problem, in discussing his specialty with laymen, is to put himself in their place—to force himself to recall how little he knew before he specialized. The experienced chef, in giving a recipe, is likely to omit as beneath mention certain details which his brotherhood would take for granted; but the amateur, without them, will struggle in vain to recreate the culinary masterpiece. Always assume your reader to be ignorant of your subject (he very likely is) and leave no blanks. On the other hand, don't antagonize him by "talking down" to him unnecessarily.
3. **Define special terms.** Words that you take for granted, from the height of your experience, may prove a real stumbling block to the "general reader," whom you can assume to be a person of fair intelligence and curiosity, but lacking special knowledge of the subject about which you write. Every field has its own peculiar lingo or cant—special words, or peculiar meanings attached to familiar ones, which to the uninitiated are a foreign language. Words like "empennage" and "shim," and the use of "cream" as a verb will be immediately

understood by the aeronautical engineer, the carpenter, and the cook, respectively, and may be used freely by one craftsman in writing for others of his craft. But when you write for the general reader, you must be on your guard, carefully defining such terms whenever it is impossible to omit them or to substitute more familiar words.

4. **Give reasons for the steps involved.** Clear directions, carefully followed step by step, may result in a successful conclusion even though followed blindly; but the intelligent reader will be grateful for a running explanation of *why* a certain step is called for, as well as *how* it is to be executed. This consideration not only will make your directions easier for him to read, but may also save him from actual misunderstandings such as might lead him to attempt dangerous short cuts of his own. "Always work with the knife blade turned away from you so that you will not cut yourself if it slips." "Let the milk cool before adding the beaten egg, which otherwise would cook into lumps before you could stir it in."
5. **Include negative directions.** It is often as important to warn a reader of what not to do, including a brief mention of the consequences of doing, as to give him constructive advice. "Do not hold the compass near any metal object, such as your belt buckle, as it may fail to register accurately." "Never allow the glass which has contained the cyanide to be used for any other purpose, as it cannot be entirely cleaned of the poison." Your chemistry instructor and your laboratory manual will furnish further illustrations of the use of negative directions.
6. **Use illustrative aids.** Never let your directions remain vague or general if you can find any means of being definite and concrete. A hurriedly sketched map is superior to a page of written instructions on how to go somewhere; a simple sketch or diagram accompanying the

text may do much to clarify a complicated procedure. Verbal images such as "The standard gearshift is arranged in an H pattern" are invaluable descriptive aids in direction-giving.

Organization

Since time is involved in doing things, the pattern of direction-giving is necessarily of the simplest sort, the chronological. Asked how to get to the City Hall, you may reply, "Continue east to the first traffic light; then turn left and go three blocks." In explaining any process involving more than a single step, you would find it sheer folly to attempt to wrench the successive procedures out of their natural, time-imposed order.

The arrangement of parts, then, takes care of itself in this type of expository writing; but the grouping remains to be done. In an essay on direction-giving you are faced with the problem of grouping a multitude of small, separate steps into a few clear, manageable units. This planning should be undertaken before the actual writing of the essay is even begun. Serving as a guide to you as you write, the resulting order will have its inevitable effect on the reader of your finished work, for four suboperations of five steps each, for instance, are far easier to follow and remember than twenty single steps.

However familiar you may be with the process of producing popcorn, for example, you must first think through the dozens of decisions and motions involved in that procedure. You may decide that those necessary to be mentioned are the following:

1. Plowing
2. Rolling
3. Fertilizing
4. Disking
5. Planting
6. Cultivating
7. Cutting

- 8. Husking
- 9. Drying
- 10. Shelling

As you look over your list, however, you find that **even** these few steps are not equal in importance, but can be grouped into a very few main units, each consisting of a number of related steps.

- I. Preparation of the ground
 - A. Plowing
 - B. Rolling
 - C. Fertilizing
 - D. Disking
- II. Growing the crop
 - A. Planting
 - B. Cultivating
- III. Harvesting the crop
 - A. Cutting
 - B. Husking
 - C. Drying
 - D. Shelling

You are at last ready to start writing. Do not let the bones of this skeleton plan show through as you proceed, but cover them graciously with word and phrase; a plan is something of which the reader should be pleasantly aware, as giving order to the material, but which should never obtrude itself unpleasantly through the body of your finished prose, as though your paper were no more than a sentence outline. Determine the amount of space to be apportioned to each main division and develop your paragraphs skillfully. Use transitional devices to hold them together and to make clear your shift from one division of your subject to another, but vary them; do not overdo the tempting but monotonous "then" and "the next step."

Interest

For the everyday "cook-book" variety of direction-giving, where space is at a premium, clearness and good

order suffice. One who wishes to know how to operate a vending machine will be best satisfied by the briefest of clear directions. But the "how to do" essay, being longer, may often quite properly add special devices for gaining reader interest to its basic explanation, and thus become more interesting and memorable.

You may wish to consider, for instance, what attitude you will take toward your material—what tone you will adopt for the particular audience whom you intend to reach. Perhaps you will choose some special device by which you feel you can most interestingly present your material.

You need not limit yourself to the formal "One does this," or even the more direct and personal imperative, "Do that." You may choose instead to cloak your directions in the form of a personal narrative in which, by saying "*I did*" thus and so, you add the quality of human interest to mere direction-giving. Instead of plunging directly into the procedure, you may begin in a leisurely fashion, with an account of how you came to be familiar with the process, for instance, or why you consider it worth doing. Instead of ending your paper with the final step, you may conclude with an account of the results of the procedure and their significance—not an essential part of direction-giving as such, but calculated to add reader interest.

Always remember, however, that clearness is the first requirement of all direction-giving; do not allow devices for adding interest to distract you from the all-important task of giving complete, clear, and easy-to-follow directions

EXAMPLES

A. HOW TO MAKE A CALL

1. Deposit coin.
2. Listen for dial tone.

3. Dial number wanted.

If call is not completed, hang up and coin will be returned.

These directions, appearing in a metropolitan phone booth, are typical of "how to do it" material in its simplest form—a mere numbered list of steps expressed in the fewest possible words so as to be most easily read and comprehended. Similar lists abound as instructions for setting up and operating mechanisms, and as directions for using the contents of cans, bottles, and boxes of material. Making such lists is good practice in clear thinking and concise wording.

B. GLUING FURNITURE

Too much heat and too little moisture this winter may loosen the joints in wooden furniture. If the loose sections can be sprung far enough apart to insert the glue, some joints can be repaired without taking the whole piece apart. Otherwise, loose sections must be pulled out and reassembled.

The best glue for an amateur to use is a plastic resin glue that can be purchased in powder form to be mixed with water as it is needed. This glue is waterproof, does not stain the wood, and is easily handled.

If the furniture is taken apart, number all sections with corresponding numbers on inside of joints. First, scrape old glue from the wood, so that new glue can penetrate into the pores of the wood. To open the pores of the wood, warm both the glue and the wood by heating them slightly over a radiator, in the sun, or in the oven.

Next, be sure that the parts fit tightly together. If they fit loosely, put strips of soft cotton cloth over the ends of the joints. Apply glue to the joint and to the part to be inserted, and place them together, as the glue sets quickly.

To keep the parts in place while the glue is drying, apply pressure by clamps, or by using a rope and a stick in tour-

niquet fashion. If rope is used for the legs, place it only between the two legs to be tightened and not around all four. Protect the wood or finish by using soft-wood pieces over thick pads of paper between the clamps or rope, and the furniture. Keep the piece under pressure for twenty-four hours.

1. This selection is an example of the numerous little workshop procedures with which the home, garden, and craft magazines are filled. Although written in essay style, they make no special effort to gain reader interest (which they can leave to their subject matter) but concern themselves solely with giving straightforward directions in a minimum of space. (Note the "telegraphic" omission of "the" in parts of ¶3.)

2. The paragraphs are rather shorter than good literary practice would suggest, but have something of the advantage of the numbered list in "How to Make a Call," as they keep the main parts of the procedure in separate units. Ready intelligibility in such a paper is more important than literary grace.

3. How much of the paper is devoted to introduction? What information does it supply? Is there a conclusion?

4. List the steps involved in the procedure; then group them into larger related units. How do your resulting groups compare with the author's paragraphs?

5. Mark the points at which the author makes clear the reasons for certain steps. Are there other places where such an explanation would have been welcome?

C. WEEDLESS LAWNS WITHOUT A BACKACHE

Oliver C. Lee

Poor lawns cause weeds, rather than weeds causing poor lawns. That's the new theory of protection against the perennial raids of these outcasts of plant society. This new power for law and order in the art of lawn making and maintenance promises to eliminate both the backache from lawn care and the weeds from the greensward. Weeds are nature's means of covering up bare spots and survive only until conditions are made ideal for a more

hardy plant, which in the case of lawns is grass. The problem of weed control in a lawn, therefore, resolves itself into building up a thick, heavy turf that will leave no room for the weed intruder. In this game of the survival of the fittest, the importance of selecting adapted grass varieties and keeping the soil in a state of fertility to grow a good crop of grass cannot be overemphasized.

In the past, most home owners have attempted to get rid of lawn weeds by the back-breaking method of hand weeding, which is just about the most laborious and inefficient method of all. Dandelion, plantain, and other lawn weeds have the habit of resprouting after cutting. Weed seeds blow in from the neighboring lawns and lots to increase the stand many-fold, all of which is very discouraging. Spray materials have been used with only a fair degree of success. Many lawn weeds are perennials, and sufficient chemicals to kill their extensive root systems are also seriously damaging to the grass.

The first step in lawn improvement is to make certain that the soil is in shape to grow a decent crop of grass. An exceedingly common error is attempting to grow grass on infertile, clayey subsoil cast up when the house foundation was excavated, to which has been added masses of waste building material. It is almost hopeless to try to grow grass on so poor and unnatural a foundation. Heavy clay soils and gravel are not suitable for lawns; most grasses like an open soil, high in humus. Only by the addition of good top soil can such a condition be remedied.

Another important point to keep in mind when producing a weed-proof lawn is that grass is a plant and needs the essential plant food elements, namely, nitrogen, phosphorus, and potash. Of these, nitrogen is the most important from the standpoint of amount and need because it is nitrogen that develops and gives color to plant leaves. It therefore follows that a plant food should be high in nitrogen, analyzing 10-6-4 or a similar ratio. Two applications of fertilizer at the rate of about ten pounds per

1000 square feet of lawn surface should be made each year. The first application should be made in early spring, March or April, and the second during September. Care should be taken to spread the fertilizer evenly over the lawn to avoid burning the grass.

Kentucky blue grass is the most commonly used lawn grass. One of its biggest drawbacks is that it will not thrive in the shade. For shaded areas, chewing fescue is recommended. It is a fine stemmed grass and makes a beautiful carpet turf with very little sunlight. Rough-stalked meadow grass, also known as *Poa trivialis*, will also thrive in the shade. Under most conditions chewing fescue is preferred, however, because of its finer texture.

In recent years bent grass, often spoken of as the aristocrat of grasses, is being used to replace blue grass. When sown on good fertile soil with proper drainage it produces a beautiful, velvety sod that has the ability to withstand the invasion of weeds. Bents, as a rule, prefer a soil slightly better supplied with plant food than the others require. In order to produce a bent-grass lawn, considerable thought should be given to the selection of the species and strains best suited to existing conditions.

Proper watering is also important in lawn care. Light sprinklings do more harm than good. They encourage shallow rooting of the grass and encourage the growth of shallow-rooted weeds. When mowing the lawn, set the cutting bars high, one and one-half to two inches from the ground. Close clipping is detrimental to the grass plants.

1. Note the change in style from the preceding selection—the general air of leisurely discussion, the well-developed paragraphs, and the absence of the imperative second-person approach. Yet the purpose is still obviously that of direction-giving. What has been gained by the change? Is anything lost?

2. The skeleton outline consists of Introduction, I—Soil, II—Fertilizer, III—Seed, IV—Watering, V—Mowing. The

introduction consists of two paragraphs; what is the special purpose of the second? How do you account for the two paragraphs devoted to III, and for the handling of IV and V in one brief one? Do you feel the need of a conclusion?

The difference between writing directions which merely inform and those which add interest to information can be readily seen from the two following selections on how to bake beans, one a standard recipe, the other an item from a collection of personal experiences.

D. BAKED BEANS

Soak 2 cupfuls of dry beans overnight. In the morning, boil until soft, and drain. Put them into a covered beanpot with $\frac{1}{4}$ lb. salt pork. Mix into $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of boiling water the following: $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. baking soda, $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp. mustard, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup molasses, and salt and pepper to taste. Pour over beans, adding enough more water to cover. Bake for 6 hours in a slow oven, uncovering during the last half hour to brown.

E. BAKED BEANS¹

Louise Dickinson Rich

Now about the baking of the beans. Baked beans have to be baked. That sounds like a gratuitous restatement of the obvious, but it isn't. Some misguided souls boil beans all day and call the lily-livered result baked beans. I refrain from comment.

We use either New York State or Michigan white beans, because we like them best, although yellow-eyes are very popular, too. I take two generous cups of dry beans, soak over night and put them on to boil early in the morning. When the skins curl off when you blow on them, they've boiled long enough. Then I put in the bottom

¹ From *We Took to the Woods*, Copyright, 1942, by Louise Dickinson Rich, published by J. B. Lippincott Company. By permission.

of the bean pot, or iron kettle with a tight-fitting cover, a six-by-eight inch square of salt pork with the rind slashed every quarter of an inch, a quarter of a cup of sugar, half a cup of molasses, a large onion chopped fairly fine, and a heaping teaspoonful of dry mustard. This amount of sugar and molasses may be increased or cut, depending on whether you like your beans sweeter or not so sweet. This is a matter every man has to decide for himself. The beans are dumped in on top of this conglomerate, and enough hot water is added to cover, but only cover. The baking pot should be large enough so there's at least an inch of freeboard above the water. Otherwise they'll boil over and smell to high heaven. Cover tightly and put into a medium oven—about 350° is right. They should be in the oven by half past nine in the morning at the latest, and they should stay there until supper time, which in our family is at six.

So far there is no trick in making good baked beans. The trick, if it can be dignified by such a term, lies in the baking, and like a great many trade tricks, it consists only of patience and conscientious care. You have to tend the beans faithfully, adding water whenever the level gets down below the top of the beans, and you have to keep the oven temperature even. If you're lazy, you can put in a lot of water and not have to watch them so closely. But to get the best results, you should add only enough water each time to barely cover the beans. This means that you'll give up all social engagements for the day, as you can't leave the baby for more than half an hour at a time. I think the results are worth it—but then, I haven't anywhere special to go, anyhow. My beans are brown and mealy, and they swim in a thick brown juice. They're good. I always serve them with corn bread, ketchup and pickles.

F. HOW TO MAKE AN ICE CREAM SODA

Charles Dippold

As a former Amalgamator of Aqueous Solutions of Carbonic Acid, I can state with authority that the ice cream soda is the acme of the soda-jerker's art. Sundaes, cokes, and shakes are all secondary; anyone can ladle syrup over ice cream or mix charged water and syrup to make a coke, but it takes long experience and inspired artistic endeavor to blend together the few simple ingredients of that masterpiece of the profession, the ice cream soda. As in any art, individual technique varies, but like any artist, I believe mine to be the most satisfactory.

To begin with, a glass must be chosen. The ideal glass is tall, with thick sides to prevent breakage, and with a heavy base to prevent tipping. It should be conical in shape, since a cone has only one-third the volume of a cylinder of equal height and base, while appearing almost as large.

Equipped with the proper glass, one now chooses the syrup. I personally prefer chocolate, but with any flavor the procedure is the same. The proper amount must be judged by the soda-jerker. It is generally between two and three ounces, depending upon the size of the glass and one's individual taste. A dab of stiff whipped cream is flipped upon the syrup by a dexterous tap of the spoon on the edge of the glass, and then one is ready for the most important step, adding the water.

The object is to produce a light, frothy, homogeneous mixture of charged water and syrup. To do this perfectly, the fine stream must be used. At some fountains, quality must be sacrificed to speed and the coarse stream substituted, but since we are considering the ideal soda, we may disregard this practice. One places the glass under the faucet, slowly moving the handle forward to allow the soda-water to fizz out with increasing velocity, and rotating the glass carefully to insure a complete mixture of

water and syrup. When the glass is about two-thirds full, the water is shut off and the soda is ready for the addition of the ice cream.

Two small scoops are better than one large one, since a large one blocks the bottom of the glass so that all of the liquid cannot be removed with the straw. The scoops must be well rounded to prevent their disintegration in the liquid. The ice cream is carefully slipped in, to avoid splashing; and now the soda is ready for its crowning glory, the cap.

Slowly and carefully the charged water is again added in a fine stream, the object being to produce as high a cap as possible without causing it to run over. If the stream strikes the floating ice cream, the water will splash out violently. This is particularly embarrassing if it lands on a customer sitting in front of the faucet. However, a really great soda-jerker has so coordinated his hand and eye by constant practice that he skillfully guides the stream into the glass without splashing. When the cap has reached the highest possible point, the water is turned off, the artist quickly seizes a spoon, and both soda and spoon are nonchalantly set before the customer in one graceful motion.

What a joy it is to behold! Beads of moisture form on the cool sides, and through the foamy mass one may discern the white lumps of ice cream floating like beautiful water lilies. The top, streaked with brown lines of chocolate, rises like some snow-capped mountain, inviting the epicure to partake of this nectar and ambrosia, the ice cream soda.

1. Besides the usual unity of content (gained by sticking to the subject), this student-written selection has a second unity—that of a conspicuous and persistently maintained attitude toward the material (the pseudo-serious treatment of soda-making as an “art” and of the soda-maker as an “artist”). What does it add to the essay that a strictly informative listing of steps does not provide?

2. Does this addition distract the writer from his primary purpose of giving usable directions? Given the necessary equipment and materials, could you make a good soda with nothing but his directions as a guide?

3. How many paragraphs are devoted to actual direction-giving? What do the others accomplish? Are they worth while?

4. How many paragraphs begin with a transitional device? How many end with a sentence which prepares us for the next paragraph?

5. At what points does the author give reasons for doing as he directs? At what points does he warn of what will happen otherwise?

Look through the six selections above for examples of the four ways in which directions may be presented: the first-person "I do this," the second-person "Do that," the indefinite third-person "One should do thus and so," and the impersonal passive "Such and such should be done." Compare the effects produced. Will your choice of method be governed by your material? Your attitude toward it? Your reader?

ASSIGNMENT

For this assignment, do not choose an involved subject like "How to Maintain Peace" or a complicated procedure like "How to Play Bridge," but rather some simple process for which you can give directions that will actually direct. You need not limit yourself, however, to a procedure which can be done perfectly on the first attempt; you may assume the necessity for repeated practice, as in "How to Perform the Crawl Stroke."

Suitable subjects include how to perform a card trick, use a jig saw, prepare a favorite dish, cast for trout, treat a snake-bite, learn to ride a bicycle, write a theme, paddle a canoe, sail a boat, repair a leaky faucet or an electrical connection, shoot free throws, make an archer's bow, build a model airplane, caddy, run a trap line, develop films, operate an automobile, administer artificial respiration, conduct a business meeting. These topics (and those in succeeding units) are meant merely

as suggestions, to be used if you wish, but preferably to suggest to you other suitable ones on which you may be even better equipped to write. When you have chosen a subject,

1. Present it as a list of numbered directions.

2. Write it up in essay form as briefly as possible, limiting yourself to a mere straightforward discussion of how to do it. (This should be preceded by a determination of the larger units of related steps into which your procedure falls, and the making of a rough outline to keep those units before you.)

3. Write a second essay in which you add as much reader interest as you can. (This will involve a decision as to the purpose of your paper, the readers to whom it is addressed, the attitude you wish to assume toward it.)

enough material from which to write an interesting, though general, account of how steel is made.

2. You may choose for this purpose a much longer and more involved process than could be handled in a direction-giving essay: compare the subject of "how to make a casting" with "how steel is made." Since your reader does not expect to be able to repeat the procedure himself, he will be content with main outlines, and you need go into far less detail.
3. The organization of your "how it is done" paper presents essentially the same problems as that on "how to do it"—a chronological sequence with the main divisions of the process clearly distinguished, before you start writing, from the many minor steps of which they are composed.
4. You will probably be under greater pressure, however, to make your paper interesting. While the man who wants to know how to do something may be entirely satisfied with the briefest directions so long as they are adequate and clear, the one who is reading merely for general information may turn away from an account which he does not find interesting as well as intelligible. Here is your chance to utilize to the fullest the arts of descriptive and narrative writing as aids to exposition proper. Let your account of how steel is made be enlivened by vivid descriptions of the furnaces and memorable accounts of what goes on in them, with sketches of the men who operate them, or with your own personal reactions to the scene, so that the reader feels that he himself is momentarily there, sharing the experience with you. Give special thought to the attention-getting qualities of your beginning and the memorability of your close.

EXAMPLES

A. MAKING BROOMS

Carl Edwin Watkins

The procedure of broom making is not very complicated. First a bale of broomcorn is broken open, the stems are cut off, and the straws are sorted by machine according to size. Then the straws are dyed that lovely, fresh green color which you may have thought to be natural. When thoroughly dry they are fastened by tacks and wire to the broom handle. Since the straws extend in all directions, they are held in a clamp while a machine sews the straws permanently together in the proper shape. Finally the brush end of the broom is trimmed, the labels are put on, and the broom is ready to sell. Some brooms are made to look better by a piece of colored velvet wired about the handle where the straws are fastened on. Some warehouse brooms have a few strips of split bamboo in the broomcorn straws to give stiffness and longer wear. Whisk brooms are made of the shorter straws.

1. No one could make a broom from the information given in this student-written paragraph. The sorting, the dyeing, the sewing—each of these processes might conceivably furnish material enough for a “how to do it” paper written for the guidance of prospective broom makers.

2. What purpose is served by an account like this, which explains a process without attempting to go into enough detail to serve as directions to the reader?

B. BACTERIA AT WORK

Allan L. Benson

Bacteria at work on a dead animal do not proceed exactly as do the workmen on an assembly line in an automobile factory, but there is a suggestion of this in what they do. Different kinds of bacteria perform the various parts of the task. Each kind of bacteria produces a juice that

creates the kind of fermentation that is necessary to do the work.

They begin with the proteids of the carcass, which must be broken down into simpler forms. The first step is to break down the proteids a little—to make them a trifle less elaborate than they were. This is accomplished without the creation of any foul odors, but in the process ptomaines are created, some of which are very dangerous to human life. Meat eaten after the first crew of bacteria have worked upon it causes ptomaine poisoning. Sometimes this poisoning manifests itself only in a severe headache; sometimes it kills. It all depends upon the virulence of the poison, how much of it is eaten, and how much resistance is possessed by the one who eats it.

The next section of the bacterial wrecking-crew break down the proteids some more, and in the process of doing so produce compounds that are not only poisonous but highly offensive to the sense of smell. The job is completed by another crew who convert what was once a living animal into carbonic acid, ammonia, and small quantities of a few other compounds. In the same way, bacteria reduce dead plants from complex to simple compounds, thus releasing life-forces for further use in other forms of life.

If there were no bacteria to release these forces all kinds of life on this planet would soon come to an end. Every animal and every plant would die because the chemical elements upon which life depends would be locked up in dead animals and dead vegetation. They would be locked up because the bodies of plants and animals, though dead, would not decay.

1. This selection concerns a process about which "directions" could not conceivably be given. To clarify even the main outlines of such a complex and invisible procedure, comparisons are very useful. To what are bacteria compared in the analogy in ¶1? To what, in the metaphor in the first sentence of ¶3? Which do you find the more effective comparison for this material? Is the use of both an inconsistency?

2. The explanation of the process is complete in ¶¶2 and 3. What purposes do ¶¶1 and 4 serve?

C. HOW DICTIONARIES ARE MADE

S. I. Hayakawa

It is an almost universal belief that every word has a "correct meaning," that we learn these meanings principally from teachers and grammarians (except that most of the time we don't bother to, so that we ordinarily speak "sloppy English"), and that dictionaries and grammars are the "supreme authority" in matters of meaning and usage. Few people ask by what authority the writers of dictionaries and grammars say what they say. The docility with which most people bow down to the dictionary is amazing, and the person who says, "Well, the dictionary is wrong!" is looked upon with smiles of pity and amusement which say plainly, "Poor fellow! He's really quite sane otherwise."

Let us see how dictionaries are made and how the editors arrive at definitions. What follows applies, incidentally, only to those dictionary offices where first-hand, original research goes on—not those in which editors simply copy existing dictionaries. The task of writing a dictionary begins with the reading of vast amounts of the literature of the period or subject that it is intended to cover. As the editors read, they copy on cards every interesting or rare word, every unusual or peculiar occurrence of a common word, a large number of common words in their ordinary uses, and also the sentences in which each of these words appears, thus:

pail

The dairy *pails* bring home increase of milk

Keats, *Endymion*

I, 44-45

That is to say, the context of each word is collected, along with the word itself. For a really big job of dictionary writing, such as the *Oxford English Dictionary* (usually bound in about twenty-five volumes), millions of such cards are collected, and the task of editing occupies decades. As the cards are collected, they are alphabetized and sorted. When the sorting is completed, there will be for each word anywhere from two or three to several hundred illustrative quotations, each on its card.

To define a word, then, the dictionary editor places before him the stack of cards illustrating that word; each of the cards represents an actual use of the word by a writer of some literary or historical importance. He reads the cards carefully, discards some, re-reads the rest, and divides up the stack according to what he thinks are the several senses of the word. Finally, he writes his definitions, following the hard-and-fast rule that each definition must be based on what the quotations in front of him reveal about the meaning of the word. The editor cannot be influenced by what he thinks a given word ought to mean. He must work according to the cards, or not at all.

The writing of a dictionary, therefore, is not a task of setting up authoritative statements about the "true meanings" of words, but a task of recording, to the best of one's ability, what various words have meant to authors in the distant or immediate past. The writer of a dictionary is a historian, not a law-giver. If, for example, we had been writing a dictionary in 1890, or even as late as 1919, we could have said that the word "broadcast" means "to scatter," seed and so on; but we could not have decreed that from 1921 on, the commonest meaning of the word should become "to disseminate audible messages, etc., by wireless telephony." To regard the dictionary as an "authority," therefore, is to credit the dictionary writer with gifts of prophecy which neither he nor anyone else possesses. In choosing our words when we speak or write, we can be guided by the historical record afforded us by

the dictionary, but we cannot be bound by it, because new situations, new experiences, new inventions, new feelings, are always compelling us to give new uses to old words. Looking under a "hood," we should ordinarily have found, five hundred years ago, a monk; today, we find a motorcar engine.

1. What larger expository purpose than is indicated by the title does this selection serve? Where is it discussed? Write a sentence which expresses what you believe to be the main idea of the whole essay.

2. Which paragraphs actually tell "how dictionaries are made"? Make a numbered list of the main steps in the process.

D. HEAVILON HALL CLOCK

Robert Woerner

Ask any Purdue alumnus what he remembers first when reminiscing about his alma mater's campus, and he is likely to name the stately clock in Heavilon Hall. Located high in the tower of that tradition-steeped building, the famous Purdue clock may be seen and heard from almost all parts of the campus. Its regular chiming has become an integral part of Purdue life.

The intricate, highly accurate machinery of the clock is two steep flights of stairs above the tower entrance on the third floor of Heavilon Hall, or on what amounts to the fifth story of the building. The mechanism itself is mounted on a heavy iron frame and is surrounded by a multi-windowed casing which occupies the entire center portion of the tower floor. The purpose of this glass and wood structure is to keep dust and dirt out of the otherwise unprotected machinery.

The clock is manually wound once each week—every Saturday morning. Winding consists not of tightening a spring, as in a watch or ordinary clock, but rather of pulling three heavy weights up their respective shafts which

extend down to the level of the third floor. Two of these weights are supported by heavy wire cables and the third by a chain. These supporting ties are wound onto drums turned by a hand crank, thus raising the weights through pulley arrangements.

The three weights supply the energy to power the three principal parts of the clock machinery—the mechanism which rotates the clock hands, that which strikes the quarter hours and the preparatory notes on the hour, and that which tolls off the hours.

The timing device of the clock is a nine-foot pendulum which hangs down from the machinery and extends through the floor into a case on the ceiling of the room beneath. The tip of the pendulum describes an arc two or three feet in length. It is pivoted upon a thin shaft which also supports two opposing rocker arms. These alternately slip in and out of the teeth of a gear as the pendulum rotates the shaft first one way and then the other. This gear experiences a constant turning force from the weight. During the interval after one rocker arm slips out of the gear and before the other may slip into it on the opposite side, the gear is allowed to turn through one cog. From this gear, through a series of shafts and meshing gears, torque is transmitted to the clock hands.

The striking mechanisms are so connected to the timing machinery that at the appointed time a series of chimes will be sounded in proper sequence. The chiming apparatus is “kicked in” by large vanes which revolve at the correct instant.

The clock faces and the great bells which sound out the time are on the floor above the clock mechanism. Out of the mechanism a vertical drive shaft extends upward to the floor above. Also extending to this floor are cables connecting the striking mechanisms to mallets which hit the bells on a given impulse.

The vertical drive shaft enters a gear box where its torque is transmitted to four synchronized horizontal

shafts leading to each of the four clock faces on the sides of the square tower. Back of each face another gear box divides the torque between the minute and hour hands and gives them the proper gear ratio.

Although from the ground the clock faces appear to be a solid black material, they are really quarter-inch wire mesh, the only solid material being gold numerals which are fastened to the wire. The solid appearance is caused by the fact that from the ground no observer can see through the tower because of the great angle. Since it is always darker on the inside than on the outside of the tower, the face appears to be quite black.

Arranged about the floor of this level of the tower are the four bells which strike the time. They are cast metal instruments ranging in diameter from eighteen inches to almost twice that—each with a clear, distinct tone. At fifteen minutes past the hour one of these bells is struck. Another bell is sounded with it at half past, and a third is added to the series at fifteen minutes before the hour. On every hour each of the four bells is struck twice in a harmonious series. This is followed by the striking of the second largest of the bells the number of times indicative of the hour. The mallet of this bell has two cables which may activate it—one from the mechanism for striking the hours and one from the quarter-hour and preparatory-note mechanism.

In 1943 the clock was completely dismantled and overhauled. Worn gears were replaced and other parts were thoroughly cleaned. Since then the clock has required little attention other than its regular weekly winding. (Incidentally, that winding takes over a half-hour of strenuous effort on the part of two men.)

At present, the clock is set to run slightly fast, gaining about a minute every two weeks. This is corrected by stopping it for a minute while it is being wound. An adjustment varying the length of the pendulum may be used to alter the speed of the hands if they get too far

off. During the winter some trouble is experienced when ice and snow collect on the hands. When this occurs, the clock naturally loses time and must be corrected more often.

Winter or summer, however, the clock manages to keep Purdue students on time (or nearly so) for their daily classes.

1. This article first appeared in a magazine for engineers. Notice that the technical word "torque" is used without explanation, and that the human-interest item in the third paragraph from the end is included only "incidentally," in parentheses.

2. The introductory and concluding paragraphs, however, are obvious attempts to add reader interest to an otherwise rather technical account of the workings of a great clock. Could the body of the paper be rewritten so as to have more appeal for the general public? Is the subject suitable for a feature article directed at this broader public? Is this article, in its present form, intelligible to the general reader who is willing to read thoughtfully?

3. Notice how much descriptive and even narrative writing, of the strictly informative variety, enters into the exposition of the construction and operation of such a mechanism.

E. HAYING

R. G. Romberger

"Haying" has a host of different meanings to different people. To the poet it means sweet green hay, straining horses, racks loaded high above their ladders, sweating men, and the hot, dim mow, whose enormous maw seems never to be satisfied. To the children of the neighborhood it means a day of hitching rides to and from the field, of romping in the mow, and of carrying cold lemonade and thick sandwiches to the field in mid-afternoon. To my mother it means breakfast a little earlier, a ten o'clock lunch for Dad, and an early dinner for me. It also means

keeping cracked ice ready for the water jug and making lemonade and bologna sandwiches for the afternoon lunch. To my dad it means getting up a little earlier to get the hay cut, raked, and in the barn before it is spoiled by rain or before other work rushes him. It also means feed for next winter when our stock cannot glean their living from the meadow itself, but must be penned in the barn, away from cold and snow. To me haying means hard work and lots of it.

I must rise early, feed and harness the horses, eat breakfast, and start toward the field before the sun is well up. My father will do the milking this morning because I must get an early start at the hay. The morning is cool, and the denim jacket feels good on my back. A heavy dew is on the hay as I enter the field, and the soft thud of each planted hoof brings a tiny glisten-shower. As I oil the mower, I hear the staccato explosions and then the steady pop-pop of a John Deere down to the southwest. Dave Zimmerman must want to finish that last piece of corn plowing before he helps us this afternoon. The last oil-hole is filled, the mower is in gear, and I am off around the field, the clatter of the old mower drowning out every other sound.

As the swaths increase and the cut strip widens, I stop occasionally to re-oil the mower and let the horses blow. The dew is about gone, and the heat of the morning begins to wave the brown stubble in the field across the fence. The horses are beginning to sweat, and their glistening sides are busy shivering off the flies. About two more hours and we shall have this field pretty well finished. Around the field we go, each round making the ring of cut hay wider and the strip of standing hay narrower. As the ten-twenty train whistles for Miller's crossing, I have only a few more rounds and already see Dad coming up the road with the side-delivery to start raking. As he enters the field, I see him stop and sweep up a bunch in his hand, testing it for dryness. Yes, it is just right. It

feels dry to the hand, but there is just enough moisture in it to give it a slight toughness and keep the leaves from breaking off. The hay will finish its curing in the windrow and will be ready for the mow by one o'clock. Dad starts raking in the same place where I started mowing, raking first the hay which is driest. The rake is a queer contraption pulled obliquely around the field, wire fingers on a revolving drum gathering an eight-foot swath of hay and rolling it out to the side in an even, round windrow.

At eleven-fifteen I have finished mowing and raise the cutter bar for the trip home. The horses have done their morning's work well and deserve an extra half-hour rest period. After seeing that they are well watered and fed, I open the big hay door in the north end of the barn, uncoil the Manila rope, and rig it through the pulleys in preparation for the afternoon work. Since Dad called up the haying crew last night, they should be ready to start pretty soon. After a hasty dinner, I hitch the refreshed team to the rack, and again head for the field. I see Ed Steffen is there ready to load and Don Hack is coming down the road. Those fellows are always the first ones on the job. As I must be at the barn when the first load is mowed, I shall be first to load. The other two men tie their teams to the fence and start pitching to me.

Pitching hay goes well if the pitchers know what they are about and work together. Don and Ed have been working at it for a long time and get along very well. Don slips his fork under the end of the windrow and, lifting gently, folds the end over, making a double roll of hay. Then, in like manner, he folds the double portion over and he has a good-sized forkful. Meanwhile, Ed has separated the windrow about ten feet from the end and is folding his end back in the same way. They meet in the middle with a giant forkful, place themselves between the bunch and the rack and, sticking their forks firmly in the edges of the bunch, they heave it upward and backward over their heads onto the rack. If one of them is slow and awk-

ward, the other must wait for him, for if they do not heave at exactly the same time, the bunch will become separated and half of it will come tumbling back on them, down their sleeves, in their eyes, and down their backs. Ed and Don are old hands at it, however, and the rack is rapidly filling up. I stay on the load, keeping the top level and keeping the hay well packed. The object in loading hay is to put as much as possible on and keep it there until you reach the barn. To do this the sides must be built up straight and the corners packed in firmly. This makes a square, high load which will ride over moderately level ground and only sway gently back and forth. When hay is piled well above the ladders on my rack, I gather up my lines, and, leaning on my fork for balance, start barnward. Dave and Uncle Sam are here now, and can start to pitch for the other two racks. My older brother and another uncle will work in the mow at home, and Bill, my younger brother, will drive the team on the rope. As I cross the road from the field, ducking to escape the sagging telephone wire, I see that Bill has his team in place; so I need only drive up close to the end of the barn under the big door and pull out the clawlike grapple fork.

The rope and pulley system in a barn is simple, yet quite effective. A stationary steel track is built in the ridge of the barn, extending out over the load of hay. On the end of the track is a trip-catch which stops and locks a small four-wheeled carrier. From the carrier is suspended the large fork, rigged so that when it is pulled to the end of the track, the carrier locks in place and the fork drops to the load, pulling with it the double strand of inch hemp rope to which it is attached. When the load is raised, by a team of horses pulling on the large rope at the other end of the barn, the carrier is released, and glides along the track to any point in the barn.

I am very careful as I pull the big grapple fork from the barn. It is fastened to the pulley which locks in the carrier, and as I pull it toward the open door with the

three-eighths-inch trip rope, I move to the front of the load so that, when the carrier hits the trip-catch, releasing the fork and locking the carrier, I will not be beneath it. The fork is quite heavy and comes down with its jaws wide apart, menacing the life of anyone caught under it. It is made in two parts, hinged in the middle with three fingers or tines in each half. It is constructed so that when its fingers are pushed into the hay and the rope pulls on the middle joint, the halves squeeze together, sometimes taking as much as one-fourth of a load at a grab. I set the fork in the back half of the load, jumping on it to set the tines firmly and deeply, and, after seeing that the trip rope is clear, crawl to the front of the rack to keep from being swept off as the load goes up. With everything in readiness I yell "All-I-I right!" There is a moment's pause while Bill starts the horses, then a tightening and straining of the rope, and the whole back quarter of my load moves slowly toward the top of the barn. Up, up, it goes until, with a moment's hesitation, the pulley clicks into the carrier, and the whole mass swings quickly into the barn. By this time I have retrieved the trip rope, and when the hay is above the spot where it is to be dropped, the men inside yell "Whoa!" I give a quick jerk on the trip rope, and the hay drops with a thump and swish to the mow floor, where it is attacked and scattered from wall to wall. The youngsters now do their part by tramping the hay and packing it well against the wall while I pull the fork back out and repeat the operation. Once in a while four forkfuls will empty a rack, but ordinarily five or six are necessary. Since I am lucky enough to get unloaded in five, I am ready to move on as Ed pulls into the yard, his horses blowing and the steel wheels of his rack noisily crunching on the gravel.

By four o'clock we have eight loads in the barn, and word comes from the house that lunch is ready. The cool basement certainly feels good, and the sandwiches and sour lemonade, together with the fifteen-minute rest, refresh us

as nothing else could. A basket with some extra sandwiches and drink was sent to the field with the last empty rack; the pitchers will not have to come to the house for their lunch.

At six o'clock, as the sun hangs heavily above the trees in the west, my last load is on the way to the barn. The pitchers have started homeward, and the stillness of the evening makes the more loud my "All right!" and the answering "Whoa!" from within the barn. As the last forkful disappears into the mow, it is with a weary sigh that I drop to the ground and start to undo the tugs. It has been a long day and I have worked hard, but as I tie up the last line and turn the team to the water tank, I feel that I have accomplished something. This day has not been in vain. I am at peace with the world.

1. This student-written selection is narrative exposition. It lacks the suspense and climax necessary to pure narrative (see Unit 2) but contains considerable personal interest which pure exposition would lack.

2. What is the effect of the use of the present tense throughout? Of naming the helpers? Of packing into a single day an activity that probably actually occupied several?

3. Do you consider the purpose here to be an account of "how to make hay" or "how hay is made"? Explain.

ASSIGNMENT

1. For your "how it is done" paper, choose a subject which is sufficiently familiar to you that you can describe it accurately and interestingly to someone less well informed. Remember that you can choose a larger topic than for Unit 4, since you will not need to go into the exact detail necessary in direction-giving.

Suggested topics: how a soda fountain is run (compare with "How to Make an Ice Cream Soda" in scope), how a fish (bird, insect, animal) lives, how an election is conducted; raising a calf (chickens, pigs), threshing, mining, growing a garden, clerking in a store, waiting on table, flying an airplane,

being a lifeguard, managing a ball team, working in a factory, manufacturing lead pencils, publishing a newspaper, running a delivery route, ushering in a theater, producing an amateur play, running a dance orchestra, putting on a puppet show, working one's way through college.

2. Do not limit yourself to these "suggested topics" in your choice of subject matter for writing practice following the study of this or other units. The pattern of thought discussed above, for example, may be found serving subject matters as far afield as how a contest is judged ("Grand-Prize Jingles," page 378) and how chaos became cosmos ("Evolution of a Universe," page 457). For further suggestions, see "They Put Meaning into Brotherhood" (how an organization works, page 408), "The British Way of Radio" (how a non-commercial radio system operates, page 367), "The Abolition of Untouchability in India" (how a social change is being made, page 424), "Education by Books" (how higher education might be carried on, page 455), and "The Method of Scientific Investigation" (how the mind works, page 462)

3. When you have chosen your subject, proceed as for Unit 4: think it through and jot down the important steps in their proper sequence; determine the larger units into which your material falls, and make a rough outline; decide on your attitude toward your material. As an account of something with which you have had some experience, your paper will very likely be cast into first-person narrative form, but do not be distracted into writing pure narrative; an account of how a summer camp is run shouldn't be sidetracked, for example, into the more exciting story of a near-drowning.

COMPARISON AND CONTRAST

The Analogy

THE ESSAY OF COMPARISON AND CONTRAST

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Basically, comparison and contrast involve holding up two actually similar, but not identical, objects or situations for the sake of discovering their similarities and their points of variance. Such is the procedure in judging stock, in testing branded goods, in determining contest winners—in any situation which involves weighing and choosing.

Whenever you are faced with a choice to make, you carefully view the various possibilities, noting their likenesses and, with even greater interest, their differences, since it is through them that you will ultimately reach a decision. Which toothpaste to buy? Which movie to go to? Which college to attend? Perhaps even which man—or girl—to marry? Recognizing the basic similarities, you search for the determining differences. Toothpaste or toothpowder? Go to the movies or stay at home? Attend college or go to work? Marry or remain single? Such alternatives are even more difficult of resolution. Yet so long as man has the freedom of making his own decisions, he will be forced to arrive at dozens—small and large—in a single day; flipping a coin is a mere evasion of the intellectual process which will bring him to a reasoned answer.

You yourself are constantly weighing such issues in order to arrive at a proper course of action; the salesman or politician weighs them before you in order to prove his product or platform superior to others. You will frequently be asked, on examinations, to compare and contrast certain issues in order to ascertain whether or not you have grasped the salient points. Your purpose in writing the essay of comparison and contrast may be merely to discover and explain the likenesses and differences involved; it may be to convince your reader of the superiority of one or the other of the objects or situations you present. Whatever it may be, the general process of comparison and contrast is the same.

Content

1. **You will be writing of two things, rather than of one or several, in a theme of this type.** More than two may be involved in your original view, but since you usually eliminate them by holding them up in successive pairs, your subject remains essentially a matter of alternatives at any one point. In reaching a decision as to which of several automobiles to buy, for example, you will probably narrow your choice down by weighing pairs until you arrive at the two likeliest, which you will then compare exhaustively with each other.
2. **Choose two things enough alike to be actually comparable, enough different to make the comparison fruitful through contrast.** Two cars of the same make and year and model may have certain differences, despite the stamp of standardized production; but such differences are usually infinitesimal. On the other hand, although an automobile and a tricycle are both vehicles, they are too dissimilar to make worth while any attempt at comparison.
3. **Since you are handling two comparable subjects, make your treatment of them similar.** If you mention a certain type of detail about one, do not neglect to include it in your discussion of the other; if cost is an issue in your choice of cars, for example, include it in both sides of your contrast.

Organization

The only possible order for material in the process theme, as you discovered in the two preceding units, is a chronological arrangement of the steps involved. In the essay of comparison and contrast, however, there are two possible plans for organization, your choice being determined by the emphasis you wish to gain. For convenience we shall call the first the **opposing**, the second, the **alternating**, pattern.

1. **Opposing pattern.** Suppose you have lived on a farm before coming to college, and wish to write of rural versus urban life. Probably you will be primarily concerned with painting a vivid picture of life in each area, in which case your paper will consist of two main divisions: life in the country, and life in the town. Which you place first will depend on which you wish to stress, emphasis requiring, of course, that the one you wish to show as the more important be treated last.

Since your interest lies in comparing the two, you must, in developing them, treat of essentially the same phases of existence in each. Your subpoints under each main division, then, will be similar—for example, food, work, recreation. The order of subpoints, further, should be logically determined and, once decided upon, should be maintained under each heading. Your skeleton outline might look like this:

- I. Life in the country
 - A. Food
 - B. Work
 - C. Recreation
- II. Life in town
 - A. Food
 - B. Work
 - C. Recreation

As you write, either you may merely paint two pictures, leaving your reader to draw his own conclusions; or you may frequently refer, in your second, to the points of contrast appearing between the two; or you may write a conclusion which will tie them together and make clear your purpose in treating both in the same paper.

2. **Alternating Pattern.** If, however, you wish to emphasize the details of the comparison instead of the larger differences, you will find more useful an arrangement in which the outline above is reversed, the phases of ex-

istence being stressed and the location subordinated. Your previous three subpoints will then become main divisions; your two main divisions, subpoints under each. Your skeleton outline will look like this:

- I. Food
 - A. In the country
 - B. In town
- II. Work
 - A. In the country
 - B. In town
- III. Recreation
 - A. In the country
 - B. In town

Which of the two orders you choose will depend on the requirements of your particular subject. The first would probably be better for the subject of country versus town life, since it lends itself well to an emphasis on the contrast between the two pictures as a whole. But if your subject is such that you wish to stress instead the particular points of the comparison—if you compare one state with another, for instance, as to climate, geography, and industry—you would choose to organize your material according to the second type of pattern. For, were you to complete the discussion of one before you started on the other, the details would have begun to fade from the reader's mind before he arrived at the second part of your discussion.

Interest

If your problem of comparison and contrast is a simple matter of deciding which of two products to buy or which of two animals is superior, a mere listing of their respective ranks in two columns may be adequate. But the essay of comparison and contrast can make good reading as well as reveal good judgment. As you have been warned in Unit 4, do not let your outline show unnecessarily through

the finished work; it is a necessary guide to order, but order alone will not suffice. Your essay may be earnest or lively, profound or amusing, according to your purpose. It may merely explain, it may imply a preference, or it may strive to convince. But whatever its purpose, it should be a fully developed piece of prose, through which your plan is felt but which is no more identical with your outline than a bungalow is with a blueprint. Description, anecdote, the personal tone, and vigorous sentence building are only a few of the practices which will give life and effectiveness to your essay of comparison and contrast.

EXAMPLES

An analogy may be a simple comparison such as "The atom consists of an internal nucleus with a system of electrons traveling around it much as the earth and planets move around the sun." The three brief selections which follow are examples of the use of more extensive analogies. In each the idea to be explained, being complex or strange, is made clear briefly and vividly by comparison with the simple and the familiar.

A. THE PRINCIPLE OF RADIATION

Sir James Jeans

Disturb the surface of a pond with a stick and a series of ripples starts from the stick and travels, in a series of ever-expanding circles, over the surface of the pond. As the water resists the motion of the stick, we have to work to keep the pond in a state of agitation. The energy of this work is transformed, in part at least, into the energy of the ripples. We can see that the ripples carry energy about with them, because they cause a floating cork or a toy boat to rise up against the earth's gravitational pull. Thus the ripples provide a mechanism for distributing over the surface of the pond the energy that we put into the pond through the medium of the moving stick.

Light and all other forms of radiation are analogous to

water-ripples or waves, in that they distribute energy from a central source. The sun's radiation distributes through space the vast amount of energy which is generated inside the sun. We hardly know whether there is any actual wave-motion in light or not, but we know that both light and all other types of radiation are propagated in such a form that they have some of the properties of a succession of waves.

B. THE LANGUAGE OF MUSIC

Sigmund Spaeth

Music has often been compared with language itself, and the comparison is quite legitimate. While it combines easily with actual language, it also speaks a language of its own, which it has become a platitude to call universal. To understand the significance of the organizing factors of rhythm, melody, harmony, tone color and form, the analogy of a familiar language is helpful. Music has its own alphabet, of only seven letters, as compared with the twenty-six of the English alphabet. Each of these letters represents a note, and just as certain letters are complete words in themselves, so certain notes may stand alone, with the force of a whole word. Generally, however, a note of music implies a certain harmony, and in most modern music the notes take the form of actual chords. So it may be said that a chord in music is analogous to a word in language. Several words form a phrase, and several phrases a complete sentence, and the same thing is true in music. Measured music corresponds to poetry, while the old unmeasured plain-song might be compared with prose. The relationship of modern music to free verse at once becomes apparent, and impressionism, expressionism, cubism and futurism can all be found in music as well as the other arts.

C. ALL LIFE IS ONE

Allan L. Benson

There is but one life, whether it be expressed in the form of an insect, a tree or a man. The protoplasm that underlies you and the protoplasm that underlies a dandelion are chemically almost identical.

If living things had been railroad trains instead of what they are we might perhaps understand this more easily. All living things spring from protoplasm, but instead of calling it protoplasm let us call it Chicago. These little living trains all left the city on the same track, but some of them did not long stick to it. They branched off in various directions.

Now we have two great systems of tracks upon which all living things ride. One system is used by plants, the other by animals. Each system is a maze of interlaced lines, branches, switches, curves and "dead-ends." A "dead-end" is a form of life that could not cope with its environment and became extinct. A branch line accommodates a group who have set off in a different direction for a different destination. Lions and human beings both patronize the animal system, but each rides on a different branch. The largest tree and the smallest blade of grass travel over different branches of the plant system. But while there are two systems and many branches, one power plant drives them all.

A prolonged analogy requires great care in maintaining a consistent point of view. In explaining that protoplasm is common to all life, to what does the author compare it in ¶2? What has it become for him in the final sentence?

D. PLANETS AND STARS

Clyde Fisher

The beginner has some trouble in distinguishing the planets from the stars, but the following difference in

appearance may help. The stars are so distant that they shine only as points of light even through the largest telescopes. In consequence, their light is unsteady because of disturbances in the Earth's atmosphere, such as the rising of warm currents and the falling of cold currents. Thus the stars twinkle. The planets, on the other hand, are very much nearer—so near that with the exception of Pluto they show as discs in our large telescopes, and not as single points of light. Therefore their light is not so much affected by disturbances in our atmosphere. It is usually said that planets do not twinkle, but shine with a steady light.

1. This paragraph is an example of the opposing pattern of organization. Note the "on the other hand" transition in Sentence 5, indicating the shift from one of the contrasted subjects to the other. Why isn't a new paragraph begun at this point?

2. What does the first sentence do? How many sentences discuss the stars? Is there a corresponding number about the planets? Notice the balance of "in consequence" in Sentence 3 with "therefore" in the last one.

E. FROM HOME TO FACTORY

Harrison E. Howe and Francis M. Turner

Less than one hundred years ago the household was a self-contained unit and produced within itself practically all the necessities of life. To some extent this is still true in the remote rural sections of the country, but even there it is rapidly passing. The home manufacture of textiles with the spinning-wheel and loom of our ancestors has almost entirely disappeared, and for such products we are now dependent on a highly organized manufacturing industry. The baking of bread and the churning of butter have persisted longer, but even those household arts are to-day passing into disuse. The bakery owned by a great corporation, manufacturing its products in ac-

cordance with scientific formulas, delivers its product with the help of the express company and the parcel post to the most secluded hamlets. The farmer sells his milk to a condensery and buys butter made in a scientific dairy possibly hundreds of miles away.

1. This paragraph illustrates the alternating pattern of organizing a contrast. Note the crisscrossing of sentences back and forth between the two sides of the picture.

Home	Factory
Sent. 1 (intro.)	Sent. 2 (intro.)
Sent. 3, 1st half (textiles)	Sent. 3, 2nd half (textiles)
Sent. 4, 1st half (bread and butter)	Sent. 4, 2nd half (bread and butter)
	Sent. 5 (bread)
	Sent. 6 (butter)

2. What does the greater space devoted to "Factory" indicate? Is such a lack of balance justifiable in the light of the authors' purpose? Might it be permissible on a still larger scale in a longer paper?

F. FROM TRAIN TO PLANE

Anne Morrow Lindbergh

The trip to Maine used to be a long and slow one. There was plenty of time in the night, spattered away in the sleeper, in the morning spent ferrying across the river at Bath, in the afternoon syncopated into a series of calls on one coast town after another—there was plenty of time to make the mental change coinciding with our physical change. Our minds could quietly step across the connecting passage from city to country, from school to vacation, from winter to summer. In the afternoon, when the train, like a busy housewife, did not have time to stop and chatter long to each station, but could not pass one by without a friendly puff and a nod, as each town showed us a typically Maine landmark—a harbor full of little boats

all pulling at their buoys, a white steeple, or a field of daisies—we were reminded of and prepared for our own harbor and field and steeple. As we neared our geographical destination we were also nearing our emotional one. The last lap of the journey across to the island by small boat completed both of these ends and each familiar personal landmark, drawing from us always the same exclamations—"The four-masted schooner is still there!" "Isn't that the five-mile buoy?" "There's our big spruce tree!"—linked us at last completely and satisfactorily to all past summers—to all vacations and to Maine.

But on this swift trip to North Haven in the *Sirius* my mind was so far behind my body that when we flew over Rockland Harbor the familiar landmarks below me had no reality. It took my mind overnight to catch up again and I lost much of the usual joy of arrival. I have had this sensation in flying many times before—this lack of synchronization of the speeds of mind and body. Pessimistically I have wondered if rapid transportation is not robbing us of the realization of life and therefore much of its joy. But I have decided that we are like the nearsighted man who is not yet used to his new spectacles. We are still trying to look at the stamen of a flower with spectacles made to look at horizons. Our children will measure their distances not by steeples and pine trees but by mountains and rivers. And these landmarks will mean as much emotionally to them as the four-masted schooner in Rockland Harbor did to me.

1. This is a somewhat longer example of the opposing pattern. Note the paragraphing. What transition introduces the change of thought, and where does it appear?

2. Is there anything in the nature of the material that justifies the comparative brevity of the second part of the selection?

3. Find the analogy in ¶2.

G. RECORDS THEN AND NOW

David Ewen

There is a radical difference between the demand for records before 1920 and the present demand. This, in itself, is an illuminating commentary on the growth of musical intelligence in this country in recent years.

Before 1920 people who bought records generally emphasized the importance of the interpreter over the music itself. Today, it is the music and not the artist that sells the records. People demand, first of all, a specific work; then, and only then, are they interested in the performer. A recent survey among several gramophone shops in New York revealed to this writer that Kreisler or Heifetz playing a musical trifle will not sell one-tenth so well as these artists interpreting a work of major musical significance. Twenty years ago or so the best Kreisler sellers were his Viennese bonbons—*Liebesfreud*, *Liebesleid*, *Schön Rosmarin*. Today these Viennese morsels are fabulously outsold by his interpretations of the concertos of Beethoven, Brahms, and Mendelssohn.

Another important difference distinguishes the record buyers of before and after the phonograph's renaissance. Formerly buyers preferred one-record excerpts of the major musical works. In 1926, however, the first album set came into being, presenting a large work in its entirety. It met with such an enthusiastic response that, henceforth, phonograph companies revised their entire recording programs to put emphasis on album sets. Today, albums of an entire symphony or concerto or string quartet or opera find a ready market—even though a work, in its entirety, may cost as much as ten or fifteen dollars.

A third, and probably the most significant, difference between the record buyers of these two periods is the conversion of interest from thrice-familiar classics to less familiar masterpieces. The great symphonies of Bee-

thoven, Tchaikovsky, Brahms are, of course, consistently good sellers—so much so that the companies have found it profitable to issue them in several different recordings by different orchestras and conductors. But the best-seller lists of records during the past two years or so in record shops throughout the country have disclosed some startling information. Sibelius sells better than Tchaikovsky; Bach better than Dvořák; Mozart better than Chopin. Many times Bach has achieved the status of a best seller—though this is largely because of the appeal of Stokowski's orchestral transcriptions.

1. Compare the organization of this selection with that of "From Train to Plane." Could the material in either essay have been fitted as effectively into the other pattern? Explain.

2. List in two columns, under appropriate headings, the several points of contrast with which this essay is concerned.

3. Check the transitional devices by which the continual shift from one to the other side of the contrast is indicated, not only at the beginning of paragraphs but within them.

H. TWO PERUS

Francis Violich

Let me take you to the two Perus I visited. We land at Callao, the port of Lima, step from the modern customs building into a shiny new Ford taxi, and race into Lima over smooth concrete roads lined with trees and planned as boulevards for modern automobile traffic. We arrive in a city that is one of the most beautiful and livable in the world. The old heart of the city, founded by Pizarro, with its narrow streets and open plazas, its old churches and balconied palaces, is surrounded by the new city, spreading, Los Angeles-like, outward toward the sea. Boulevards and great parks, up-to-date suburban home districts, modern theaters and shops, grocery shelves laden with preserved delicacies and great quantities of fresh fruits, vegetables, baked ham and cold meats—these

demonstrate the material, twentieth-century progress of the Peru that is Lima. This twentieth-century Peru is a result of the direct importation of Europeans with their initiative and ideas to the New World.

But a second Peru awaits. A few miles out of Lima, you climb sixteen thousand feet above the sea in a little over three hours. You leave modern Lima and enter the twelfth-century land of the Indian, the descendant of the great Incas.

The town is Cuarhuasi, high in the Andes, and we are standing on the balcony of the small lodging place, looking down into the courtyard and out over the moonlit roof-tops of the mud houses, to the white monolithic church dominating the square. The only light below comes from a wavering candle in a small room opening on the yard. In the dim interior sits an Indian woman, her black skirts spread on the earth floor, a large hat on her head and two thick braids reaching down her back to her waist. She drinks from a cup in silence. Another figure moves about the room slowly and aimlessly, casting deep shadows over the obscure walls. Without a word to the other this woman pads out and shuts the door without a sound. The courtyard is pitch dark now and she pulls up her skirts, squatting for a moment in the darkness before entering the next door off the cobbled pavement. A light flickers in the room and she prepares for bed.

Over the roof-tops come the sounds of night. Dogs bark restlessly, a pipe plays over and over again a plaintive, minor tune that has come from Inca times; a young voice sings bits of the tune from the other side of the village; footsteps sound in the square outside the courtyard. The pipe plays on plaintively; the voice sings again; a cricket chirps; a dog barks; the pipe plays and the voice sings and you hear voices murmuring in the square. In the room where there is still a light, the woman talks with a man. The language is Quechua, not Spanish. They raise their voices heatedly and after a while there is silence

and the light goes out. All the candles are out now and Cuaruasi is like a town of the Middle Ages, dark and close to nature, covered with night and stars. There is only the moon making white and wonderful the massive church and the few houses which have been whitened. If it were day the others would be a deep red-brown, the color of good rich mud.

This is the second Peru: the Indian, the Inca music, the darkness, the great whitened adobe church dominating the square and the people of the village; a mournful serenade to quicken a love affair; the filth, the ignorance, and the miserable poverty. This and more is one Peru I saw in Cuaruasi and in a hundred little towns and villages in the Andes. In them, life seems to have stopped long ago; those who have managed to exist have simply used the structures and facilities at hand as best they could, expending no creative thought on making them more usable, more efficient. There is an appallingly unbalanced distribution of the benefits of modern technology.

1. The bulk of this contrast is descriptive writing, with a little narrative thrown in; yet it is nonetheless primarily expository in purpose. (Put into a single sentence the main idea of the essay.) Do you find any element of argument, at least by implication? Explain.

2. How do you account for the use of the present tense?

3. What purpose does ¶2 serve? What is such a paragraph called?

4. Why do you think the author devotes twice as much space to the second Peru as to the first? Is it because he prefers the second?

1. THE REVOLT OF TENNIS AND WOMEN

Virginia Powers

The woman in tennis today is a type entirely different from the one of yesterday. Our mothers played the game too, but they were far removed from the fighting, fiery,

fast females that now conquer the courts. During the last thirty years American courts have become a meeting place for all modern girls—whether they be debutantes who go to the “swank” country club or salesgirls who monopolize the grassy fields of the public parks. Tennis is now the test of fashion, just as knitting was during the war, and this new type of tennis-woman, the revolutionized “one-set gal,” the indoor lass turned out, has made it so.

In about 1900, one hour of one afternoon a week (perhaps a month) was set aside for a “bit of exercise.” Preparations for that day involved the tedious task of being outfitted. One had to have a hat of enormous width and tremendous weight, often bedecked with accumulated varieties of fine plumes, to keep the long tresses silky and the delicate skin satiny; a tight bodice to maintain self-confidence; and a full, ankle-length skirt to—well, I’ll say to make the game more difficult. The girl’s skill at the sport was determined by the years that she had studied in Miss Peabody’s School of Dance for Popular Young Gentlewomen. The forehand drive involved a graceful uplifting movement that ended with the pointed toe forward and the little finger crooked. The backhand shot was much the same, only it made possible a catching, coy look over the right shoulder. Truly, one must marvel at these creatures. How valiant they must have been to risk a sprained ankle, a dirty hand, or the ruin of their taffetas as they swished over the white lines for a “bit of exercise.”

In perfect contrast, we have Miss Tennis herself, the modern lass with the modern swing. From sunrise to sunset, she wields a championship racket. In only a minute she dresses for the challenge. She leaps into scanty, starched, spotless shorts of white linen. She whisks white wool anklets over slim, evenly tanned feet, the toes of which are smoothly pedicured with a bright shade of red nail polish. She tosses a sporty shirt over loose curls and trim, wide shoulders. Finally, she throws a white angora cardigan sweater over her arms, for the settling of high temperature

after the game. She emerges thus. She sprints as the sun bleaches her hair and darkens her skin. She smiles frankly through smudges of brick-dust. She pants when she's tired. She's graceful in her awkwardness. She displays her freckles; she flashes her knees; she's fast as a fish. She's alive; she's dynamic; she's the tennis-woman of 1950!

1. This contrast was written by a student. What does ¶1 accomplish? ¶2? ¶3? Do you feel the need for a concluding paragraph? Discuss.

2. Which side of the picture do you think the author prefers? What makes you think so?

3. In the second sentence, "fighting, fiery, fast females" is an illustration of initial rhyme, or alliteration. It is a sound appeal best suited to poetry, and should not be overdone in prose except for humorous effect. Find other examples in ¶3.

4. ¶¶2 and 3 offer an interesting contrast in style as well as in content. Note the long sentences and slow movement of ¶2, the speed and crispness of ¶3. Does this change accord with the shift in subject matter? Is it effective?

ASSIGNMENT

1. Choose some difficult concept that you have recently met in one of your courses—economics, history, literature, physics, chemistry, mathematics—and explain it to the uninitiated, making use of an extended analogy in which you explain the new, the strange, and the difficult in terms of the old, the familiar, and the simple.

2. Write an essay of comparison, choosing as your subject two things enough alike to be comparable, but with enough points of contrast to make the comparison worth while. There are two chief types of topics, a comparison between then and now, and between two things coexistent. Suggested topics for the former include all phases of life as it was lived in the past and as it is lived now: horse and tractor, threshing machine and combine, washboard and Bendix, courtship past and present, the first and the modern automobile (bicycle, airplane), wartime and peacetime, and (for you) living at home and in a

dorm, going to high school or college. The latter type offers an even greater variety of subjects: two makes of automobiles (types of engines or other mechanisms), two breeds of horses (dogs, chickens, cattle), army and navy, military and civilian life, North and South, city and town, town and country, college and university, fraternity and non-fraternity life, book and movie, movie and stage play, train and airplane travel, still fishing and casting, football and basketball, airplane and helicopter.

Before you begin to write, decide on which of the two types of organization can serve you more effectively, and make an outline of the main and subpoints to be treated.

3. Study the extent to which comparison and contrast have been used in "Dos Passos" (page 450), "The Phantom of Fear" (page 383), and "The British Way of Radio" (page 367).

4. In "The Method of Scientific Investigation" (page 462), does Huxley's comparison of the processes of the ordinary and of the scientific mind constitute an analogy? Justify your answer.

ANALYSIS: CLASSIFICATION

Two important kinds of analysis are **classification**, the dividing of a group into the kinds of units which comprise it, and **partition**, the breaking down of a single unit into the parts of which it is composed. An analysis of automobiles according to make (Buick, Plymouth, Packard, etc.) would involve classification; an analysis of a single automobile into its parts (wheels, frame, engine, etc.) would involve partition. The kind to be used will be determined, of course, by the type of problem with which you are faced.

To the layman the entire sweep of plant and animal life appears chaotic. But for the biologist it has attained a high degree of order: a few primary divisions called phyla, each of which is composed of a number of orders, and so on down through the smaller divisions of family,

genus, species, and variety, until there results an elaborate classification system which brings order out of chaos by enabling him to consider any plant or animal in its proper relationship to all the rest. The anthropologist similarly classifies men according to races; the businessman divides his creditors into various classes of risks; the instructor groups his students, at the end of each term, into the five or six classes provided by the prevailing marking system. The mind loves to classify—so much so that it sometimes overdoes the job of neat pigeonholing, thereby distorting our picture of certain areas of human experience which do not readily respond to such treatment. Nevertheless, accurate knowledge depends greatly upon the clarification of existing relationships through the exercise of classification.

Content

To analyze any group formally and completely would involve taking into consideration every representative of that group, and breaking down classes into subclasses and so on until the ultimate in analysis had been attained. For most purposes, however, it is sufficient to consider only the most important classes into which a given subject divides, and to treat only of its principal groups or subgroups. An informal classification of musical instruments, for example, need not include every rare or ancient piece, but may accomplish its purpose well enough if it considers only those commonly used by the modern orchestra; and once they have been classified into kinds and the outstanding instruments of each kind have been discussed, the task is, for practical purposes, complete. The essay of analysis usually has other ends than utter thoroughness in view, and sets about accomplishing them in a clear and orderly but informal and pleasing manner.

1. Choose as your topic for such an essay a group limited enough so that you can, in a brief paper, go into some detail in delineating the subgroups. "People" is too much to handle; "taxi-drivers" might do nicely.

- 2. Choose a group which will permit of analysis into three or more subgroups.** Classifications with only two classes exist, of course, but will yield you little more training than the essay of contrast treated in the preceding unit. Classifying people into "those I like and those I dislike" is an example of a limited and rather pointless analysis of a too large subject.
- 3. Decide whether your purpose is merely to record an existing classification** (that of cattle into the dairy, beef, and dairy-beef types, for instance), **or to create a personal and original one** (such as a classification of music according to its effects upon you). Your instructor will perhaps guide you here with a specific requirement, depending on whether fact or opinion is your goal.
- 4. Choose a single principle of classification, such as will determine the classes to be discussed, and stick to it.** Engines may be classified according to maker, to use, to speed, to number of cylinders—but only to one at a time. An attempt to classify drivers into women drivers truck drivers, and good drivers is no classification at all, merely a loose and purposeless discussion. For the topic "women drivers" announces that the principle guiding the analysis is sex; "truck drivers" switches to a new one, based on the type of vehicle driven; and "good drivers" shifts ground once again, this time to driving proficiency. Actually, there are the beginnings here of three distinct classifications:
 1. According to sex (women, men—one of those two-part and ready-made schemes)
 2. According to vehicle driven (truck, taxi, passenger car, etc.)
 3. According to proficiency (good, bad, average)
- 5. Never permit your classes to overlap.** In the scheme just discussed, for example, a truck driver might reasonably be a woman, and a woman, conceivably, a good driver.
- 6. Make your classification reasonably complete, within the**

limits and according to the principle which you have set up, even though, as mentioned earlier, your essay need not be an exhaustive analysis. In classifying dogs by breed, you might leave unmentioned certain rare varieties, but you would be obliged to consider all of those commonly known. To mention college classes you dislike and those you tolerate naturally calls for the inclusion of those you enjoy, if such exist; then your analysis, based on the principle of your own attitude, would be satisfactorily complete.

7. In developing each class, you may find yourself involved in **classes within classes**—still finer divisions of the subgroups into which you divided your original group. In classifying students according to religious faiths, for example—as Jews, Catholics, and Protestants—you would likely find yourself mentioning under Protestantism some of the principal sects (Methodist, Presbyterian, Baptist, etc.) which comprise it. Well and good—as long as you keep such a subgrouping in its place and do not allow yourself or your reader to confuse it with the larger classification which it is the primary purpose of your paper to present.

Organization

The several main classes of which your classification is to consist will of course constitute the principal divisions of your plan; there remains only the problem of the order in which you can best treat them. Sometimes the order is natural—inherent in your subject, leaving you no choice; sometimes you will have to decide among several possibilities for different logical arrangements.

To write of college students according to the classes in which they are registered, you would naturally start with the freshmen, go on to the sophomores and juniors, and finish with the seniors, since that is the order of a student's progress through college. If you classify them according to religion, you might conceivably arrange them into (1) Jews, (2) Catholics, (3) Protestants, thereby

acknowledging the relative ages of those three faiths. More likely, however, you would be guided by the numerical importance of those faiths on your campus, in an ascending order. Or perhaps, as with most subjects, the order would be determined by the emphasis which you as writer wished to place upon them, the one to which you wish to give most importance coming last for the sake of making a strong final impression on the reader.

In writing of the three types of cattle—dairy, beef, and dairy-beef—the dairy-beef type, being a combination of the qualities of the other two, must of course follow them. Then you have the order of only the first two to determine, and the problem of attracting your reader's interest is likely to help determine your choice of which to treat first.

As to the order of details within your discussion of each, note that, as in the contrast theme, your outline divisions indicate comparable topics, and therefore should receive a similar treatment. If you discuss, under dairy cattle, the principal breeds and their cost and care, you will be expected to give consideration to the same aspects in dealing with the others.

- I. Dairy cattle
 - A. Popular breeds
 - B. Cost
 - C. Care
- II. Beef cattle
 - A. Popular breeds
 - B. Cost
 - C. Care
- III. Dairy-beef cattle
 - A. Popular breeds
 - B. Cost
 - C. Care

Note that Subpoint A under each main division involves an additional exercise of analysis by classification—of “classes within classes” (see No. 7 under Content, above)

Interest

Remember again that this tedious outline is merely an over-all guide, calculated to assure a logical and orderly handling of the essential material; do not let it obtrude monotonously into the finished theme, which should exhibit a pleasingly generous variety within the limits of good order. A formal classification might never go beyond the outline stage, might remain only a listing under appropriate heads and subheads; but it would have little appeal save to a student of the subject. Make your analysis, like your previous assignments, a readable as well as a logical piece of work. Never let yourself or your reader lose sight of the essential underlying order; but use every means within your power to make your writing interesting.

EXAMPLES

A

Science	{	Abstract sciences	{	Mathematics
		Physical sciences		Logic
				Physics
				Chemistry
				Astronomy
				Mineralogy
		Biological sciences		Geology
				Bacteriology
				Botany
				Zoölogy
				Paleontology
		Psychological sciences		Psychology
				Language
				History
				Social science
				Political economy
				Ethics

1. This schematization has the advantage of a numbered list of directions in that the items are easily comprehended,

and of an outline in that the relationships of the parts to the whole are implicit in the arrangement. It could be carried into subdivision after subdivision to its logical conclusion—mathematics being shown to include arithmetic, algebra, geometry, trigonometry, analytical geometry, and calculus; arithmetic being shown to include addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division—and the relation between one of the smallest items (division) to the whole (science) would remain obvious.

2. The weakness of such an easily grasped arrangement lies, of course, in its bareness, in its failure to include any details of information or interest beyond the skeletal arrangement itself. Even in the textbook from which the above arrangement was taken, the author felt it wise to include the essay-type discussion of the same material, which follows.

B. THE SUBDIVISIONS OF SCIENCE

W. A. Noyes

There is, properly speaking, only one science, which includes all classified, systematic knowledge. The amount of such knowledge has become so great, however, that it is customary to subdivide it into a number of parts, each of which is called a science. It should always be remembered that the boundaries between various divisions are more or less arbitrary and that very many facts belong about equally to two or more of the sciences. It is also very important to understand that no one can make much progress in any one science without considerable knowledge of several others.

The more important subdivisions of science are the following: abstract sciences, which deal, primarily, with forms of abstract reasoning—mathematics and logic; physical sciences, dealing with the phenomena of matter and energy apart from life—physics, chemistry, astronomy, mineralogy, geology; biological sciences, dealing with the phenomena of living bodies—bacteriology, botany, zoölogy, paleontology; psychological sciences, dealing with the phenomena of mind and of society—psychol-

ogy, language, history, social science, political economy, ethics.

1. What, specifically, has been added here to the preceding scheme?

2. Does the author claim to have made a completely exhaustive analysis of his material?

C. THE ARTS

E. O. Turner

If perfect communication is the aim of all the arts, which of them realizes it most nearly? Two groups may be formed, and each art assigned to one or the other according as it is embodied in space or time. Painting, sculpture, and architecture are spatial arts; music, poetry, and the drama are temporal. The spatial arts are superior in transmission; the creator's conception is expressed completely, once for all, without either subtraction or addition. The temporal arts may sometimes rise to this perfection, as when a Goethe or a Beethoven interprets his own work, but in general an intermediary, the interpreter, is called in, and the transmission is more or less inaccurate.

1. This brief classification contains both groups and subgroups. What are the two principles of classification involved?

2. Make a schematization, like the one for science (see A, above), showing the relationships expressed here among the arts.

D. DANCE ORCHESTRA MUSICIANS

Robert Nutting

That group of musicians who make their living playing popular tunes on legitimate instruments are known as "dance orchestra musicians," or simply "dance men." In their degrees of intellectual attainment and musical

ability they can be classified into three prevalent types: the "jazz-mad" individual, who picks up the instrument by himself; the well-schooled concert man, who is forced by circumstances to play in dance orchestras; and, finally, the ideal dance man, who fits in every way into his position.

The appalling musical and moral conditions in the majority of "small-time" dance orchestras in this country prove the prevalence of the jazz-mad type. He is usually to be found in some "barn-storming" organization or "out location" at some mediocre café. He has had little or no musical training but holds what small amount of prestige he possesses by the novelty use of his instruments. In his own eyes he is a master performer and, because of this egotistical complex, usually progresses but little, either musically or mentally. Like most self-esteeming people he is happy and confident in his work. Morally he is a mere follower of custom, and the ordinary diversions of jazz-band people are notoriously without ethical limit. He is the gipsy of the dance-band world.

The "converted" concert man differs from the jazzy type in almost every respect. He is highly trained musically and, as a result, has had to train himself mentally. He is usually found in that class of orchestras which play for commercial radio programs or for the making of phonograph records. He has been forced into the dance music "game" under stress of financial circumstances and, because of this and his knowledge of finer music, is seldom very happy at his work. He grinds out his music with mathematical precision, but is unable to put much of his real self into it. In most cases he is a home-loving person who has tried all of his life to make a business out of better music and, because of the perverted public taste, has failed.

The ideal dance orchestra musician is a combination of the "hotcha" musician and the musically well-trained man. He has become technically superior on his instrument

without having delved too much into high-class music. In other words, he has not cultivated his taste to the extent that he is dissatisfied or discontented with his work. The glamour of showmanship has a permanent appeal to him, and, with temperance, he blends into the gay and fast-moving life. He fits his position, and his position fits him.

1. What does the student-written classification above announce as its guiding principle? Does the fact that it is two-fold make for confusion, or not? Explain.

2. Note how comparable the information given about each class is; such balance is as important among the sections of the classification as between the two divisions of the contrast (see page 119).

3. The third type discussed here, being a combination of the other two, had to come last. Can you see any reason for the order of the first and second?

4. What does the first paragraph do? Is there a need for a fifth? Explain.

5. What are some other principles of classification that might be used in writing on this same subject?

E. BICYCLES FOR TOURING

Ruth and Raymond Benedict

If you are expecting to buy a new bicycle, it would be well to consider first some of the special types sometimes used for touring. Racing bicycles are used by some riders, but most racers are not meant for use on the highway or in traffic. They are designed for high speeds on smooth tracks, not for rough roads, heavy loads or traffic. The tires are very small and must be kept hard. They are usually the single-tube construction. The ordinary racing saddle is not comfortable. It is designed for strenuous cycling, when little of the rider's weight is carried by the seat. The handlebars are dropped very low, to reduce wind resistance at high speeds. At touring speeds a higher handlebar is much more comfortable and permits a better

view of the surroundings. Most racing bicycles have no mechanical brakes, a fact which makes them unsafe in traffic. Hand brakes can be installed, however. Mudguards are desirable for use in most parts of the country. Light weight is the attractive feature of racing cycles, but it is doubtful if any stock bicycle weighing very much under thirty pounds is complete enough and sturdy enough for touring with camping equipment.

Tandem bicycles are sometimes used. They are fast on level roads, but their extra length makes them poor hill climbers. A tandem has no more space for camping luggage than a single bicycle, and luggage space is an important consideration in touring. The larger space occupied by tandems makes them less convenient in traffic and when it is necessary to take them on board a passenger steamer or load them into a baggage car. A tandem is very successful in permitting a timid or inexperienced cyclist to ride, but in most circumstances, two single bicycles will be found more useful than a tandem.

Special touring bicycles have been developed in England, where cycle touring is more common. Their chief advantage is in the use of gears, giving a choice of two or more speeds while in motion. By reducing to a lower gear, one can ride hills more easily and overcome head winds. They also have raised handlebars and two brakes. Of course the difficulty with foreign bicycles is the lack of adequate local service and spare parts. Purchasers should be cautioned to check up on repair service before buying such bicycles. Gear shifts can now be obtained on some American bicycles, and they are very desirable.

1. Here is an example of the classification of mechanisms which you may frequently encounter or be called upon to make. Compare the originality of the scheme with that of "Dance Orchestra Musicians." Is the classification exhaustive? Do the authors justify their omission of the ordinary bicycle?

2. Is there any reason why the three types are treated in this order? By what expository method is each developed?

3. Why doesn't a new paragraph start with the second sentence, which begins the discussion of the first type? Is the lack of a paragraph of conclusion a fault here?

F. FOREIGN INFLUENCES IN AMERICAN ART

Donald Drew Egbert

In general it can be said that the foreign influences on art have usually entered this country in one of three ways. At times, as in the case of the Pennsylvania "Dutch," they have been introduced by closely knit bodies of immigrants who bring in their native tradition and continue it even after connection with the homeland has been broken, or at least has become very weak. At other times, the foreign influences have come in through ethnic or national groups who continue to keep up-to-date with developments in what they still consider to be the homeland. To a considerable degree this has been true of the arts of the French in New Orleans. Thirdly, and most important, the foreign influences have come in through Americans who, much more than the Pennsylvania "Dutch" or the Louisiana French, consciously regard themselves as American nationals, but who, for one reason or another, have kept open to influences from abroad. Such native Americans are usually affected by foreign arts for reasons that may be primarily intellectual and artistic, or snobbish, or religious in character. Examples of each variety of reason will be given below when the chief types of artistic influence which have entered the United States in these various ways are investigated. For the foreign artistic influences which have thus modified the arts of the United States can be grouped into four chief types distinguished by the degree and nature of their effect on the art already existing here.

One type consists of those foreign influences which have been not only imported but long kept alive by immigrant or ethnic groups existing in a kind of cultural is-

land, and which hence have had little or no effect on the more characteristically American art of the surrounding regions. In such cases, the art of the cultural island is usually limited to provincial versions of the minor arts of the homeland, as in the case of the household arts and crafts of the Pennsylvania "Dutch." Ordinarily, too, the continued survival of such folk art is the result of a more or less blind adherence to tradition, with the result that—as in so much folk art—there is likely to be a lack of sufficient originality to make either for artistic greatness or for any significant progress. However, the relative simplicity and directness of this kind of art, its loving craftsmanship and its feeling for the qualities of materials, appeal strongly to our own sophisticated age in which primitive art is glorified both for its direct and immediate expressiveness, and for its unsophisticated expression of "natural" man.

A second type of foreign influence includes those foreign artistic currents which by their very nature could strongly reinforce some already existing American tendency or tendencies. A good example of this is the German painting of Düsseldorf which was so highly regarded in America during the mid-nineteenth century. Indeed, from 1840 to 1870 or so, after the decline of the English portrait tradition which had dominated American painting from Colonial times, the academy at Düsseldorf was the favorite place of study for those American painters fortunate enough to be able to secure training abroad. The Düsseldorf style, based as it was on a revival of the literal, highly finished, middle-class genre of seventeenth-century Holland, appealed to both the American middle-class love for literal storytelling in art, and the American regard for technical polish. It is therefore not surprising that so mediocre a painting as Emanuel Leutze's *Washington Crossing the Delaware* (1851) has enjoyed such great popularity in America. For in it Leutze—who worked in both Germany and the United States—shows

most of those characteristics of Düsseldorfian painting which also had a great appeal to the average American, even though, in this particular example of it, the scale and subject matter of the painting are more monumental than was usual. In this respect, Eastman Johnson's *The Old Kentucky Home* painted in 1859—a much smaller work dealing with an everyday scene—is more typical of the paintings produced by Americans trained at Düsseldorf. Here again, however, is the detailed storytelling and characteristic careful finish in a picture in which the more directly visual qualities of the art of painting are largely ignored. For the artist has painted each detail in the scene with equal care so that there is no real visual focus to the composition. He has, in short, put in everything he *knew* was there rather than just what an observer could see if he were far enough away to take in the whole scene at a glance.

A third variety of the outside artistic influences that have affected our art consists of those which, while foreign to characteristic American tendencies, appeal to a relatively small number of Americans for some special intellectual, artistic, snobbish, or religious reason. For instance, Americans who received their education—artistic or otherwise—abroad have often been attracted by European movements in art which have had no wide appeal for the average American. Similarly, sheer snobbery has at times produced small cliques who have adopted certain European vogues merely from a desire to keep ahead of the Joneses. Such a desire has determined the character of many American art collections, and of course can also be clearly seen in such things as the influence of Paris on the styles of women's dress. Finally, as a good example of a foreign religious influence with a strong appeal for a limited group of Americans, we can cite the Victorian Anglo-Catholicism which was so largely responsible for introducing the Gothic Revival into church architecture in

this country. It was directly responsible for the Gothic style of Trinity Church in New York, built between 1839 and 1846 by Richard Upjohn, one of the first "high-church" architects in this country. Upjohn was influenced by the Oxford and Camden movements in England, and by that famous English architect of the Gothic Revival, A. W. N. Pugin, who was so very high-church that his interest in the Christian Middle Ages eventually led him to become a Roman Catholic. And for Trinity Church, Upjohn not only chose Gothic, to him the most Christian style, but insisted on a deep chancel and a cross on the spire against the opposition of a low-church vestry. It is amusing to note that the only way in which he finally won his point about the cross was to place it atop the steeple just before the scaffolding was hastily taken down, so that, in order to remove it, the vestry would have been forced to rebuild the scaffolding at considerable expense. As a result, the cross remained in place.

The three types of influence from abroad which have already been considered—the foreign influences restricted to a small cultural island, the foreign influences reinforcing already existing American tendencies, and the foreign influences appealing for some special reason to a small group of native Americans—are not, however, so important as the fourth variety which combines the second and third types already discussed. That is to say, it consists of foreign tendencies that appeal *both* to widespread tendencies already existing in this country, and also, for particular reasons, to certain small groups of artists, intellectuals, snobs, sectarians, or to some other kind of sharply delimited body.

For example, the Gothic Revival which has affected our architecture so strongly from the end of the eighteenth century to the present day, had an appeal not only to the religious needs of a limited group of high-church Episcopalians as indicated above, but also to certain wide-

spread American tendencies, which in turn were reinforced by romantic and scientific currents characteristic of the nineteenth century in general. For one thing, the complicated structural problems implicit in Gothic vaulting and buttressing appealed to that romanticization of the technical and scientific which was both peculiarly American and particularly characteristic of the nineteenth century. Thus Ralph Adams Cram, the architect in charge of the Episcopal Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York from 1911 until his death in 1942, was not only an extreme Anglo-Catholic, but in addition was very proud of the structural thinness of the intermediate piers in the Gothic nave which he added to the cathedral. Indeed, he boasted that before the vaults were placed on these stone piers, they could be made to sway by the mere push of a man's hand. It was this sort of delight in the skeleton construction made possible by Gothic methods of building that helped lead many architects to an interest in other materials which would make even thinner structure possible, so that the introduction of iron and steel as structural materials was frequently fostered by Gothic Revivalists. Furthermore, many steel-framed skyscrapers, such as Cass Gilbert's Woolworth Building in New York (1912) or the Chicago Tribune Building by Raymond Hood (1922) were covered with Gothic detail as particularly suited to expressing tall buildings of light construction.

1. This essay contains two separate analyses. Which is the more important? What part does the other play in relation to it?

2. What is the principle according to which the first is made? Does it claim to be exhaustive? How many classes does it contain? How much space does it occupy?

3. What principle guided the making of the second? How many classes are involved? What is curious about the last one?

4. What is the chief means used in the expansion of the various classes in each classification?

5. Note the subclassification in ¶4 of the reasons for which

foreign art appealed to Americans. How many are listed? How many are illustrated?

6. What special purpose is accomplished in ¶5?

ASSIGNMENT

1. An essay treating of existing classes can find its subject in all kinds of things: guns, boats, airplanes, engines, automobiles, welding processes, ways of preserving food, swimming strokes, popular music, clouds, radios, trees, crops, cattle, hogs, mathematics. Some of these also lend themselves to more original treatment, depending upon the principle of classification which you adopt and the attitude you take in working it out. More likely to demand originality are subjects like hats, love, the weather, advertising; and you may especially enjoy a personal classification of people—dancers, students, churchgoers, movie patrons, farmers, salesmen, customers, pledges, hitchhikers, sports fans, ball players, girls, “dates,” teachers, waiters, garage men, taxi-drivers, fishermen, radio announcers, news commentators, pilots, bridge players, employers.

2. Before you start writing, jot down a brief outline of your subject, containing not only the classes of which you will treat (and be sure they follow a single principle and are reasonably complete), but also the main phases of each which you mean to take up (these should carry out the principle of classification which guides you, and include approximately the same type of information for each class).

3. Read “Reading and Understanding” (page 441), noting the author’s use of analysis by classification of (1) the kinds of reading, (2) the kinds of reading material, (3) the kinds of uses of language, (4) the kinds of figures of speech. Examine the purposes of these classifications, the extent to which they are developed, and the methods used in their development.

4. What use of classification do you find in “The British Way of Radio” (page 367)?

UNIT 8

ANALYSIS: PARTITION

When you are concerned not with finding the subgroups which comprise a group, but with breaking down a single object or concept into the parts of which it is composed, you will use the analytical method of **partition**, a frequently used and important method adaptable to a great range of problems. You may use it in the relatively simple matter of explaining the parts of which a given mechanism is composed (in which case it is closely allied to the simple informative type of descriptive exposition discussed in Unit 1), or you may use it in the far more complex task of discovering the bases for an abstract concept. On the one hand, you may be interested only in discovering of what pieces the safety razor is made; on the other, you may be searching for the elements which constituted Washington's greatness. In either case the process is logically the same.

A complete analysis by partition would account for every component. But the essay of partition may, as we have noted of the problem of classification in the preceding unit, fulfill its mission less formally, with only a reasonable completeness. So long as it chooses a logical task, makes clear what it is trying to do, and does it, it is not likely to be charged with sins of omission.

Enumeration

The simplest use of analysis by partition involves determining the parts or phases of the subject to be discussed and treating them in some logical order. You may designate them clearly with "1, 2, 3" or "first, second, third," or connect them by other transitional devices which may indicate their relationships more subtly but with sufficient clearness.

Here, as in analysis by classification, it is of prime im-

portance to choose a principle to guide you through the dissection of your subject, so that your parts will be neatly ordered pieces making up a logical whole. Whether they are merely parts of a simple mechanism, or abstract qualities making up a reputation, they must be comparable. The quality of shininess is not one item in an enumeration of the parts of the safety razor; nor is Washington's title of general on a par with the qualities of character which you may be listing as constituents of his greatness. At no time is it more important that you recognize elements logically similar and keep out the extraneous.

The order of the parts you finally settle upon as suitable will be determined, of course, by the usual laws of arrangement for emphasis.

Statement of a Problem

Analysis need not be content with a mere enumeration of parts. As a logical process it is applicable also to problem solving, in which a situation must be broken down in order to discover the exact nature of the problem involved so that a reasonable solution based on that nature can be reached. Whether you are hunting for an error in your bank balance, choosing a career, or settling one of the world's major ills, the general procedure will be the same.

A preliminary analysis may be made in order to eliminate any aspects of the subject which are irrelevant to your view of the problem, as when, faced with a solution of unknowns, you rule out as rapidly as may be the unlikelier possibilities. You may analyze the situation of the veteran, for instance, into its physical, economic, and social aspects, and proceed to eliminate the first two from your discussion in order to concentrate upon the third. Therein lies your problem—which you will proceed to break down further into still more subordinate phases (home, community, etc.), and work through to a logical solution of the problem on the basis of those aspects, clearly stated.

Such an analysis does not, however, necessarily include a solution. It may only imply the answer, or it may merely lay bare the issues for the reader's consideration; such a clarification alone satisfies the primary demands of the analytical process.

Statement of Root Principle

In order to give the parts of an analysis meaning, you may well begin with a summing-up instead of a breaking-down—with a setting-forth of the essence, the significance, the root of the subject, rather than its parts. This procedure may not seem to be "analysis" at all, in the sense in which we have been using the word; but in a wider sense it not only is analytical but is one of the most valuable of such critical processes. For analysis may mean not only "dissection," breaking down into parts, but "resolution," reducing to a simpler form. In itself such reduction is not partition; but it is likely to precede the normal taking-apart process (especially in the handling of abstract and complex subjects) in order to give it clarity and purpose.

An analysis of the depression of the 'thirties, for example, might begin by reducing that great economic phenomenon to a basic term, such as starvation in the midst of plenty, before breaking it down into its causes, results, or whatever other aspects you are concerned with presenting. Among them your already stated root principle will serve as a guide.

EXAMPLES

An analysis by partition could be presented in a schematic arrangement like the classification of the sciences in the preceding unit. An orchestra, for example, could be shown to consist of four parts: the string, wood-wind, brass, and percussion sections; the string section to consist of violin, viola, cello, bass viol, harp; the violin to be made up of box, neck, strings, pegs, and bridge; and so on. Partition, like classification, in-

volves a breaking-down, the difference being, as already seen, whether that which is to be broken down is a single unit (to be divided into parts), or a group (to be separated into classes, kinds, types). The mental process behind the two exercises is essentially the same. Similarly, the essay of partition (written about the orchestra by a musician, let us say, who would include an account of the history and the peculiar functions of each instrument) can add much to the original partition pattern.

Notice how much description of the informative sort is required in the two simple essays of partition which follow.

A. A CASTING ROD

A casting rod is made up of four main parts: a handle, a reel seat, a length of rod, and several line guides.

The handle is invariably made of cork fitted around a steel shaft. The steel gives the necessary strength, and the cork, because of its texture, a comfortable and certain grip.

Attached to the upper end of the handle is the reel seat. This too is made of steel, for strength. Its only moving part is a clamp screw which, when tightened, will hold the line-filled reel firmly.

The rod itself is a length of either steel or bamboo which fits tightly into a hole in the upper end of the handle. If steel, it is a single piece, tapered for flexibility. If bamboo, it is made up of slivers of bamboo split and then glued together. These are wound at frequent intervals with silk to give them strength, and the rod is varnished several times in order to make it waterproof. Such a rod is usually jointed at two points.

The line guides are firmly attached along the rod at intervals of about one foot. Each is a small ring of smooth glass encircled by a steel band which strengthens it and by which it is attached to the rod. Through these guides the line can be reeled in and out smoothly, without snarling or knotting.

1. What principle of order determined the arrangement of the four parts discussed in this student-written theme? Could some other have been used? If so, what?

2. What is the method or methods used in developing each part?

B. THE STRUCTURE OF A COMET

C. C. Wylie

The head of a comet is a hazy, faintly shining ball. This head, or *coma*, is the essential part of the comet and gives it its name. Inside the coma there is usually, but not always, a *nucleus*. The nucleus is formed as the comet approaches the Sun and is seen as a starlike point near the center of the coma. Naked-eye comets always, and telescopic comets often, form a *tail* as they approach the Sun. The tail is formed by matter streaming off in a direction opposite to the Sun. Usually the tail attains its maximum length and brightness a little after the comet passes perihelion.

In volume, comets are the bulkiest members of the solar system. The head, or coma, is rarely smaller than the Earth in diameter, and for one or two comets the diameter of the head has surpassed that of the Sun. The length of the tail of a spectacular comet may be as much as one hundred million miles, or about the same as the distance of the Earth from the Sun.

The mass of any comet is exceedingly small—so little that it cannot be measured directly. Calculations from the amount of light reflected indicate that the mass of Halley's Comet, one of the most spectacular, was a little less than that of the rock and dirt removed in excavating the Panama Canal. From its mass and volume the density of the head of Halley's Comet was estimated as being equivalent to twelve small marbles per cubic mile. It is believed that the head of a comet is composed of dust and small particles surrounded by gas. The density of the tail

of a comet is almost inconceivably small. For Halley's Comet the density has been calculated as equivalent to one cubic centimeter of air at sea level pressure expanded to two thousand cubic miles.

C. BING

Ruth Conrad

There are hundreds of actors in this world, but on the list of those with whom I am familiar, Bing Crosby continues to stand at the very top. I realize that I am one of thousands who admire him, and this fact only makes me proud that my favorite should be the choice of so many other Americans.

It is difficult to determine just what is that something in Bing which so appeals to me. Certainly his charm does not lie in youth or a handsome face, for in my opinion he has neither. Perhaps it lies in his manner, which is so casual, so easy, so natural that I feel as if I were personally acquainted with the man.

There are comedians who continually tease Bing about his clothes. I approve, and I think the teasers do also, of the way he dresses. He wears sport clothes most of the time—and what sport clothes! His shirts are usually plaid, checked, or striped, and are always of a vivid, live color. His great interest in sports—mainly golf and horse-racing—has been the object of about as many jokes as his clothes have been. But actually his horses are of real racing blood, and he plays an excellent game of golf.

Yet obviously an entertainer must have more than manner, or clothes, or an interest in sports, in order to win the admiration of so many. He must have a certain degree of talent as well, and this requirement also Bing fulfills. His acting is excellent; his singing, superb. The competition which has lately appeared for him will, I am sure, prove just another "fad," and will fade away and be forgotten long before Bing even thinks of retiring.

But to me the quality which tops all the other admirable traits in Bing is his excellence as a husband and father. He and his wife, the former Dixie Lee, hold one of Hollywood's records for a long and happy marriage, and they have four sons of their own to complete the family. Perhaps it is the Crosby religion which has kept divorce from their home. I prefer to think that it is the man himself, the great Bing, who has refused to become another Hollywood "Joe-boy."

1. To divide a thing into its more or less obvious parts, as in selections **A** and **B** above, is a relatively simple mental process because it involves only the discovery of already existing units or lines of demarcation. Making an original analysis demands (as we have already seen in Unit 7) more effort. It is a wholesome exercise to force yourself to analyze your own opinions, for instance—particularly the more violent of your likes and dislikes—in order to discover the real reasons behind them. The student author of this selection was confronted with the problem, "Why is Bing Crosby my favorite actor?" List the reasons which her analysis produces.

2. Can you find any cause for the arrangement of the reasons in their present order? Can you suggest and justify any changes in position?

D. THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN WAR AND PEACE

Henry M. Wriston

The definition of war and peace may be approached from three different points of view. The first is deceptively clear, the second is significantly vague, and the third becomes clear only in perspective.

First, there is the legal aspect of the difference between war and peace. This is deceptively clear. In December 1941 Japan attacked the United States and declared war upon this country and Great Britain, and immediately thereafter Germany and Italy declared war upon the United States. In each case the United States reciprocated.

cated. The joint resolution declaring war upon Japan was adopted by Congress on the 8th of December and was signed by the President at 4:10 P.M. Eastern War Time. Under the Constitution of the United States, that was, for the American people, the legal change to war in place of peace. But by the time that signature became effective, every United States battleship based upon Pearl Harbor was already out of action. The legal inception of war did not correspond with the moment of war's physical impact, much less with its substantive reality. Yet that definite day, December 8, 1941, will be set down in all the books of history as the date for America's entry into the war. It corresponds with the legal status, but with no other; that is why, though it is clear, it is nonetheless deceptive. . . .

The legal distinction between war and peace is not without significance; property rights and many other interests are modified by it. But relative to the total pattern of life as affected by war, this excessively precise legal distinction is vastly less important than the political aspect.

By contrast, the political distinction between war and peace is significantly vague. People talk about the "white" war which preceded the "red" war. They refer to the economic war which preceded the battles. They speak of the "long armistice" between the Treaty of Versailles and the outbreak of this war, as though there never was an interval of genuine peace. Some regard the recent war as beginning in 1931 at the time of the Manchurian incident and the development of the Stimson Doctrine. Others say war began in 1934 when Japan denounced the Washington treaties. Still others think it started in 1935 when Italy attacked Ethiopia and defeated the concept of sanctions. Others would connect it with the German occupation of the Rhineland in 1936. Every person has his favorite time, some suggesting the civil war in Spain, others the *Anschluss*, yet others the Sudeten crisis. Each of those claims has a plausible basis. It is obvious that every

act of aggression was part of a maturing crisis; the declaration of war is only a culminating step which completes the development.

Defining the state of war politically, therefore, is like inquiring when some functional disorder took on serious pathological qualities. It may start as some mild or benign affliction, but slowly or swiftly by unperceived degrees develop to a point where it menaces life itself. At what moment in that tragic sequence did the disease begin?

Peace comes politically in the same way as war itself. The peace treaty, whatever its legal effects, does not ensure political peace. Genuine peace, if it is ever achieved, will come through many channels over many long years. It will be a wise man indeed who can set a precise date upon which others, equally well informed, will agree.

The third distinction between war and peace is military; it is clear only in long perspective. This last was called a global war, and many insist it was one war. But common sense makes it obvious that so long as the Soviet Union was not at war with Japan or the United States with Finland, the statement that there was a single war was imprecise.

The same difficulty appears when the chronology of the war is examined. The use of force began with the Manchurian incident in 1931. The later phase of the war in China began in 1937. Fighting took place in Africa in 1935 with the conquest of Ethiopia, and on the continent of Europe with the occupation of Albania in the spring of 1939. In the period since the declaration of war by Great Britain against Germany on September 3, 1939, some thirty-five other nations have declared war and others have severed diplomatic relations with the Axis. Denmark and Norway, Belgium and the Netherlands, Italy, the Balkan States, the Soviet Union, Finland, Japan and the United States all became involved in the fighting at different times. . . .

Such military facts are characteristic of all war. The Hundred Years' War between France and Britain was by no means a period of uninterrupted fighting; the name could be applied to the era only in retrospect. Similarly, the Napoleonic wars were interrupted by truces, by reversal of alliances, and by treaties of peace which proved temporary. Yet in the long perspective the whole period had a certain unity; the successive phases of the lengthy series of struggles are now regarded as constituting one war. Those are illustrations of what is meant by the assertion that the military aspects of war and peace are comprehensible only in perspective.

War is a legal, political, and military fact; its appearance is different when observed from those various points of view. Since the distinction between peace and war is legally clear, politically vague, and militarily plain only in perspective, the effort to roll all three types of description into one has resulted in confusion of thought.

1. Being on a subject both abstract and complex, this analysis represents a more difficult type than any of the preceding selections, but one which must frequently be used in clarifying the many involved issues facing mankind.

2. What larger purpose is the author attempting to accomplish as a result of his analysis?

3. Note the care with which he announces, in the opening paragraph, the parts into which his material will fall; the clarity with which he moves from one to another as he takes them up in the essay; and the way his final paragraph ties up with his opening. Such a clearly marked pattern is particularly useful in making abstract material comprehensible.

4. What does the final paragraph do besides summarize?

5. What special rhetorical device is used in ¶5?

The analytical approach, as mentioned earlier, may involve not only an enumeration of parts and a breaking-down of problems into their essential issues, but also a process of simplification, a summing-up. One writer (Archibald MacLeish, in *A*

Time to Act) reduces the greatness of Lincoln to the fact that he was able to make such a reduction out of the confusion of his time.

"The greatness of Lincoln consisted precisely in the fact that he reduced the violence and confusion of his time to the essential moral issue and held it there against the cynical and worldly wisdom of the merchants of New England and the brokers of New York and all the rest who argued for expedient self-interest and a realistic view."

Another writer, concerned with the growth of music in this country, precedes his more detailed analysis of the musical scene by this statement of the most significant force in that growth.

E. THE MECHANIZATION OF MUSIC

David Ewen

The greatest force in making America a country of music lovers was unquestionably that of mechanization. A developed concert life, expanding educational resources, growing musical institutions, increasing audiences—these were, of course, significant in the evolution of a musical culture. But in the face of mechanization which, literally, brought the art of music into every household, all other influences assume secondary importance. Inevitably, the process by which an uneducated and uninformed public is trained to visit the concert hall or opera house regularly is, at best, a slow one. Over a period of fifty years there has been noticeable development in this direction. But the transformation of America into a musical country would not have been consummated in fifty or a hundred and fifty years if the role of mechanization had not entered upon the scene. Through machines, the mountain came to Mohammed: music came to the average American—and into his living-room.

Historians and the social critics, faced with a great mass of human experience which they must interpret for the less well informed, are continually forced to make analyses such as the

above. One such writer, examining American life from 1918 to 1929, decides that "disillusionment was the keynote of the nineteen-twenties"—a significant summing-up which gives unity to his book by guiding his treatment of various social phenomena in that decade. Note his reference to it in his analysis (below) of the seemingly inexplicable popularity which Lindbergh achieved in 1927 by his solo flight across the Atlantic. His plan involves, first, a factual account of the relative commonplaceness of the feat as compared with its extraordinary effect on the public; second, an explanation of that effect, drawn from the national background of the earlier twenties which he had previously built up.

F. THE POPULARITY OF LINDBERGH

Frederick Lewis Allen

To appreciate how extraordinary was this universal outpouring of admiration and love—for the word love is hardly too strong—one must remind oneself of two or three facts.

Lindbergh's flight was not the first crossing of the Atlantic by air. Alcock and Brown had flown direct from Newfoundland to Ireland in 1919. That same year the N-C4, with five men aboard, had crossed by way of the Azores, and the British dirigible R-34 had flown from Scotland to Long Island with 31 men aboard, and then had turned about and made a return flight to England. The German Dirigible ZR-3 (later known as the *Los Angeles*) had flown from Friedrichshafen to Lakehurst, New Jersey, in 1924 with 32 people aboard. Two Round-the-World American army planes had crossed the North Atlantic by way of Iceland, Greenland, and Newfoundland in 1924. The novelty of Lindbergh's flight lay only in the fact that he went all the way from New York to Paris instead of jumping off from Newfoundland, that he reached his precise objective, and that he went alone.

Furthermore, there was little practical advantage in

such an exploit. It brought about a boom in aviation, to be sure, but a not altogether healthy one, and it led many a flyer to hop off blindly for foreign shores in emulation of Lindbergh and be drowned. Looking back on the event after a lapse of years, and stripping it of its emotional connotations, one sees it simply as a daring stunt flight—the longest up to that time—by a man who did not claim to be anything but a stunt flyer. Why, then, this idolization of Lindbergh?

The explanation is simple. A disillusioned nation fed on cheap heroics and scandal and crime was revolting against the low estimate of human nature which it had allowed itself to entertain. For years the American people had been spiritually starved. They had seen their early ideals and illusions and hopes one by one worn away by the corrosive influence of events and ideas—by the disappointing aftermath of war, by scientific doctrines and psychological theories which undermined their religion and ridiculed their sentimental notions, by the spectacle of graft in politics and crime on the city streets, and finally by their recent newspaper diet of smut and murder. Romance, chivalry, and self-dedication had been debunked; the heroes of history had been shown to have feet of clay, and the saints of history had been revealed as people with queer complexes. There was the god of business to worship—but a suspicion lingered that he was made of brass. Ballyhoo had given the public contemporary heroes to bow down before—but these contemporary heroes, with their fat profits from moving-picture contracts and ghost-written syndicated articles, were not wholly convincing. Something that people needed, if they were to live at peace with themselves and with the world, was missing from their lives. And all at once Lindbergh provided it. Romance, chivalry, self-dedication—here they were, embodied in a modern Galahad for a generation which had foresworn Galahads. Lindbergh did not accept the moving-picture offers that came his way, he did not

sell testimonials, did not boast, did not get himself involved in scandal, conducted himself with unerring taste—and was handsome and brave withal. The machinery of ballyhoo was ready and waiting to lift him up where every eye could see him. Is it any wonder that the public's reception of him took on the aspects of a vast religious revival?

Literary criticism, as you will find in Unit 13, is a particularly difficult analytical exercise, for it involves a continual working with abstractions. Here the essential quality of Poe's genius is explained by comparison with that of others, in the first part of the paragraph, and by illustration in the last.

G. THE GENIUS OF POE

Van Wyck Brooks

Poe possessed a literary genius that had had no parallel as yet on the American scene. This genius, moreover, was supremely artistic, as Cooper's, for instance, never was, or even the noble talent of the admirable Bryant, who was also a lover of perfection; for Poe was a craftsman of exquisite skill in prose and verse alike, a conscious master of his methods as well as his effects. Even as a reviewer of books, he affirmed that reviews should be works of art, a point that no writer had thought of in America before, and Hawthorne alone was to rival him in the eighteen-thirties in the art of prose composition and the writing of tales. Irving, of course, was a natural artist, but he had little of the cunning of Poe; while Cooper, a man of genius, was nothing as a craftsman, and Poe was an innovator in verse, a creator of "novel forms of beauty," who influenced poets elsewhere for an age to come. A lover, as he said, of severe precision, "profoundly excited by music," a seeker of the perfect who constantly revised his work, while disdaining all recourse to "poetic licence," he had taken to heart the remark of Bacon that "there is no excellent beauty that hath not some strangeness in the

proportion." He had developed variations from the usual metrical patterns, notes that were subtly discordant and wholly unexpected, and, feeling that "the indefinite is an element of the true poesis," he sought "the unknown—the vague—the uncomprehended." His images, instead of creating specific pictures in the mind, evoked a world of sorrowful associations, remote, dim, sinister, melancholy, majestic, his refrains suggested echoes from bottomless gulfs, and when he repeated a word in a rhyme the sound seemed magically altered by the new collocation. One heard in a few of these brief poems a kind of ethereal music like Tennyson's horns of Elfland faintly blowing, though the dream-world of Poe was a wild weird clime indeed. It was haunted by ill angels, vast and formless, "flapping" from their condor wings invisible woe.

ASSIGNMENT

1. The simplest subjects for analysis by partition are definite objects like a fountain pen, a mechanical pencil, a plow, a lathe, a sailboat, a radio receiver, a baseball diamond, an athletic team—in all of which the parts are easily discoverable. A little more difficult is the analysis of an institution (school, church, government) or a work of art, where the existing parts are not so easily discerned. Still more challenging (and allowing for more originality) is an analysis of your likes and dislikes (of book, magazine, movie, person, course, situation); of the causes for an existing state such as the popularity of a sport, the growth of a fad, the success of an individual; of the essential qualities of a leader, a government, of war, peace, victory, freedom, Fascism, happiness, or success; of various ways of looking at a subject.

2. Whatever you decide on, keep your purpose clearly in mind. In analyzing a textbook, do not confuse the form and the content; a red cover is not to be mentioned in the same breath with a clear-cut literary style.

3. Study the analytical process at work in "Dos Passos" (page 450), "What's Happening to Our Language?" (page 434), and "The Present Hysteria" (page 71).

DEFINITION

You have already discovered that higher education demands of you a constantly enlarging vocabulary, both general and specialized. Biology, grammar, music, chemistry, economics, drafting, literature—each has a terminology peculiar to itself with which the beginner must be equipped before he can begin to understand the field. *Changing world conditions continually produce new terms* to meet new needs, and we are constantly meeting, through platform and press, words and phrases new to us, or old ones which are taking on new meanings. An increasing interest in semantics, the science of meaning, is drawing particular attention to the need for a more accurate and careful use of words. Notice how much space your textbooks devote to mere definition and how often on examinations you yourself are asked to define, and you will get an idea of what an important part definition plays in expository writing.

A formal definition is based upon a concise, logical pattern which permits of a maximum of information in a minimum of space. It consists of three parts:

1. The **term** (word or phrase) to be defined
2. The **genus**—the class of object or concept to which the term belongs
3. The **differentiae**—those characteristics which differentiate or distinguish it from all others of its class.

You have at your tongue's end a number of such definitions, a single sentence in length, which you have been memorizing since grade-school days. "A verb [1—the term to be defined] is a word [2—the class to which it belongs] which shows action or state of being [3—the characteris-

tics which distinguish it from others—nouns, adverbs, etc.—of the same class].”

Note the three parts of which the following are composed:

1	2	3
Water is	a liquid	made up of molecules of hydrogen and oxygen in the ratio of 2 to 1.
An epic is	a poem	presenting heroic action in an elevated style.
An owl is	a bird	with large head, strong talons, and nocturnal habits.

You will find it surprisingly difficult to arrive at unexceptionable definitions, in your own words, of the most familiar terms; yet you will seldom get credit for knowing what a thing is unless you can so define it. Practice in the writing of such brief formal definitions is good mental discipline, as well as excellent training in conciseness and care in the use of words.

1. **Avoid, in your definition, the twin errors of “is when” and “is where”—**“A vacation is when people don’t work,” “A grocery is where food is sold.” “Is,” being a mere linking verb, must be followed by the same type of construction as precedes it, and an adverb clause cannot serve as a predicate nominative. A noun must be defined with a noun, a verb with a verb, an adjective with an adjective, etc. (“To run is to move swiftly.” “Shiny means bright.”)
2. **Never attempt to define a word by mere repetition.** “A baked potato is a potato that has been baked” adds nothing to what the term to be defined has already told us.
3. **Whenever possible, define a term in words simpler and more familiar than it is,** for the purpose of definition is to clarify, not to confuse. You may have heard of Dr. Johnson’s famous dictionary definition of network as

"anything reticulated or decussated at equal distances with interstices between the intersections."

4. **Be sure that your genus is large enough to include all the members of your term, but no larger.** The genus "soldier" is too small for the term "lieutenant," because there are lieutenants in the navy as well as in the army. On the other hand, the genus "person" is too large, because it includes far more than necessary. "Commissioned officer" is a happy compromise.
5. **Be sure that your differentiae completely differentiate.** "A flute is a musical instrument played by blowing" includes far too many musical instruments that are not flutes.

Write, in your own words and without benefit of dictionary, formal one-sentence definitions of the following familiar terms:

- | | |
|---------------|---------------|
| 1. apple | 6. vinegar |
| 2. cow | 7. task force |
| 3. dictionary | 8. foul ball |
| 4. eye | 9. coed |
| 5. typewriter | 10. democracy |

Then check over the numbered warnings to see whether or not you have committed any of the common errors mentioned, before submitting your work to the further criticism of your classmates or your instructor.

THE ESSAY OF DEFINITION

The difficulty you encountered in the exercise above in packing all you wished to say into a single sentence has doubtless made you aware of the limitations of so brief a definition. Dictionaries, for lack of space, must be content with such brevity; for most purposes, however, a longer discussion is desirable. Even the brief definitions of the four forms of discourse in this book (pages 21-22) go beyond dictionary limits. In the essay of definition, you may go still further, defining at whatever length you find de-

sirable, as long as everything you write on the subject is pertinent.

1. The greater length of the essay will permit not only an expanded definition, but a far more readable one. A formal one-sentence definition has about as much reader interest as a mathematical equation; the essay of definition can be personal, amusing, vigorous, stimulating, memorable.
2. Do not forget, however, that in writing such an essay your first duty is to define. You may or may not include in it a sentence of formal definition—probably not; but your paper must be an expansion of that basic material, in any event, not an evasion of it. Without this fact in mind, you may find that you have written a charming familiar essay on a given subject, but no definition.
3. Note, as you look over the list of suggested topics at the end of this unit, that definition is a type of writing suited to generic rather than specific purposes. One defines a dog, for instance, rather than our Rover; a church, rather than Westminster Abbey; a certain type of airplane, rather than a specific plane of that type. Other kinds of writing—description, the character sketch—are better suited for treating particular things.
4. In its effort to add fullness and interest to basic data, the essay of definition may take advantage of numerous expository methods. Note how many of the kinds of writing discussed in earlier units are mentioned below.
 - a. *Details.* Not content with briefly stated differentiae, the essay of definition may go on and list great numbers of distinguishing characteristics. To the bare definition of a dog as “a carnivorous domesticated mammal of the family Canidae,” there may be added numerous details as to size, build, color, habits, etc. (Description.)
 - b. *Examples.* This method is particularly valuable in the definition of abstract terms, since it renders them specific and concrete. The old story of Abe

Lincoln's walking miles to return a few cents owed its popularity to the fact that, by illustrating honesty in action, it got the idea of that virtue across much more effectively than could be done by any discussion in mere general terms. (Narration.)

- c. **Comparison and contrast.** This method helps to define the unfamiliar by showing its likenesses to or differences from the familiar. A strange object may be explained as "the shape of a hen's egg," "the size of a basketball," "the color of a lemon." Or running may be defined through its unlikeness to walking, music through its difference from mere sound. This method is often used to eliminate things which might, if not mentioned, be confused with the thing to be defined because of some similarity.
- d. **Analysis.** Another logical means of expanding a basic definition is to break down the object to be defined—a machine into the units of which it is composed (partition), or Protestantism into the chief sects which comprise it (classification).
- e. **Origins and causes.** The nature of some subjects demands definition in terms of their backgrounds. The meaning of a word like "radar" is implicit in its origin ("ra" stands for radio, "d" for detection, "a" for and, "r" for ranging); and a phenomenon like a geyser or a volcano can best be explained through its cause.
- f. **Results, effects, and uses.** Many of the same terms, and others, call for discussion in terms of their consequences. Words like Christianity and Fascism need to be explained in terms of their results as well as of their origins, and war or depression is certain to require an explanation of effects. Definitions of mechanisms and processes (radar is again an example) are equally sure to involve a discussion of the uses to which they are put.
- g. **Restatement.** This method is a rhetorical device in-

volving the hammering in of a definition by defining over and over again, in various terms or from different angles, for the sake of enlarging and emphasizing the original concept. "This invention is a joy to the child, a boon to the teacher, and a saving for the school board." Such restatement is not to be confused with mere repetition of the same words.

Organization

As you note how many of the expository patterns and aids previously studied are included in this list of the methods of definition, you will realize that no one simple organization plan can be laid out for the essay of definition, for in it any or all of these patterns may be successfully combined. Your plan will depend entirely upon the demands of your subject and your taste as a writer. A definition of Americanism, for instance, might involve a detailed breaking-down of the term into the qualities of which you believe it to be composed; you might include examples of true Americanism in action, a contrast between real Americanism and the false varieties (a comparison of it with other "ism's" would be illuminating); a discussion of how it came to be and of its effects on a people and the world would also be in order. But how best to arrange and mingle this ample and varied material is a problem for which there is no ready-made answer. The writing of the essay of definition is good preparation for the relatively uncharted seas of some of the expository problems taken up in the next section.

EXAMPLES

What is the principal method of definition used in each of the following brief selections? (Check the letter before each one with the corresponding letters given to the items in the list of methods above, to confirm your conclusions.)

a. THE MASONQUO

Harold Courlander

The *masonquo* is a six-stringed lyre having a hollow leather-covered sound-chamber much like that of a banjo. It has a bridge and, since it lacks a neck or fingerboard, the strings are stretched to a framework of sticks. The keys are primitive but ingenious and effective. The general style of the instrument is known from northern Egypt to southern Ethiopia. The *masonquo* is used primarily for accompaniment to singing, and is closely associated with old ballad forms. All six strings are struck simultaneously with a small piece of leather or a feather, the resultant music being in a sense harmonic. Holy books written in the ancient Gez language state that King David played a *masonquo* in the Hebrew temple. In Ethiopia this instrument is played by both men and women, and is popular for rendering love-songs. It is commonly heard in public houses, and women use it to attract attention from men. It is known in Shoa Province as *kirar* or *kidrar*.

b. THE LAW OF GRAVITATION

Sir James Jeans

Drop a cricket ball from your hand and it falls to the ground. We say that the cause of its fall is the gravitational pull of the earth. In the same way, a cricket ball thrown into the air does not move on for ever in the direction in which it is thrown; if it did it would leave the earth for good, and voyage off into space. It is saved from this fate by the earth's gravitational pull which drags it gradually down, so that it falls back to earth. The faster we throw it, the further it travels before this occurs; a similar ball projected from a gun would travel for many miles before being pulled back to earth.

The law governing all these phenomena is quite simple. It is that the earth's gravitational pull causes all bodies

to fall 16 feet earthward in a second. This is true of all bodies which are free to fall, no matter how they are moving; every body which is not in some way held up against gravitation is 16 feet lower at the end of any second than it would have been if gravitation had not acted through that second.

c. THE PAPAYA

G. W. James

To the wanderer from temperate zones, the papaya might be a dwarfed Tom Watson or an unripe cantaloupe. This interesting native of the torrid zone assumes a variety of shapes and sizes. It may be elongated like a watermelon, or almost spherical, or even slightly compressed on one end, like our crookneck squash. Within, it is much like a muskmelon, with a multitude of seeds which cling tenaciously to the firm, thick, salmon-colored lining which is its edible part.

cc. TACT

Margaret Van Horne

A great many would-be socialites entertain the illusion that politeness and tact are the same thing. That is why they are only would-be's. Politeness is a negative, and tact a positive, virtue. Politeness is merely avoiding trampling on another person's toes, while tact is placing a Persian carpet under his feet. Nations send representatives to other nations to keep friendly relations, or, more commonly, to get something away from the other nations, by using tact. For tact is, after all, just a drawing-room version of diplomacy, and diplomacy is a civilized expression of the instinct of self-preservation. Men used to seize their neighbors' possessions if they happened to want them; now they persuade their neighbors that they would be much better off without some of their posses-

sions. That is tact, and much prettier and neater it is than seizing.

d. REASONING

Mayme I. Logsdon

To reason is to draw inferences or conclusions from propositions. The propositions on which the inferences are based may be the result of observations or they may be products of the mind. In the former case, the reasoning is generally called *inductive*; in the latter case, it is called *deductive*.

e. CANADA

Daniel Buchanan

There is a Castilian legend, more or less unauthentic, that the word "Canada" is derived from the expression, "Aquí Nada," meaning "Here is nothing." It was supposed to be a casual, but none the less expressive, remark made by the first Spanish explorers to reach the mouth of the St. Lawrence. They must have been convinced of the truth of the remark, for they made no settlement in that part of the continent. The real origin of the word is no doubt "Kanada," an Indian word meaning "collection of huts."

ee. THE METER

W. A. Noyes

The meter was originally intended to be one ten-millionth of the distance from the equator to the pole of the earth, measured on the surface. The measurements by means of which the first meter was prepared were inaccurate, however, and the real meter is the distance, measured at the freezing point of water, between two marks on a bar of platinum-iridium kept at the International Bureau of Weights and Measures at Sèvres, France.

f. THE BOMBING AIRPLANE

Stuart Chase

The bombing airplane is a child of technology, and promises to revolutionize the maps of the world. It has destroyed the French Republic, rocked the mighty British Empire, consolidated Europe under one tyranny, and is fast consolidating the Western Hemisphere and all its outlying islands into a unified system of defense. It has shattered the established concepts of sea power, and made the doctrine of the freedom of the seas impossible to enforce. It has sent the *Prince of Wales* to the bottom and sooner or later it will make the battleship obsolete. It has wrecked the principle of self-determination and the rights and sovereignties of small nations. If you have the bombers and the fighting planes, you can protect your sovereignty. Otherwise it must be surrendered to the protection of those who do have the bombers.

g. TECHNOCRACY

Stuart Chase

What is Technocracy? It is Veblen pushed a few steps forward, modified by recent industrial history and Mr. Howard Scott. It is an attempt to measure by means of figures and charts the impact of energy (the machine, if you like the term better) on civilization. It is an expedition into the higher mathematics. It is a prophecy and a challenge. It has hinted at a blue print of a possible new society where economic activity is controlled by the technician, with a sixteen-hour work week, but the blue print has not yet been divulged. It is the name of a group said to consist of some 350 engineers and technical men. And, if it is not careful, it may turn into an esoteric cult.

Each of the selections above was chosen to illustrate briefly one of the various expository methods useful in defining. The

following selections are longer essays of definition, in which various combinations are used. Pick out the methods used in each, and comment on their effectiveness. (Selection A is student-written.)

A. THE RUANA

Pablo Emilio Andrade

It is easy to explain what a ruana is, in terms of its physical characteristics. It is merely a square piece of heavy woolen cloth worn as a garment by the male Indians of the South American mountains, with a hole in the center large enough to let the head through so that the material can hang from the shoulders. As it usually is made to fall about to the knees, its size depends upon the height of its wearer.

But to define the intrinsic value that this piece of cloth has for its owner is a more difficult task. The ruana is as old, it would appear, as the Indian race itself. Generation after generation has worn it, but its popularity has never diminished with the passage of time.

When a man-child is old enough to walk well—at the age of three, perhaps—his parents buy him his first ruana. From then on, his ruana will be his inseparable companion. With it he will cover himself for warmth when, tired of walking home from the town where he has been to sell his products, he lies down by the roadside to sleep for a while; with it he will cover his Indian girl when, enchanted by the beauty of the moon on a cold night, they decide to walk to the top of a nearby hill. It will keep him warm when the roof of his little house is not visible; it will comfort him when, desperate for rain for his crops, he gets up in the night to pray to his God.

Should another man insult him or his family, he will spread his ruana on the ground in front of his enemy, daring him to walk over it. If the other man does so, it is an insult to the owner's honor, and the two will fight with

their machetes until one is dead, or is forced to surrender and beg the other's pardon. During the fight, each man rolls an edge of his ruana around his left arm, leaving the rest to hang as a shield.

The services that the ruana renders to its Indian owner are innumerable. To put it briefly, the ruana is his faithful and eternal companion. Throughout his life he wears it every day and on every occasion, and when he dies he is buried by his relatives with his ruana wrapped about him.

B. MAPS

C. C. Wylie

A map is a conventional picture of an area of land, sea, or sky. Perhaps the maps most widely used are the road maps given away by the oil companies. They show the cultural features such as states, towns, parks, and roads, especially paved roads. They show also natural features, such as rivers and lakes, and sometimes mountains. As simple maps, most automobile drivers have on various occasions used sketches drawn by service station men, or by friends, to show the best automobile route from one town to another.

The distinction usually made between "maps" and "charts" is that a chart is a representation of an area consisting chiefly of water; a map represents an area that is predominantly land. It is easy to see how this distinction arose in the days when there was no navigation over land, but a truer distinction is that charts are specially designed for use in navigation, whether at sea or in the air. . . .

Maps have been used since the earliest civilizations, and explorers find that they are used in rather simple civilizations at the present time by people who are accustomed to traveling. For example, Arctic explorers have obtained considerable help from maps of the coast lines

showing settlements, drawn by Eskimo people. Occasionally maps show not only the roads, but pictures of other features. One of the earliest such maps dates from about 1400 B.C. It shows not only roads, but also lakes with fish, and a canal with crocodiles and a bridge over the canal. This is somewhat similar to the modern maps of a state which show for each large town some feature of interest or the chief products of that town.

C. THE WANTS OF MAN

Stuart Chase

The wants of man are impossible of exact definition. They are constantly growing, shrinking, changing. In a certain sense they are different for every living person. One man's meat is sometimes another man's poison. Any allowable definition of the wants of man must be built without a roof—it must be open to the sky.

What does man want? Life! A more abundant life! Bread and beauty, if you please. Our cynic as well as our artist must agree to this. What constitutes a more abundant life? More bread, more beauty. And we cannot permit cynics and artists to argue that this does not include certain unchanging classifications of wants which the facts as to man's place in nature render imperative. Thus everyone must eat—and he must eat certain combinations of protein, fats, carbohydrates, together with the accessory vitamins, or he sickens and dies, and his aesthetic wants become a matter of very secondary consideration. He must in certain climates have clothes to wear to keep him from cold or heat, and in nearly all climates he must have a house or shelter of some sort in which to live, and particularly to protect his children.

Food, shelter and clothing comprise the most elementary wants of man. After them follow other classifications almost equally essential to mankind in civilized communities. The development of communication between people

—channels without which human society is impossible—an alphabet, a language, books, education are all imperative wants of man. Religion of some sort he wants. Art he demands—music, painting, architecture and design, poetry, literature and the theatre. Recreation and play he wants—dancing, running, swimming, mountain climbing, games. The latter is a very fundamental want, for the body declines rapidly if it is not satisfied. Health he wants, and the services of doctors, nurses, hospitals, sanitary measures. Love he wants—not only sexual, but all the pleasant relationships of family and friends. Some men just want to know. They are moved by a divine curiosity. We call what they do pure science and it is one of the most precious of man's wants.

D. A NATURAL LAW

W. A. Noyes

When a given relationship between two or more phenomena is found always to exist, we conclude that the relationship is necessary or inherent in the nature of things, and it is called a *law*. The original thought conveyed by the name was, doubtless, that the material universe acts as it does because it was commanded to do so by some higher power, but the word has come to signify simply a statement of some constantly recurring relationship between phenomena.

To illustrate: we find that if we let go of an object held in the hand it will fall. The first time this is observed it is simply a *fact* of experience or observation. But a further examination of the relations involved leads to the general statement that any body which is not supported will fall. We may, perhaps, call this a law, but it is still a comparatively imperfect statement of the existing relations. A further study teaches us that all bodies fall, in a vacuum, at the same rate, irrespective of their size or weight and that the velocity of a falling body varies as

the time during which it has fallen. These may be called the empirical laws of gravitation, that is, the laws derived from experiment and observation. For the class of phenomena to which they apply such laws have, practically, as great a certainty as any individual fact which we observe. A further study of the matter and especially of the motions of the earth and planets and stars has led to the more complete generalization that all bodies attract each other directly as the product of their masses and inversely as the squares of their distances. This is Newton's law of universal gravitation. When once stated, it is seen that the empirical laws stated above follow from it.

E. LAGNIAPPE

Mark Twain

We picked up one excellent word—a word worth traveling to New Orleans to get; a nice, limber, expressive, handy word—"Lagniappe." They pronounce it *lanny-yap*. It is Spanish—so they said. We discovered it at the head of a column of odds and ends in the *Picayune* the first day; heard twenty people use it the second; inquired what it meant the third; adopted it and got facility in swinging it the fourth. It has a restricted meaning, but I think the people spread it out a little when they choose. It is the equivalent of the thirteenth roll in a "baker's dozen." It is something thrown in, gratis, for good measure. The custom originated in the Spanish quarter of the city. When a child or a servant buys something in a shop—or even the mayor or the governor, for aught I know—he finishes the operation by saying:

"Give me something for lagniappe."

The shopman always responds; gives the child a bit of licorice root, gives the servant a cheap cigar or a spool of thread, gives the governor—I don't know what he gives the governor; support, likely.

When you are invited to drink—and this does occur

now and then in New Orleans—and you say, “What, again?—no, I’ve had enough,” the other party says, “But just this one time more—this is for lagniappe.” When the beau perceives that he is stacking his compliments a trifle too high, and sees by the young lady’s countenance that the edifice would have been better with the top compliment left off, he puts his “I beg pardon, no harm intended,” into the briefer form of “Oh, that’s for lagniappe.” If the waiter in the restaurant stumbles and spills a gill of coffee down the back of your neck, he says, “F’r lagniappe, sah,” and gets you another cup without extra charge.

F. WHAT IS CULTURE?

James G. Leyburn

The impact of millions of people upon other millions during the past century and a half in America interests the sociologist in its effect both upon the culture of the immigrants and upon the culture of the Americans.

It is easy enough to say that the influx of foreigners has inevitably had an effect upon American culture. But do we understand specifically what we mean by “culture”? We realize that the term means more than refinement and a broad education; what else does it mean? . . .

Note, first of all, that *culture is not biological*. It has nothing to do with physical heredity. One of the first lessons we learn in our biology courses is that all human beings, of whatever color or breed, belong to the single species *Homo sapiens*; any normal adult male can mate with any normal adult female; all normal human beings share the pangs of hunger, the drive of sex, the range of emotions from fear to exaltation, the ability to talk, and the power of reasoning. In these respects, black does not differ from white, nor Oriental from American Indian.

Our biology courses teach us next that heredity is a *stable, relatively unchanging factor*. Man’s physical char-

acteristics have not appreciably changed within the past ten thousand years. The physical traits of parents will be passed on to their children according to Mendelian laws. Tall black parents with flat noses and kinky hair will have children who resemble them; parents of Mongoloid physical characteristics will produce children Mongoloid in appearance.

So much is patent. But is there a Negro *culture*? Does a baby born to Chinese parents have a predisposition to Chinese culture? The answer is No. Before we have been with a Frenchman and a German for ten minutes we recognize radical differences between them. But this difference may not be one of appearance. Indeed, many an expert anthropologist is unable to distinguish the nationality of a member of the white race (or of the black or any other) from his looks alone. What marks off the Frenchman from the German is his culture—not what he has biologically inherited, but what he has learned from infancy onward in his social environment: his language, his customs, his ideals, his preferences, his behavior.

Culture is not human nature, but second nature. If a French baby were adopted at birth by Eskimos, before he had begun to learn French habits of thought and action, he would grow up an Eskimo in everything but appearance; he would eat blubber, hunt seals, make kayaks, and he would lack all those characteristics which we commonly attribute to Frenchmen—logicality, thrift, excitability, and the rest—except in so far as they were also Eskimo characteristics. When we speak of such traits as French excitability, the Latin temperament, Dutch phlegm, English restraint, we tend to think that these are inherent in the people. They are not. They are culturally approved attitudes which are impressed upon a child almost at his mother's breast. To use our former illustration, an infant of typical Dutch parents growing up in Italy under normal circumstances, and with Italian foster parents, would have a Latin temperament.

Our culture, then, we get by imitation and inculcation from the people among whom we grow up. There are among us many hundred-per-cent Americans who are children or grandchildren of tall blond Swedes or small swarthy Greeks. The hereditary physical traits have not changed unless there has been intermarriage, but the culture has.

The upshot of this matter is that we need never fear that alien *blood* can in any way affect our culture, nor need we fear intermarriage with any of our immigrants.

What precisely is culture? It consists of three parts: ideas, behavior, and material things. If you went on an ethnographical expedition whose purpose was to describe the culture of a primitive tribe, you would try to bring back a report of what the people thought, what they did, and what they had—as a group. And with your outsider's detachment, you would probably be able to give a pretty fair description of the essentials of their culture. It is not so easy to describe our own complicated American culture (not only because it is complicated, but also because, being parts of it, we cannot view it objectively), and I know of no one, historian, sociologist, anthropologist, or philosophical critic, who has been able to give us more than a partial picture.

These three components of culture (which we may call the mental, the behavioral, and the material) are all closely interrelated with each other. . . . Being an American does not mean to us *primarily* the things we use—our automobiles, our houses, our machines, our roads, our chewing gum. It does not even mean *primarily* our behavior, although this touches us more deeply. What really stirs our hearts and minds is our set of ideals and values. Often we do not realize explicitly what these are until they are threatened. But in a crisis we know with our innermost being how dear to us are our American ideals of democracy, decency, and individual freedom, our belief in free speech and in free elections and in the right to wor-

ship as we choose, our family mores, our religious faith, our respect for certain symbols (the American flag, for example) which convey these ideals to our attention. It is this *mental* aspect of culture which gives us what security we have in life.

In the next two selections, the principle of comparison and contrast is used to give a double definition—two comparable terms defined in the same essay. Compare this with its use as one of several methods of definition (see directions and selections labeled c, above). In "The Papaya," for instance, familiar fruits are mentioned only for the sake of describing the unfamiliar; in "Tact," politeness is brought in only to be eliminated from the possibly confusing concept of tact.

In the following, however, the authors are as much interested in presenting one of the compared subjects as the other. Note the careful balance, especially in the first, designed to give the same weight to each term.

G. PHYSICS AND CHEMISTRY

W. A. Noyes

The two fundamental physical sciences are physics and chemistry. Roughly speaking, physics treats of energy and chemistry of matter. Thus chemistry tells us of the properties and composition of substances, as of water, of iron or of sulfur, of the action of substances on each other and of the changes in composition which they undergo in a great variety of circumstances. Physics, on the other hand, deals with the varieties of energy, as mechanical energy, sound, heat, light, electricity, and with the transformations of each of these into other forms.

As we can have no knowledge of matter except through the energy which it possesses and the effect of that energy on our senses in one way or another, and since the changes in energy which result when substances act on each other are often of great importance, the chemist can make little progress in his study without a consider-

able knowledge of physics. And as we have no knowledge of energy apart from matter, the physicist finds some knowledge of chemistry desirable. This interrelation between the sciences is so close, also, that there is a large domain which is common to both and of which it is scarcely worth while to ask whether it belongs to chemistry or to physics.

H. INFORMATIVE AND AFFECTIVE CONNOTATIONS

S. I. Hayakawa

The informative connotations of a word are its socially agreed upon, "impersonal" meanings, insofar as meanings can be given at all by additional words. For example, if we talk about a "pig," we cannot readily give the extensional meaning (denotation) of the word unless there happens to be an actual pig around for us to point at; but we can give the informative connotations: "mammalian domestic quadruped of the kind generally raised by farmers to be made into pork, bacon, ham, lard . . ."—which are connotations upon which everybody can agree. Sometimes, however, the informative connotations of words used in everyday life differ so much from place to place and from individual to individual that a special substitute terminology with more fixed informative connotations has to be used when special accuracy is desired. The scientific names for plants and animals are an example of terminology with such carefully established informative connotations.

The affective connotations of a word, on the other hand, are the aura of personal feelings it arouses, as, for example, "pig": "Ugh! Dirty, evil-smelling creatures, wallowing in filthy sties," and so on. While there is no necessary agreement about these feelings—some people like pigs and others don't—it is the existence of these feelings

that enables us to use words, under certain circumstances, for their affective connotations alone, without regard to their informative connotations. That is to say, when we are strongly moved, we express our feelings by uttering words with the affective connotations appropriate to our feelings, without paying any attention to the informative connotations they may have. We angrily call people "reptiles," "wolves," "old bears," "skunks," or lovingly call them "honey," "sugar," "duck," and "apple dumpling." Indeed, all verbal expressions of feeling make use to some extent of the affective connotations of words.

ASSIGNMENT

1. There are five types of terms which you may usefully define:

- a. Those which are common but limited in locale, so that they are unfamiliar to many (papaya, masonquo, ruana, hostel).
- b. Those which are too technical to be familiar to the layman, or if familiar are not thoroughly understood (technocracy, toluene, azimuth, trajectory, neon, helicopter).
- c. Slang uses which are either too new or too limited in use to be commonly known (lagniappe, greasy grind, hep cat, brass hat).
- d. Abstract terms which continually need new and specific definition because of the numerous interpretations possible (culture, the wants of man, patriotism, democracy, religion, sportsmanship, peace, propaganda, personality).
- e. Familiar terms which have a particular personal meaning for you which you would like to express (coed, spring fever, buddy, friendship, conscience, engineer).

2. In addition, there are numerous pairs of words which may be usefully defined together in order to overcome frequent confusion of the two: courtesy and etiquette, job and position, art and science, knowledge and intelligence, house and home, infer

and imply, naturalist and biologist, religion and theology, possibility and probability.

3. When you have chosen a subject,

- a. Write a formal one-sentence definition.
- b. Expand that definition into a paragraph by increasing the differentiating details, but keep it formally informative.
- c. Expand it into a longer essay of definition by using devices and adding information which will make it enjoyable as well.

4. Check the points at which definition has been used in "Right and Wrong" (page 420), "The Method of Scientific Investigation" (page 462), and "Reading and Understanding" (page 441). At each point, analyze the method or methods used.

5. What is the principal method used in the essay of definition, "What Is Thought?" (page 212)?

////////// P A R T I I I //////////
COMMON EXPOSITORY PROBLEMS

THE SUMMARY

As a beginning college student, faced with one or more lecture courses, you may have found yourself regretting that you cannot write shorthand and thus capture every word that falls from the lecturer's lips. It is a needless regret; as a matter of fact, those of you who are familiar with shorthand will be unwise to attempt to take a lecture down in its complete form. Such a procedure will not only prove time-wasting later, but will rob you of valuable practice in summarizing.

Faced with the maze of details with which every aspect of your daily existence is filled, you are constantly forced into some type of condensation in an effort to retain such elements of the whole as are truly significant. In college, you must not only take lecture notes, but summarize chapters in your texts or in supplementary readings, and perhaps write synopses of stories or novels. Outside, you find yourself striving to get the gist of a speech, of a news report, of articles on current affairs, of new technical works in your own professional field. You may make use of the outline, the skeleton form of summarization which is taken up in detail in Unit 11; or you may condense the essential material into readable paragraph form, a practice resulting in what is variously known as the abstract, the digest, the *précis*, the summary.

The kind of summary appearing in the popular magazine digests is not necessarily the best for practical purposes, for it usually consists only of selected chunks of the original (the flashier portions) skillfully glued together by editorial transitions, being aimed chiefly at maximum reader appeal. For your own purposes of getting at and briefly recording the essence of the information which the author has set forth at length, reader

interest may well be sacrificed in favor of a more sober and better-balanced type of condensation.

1. **The length of a summary will be determined by your needs.** You may reduce a 500-page book to half its length, or you may state its theme in a single sentence, depending upon how much detail is required for your immediate purpose. The longer the material to be summarized, however, the shorter the summary is likely to be, in proportion, since all must be reduced to manageable form. Your instructor may perhaps suggest, for your practice work here, a summary of a certain length or proportion. The reduction of an ordinary article or chapter to something less than a quarter of its original length is likely to serve most purposes well.
2. **The object of summary writing is to select and record the main points from the wealth of material that the writer has provided.** A good writer, as we have seen, uses all kinds of devices in order to impress his main issues upon the reader. He repeats them, perhaps several times in different words; he uses analogies and figures of speech; he fills his article with descriptive detail and narrative anecdote. But the successful summary will pick its way through all of these purely rhetorical devices and arrive at concise statements of the essential ideas only.
3. **The summary may consist of a single paragraph or of many, depending upon its length.** The number of paragraphs in the summary bears no relationship to the number in the original essay, but should be determined by the usual rules of good paragraph development. The summary is, after all, an essay in miniature.
4. **Apportion the space fairly, with due consideration for the importance of the material.** A more or less literal reproduction of one or more important paragraphs in an essay is not a summary (unless, of course, the author has included summarizing paragraphs of which you may take advantage).

5. **Avoid the author's words.** Summary writing involves no question of plagiarism, since it does not pretend to be an original undertaking in any sense. But if you depend too much upon the author's phrasing you are likely to find yourself finishing with a fair handwritten copy of the material, rather than a brief summary of its content. Putting an idea into your own words is the surest way to prove your understanding of it.
6. **A summary is not a mere paraphrase,** furthermore, such as you may have been required to write in prose in order to prove your understanding of a poem; it is a condensation as well—a briefer as well as a simpler form of the original material.
7. **Read through the entire article before you start your digest.** In taking notes on a lecture, you are obliged to write them down as you go along, for in listening there is no turning back the pages. This process is likely to prove wasteful, however, as you will discover if you set about making a summary of the lecture from your notes; for you have probably included many details which were either repetitious or proved to be relatively unimportant when, reaching the end, you could look back and see them in their proper relationship to the whole. In summarizing reading material, such waste is unnecessary, and can be avoided by completing the reading before you begin. Then you can see the details in their proper perspective, and any time you may have to spend glancing back at what you have already read will be amply made up for by the increased conciseness of your summary.
8. **Write your summary from the author's point of view,** not from that of an outsider looking on. Avoid such expressions as "the author says," saving the strength of your predication for a clear-cut phrasing of *what* he says. Compare the information value of these two sentences written about Selection E on page 181:

- A. Mark Twain discusses the meaning of the word "lagniappe." [This adds little to what the title and author lines have told us.]
- B. "Lagniappe," a Spanish word we picked up in New Orleans, means something extra thrown in for good measure. [This tells us *what* he said, not merely *that* he said it.]
9. Omit all extraneous comments. The summary is no place to record your own opinion of the material condensed. Such comments as "The author says that he thinks socialized medicine a good thing, but I disagree with him" belong to the field of criticism and are entirely out of place here. "Socialized medicine is a good thing" followed by a digest of the facts offered in support of this opinion is all that belongs in a summary, which should be a condensation of the facts and opinions presented by the author—nothing more.

EXAMPLES

THE SILENT GENERATION

Thornton Wilder

1. A younger generation has been calling attention to itself again. These crises in the public appraisal of the young used to occur at longer intervals; now, with the acceleration of social changes, they appear with increasing frequency. Some of us remember the Jazz Age; this was followed by the Lost Generation; now we are in a state of alarm about the Silent Generation.
2. I have been given an article on "The Younger Generation" which appeared in *Time* magazine on November 5, 1951, and have been asked to comment on it. There I read that these young people "do not issue manifestoes, make speeches, or carry posters . . . do not want to go into the Army. . . . Their ambitions have shrunk. . . . They want a good secure job . . . either through fear, passivity, or

conviction, they are ready to conform. . . . They are looking for a faith."

3. All this I recognize. I propose that we read the manifestations differently.

4. The Jazz Age preceded and accompanied the first world war. There was a breaking of windows and great scandal. It made evident to all that the American home or the patriarchal pattern had come to an end. The young people won the latchkey. Then the young men went off to the war. That made them heroes. As heroes they acquired more liberties than they had seized as rebellious bad boys. The Lost Generation was the generation that did not know what to do with its new liberties. The younger generation of today is facing the too-long delayed task of consolidating its liberty and of impressing upon it a design, a meaning, and a focus. No wonder they strike us as silent.

5. An even greater task rests on their shoulders. They are fashioning the Twentieth Century Man. They are called upon to illustrate what the Germans call a "life-style" for our times. This work is usually done by men and women of middle age, but in the accelerated tempo of these war-punctuated years a man or woman of forty-five is out of date. He does not respect or despise the same institutions as an intelligent person in the middle twenties, does not read the same books, admire the same art, nor agree on the same social or cultural premises. The Silent Generation (loquacious enough among its contemporaries) holds its tongue because it cannot both explore itself and explain itself.

6. The first charge against these young people is apathy. They do not fling themselves into causes; they are not easily moved to enthusiasm; the expression on their faces is impassive, is "dead pan."

7. But I know where they learned this impassivity. They learned it at home, as adolescents, guarding themselves against their parents. Guardedness is not apathy. In all my reading I have discovered no age in which there was

so great a gulf between parent and child. A seismic disturbance has taken place in the home. Within forty years America has ceased to be a patriarchy; it is moving toward a matriarchy but has not yet recognized and confirmed it. There is nothing wrong with a matriarchy; it does not connote any emasculation of men; it is merely a shift of balance. What is woeful for all parties is the time of transition. These young people grew up in the fluctuating tides of indeterminate authority. A father was no longer held to be, *ex officio*, wise and unanswerable. The mother had not yet learned the rules of supporting and circumscribing her new authority. Father, mother, and children have had daily to improvise their roles. This led to a constant emotional racket in the air. The child either learned a silent self-containment or fell into neurosis.

8. The second change is that they "aim low"—they want a good secure job. The article in *Time* says that, as far as their domestic life is concerned, they look forward to a "suburban idyll."

9. What they want, at all cost, is not to find themselves in "false situations." Life is full of false situations, especially American life today. The most frequent and glaring of them is incompetence in high places. My generation saw a great deal of this in government, in the Army, in culture, and in education. We exercised our wit upon it, but we were ourselves (not yet free of patriarchal influence) still vaguely respectful of rank and office and status. This generation is not impressed by any vested authority whatever. And their freedom to judge authority is accompanied by their willingness to be judged. Their caution reposes upon their unwillingness to exercise any authority or responsibility for which they do not feel themselves to be solidly prepared and adequate. They hate the false and they shrink from those conspicuous roles which all but inevitably require a certain amount of it. I find this trait very promising. Plato was the first to say that high place is best in the hands of those who are reluctant to assume it.

10. I have said that the Silent Generation is fashioning the Twentieth Century Man. It is not only suffering and bearing forward a time of transition, it is figuring forth a new mentality.

11. In the first place, these young people will be the first truly international men and women. At last it has ceased to be a mere phrase that the world is one. Compared to them my generation was parochial. Their experience and their reading—their newspapers as well as their textbooks—have impressed upon them that the things which all men hold in common are more important and more productive than the things which separate them. In the Twenties and Thirties one felt oneself to be one among millions; these young people feel themselves to be one among billions. They know it not as a fact learned, but as a self-evident condition; they know it in their bones. On the one hand the individual has shrunk; on the other, the individual has been driven to probe more deeply within himself to find the basis for a legitimate assertion of the claim of self. This conviction is new and its consequences are far-reaching—in international relations, in religion, in social reform, in art, and in the personal life.

12. For instance, we went to war against and among “foreigners” and “enemies.” That attitude was narrow; henceforward all wars are civil wars. This generation goes forward not to punish and destroy, but to liberate oppressed and misguided brothers. The Army authorities go into anxious huddles over the unabashed candor with which young men can be heard exploring ways of avoiding military service. The Army—like the church, like the university—is an echoing gallery of out-dated attitudes and sentiments. It still thinks soldiers can be coerced and it still thinks that the primary qualifications of a soldier are courage and obedience. In a machine warfare, the soldier is a kind of engineer; his primary virtue is technical skill and his function is co-operation, not obedience.

13. Most of us were Protestants; the beliefs held by

others were the objects of our all but condescending anthropological curiosity. Today these young people are interested in the nature of belief itself. Some of us in the previous generations hurled ourselves into social reform and social revolution; we did it with a personal passion that left little room for deliberation and long-time planning. To correct one abuse we were ready to upset many a benefit. It was of such crusaders that the Sidney Webbs were finally driven to say, "We hate moral indignation." The emerging International Man will move less feverishly in his enlarged thought-world. This generation is silent because these changes call not for argument but for rumination. The mistakes of the previous generations are writ large over the public prints.

14. These young people are setting new patterns for the relation of the individual to the society about him. The condition of being unimpressed by authorities and elders has thrown them back more resolutely on themselves. They are similarly unimpressed by time-honored conventions. For instance, young married couples today make few concessions to the more superficial aspects of social life. In my generation young brides suffered if their street address was not "right" and if their table silver was not distinguished. Young men were very conscious of influential connections, commissions in the Army, membership in good clubs. Members of this generation exhibit a singular insistence on wishing to be appraised for themselves alone. How often I have known them to conceal sedulously the fact that they come of privileged family. This insistence on being accepted as an individual produces an unprecedented candor. A college girl said to me: "You know I've always been an awful liar. I'm trying to get over it." A veteran, in the presence of his stricken parents, informed a mixed company that he had been a "psycho" for six months after the war. Such expressions reveal the consolidations of a liberty—the liberty of belonging to oneself and not to a social fiction.

15. These paragraphs have been part description, part explanation, part testimony of faith. Faith is in constant correspondence with doubt. It may be that these young people have been injured by the forces which have been sweeping across the world in their formative years. It may be that what I have called their self-containment is rather a cautious withdrawal from the demands of life. It may be that they lack passion and the constructive imagination. My faith returns, however, with each new encounter. I have just crossed the ocean with a boatload of choice young "Fulbrights" (all hail to the Senator!). The traits I have been describing reappear constantly. They have two orientations well in hand, to themselves and to the larger ranges of experience. It is toward those middle relationships that they are indifferent—current opinion and social usage and the imperatives of traditional religion, patriotism, and morality. Their parents wring their hands over them; their professors find them lukewarm or cool; the Army grows anxious; we older friends are often exasperated. These impatiences are provoked by the fact that they wish to live correctly by their lights and not by ours. In proportion as we are free we must accord them that.

The essay above is condensed in the following summary to about one-third of its original length, and its fifteen paragraphs are reduced to five. Its first three paragraphs logically become one, since the first two are introductory and the third only a brief transition into the body of the essay; the next two, dealing with the traits of three generations, another; the next four, answering the two charges against this generation, a third; and the next five, showing what this generation is doing, a fourth (the longest, since this section is the main body of the essay). The last paragraph, being Wilder's concluding statement of faith, remains one, but appears in a shortened form.

Thus the completed summary not only is a reduction of the essay in length, but also, in its paragraphing, indicates the main parts into which the thought falls.

A

The younger generation is getting the attention of the public more frequently, as social changes have been speeded up; now we are alarmed about them as the Silent Generation. A recent article in *Time* magazine accuses our present young people of apathy, and of no greater ambition than security. I understand, but suggest that we make a different interpretation of these symptoms. (§§1-3.)

The Jazz Age, before and during the first world war, was one of violent revolt from the discipline of the American home. The Lost Generation was the one that did not know what to do with its new freedom. Today's younger generation is silent because it is busy trying to give belated meaning to its liberty. It is shaping Twentieth Century Man, a "life-style" for our times. This task has usually fallen to the middle-aged, but with the rapid pace of the present, those of forty-five are out of date. (§§4-5.)

The first complaint about this young group is that they show little enthusiasm. But I know they are really only showing guardedness, a trait they developed because of the great distance between parents and children in this age. The second complaint is that they wish nothing higher than security. Actually, they are trying to avoid being in "false situations," such as incompetence in high places. My generation saw this incompetence and was witty about it, but we still felt vaguely respectful. This generation judges authority freely, and is equally willing to be judged. They are cautious because they do not wish to assume authority until they are thoroughly prepared. I find their dislike of all that is false promising. (§§6-9.)

The Silent Generation is shaping, out of this period of transition, a new mentality; they will be the first truly international men and women, compared to which my generation was provincial. The things they have read and done have made them aware that the things men have in common are more important than the things which separate them. The individual has grown smaller, but he has also dug

deeper to discover himself, with consequences for all areas of experience. We used to fight "foreigners"; from now on all wars will be civil wars. This generation fights not to destroy but to liberate. The Army, which worries about the frankness of our young men, is outdated; it does not realize that co-operation, not obedience, is the first requirement of the modern soldier. As to faith, most of us were Protestants, and we regarded other beliefs with curiosity; young people now inquire into the nature of faith itself. We were enthusiastic but unintelligent about reforms, whereas the new International Man will think rather than argue. Unimpressed by authority and convention, those of the younger generation are becoming more self-reliant, and wish to be judged for themselves alone. (§§10-14.)

Perhaps these young people have been harmed by the world forces among which they grew up; perhaps their self-containment is only withdrawal from life. But my faith in them returns each time I meet them. They are well-oriented, to themselves and to the larger reaches of experience; it is about the middle relationships of opinion, custom, and tradition that they are unconcerned. We of the older generation are distressed because the younger wish to live by their own standards, not by ours; but as we are free, we must permit them to be so. (§15.)

The same material might, if convenience suggested, be reduced still further—into a single paragraph:

B

The present Silent Generation has been criticized for its apathy and its desire for security. Actually it is trying to find the meaning of the liberty gained by the earlier Jazz Age and not understood by the Lost Generation. If these youth show little enthusiasm, it is because the breakdown of family relationships in these transitional times has made them guarded. If they want only security, it is because they wish to avoid the false situations created by incompetence

in high places. More, they are shaping a new mentality—that of international men and women who stress the things men have in common rather than their differences. This fact gives them a new attitude toward war, religion, and reform which is marked by thoughtfulness and self-reliance. Although they may have been harmed while they were growing up and their self-containment may be a withdrawal from life, my faith in them is strong. We are distressed because they wish to live by standards other than our own, but we must permit them the same freedom we ourselves enjoy.

Reduced further still, to a single sentence, the essay might become the following:

C

Modern youth, the Silent Generation, is criticized for its apathy and its desire for security, but actually these young people are becoming international men and women with new attitudes which verify my faith in them and require our willingness to allow them the freedom we ourselves enjoy.

ASSIGNMENT

1. Examine the above summaries carefully, comparing each in detail with the original essay and with the others, noting of each what is saved in space, and what is lost in detail. (You will discover that the shorter versions are not "better" otherwise—a fact to remember in a world in which all kinds of book and magazine digests bid for your attention). Watch particularly for what has been considered worthy of continued inclusion as the space becomes less and less.

2. Point out the major faults in the following attempt at summary writing:

Mr. Wilder says that crises in the public appraisal of the young used to occur at longer intervals; now we are in a state of alarm about the Silent Generation. The thing the

young are being criticized for is a lack of enthusiasm. I don't think this is fair. Just go to any pep meeting or football game on a college campus, and you will find plenty of enthusiasm. The students yell, and whistle, and sometimes even have snake dances after the game. I would say that if anything they are often too enthusiastic.

3. Read "What's Happening to Our Language?" (page 434) and summarize it in one sentence. Then summarize it in a couple of pages. What sort of thing have you been able to include in the second summary that you couldn't in the first? In the longer summary, consider your paragraphing carefully. The number of paragraphs you use will bear no necessary relation to the number in the original material but may reasonably indicate the number of main points with which the author deals.

4. Reduce other essays that you have read in this book to a single sentence—the author's "thesis," or main idea.

5. Write longer (1–2 page) summaries of

- a. other essays in this book,
- b. chapters from textbooks you are using in other courses,
- c. articles in current magazines,
- d. classroom lectures,
- e. public addresses.

UNIT 11 //////////////////////////////////////

THE OUTLINE

The summary is not the only means of setting down the main ideas found in a piece of reading matter ; neither is it, for all purposes, the best. It is the "essay in brief," and its paragraph form makes it pleasantly readable ; but the outline, which is the "essay at a glance," has the advantage of not only recording the main ideas but also indicating their relative importance. Whereas the summary is the essay in miniature, the outline is its skeleton—the framework which, properly enveloped, became the whole.

Lecture Notes

You will discover, for instance, that lecture notes taken in summary form are not the easiest from which to study for examinations. The material is there, but it must be read very attentively in order to establish the relationships between the important and the not-quite-so-important facts. Were the notes on the same lecture arranged with each new sentence or topic beginning on a new line instead of where the last left off, and with those which merely supported the preceding slightly indented beneath, the more important notes would be, literally, "outstanding," and the eye would at once detect the emphasis which they should receive in review, without waiting for the mind to determine it. Compare the usefulness of these two arrangements of the same notes :

- A. History is divided into two periods—prehistoric, before writing existed, and historic, after writing. Prehistoric, known by remaining weapons and utensils, is divided into four stages: Old Stone (rude and primitive), New Stone (more advanced), Copper-Bronze (first use of metals), and Iron. Historic age is much better known, through written records.

B. History is divided into two periods:

Prehistoric—before writing—known by weapons and utensils

Old Stone (rude and primitive)

New Stone (more advanced)

Copper-Bronze (first use of metals)

Iron

Historic—after writing—much better known, through written records

The outline is merely a conventional arrangement, with labels, of such logical indentations, more elaborate and exacting than you could work out in complete detail while listening to a lecture, it is true, but the general principles of which, as illustrated above, could be applied even in haste. Its uses are many. In taking reading notes, for instance, you will do well to weigh the advantages of the outline form against those of the summary. But the value of the outline extends beyond a discovery of the main plan underlying the work of someone else, into the even more important task of organizing your own. Every time you have planned a paper for one of the preceding expository units, you have had occasion to work out a brief outline by way of organizing your material, and you will do well to precede every piece of prolonged composition with such a plan. The longer the writing to be done (see Unit 12), the more detailed your preliminary plan should be. There are three common varieties of outline, according to form: the **paragraph**, the **topic**, and the **sentence** outline.

Paragraph Outline

The so-called "paragraph outline," the simplest to make but the least useful of the three types, is actually closer in purpose and result to the summary than to the outline. If written in paragraph form, it would read much like a summary, sharing both its advantages and its disadvantages. It is nothing but a numbered list of sentences, each of which contains the topic, or main idea, of one paragraph. Al-

though such a topic may be merely implicit in the material of the whole paragraph, it is often directly stated by the author in a "topic sentence" (usually at the beginning, but sometimes—for emphasis—at the end); thus the paragraph outline is the most quickly and easily made of the three types.

It has, however, two great weaknesses. First, it fails to take account of the differences of length and importance among the paragraphs of the original essay, giving as much attention to a brief paragraph of transition as to a long one which develops a main point. The number of paragraphs in an essay, as we have noted earlier, has no necessary relation to the number of main sections into which the thought of the essay divides. Second, the paragraph outline provides no means of indicating the relationships between ideas, such as is made instantly clear by the use of a system of heads and subheads in the topic and sentence varieties.

Topic and Sentence Outlines

- The topic and the sentence outlines share the virtues of being guided entirely by the importance of the material, without regard to the paragraphing, and of having that material arranged logically, according to various degrees of importance, through a careful system of designations and indentations. These two kinds differ only in the way the unit of thought is expressed: in the topic outline, a word or phrase suffices to indicate an item; in the sentence outline, a complete sentence is required. The former is the simpler to write, and is usually adequate for small jobs where you wish merely to be reminded of the material involved. But for complex schemes, for material which you may lay aside for some time, and above all for plans which are to be submitted to someone else, the sentence outline is far superior. The fact that each of its items must be expressed in a complete sentence not only requires that you think more thoroughly through your material, but

results in a plan which is intelligible to others as well as to yourself.

Whichever type is better for a given purpose, it is part of the logicity demanded of all outlining not to mix them; no mere words or phrases should appear as items in the sentence outline, and no sentences in the topic outline.

Technique

Regardless of whether your need indicates the topic or the sentence type, or whether it is to be a record of your reading or a plan for your writing, the secret of a successful outline lies in the logicity of your choice and arrangement of items. The process of outlining is merely an elaborate breaking-down of a whole into the main parts of which it is composed, each of these coordinate parts being further broken into their components, and so on as far as proves necessary or wise.

Designation. In the matter of form, custom has settled upon the following:

Roman numerals (I, II, etc.) for main divisions

Capital letters (A, B, etc.) for secondary points

Arabic numerals (1, 2, etc.) for the third degree

Lower-case letters (a, b, etc.) for the fourth degree

Fifth and sixth degrees, rarely needed, may be indicated by the use of Arabic numerals and lower-case letters enclosed in parentheses.

Indentation. Each subservient rank is indicated not only by a change in designation, but by a slight indentation under the preceding one, all points of the same rank being kept carefully parallel down the page. Thus the eye can aid the mind in grasping the similarities and differences of rank existing among the various points. Three to five spaces on typewritten outlines and a half inch or less on handwritten are sufficient to make the indentation easily recognizable. If you indent much farther, you may find your material running off the right side of the page before you have reached your least important subpoints.

Further to aid the outline in becoming the "essay at a glance," avoid obscuring the designations with carryovers from long lines. Compare the readability of the following:

- A. I. The Aztecs had attained a remarkable degree of civilization.
 - A. Their buildings show a considerable knowledge of architecture.
 - B. Their weapons indicate a people highly advanced in handicraft.
- B. I. The Aztecs had attained a remarkable degree of civilization.
 - A. Their buildings show a considerable knowledge of architecture.
 - B. Their weapons indicate a people highly advanced in handicraft.

Wording. Keep the wording of your points brief and simple; the outline, being a mental discipline rather than a creative effusion, is no place for rhetorical flourishes. Therefore, do not depend too heavily upon the author's phrasing, which was chosen to cover gracefully rather than to reveal nakedly the skeleton of his plan. Seek out his main ideas and present them in simple words.

THE READING OUTLINE

Numerous occasions call for the making of careful outlines of the material of others: lectures, textbook assignments, and supplementary reading may be outlined in order to record their main ideas for further reference and review, and essays may be outlined as a study in composition—as the best means of discovering (in the hope of imitating) the author's careful build-up of thought upon thought. Nothing makes for more thoroughly analytical reading than the necessity of outlining; and the working out of the outline pattern, with its careful distinction between points and subpoints, is in itself one of the best of logical disciplines.

An outline, as mentioned earlier, is a result of the intellectual process of breaking wholes into their parts, successively, according to a logical system. Faced with an article or a chapter to be outlined, you will proceed as follows:

1. **Read the entire piece through carefully** (a book will be outlined by chapters or other manageable units, rather than as a whole). When finished, reduce its central meaning to a single comprehensive sentence. This is the "main idea," or "thesis," and should always appear at the head of your outline, for it represents the "essay as a whole," which you must now proceed to break down.
2. **Decide whether there is a definite introduction or conclusion**, sufficiently long or significant to warrant mention in the outline. If there is, *name* rather than *number* them, beginning the words "Introduction" and "Conclusion" at the same margin as you do your Roman numerals for main divisions. Otherwise you may find yourself with one of those pointless "I. Introduction, II. Body, III. Conclusion" outlines which are really no outlines at all, since the important part, the body, is not yet broken down.
3. **Decide on what constitutes the main divisions of the author's thought**—the major sections into which he groups his lesser points. If you find eleven, say, or seventeen, reconsider; you are probably "failing to see the forest for the trees in the way," and are looking at small details as though they were important items. A single chapter or essay cannot manage so many main points (note the briefness and simplicity of your plans for your own writing so far)—probably, in fact, not more than a half dozen at the most. Remember that there will be at least two, however; since outlining is a process of breaking down, a one-point outline is no outline at all. What you call "I," in such a case, will

prove actually to be your main idea, which must itself be broken down into I, II, etc.

4. Test the main points you arrive at by seeing whether or not the material each indicates is comparable in importance, hence deserving of equal rank in the outline. Wherever possible, make such equality clearly evident through parallel wording.
5. Now, taking section by main section, proceed to break down each into the parts of which it in turn is composed. Thus you arrive at the secondary divisions, which you indicate by capital letters and an indented position. Remember that the introduction and conclusion constitute sections in themselves, to be outlined as thoroughly as the "I, II, III" divisions of the body of the paper.
6. Complete the outlining of each section before moving on to the next, but never start on items of the third rank until you have worked out all the second-rank items for that section, nor on the fourth until the third is completed, and so on. Otherwise, you may lose perspective and tend to give too great importance to a trifling point. Be sure that on every level your points are logically coordinate, and continue to indicate the fact not only with similar designations and indentations, but wherever possible by parallel wording as well.
7. Your outline should normally follow the order of the essay. It must always, however, proceed deductively—from the general to the particular, from the main point to the subpoints beneath it. If the author has deliberately reversed his material for emphasis—presenting it inductively, with his particulars first and his main point arrived at only through them—your outline must nonetheless present his points in the usual deductive order.
8. Omit from your outline everything in the essay that is irrelevant to a presentation of the main plan as such. Figures of speech, elaborate descriptions, repetitions

for effect—these are mere rhetorical devices used by the author to embellish his thought; your task is to reduce them to the thought they illustrate or emphasize. The advice of the college lecturer who admonished his students, “Take down the point I am trying to make, not the funny story I tell you in making it” is sound—although the story might well be mentioned in its proper subservient position.

9. **Your purpose in outlining and the details which it demands will determine how many ranks you need to use.** You may or may not trouble to divide Point 1 into the a, b, and c of which it is perhaps composed; but if you mention “a” as such, you are duty bound to enumerate all other items of the same rank.
10. **Avoid the meaningless single subpoint.** If a point is not divisible, it properly has no subpoint at all. The only logical exception occurs when, two examples having been given for “A,” for instance, and only one for “B,” the one might well be listed as “1” under “B” to show that it is parallel with the similar items under “A.”
11. **Check back over your work to be certain that it is logical in every respect.** Remember that every set of subpoints used must add up to the main point under which it appears: a, b, and c must equal 1; 1 and 2 must equal A; A and B must equal I; and I, II, III (plus the Introduction and Conclusion) must equal your original main idea.
12. **Apparent discrepancies may be the fault of your wording, not of your essential pattern.** Reword where necessary, so that your main-idea sentence actually expresses (briefly but definitely) the thought contained in the main points into which it divides, and Point I reads so as to include logically its own A, B, and C, and so on.

THE WRITING OUTLINE

The outline which you make to guide you in your own writing will be essentially the same as that which you have made of your reading; the technique and the logic involved in the two are identical. Just as your reading outline is your version of the framework upon which someone else has written his orderly composition, your writing outline is the skeleton upon which you will build your own. But here, instead of a completed essay to work on, you have only the raw materials of your project: the ideas derived from your personal experience, or reading notes consisting of facts and opinions previously set down by others. Instead of being intent upon discovering another's plan, you must determine one according to which you may present your own material (and do not put the cart before the horse by falling into the popular but ridiculous error of writing your paper first in order to make an outline from it).

The assembling, grouping, and arranging of facts involved in making a useful outline for your own writing are discussed more fully in the Preliminaries (pages 10-15).

EXAMPLES

WHAT IS THOUGHT?

John Dewey

- No words are oftener on our lips than *thinking* and *thought*. So profuse and varied, indeed, is our use of these words that it is not easy to define just what we mean by them.
- Intro. The aim of this essay is to find a single consistent meaning. Assistance may be had by considering some typical ways in which the
- A. terms are employed. In the first place *thought* is used broadly, not to say loosely. Everything that comes to mind, that "goes through our

- heads," is called a thought. To think of a thing is just to be conscious of it in any way whatsoever. Second, the term is restricted by excluding whatever is directly presented; we think (or think of) only such things as we do not directly see, hear, smell, or taste. Then,
- C. third, the meaning is further limited to beliefs that rest upon some kind of evidence or testimony. Of this third type, two kinds—or, rather, two degrees—must be discriminated.
1. In some cases, a belief is accepted with slight or almost no attempt to state the grounds that support it. In other cases, the ground or basis for a belief is deliberately sought and its adequacy to support the belief examined. The process is called reflective thought; it alone is truly educative in value. . . . We shall now briefly describe each of the four senses.
- I. I. In its loosest sense, thinking signifies everything that, as we say, is "in our heads" or that "goes through our minds." He who offers "a penny for your thoughts" does not expect to drive any great bargain. In calling the objects of his demand *thoughts*, he does not intend to ascribe to them dignity, consecutiveness, or truth. Any idle fancy, trivial recollection, or flitting impression will satisfy his demand. Daydreaming, building of castles in the air, that loose flux of casual and disconnected material that floats through our minds in relaxed moments are, in this random sense,
- A. 1. *thinking*. More of our waking life than we should care to admit, even to ourselves, is likely to be whiled away in this inconsequential trifling with idle fancy and unsubstantial hope.
2. In this sense, silly folk and dullards *think*.

The story is told of a man in slight repute for intelligence, who, desiring to be chosen select-man in his New England town, addressed a knot of neighbors in this wise: "I hear you don't believe I know enough to hold office. I wish you to understand that I am thinking about something or other most of the time."

- B.1. Now reflective thought is like this random coursing of things through the mind in that it consists of a succession of things thought of; but it is unlike, in that the mere chance occurrence of any chance "something or other" in an irregular sequence does not suffice. Reflection involves not simply a sequence of ideas, but a *consequence*—a consecutive ordering in such a way that each determines the next as its proper outcome, while each in turn leans back on its predecessors. The successive portions of the reflective thought grow out of one another and support one another; they do not come and go in a medley. Each phase is a step from something to something—technically speaking, it is a term of thought. Each term leaves a deposit which is utilized in the next term. The stream or flow becomes a train, chain, or thread.

- II. Even when thinking is used in a broad sense, it is usually restricted to matters not directly perceived: to what we do not see, smell, hear, or touch. We ask the man telling a story if he saw a certain incident happen, and his reply may be, "No, I only thought of it." A note of invention, as distinct from faithful record of observation, is present.
- A. Most important in this class are successions of imaginative incidents and episodes which, having a certain coherence, hanging together on a

continuous thread, lie between kaleidoscopic flights of fancy and considerations deliberately employed to establish a conclusion. The imaginative stories poured forth by children possess all degrees of internal congruity; some are disjointed, some are articulated.

- B. When connected, they simulate reflective thought; indeed, they usually occur in minds of logical capacity. These imaginative enterprises often precede thinking of the close-knit type and prepare the way for it. But *they do not aim at knowledge, at belief about facts or in truths*; and thereby they are marked off from reflective thought even when they most resemble it. Those who express such thoughts do not expect credence, but rather credit for a well-constructed plot or a well-arranged climax. They produce good stories, not—unless by chance—knowledge. Such thoughts are an efflorescence of feeling; the enhancement of a mood or sentiment is their aim; congruity of emotion, their binding tie.

- III. III. In its next sense, thought denotes belief resting upon some basis, that is, real or supposed knowledge going beyond what is directly present. It is marked by *acceptance or rejection of something as reasonably probable or improbable*. This phase of thought, however, includes two such distinct types of belief that, even though their difference is strictly one of degree, not of kind, it becomes practically important to consider them separately.
- A. Some beliefs are accepted when their grounds have not themselves been considered, others are accepted because their grounds have been examined.

When we say, "Men used to think the

world was flat," or, "I thought you went by the house," we express belief: something is accepted, held to, acquiesced in, or affirmed. But such thoughts may mean a supposition accepted without reference to its real grounds. These may be adequate, they may not; but their value with reference to the support they afford the belief has not been considered.

1. Such thoughts grow up unconsciously and without reference to the attainment of correct belief. They are picked up—we know not how. From obscure sources and by unnoticed channels they insinuate themselves into acceptance and become unconsciously a part of our mental furniture. Tradition, instruction, imitation—all of which depend upon authority in some form, or appeal to our own advantage, or fall in with a strong passion—are responsible for them. Such thoughts are prejudices, that is, prejudgments, not judgments proper that rest upon a survey of evidence.
- 2.

- B. IV. Thoughts that result in belief have an importance attached to them which leads to reflective thought, to conscious inquiry into the nature, conditions, and bearings of the belief. To *think* of whales and camels in the clouds is to entertain ourselves with fancies, terminable at our pleasure, which do not lead to any belief in particular. But to think of the world as flat is to ascribe a quality to a real thing as its real property. This conclusion denotes a connection among things and hence is not, like imaginative thought, plastic to our mood. Belief in the world's flatness commits him who holds it to thinking in certain specific ways of other objects, such as the heavenly
- 1.

bodies, antipodes, the possibility of navigation. It prescribes to him actions in accordance with his conception of these objects.

2. The consequences of a belief upon other beliefs and upon behavior may be so important, then, that men are forced to consider the grounds or reasons of their belief and its logical consequences. This means reflective thought—thought in its eulogistic and emphatic sense.

- a. Men *thought* the world was flat until Columbus *thought* it to be round. The earlier thought was a belief held because men had not the energy or the courage to question what those about them accepted and taught, especially as it was suggested and seemingly confirmed by obvious and sensible facts.
- b. thought of Columbus was a *reasoned conclusion*. It marked the close of study into facts, of scrutiny and revision of evidence, of working out the implications of various hypotheses, and of comparing these theoretical results with one another and with known facts. Because Columbus did not accept unhesitatingly the current traditional theory, because he doubted and inquired, he arrived at his thought. Skeptical of what, from long habit, seemed most certain, and credulous of what seemed impossible, he went on thinking until he could produce evidence for both his confidence and his disbelief. Even if his conclusion had finally turned out wrong, it would have been a different sort of belief from those it antagonized, because it was reached by a different method. *Active, persistent, and careful consideration of any belief or supposed*

Concl.

form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it, and the further conclusions to which it tends, constitutes reflective thought.

- A. Any one of the first three kinds of thought
 - B. may elicit this type; but once begun, it is a conscious and voluntary effort to establish belief upon a firm basis of reasons.
-

1. Note that the basic structure of the essay is the result of an analysis of the principal ways in which the words *thinking* and *thought* are used, but that its deeper purpose is to show the superiority of one of these ways (reflective thought); hence the use of comparison and contrast in the discussion of each of the other ways, in pointing out the likenesses and similarities between it and reflective thinking.

2. The Roman numerals at the beginning of certain paragraphs appear, like the italicized words and phrases, in the original text—devices used by the author to make his thought clearer or more emphatic. The numbers and letters in the margin, however, have been added to indicate the relationship of the essay to the outline below. Compare outline and essay, point by point, observing carefully not only what has been found worthy of inclusion, but what has been left out.

SENTENCE OUTLINE

Main Idea. Of the four uses to which the words *thinking* and *thought* are commonly put, the first three (meaning what goes through our heads, what is not present to the senses, and what is believed without examination of its grounds) may call forth the fourth, reflective thought (what is believed only after such examination), which alone is truly educative in its value.

Introduction. This chapter will describe four of the senses in which the words *thinking* and *thought* are often used, in order to discover a single consistent meaning.

- A. In one sense, everything that goes through our minds is a thought.
 - B. In another, whatever is directly presented to our senses is excluded.
 - C. In a third, consisting of two sorts, a further limitation is made to beliefs resting upon evidence.
 - 1. In one, a belief is accepted without supporting grounds.
 - 2. In the other, the ground is searched for and examined.
- I. In its loosest sense, thinking means anything that goes through our minds.
- A. Daydreaming and other such disconnected thoughts are examples of this type.
 - 1. We spend much time in such trifling.
 - 2. Even the silly and the dull think in this sense.
 - B. Reflective thought is both like and unlike this type.
 - 1. It too is a succession of things thought of.
 - 2. But the succession is a related chain, not a chance sequence.
- II. Even in a broad sense, thinking is usually limited to those things *not* present to the senses.
- A. Successions of coherent imaginative incidents are examples of this type.
 - B. Reflective thought is both like and unlike this second type also.
 - 1. It occurs in the same logical type of mind.
 - 2. But it aims at knowledge about truth, as such imaginings do not.
- III. In another sense, thinking means two types of belief resting upon a basis of real or supposed knowledge.
- A. One type is accepted even though its grounds have not been considered.
 - 1. Such thoughts are picked up from various sources.
 - 2. They are prejudices, in that they do not rest on a survey of evidence.

B. The other type, which is true reflective thought, is accepted because its grounds have been considered.

1. Such thought commits one to certain other thoughts and actions.

2. Its consequences may force men to consider the reasons for their beliefs.

a. Men's thoughts of the world as flat were accepted from tradition or appearance.

b. Columbus' thought of the world as round was a reasoned conclusion.

Conclusion: Reflective thought involves a careful consideration of the grounds which support a belief.

A. Any of the other three kinds of thought may call it forth.

B. But once called forth, it must establish belief on reasons.

1. The length of an outline will vary with its purpose, a longer one including more low-level subpoints, a shorter one fewer. In the outline above can you justify the exclusion of the story of the New England candidate in ¶3? The inclusion of that of Columbus in ¶10?

2. Do not be confused by the frequency of pairs of subpoints on various levels, in the outline above; there might as easily have been a half dozen at any point, had the material justified them.

3. Check through the subpoints to see that they are all logical under their main points. Find examples of the use of transitions and of parallel wording to make more obvious the logical connection between coordinate points.

4. Is the "Main Idea" so worded as to refer definitely to every main point?

5. Why is the first section labeled "Introduction" instead of "I"? What is the connection between the subpoints in this section and the main divisions of the outline?

6. How can you justify the division into three main sections when the author numbers four?

TOPIC OUTLINE

Introduction. Many uses of *thinking* and *thought*.

A. What goes through the mind.

B. What is not present to senses.

C. Beliefs resting on evidence.

1. Without grounds.

2. With grounds—reflective thought.

I. What goes through the mind.

A. Daydreaming, etc.

B. Reflective thought also a sequence, but related.

II. What is not present to senses.

A. Successions of imaginative incidents.

B. Reflective thought a similar mental process, but aimed at truth.

III. Beliefs resting on evidence.

A. Without grounds.

1. From various sources.

2. Prejudice, not evidence.

B. With grounds—reflective thought.

1. Commitment to other thoughts and actions.

2. Consideration of reasons for belief.

Conclusion. Reflective thought—consideration of grounds.

A. Called forth by other three kinds.

B. Established only on reasons.

1. Compare this outline with the one that precedes it, in wording and arrangement. Notice that its brevity is the result not only of more briefly worded items, but of fewer low-order subpoints, another common difference between the two types of outlines.

2. In what respects is the topic outline superior to the sentence outline? For what purposes might it be used?

PARAGRAPH OUTLINE

1. This chapter aims to find a single consistent meaning for the words *thinking* and *thought* by examining the four senses in which they are typically used, of which

only the last, reflective thought, has truly educative value.

2. In its loosest sense, thinking means every random impression that goes through our minds.
3. In reflective thought, there is a similar succession of things through the mind, but in a consecutive rather than a chance order.
4. Even in a broad sense, thinking usually means things imagined rather than observed; such thinking, when connected, is similar to reflective thought, but the latter differs from it in aiming at belief about facts.
5. In a third sense, thought means belief resting upon some basis, and is of two types: that which is accepted without a consideration of its grounds, and that which is accepted because the grounds have been examined.
6. Some thoughts are accepted as beliefs without a consideration of whether or not their grounds are adequate.
7. These thoughts are prejudices, having been accepted from others without examination.
8. Reflective thought involves a conscious inquiry into the reasons for belief, and an acceptance of the consequences.
9. The consequence of one belief on others may be so important that men are forced to consider its grounds, thus thinking reflectively.
10. Any of the first three kinds of thought may call forth reflective thought; but once started, it is a conscious effort to base belief upon reasons.

1. Compare the paragraph outline above to a summary of comparable length which might be made of the same essay. What are its advantages and disadvantages?

2. Compare it to the sentence outline of the same material. Has it any advantages? What are its disadvantages?

3. What relatively unimportant paragraphs in the essay are

placed on an equal footing with the rest here? What important paragraphs receive the same treatment?

4. In what paragraphs was a summary sentence practically ready-made? Where was it located?

ASSIGNMENT

1. Before you start work on outlining the ideas in an essay, test your knowledge of numbering and arrangement and your sense of logical relationships by putting into proper topical outline form the items in the following unorganized list. Use as many main points and as many degrees of subordination as the material seems to you to require.

caves	meat	sandals	chicken
clothing	tents	Irish potatoes	fruit
sausage	vegetables	pork	fedoras
potatoes	lemons	derbies	shelter
food	suits	oranges	hats
cabins	cottages	hamburger	beans
apples	lima beans	sweet potatoes	houses
sauerkraut	cole slaw	slippers	corn
pineapple	bacon	grapefruit	beef
caps	bungalows	tams	headgear
footwear	navy beans	T-bone steaks	cabbage

a. Under what "main idea" might these logically appear?

b. Can you justify the arrangement of your groups, as well as your groupings? Explain what principles of arrangement you have used. (The groupings are inherent in the material, but the arrangements will depend somewhat on your attitude toward it.)

2. Choose a magazine article, a book chapter, or an essay from one of these units (as you did for the summary in the preceding unit), and make the three types of outlines from it. The paragraph outline may prove useful to you in taking reading notes, because of the ease with which it can be made. Remember that it is nothing more than a one-sentence summary of each paragraph, and that such a summary frequently exists in almost the very form you wish, in the author's topic sentence.

Making the true outline, with its distinction between ranks of importance, is a more painstaking job. The mental process behind the topic and the sentence types is essentially the same, and the number and arrangement of divisions and subdivisions will probably be identical, although the sentence outline often inclines to fuller detail.

When you have completed the sentence outline, check your work carefully with the directions given earlier in this unit, making sure that it is satisfactory as to both the mechanics and the logic of the arrangement.

3. Utilize the essentials of outlining technique at every opportunity—in taking lecture and reading notes, and in planning your own compositions for this course and others. Good essays for practice are:

- a. "Evolution of a Universe" (page 457),
- b. "The Present Hysteria" (page 71),
- c. "Reading and Understanding" (page 441),
- d. "What's Happening to Our Language?" (page 434),
- e. "Grand-Prize Jingles" (page 378).

UNIT 12 **////////////////////**

THE RESEARCH PAPER

In the creative writing problems discussed so far, the importance of relying upon the materials of your own first-hand experience has been stressed. The research paper, quite the contrary, is the result of extensive study of the work of others. Here your material lies not in your memory of the past, nor in your personal impressions of the world about you, but primarily in the articles and books which have been written by others. Your object is to survey the available literature on a given subject, and to synthesize the results of your research into a purposeful whole.

Such is the type of paper prepared by research workers in many fields. New discoveries in science, for instance, do not often just "happen," nor are they likely any longer to be the result solely of one worker's genius. Rather, they are the culmination of a long tradition to which many have contributed. The scientist, in preparing his report of new discoveries, must survey and evaluate the work of his predecessors, and show where he has torn it down or built upon it.

Of more immediate concern, though on a humbler level, is the fact that the research paper is the type required in college not only for advanced degrees but in the many courses which demand one or more "term papers," or reports, on related subjects. Such also is the type that you may have to prepare later as your contribution to the program of some club group interested in keeping its members well informed in one field or another. Your opinions on many issues will be of value to others only as they synthesize the numerous conclusions already published.

Such a synthesis is not to be confused with the summary, which is a mere objective digest of a given body of material. The research paper, on the contrary, is an orig-

inal work, differing from other creative writing only in the sources from which it is drawn and the technique which has been developed by scholars for the convenient handling of such materials. It is an arduous and exacting piece of work which cannot, like some assignments, be "dashed off" in a moment of inspiration. Its preparation involves long hours of searching for, selecting, and using source materials, and its completion requires great care in the conventions which surround their handling. Like many another difficult accomplishment, however, it carries its own peculiar rewards.

The actual procedure for the research paper divides itself logically into five major consecutive steps: choosing a subject, building a bibliography, reading and note taking, organizing, and writing and documenting.

1. CHOOSING A SUBJECT

Enjoyment

Since the problem of the research paper is, compared to any other assignment in this course, a long-drawn-out affair with which you will live and work for several weeks, it is particularly important that you choose (if you are allowed a choice) a subject which will give you both pleasure and profit. It will probably be one with which you are already somewhat familiar, and about which you find yourself sufficiently curious to desire additional information. As a city dweller, you may have become interested in some social problem, such as juvenile delinquency or industrial diseases; as a farmer, in problems of soil erosion or farm tenancy. As an amateur in dramatics, you may wish to know more of the little-theater movement; in aviation, of the history of man's long desire to fly. Your travels may have taken you to Boulder Dam or to the Panama Canal, and you would enjoy a study of the problems which had to be met in their construction. Or some college course, by a casual reference to Esperanto or surrealism, may

have given you just a glimpse down an avenue which you would like to explore more thoroughly.

Your choice will depend, however, upon a number of factors in addition to your own preference; one is the reading public for which your paper is intended. In years to come you may, as a serious research worker in your field, be surveying the result of others' work for the benefit of fellow specialists. For the time being, however, it would be presumptuous of you to write on penicillin for the chemist, or the Underground Railroad for the historian. Your logical present purpose is to stand as interpreter between the specialist, of whose field you will make as thorough a study as you can, and the uninformed general public, for whom you can thus perform a real service. Assuming, for instance, that you are capable of a complete understanding of Einstein's theory of relativity, there remains the problem of whether or not you could write of that subject simply enough for the information and enjoyment of the average man. Choose a subject which can become intelligible not only to you, but also to the general reader—if for no other reason than that only on such a paper, probably, will your instructor be qualified to judge you fairly.

Limitation

Involved in the choice of a subject for research is its limitation. At no time is it more necessary to remember the advisability of writing fully on a small subject, in preference to sketching briefly the mere outlines of a large one. All the laws of vividness and emphasis insist that you narrow your choice to a single phase of the omnibus topic you may conceivably have chosen. "Aviation" has become an encyclopedic subject; but fascinating research papers of one to two thousand words (a common length requirement) might well be produced on its early history, the use of plastics in airplane manufacture, the effects of altitude on pilots, and so forth.

Availability of Material

Before settling upon a choice, make sure that there is available for your use an adequate amount of printed material on your subject. A full-fledged research worker will overcome any such handicap by interlibrary loans or by studying at various centers of learning; but you will do well, for this practice paper, to limit yourself to a subject on which your own college library is well supplied with material available to the undergraduate. The subject of American attitudes toward international issues as revealed in the cartoons of the daily press of a given period might well prove a fascinating choice, but futile if your library's policy denies undergraduates access to the bound volumes of its fragile newspapers.

2. BUILDING A BIBLIOGRAPHY

In checking on the availability of material on your chosen subject, you have already begun on the second step of the research task—the collection of a list of published materials on your subject which is known as a bibliography. Accompanying your completed paper, in acknowledgment of the sources from which you have gathered its basic content, will be a *final* bibliography—a list of materials on which you have actually drawn in preparing the completed paper. In beginning your work, however, you will draw up a much longer list—a *working* bibliography, from which you will later select the items that prove of actual use in your paper.

Reference Guides

A bibliography is literally a list of books, but the materials available for your use may very likely include (depending on your choice of subject) newspapers, popular magazines, specialized journals, and all sorts of bulletins and pamphlets as well. Your first task will be to become familiar with the many devices available in the modern

library to aid you in locating printed materials on any subject. You will first look not for the materials themselves, then, but at the various indexes from which you may discover what sources exist.

The **card catalogue** is chief among these—tiers of drawers in which are filed, alphabetically, cards identifying the library's many books. There will be a number of cards on file for a single book, for you may locate it not only by title and by author, but through any one of a number of subject cards covering the chief topics with which it deals. Hence, under "Wilson, Woodrow," for instance, you will find cards referring you not only to books by Wilson, but to books about him.

Books, however, may constitute only a small part of your source materials. Your subject may be a small one which never attained book stature, or some recent scientific discovery on which books have not yet been published; or, even though you have found books on it, you may wish to supplement them with other materials from the periodical presses. In locating such materials, you have at your disposal a number of invaluable guides.

The **Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature** is the foremost index of the sort. Issued monthly in magazine form, it is later cumulated into volumes covering one, and ultimately several, years. In it, under author and subject headings, you will find indexed the contents of the principal American periodicals (and a few English) since 1900.

Poole's Index indexes English and American periodical literature of an earlier period, from 1802 to 1906.

The **International Index** indexes a selected list of the periodicals of the world.

Besides these general indexes, there are numerous others specializing in particular fields—agriculture, engineering, education, psychology, art, industrial art, dentistry, medicine, law—some of them listing books and bulletins as well as articles in periodicals.

The *New York Times Index* is published annually, and through it you can discover the exact location of material in the files of one of the nation's great metropolitan dailies, the *New York Times*. Since most significant news is handled on the same day by all the principal papers of the country, this index is also helpful in using other newspaper files.

Whatever index you consult, familiarize yourself with its scope and its system of symbols, for each has its own plan and method. Intelligently used, they combine to put quickly at your disposal materials which would otherwise lie undiscoverable on the miles of shelves in the stacks of the large library. Mention should be made here of the most useful reference tool of all—the reference librarian. Especially trained in the use of reference materials, she can help you locate all manner of materials. But do not impose on her good nature; in this practice work particularly, proceed as independently as you can. The ability to find your way around a library (and you will find libraries conveniently similar all over the country) will be an asset to you for the rest of your life.

It is well to remember that a college library is often dispersed about the campus—that in addition to the large general library, there may be departmental collections, such as chemistry or agriculture, located conveniently in the buildings that house those departments. Such materials are usually indexed in the card catalogue at the main library building, with special notations as to their location.

Bibliography Card

Before starting to build a working bibliography of your subject, equip yourself with a package of ruled cards (or a pad of paper, if you prefer) of a convenient size. Satisfactory to most is 3×5 , although some who write a large hand prefer 4×6 . As you discover likely items, do not yield to the temptation of merely jotting down a list

of possible sources in your notebook, but *record each item on a separate card*. Later on, when you are sorting, eliminating, and alphabetizing these items, the time-saving convenience of the card system will be only too apparent.

If the subject you have chosen is one on which books are available, the card catalogue is the logical place to begin. You may find yourself overwhelmed with a drawerful of books on your subject, obviously more than you can afford even to look at. In that event the process of selection, which is so important in the research procedure, must begin at once. Titles may indicate whether the book is likely to deal with your particular phase of the subject; if you already know something of the field, you may be able to choose the significant authors from the many who have written on the subject; the publication date may indicate whether or not the book will serve your purpose; the brief mention of contents occasionally appearing on the index card may help you. When in doubt, fill out a card; it is much easier to discard items later than to back-track in quest of neglected material. A large working bibliography is good assurance that such items as will survive to form the final bibliography will be well chosen.

When you discover a likely-looking item, fill out a bibliography card for it, being sure to include all the information that you may later need, for the secret of economical research technique is the avoidance of all unnecessary backtracking. You will need the full name of the author (last name first, always, for convenience in alphabetizing); the title (underscored, always, to indicate that it is a book); and the library call number from the upper left corner of the catalogue card for your later convenience in ordering the book brought from the stacks. In addition you must take down the place of publication, the name of the publisher, and the date of publication, as well as any special information as to volumes, edition, etc., which appears on the card; all of this will be required for your

final bibliography, which must include complete information as to the exact sources used. Your completed card will look like this:

Copland, Aaron	780.9
	C79
<u>Our New Music</u>	
New York, McGraw Hill Co., 1941.	

Moving on to the guides to periodicals, you will again find the need to exercise discrimination in choosing the apparently important out of the many. Since you will encounter your references in volumes collected by date, you need look only at those whose period gives promise of usefulness. Again, you may be helped in your selection of promising items by author, title, and the type of magazine in which the article occurs; again, be generous: do not encumber yourself with items obviously worthless, but take down any and all that look promising; and again, *use a separate card for each item.*

The information needed for articles will differ somewhat from that required for books. List the author as before (leave blank the line where the author's name would regularly go, if the article is anonymous, for it will then be alphabetized by title instead); the title (in quotation marks to indicate that it is only part of a larger whole); the title of the magazine (this gets the under-scoring); the volume number and date of the copy that contains this article; and the pages that it occupies. Your completed card will look like this:

Embree, Edwin R.

"Balance Sheet in Race Relations"

Atlantic Monthly, vol. 175 (May, 1945), pp. 87-
91.

The presence of a card in the card catalogue is proof that the volume to which it refers is contained in the library in which you are working; not every library, however, will possess all the periodicals indexed by the guides you have consulted. Your next step is to consult the magazine file to discover which of the periodicals to which you have taken references are available. Jot down the call number for those that are available, as you did on your book cards, for convenience in getting the bound volume from the stacks; then discard all cards for those that aren't.

Primary and Secondary Materials

You cannot be expected to read every word on your chosen subject, either in books or in magazines; and one important principle of selection depends on whether the material in question is first or second hand. If you perform a laboratory experiment and write up the results, your material is of course strictly first hand, or primary. If you merely read what others have written about such experiments, it is secondary. Most of the materials with which you deal in this practice piece of library research will be secondary, but that fact does not mean that primary material is not to be preferred, whenever available. A book is primary material for a book review; what the

critics have already said about it is, for the purpose, secondary. If you are preparing an account of Thomas Jefferson's views on democracy, the conventional history of his life and times will be secondary, as you will be dealing with someone else's conclusions. On the other hand, an edition of his letters, his speeches, his state papers, will be primary—and just so much more valuable because your access to the material is direct, uncolored by another's opinion of his opinions. Similarly, the original version of a magazine article is to be preferred to a condensation appearing later in a magazine digest, where editorial excision has operated upon the material as the author originally prepared it.

3. READING AND NOTE TAKING

You are now equipped with a sizable pack of references to the most promising materials available on your subject, and are ready to proceed to the actual reading and note taking, two processes so closely allied as to form a single step in the research procedure.

Someone has described the gathering of material for the research paper as a process of "judicious fishing"; there is certainly much trial and error involved, and one must reconcile himself to taking wrong steps as well as right ones, to looking over useless material as well as useful, and to generally "wasting time." This is only the kind of "waste," however, which is inevitably present in looking for something, be it a mislaid object or a bit of undiscovered information, and it combines with the annoyance of false moves something of the exhilaration of the treasure hunt. A knowledge of the theory of research technique, plus an intelligent maintenance of perspective, will help to eliminate unnecessary waste and to speed a successful conclusion. But the finished paper, it must be remembered, is a monument to much discarded material as well as to that which proved worthy of inclusion.

Where to Begin

It is always best to start with the most general sources, in order to see your phase of the subject in its proper relationship to the whole, from the start. Chief among the general reference works to which you may well turn before settling down to reading books or articles on specific and limited phases of the subject are the encyclopedias (not only the familiar *Britannica*, *Americana*, and *New International*, but others specializing in a single field such as religion, education, or sociology); collections of brief biographies (*Who's Who* and the *Dictionary of National Biography* for Englishmen, living and dead, and *Who's Who in America* and the *Dictionary of American Biography* for Americans); collections of facts and statistics such as the *World Almanac* and other yearbooks; and atlases. Spend some time browsing in the reference room of the library, acquainting yourself with the many works of reference at your disposal.

How to Read

So much of your reading in school and college has been the word-by-word digestion of the content of textbooks that you may need to be reminded of other ways of approaching printed matter which will take you more rapidly through the great masses of material with which you are now faced. First, learn to use that most neglected part of every book, the preface. From it you can often determine whether or not the book is likely to include anything for your purpose. The table of contents is even more useful; a glance at chapter headings may save you from the necessity of going further, or direct you quickly to the one small section, perhaps, which will be useful. Next, learn to "skim"—to glance rapidly through material in search of the significant. By these means, eliminate from consideration as rapidly as you can those items which once looked promising enough to get into

your bibliography but which now prove unsuitable. Then you can settle down to a thorough reading of what you have found to be really worth while.

How to Take Notes

As you read, you must of course take notes; do not depend on your ability to "keep in your head" the materials needed for such a project. Research technique requires that you keep not only careful notes of the content of the materials you will later incorporate into your own paper, but also an accurate account of their sources.

Good note taking will put you far along on the next step in the process, organization. By the time you have acquainted yourself with the general backgrounds of your subject, and before you have gone far in the detailed reading, you will begin to get a notion of the general pattern into which your handling of the subject will likely fall—of the topics which will constitute the phases of your approach. These topics should become the titles for your notes, and the recording under such headings of the more important facts and opinions that you run across is the surest way to keep this step of the research process from resulting in a hopeless mass of unclassified data.

Your reading notes, like your bibliographical items, should be taken on cards (pads of paper, being cheaper and less space-taking, may be preferred, especially for a large job, but they do not handle so easily). Convenient sizes are 4×6 and 5×8 (the 3×5 size convenient for bibliographical items is hardly large enough for reading notes, and larger than 5×8 is likely to be unnecessarily wasteful). Choose the size you prefer and stick to it; the important thing is that your notes be uniform, for convenience in handling.

As with the bibliographical items, *take only one reading note on a card*. You will be tempted to go ahead and fill up a page with successive notes taken from a given work; if you do, you will find when you come to write

your paper that you have a hodgepodge of information which must be read through time after time in search of pertinent items. Your paper is to be no mere series of digests, but a composite of information taken from many sources and handled according to a purpose and pattern of your own. The practice of limiting each note card to a single titled topic taken from a single reference will provide you, when your reading is completed, with a mass of notes in which all like material, however varied the sources, appears under a common title heading, easy to assemble and possible to discard without interfering with the rest. The flexibility of such notes makes the next step, the task of organizing, relatively simple.

You will need to take two kinds of note, the **summary** and the **direct quotation**. The former you will take most often, jotting down in your own words (as briefly as possible without loss of meaning) the gist of the material you are reading. But there will be times, when you come to write your paper, that you will wish to present a writer's idea just as he expressed it; for this purpose you will need to record his exact words (in quotation marks, always, to indicate that you have done so). While you will perhaps need relatively few such quotations, it is well to remember as you take your notes that the direct quotation can be easily summarized when you write your paper, but to expand a summary into a direct quotation, should the need arise, will require a time-wasting trip back to the original source.

In addition to the classifying title and the note itself, your note card must show clearly the *exact source* of the borrowed material. Your finished work will be required to show not only the book or article the idea came from, but the exact page. After every note is taken, then, jot down the page number or numbers on which the information originally appeared. In the upper right corner of your note card, indicate the source of the material. The time required to write down the author and title of the work

for that purpose can easily be cut by giving each of your bibliography cards an arbitrary number or letter, and thereafter identifying each note by merely placing that symbol on the note card. A completed note will look like this:

Organization	17
Entire set-up divided into four identical units, each with own staff, living quarters, dining hall, and recreational facilities. Little communication among the four. "The social and psychological advantages of the smaller group have been proven time and time again."	
p. 23	

(The "17" in the upper right corner is the number assigned to the bibliographical item from which this note is taken—a time-saving substitute for the author and title which must otherwise appear.)

Just how to combine the tasks of reading and taking notes can best be determined by actual experience. The practice of taking notes as you read is likely to result in overfull or repetitive notations; better to read an entire article or chapter, to give yourself the proper perspective for efficient note taking. On the other hand, to read an entire book without taking any notes is likely to result in a good deal of uneconomical rereading.

Do not hesitate to add to your bibliography as you read. You may get on the track of some of your best material through references to other sources found in your reading, and through the useful bibliographies which are often appended. Your working bibliography should remain a fluid collection, subject to constant addition and subtraction as the work goes on.

4. ORGANIZING

A summary, as we have seen, is a mere digest of a given piece of writing—an entirely objective condensation of the material. The writer, having read an opinionated article, has no task but to condense that opinion. The research paper is similarly dependent upon others for material, but its author, having run into numerous opinions, will find himself obliged to weigh them and to determine their relative importance. Thus the research paper becomes, as mentioned earlier, an essentially creative work (as a house may be made of old lumber yet be a new house), and its organization involves not only a consideration of the material you have collected but also the determination of what you wish to accomplish with it.

If it is concerned with a highly factual subject, such as the history of penicillin, the need for creative judgment is reduced to a minimum, although even here the author must determine what is, for his purpose, the relative importance of the facts. If it is a much-debated subject like socialized medicine, he is quite likely, in weighing diverse opinions, to arrive at and express some of his own. Whatever the subject of your research paper, you will be faced with the task of making the material your own, of reshaping it to form the truest picture of your subject as you now see it, and to contribute most to the pleasure and profit of your reader. Thus the organization of your material will depend partly upon its nature, with the usual logical patterns of thought operating upon it (origins will reasonably come first, causes precede effects, and so on), but partly upon the handling which you, as author, determine to be most effective for your purpose.

As you read and took notes, your plan no doubt began to take form, and your final organization may involve little more than settling the details of that tentative scheme. Grouping and arranging your material is merely a matter of following the principles laid down in the Preliminaries

(see pages 10–15), which you have already put into practice many times on a smaller scale. Now, instead of a few ideas in your head, you have a wealth of them on paper; but if your notes have been carefully taken on separate cards and thoughtfully titled, organization is a fairly simple matter of shuffling them into the order of your predetermined pattern.

The greater length of the research paper demands that particular attention be paid, as you plan, to the introduction, which may here be justifiably a matter of several paragraphs. It may well lie outside the scope of your notes themselves, being concerned with your reason for choosing the subject, with a discussion of its significance, with a view of the whole of which it is a part—anything calculated to introduce the material appropriately and with a maximum of reader interest. The conclusion similarly deserves special thought, and may transcend mere summarizing by evaluating the subject or suggesting its future.

Your entire plan should be worked out into a complete sentence outline (see Unit 11) before you begin the final step, the writing. Not only will the effort of making such a detailed plan help to clarify your pattern in your own mind and to iron out any illogicalities or misplaced emphases, but the result will be something which will be intelligible to your instructor, who will probably wish to check your work at this point.

5. WRITING AND DOCUMENTING

The problems of writing the research paper are first of all those of all writing—accuracy, clarity, and interest. But in addition there are special problems arising from the handling of borrowed materials which require special techniques.¹

¹ Most large research centers issue a special manual of style to which their workers must adhere, since there is not yet complete agreement in scholarly circles on the details of these techniques. The differences are minor, however, compared to the common

Footnotes

The footnote is merely a device by which information which should accompany the text but which is too cumbersome to be given a place in it can appear inconspicuously at the bottom of the page. Footnotes are of two principal sorts—those that indicate the source from which the text material has been taken, and those that supply information in addition to it.

The Source Note. One of your principal problems will be that of giving credit for the materials you use. The student beginning work on a research project sometimes fears that his paper must necessarily involve a footnote for every sentence; actually, much of the material—your own handling of it and any ideas on the subject which you have found to be generally held—is your own. Credit must be given, however, not only for all words directly quoted, but for all facts or opinions which you have found to be the peculiar property of one author, even though you present them in your own words.

All such credit could be included in the body of the paper, but it is generally removed to the bottom of the page to make the text more readable. Compare the following:

- A. Once the war had begun, it became generally popular, and, as Bernard DeVoto remarks on page 203 of *The Year of Decision*, "The Whigs had the bitter knowledge that most wars increase the power of the party that fights them."
- B. Once the war had begun, it became generally popular, and "The Whigs had the bitter knowledge that most wars increase the power of the party that fights them."⁸

8. Bernard DeVoto, *The Year of Decision*, p. 203.

agreement on the larger issues, and the directions which follow represent a simple and satisfactory procedure for the beginning writer. Consistency in matters of arrangement and punctuation is important as an indication of care in the preparation of the finished paper.

- No item of this source information that is included in the text need be repeated in the footnote. If the quotation above was introduced by "As Bernard DeVoto says," only the title and page number need appear; if by "As Bernard DeVoto says in *The Year of Decision*," only the page number.

Credit to a source must logically include all information necessary for the location of the original material by an interested reader: for a book—author, title, page, place of publication, publisher, and date; for an article—author, title, page, magazine, volume, date. Since, however, your paper will be accompanied by a bibliography including all publication information, only the author, title, and page need appear in the footnote.

Footnotes are numbered sometimes anew from "1" on each page, but more often consecutively throughout the chapter of a book or the entire length of a paper such as you will write. The number in the text should always be placed at the end of the material (paragraph, sentence, phrase, or word) for which you must give credit, and should be raised half a space to keep it from being read as part of the text (such raising is unnecessary in the footnote itself, where a period separates the number from the material). The author's name should be written in normal order (the last name alone is sufficient after each first entry), the titles of books should be underlined and of articles put into quotation marks, the items should be separated from one another by commas, and the note terminated by a period. Footnotes more than one line long should be continued under the first word so that the numbers, as in an outline, stand out (see examples below).

Certain standard abbreviations are commonly used :

p.—page ; pp.—pages
ff.—following pages
v. or vol.—volume
vols.—volumes

ibid.—in the same place
op. cit.—in the work cited
loc. cit.—in the place cited
et al.—and others

All should be capitalized if they begin footnotes ; all (save *et*,

which isn't an abbreviation) should be followed by periods, and the last four, being Latin, should be underscored. *Ibid.* is used for consecutive footnotes referring to the same source, to avoid repeating author and title; it need be accompanied by only a page number. *Op. cit.* is used instead of the title if the work has been mentioned in an earlier but not immediately preceding note; it must therefore be accompanied by the author's name as well as the page number. *Loc. cit.* may replace either *ibid.* or *op. cit.* if the second reference is to the same page as the previous one. *Et al.* replaces all but the first author's name, in case of multiple authorship.

- Examples:*
1. Frederick Lewis Allen, *Only Yesterday*, p. 161.
 2. *Ibid.*, pp. 286 ff.
 3. James William Fulbright, "The Price of Peace Is the Loss of Prejudices," p. 80.
 4. Allen, *op. cit.*, pp. 20-25.
 5. *Ibid.*, p. 125.
 6. *Loc. cit.*
 7. Oscar James Campbell *et al.*, *Patterns for Living*, vol. II, p. 1044.
 8. Fulbright, *loc. cit.*

The Information Note. Footnotes are also used to add information which the writer wishes to accompany the text but which is not important enough to appear in it. Such information may be an explanation of a term which might not be clear to all readers; an additional example or quotation which is of interest but not essential to the text; a reference to a related work; the author's own opinion of a passage; or a humorous anecdote or flippant reflection suggested by the text but not appropriate to the mood of the paper itself.

In preparing manuscripts for publication, each item of footnote information is usually placed between a pair of parallel lines immediately after the line in which the reference appears, for the convenience of the printer; in books, such notes are often grouped together at the end

of each chapter to avoid the rather formidable appearance they give to the text. In either case they are no longer "footnotes," strictly speaking, although they serve the same purpose. Your research paper can be most conveniently read if you put them in the conventional position, at the bottom of each page. In making your final draft, be careful to allow enough space for them. In order to avoid the danger of their being read as part of the text itself, draw a partial line in from the left margin, between the last line of text and the first footnote.

Bibliography

The other piece of paraphernalia which distinguishes the research paper from the ordinary essay is the bibliography, which should appear at the end. This is a list of the materials you made use of—not all that appeared in your original working bibliography, many of which you found useless, but all that actually contributed to your work, whether or not you found occasion to mention them in footnotes.

These bibliographical items, which will be taken from your bibliography cards, should contain all the information necessary to identifying the exact works you have consulted—not only author, title, place of publication, publisher, and date, but volume number, edition, and any other special information necessary to a complete description. They should be arranged alphabetically by author, last name first (names in joint authorships are alphabetized by the first author, and the names of others are not reversed). Any anonymous items should be alphabetized within the same list by title (omitting "a," "an," and "the" from consideration). If several works appear by the same author, they must of course be alphabetized among themselves by title; and a bar may be drawn to replace the author's name after the first item. Any lines after the first should be indented half an inch or so, to make the alphabetized words stand out sharply. Common punctua-

tion practice makes two units of most items, one for the author and title, another for the facts of publication, the items in each being set off by commas and closed with periods. Any information as to volume or edition follows. Titles of books and magazines are as usual underscored, and those of articles put into quotation marks.

- Example:* Allen, Frederick Lewis, *Only Yesterday*. New York, Harper & Brothers, 1931.
- Campbell, Oscar James, Justine Van Gundy, and Caroline Shrodes, *Patterns for Living*. New York, The Macmillan Company, 1939. 2 vols.
- "Chance." *Time*, vol. 46 (July 2, 1945), p. 36.
- Chase, Richard V., "Finnegans Wake: An Anthropological Study." *The American Scholar*, vol. 13 (Autumn, 1944), pp. 418-426.
- Chase, Stuart, *The Road We Are Travelling*. New York, The Twentieth Century Fund, 1942.
- , *Technocracy*. New York, The John Day Company, 1931.
- Curl, Mervin James, *Expository Writing*. Boston, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1931. Revised ed.

A long bibliography is often divided for convenience into two separately alphabetized lists, one of books and one of articles.

EXAMPLE

BEYOND THE BLUE HORIZON

Dorothy Sherrard

For many years, the children of America have been at loose ends during most of the summer. When the school doors are thrown wide in June, thousands of students are left without constructive interests, wholesome recreation, or opportunities for summer learning. In countless ways

the American Youth Hostel movement is attempting to fill up this summer gap, and at the same time to develop better qualities in young people. Hosteling has been defined thus: "A 'back to nature' recreation movement of middle class intellectual youth of high school and college age."¹ The traits that the hostel association is attempting to promote sound impressive: independence, self-reliance, cooperation, and knowledge of the history, beauty, industry, and the resources of our country.² To the boys and girls themselves, the reasons for hosteling are more simple. They say, "It's sociable." They like hosteling because it gives them a chance to meet people, and "to learn other customs and languages."³

The youth hostel movement itself began in Europe in 1910. A German school teacher, Richard Schirrman, was in the habit of taking his pupils for long hikes in connection with the nature, sociology, and geography classes. Always, however, they faced the same difficulty: arranging for a place to stay all night. Seeing that other teachers were similarly handicapped, Schirrman opened the attic of his schoolhouse to overnight hikers. Soon this humble stopping place became so popular that he converted an ancient family castle into a permanent hostel, and thus the movement was born. The European hostellers, or *Wandervogel*,⁴ as they are called, soon hiked over all of Europe, and in their wake left a chain of more than four thousand hostel links in nineteen European countries.⁵ The most prominent hosteling countries before the war were Czechoslovakia,

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1. John and Mavis Biesanz, "Social Distance in the Youth Hostel Movement," *Sociology and Social Research*, 25 (January, 1941), 237.
 2. G. D. Shultz, "A-Hosteling We Go!" *Better Homes and Gardens*, 18 (June, 1940), 88.
 3. Biesanz, *op. cit.*, p. 240.
 4. *Wandervogel*—birds of passage. G. G. Telfer, "Youth Follows New Trails," *Parents Magazine*, 10 (July, 1935), 65.
 5. "Hosteling Boom," *Newsweek*, 14 (November 6, 1939), 33.

Holland, Denmark, the Scandanavian countries, France, Belgium, and of course Germany.⁶

The movement was first introduced into America by Mr. and Mrs. Monroe Smith, a young couple attending school in Philadelphia. Smith and his wife Isabel were commissioned in 1933 by Columbia University to lead a group of high school pupils through Europe. The trip was a success; and from seeing the great service that the hostels in Europe were doing, the Smiths began to consider the idea for America. That same winter they were invited to attend the Second International Conference of Youth Hostels, and at that meeting they were appointed to initiate the movement in the United States. In 1934 the Smiths again conducted thirty-five wide-eyed American youngsters on an international tour. These hostellers joined Danish, Scottish, German, Swiss, Norwegian, and Swedish young people on the road, and lived, worked, and played with them on hostel trails. In October of that same year, at the Third International Youth Hostel Conference, in London, the United States officially joined as the eighteenth member of the group.⁷

The first American youth hostel, the Richard Schirrmann International Youth Hostel, was established in Northfield, Massachusetts, by Monroe and Isabel Smith. It opened at Christmas time, 1934, when two hundred and fifty boys and girls spent the holidays tobogganing, skating, skiing, and snow-shoeing. In the next two months four hundred guests passed through; by spring, a chain of twenty-five hostels had extended out through the White Mountains and back through the Green Mountains. The youth hostel movement was well on the way.⁸

In order to get a clear picture of the American Youth Hostel movement, let us start by seeing how one joins it.

6. T. D. Young, "To See What's over the Hill," *Rotarian*, 48 (April, 1936), 11-12.

7. Telfer, *op. cit.*, pp. 25 ff.

8. *Ibid.*

The first step to take is to contact the national headquarters at Northfield. The office, managed by the Smiths, is staffed by twenty-nine young people, most of whom are planning to make a career of social service.⁹ From this office, a prospective traveler will get his American Youth Hostel pass, costing a dollar and a half for young people, two dollars and a half for adults. With this pass comes the AYH handbook, the *Knapsack*, with complete traveling instructions and lists of equipment requirements. Also included in this manual is a complete list of tours.¹⁰ A hosteler has the whole of the Americas at his feet: the beautiful Rhododendron Valley of West Virginia, the North Carolina Smoky Mountains, the entire Lake Michigan region, the Ozarks of Missouri, the Puget Sound region, the Berkshires, the kettle moraine of Wisconsin, Colorado. Or one can choose Chile, Alaska, Nova Scotia, Quebec, Bolivia, the Gaspé.¹¹ What better way could there be to further Pan-American relations than by threading the countries together with miles of hostel trails?

The only law for hosteling is this: "Travel under your own steam."¹² By disobeying this rule, a traveler defeats the purpose of hosteling and spoils its enjoyment for himself and others. In all phases of hosteling the idea of fun is emphasized: have fun yourself and make it fun for others. This idea is exemplified in the unwritten code which says that a hostel must be left neater than it was found.

The hostels, or overnight "hotels," are generally much alike. They are each in charge of a house-mother, who with the group leaders holds the responsibility for government and discipline. The rules are few and simple. No smoking is allowed, because of both the fire hazard and of "wind shortage." Drinking is banned. Lights must be out by

9. D. H. John, "Hosteling with Young America," *Christian Science Monitor*, June 1, 1940, p. 4.

10. Dickey Meyer, "Youth Hostels, U. S. A.," *Seventeen*, May, 1947, p. 96.

11. John, *loc. cit.*

12. "Hosteling Boom," *loc. cit.*

10 P.M., and campers are expected to be on the road by 9 A.M. Each guest helps care for the hostel and aids in the preparation of meals. In return, the hostels provide shelters about fifteen miles apart all along the trails. A hostel usually consists of sleeping quarters for boys and for girls, separate sanitary facilities, recreation rooms, kitchens, and dining rooms.¹³ Operated on a strictly local basis, each is sponsored by a committee of ministers, teachers, professional men, and representatives of civic organizations in the community. This committee selects the hostel parents.¹⁴

For the travelers, the procedure of entering a hostel is simple. Usually the hostel parents are notified in advance, either by postal card or by a telephone call from a noon stop-over. When the guests arrive, they register, pay a twenty-five or thirty-cent fuel fee, and surrender their passes. The house-parents keep these passes until the next morning, when the travelers start out again. In this way any hosteler may be suspended from membership because of ill-conduct merely by the retention of the pass. There is no better insurance of good behavior than the threat of suspension. Another routine of checking in at the hostel is much appreciated by the folks back home. When each traveler arrives, he is given an "arrival card," describing the location and surroundings. The hosteler has only to fill in the date and his name, and address it, and the card will be sent. This simple procedure doubtless saves countless nights of worry for the stay-at-home parents, and relieves the busy hosteler of an irksome duty.¹⁵

The hostels, in providing for the *Wandervoegel*, furnish, besides the shelter, beds, and heavy blankets, heavy cooking utensils, and recreational facilities. Thus the camper has to "tote" only his sheet sleeping-bag, his mess kit, soap and towels, a change of socks and underwear, a raincoat, a first-aid kit, and perhaps a few personal items. If the hos-

13. Telfer, *op. cit.*, p. 24.

14. John, *loc. cit.*

15. Telfer, *op. cit.*, p. 64.

teler goes by bicycle, either his own or one rented from the association, he usually carries a tool kit besides. In any case, the load is light, and the hostellers are not burdened as they make their journeys across the country.¹⁶

The hostels are located in widely different surroundings. The one in Northfield utilizes barns, houses, a schoolhouse, and a garage, and has a capacity of one hundred. Other hostels are located in almost every conceivable type of building. The college retreat at Mt. Holyoke is one; the University of Illinois football stadium has been another. Civic organizations donate summer homes, and schools throw open their gymnasiums, during holidays. The majority of hostels, however, are the simple farm homes of middle-class people. The couples who manage them delight in their young guests far more than in the meager monetary return. And the campers appreciate these friendly, democratic people who open their doors and hearts every evening.¹⁷

Statistics vary greatly as to the numbers of hostellers. One source places the yearly total for 1944, a war year, at fifteen thousand. The ages of the hostellers vary from four to ninety-four. Yet with all this number and variety, one hostel parent spoke for many when he said, "I have never met a discourteous or a dishonest hosteler. Careless, yes, sometimes, because youth is often that, but no more."¹⁸ This statement is a splendid compliment to the American Youth Hostel Association and to the people who have organized it.

The future of the hosteling movement is bright; more and more, people are becoming aware of its larger values.¹⁹

16. "Youth Hostels Shelter Young Travelers," *Hygeia*, 13 (October, 1935), 952.

17. John, *loc. cit.*

18. L. N. Day and L. Kistler, "Vacation the Hostel Way," *Parents' Magazine*, 20 (May, 1945), 62.

19. The purpose of the movement has been said to be to nurture love of nature. The by-product is increased international understanding. "It may come about that in the long run, the by-product will be the most important product." (Young, *op. cit.*, p. 10.)

A plan is under way to fit out a reconverted troop ship as the *Youth Argosy*,²⁰ to shuttle across the Atlantic between England, France, and America carrying hostel members for the unbelievable sum of twenty-five dollars.²¹ The trend toward internationalism is being increasingly realized, in current overseas movements. Eight sixty-eight-day projects were planned for the summer of 1947; a hundred young people left the United States that year to begin rebuilding the hostels of Holland, Luxemburg, and the French Alps.²² These projects, along with proposed tours to all parts of the world, will do much to further international good will.

20. Named after the famous adventure ship in Homer's *Iliad*.

21. Day and Kistler, *loc. cit.*

22. Meyer, *op. cit.*, p. 192

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1. Comment on the reader interest achieved by the student writer of this paper. Is it inherent in the subject or the result of the author's handling?

2. Make a brief topic outline of the main points and sub-points, representing the scheme from which the author must have worked in writing the paper. How much of the material is introduction? How much is conclusion? What does each of these sections add?

3. What is the exact reference meant by footnote 3? 8? 11? Why can't *op. cit.* be used in footnote 12?

4. For what purposes, besides indicating source, are some of these footnotes used?

5. Notice that it is possible to omit the abbreviations for "volume" and "page" where the arrangement makes the meaning of the numbers clear (see footnote 1, for example).

ASSIGNMENT

The whole field of human knowledge is open to you when you start to choose a subject for a research paper. You need only remember that you can treat of but a small phase of a tiny section of it, and choose a subject that you can handle thoroughly in the assigned length.

The field of history offers numberless subjects, of both political and social interest: the Boston tea party, the Brook Farm community, the Mormons, Gettysburg, the Olympic games of ancient times. Religion (the history of sect or a schism, the Scopes trial, faith healing), exploration (Byrd, Amundsen, Cooke, Peary, Livingston), language (Esperanto, Basic English, slang), fine arts (music, musical instruments, musicians, surrealism, architecture), applied arts, literature (movements, works, authors), science (geology, biology, astronomy, engineering, chemistry, physics)—each offers a vast range of small topics suitable for your paper. Medicine alone is a fascinating field—the history of anesthesia, the development of penicillin and the sulphas, new techniques in surgery, new plans for hospitalization or public health.

About the only subject to be avoided, in fact, is the purely biographical one, which too often results in little more than a digest of an existing work. But a man may well be studied in relation to his work as author, artist, scientist, or diplomat.

UNIT 13 **////////////////////**

THE CRITICAL PAPER

The summary and the outline are both ways of getting at the essence of what a writer says; but frequently you need to go further, into an evaluation of his work. Such a weighing of values is known as criticism, a word which in common use is too often made synonymous with finding fault. Here it is used in the larger and more accurate sense of finding both the faults and the virtues of an object or an idea, of weighing its merits and demerits in order to arrive at a fair and impartial estimate of its worth. As a method of thought it is in constant use—whenever, for instance, you are asked for your opinion of a course, a laundry, a fountain pen, a lecture, a movie, a book. In “bull sessions” and class discussions, in written examinations and term papers, your critical faculty will be called into further play. Before you exercise it, you should carefully consider certain requirements which are basic to all sound criticism.

- 1. Know your subject.** “Snap judgments” have little value, and you should not weigh seriously something that you know imperfectly. The first class meeting does not give you a sufficient basis for judging either the course or the instructor; the first chapter is not a fair indication of the worth of a book.
- 2. Make your judgment in terms of like objects or situations.** Adversely criticizing a particular movie because it isn’t a stage play, or a make of bicycle because it isn’t a motorcycle, is as unsatisfactory as expecting an answer in dollars when the problem is stated in inches.
- 3. Decide on a set of standards.** You cannot measure accurately without a yardstick; neither can you decide on the merits of an object without first determining

what reasonable expectations for such objects should be.

4. **Analyze the subject into its pertinent issues, and avoid the unessential.** The color of a knife handle has no bearing on its keenness as a cutting instrument, or the size of a man on his ability as a mathematician.
5. **Follow every critical generalization with concrete support.** One who wants a serious judgment isn't likely to be satisfied with your "It's swell" or "It's lousy," but will want to know *why* you think so. Your opinion will stand or fall not by itself alone, but on the merits of your reasons for holding it.
6. **Be objective.** The fact that you are enamored of everything on wheels shouldn't cloud your view of whether or not a given automobile is a good one.
7. **Be fair.** Your first duty as a critic is not to argue but to weigh. He who prefers a smart remark to the truth may be amusing, but he won't long be trusted. As surely as you permit mere personal prejudice to enter your criticism, your words lose weight. To be convincing, produce the facts; conviction will follow unbidden on their heels.

THE BOOK REVIEW

Criticism is as broad as life, and you may find yourself required, at various times, to act as a critic on subjects as far apart as livestock and personal conduct, machinery and government policies. The critical process is exercised alike by the judge of canned goods at the country fair and the writer of the music column for the metropolitan daily. Among the more difficult kinds of criticism, however, are those of the arts; and critics of painting, of music, of drama, and of books often devote their lives to their tasks. Without becoming a professional, you will nonetheless be frequently required, in college and out, to pass written judgment on published materials—on maga-

zine articles and on books of all kinds. Such an exercise is worth while not only in itself, for the occasions in class and club which may require it, but as practice in clarifying your own sometimes foggy impressions and in formulating defensible bases for your opinions.

The "book report" such as you may have been asked to write in high school is often no more than mere summary writing, providing a synopsis of a novel or a digest of the ideas presented in a book of non-fiction for the purpose of proving that you have read the book. Such a report merely passes on information in condensed form. Some information as to content is also present in the book review, but here it is subordinate to the greater purpose of critical writing—that of interpreting and of passing judgment upon that content.

The review, in other words, consists of fact plus interpretation of fact, of information plus judgment passed upon that information. It must do three things: make clear the type of book being reviewed and its scope, summarize its content, and interpret and pass judgment upon it. While the third is of greatest importance, it cannot well exist without the other two; and the student who, being warned to avoid the mere report, completely excludes such factual material from his review is likely to produce a critical essay which floats about ineffectively because the reader is not sufficiently aware of the material on which it is based. Fact and criticism should be skillfully combined, however, rather than handled in separate units, the criticism being incorporated into the relation of the fact, and the fact drawn on in support of the criticism.

1. **Make clear the type of book with which you are dealing:** whether it is fiction, biography, travel, history, opinion, etc., and how much area the author has attempted to cover in it. It is unfair to attempt to judge one kind

of book by standards belonging to another; a dictionary can scarcely be blamed for having, as Mark Twain observed, little plot.

2. **Summarize its content.** Such a summary must be brief (the student accustomed to the high school type of book report may be inclined to spend pages on synopsis and a paragraph on evaluation), but it must be adequate, for the critical interpretation which isn't thoroughly grounded in the elements of the thing criticized is likely to drift off into vague and ineffectual generalities. Brevity can be attained by selecting only the significant features of the book, as determined by the relative importance ascribed to them by the author.
3. **See that your summary is so worded as to help the reader to decide whether it is a book he would care to read,** without spoiling it for him by acquainting him in detail with the outcome or conclusions.
4. **Write your own review, independently of the professional critics who have already expressed themselves on the subject.** You are less experienced than they, and your results will be less valuable to the world at large. But the experience you get from standing on your own intellectual feet will be invaluable to you, and the atmosphere of sincerity with which your work will be suffused will make up for much immaturity of judgment.
5. **Never treat the book as though it existed solely within its own two covers and should be so judged.** Bring to bear on it all your past experience—not only your living, but your reading and your thinking on it and related subjects.
6. **Remember, however, that you are writing a review, and stick to the book.** Do not let it become an essay of your own on the subject, in which you use the book merely as a springboard for your own ideas.
7. **Let your criticism include not only praise and blame, but interpretation.** The critic's function is to clarify the

book for the reader as well as to weigh it—to help him to grasp its significance more certainly and easily.

8. **Quotations, carefully chosen, are valuable in the review,** for they can be used to illustrate not only what the author writes about but how he writes it. The review is essentially your own creative writing, however, and quotations should usually be limited to a few apt words to illustrate your general points.
9. **So far as you are able, expand your judgment to include not only what the book is about, but how it is written.** You may find yourself judging a book primarily on its content—on the story the author tells or the ideas he expresses. But two works on the same subject may vary greatly in merit because of those differences in treatment which are lumped together in the word “style.”
10. **Rule out the trite and the conventional in your wording, using fresh, direct, and sincere language.** Critical language, as you will discover by reading a few reviews, is sadly limited; and it is difficult to avoid stock phrases without making a definite effort.
11. **Beware of generalizing without backing up your generalization with specific examples.** Expressions such as “I liked it,” “It was good,” “It was interesting,” and their converse, are valueless until you have told *why* you liked it, *what* made it good or interesting.
12. **Your judgment should be largely objective—based upon such standards as you have come to believe works of its type should live up to, and whatever knowledge you may possess of its place in the history of thought or literature.** But there is a place, too, for subjective (sometimes called “appreciative” or “impressionistic”) criticism—for an account of your particular reactions to it. You yourself, after all, are less concerned with its being a great book than with its effect upon you; and the reader of your review will welcome an admixture of such appreciative evaluation along

with the more objective kind of criticism. But do not substitute appreciation for judgment; the fact that the book reminds you pleasantly of your childhood experiences in the country does not of itself make it either good or bad.

EXAMPLES

Criticism is closely allied to analysis, a mental process which is a preliminary to the writing of all sound critical papers. Note the generalizations in the two selections following, and the use of particular instances to support them.

A. THE PASSIVITY OF CROWDS

Margaret Marshall

The passivity of American movie audiences, and of American crowds in general, is to me a very depressing thing. On the afternoon of V-E Day I made my way to Times Square. After all, I found myself thinking, victory comes but once every twenty-five years. It was anything but gay—but of course by that time a sound truck was circulating with the announcement that this was not V-E Day. The paper scraps had been thrown hours before and now were dirty underfoot. The light of the sun breaking through the overcast sky was pale and wan and very unbecoming to the milling faces of a crowd which had brought, one felt, a burden of inertness which it hoped to have lifted. Street-cleaners were closing in; bored policemen were directing people to keep to the sidewalk and being obeyed. When a photographer appeared on the roof of the Astor marquee, a crowd gathered and looked up at him hopefully as if asking for the excitement they had come to find and had somehow missed. When it was not forthcoming, they went limp again. I can't help feeling that the inertness of most city crowds—and perhaps rural ones too—must be related to the fact that more and more people are becoming more and more dependent on having

their fun made for them by mass-entertainment industries. Those passive, amorphous faces in Times Square might have been composition faces made of the same processed stuff as the gadgets and the movies and the magazines and the books of mass production.

B. THE SPEECHES AT SAN FRANCISCO

I. F. Stone

The speeches at the opening session of the San Francisco Conference were as banal as the juke-box music which was piped into the Opera House as the delegates arrived. The President's address was disappointing. The occasion called for either Lincolnian eloquence or plain, commonsense statement. Mr. Truman is fully capable in private of the latter, but he seems to have been prevailed upon to indulge instead in windy moralisms, turgid periods, and the kind of untruths which are regarded as inspirational. I pick one of many examples from the speech. "None of us doubt," Mr. Truman said, "that with divine guidance, friendly cooperation, and hard work we shall find an adequate answer to the problem history has put before us." Mr. Truman would never talk that way in private to a visitor. Why does he in a speech? The statement is not true; some of the wisest of the delegates here certainly do doubt whether we shall find the "answer to the problem history has put before us." The rhetoric is false, the effect is hollow, it is hooey. In private Mr. Truman would say, "It's a tough job. I'm not sure we can do it. But we're going to try our best." Why not say that in public? That kind of plain talk inspires confidence. The tawdry and flatulent rhetoric which marked most of the speeches depressed one. The occasion was so momentous; the danger so grave; the need so great; the utterance so mediocre.

Criticism is closely related not only to analysis but to argumentation, which is likely to appear in it at least by implica-

tion. Note in the following selection the use of contrast between the thing that is and the thing that ought to be (a common critical device) and of specific examples to uphold generalizations about both.

C. THE TEACHING OF CHEMISTRY

Harrison E. Howe and Francis M. Turner

The training in chemistry given in our high schools and colleges is unfortunately seldom such as to interest the student in the science as a department of culture and as the all-important handmaid of civilization. No distinction is made between the student who wants to *know* chemistry, as a chemist should know it, and the student who merely wants to *know about* chemistry, as any man or woman of broad culture should know about it.

Most of the text-books have been written as if the object were to exclude every trace of human interest and to make the subject as dry, pedantic, and difficult as possible. As a matter of fact, the whole history of chemistry is replete with romance, from the days of the mediæval alchemists who vainly sought to transmute lead and iron into gold and to discover the secret of perpetual life, on down to the modern miracles of chemical industry.

Nor is chemistry without its heroes. Dalton, the founder of the atomic theory, struggling with his blindness, seeing visions of microcosmic universes with the eye of his soul in a world that was dim and ashen-gray to his physical eye; Charles Goodyear, the pioneer of rubber chemistry, racked with disease, cast into a debtors' prison, following his little child's body to a pauper's grave, refusing even necessities for himself and his family at the cost of abandoning his vision of achievement—these are but two of the many.

We have not come easily by our chemistry of to-day. It is the reward of the hopes and strivings of a vast army of searchers after truth, in all lands and in all centuries—an army blazoned on whose records are the names of

many glorious generals, but made up in the main of countless humble workers in the laboratories and the industries, the names of whom are forgotten to-day, even in the world of chemistry.

Picture the difference that would result if our general students were shown the dependence of progress in medicine on chemistry; the interrelation of chemistry with all the industries and all the industrial arts; its overwhelming importance in warfare and consequent influence on international relations; its fundamental bearing even upon the thinking of men, not to mention its contributions to transportation, agriculture, mining, and the conservation of natural resources, such as our forests, coal, and oil!

Instead of stressing human interest, we give our young men and women a course in chemistry which all but a few regard as a rather amusing nuisance, having no relation to anything outside the laboratory. They emerge with a confused idea of the elements as strange substances in stoppered jars, and with an assortment of undigested and vague trivialities such as the "facts" that iron wire will burn in oxygen, that hydrogen sulphide smells bad, that sodium burns on water which thereafter turns red litmus paper blue, and that H_2SO_4 is the formula for sulphuric acid, which—with granulated zinc—evolves hydrogen, which explodes with a barking noise, and is used to fill balloons because (on account of Boyle's law, or something of the kind) it is lighter than air.

Summarize the qualities which lead to the favorable review of a musical comedy and the unfavorable one of a movie, which follow.

D. HIGH, WIDE, AND HANDSOME

Joseph Wood Krutch

Oklahoma! is like the state it celebrates—high, wide, and handsome. I can't say I would ever have guessed that Lynn Riggs's play *Green Grow the Lilacs* would make an

especially good book for a comic opera, but it does. Or at least it has been made so to serve, and the whole thing comes out as certainly one of the most lively, entertaining, and colorful musical comedies it has ever been my privilege to see. Richard Rodgers's music is original as well as tuneful; Oscar Hammerstein's lyrics are witty; Agnes de Mille's choreography is both beautiful and comic; Rouben Mamoulian's direction sets a vigorous tempo. What more could anyone ask? First-class performers perhaps? Some interesting scenic backgrounds? They also are provided in the course of an evening planned with a lavish hand as well as a talented one. The Theater Guild deserves congratulations but is pretty certainly due more substantial rewards. *Oklahoma!* is going to have a long run.

It is a notorious fact that Broadway's musical shows are generally good just in the degree that they are rowdy, slap-dash, and orgiastic. We do the Bert Lahr-Ethel Merman sort of thing better than it was ever done before and in a way that makes such legendary institutions as the Folies Bergères look anemic. But I have seldom seen an American operetta that strove for some sort of good taste that did not strike me as tedious almost beyond endurance, and that is one of the things which make *Oklahoma!* seem astonishing. It is an operetta, not a revue; it does have a romantic story, it does seek its local color not from a night club on the one hand or a mythical kingdom on the other but from the wild and woolly West at the turn of the century. And yet it is vastly entertaining at the same time that it is fresh. I do not mean, of course, that *Oklahoma!* is solemn or even serious, that it goes in for realism or would call itself a folk play. What I do mean is that it has discovered a fresh source of themes to be treated with comic extravagance, and that the result is most exhilarating.

Perhaps the most important single element is the music of Richard Rodgers, which has a style all its own, a style

even farther away from that of the tepid operetta tradition than it is from the pure jazz and swing of the usual revue. It is rhythmical enough and lively enough to suit Broadway taste, but it is also full of joyous melody which can sustain itself without that continuous rattle of drums and howl of brasses which may be fine for the jitterbug but is always a bit hard on the sedentary spectator. Two of his songs—the romantic “Oh, What a Beautiful Mornin’” and the lively “Farmer and the Cowman”—are sure to be heard frequently and for a long time. So too, I suspect, is the more conventional sounding “I Cain’t Say No,” which Celeste Holm sings with such good effect that it ought to make a star of her. All of the other principals know how to make the most of their good material. Alfred Drake has a fine voice, Betty Garde makes a fine buxom aunt, Howard de Silva a fine villain, and Joseph Buloff a fine peddler whose demonstration of the “Persian goodbye” on the person of Miss Holm is neatly topped by her cowboy lover’s counter-demonstration of “the Oklahoma hello.” Joan Roberts, who is almost a newcomer to Broadway, does very nicely also as a romantic heroine.

Only two American operettas of the last two decades have been really remembered vividly enough to be frequently mentioned—*Showboat* and *Porgy and Bess*. *Oklahoma!* is not so ambitious as the last, and it is not quite so phenomenally slick as the first. But personally I like it quite as well as either.

E. SUNDAY DINNER FOR A SOLDIER

James Agee

The title “Sunday Dinner for a Soldier” suggests to me a movie that could be made in a dozen or a thousand versions, all of them good; but the version that has been made is not one of them. The family which stages the dinner lives on a houseboat near Tarpon Springs, Florida. The nominal head of the family is Charles Winninger with

white whiskers; everybody calls him Grandfeathers. The actual head is Anne Baxter; she is wondering whether or not to marry a rich young man who can't understand why she dances all alone (to the music of a large invisible orchestra and chorus) in the sand-foundered ballroom of a derelict hotel. Other members of the family are a pretty little sister who loves a hen named Miss Easter, and two little brothers, one of whom says of a flower, "It stinks swell." These are represented as nice people, but very poor and, in their poverty, ever so whimsical and lucky. John Hodiak, the soldier who turns up for Sunday dinner, comes of nice people too, in a social and money sense, but his parents were divorced when he was twelve and he ran away when he was fourteen and worked in factories; so he too enjoys the advantages of all the classes and suffers the disadvantages of none. One of the ads for the film says of his romance with Miss Baxter, "Their eyes met! Their lips questioned! Their arms answered!" and though both players try to be reasonable about it, that is not much of an over-simplification.

I sat through the picture in a misery of embarrassment, which intensifies as I try to write about it. I feel embarrassment rather than simple anger because most of the people who worked on the show appear to have loved it, believed in it, and had great hopes for its originality and worthiness. The confused but genuine sweetness of their intention is as visible through all the mawkish formulas, and as disturbing, as a drowned corpse never quite surfacing. I cannot bear to say in detail why I found the film so distasteful. To do so would be like spending a self-controlled day with an innocently awful family, then sneering at all that was painful to you but dear to them.

BOOK REVIEWS

F. THE RAZOR'S EDGE

*Harry Lorin Binsse**(The Razor's Edge—W. Somerset Maugham)*

In his latest novel Mr. Maugham gives no evidence that the degenerative process which set in after he had finished *Of Human Bondage* has ceased. *The Razor's Edge* in its total effect is unbelievably cheap and trifling. Its hero is an ex-aviator (in the last war) who, Mr. Maugham would have us believe, "found a faith." I read the book through with real attention, hoping to discover what this faith might be. Catholicism he tried and dismissed on grounds which irresistibly reminded me of freshman "bull sessions" at college. In substance, our hero cannot believe in a God who permits evil. He then wanders to India (I suppose this is inevitable) and there studies with a Hindu teacher and holy man. He does not, however, embrace Hinduism, though he does have something we are led to suppose is a mystical experience. The nearest I can figure it out, the faith Larry found might be catalogued as a natural mysticism, though I cannot see how the word *faith* fits in. The rest of the novel deals with the lives of Larry's old friends, his one-time fiancée, who still desires to possess him, her uncle, a childhood friend from Illinois, who sinks to the depths of drug addiction and vice and is finally murdered, presumably by one of her sailor lovers. For all of this I can find no better adjective than cheap. The one redeeming thing about the book is that Maugham's knack of sparkling characterization is still occasionally in evidence, particularly when he is dealing with Elliott Templeton, the expatriate American uncle of Larry's once betrothed.

1. In considering this best-seller, the reviewer generalizes as to its total effect. What evidence does he offer in support of his generalizations? Does it seem to you valid?

2. Do you find any evidence of an attempt at fair-minded criticism in this account of a book of which the reviewer admittedly disapproves?

3. Does his summary of the plot appear to give you a good impression of the contents without spoiling the story for you?

G. IN THE BED OF ETERNITY

Joseph Bornstein

(*Copernicus and His World*—Hermann Kesten)

The little Polish canon who four hundred years ago discovered that the earth moves and turns around the sun defied everyone's belief and the most sacred authorities—including God Himself as He is quoted in the Bible. Even for the "rebels" of his time Copernicus's discovery was too rebellious. Luther called him "a fool." Calvinus asked: "Who will venture to place the authority of Copernicus above that of the Holy Spirit?" Two hundred and fifty years later Goethe stated that "of all discoveries and opinions none have exerted a greater influence on the human spirit than the doctrine of Copernicus."

The miraculous story of this total victory against ignorance and prejudice won by a single man is told by Hermann Kesten in *Copernicus and His World*. Kesten, a German novelist of stature, does not novelize his hero but sticks conscientiously to the meager established facts about the life of Copernicus. By his art and power of penetration, however, Kesten succeeds in bringing the Polish canon alive, in showing the reader the man and his surroundings, his modest manners and his promethean ideas, the routine of his daily job and the greatness of his eternal work. Copernicus, in his own words, wrote "for mathematicians only." Kesten makes intelligible even that part of Copernicus's works which seems impenetrable for non-mathematicians. He reveals himself in this book as an excellent pupil of those great humanists who were poets as well as scientists, playwrights as well as historians.

Splendid pictures of the fascinating men and women who populated Copernicus's world and exciting historical adventures are included in Kesten's report of the development of mankind's knowledge from Ptolemaeus to Einstein—from the belief that we live in the stable center of the universe to the opinion of modern astronomy that we are, as Kesten puts it, "insects on the surface of one of the smallest satellites of a dwarf star in a local system of one of the millions of milky ways."

Copernicus and His World does not deal with Hitler or Stalin or Germany's reeducation. Its author—a refugee from Germany and France—might be accused of escapism. Mr. Kesten has a reply in the sentence he quotes from the astronomer Johannes Kepler, who during the Thirty Years' War wrote as follows: "When a storm is raging and shipwreck threatens the ship of state we can do nothing more dignified than to cast the anchor of our peaceful studies in the bed of eternity." There are, it seems, two kinds of escapism. One leads astray, the other to higher observation points and deeper understanding. Kesten's is of the second variety.

1. Check the points at which the reviewer, in making clear the scope of this biography, mentions what it does not do as well as what it does. Does he seem to consider its limitations as faults or as virtues?

2. What comments does he make on the style in which it is written?

H. A BELL FOR ADANO

Diana Trilling

(*A Bell for Adano*—John Hersey)

John Hersey is a *Life-Time* correspondent with our invasion forces; his novel, *A Bell for Adano*, is our first fiction of the American government of Italy—occupational history written while it was still little more than a gleam

in Amgot's eye. But the very speed of composition of Mr. Hersey's book gives it what interest it has, because, writing quickly, Mr. Hersey wrote out of a deep reservoir of folk idealisms and popular assumptions. This is not to say that *A Bell for Adano* is an unconscious book any more than most movies, also created out of popular assumptions, are unconscious. It is as impossible for me to believe that a person who has had the education and experience necessary to get a correspondent's job on *Life* naturally thinks of Americans or Italians in the simple way that Mr. Hersey appears to in his novel as it is for me to believe that the Hollywood scenario writer who wrote *Joe Smith, American* naturally thinks of Americans as Joe Smiths. The contrivance of simplicity is one of the things that may set my spine tingling in a movie, especially in a lesson-in-democracy movie, but it also leaves a bad taste in my mouth, because I feel that I have been done, played upon, taken in. I feel the more taken in, indeed, in the degree that the popular assumptions which are paraded have a basis in truth.

And there seems to me to be a great deal of truth in Mr. Hersey's picture of an American. In fact, *A Bell for Adano* might accurately be described as the Platonic ideal of Americanism, of which the American reality is an active approximation. Its hero, Major Joppolo, is a kind of compendium of quickly recognizable national characteristics. Joppolo is the American occupation officer of the little town of Adano. He thinks for himself, works fourteen hours a day, is realistic about taking help where he can find it, is gentle from instinct and ruthless on principle, respects authority where it earns respect and where it is unworthy countermands it at whatever risk, knows how to play with the church, has sex but knows how to keep it down, loathes protocol and red tape, and first and always is a man of heart who understands that a town full of Italian peasants has more need for a bell than for American sanitation; when his M.P.'s get into a drunken

orgy and smash up the house in which they are billeted, instead of sending them to the guardhouse he invokes the memory of their mothers. So convincing is Mr. Hersey's portrait of the American as an administrator that we even come to think it a national characteristic that Joppolo should be of Italian parentage and come from the Bronx.

Obviously, folk idealism of this kind is its own good clean fun. What offends me is its being put forward as all of his truth by someone in a position to boast a more complicated view of things. When Mr. Hersey says in his Foreword that only men can guarantee the future, men like Major Joppolo, I tend to agree with him; for all its limitations the Joppolo incarnation of American democracy at work isn't a bad star to be shooting at in these practical days. But when, also in his Foreword, he uses Hollywood-naïve prose like this, "Major Victor Joppolo, U.S.A., was a good man. You will see that. It is the whole reason why I want you to know his story. . . . Major Joppolo was Amgot officer of Adano, and he was good," I know that Mr. Hersey's ideas, like his prose, have undergone a process of conscious, falsifying, and purposeful simplification.

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1. What is the basis of the reviewer's chief objection to this book?
 2. What does she find admirable about it?
 3. Taking it as a whole, do you consider this a favorable or an adverse review?

I. SIR WILLIAM H. BRAGG'S *THE UNIVERSE OF LIGHT*

The Universe of Light gets off to a good start by concerning itself with an interesting subject. Psychologists tell us that, of all the impressions our five senses give us, eighty-three per cent come to us through our eyes. Light is the mind's most frequently used contact with the world. It is no wonder that most of us are curious about light and

its manifestations in various phenomena. The book satisfies this curiosity by answering some of our questions about light. It tells just how we see, why it is that objects seen through cheap lenses seem to have fringes of color about them, what causes the colors in a rainbow or soap bubble, and why it is that a setting sun looks red and a mountain on the distant horizon looks blue.

For those who have had high school physics, the first part of the book is a pleasant review. But Bragg does not stop there. He goes on to discuss the conflicting theories concerning the nature of light. He explains the photo-electric effect and even includes a discussion of the determination of crystalline structure by use of x-rays.

But an interesting subject does not necessarily make an interesting book. The subject must be clearly explained; new ideas must be presented in terms of the older, more familiar ones. *The Universe of Light* is full of drawings, photographs, and word pictures (Bragg is a skillful user of apt analogies). A difficult point is presented in several different ways, and one soon forgets that the point was difficult. It is not until one stops to reflect that he gets the feeling of really having learned quite a bit about light. It is like taking halibut oil capsules instead of a spoonful of cod liver oil. One gets full value without any bad effects.

J. JOHN DOS PASSOS' 1919

George Asselin

All great struggles produce their tragic aftermaths; the First World War was no exception. It broke lives, wrecked futures, and wrought a general destruction of man's faith in himself. Society suffered badly enough while the actual warfare was going on; but when the fighting ceased and people were given time to comprehend their plight, the situation became even more calamitous. The immediate effects of the war continued throughout a decade. But the time of greatest suffering from the disruption of the social and economic order was the year following the armis-

tice. About this time and its effects John Dos Passos builds a superb novel called *1919*.

Using his characteristic "newsreel" style, he gives a cosmorama culminating in the year 1919, and made up of scattered lives that were affected by the First World War.

Joe Williams, a typical Yankee sailor, gets into a scrape in South America. Using a set of forged papers, he gains a berth as an able-bodied seaman on an English merchant ship and becomes involved in the war mess. He has a roaring good time in Paris, and returns to New York to spend almost a year dodging the draft before he is caught. After the fight, he becomes a good-for-nothing bum and is "tight" as often as he can get his hands on some money. Thus Dos Passos portrays the effect of the war on one man's life.

Caxton Hibbens, well-to-do young man, wangles a commission in the army in order to see the world. It is not the pleasant world of his imagination that he sees, but rather the hard facts of a world at war. Before his eyes, hitherto unaccustomed to such sights, are thrown "gangrened wounds, the cholera, the typhus, the little children with their bellies swollen from famine, the maggoty corpses, drunk Allied officers chasing sick naked girls upstairs in the brothels of Saloniki, soldiers looting stores and churches, French and British sailors fighting with beer bottles in the bars." The war makes Hibbens a Communist.

These and the other tales in *1919* are told in an unusual manner, to say the least. News bulletins, dispatches, and headlines are scattered through the book. Three or four stories are begun at the same time and continued irregularly through the entire work. The headlines serve to connect the sketches by showing how the lives of individuals are affected by various current events.

The words are vile in places—in many places—but this obscenity helps to give the novel that "illusion of reality," that "local color," which makes the book great and enables John Dos Passos so forcefully to drive home a picture of the conditions of life in a country at war. Some people

may find fault with Dos Passos' many long series of incomplete sentences; but, for me at least, these make effective his portrayal of the abandonment of hope for the future that characterized the year 1919.

1919 is a newsreel picture of life in post-war America, taken by a camera-man whose eye for grim reality is not blurred by pre-war ideology. If you are fond of realism in literature, if you prefer your facts ungarnished, and if you are interested in the disillusionment of the war generation, read *1919*. If for no other reason, read it to gain a finer appreciation of the trouble in Europe today.

The two reviews above are student-written, the first on a book of non-fiction, the second of fiction. Check them with the suggestions for the book review given earlier (pages 255-258), and decide how successfully they have accomplished their tasks.

ASSIGNMENT

1. Choose some campus problem, curricular or extracurricular—a rule, a course, a requirement, any situation which needs examination—and write a sound critical paper about it. Remember that a criticism is not necessarily an argument, although it may provide the material from which good argument is made, but that it is always an analysis—a getting at the essential parts or qualities of the thing criticized.

2. Write a criticism of the next public function you attend—lecture, concert, movie, or other program. Take into consideration the special problems or requirements of the performance, insofar as you are familiar with them. Do not pretend to critical knowledge that you do not possess, but write your own sincere and personal reaction on the basis of what you do know and feel you have a right to expect.

3. Write a book review of a novel, or of one of your textbooks or other book of non-fiction (science, travel, world affairs, biography), setting up standards to which you believe such a book should measure and comparing it with them.

4. Examine the essay on "Dos Passos" (page 450), in terms of the criteria on pages 253-254 of this unit.

UNIT 14 **////////////////////**

THE CHARACTER SKETCH

One of the most valuable assets you can have is the ability to know a good man—or a bad—when you see one. Such judgment of character, whether from first acquaintance or long friendship, is constantly demanded of you. In college you must choose friends, pledges, candidates, instructors; later you may be called on to select employees and employers, public officials—and husbands and wives.

The character sketch is merely a means of presenting, in written form, your version of what a person is like. A letter home about your roommate, your girl, your house-mother, your instructors; a report on the qualifications of a fellow student for a campus office; an answer to an examination question requiring the characterization of a figure in history, current affairs, or fiction—all involve the same general mental process. Successful characterization is basically a matter of analysis, of breaking down the multitudinous traits which comprise the fascinating complexity of human personality into a few dominant features which will make individuality intelligible to the reader. But like the book review, the character sketch will often attempt to interpret as well as to analyze—to go beyond mere *showing* into the realm of *explaining*. Such sketches are, depending upon the subject, of two kinds: the **type** and the **individual**.

THE TYPE SKETCH

The type sketch is an exposition of a kind of person rather than of an individual. It may be a mere businesslike matter of setting up the qualifications for a position (membership in an organization, appointment to an office, awarding of an honor); or it may be an artistic job of delineating, for enjoyment as well as information, the characteristics typical of a certain group of people (the student,

the stenographer, the old-maid aunt). Whatever its purpose, it involves determining, analytically, what the important characteristics are and presenting them in some clear and logical order, expanding each with such details as seem pertinent. It may even devote itself to presenting and illustrating a single significant feature of the type (the glutton, the absent-minded professor, the saint).

The type sketch tends, like the definition, to generalize—to deal only with such characteristics as are common to the entire group. Its subject will therefore be *the* student (as set off from other types—professors, shopgirls, fathers), never *this* student; hence the methods of definition (see Unit 9) are useful here.

THE INDIVIDUAL SKETCH

The individual sketch, on the contrary, shares with description and narration the tendency to particularize. It is generally more interesting reading, therefore; for human interest, as we have seen, lies in the concrete, the particular, rather than in the abstract, the general. We are more concerned about “Jack Emmons” than about “the student.”

Successful characterization will draw on a number of different sources of information about the subject. What a man looks like, what he says and how he says it, what he does and how he does it, what he believes in, what his interests, his reading, his habits, and his hobbies are, what the attitude of others to him is—these combine to reveal personality.

In presenting this varied information, you will find that a number of the methods of exposition already discussed will be useful—comparison and definition, for instance, as well as the basic process of analysis. But we would rather be *shown* than *told*; and direct exposition, with its tendency to the general (“He’s honest, loyal, and courageous”), is usually far less effective than certain more vivid ways of character presentation.

1. **Use narrative liberally;** it is, as we have seen, one of the best ways of making clear the abstract through the concrete. Through it the individual may be shown in action, and by small gesture as well as larger deed may be made to give himself away. Relating how prosperous George Taylor counted out five pennies for the collection plate is a far more effective way of revealing a quality of his character than merely stating that he was stingy.
2. **Use numerous little incidents rather than one sustained narrative.** A personality is completely revealed through various isolated events rather than on one occasion; furthermore, a long narrative is likely to draw attention to itself as a story to the exclusion of its main purpose here—that of revealing character through incident.
3. **Use dialogue.** It not only contributes, as we have seen, to the narrative illusion of reality, but it adds the knowledge of how a person talks to that of what he says. A man's grammar (or lack of it), his vocabulary, and his accent may reveal much about the kind of person he is. Note the amount of information about Irvine Love-lands' lack of education, habits of thought, and moral standards that Robert Louis Stevenson packed into this brief remark in *The Silverado Squatters*:

A man, he told us, who bore a grudge against him, had poisoned his dog. "That was a low thing for a man to do now, wasn't it? It wasn't like a man, that, nohow. But I got even with him: I poisoned *his* dog."

4. **Use description sparingly.** You are likely to give it too much attention for the reason that it is much simpler to catalogue the things about a man that meet the eye than to determine what qualities of character he possesses. Description may have its place in the character sketch, but only so far as outward appearance reveals or belies inward grace. Would you choose a roommate by height and weight, or by disposition? Your answer indicates the relatively small part which many details of appear-

ance play in personality. Yet a slovenly appearance or a habitual nervous twitch of the lips may well be worthy of mention as significant indication of character.

5. You may characterize an individual through the opinions of others. A full picture of him may be drawn without his ever appearing on the scene, through bringing to a focus the varying reactions of a number of people.
6. Whatever methods you use in developing your sketch, remember that its purpose is first of all expository. Get and keep clearly in mind the quality or qualities of character which your analysis has revealed to be essential. These will serve as the guiding principle which will determine what details and examples you ought to include, and you will avoid the confusion which results when you merely set down everything you can think of about a person, to no special purpose. All your illustrative materials should illustrate, and nothing more; they should never be included for themselves alone, but should always serve your larger, clearly defined expository purpose. They may be details which bear out the characteristic you are trying to reveal, or which appear to be contradictory, for the sake of contrast; but they must never be unrelated.

Choice of Subject

You will of course choose as the subject of your character sketch someone whom you know well enough to be able to analyze accurately and with some completeness; even the professional writer, in creating his characters, depends heavily on the qualities of people he has known. You will find your work easier if you choose, from among your acquaintances, someone whose personality presents some outstanding feature around which you can readily unify your supporting details in the establishment of a clear-cut picture. Someone has remarked that there has never yet been written a biography of an ordinary man—for the reason, no doubt, that no one would care to read it.

The skilled observer of human nature, however, would probably not admit the existence of such a creature, as any one of us, if properly analyzed, would reveal out-of-the-ordinary traits. But your character sketch of the apparently "ordinary man" may risk being dull, whereas a subject such as your town's bum, an eccentric widow, a dashing uncle, a crusading teacher, an erratic schoolmate, or a faithful old family nurse can easily be made into a vivid portrait.

Organization

There is no single clear-cut pattern to be followed in writing the character sketch. The simplest arrangement is to choose a few outstanding traits and to set them forth, exemplifying them one by one, in some logical order, such as from the most obvious to the least. But such a plan is not necessarily most effective. You may prefer the deductive plan of stating all the characteristics first, and then illustrating them in order; or the inductive one of giving your illustrations first and drawing the characteristics from them later (often superior from the standpoint of reader interest, because of its greater climactic strength); or you may merely give your illustrations, trusting your reader to draw the proper conclusions from them (which he can readily do if they are well selected). Almost any method of handling your material (other than that of tediously moralizing on the vices or virtues of the character presented) is allowable.

The only inescapable rule is that before you start writing you must carefully determine what you want to say, and then unify your material around that controlling idea. Beyond that, use whatever means you can best employ to draw a telling and readable portrait, keeping in mind, of course, the law of emphasis—of building up to an effective climax of event or idea.

EXAMPLES

A. THE MAINE GUIDE¹*Louise Dickinson Rich*

Here's the Maine guide. He wears what amounts to a uniform. It consists of a wool shirt, preferably plaid, nicely faded to soft, warm tones; dark pants, either plus-fours, for some unknown reason, or riding breeches; wool socks and the soleless, Indian-type moccasin, or high laced boots. He carries a bandana in his hip pocket and may or may not wear another knotted around his neck. But he must wear a battered felt hat, with a collection of salmon flies stuck in the band, and he must wear it with an air; and he must wear a hunting knife day and night; and he must look tough and efficient. If he has high cheek bones and tans easily, that is his good luck. He can then admit to part-Indian ancestry, accurately or not. Indian blood is an item highly esteemed by sports.

B. THE WRITER

Margaret Marshall

I should describe writers as a happy breed of men who are usually unhappy. The writer is either worried about something he has written or about something he is writing. If he isn't working at anything he's worried about that. He has his moments, of course, but they are not too frequent, and he knows very well that within a few hours he may be wondering what he ever saw in *that* paragraph. And one of the sad things about the whole process is that when he's jubilant he can foresee that he will shortly be discouraged but when he's discouraged he can't imagine being jubilant again. The outsider may well wonder why anyone persists in such a vocation. The insider knows that

¹From *We Took to the Woods*, Copyright, 1942, by Louise Dickinson Rich, published by J. B. Lippincott Company. By permission.

it's a compulsion, a sweet sorrow, that can't easily be exorcised.

Compare the two brief selections above. The first is purely descriptive, and should not be confused with the character sketch. It tells how a type known as the Maine guide looks—and by implication, what the "sports" who hire him expect him to be like—but of the kind of person he actually is, there is not a word. In the paragraph on the writer, on the contrary, not a single descriptive detail appears; yet a clear impression is given of the kind of person he is in relation to his work.

C. "JUDY"

Anonymous

Movies, as you know, are made to match the tastes, morals, prejudices and mental limitations of a nice old lady referred to around the studios (in awe or cynically, as the case may be) as Aunt Emma. Plots are pruned, dialogue is simplified, emotions are curbed to please this composite customer, and the Hays office protects her sensibilities.

But unless you are in the business, you do not know her redoubtable niece, Judy, for whom some five and a half million movie fan magazines are printed monthly. An advertising outfit once made a study of fan publication customers. It found that they averaged up to a nineteen-year-old girl, with a year or so of high school to her credit, holding an office job below the level of stenographer, such as filing clerk or switchboard girl. She was christened Judy.

Judy believes that Clark Gable's escape into the Army is a great tragedy. She is more concerned with Victor Mature's love life than the current news from North Africa. The private existence of the stars, rather than their work on the screen, is her chief interest. Her appetite for "inside dope" on the glamorous ones of Hollywood—gossip, scan-

dal, emotional close-ups, shocking intimacies, love hints—is insatiable. She lives vicariously in a supercharged world, mostly invented by bored press agents, with its own synthetic romance, homey philosophy, and diluted sinfulness.

D. A GOOD FARMER

Louis Bromfield

A good farmer in our times has to know more about more things than a man in any other profession. He has to be a biologist, a veterinary, a mechanic, a botanist, a horticulturist, and many others, and he has to have an open mind, eager and ready to absorb new knowledge and new ideas and new ideals.

A good farmer is always one of the most intelligent and best educated men in our society. We have been inclined in our wild industrial development to forget that agriculture is the base of our whole economy and that in the economic structure of the nation it is always the cornerstone. It has always been so throughout history and it will continue to be so until there are no more men on this earth. We are apt to forget that the man who owns land and cherishes it and works it well is the source of our stability as a nation, not only in the economic but in the social sense as well. Few great leaders ever came out of city slums or even suburbs. In France, in England, in America, wherever you choose to turn, most of the men who have molded the destinies of the nation have come off the land or from small towns. The great majority of leaders, even in the world of industry and finance, have come from there. As a nation we do not value our farmers enough; indeed I believe that good farmers do not value themselves highly enough. I have known all kinds of people, many of them celebrated in many countries, but for companionship, good conversation, intelligence, and the power of stimulating one's mind, there are none I would place above the good farmer.

But there are two other qualities, beyond the realm of the

inquiring mind or the weight of education, without which no man could be a good farmer. These, I believe, are born in him. They are a passionate feeling for the soil he owns and an understanding and sympathy for his animals. I do not believe that these traits can be acquired; they are almost mystical qualities, belonging really only to people who are a little "teched" and very close to Nature itself. . . .

For the good farmer, his animals are not simply commodities without personality, destined only to be made into pork chops or beef steaks or to produce milk all their lives. To a good farmer, each animal has its own personality. A good farmer cannot himself sleep if his animals are not well fed and watered and bedded down on a cold winter night. Watch any good farmer showing his sheep or cattle or hogs at a county fair or an international stock show and you will understand how much he respects the animals that are linked into that chain of life which explains and justifies the whole of his activity. Or watch any Four-H club youngster with tears in his eyes when the moment comes for him to part with the fat steer he has raised and brought to a cattle show. He has slept in the straw in the stall beside his steer for days. The steer is a part of the richness of his own existence. He will go cold himself or go without food and water before the steer shall be deprived of these things.

The type, you will remember, is not an actual individual, but a composite, existing only as a set of characteristics which are found to be general among a certain group. Polls which give us what the "average American" of a certain class thinks and does establish such types for us; so do minimum standards or ideals set up for professions. Reduce the sketch about "Judy," above, to a few adjectives denoting the characteristics which are therein objectified. Do the same for the one about "The Good Farmer." What advantage do the sketches themselves have over these listings of the characteristics they present?

E. KNUTE ROCKNE

Knute Rockne had a clean mind and a healthy body, a clear vision and an indomitable will. He was famous for his driving energy, which showed in his every word and motion. He was dramatic, witty, and keen, and he knew human nature. These qualities raised him from the poverty of his immigrant boyhood to a position of wealth, culture, and nation-wide fame.

F. HENRY CABOT LODGE

Frederick Lewis Allen

Henry Cabot Lodge was a gentleman, a scholar, and an elegant and persuasive figure in the United States Senate. As he strolled down the aisle of the Senate Chamber—slender, graceful, gray-haired, gray-bearded, the embodiment of all that was patrician—he caught and held the eye as might William Gillette on a crowded stage. He need not raise his voice, he need only turn for a moment and listen to a sentence or two of some colleague's florid speech and then walk indifferently on, to convince a visitor in the gallery that the speech was unworthy of attention.

The type sketch attempts to represent a group by presenting it as a single individual. the sketch of an individual attempts to clarify the confused and many-sided picture which is personality by singling out significant details. Of the two brief sketches above, the first tries to do too much in too short a space, resulting in a mere list of qualifying adjectives which characterize, it is true, but which are quickly forgotten because there is nothing to give them vividness. Compare with its dull listing the effectiveness of the second, where in the same space less is attempted.

G. WARREN HARDING

Frederick Lewis Allen

Warren Harding had two great assets, and these were already apparent. First, he looked as a President of the United States should. He was superbly handsome. His

face and carriage had a Washingtonian nobility and dignity, his eyes were benign; he photographed well and the pictures of him in the rotogravure sections won him affection and respect. And he was the friendliest man who ever had entered the White House. He seemed to like everybody, he wanted to do favors for everybody, he wanted to make everybody happy. His affability was not merely the forced affability of the cold-blooded politician; it was transparently and touchingly genuine. "Neighbor," he had said to Herbert Hoover at their first meeting, during the war, "I want to be helpful." He meant it; and now that he was President, he wanted to be helpful to neighbors from Marion and neighbors from campaign headquarters and to the whole neighborly American public.

His liabilities were not at first so apparent, yet they were disastrously real. Beyond the limited scope of his political experience he was "almost unbelievably ill-informed," as William Allen White put it. His mind was vague and fuzzy. Its quality was revealed in the clogged style of his public addresses, in his choice of turgid and maladroit language ("non-involvement" in European affairs, "adhesion" to a treaty), and in his frequent attacks of suffix trouble ("normalcy" for normality, "betrothment" for betrothal). It was revealed even more clearly in his helplessness when confronted by questions of policy to which mere good nature could not find the answer. White tells of Harding's coming into the office of one of his secretaries after a day of listening to his advisers wrangling over a tax problem, and crying out: "John, I can't make a damn thing out of this tax problem. I listen to one side and they seem right, and then—God!—I talk to the other side and they seem just as right, and here I am where I started. . . ."

1. Note the contrast between Harding's assets and his liabilities—calculated not only to provide a complete picture but to establish confidence in the fairness of the writer's analysis.

2. The character sketch, as we have seen above, must be based on certain characteristics but not limited to a listing of them. Notice how relatively few points are taken up here. What details are supplied to support the statement that Harding was handsome? friendly? fuzzy-minded?

3. How is the use of Harding's own words doubly revealing?

H. GUSSY

Carl Zuckmayer

One Sunday we paid a visit to a neighbor who runs a nice farm and is lucky enough to have one of those ghost farmers doing the jobs. We had a look at the poultry yard. There, on an icy manure heap sparkling in the early spring sun like a throne of crystal, sat Gussy. (She wasn't Gussy yet. They just called her "the crazy duck.")

Her white feathers were ruffled in self-defense, but not without a vicious touch of challenge and aggressiveness, and sprinkled with blood. From time to time some of the "normal" poultry—roosters, hens or other ducks—would vigorously jump on her and try to peck her, and she would fight back, hissing like a snake, battling with her beak and her wings, even pursuing her persecutors. Then, having lost more feathers and more blood but none of her honor or dignity, she would return to the place of her royal isolation.

That's the way she was, the farmer said, since she was outfeathered. He had no explanation for her lack of popularity. "They just don't like her," he said, "and she doesn't like them. They won't let her feed with them—she's almost starving. Well, some day they'll kill her. She might do better somewhere else. It's a nice duck, after all."

It didn't take much time or persuasion—and we had her locked in a little basket with a small supply of grain. Why should we reject a gift?

Gussy, at first, gave us a hard time. She got all the attention, the care, the respect for her privacy she ever

wanted, but she still was a problem child. She wouldn't eat her grain at the regular time, but would overthrow her water pail and act as if starving or dying from thirst a little later. When my wife tried to feed her with white bread and milk, she would gratefully bite her finger. To tell all the stories of her different escapes, how many times I fell in the mud while running to catch her or to drive her back, would fill several volumes of escape literature.

What makes a duck crazy? . . . Is it caused by a cerebral deformation, or by what we call "psychological" reasons? In Gussy's case it might be a matter of imagination. No physical defect was to be observed—no troubles of environment. I sometimes thought, "She's just an ordinary trouble-maker—mean, ugly, preposterous," and the knife was sharpened to cut her throat. But she always saved her neck by this fascinating way of despising everything and everybody, mainly her own kind and race, and of secluding herself from the world of duckhood.

A poultry yard grew up around her, populated by hens, geese, ducks. She ever stuck to the same attitude of challenge and isolation. . . . One day she disappeared and we thought it was for good this time. But when a month or so had passed, there suddenly was a terrific squawking, hissing and chirking under the rotten floor boards of the big old barn, and sneaking out between the stones of its foundation came Gussy—dirty, starved, aggressive—leading a bunch of eleven newly hatched yellow ducklings.

Motherhood didn't change her craziness. She behaved shy and wild, avoided the common feeding places and tried to bring up her brood to the same asocial and misgiving way of self-seclusion. But when they grew a little older and took to the habits of "normal" ducklings, she bit them away from her, retired brusquely from family life, and looked for a lonely manure heap on which to defy God and the world.

Just as storytellers sometimes use animals for characters, the writer of the character sketch may amuse himself by setting forth the "personality" of a pet or other animal. What is the effect here of mentioning the manure heap at both beginning and end? (See page 18, No. 6.)

I. MAY THE EAST WIND NEVER BLOW

Lucy Cundiff

You may have your Royal Coachmans, your Pflueger reels, your outboard motors! Give me a can of angleworms, a long bamboo pole, and a flat-bottomed boat. Give me a lazy summer day. And if there is some magic by which time can be turned backward, let Old Jay Brown be sitting in the stern of the boat talking quietly while our fishing lines drift in placid waters.

Fishing and Jay Brown are inseparable in my memory. He was my instructor in the art. He taught me how to bait hooks and make catches, and what is more important, he taught me those virtues of patience and introspection which should be a part of every fisherman's make-up.

When my brother Hugh and I were youngsters, Jay was to us what Captain John and Robin Hood are to other children. That much-used and often ill-used word *glamour* rightly describes what he meant to us. The magic in his person and in his way of life fascinated us more than that of the heroes of fiction. He had none of the outward aspects of a traditional hero. He was tall, stoop-shouldered, and gaunt. His square head was set like a chunk of cordwood on his long, thin neck. His hair, what little remained of it, formed a sparse, gray semicircle around the bald crown of his head. He lived in a weather-beaten shack on the edge of the river that bisected our little Wisconsin town. To my brother and me, his domestic arrangements were ideal. He had but to step out of his back door to be on the little dock to which his boat was moored. He shared his home and a considerable portion

of his fishing catches with Venus, his dog, an old hound with a lean, mournful face like a crumpled velvet pillow. She was lame with age, and asthmatic, but wherever Jay went she lumbered in his wake.

His most fascinating quality was his ability to "play games." He never seemed to us one of the grownups. He entered into our world, or took us with him into his. Getting into the boat to go fishing he would say to me, "Now, Lou, you just sit up there in the prow and pretend yer the Lily Maid." Many a long summer afternoon I dreamed myself Elaine, while Jay and Hugh brooded over idle fish poles. Jay invested all of our make-believe with a quality of reality. When he was with us we didn't have to pretend we were Jim Hawkins and Alice in Wonderland at all. We *were* Jim Hawkins and Alice in Wonderland if Jay was there to say so.

One thing about Jay added a dash of daring to our association with him. He fished because he loved to fish, but he also fished to make a living—and broke the game laws freely. He ran setlines at night, and though the warden warned him often about the possibility of arrest, Jay went his way unperturbed. We didn't question his methods, but accepted them as a natural part of his existence. In an era when the children of fiction too often followed the Elsie Dinsmore and Horatio Alger patterns, Jay strode through our lives like a tattered but triumphant warrior.

If Jay had been a student of the scriptures, he could have taken as his motto, "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." He asked nothing more of life than that he be allowed to fish when he liked, to have Venus always with him, and to live by the river he loved so well.

The river was a living creature to Jay. He spoke of it in the familiar way in which people speak of kindred. "She" was "in a temper," or she was "gentle as a new lamb." She had "moaned all night," or she had "sung him to sleep." When the spring floods came he never moved out of his shack, though sometimes it seemed in

peril of being carried off by the violence of the river. He talked of the rising waters half-disapprovingly, half-proudly, as a parent speaks of a precocious but willful child.

In winter, though the river was ice-covered from bank to bank, it still provided him with his livelihood. He set traps for muskrats, and would tramp miles every day across the ice to the little muskrat houses which dotted the white expanse like small mounds of firewood. On the infrequent occasions when we visited him in wintertime, the air in his shack was always strong with the odor of drying hides. He stretched them on pointed boards and hung them from the rafters. By late winter the blood-tinged skins were brown and smoke-stained, and the odor in the shack was so pungent that even Venus preferred lying in a sunwarmed spot on the dock to staying indoors.

It was in summer that Jay came into his own. The richness of his contentment was almost tangible. Sitting in his boat, with Venus at his feet, his fish pole lying across his lap, the smoke from his pipe curling upwards around his battered straw hat—this is the picture of him that I remember best. Judged by conventional standards, it is the picture of a failure; judged by the more sensible standard of a man's search for happiness, it is one of a memorable success.

I hope that now, when Jay goes fishing in celestial waters, Venus still lies at his feet, his pipe smoke still curls upward, and "the east wind never blows."

This student-written sketch and the one which follows indicate the wisdom of choosing, for your own writing, someone whom you know well and who is inherently interesting. It is often as important to assume and maintain a particular mental point of view in the sketching of character as in the writing of description. Notice here the contrast between the "hero" Jay Brown was to the writer as a child, and the "bum" he was probably thought to be by the town's adults—particularly the game warden.

J. A DIAMOND IN THE ROUGH

Gloria Hunter

Wednesday—the smell of flaxsoap wafts up from the gleaming floors, and the odor of a hot iron on clean sheets blends in to form the intriguing aroma of cleaning day. The dog skids across the polished linoleum, halts unsteadily under the ironing board, and contentedly falls down for a nap. Valley is singing “Swing Low, Sweet Chariot” as she irons, and where else would a sensible dog sleep on Wednesday afternoon? The sweet voice rises and falls and the iron moves rhythmically, halting now for a moment or two as “Mary Marlin Faces Life” hits a high point in its dramatic portrayal.

Valley Smith is “cleanin’ up” for her Hunter folks, as she does weekly, and life is calm and clean and pleasant. Whether the “Valley” is derived from “Lily of the Valley” or from the locale of her birth is unknown, and even the Smith is temporary. Her next “no-good-nigger” may very likely be named Washington, or another week’s fancy provide her with a good old French title. Only God knows the year Valley appeared on our earth, but Georgia was the spot and “Calculatin’ by my rheumatism and pressure, it was a good bit back.” So as not to miss anything, she celebrates a birthday three or four times a year, the exact one depending on how old she feels at the time of the celebration.

Her “pressure” is quite an interesting illness. We presume that it means blood pressure, but she admits she doesn’t know whether that is high or low. And it is very easily affected. Venetian blinds are notoriously difficult to clean; about a month ago Valley announced, “All those lines make me so dizzy it affects my pressure too much to do them.”

With a mind like that she really doesn’t need book learning. But her lack of it at times is somewhat pitiful. She would defend to the death her claim that she can

read and write, but when asked to get a can of tomatoes from the basement she is likely to ask "They got a red picture on 'em, don't they?" Telephone messages venture on surrealistic art when she does try to take them down. Usually she keeps them in her head till Mom comes home "so as to tell you all about it," but she invariably forgets the name, and many are the complications that arise. Mom doesn't seem to mind too much; after all, what are a few conventional friends compared to such help?

Valley is loyal to our family beyond all expectations. Just recently she has begun to cut her working days down to a few a week, but her ambition is still to take care of my first child. We often wonder what we have that attracts her so. Mom pays her less, and "tells her off" more frequently than any of our friends who desire her services. Yet if one of them does succeed in getting her to agree to work for them on one of her free days, she is likely to call up and plead illness or an important funeral. And on the next Wednesday, when Mom reads the riot act, she just flashes her ivory and gold grin and says soothingly, "But, Miz Hunter, I just can't go there. Their houze just doan feel like yours." Why a house has to feel a certain way to be cleaned is just another of life's little mysteries—to anyone but Valley.

If her ancestors could be traced, a bit of Irish would surely pop up somewhere. I am "the sweetest child that ever was," and my brother is "the prettiest boy in the world." The fact that he is a six-foot-four hunk of masculinity doesn't dampen her ardor in the least, and she always chooses a moment when I have my hair up and cold cream on to tell me how much better-looking I am getting to be. This raises the insoluble problem of whether her flattery is ridiculous or naïve, but it is undeniably pleasant to be told, as I drag in from a hard day in the cruel world, that I am glamorous.

She cleans my room each week with a thoroughness that would do an operating room proud, and no mess is

too much trouble for her to tidy up. With frightful regularity she breaks one of my miniature dogs, but her grief is so real that I usually end up by comforting her. In an attempt to replace some of the damaged canines, she once scoured a dime store and brought me two cats, a penguin, and a duck, in the firm conviction that they were unusual species of dogs. They now occupy a prominent front position in the collection—but somehow, she never even cracks them.

She's a real southern ducky and she doesn't hold with the nonsense of her race up here. Around election time she was "quite put out" at the paid voters in Dark Town. We get a wonderful picture of how the other half lives from her rambling narratives. Should there ever be a race riot, she would undoubtedly tell both sides off quite effectively and never raise her voice in doing it.

Her God is "the good Lord Jesus," and her code of ethics straight from the church where she often attends all-night services. It is the morning after one of these sessions that she is the most talkative, and her stories range from sad reality to real live miracles. Some of her tales reduce us to weak laughter, such as the one about the time she took some Cuban darkies in for dinner. They were sent up here to work in defense plants, and their summer clothing and British money baffled her no end. But she just said, "Valley, these folks is confusin' you but they's your brothers." So she stuck out the evening—and has avoided them ever since.

A born scavenger, she rifles waste baskets for anything redeemable, and we just pile up any cast-offs for her to cart home in her huge shopping bag. But only with permission does she engage in her scavenger hunts; a penny found behind a cushion is speedily brought to Mother. Her wardrobe speaks for her efforts, and it is often somewhat of a shock to see one of Mom's old dresses stretched across her bulk and my last year's Easter hat adorning her carefully Poroed coiffure. Not a curl is left after one

of those treatments, and she is a sight to behold. The leaning tower of Pisa is about the only thing comparable to one of her more reckless hair-dos.

When I said good-bye to Valley before leaving for college she warmed my heart with her parting tribute.

"Honey," she said, "what for are you going to college?"

I explained that I had to get some knowledge and improve myself, and that I'd come back much nicer and smarter.

"Honey, that's no reason at all," was her reply; "you're just naturally the smartest child in the world and you doan need to be no sweeter."

Outrageous, yes, but a nice memory to keep. And she assured me that my laundry would come "just perfect." I didn't see how she could do it any better than she had, but she insisted that "with a little extra pains, honey, I'll have you the neatest-lookin' chile in that dormitory place." So when my laundry comes in each week, I look at the carefully folded blouses and think of Valley's extra pains, and I see the dog sleeping under the ironing board and hear Valley crooning softly as she follows the wonderful adventures of Mary Marlin's struggle with life.

Compare the use of the dog under the ironing board at the beginning and end here, with that of the manure heap in "Gussy."

As you did for the type sketches earlier, go back now over the five preceding sketches of individuals and make out a list of the qualities which you find their subjects to possess. Do they appear to you to represent a logical and adequate (for the space allowed) analysis of the subject? Are these characteristics merely stated, or are they sufficiently illustrated by description, incident, speech, or impression made on others?

ASSIGNMENT

1. Write a sketch of a type character—the professor, the taxidriver, the waiter, the minister, the studious student, the

college "joe," the career girl, the scientist. Treat him (or her) as a single individual, but be sure that your sketch includes only such qualities as are common to the type and mark it off from other types, not those which individualize a person within the type itself.

2. Read

- a. "The Phantom of Fear" (page 383), and write a type sketch of man as pictured by Devoe, or (if you disagree) in answer to him.
- b. "La Grande Trappe" (page 415), and sketch a typical Trappist monk.
- c. "They Put Meaning into Brotherhood" (page 408), and sketch an Anselmite (a composite).

3. Read "Mr. Mookerjhee" (page 402), and write brief character sketches of

- a. Mr. Mookerjhee
- b. Mr. Bannerjhee
- c. Their employer (what can we infer about him, as an individual, from his discussion of them?)

4. Write at some length a highly individualized sketch of someone (beast or human) with whom you are sufficiently familiar and who is in himself interesting enough to merit your choice.

THE FAMILIAR ESSAY

All the assignments in this book are concerned, directly or indirectly, with writing of an expository kind, the primary purpose of which is to inform; yet we have seen that informative writing best succeeds when it is interesting as well. The familiar essay is another essentially expository form, but it differs from the other assignments in that its purpose is first to interest and only incidentally to inform. Consequently it is a more artistic and a less utilitarian form of composition than the others we have taken up, and likely to be written for its own sake rather than to serve any workaday end. You will find frequent examples of it in the Sunday supplements and in magazines; but the situations in life which require it of any but the professional man of letters are relatively few, the personal diary or journal and the social letter being most likely to include its charms.

The spirit of informality which is its chief characteristic, however, is one that is so valuable in making stricter expository forms readable that a little deliberate practice in the type may serve, like that in description and narration, to enliven all your writing. The familiar essay is an attitude of mind rather than a set type; and there is nothing like it to limber up one's literary joints.

This kind of essay can best be defined in terms of the adjectives variously used to describe it—"informal," "personal," "familiar," "light." It is informal in purpose and treatment, demanding none of the rigorous logical completeness of the analysis, for instance, nor the equally strict order of the process theme. It is personal beyond any interpretation of that general requirement that all your creative writing be drawn from personal experience, for its aim is to reveal not only your own experiences and opinions but the warmth of your personality as well. It is

familiar in that it takes the reader into its confidence, chatting with him conversationally and often ostensibly "off the record." It is light in its choice of subject matter, preferring the whimsical and the humorous to the weighty and the thought-provoking, and often treating the most serious subjects with levity.

The familiar essay is both the most and the least demanding of all the writing you will do; most, because its nature demands that (unlike the definition, for instance, which may be useful without being interesting) it must be pleasantly readable or it is nothing; least, because it offers remarkable opportunity for individual variation within the prescribed type. It appears in so many forms and lengths and spirits that it is difficult to prescribe any set pattern for it. But certain suggestions may help you in turning to it from the more earnest and workaday types of expository prose.

1. **Relax.** Forget the many occasions upon which, as a writer, you have been obliged to be purposeful and profound, and know the delight of irresponsibility, of frivolous reflection. Your only objective now is to charm—yourself as well as others—and you can accomplish it more easily from a mental armchair than from a platform.
2. **Your subject matter is as varied as all your experience of man and nature.** It may well be the most commonplace and trivial, but your approach to it must be fresh and original; the man who insists on calling a spade a spade will never succeed with the familiar essay. This is the place for those reflections which often occur but which never before have seemed worthy of being set down—for the whimsical, the quizzical, the curious, the fantastic.
3. **Do not attempt to be systematic or complete.** The frequent use, as a title, of "On" such and such a subject indicates that these essays are casual reflections rather

than thorough treatments. The familiar essay may defy the outline, deserting the usual laws of order and following the meandering course of the writer's thought, often digressing and sometimes even becoming interested in developing the digression for its own sake.

4. **Do not therefore assume that the familiar essay is without unity.** Your essay may follow any or all patterns—or none—but in any case its unity is less of content than of mood. You may be amusing or provocative, happy or sad, frivolous or meditative; so long as you choose and maintain a definite attitude toward your material, its arrangement will take care of itself. Even your digressions will have, from this point of view, a reason for being.
5. **Be casual.** The familiar essay is seldom the place for serious fact, criticism, argument, or moralizing—for attempting to make others believe what may be only a fleeting fancy, even for you. On the rare occasions when the underlying purpose is earnest, it is likely to be disguised under a lightness of mood. You may write of the beautiful or the nonsensical, the amusing or the pathetic, but you must not seem overearnest, or interested in accomplishing any end beyond the pleasure of the moment. If your essay sounds ponderous, it will do so only by way of contrasting humorously with a lighter purpose—as in Charles Lamb's apparently scholarly but actually facetious "Dissertation upon Roast Pig."
6. **Be personal.** The familiar essay, more than any other form of composition, offers the writer a chance to please himself first, the reader only incidentally. For the moment you are the center of all interest; and as we shall discover of the social letter (Unit 18), the successful familiar essay is that which best reveals the most interesting personality. But be less concerned with what you have experienced than with how you have reacted to it; less with what you think than with

how you feel. Appear as unreasonable, as belligerent, or as prejudiced as at the moment suits your fancy; no lover of the familiar essay will hold your idiosyncrasies against you if they are pleasant and amusing. Don't be disagreeably egotistical, however. Be as ready to laugh at yourself as at others—yet no less tolerant of your own weaknesses than of theirs.

7. Remember that the way you say it is here even more important than what you say, and give particular thought to the sound and suggestiveness of your words. Your style, like your content and your plan, is subject to infinite variation in this kind of writing, being free from many of the conventions restricting more formal types. But even in your extravagances let there be an underlying sincerity; gushing (save with deliberate and humorous intent) is as out of place in the familiar essay as elsewhere.

EXAMPLES

The following selection is written in a long-popular familiar-essay tradition—leisurely, personal, reflective, and less interested in arriving at a conclusion than in enjoying its journey.

A. STILL FISHING

August Derleth

However numerous may be the hosts of the modernists among the angling brethren, the still fisherman is with us yet, be he the barefooted boy or the ancient, loath to take up what may seem to him new methods. I take delight in seeing the barefooted lads, now that school is over, making their way to the rivers, ponds, and brooks, the inevitable can of worms in their pockets.

Ponds, brooks, running and quiet water—and just water—all have a fascination for mankind, one that may undergo mutations but never fades, and the still fisher-

man has a closer kinship to water than his more enlightened brethren who use artificial flies and plugs and come to the sport garbed in the most recent fashions, and a superfluity of advice, little of which will be of any service. The still fisherman needs only a shady spot, good water, his simple pole, and his bait; if need be, he can cut himself a willow twig to hold his catch—but it is far less important that he catch anything than it is that he have the enjoyment of his leisure.

Still fishing, say the more aloof angling brethren, is a kind of loafing. How mistaken it is to think of loafing as evidence of the error of someone's ways! It is as much an art to loaf as it is to create, and the man who forgets how to loaf is an object of pity, indeed. It is more to the point to examine modern angling methods with a view to determining just how much the claptrap of modernism has diminished rather than added to the pleasures of this most common of all summer sports. There are good cases for each side of the question, but it is undeniable that the modern angling enthusiast has little of that pure pleasure that comes from watching a cork dance on quiet water, from feeling the first tentative tugs at a line leading into the mysterious depths of a pond or river, the tremors that flow down a pole to the hands at its base—none of this; in excitement, perhaps, there is no difference, but I contend that the still fisherman combines the pleasure of sport with the delight of loafing, while the modern enthusiast has only the thrill of his game.

Be that as it may, it is the still fisherman who is the traditional angler—the barefooted boy who trudges to his favorite fishing hole as soon as he is freed from school in June, the oldster, his responsibilities lessened with the years, who can take himself off in a rowboat to the wing dams and the islands where he fished years ago, and where he fishes yet. There is nothing to equal their pleasure, save only that kind of boy's magic that comes out of lying on a hill in summer and watching the

clouds go by—and that is but another kind of loafing, a kind of still fishing, too, with less tangible but no less worthwhile game. Indeed, all loafing is a kind of still fishing, and it ceases to be only when a man has forgotten how to loaf, when his leisure is spent aimlessly, without profit to either his mind or his spirit, and he comes to know the weight of years as no one who truly knows how to loaf ever knows age.

The still fisherman is a symbol, not alone of a tradition, but of a way of life.

Like Lamb's familiar "Dissertation on Roast Pig" mentioned above, this reflection on a peculiarity of American speech purports to be the result of a scholarly investigation. Compare its crispness and directness with the style of "Still Fishing."

B. UH HUH?

Mary Maxtone

Four years ago, as a British immigrant struggling with some of the eccentricities of the American language, I was continually puzzled by a nasal honking sound which seemed to recur in nearly all conversations, though I seldom saw it in print. I started to tackle it as a problem in semantics.

First, I went to the dictionary. Unfortunately, it wasn't listed, though I looked under E for *erh her*, H for *huh unh*, and U for *uh huh*. Nothing daunted, I decided to listen carefully, jotting down parts of the conversation in which the word was spoken, in order to learn its meaning. I found the term "meaning" to be a classic example of British understatement. The word—if it may be called a word—had not one but twenty meanings. Consider these typical excerpts from my notes:

1. "Do you like spinach?"

"Unh unh." (*No, certainly not.*)

2. "Would you like to see something nice?"
"Uh huh." (*Yes!*)
3. "Have you written that letter?"
"Unh unh." (*No.*)
4. "I have been all round the world."
"Uh huh?" (*No, really?*)
5. "Where are you going?"
"Uh huh huh." (*I don't know.*)
6. "Will you do me a favor?"
"Uh . . . huh." (*Well—yes.*)

A fascinating study! To my untrained ears, the pronunciation seemed to be exactly the same each time; I later learned the immense variations of accent and inflection, the subtle nuances of tone, which could give such different meanings. I discovered the spelling, which, although not standardized, usually consists of *u-h h-u-h* for the affirmative and interrogative, and *u-n-h u-n-h* for the negative. I even found out the regional characteristics: in the South, it has four syllables; in the West, it is pronounced *erh her*; in the Middle West, the faint rumble of an *r* can be detected.

My next step was to attempt to add the new word to my own vocabulary. I practiced it frequently, and went around muttering "Uh huh, uh huh, uh huh, uh huh" until my friends began offering me Kleenex.

One day at a dinner party I tried it.

"Would you like some potatoes?" asked my hostess.

"Uh huh," I replied bravely.

"Oh, so you're on a diet!" she exclaimed, and passed me my plate potatoless. Irritated, I attributed it to her poor hearing.

A few days later, I was asked the usual question: "Do you like living in this country?"

"Uh *huh!*" I answered enthusiastically. The questioner looked pained and surprised, and murmured that that was too bad.

In the middle of a long story, a friend of mine said politely, "I do hope I'm not boring you."

"*Unh unh*," I said, trying very hard.

I never heard the end of the story, and my friend hasn't spoken to me since.

The attitude of mock-sobriety in the next is another favorite with the familiar essayist—one that sometimes leads to misunderstandings among literal minds!

C. VICTORY-GARDEN VICTORY

Herbert Coggins

Our whole present theory of farming is wrong. We coddle the things we want to grow. Instead of developing them and making them stronger, we undermine their resistance. We take from them all incentive for success. At the same time we combat weeds and unintentionally strengthen them and train them to survive.

I learned this from my first Victory Garden. I decided that the next year I would pamper the weeds and debilitate them. I would build up the stamina of my vegetables with adversity.

So the second year I left all the old vegetable plants in the ground, but I had the whole garden plowed up and cultivated to a point of luxurious fineness. I didn't waste any money on vegetable seeds or plants. Instead, I gathered and planted row upon row of lusty young thistles and wild mustard and tarweed.

These I cultivated tenderly, treating them to the best fertilizer and watering them daily. At first I weeded out any sprouting vegetables that tried to encroach upon them. My weeds shot up to unheard-of heights, and it looked as if I might develop some giant varieties. Then, as I foresaw, they turned soft and droopy. My theory was correct. I had undermined them.

At the same time aggressive tendencies were developing in the old vegetables left in the ground. They not only resented my neglect, but they became angry with the weeds for taking their place. Their stalks and leaves shot up determinedly. I wisely pinched off the first sprouts to make the plants more combative. With that, nearly all last year's roots and seeds, like a reserve army, rose up and forced their way here, there, and everywhere, and in many places crowded out the weeds.

The next season I was sure of myself. I planted great numbers of weeds and pampered them more than ever. They became sickly from the start. Beets, carrots, and lettuce ganged up on them. Squash developed a most devastating characteristic; winding their stems about the weeds, they choked them—and in some instances actually pulled them up by the roots. One plant reached out in many directions like an octopus and strangled five different thistles to death at the same time.

As anyone can realize, my plan makes farming so simple and efficient that the increased production might well have a bearing on the outcome of the war. In my own garden now, the great problem is to keep the vegetables within bounds.

With no labor on my part, the garden is so overgrown with vegetables that it is impossible to cross it without crunching radishes, carrots, and beets beneath the foot. Weeds are so scarce that I shall have to borrow some from the neighbors for next year's planting.

But if the neighbors adopt my method, they will need all their own weeds. In any event, in the future I must have a supply of noxious plants on hand as a threat and stimulus to my vegetables. So I am permanently setting aside a patch of my best soil for seeding mustard and thistles. I'm building a heavy wire screen fence about it. Otherwise the vegetables will get in among my weeds and destroy them.

Aspects of nature have always been a favorite subject for the essayist, becoming doubly enjoyable when he who loves and understands the outdoors is possessed of a really excellent literary style.

D. GREAT BLUE HERON

Alan Devoe

The wild creatures of the earth have reacted in a variety of fashions to the coming of that unique two-legged animal, gifted with a convoluted cortex and a devious will, who made his startling appearance on their earth a few millenniums ago. Some of the wild things, too gentle to survive his malignance or too instinct-fixed in old patterns of behavior to be capable of ready change, have simply perished under his assault, as man has spread and increased and carried his contrivances to more and more parts of the earth, or else they have fled helplessly before him; so that now the passenger pigeons are extinct and the ivory-billed woodpeckers, or their vestige, inhabit only the deep fastnesses of quiet forest which human machinery has not yet claimed. Other wild things, more hardy and resistant, have drawn on the subtle "deep-knowing" which served the pre-human world as mind, and have held their ground. They have sharpened and adapted their natural woods-wisdoms, their animal caniness, their old wild instincts, to deal cunningly with the man-environment; so that now the crows are human-wise as well as woods-wise, and have turned their old genius for mimicry, exuberant mischief and flock-cooperation into fluid and astonishing stratagems for coexisting successfully—almost derisively—with the invader.

The impact of humanity changes various animals in various ways. There are accommodations by docility, accommodations by guile. The wild horse has become a slave; the fox has grown trap-wise, learning the smell of

the toothed steel as well as he once knew the smell of lynx. Small sparrows have grown accommodated to soot and gasoline fumes as once they were accommodated to green hedgerows and the clear sunlit air. Animals that in the wilderness are nearly without fear save when pursued by their natural enemies have acquired, in man-places, a protective timidity and terror. Wherever we have gone, carrying our civilization into what was once the home of winged and four-footed wilderness dwellers, followers of ancient wilderness-ways and wilderness-wisdoms, we have compelled nearly all those denizens either to adapt their ways, or to flee from where we are, or to die.

But there are exceptions. There are a few creatures which, in the very midst of all our bustle of alterations and inventions, still follow precisely their ancient way. They have not accommodated their ancestral wisdoms to our pattern; they have not acknowledged our power by exhibiting a terror; they have not fled. They exist, so to speak, oblivious that we are here. Of these persisting ones, the chief and symbolic is perhaps the great blue heron.

Any man must be made to wonder, and to admire, by the wild sagacity and woods-guile with which crows and wolves and foxes have learned to deal with humanity and to survive our presence. Any man must be touched by the tragedy of the gentler and less pliable creatures, which could not endure against us. But such a bird as the great blue heron stirs an observer in a queer and special way. Grave, calm, serene, the statuesque herons wade every summer in our water-courses, heedless that the water-courses are now bordered by farm buildings or suburban apartments or macadam highways instead of by quiet alder-thickets. The noise of trains, the noise of cars, the general excitement and fever which attend our human presence . . . all these have not stirred the stately heron from its ancient and enormous calm.

The two student-written essays which follow offer a contrast between two popular essay-writing moods, the gently reminiscent and the ludicrously extravagant.

E. GRANDFATHER'S BOOTS

Mae L. M. Carter

My grandfather knew that boots fascinated me. Many times I've heard him remark, "Well, those boots carried me all over the back forty today." Then he would glance at me. If I seemed impressed, and was taking his remarks seriously, he would grin, and stoop to pat my head affectionately. My fascination for boots dated back to the autumn night that Grandmother had read "Puss in Boots" to me. In one corner sat my grandfather. After the story had ended, he assured me that when the old cat had died, he had sneaked its boots away. These were the same boots which carried him all over the farm so tirelessly each day.

"Look, Sissy," he would say; "see these boots? They keep my feet dry and warm. If I wore shoes, mud and water would seep in. No sir, nothing like boots to wear on a farm."

That Christmas he presented me with a pair of red boots. Each day I wore them to school. Many times I let my schoolmates wear them a few minutes in return for a crayon or a partly filled color book. The boots proved to be a gold mine, and I cried bitterly when I outgrew them.

Grandfather often allowed me to help clean his boots. He'd show me how to remove the mud carefully. Many years later I realized that he usually gave me a worthwhile lecture which was concealed by his talk about magic boots. "I tell you, if I hadn't had old Puss' boots today, I'd have fallen into that hole. Those boots just naturally guided me right by it." As an afterthought he'd add, "Now see, you must clean them good or the rubber

will crack. Remember that nothing is worth doing unless you do it to the best of your ability." His lessons were made painless by the methods which he employed. Needless to say, the hidden lectures and the fable of Grandfather's boots have remained together with me.

Each day at the supper table, Grandfather would ask me if I had finished my chores. If I could truthfully say "Yes," then he would roll down the tops of the boots, and I was allowed to wear them until my bedtime. Once temptation was too strong—I fibbed. That day I had forgotten to water the chicks, but dreaded to think that I would not be allowed to wear the boots. As a punishment for fibbing, Grandfather forbade me even to touch his magic boots for a week. I was heartbroken, but he was not to be swayed by tears. In vain did Grandmother try to divert my thoughts by reading "Cinderella," "Sleeping Beauty," or "Tom Thumb." At the end of the week Grandfather said only one short sentence. "Look, the magic boots are happy again." How sad I was to think that I had caused the boots to feel unhappy. I firmly resolved never to neglect my work, or to fib, again.

Grandfather's vivid imagination often took me across the country with his magic boots. He would tell me how "they just carried me right up to a bird's nest." With them I saw the new baby pigs, the black berries hanging lush on a bush, the creek as it traveled along, the new fence, and a maple sapling which grew by the little waterfall. I heard the cows lowing, bees buzzing over clover, a whippoorwill singing, and the quietness of a dense forest. I smelled the goodness of newly turned earth, and the pungent odor of wild roses which vined over the fences.

If I daydream long enough, I can still hear Grandfather telling me how he acquired his magic boots. Then I am inclined to decide that it was he who had the magic, and that boots are just boots.

F. CREW-CUT—PHOOEY!

Charles B. McVey

Spring is here for sure,
And the weather's gettin' hot.
A fella should be happy,
But jiminy—I'm not!

And how can I be blue
When spring is in the air?
The fault is simply this—
My head of crew-cut hair.

A crew-cut (let me explain to the uneducated) is nothing but an exaggerated haircut. It is not a complicated method of "hair do"—in fact, it is very simple. It is merely the result of getting too close to the barber.

I don't know why I got a crew-cut. I guess it must be that I always like to have whatever is new and different. If I buy a suit, I'm always sure to pick the one with stripes. If I buy underwear, it's got to be checkered. I'm just that way. But I went a step too far when I walked into that barber shop.

I can't blame the barber, though, because I told him to do it. I even had to persuade him. I thought any barber would be glad of a chance to close his eyes and whack away for fifty cents, but he wasn't at all. I dropped into the chair and said, "Give me a crew-cut."

"A what!" exclaimed the barber.

"A crew-cut!"

"O my! I wouldn't have it cut off if I were you. You'll regret it when it starts coming back in—stubborn as the dickens. Your hair is pretty too."

My girl too had always told me that my hair was pretty. But no, I had made up my mind.

I walked out of the shop with a light head and entered an adjacent store to buy a candy bar.

"Hello, sonny. What can I do for you?" the clerk said.

That rubbed my dandruff the wrong way. I thought that when I came to college I had become a man.

I hurried out of the store and down the street in an attempt to make my math class on time. As I entered the door, one of the "bright boys" yelled out, "Well, will you look what we've got here! Hello, Curly." That was only the beginning.

It happened that we were discussing symmetric figures that day, and the instructor said in explanation, "Your own body is ordinarily an example of symmetry, with the exception of the hair."

"But McVey is perfectly symmetric!" my classmates said in unison.

"Well, I'm talking about the average individual, not McVey."

"Anyway," I thought, consoling myself, "I can brag about one thing—I'm symmetric with respect to the y-axis."

I pulled through my classes in fairly good shape, but the worst was yet to come. I made a terrible mistake—I went home over the week-end. No, my parents didn't mind, but the certain girl I went to call on certainly did. When I had written to her that I was coming, I somehow "forgot" to mention my crew-cut. I almost never wear a hat, but when I went to call on her this time, I decided I should wear one. A fellow in college ought to look dignified once in a while.

Everything went well when she met me at the door. I won't repeat the conversation because it's rather sentimental, and to most people a matter of no importance. Then we went inside.

"Take your hat off and stay a while, Honey," she said affectionately.

"Don't you like my hat?" I said.

"Yes, I like your hat, but if you won't take it off I guess I'll have to."

If I had had any hair, my hat would have risen of its own accord, but it remained firmly on my head until she grasped it.

I didn't wait—I stuffed my ears quickly. It came—and how it came! I won't repeat what she said then either. It wasn't sentimental at all.

After I came back to the campus, I received a letter. "I don't see why you got that haircut," she said. "I loved your hair, but now that it's gone—well—what's left?"

"I went to a show yesterday, and Barbara Stanwyck ran her hands through Henry Fonda's hair. How romantic to run my hands over a shaved head!"

I am like Samson—my strength is in my hair; I lose my hair; I lose my girl. So now I have two consolations. I am like Samson, and I am symmetric with respect to the y-axis.

Spring is here for sure,
And the grass has surely riz'.
I wish my hair would do the same;
I hate it like it is.

ASSIGNMENT

1. Check back through the selections given as examples of one or another writing form, type, or problem in the preceding units, and list those which seem to you to have been treated in a mood typical of the familiar essay.

2. Classify the selections in this unit according to the form, type, or problem which they represent. Your results will make clear that the familiar essay is not so much a particular kind of writing as a special attitude toward the subject.

3. Choose a subject on which you will enjoy writing a familiar essay—some topic too trifling, some personal attitude too whimsical, to have been a suitable subject for the more earnestly intentioned papers which you have written before. It may be an aspect of nature or a custom of man, a subject on which you have written seriously before, perhaps, and now

wish to approach in a lighter mood, or a slight subject which you wish to treat with a pretense of great seriousness.

4. Try your hand at several essays, approaching the same subject, even, in various moods. You might recall a certain childhood incident, for example, humorously, nostalgically, regretfully, cynically, and so on, depending on the attitude you wish to develop toward it. The familiar essay may take liberties with many of the rules of writing—even with the principle of the unity of content—but it must be consistent in its mood.

5. What elements of the familiar essay style do you find in

- a. "Mr. Mookerjee" (page 402)
- b. "Shakespeare and I" (page 397)
- c. "Wolf Song" (page 400)
- d. "Right and Wrong" (page 420)
- e. "Burro Bill and Mrs. Bill" (page 394)

6. What evidence can you find to support the idea that "Sugaring Off" (page 390) is basically a familiar essay rather than a process essay explaining "how maple syrup is made"?

THE EXAMINATION

Some of the most important writing that you are doing in college (from the standpoint, at least, of immediate results) is what you do when examination time comes around. Yet many students with good minds, who are faithful in preparing assignments and attending classes, conscientious in taking lecture and outside-reading notes, and thorough in review, fail to get the academic recognition they merit because they give too little thought to the importance of the actual writing of the examination itself. Examinations are of two main types: the **objective**, which can be answered with a word or a symbol; and the **essay**, which requires that answers be written out at some length.

The Objective Examination

You are familiar with the objective examination in various forms—true-false, completion, multiple choice, matching—in all of which the problem of writing is reduced to a minimum. The material covered by the examination is either supplied in full for you to manipulate, or given completely enough so that you have only to recall a missing term and fit it into a certain context. Faced with such an examination paper, you have only two concerns—to understand the material and to follow directions exactly. If you read hastily through true-false statements and jump to conclusions, if you use plus and minus signs when “T” and “F” are asked for, or if you put down your answers irregularly at the sentence ends instead of blocking them at the beginning as directed, you may fail an examination for which you are perfectly prepared. The objective correction-key makes no allowance for personal idiosyncrasies and gives no credit for good intentions alone.

The objective examination is frequently a time test as well as an information test, designed to check your speed

as well as your knowledge. Consequently you would do well to run through it rapidly at first, answering only those questions whose answers occur to you at once. Then you can return and spend the necessary time on the troublesome ones, without fear that you will get caught at the end of the period with some obvious ones untouched.

The objective types of examination are generally popular with students because of the ease with which they can be taken, with instructors because of the speed with which they can be corrected, and with both because of the complete objectivity of the results. They are best suited to subjects involving little but the memorizing of a great many facts, since they test what you know, but not what you can do with your knowledge. As someone has remarked, they are designed to discover what you don't know, while the essay type permits you to reveal what you do. You may write a perfect paper of the objective sort, but only in the essay examination can you write an extraordinary one.

The Essay Examination

The essay type of examination requires that answers be written out at some length. Your entire equipment being a set of questions and a blank sheet of paper, the need for a careful following of directions increases. The student who handed in an unfinished paper late because the examination was too long got little sympathy from the instructor who pointed out that the directions (because of the crowded room) called for the answering of alternate questions only. If you are asked to answer three out of five or eight out of ten questions, there is little virtue in attempting to prove your superiority by writing on them all. Since your instructor will probably read and grade you on the required number only, you will be wiser to spend your allotment of time on a fuller treatment of the work designated.

The student who receives a set of questions is likely to

feel a great urgency to start writing on them at once. It is far better if you will devote a little time to reading the examination as a whole before you set pen to paper. Every set of questions represents an instructor's estimate of what the average student can do in the time allowed. It is easy to make the mistake of spending so much time on the first few that you are unable to finish, in which case you are usually penalized in full for the proportion of work undone.

Another reason for reading through all the questions before you start to write is to discover those that you are best prepared to answer. Not that you should do them first, as you would in the objective type, for your answers should follow the order of the questions unless you have received specific permission to change it. But an exceptionally good and complete discussion of some of the questions will likely compensate, in the reader's judgment, for a relatively brief or sketchy treatment of others. (Here is an advantage of the essay examination over the objective type, in which you can never be better than correct.) Still another reason for a careful prereading is that some questions may tend to overlap, so that you can save time by determining in advance just what you will treat of in each answer. Altogether, the few moments you spend in going over the entire examination is a well-invested portion of your examination time.

Read and consider with care not only any directions covering the conduct of the examination in general, but any indications of the manner in which a particular answer is to be prepared. Among the strictly essay questions, for example, are often found some purely factual ones which are more nearly objective in nature. If you are asked to "list six reasons" or "enumerate eight causes," there is no merit in writing a long discussion of reasons and causes instead. In fact, the examination reader, who will be looking for an answer in the requested form, will probably be in no mood to pick the vital points out of your dis-

cussion for you. If you are asked, again, to state something in a single sentence, use no more and no less; but when you are told "discuss at length" or "explain fully," a paragraph or more is in order.

It is in answering such discussion questions (and they are the more numerous and important in the essay type) that you will find a use for one or another of the types of writing already discussed in this book. You may be asked to describe a plant (Unit 1), to narrate the chief events in the life of a historical figure (Unit 2), to present the arguments for or against a social reform (Unit 3). You may be asked to tell how to make a piece of laboratory equipment (Unit 4) or how an industrial process is carried on (Unit 5), to compare or contrast two characters in a book or fiction or the circumstances leading up to two events (Unit 6), to classify peoples, poetry, or natural phenomena (Unit 7), to divide a flower or a piece of machinery into its parts (Unit 8), and most frequently of all, perhaps, to define terms from the new vocabulary which practically every subject forces you to learn (Unit 9).

Examination questions not only call for use of the various forms of writing and of the common expository patterns (treated in Parts I and II of this book), but also present you with many of the expository problems discussed here in Part III as well. Since examinations are necessarily brief, you will frequently be asked to summarize a book or a discussion (Unit 10), or to outline the main causes leading to some result (Unit 11). You will often be asked to deal critically with a scientific theory or a suggested social reform (Unit 13) or to characterize some figure in history, literature, or politics (Unit 14). You may even be asked for such a correlation of various reading materials as will recall in brief the research paper itself (Unit 12). In fact, the fields in which you are studying are so varied and the possibilities for kinds of essay-type examination questions so numerous that there is

scarcely a method of thinking or writing which you will not be called upon to make use of on examinations at one time or another.

The length of your answers will be determined by three factors: the number of questions, the time allowed, and your knowledge of your own speed of thinking and writing. The instructor who gives a single question as a three-hour final will naturally demand a wealth of detail which he will by no means expect if he gives twenty questions to be answered in an hour. The more comprehensive your answer is to be, the more pains you should take in planning it. (The habit of jotting down in rough outline form the main points you mean to discuss, on the back of your paper or in a margin, is a useful one.)

There is no special premium to be placed on length alone. Your instructor, who must read dozens of examination papers every time you write one, is likely to be at least as favorably impressed by a concise answer which drives straight to the point as by a long and flowery piece of rhetoric. A brief generalization supported by a few well-chosen examples is, in the examination as well as in other writing, worth pages of vague abstractions.

It goes without saying, of course, that just as you should take a little time at the beginning of the period to acquaint yourself with all the questions, so you should reserve a few moments at the end to reread your work, to catch possible inaccuracies of expression as well as content. Even though your writing time is thus further shortened, the time is again well spent. Whether or not an instructor consciously lowers grades for inaccuracies of composition, he cannot avoid being at least subconsciously impressed by careful as well as by careless writing.

Since your success in the essay type of examination depends upon the reader's personal evaluation of your work rather than upon an objective score, the question of neatness may be another determining factor in your grade. No one will object to careful crossings-out and interlin-

ings on the examination paper; but the greater ease with which an instructor can read a paper written in ink in a tidy hand, with reasonable margins and with spaces setting off neatly numbered answers, is certain to be reflected in his estimation of your work. This is inevitable; not that, on the college level, there is a definite "grade school" premium on neatness, but that the contents of the paper which can be read without annoyance from its form can be more certainly appreciated.

Preparing for the Examination

Perhaps in a discussion of how to write the examination, brief mention of how to prepare for it will not be amiss. From all sides you hear that cramming is a vicious habit—and every word is true. The student who has good sense and will power enough to make reviewing a simple everyday matter instead of an all-night ordeal just before the examination will get his reward not only in superior grades, which, after all, are of only immediate and trifling concern, but in the mastery of his subject, which is his reason for being a student. He who does his final reviewing the day before, gets a night's sleep, and comes to the examination without a further look at notes or textbook will gain more from his resulting clearheaded perspective of the whole subject than he will lose by forswearing those tempting last-minute looks at the minutiae.

It may sound like an ideal—but it can be done.

ASSIGNMENT

This is a unit for which you can best supply your own examples.

1. If you have access to files of old examination questions, look them through to discover the type of writing that is required in the answer. If among them are questions covering the work of courses you are now taking, try writing answers to any with which you are already familiar.

2. Save your own examination questions and compare them with your answers at your leisure, after your paper has been returned. If you got less than the highest grade, try to discover whether you were penalized for lack of preparation or poor presentation. (If in doubt, ask the instructor to go over the paper with you.) Then practice rewriting some of your answers, after referring to the suggestions given in the preceding units for the type of writing they require.

One of the most important results of your college training in composition should be that through such leisurely and painstaking writing (such as the themes you prepare outside of class for this course) you gradually become capable of writing papers comparable in quality while working rapidly and under pressure (as you are obliged to do in writing themes in class).

UNIT 17 //////////////////////////////////////

THE BUSINESS LETTER

Any firm doing business with the public by mail can testify to the confusion and delay caused by the carelessness or ignorance of its customers. Since you will be a rare person indeed if in the course of your life you find no occasion to write a business letter, you owe it to yourself to become familiar with the accepted forms and practices of business correspondence, and to make their use a fixed habit. Like learning to ride a bicycle, the acquiring of correctness demands some practice; but you will be equally well repaid, for, once acquired, the right procedures will be as natural and permanent as your sense of balance on a wheel.

Should you decide to make business a career, you will find books and courses devoted entirely to the subject of Business English, which treats of all manner of commercial problems. Here we shall disregard all types of communication between businesses and from firm to customer, taking up only those kinds of business letters which you, as a layman, are most likely to be called on to write, along with such matters of letter form and business practice as you will need in writing.

Such forms and practices have become very highly conventionalized. Liberties, of course, may be taken to obtain special effects; you may find a sales letter beginning, for instance, with an attention-getting "Good Morning!" instead of the customary "Dear Sir." But the following procedures have come to constitute standard business practice, and within their limits you can work with confidence in your correctness.

BUSINESS LETTER PRACTICE**What to Write with**

Type your letter if possible; if not, write neatly and legibly by hand. Use blue, blue-black, or black ink—never pencil.

What to Write on

The preferred stationery for general use is a good grade of white paper, "typewriter size" ($8\frac{1}{2}$ x 11 inches). It should always be unruled (use a ruled guide beneath it, if necessary, to keep your handwritten lines reasonably straight). For very brief letters you may use the half-sheet size of paper ($8\frac{1}{2}$ x $5\frac{1}{2}$). On this size you may write either the long way, producing a short letter of standard width (this is generally preferred, for convenience in handling and filing), or the short way, producing a miniature letter of standard proportions (this is chosen by some, for the relative informality of its appearance).

How to Send

Your envelope should match your paper in quality and finish as well as in color. Use the standard commercial size ($3\frac{3}{4}$ x $6\frac{1}{2}$) for the half-sheet letter, which should be folded into three parts. The two outside wings should be slightly narrower than the center section, with the right folded in first and the left over it, so that it will slip readily into the envelope (held in the left hand, face down) without catching on the sealed flaps. The recipient, withdrawing it in the same fashion after slitting the top flap, can then easily flip it open with his right thumb.

This commercial envelope will also accommodate most letters written on a full sheet if they are correctly folded into six parts. Bring the bottom up to within half an inch of the top, and crease; then fold as you would a half sheet, and it can be opened readily with the right thumb and forefinger.

For letters necessitating several full sheets or containing bulky enclosures, use the official size of envelope ($4\frac{1}{4}$ x $9\frac{1}{2}$). Fold the sheets together into three parts only, bringing the bottom up about two-thirds of the way to the top, and the top down to about half an inch from the resulting crease.

How to Arrange

Whichever size of paper you use, it is desirable that you arrange your letter on the page so that it will appear as much as possible like a well-framed picture. The spacing between the parts of your letter, and the width of your margins, may be varied in order to make different letter lengths appear to best advantage on your page. Keep all four margins approximately equal, with the left and bottom rather wider than the right and top, if anything. Hyphenate long words at the ends of lines to keep the right margin reasonably straight (check with the dictionary to be sure you have split them at the accepted places). The use of the half sheet for a very brief message will help to overcome the lonely appearance of a single line of letter on a full one, and double-spacing will help to plump out other brief messages. Only an experienced stenographer can judge accurately in advance the space a letter will occupy; but with a little care you can avoid an unnecessarily clumsy arrangement.

For long letters likely to occupy more than a page, do not reduce your margins beyond 1 to $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches. Arrange to have at least three lines of letter text on your last page, and number each page after the first. Never write on the back of a sheet.

BUSINESS LETTER FORM

The form required by custom in writing a business letter is composed of five essential parts besides the message itself: the heading, the inside address, and the salutation, which precede the message, and the complimentary close

and the **signature**, which end it. As you study the requirements for each part, refer to the model letters on page 327 for illustrations of their use.

Heading

The heading includes your address and the date on which you are writing. It customarily occupies three lines as far up in the upper right corner as is required for a good arrangement of your letter length, and far enough to the left to insure that the longest line will end at whatever margin you intend to maintain. Business firms, of course, use prepared letterheads on which their names and addresses are printed or engraved; and you yourself may have stationery on which your address already appears, at top center. If so, you need write only the date, either in the customary upper right corner position or centered on the page, but always below the address.

Inside Address

The inside address contains the name and address of the person or firm to whom you are writing, just as it will appear on the envelope (include zone number for large cities, if known). Although its use is essentially a matter of office procedure for convenience in filing and in addressing a reply, it has become conventional for all business letters. Begin it at the left margin, two or more spaces below the date.

If your letter is addressed to a firm but you wish it to come to the attention of a particular person or officer, you may include an "attention note" (see page 327), customarily centered on the page between the inside address and the salutation.

Salutation

The salutation appears at the left margin, two spaces below the inside address, and consists of the words with which you greet the person to whom you are writing.

They have been conventionalized into a few set phrases, among which these are most frequently used:

To a company:

Men	Women
Dear Sirs:	Mesdames:
Gentlemen:	Ladies:

To an individual:

Men	Women
Dear Sir:	Dear Madam:
My dear Mr. Blank:	My dear Mrs. (Miss) Blank:
Dear Mr. Blank:	Dear Mrs. (Miss) Blank:

It was once the custom to use "Dear Sir" or "Dear Madam" in greeting any individual not personally known to the writer; but now the addressee is usually greeted in more friendly fashion by name, whenever the name is known. Curiously enough, "My dear Mr. Blank" is generally regarded as a slightly more formal salutation than "Dear Mr. Blank," with "Dear Sir," of course, remaining the most formal of all.

- Note:*
1. Choose a salutation which matches the inside address in number and gender, disregarding any intervening attention note.
 2. Choose one expressing the degree of formality suited to the occasion.
 3. Capitalize the first word and all nouns.
 4. Punctuate with a colon always—nothing more.

Complimentary Close

The words by which you take your leave should begin at the center of the page width, at least two spaces below the last line of your letter. Like the salutation, they have become conventionalized into a few acceptable phrases, of which the following are most popular:

1. Very truly yours, Yours very truly, Yours truly,
2. Sincerely yours, Yours sincerely, Yours very sincerely,
Sincerely,
3. Cordially yours, Yours cordially, Cordially,

The first group is very impersonal, the second more friendly, the third the warmest. Words like "faithfully" and "respectfully" have gone out of general business use, along with the somewhat subservient attitude they suggest.

- Note:*
1. Choose a close that will match the degree of formality expressed in your salutation.
 2. Capitalize the first word only.
 3. Punctuate with a comma.

Signature

Directly under the complimentary close, sign your name as you are in the habit of writing it. Be sure that it can be easily read; do not pride yourself on one of those highly distinctive signatures which look more like a careless drawing than a row of letters (experts say they are more easily forged than a decipherable one). If you type your letter, type your name also, to make certain of its legibility, but leave room between the complimentary close and the typed name for your handwritten signature, to certify the letter as your own. If you are writing in any official capacity, your title should appear below your name. Do not punctuate either signature or title.

As to social titles, a man never signs himself "Mr.," since that title is taken for granted. But a woman must indicate whether she is "Miss" or "Mrs.," for the information of those who will address her in reply. Those titles are not a part of her legal signature, however, and should never be written as such, but in parentheses.

- An unmarried woman:* (Miss) Jane Brown
A widow: (Mrs.) Jane Brown
A married woman: Jane Brown
(Mrs. Charles R. Brown)

The initials that usually appear at the left margin of a business letter issuing from an office, opposite or slightly below the signature, are those of the dictator and the stenographer, for purposes of record. As an individual writing your own personal business letters without benefit of secretary, you will omit them.

BUSINESS LETTER STYLE

Arrangement

You may arrange the parts of your business letter form according to either of two styles, **indented** or **block**.

Indented. Arrange the lines of the heading and the inside address diagonally by indenting each succeeding line an equal distance (about two letter spaces) beyond the one above. The diagonal arrangement resulting is the older of the two styles and is still preferred by the conservative, upon occasion, because of its greater consequent dignity, and for handwritten letters, in which it is difficult to follow the block pattern successfully.

Block. Arrange the lines one underneath the other vertically. This style came into being with the typewriter, because of the greater ease of beginning each line at the same point, on the machine; its popularity is now so great that it has almost completely displaced the older indented style in business correspondence. Carried to its logical conclusion by the efficiency expert, this style would demand that every line, including the date, the opening sentence of each paragraph, and the complimentary close and signature, begin at the left margin. Present business practice, however—as you may discover for yourself by examining the next few letters you receive—most frequently involves one or another variety of compromise, often called “semi-block.” In this form the heading is blocked but left in its usual position on the right side, and the inside address is blocked at the left margin. The paragraphs may or may not be indented (if not, the shift from one to another will

be readily indicated by the blank line customary between single-spaced paragraphs; if double-spaced, always indented), and the complimentary close and the signature may or may not be moved from the center of the page to the left margin.

Note: The salutation always begins at the left margin, and the complimentary close and the signature are usually blocked in either form.

Punctuation

You may punctuate your business letter form according to either one of two styles, **closed** or **open**.

Closed. Every line of the heading and the inside address must be followed by a comma, except for the last line of each, which is closed with a period.

Open. No terminal punctuation is used in the heading or the inside address.

You may use either style of punctuation with either style of arrangement, but because closed punctuation and the indented style are the older forms, they are more frequently used together; the block style is usually accompanied by open punctuation.

Note: 1. Your choice of punctuation affects only the heading and the inside address; the colon after the salutation, the comma after the complimentary close, and the omission of punctuation after the signature are constants in all business practice, and are unaffected by your choice of style.

2. Whichever style of arrangement or punctuation you choose, be consistent within a given letter.
3. You will do well to decide on the style which you prefer, and to practice it consistently in your business correspondence, so that its correct use will become second nature to you.

Envelope

1. In writing the outside address on the envelope, follow the style of arrangement and of punctuation which you have used in the letter itself, except for your return address, in the upper left corner, which you should always block for the sake of compactness. Single-space it for the same reason.
2. Double-space the name and address of the person or firm to whom you are sending the letter (unless it contains so many items that single-spacing is necessary), in order to make it easier for postal employees to read. Begin it at the approximate center of the envelope, so that it will occupy the lower right quarter of the envelope face.
3. Special directions such as the attention note, "Personal," or "Please Forward" should be placed in the lower left corner.
4. Attach the stamp—right side up—well inside the upper right corner of the envelope; it will look better and be less likely to be torn off than if allowed to run over the edges.

Abbreviations

You may correctly use the abbreviations "Mr." and "Mrs.," of course, since they are never written out; and other abbreviations in common use, such as initials, directions (1014 E. Morton Street), St. Louis, Washington, D.C., U.S.A., 142 Rosewood Boulevard NW (designating an area in a city), Mumford & Jones (provided the firm itself uses the ampersand). But you should avoid abbreviations of month and state names, of "street" or "avenue," and of "company." These are generally frowned upon in business letter writing, the slight saving of time effected being insufficient to offset the appearance of haste or laziness and the sacrifice of dignity accompanying their use.

I.

425 Merton Road,
Danville, Ohio,
December 16, 1949.

Doctor John McClelland,
17 Manistee Boulevard,
Cleveland, Ohio.

My dear Doctor McClelland:

I have just discovered that I shall be unable to keep my appointment with you at 4 P.M. on Thursday afternoon, December 20, because of an important board meeting of which I did not know when I was in your office last week.

It appears advisable now to wait until after the holidays. May I see you at the same hour on Thursday, January 3? Please drop me a card confirming this time, or suggesting a later one at your convenience.

Sincerely yours,
George R. Weston

II.

Route 3, Box 61
Naylorton, Tennessee
February 21, 1950

The Acme Photo Company
1018 East Moore Street
Detroit 7, Michigan

Attention: Mr. H. A. Green, Manager

Gentlemen:

The price you quote in your letter of February 16 for the tinted, framed enlargement of my two sons, about which I had written you earlier, is entirely satisfactory.

I am therefore enclosing the negative, together with the list of colors you requested, and shall look forward to receiving the completed picture in about ten days, as you have indicated.

Very truly yours,
Ethel Anderson
(Mrs. Robert H. Anderson)

ASSIGNMENT

1. Identify the conventional letter parts with which the messages in Letters I and II are equipped.
2. Name the style of arrangement used in Letter I.
3. Is Letter II written in complete or semi-block form?
4. Name the style of punctuation used in Letter I; in Letter II.
5. In what points is the form of the two letters identical? In what different?
6. Which is the more commonly used? What are the advantages and disadvantages of each? Which do you prefer?
7. Does the choice of salutation and complimentary close correctly indicate in each letter the degree of formality involved?
8. Address an envelope (an appropriately sized rectangle will serve for practice) for Letter I, including your return, and following the letter pattern. Do the same for Letter II, and note the similarities and the differences in your results.
9. Practice folding an $8\frac{1}{2} \times 11$ sheet and inserting it properly into a commercial envelope; into an official envelope. Repeat with a half sheet and a commercial envelope. Practice until you can perform the required operations smoothly and correctly, without pausing to think.
10. How many errors can you discover in this letter form?

June 17, 1945
145 Glassell Ave.
Syracuse, New York

Brandon Brothers
1818 Dover Street
Pullman, Washington.

Dear sir,

.....

Yours Truly
Mabel Saunders.

BUSINESS ENGLISH

"Business English" is no new and different kind of expression; it is concerned no more and no less with clearness and correctness than is all your other writing. But, being of a very practical nature, with the aim of getting something done rather than of merely informing or entertaining, the English of business tends to be simpler and more direct. The most easily discernible difference between it and "literary" English is its use of shorter paragraphs, shorter sentences, shorter words—a conciseness designed less to charm than to be readily understood. There is little room in business correspondence for plays upon words or other delightful but time-taking rhetorical devices; your business letter should say what it has to say as clearly and as briefly as is consistent with expressing all the necessary facts effectively.

Two tendencies distinguish modern business correspondence from that of an earlier day. One is its adoption of a more personal and friendly manner. Once the businessman was regarded—and regarded himself—as a kind of vassal, a necessary but inferior creature who humbly begged, and was grateful for, small favors. This attitude led to such salutations as "Respected Sir" and to such closes as "Your humble and obedient servant." The modern businessman is an equal in enterprise who offers rather than begs, and his improved status is reflected in the natural, even conversational, style of his letter writing.

The other modern trend is a sharp turn away from the great formality of the past, a formality which once reduced the business letter to little more than a series of elaborate set expressions. Such time-wasting patterns as "Yours of the 10th inst. at hand and contents noted" and "We are in receipt of your letter written under date of May 16" have now been ruled out in favor of a direct and sincere reply, simply and freshly worded to suit the particular circumstances that called it forth. Participial

beginnings such as "Replying to your letter of March 6," and endings that glide into the complimentary close ("Hoping to hear from you soon, we remain") are now taboo, largely because they recall unpleasantly the day of stereotyped business phrases.

The modern demand for simplicity sometimes goes to an undesirable extreme known as the telegraphic style, however, in which the writer lops off words as though they were costing him so much each.

Received your letter. Adjustment suggested is satisfactory. Will return goods at once and await immediate refund.

Make your business English the language of natural speech; but remember that the complete sentence is desirable, even in speaking.

TYPES OF BUSINESS LETTERS

The Inquiry

You will frequently need to write to a business firm to ask for information, prices, catalogues, types of accommodations. Beyond following the matters of form already discussed, your letter should observe three requirements.

1. **Be explicit.** Be sure that your request is clear, and that you have included enough details to make a definite reply possible. A letter to a hotel asking if it has rooms available is aimless, unless you include the date; one inquiring about rates is equally time-wasting, unless you mention the size of your party and the type of accommodations preferred. Make your inquiry so clear that the reply may be an answer, instead of a request for more specific information, with consequent additional correspondence and delay.
2. **Be brief.** Include all necessary details, but none that are beside the point. A request for information about a company's procedures would appropriately include the use to which you planned to put it, but an inquiry

about tickets for the theater need not include your reasons for wishing to see the play.

3. **Be courteous.** Even though your inquiry will likely lead to business which the firm will be only too glad to get, you should remember that, at the moment, you are asking a favor. "Send me your catalogue" will doubtless get results, but a more gracious wording is to be preferred; although servility in business correspondence is a thing of the past, "please" and "thank you" are still welcome oil in the gears. Avoid, however, the hackneyed "Thanking you in advance." Should your inquiry ask for information or material which will benefit you alone (except for the good will the company may win by supplying it), the need for courtesy is of course sharply increased.

A. TO A SEED COMPANY

Will you please send me a copy of your 1946 "Gardener's Guide" as advertised in the May issue of the *Farm Journal*.

1. A question that is not really a question but merely a politely worded command is customarily punctuated with a period instead of a question mark.
2. A mention of the source through which you learned of the literature requested is an added courtesy; it helps the company not only to know exactly what you wish, but also to check up on the efficacy of its advertising media.

B. TO A CAMERA SUPPLY HOUSE

I own a camera made by the Veldt Optical Company, one of their old 4 x 4 plate size models called the "Ranger." Through age and disuse the bellows has dried and cracked until it has begun to leak light.

As this camera is a favorite of mine and is otherwise in good repair, I wish to inquire whether or not you have such a

bellows in stock for replacement. If so, could I install it successfully myself, or must I send the camera in to have you make the change?

Please give me an estimate of the probable cost involved.

1. All the many necessary details and possibilities are included, thus eliminating needless further correspondence.
2. By the rules of "literary" English, this letter, being brief and all on one subject, might well have been written as a single paragraph. But here the shorter paragraphs, making the turns of thought (from situation to remedy to expense) more readily grasped, are preferable; they lessen the likelihood of any part of your inquiry being overlooked in reply.
3. The second sentence in the second paragraph is a real question, not a mere polite command like the preceding letter; hence the customary question mark.

There is perhaps as much danger that the average letter writer will give too many details as too few. The files of almost any firm, particularly the big mail-order houses, can furnish amusing examples of letters in which the writers "wear their hearts on their sleeves" and include many private matters entirely irrelevant to the inquiry—to the exclusion, too often, of really vital details.

C. TO A LADIES' READY-TO-WEAR FIRM

I am writing to ask you how much you would charge me for a silk dress for my wife Mabel. She is a little woman and only stands about as high as my shoulder. We have been married twenty-five years next Fourth of July, and she has been a good wife to me nearly the whole time. She likes red, but I think black is better at her age, and I want to pay a good price for it. Not too expensive, as I just work by the day, but nice, because I think she has earned it.

1. What unnecessary details are here included?
2. What needful information has been omitted?

D. TO A TRAVEL AGENCY

As I am hoping to take my family on a vacation trip this summer, I am interested in knowing what kind of tours you have to offer.

We shall be able to spend about a month away from home, and prefer to devote part of that time to a lake cruise. There will be four in our party: my twin eight-year-old sons, my wife, and I. We wish first-class Pullman and boat accommodations, as well as hotel, and prefer that you quote us on all-expense conducted tours.

May we have any literature that you have available on those sections of the country which we might reasonably reach from here in the time allowed.

1. The personal items here included are all necessary to the successful answering of the inquiry: the fact that it is a vacation rather than a business trip, the size of the family, the age and sex of the children.
2. While the writer is asking for general rather than specific information, the statement of the type of trip and the quality of the accommodations desired helpfully narrows down the tour literature and price lists which the agency will need to send.

The Order

The habit of buying goods by mail has been firmly established during the last couple of generations through the rise of the great mail-order houses, whose care in building up public confidence has led to a tremendous increase in all sorts of sight-unseen buying. Many firms provide their customers with order blanks on which spaces are carefully provided for all the information required in this type of business communication. Lacking such, you will need to write a letter in which you are careful to include three kinds of information:

1. **The exact description of the article desired:** quantity, catalogue number (if known), size, color, and price.

2. The method of shipment: parcel post, express, freight; the "fastest" or the "cheapest" way; special delivery; prepaid or collect.
3. The arrangement for payment: C.O.D.; cash, stamps, check, draft, or money order enclosed; charged to account.

E. TO A MANUFACTURING CONCERN

Please send me 1 8-inch bench saw, complete with stand and $\frac{1}{2}$ h.p. motor, as advertised in the March *Home Craftsman*.

I enclose a bank draft for \$39.95, the price of the outfit, and understand that you will ship it at once by collect freight.

1. This letter is both brief and explicit—qualities the order should share with the inquiry.
2. It further satisfies the particular requirements of the order letter by making clear the item desired, the method of shipment, and the arrangement for paying.

If you are ordering a number of items, you can help the person who fills your order by arranging them one per line, in columns such as an order blank would provide.

F. TO A MAIL-ORDER HOUSE

Please send me by parcel post the following merchandise as advertised in your Spring and Summer catalogue:

#1E83	1	sweater	blue	size 36		4.96
#7E291	2	prs. canvas gloves	brown	large	@ 29¢	.58
#2E17	6	sheets		81 x 99	@ 1.10	6.60
						12.14
Postage on 10 lbs. to 3rd zone						.29
Money order enclosed						12.43

The words "immediately," "promptly," and "at once" appended to the shipping directions in order letters are so generally used as to be almost useless. However, if you must have the goods by a certain date, or if for any reason

you want shipment postponed until a specified time, an explanation of the circumstances, accompanied by the exact date, will usually secure for your order the special attention it requires.

G. TO A NURSERY

I enclose my check for \$8.64 for 1 dozen 2-year-old Delicious apple trees as advertised on page 16 of your new spring catalogue, at your special dozen price of \$9.60 less 10% for a cash order in January.

Please ship them express collect at the time which you have found to be best for setting them out in this locality.

H. TO A DRY GOODS FIRM

I wish to order 50 yards of your #614 red, white, and blue bunting at 13¢ a yard, provided it can be shipped so as to reach me by July 3 without fail. If you can supply it, please send it by parcel post, special delivery, and charge the goods and the shipping costs to my account.

If you cannot, please wire me collect upon receipt of this order, so that I can make other arrangements.

The Complaint

Business transactions frequently produce difficulties which require correction. Goods fail to arrive, they are damaged in transit, the wrong thing has been sent or the right one proves unsatisfactory—such situations call for the letter of complaint. In this type of correspondence courtesy is not only a pleasing grace, it pays; for, as the old saying goes, more flies are caught with honey than with vinegar. To the business firm the “customer is always right”—particularly if he is reasonable as well.

1. **Be sure that your cause for complaint really exists.** Better to wait a day or two, for instance, than to send a complaint of non-arrival which is likely to cross the shipment. You may find yourself too close for com-

fort to the situation of the old farmer in the anecdote who sent a thundering letter complaining of a delay, to which he had added: "P.S. The mailman just now brought the stuff."

2. **Be equally sure that your complaint is just.** Check your order to make sure that you wrote the size correctly, before you assign the blame for the failure of the shoe to fit.
3. **When you are certain that something for which you are not responsible is amiss, write your complaint, being both courteous and reasonable.** Be exact and clear in recounting the cause for your dissatisfaction, and suggest what you regard as a suitable adjustment.

Someone has observed that the wise man will handle every unpleasant situation in terms of the results he wishes, rather than of the immediate emotion which he is tempted to express. This observation certainly has a particular truth for the writer of the letter of complaint. Consider the following:

I. TO A DEPARTMENT STORE

Last week I spent good money to go clear in to Memphis to buy a sweater at your Sports Bar. I got one, but your salesgirl was careful not to tell me that it was soiled from lying around too long on your shelves waiting for a sucker like me, and I didn't find it out till I got home. I think any store that does that kind of business ought to be ashamed of itself, and I can promise you that you won't get any more trade from me or any of my friends.

1. The writer now probably feels much better—for the time being.
2. She gives the store not only no suggestion as to a suitable adjustment, but no opening for making any.
3. If she is wise, she will follow Mark Twain's practice by tearing this caustic masterpiece into shreds and sending the following in its place:

J. TO THE SAME STORE

When I was in Memphis last week-end, I bought a beige wool slipover sweater at your Sports Bar for \$3.98. Not until I got home did I discover that there were two badly soiled streaks down the center of the back where it had lain folded on the shelf.

Do you wish to have me return it in exchange for another, or to pay for having it cleaned locally? (The cost would be \$1.00.) I should prefer to have it cleaned, as I think you did not have another one in stock of just this style and shade.

1. The lack of recrimination is not only courteous but just, since it appears that no one is particularly at fault. (The customer can scarcely blame the salesgirl for not noticing what she herself had overlooked.)
2. The psychology of taking for granted that an adjustment will be made is particularly sound, and far superior to merely asking if the firm will make one.
3. The suggestion of specific adjustment possibilities, with a statement of the customer's preference, will be a boon to the adjustment office.

The Letter of Application

Unless you are one of those fortunate individuals who have jobs waiting for them the minute they get out of college, you will probably start writing application letters very seriously in the last term of your senior year, or sooner. Perhaps you have already written them for summer work; you may quite likely have occasion to write them again, later in your career.

Since such a letter is likely to mean your very bread and butter, it is probably the most important business type that you will ever be called on to write. Courtesy and clearness are sufficient graces for the letter of inquiry, the order, the complaint; but to these virtues the application must add appeal. It is well to think of the letter of application for what it is—a sales letter—and to

remember that individuals, like businesses, do not get very far in the face of modern competition without some knowledge of the psychology of salesmanship.

1. **Do not be diffident.** The door-to-door salesman who used to go up to housewives saying, "You don't want to buy some magazines, do you?" may have gotten a few orders out of pity, but he didn't get fat. Never begin with such expressions as "I don't know whether I would succeed in this position or not," or "I have never had any experience in your type of work." In applying for a job, it is not enough to put your best foot foremost; keep the other safely out of sight.
2. **Do not be boastful.** A statement like "I have always been a supersalesman ever since I was a child," or "I have always outranked every other student in my class" may be perfectly true, but it is likely to antagonize. Leave such information for others to supply in the letters of recommendation they write for you.
3. **Never sound superior to the work for which you are applying.** No employer was ever won by such remarks as "I am willing to work for you until I can find a place that suits me better," "My previous experience has been with bigger firms than yours," or "I should not be looking for a job except for recent financial reverses in my family."
4. **State honestly but modestly the actual achievements which may fit you for the job, but do not include irrelevant items from your past.** Remarks which may be entirely justified in one application may be mere boasting in another. "All through high school I spent my spare time caring for the neighbors' children" might be relevant information in an application for work in a nursery school, but hardly for a stenographic position. "In college I was elected the most popular man in my class" might be fit and useful information if you are asking for work in a sales organization, but inappropriate boasting if you are applying for work as a laboratory technician.

5. Remember that a prospective employer is more interested in what you can do for him than in what he can do for you, even in this age of social consciences. "Because of my lifelong interest in and study of railroading, I believe that I can make myself useful to the X Railroad" is a more ingratiating remark than "I want to work for you because my girl lives in X-ville," or "because I like your retirement plan."
6. Use every legitimate means at your disposal to make your letter stand out favorably from others, for it may reasonably be one among dozens or even hundreds received from qualified persons. But do not mistake mere freakishness for individuality. The application letter is an essentially serious and dignified performance, not lending itself readily to the extreme devices often employed in other types of sales letters.

Content

The material included in your letter of application will normally fall into five main sections: **introduction**, **personal data**, **qualifications**, **list of references**, and **conclusion**.

Introduction. How you begin your letter will depend on the kind of circumstance that called it forth.

1. If you are answering an advertisement, you will of course begin with a reference to that fact.
2. If you have learned indirectly of an opening, you will probably mention the name of the agency or friend who informed you.
3. If you have no knowledge of a particular opening but are sending out a number of letters to employers for whom you think you would like to work, you may begin with some mention of the reasons which have induced you to apply to them in particular.

Personal Data. You will include a list of objective facts about yourself as an individual, apart from any qualifications you may have for the job. This will include such items as your age, height, weight, sex, race, nationality, religion, marital status.

Qualifications. Most important is a statement of the qualifications which fit you for the job applied for: your education, experience, inclination, aptitude.

References. List the names, official positions, and addresses of the people whom you have chosen as best qualified to speak for you as to both character and ability. (And don't forget to ask their permission in advance, and to thank them later for writing in your behalf.)

Conclusion. Like every good sales letter, the application should end with some effort to induce action: a request for an interview; mention of an enclosed stamped, addressed envelope; an expressed hope for an early and favorable reply.

Which of these many items to stress and which to omit will depend, of course, on the nature of the work for which you are applying. Religion might be a more important issue in getting a teaching position than a business job. Experience will play the major role in the application of a person already well established in his profession; education (with specific reference to relevant courses) and recommendations will be the chief stock-in-trade of most college students.

Data Sheet

If the material that you find necessary or wise to include will involve a long letter—more than a page—it is a good practice to shift the **objective**, or factual, information (personal data, qualifications, references) to a separate unit called the data sheet. Here it can be arranged neatly and clearly, under suitable headings and subheadings easy for the prospective employer to consult and file if he is interested, or to avoid the trouble of reading if he is not.

The greatest advantage of the use of the data sheet is that the application letter itself is thus not only shortened and made more readable, but freed to concentrate on the

more important task of making your personal appeal. Here you will present your **subjective** material: your account of your interest in the job, your general aptitude and inclination for it, and the hopes you have for accomplishment in the field. Remembering that the letter of application is first of all a sales letter, you will recognize the importance of these remaining items and of the impression they will make on the reader, who will read not only the lines but between the lines, and who may be more impressed—favorably or not—by what he thus discovers of you as an individual than by all the facts ascertainable through the data sheet.

K. ANSWERING AN ADVERTISEMENT

(Wanted: college girl to read to invalid lady afternoons or evenings. Box 41, Sheldon Post.)

Your request in today's *Post* for a college girl to read to an invalid has just appeared, and I am writing to ask that I be considered for the position.

I have already had some experience as a reader, for my grandmother, who had lost her eyesight, lived in our home while I was in high school. Now I am a junior in the university, where I am majoring in speech, my chief interest being in interpretive reading.

Professor John Secord of the Speech Department can speak for my reading ability, and Reverend A. W. Smith, director of the Presbyterian student center, may be consulted as to my personality and character.

My present schedule leaves my every afternoon free except Tuesday and Thursday, and I am available practically any evening. I should like nothing better than a few hours a week of such congenial part-time work. May I arrange for an interview? My phone number is 66774.

L. ABOUT A KNOWN OPENING

I expect to complete my work for the A.B. degree, with a major in history, at Blesser College in June, and am hoping to begin work on an M.A. (with a Ph.D. and a college teaching

position as my ultimate goal) at Hampton University next fall. I am unable to do so, however, without some financial assistance; and through Dr. Harold Hamilton, head of the History Department here, I have learned of the graduate assistantships which you offer yearly to a limited number of men who have completed their undergraduate work and wish to continue studying toward advanced degrees.

Upon graduation I shall have 42 semester hours of credit in history courses here at Blesser, 15 of them from courses open to graduate as well as to undergraduate students. My grade average in all my undergraduate work to date has been B, and in my history courses slightly higher (about B⁺). My major interest has been the American Revolutionary period, in which I took a senior seminar and on a phase of which I am now writing my honors thesis.

For the past year and a half I have worked part time for Dr. Hamilton, taking roll and grading papers for one of his freshman courses here. He has offered to write to you about me, at your request, as has Dean Robert Snow of the Liberal Arts college. If it appears to you that I might be eligible for one of your assistantships, I shall be glad to send my complete transcript to you for evaluation, and to supply you with any other information about myself, my work, or my plans that you may desire.

M. IN HOPE OF AN OPENING

It has long been my ambition to become an airline hostess, and as this is combined with a special interest in South America, I would particularly like to work for Pan-American. I understand that your main flights are to South American points, and the fact that I speak fair Spanish and understand some Portuguese might make me particularly useful in your organization.

At present I am a senior in Flanham College, where I am majoring in psychology with special emphasis on personnel work. I am also active in a number of campus organizations which are giving me experience in working with and handling people. My college minor is languages—Spanish and Portuguese.

I have always been much interested in all phases of aviation,

and am now learning to fly at the Hoadley Airport nearby, having twelve hours of flying time to my credit at present. In addition, I have been taking such related subjects as are offered here at Flanham.

The accompanying data sheet will give you a more complete knowledge of my preparation and experience, as well as a list of persons to whom you may write for further information about me. I do not know whether you are taking on beginners for your special training course at present or not, but if you are I should be very happy to come to Chicago for an interview any time this spring (preferably on Saturday, to avoid missing classes). If you have no openings at present but anticipate some in the near future, I should be pleased to have you keep my application on file.

Data Sheet

Personal

Name: Mary Louise Donham

College address: Sarah Black Residence Hall, Flanham
College, Danvers, Iowa

Home address: 286 N. Oak St., Moulton, Illinois

Age: 22 Nationality: American

Height: 5'2½" Marital status: single

Weight: 110 lbs. Health: excellent

Education

Moulton High School graduate, February, 1946

6 months in Wahl Business College, Moulton, 1946

B.S., Flanham College (expected in June, 1950)

Major in psychology

Minor in languages

General courses: English, history, mathematics, physics,
chemistry, psychology, sociology

Special courses: meteorology, navigation, engineering,
drawing, service and operation of air-
craft

Activities

Airways Club (founding member)

Flanham Christian Foundation (secretary, 2 years)

Science Club (program chairman, 1 year)

Experience

Secretary to director of personnel, Ames Aircraft Corporation, Benzie, Illinois (1 year)

Student assistant to head of Sarah Black Residence Hall, Flanham College (2 years, part time)

References

Dr. Ernest Beers, Head of Psychology Department, Flanham College

Mrs. Edna Markham, Director of Personnel, Ames Aircraft Corporation, Benzie, Illinois

Mr. Ted Houston, Manager, Hoadley Airport, Danvers, Iowa

ASSIGNMENT

The following requirements are stated generally, instead of being given in the form of specific problems, so that you can choose subjects you are really interested in, some real life situation for which you are writing an actual letter, instead of merely going through the motions of a classroom exercise

1. Write a letter inquiring about vacation tours, resort accommodations, services offered, goods for sale—to any actual business firm from whom you would really be interested in getting information. (Look through the current issue of a popular magazine for suggestions.)

2. Write a letter ordering merchandise, repairs, tickets—anything which you would actually like to have from an actual firm with a real address.

3. Write a letter complaining about any unsatisfactory goods or services (repairs, transportation, and the like) which you have recently had the misfortune to encounter.

4. Write a letter replying to a classified ad in your local paper, in which you apply for a position that you are actually qualified to fill.

5. Write a letter applying for summer work at some place where you know there is an opening in some line of work of which you are capable.

6. Write a letter of application, accompanied by a data sheet, applying for the position which you think you would like when you get out of college. Direct it to an actual firm by whom you would like to be employed.

UNIT 18 **////////////////////**

THE SOCIAL LETTER

There is no need to attempt to list for you the kinds of situations that will require you to write the social, or friendly, letter; now that you are in college, you are probably devoting more time to it than to any other type of composition. You are constantly writing back home to your family, to the friends you have left behind—to Her and to Him; and as your changes of environment continue and your circle of intimates is enlarged, your need for keeping in close personal touch with those absent will be multiplied.

Form

Most of the letters that you are now writing—to family, to sweetheart, to friend—are guided by no such rigorous rules of form as business practice demands. There are, however, certain conventions of beginning and end, which you observe more or less loosely in all your correspondence, and which you should follow carefully in the more formal¹ of social letters—those written to someone whom you do not intimately know, for instance, or on an occasion which requires that you be on your “best behavior.”

A comparison of the form required for such letters and that demanded by business practice reveals, along with many similarities, the following differences, which you should note carefully in order to avoid confusing the two forms in any detail.

1. An inside address is never used in the social letter; being a matter of office routine, it can serve no purpose

¹ This unit does not take up the truly “formal” note of invitation and reply, with its highly conventionalized requirements of third-person pronouns and spelled-out numbers. Consult any good etiquette book for its rigid patterns, when the occasion for its use arises.

here and, if used, would only look disagreeably businesslike.

2. A comma is always used after the salutation, instead of the business colon.
3. The salutation, never more formal than "My dear Mr. (Mrs., Miss) Smith," may be as informal as "Dear Genevieve" or "Dear Bill"—whatever is appropriate to the person and the occasion. "Dear Friend," however, is no longer in good use.
4. The complimentary close, never more formal than "Yours sincerely," may be varied, like the salutation, to express any greater degree of intimacy that may be suitable. "Your friend" is frowned upon as hackneyed.
5. The signature, too, may be the full name required in business letters, or more informal. The feminine titles of "Miss" and "Mrs.," for instance, and even the surname, may well be omitted, if sufficiently known to the addressee.

Compare in all details the form of the following with that of the business letters on page 327.

817 Oakland Avenue
Ann Arbor, Michigan
January 16, 1950

Dear Bob,

Back again at the old grind, but full of pleasant memories of last week-end with you in Chicago. You certainly did me proud—the recollection of all the places we went and the things we saw and did will go a long way toward getting me through the rest of this long winter, until we can both get back up to the lake in June.

I am mailing the book you lent me to read on the train—it lasted me almost to Jackson! Thanks for it—and for everything. I'll be waiting eagerly to hear how your change of jobs works out.

As ever,
Jack

Arrangement

The arrangement of the parts of the social letter follows business practice, you will notice, insofar as those parts are identical. Social custom being more conservative, however, closed punctuation and the indented style remain in greater favor than in business use, but open punctuation and variations of the block style are becoming increasingly popular.

The width of margins will necessarily vary greatly with the size of paper used, but enough space should be left on all four sides of the page to present a pleasing "frame" for the message.

There is no objection to writing on both sides of the paper if it is of a sufficiently good quality.

Tools

A pencil, with its indication of haste, laziness, or lack of consideration for the correspondent, should never be used.

The typewriter long remained out of favor with friendly letter writers, as smelling too much of the office. But with the steady increase in the use of portables in the home, this antagonism is slowly vanishing, and the machine is increasingly welcomed in social correspondence—by the writer for its greater speed, and by the reader for its increased legibility.

The personal appeal of the handwritten letter, however, is still preferred by many—and for the more dignified social uses, by all. Blue, blue-black, or black ink is preferable to any of the many vivid novelty shades now available.

Stationery

The varieties of stationery acceptable for social correspondence are so numerous that few hard-and-fast rules can be laid down concerning it. It comes folded, and in single sheets; it varies from tiny notepaper to the large "club" size; and the available shapes, colors, and finishes

are legion. The following considerations, however, should help you in your choice:

1. The tiny sizes are frowned upon, for obvious reasons, by post-office employees.
2. Good taste rules out most of the colors, especially in the more vivid shades; white is always a safe choice.
3. Paper and envelope should match in size and finish. The paper should be folded to fit the envelope provided, with the beginning of the message always inside.
4. Many people prefer to adopt and maintain the use of a certain type of paper over a long period of time, as a badge of individuality. Good standard brands of paper can be purchased by the pound (in various styles, with matching envelopes by the package) much more cheaply than in fancy gift boxes.

Cards

The post card, being entirely lacking in privacy, should be used for only the most informal and hurried purposes.

The greeting card, with its own envelope, is appearing in ever-increasing numbers—a printed message often accompanied by highly colored illustrations. Now available for every conceivable situation, from holiday greetings to such highly personal matters as thanks for gifts and expressions of sympathy, these cards constitute one of the many answers to the modern world's demand for speed and efficiency. For this very reason they may well be used far more sparingly in social correspondence than their manufacturers suggest. For no printed card, however carefully chosen, can ever be as personal as a written message; and while it may sometimes be justified, it is coming to be vastly overused. The popular Christmas card with its sender's name printed or engraved may well be resorted to by the person who feels it necessary to remember himself to large numbers of mere acquaintances—colleagues, business associates, or employees—but it is hardly the thing for one's friends, without the addition of a personal

note, for its receipt indicates nothing more intimate than the fact that one's name was on the mailing list of the sender, who probably handed it over to his wife or his secretary. The more intimate the relationship and the more demanding the occasion, the less appropriate is the printed card, the use of which indicates too often an unwillingness to spend the time necessary to thinking out and writing a few personal words, and is always evidence of the regrettable modern tendency to be content with stereotyped means of satisfying human needs.

Notes

The personal note is always preferable to the purchased card; but even the card is better than the too-frequent neglect of occasions of which social courtesy requires acknowledgment.

Promptness. Too many such notes go unwritten, despite the best of intentions, merely because the proper time is allowed to pass by. Remember that they take no longer to write when they are due than later; they are, in fact, usually easier to write at the moment, while "the spirit moves."

Sincerity. Sincerity is the first need of every note which social courtesy demands; if you can be simple, natural, and direct—in other words, "be yourself" at your best—you will have no need to search for models to follow, or for any of the "highfalutin" phrases by which some men seek to express through other men's words the feelings within their own hearts.

Occasion. Of just what persons and occasions call for a note from you, you are your own best judge. It is usually safe to ask yourself, "Would I, if the circumstances were reversed, expect or wish to hear from him?" and to abide by your answer. Here are some of the occasions which are most likely to require note writing.

1. **Congratulations.** Your friend is graduated—engaged—married—has a child—receives a promotion or other

honor; whether or not a gift is required, a note of congratulation is surely in order, nor need you wait to receive an announcement of his good fortune from him. Write as soon as you hear the news, expressing your sincere and heartfelt pleasure in his accomplishment. Avoid any remarks which might seem to minimize it.

2. **Thanks.** He has entertained you, sent you a gift, or performed some other outstanding favor for you; acknowledge the courtesy and thank him for it. Do not limit yourself to general terms; a printed card could serve as well, for instance, as a mere "Thank you for the gift." Mention his gift particularly, by name, and specify the use to which you will put it. Be enthusiastic, but don't "gush."
3. **Apology.** If you have consciously or unconsciously done him a wrong, write him an apology. Admit your error and express your regrets; make it a true apology and not a mere matter of excuse-making.
4. **Sympathy.** He is ill, loses a member of his family, or suffers other serious loss or misfortune; send him that hardest-to-write but most necessary note, the condolence. Express your sympathy, but say nothing to make him feel worse; do not be cheerful to the extent of minimizing his pain or grief. If the tables are turned, acknowledge his expression of sympathy for you.

Writing the Letter

The highly informal correspondence which you carry on with your intimates permits of all manner of deviations from the suggestions as to form and style made at the beginning of this unit, for here all pretense of formality ends, and with it the necessity for rules. There is no need, for example, to include an inside address when writing to a person as familiar with your location as you yourself are (the date, however—perhaps even the time of day—should always be mentioned, for its omission leads to

frequent confusion). But the necessity of giving careful thought to what you have to say is in no wise diminished. The student who protested the college requirement in English composition on the grounds, "I never write anything but letters to my mother, and she understands me," may actually have been guilty of putting too much strain upon even maternal powers of comprehension.

It is obviously impossible, however, to lay down any definite requirements for the content of a friendly letter; it falls into no such patterns as those of the business letter types already discussed, but is determined by the nature of the person to whom you write and the things you wish to tell him. We are only amused by the old story of the Chinese student, required to learn by rote a letter proper for sending to his parents; even the lover is no longer likely to buy himself a book of model letters on which to pattern the expression of his own passion. Such time-worn phrases as "I take my pen in hand" and "How are you? I am well and hope you are the same" are frowned on even more severely for their lack of originality than is the business cliché.

If, in all your social correspondence, you are personal and sincere, you cannot go far wrong. But the precise tone of a letter, as well as its content, will inevitably vary with the writer, the reader, and the nature of the peculiar and delicate relationship existing between the two. Any type of writing obliges you to keep these three things foremost in your mind: yourself, your subject, and your reader. Correspondence, however, entitles the reader to an unusual share in your attention, since the letter is the only form of composition in which you are likely to be blessed with a prospective audience of one, with whom you are thoroughly familiar. Your choice of subject matter, therefore, should be largely determined by your knowledge of him—of his interests and tastes.

Naturally, your reader will be interested in you—the old-time censure of the use of the first person pronoun is

rather ridiculous (although the repeated use of "I" or "we" to begin consecutive sentences or paragraphs may well be avoided for stylistic reasons), for surely your correspondent's chief desire is to hear of you—of your activities and your reflections. But not exclusively. A correspondence implies two persons and, like successful conversation, should involve an element of give-and-take. Show an interest in him and his affairs, as well as your own. However long the interval between your letters (and many successful correspondences are carried on with no more than annual replies), keep his last one before you as you write, comment on what he has written you, and, above all, be careful to answer any specific questions he may have raised. You yourself doubtless know how annoying it is to get a letter which leaves you wondering whether your correspondent has received the one you wrote previously.

Promptness has been mentioned as a necessity in the note of social courtesy. But in ordinary friendly correspondence, consisting of letters and replies at long and irregular intervals, you may be tempted to consume too much time in needless explanations of a delay which may actually have been only natural and right. Further, it is no flattery to say, "I know I should have written to you long ago, but my life has been full of all kinds of interesting things"—as if your correspondent were obviously not one of them. (The social grace of avoiding excuse-making may well be carried over into correspondence; better still, avoid the occasion for the excuse.) Neither is it good taste always to end with a plea that he answer, as though writing to you represented an unpleasant duty about which you must nag him.

Every letter must suffer from lack of the vocal emphases and the facial expressions accompanying conversation; hence a remark you write in all innocence may be misunderstood, or something you intend as sarcasm or a joke may fail to get across. (Do not stoop, however, to the childish device of writing "ha ha" in parentheses

as a label to your humor!) Reread your finished letter to make certain that it can be read as you intended.

Avoid anger in your letter writing, for anger is a transient emotion which will pass away before the letter has reached its destination, but letters themselves have a terrible permanence. That permanence is something to be remembered whenever you start to write anything which might prove embarrassing in the hands of a third person, for, as Butler once wrote,

Full oft have letters caused the writers
To curse the day they were inditers.

There is no better advice concerning the kind of letter you should write than that you stop and consider the kinds of letters you most enjoy receiving. The best letter is usually that which brings the writer most clearly before you, the letter in which he "writes as he talks." For this reason colloquialisms, contractions, and even slang, which would be entirely out of place in formal writing, are not only allowable but desirable in the informal friendly letter. Some people, as you may have discovered, write even better than they talk, being more successful at self-expression through the leisurely one-way medium of the letter than in the rapid give-and-take of conversation. "Style is the man himself," said a famous literary critic; and the successful letter is certainly the one that most clearly reveals the many-sided personality of the writer.

EXAMPLES

The two letters which follow were written by a college boy, Larry Foster, the first to his girl, the second to his parents, from the Arizona camp at which he was vacationing after his sophomore year at Lafayette College.

A

Dear Girl,

I laughed at your description of the way you feel when you hear good music. There are times when I could "dance

my soul away" too, and I can't think of a better expression of my feelings. But usually I just hurt inside somewhere—same's I do when I see these sunsets. I'm an emotional li'l devil; it takes just a few violins, 'cellos, and such, and I'm blinking pretty rapidly. Fred says that he can't eat a mess of frijoles without wishing that everyone in the world was eating 'em with him. I can't experience loveliness in any form without wishing that you could be with me.

After all, you really see only the decent side of me: I can't expose my *other* side when you're near, in reality or imagination. The mean things always pop out when you're not around. You'd better transform yourself into a pigeon or something and give me the once-over when I'm not expecting you; then you'll get the straight dope about me.

The rattlers that I enclose came from a little two-foot prairie rattler that argued for the right of way down by Zeniff. I went down there to spend two days with Leo, and we had no end of fun and hard work. You'd laugh at the multitudinous things that a cow-puncher has to do. While I was with him, I helped him as carpenter, plumber, mason, rancher, and all-round utility man; cooking, washing, house-cleaning, and I was there a little over twenty-four hours. That is the charm of ranch life—no two days are the same. Compare with that the business life of any one of the men of Ridgewood!

B

Dearest Family,

Just think! a week from today I'll be leaving Airipine. Gosh! it doesn't seem possible that I've been here two months. They have been the shortest two months I've ever spent, and probably the two most filled with the accumulation of new knowledge. The things I have learned and the things I'd like to stay and learn! But don't think for a moment that I don't want to come home. The only

thing that worries me is that I must go back to Easton so soon. Gosh, I hate to think of being cooped up in that filthy city for another eight months, with darn little chance to breathe good air, take good exercise, eat good food, and the rest. But that's all coming, so why look ahead to it?

I have started to write a book of verse! It's to be "Songs of the Arizona Hills" and already I've finished my "Dedication." Of course, there is endless material; all I'll have to do is take my time and keep writing for a year or two—and presto! I'll be an author! Whether financially successful or not is immaterial; it's wonderful practice in word choice for both writing and speaking. I feel as if I've been a sponge, soaking up all the experiences of the lives of these people—and soon I must squeeze the sponge and pass on what I've seen to others.

Physically, I'm as nearly in perfect condition as I ever will be. My shoulders are heavier, my arms are stronger, my chest is deeper. I'm filling out a lot, and some day may be more symmetrical. But it is a health I've never had before; I just get out on the hills and yell for pure joy! I feel like bubbling over and grinning all of the time. Blamed Cheshire cat!

Lord help me, if I had an E.E. right now I think that I'd never come east to live again—awful thought! But there is such a chance for leaders out here, for men who are ingenious, and industrious. Just you wait until I can talk to you of it. At last I have found something that is very near to my heart, that challenges the best sporting blood in me, that fills me with awe because of the possibilities of the undertaking. It is inevitable that the change will hit Arizona; can you realize the thrill when *I* realize that it is *possible* for me to be one of the leaders who will *make* that change? Who knows? Who knows?

Among the things for which Theodore Roosevelt is famous are the many chatty letters which he found time to write to his children, in the midst of an unusually active public and

private life. The following was addressed to his oldest son, Ted, then a student at Groton. Notice the happy combination of interest in the boy's activities and of news of his own.

C

Dear Ted,

In spite of the "Hurry! Hurry!" on the outside of your envelope, I did not like to act until I had consulted Mother and thought the matter over; and to be frank with you, old fellow, I am by no means sure that I am doing right now. If it were not that I feel you will be so bitterly disappointed, I would strongly advocate your acquiescing in the decision to leave you off the second squad this year. I am proud of your pluck, and I greatly admire football—though it was not a game I was ever able to play myself, my qualities resembling Kermit's rather than yours. But the very things that make it a good game make it a rough game, and there is always the chance of your being laid up. Now, I should not in the least object to your being laid up for a season if you were striving for something worth while, to get on the Groton school team, for instance, or on your class team when you entered Harvard—for of course I don't think you will have the weight to entitle you to try for the 'varsity. But I am by no means sure that it is worth your while to run the risk of being laid up for the sake of playing in the second squad when you are a fourth former, instead of when you are a fifth former. I do not know that the risk is balanced by the reward. However, I have told the Rector that as you feel so strongly about it, I think that the chance of your damaging yourself in body is outweighed by the possibility of bitterness of spirit if you could not play. Understand me, I should think mighty little of you if you permitted chagrin to make you bitter on some point where it was evidently right for you to suffer the chagrin. But in this case I am uncertain, and I shall give you the benefit of the doubt. If, however, the coaches at any time come to the

conclusion that you ought not to be in the second squad, why you must come off without grumbling.

I am delighted to have you play football. I believe in rough, manly sports. But I do not believe in them if they degenerate into the sole end of any one's existence. I don't want you to sacrifice standing well in your studies to any over-athleticism; and I need not tell you that character counts for a great deal more than either intellect or body in winning success in life. Athletic proficiency is a mighty good servant, and like so many other good servants, a mighty bad master. Did you ever read Pliny's letter to Trajan, in which he speaks of its being advisable to keep the Greeks absorbed in athletics, because it distracted their minds from all serious pursuits, including soldiering, and prevented their ever being dangerous to the Romans? I have not a doubt that the British officers in the Boer War had their efficiency partly reduced because they had sacrificed their legitimate duties to an inordinate and ridiculous love of sports. A man must develop his physical prowess up to a certain point; but after he has reached that point there are other things that count more. In my regiment nine-tenths of the men were better horsemen than I was, and probably two-thirds of them better shots than I was, while on the average they were certainly hardier and more enduring. Yet after I had had them a very short while they all knew, and I knew too, that nobody else could command them as I could. I am glad you should play football; I am glad that you should box; I am glad that you should ride and shoot and walk and row as well as you do. I should be very sorry if you did not do these things. But don't ever get into the frame of mind which regards these things as constituting the end to which all your energies must be devoted, or even the major portion of your energies.

Yes, I am going to speak at Groton on prize day. I felt that while I was President, and while you and Kermit were at Groton I wanted to come up there and see you,

and the Rector wished me to speak, and so I am very glad to accept.

By the way, I am working hard to get Renown accustomed to automobiles. He is such a handful now when he meets them that I seriously mind encountering them when Mother is along. Of course I do not care if I am alone, or with another man, but I am uneasy all the time when I am out with Mother. Yesterday I tried Bleistein over the hurdles at Chevy Chase. The first one was new, high and stiff, and the old rascal never rose six inches, going slap through it. I took him at it again and he went over all right.

I am very busy now, facing the usual endless worry and discouragement, and trying to keep steadily in mind that I must not only be as resolute as Abraham Lincoln in seeking to achieve decent ends, but as patient, as uncomplaining, and as even-tempered in dealing, not only with knaves, but with the well-meaning foolish people, educated and uneducated, who by their unwisdom give the knaves their chance.

Robert Louis Stevenson was a prolific writer of letters as well as books. The first letter below was written when he was a schoolboy of sixteen; the second, while he was spending a winter in New York State in his long search for health.

D

Respected Paternal Relative,

I write to make a request of the most moderate nature. Every year I have cost you an enormous—nay, elephantine—sum of money for drugs and physician's fees, and the most expensive time of the twelve months was March.

But this year the biting Oriental blasts, the howling tempests, and the general ailments of the human race have been successfully braved by yours truly.

Does not this deserve remuneration?

I appeal to your charity, I appeal to your generosity, I

appeal to your justice, I appeal to your accounts, I appeal, in fine, to your purse.

My sense of generosity forbids the receipt of more—my sense of justice forbids the receipt of less—than half a crown.

Greeting from, Sir, your most affectionate and needy son,

R. Stevenson.

E

Post Office, Saranac Lake

My dear Fairchild,

I do not live in the Post Office; that is only my address; I live at "Baker's," a house upon a hill, and very jolly in every way. I believe this is going to do: we have a kind of garret of a spare room, where hardy visitors can sleep, and our table (if homely) is not bad.

And here, appropriately enough, comes in the begging part. We cannot get any fruit here: can you manage to send me some grapes? I told you I would trouble you, and I will say that I do so with pleasure, which means a great deal from yours very sincerely,

Robert Louis Stevenson.

P.S. Remember us to all yours: my mother and my wife are away skylarking; my mother to Niagara, my wife to Indianapolis; and I live here to-day alone with Lloyd, Valentine, some cold meat, and four salmon trout, one of which is being grilled at this moment of writing; so that, after the immortal pattern of the Indian boys, my household will soon reckon only three. As usual with me, the news comes in a P.S., and is mostly folly.

R. L. S.

P.P.S. My cold is so much better that I took another yesterday. But the new one is a puny child; I fear him not; and yet I fear to boast. If the postscript business goes on,

this establishment will run out of P's; but I hope it wasn't you that made this paper—just for a last word—I could not compliment you upon that. And Lord! if you could see the ink—not what I am using—but the local vintage! They don't write much here; I bet what you please.

R. L. S.

The next was written by Gamaliel Bradford, the biographer, to a childhood friend on the occasion of the latter's birthday.

F

Dear Isaac,

I cannot let your seventieth birthday go by without a word of congratulation. I imagine there are few people, besides Marve, who go back into your past so long and so intimately as I do. When I look back at the intertwining threads of association, stretching back through so many years, there is a keen as well as a melancholy pleasure in disentangling them.

You will remember how we were at Miss Shurtleff's little school together, and how together we discovered the squirrel's hoard under the big nut-tree. That must have been in the very early 'seventies. And there was the swimming at Longfellow's, and of course I always looked up to you as better and bigger, but still we were companions in a fashion. And there were those interesting and varied excursions when my father used to take us to visit the Navy-yard, or the Monument, or one thing or another, and I know that my father always looked to you with confidence and respect.

And when we were somewhat older, we were in the Greek class together, which seems quite absurd, and then you basely deserted me and left me alone to battle with the three older girls, who looked down upon me as an infant and made me feel it. And I wonder if you remember, how, a little later than that, you and I used to go to the theatre together, to Bernhardt, and Jefferson, and

somehow I remember particularly one very dull evening with Mary Anderson, in *The Lady of Lyons*, which probably you have forgotten.

Later still there was the Octopus Club, and our charming camping trips to Falmouth, and the vacation at Lake Placid, crowned by the long climb up White Face. I simply mention all these as samples of what your memory no doubt could supplement by many other things, if you had time and inclination to let it run.

And of late years we have both been too busy and distracted with other, often unprofitable interests, to see much of each other. Perhaps we never shall have time to see much more in this world. If there is another, of which, alas, I am neither very confident nor very desirous, perhaps we may be able to renew some of the agreeable associations of earlier days. Meantime they are always delightful to remember, and even if we do not meet very often, you will understand that I wish you many happy returns of your birthday with most affectionate greeting.

Of course you will understand that this requires no answer. Some day when you are driving by, stop again. You are likely to find me on the piazza, more often than I like, though it is a lovely place to be.

G. K. Chesterton, the essayist, wrote the following to a childhood friend on the occasion of her approaching marriage.

G

A Restaurant somewhere.

My dear Annie,

I have thought of you, I am quite certain, more often than I have of any human being for a long time past—except my wife, who recalls herself continually to me by virtues, splendours, agreeable memories, screams, pokers, brickbats, and other things. And yet, though whenever my mind was for an instant emptied of theology and journal-

ism and patriotism and such rot, it has been immediately filled with you, I have never written you a line.

I am not going to explain this and for a good reason. It is a part of the Mystery of the Male, and you will soon, even if you do not already, get the hang of it, by the society of an individual who, while being unmistakably a much better man than I am, is nevertheless male. I can only say that when men want a thing they act quite differently from women. We put off everything we want to do, in the ordinary way. If the Archangel Michael wrote me a complimentary letter tomorrow (as perhaps he may) I should put it in my pocket saying, "How admirable a reply shall I write to that in a week or a month or so." I put off writing to you because I wanted to write something that had in it all that you have been, to me, to all of us. And now instead I am scrawling this nonsense in a tavern after lunch.

My very dear old friend, I am of a sex that very seldom takes real trouble, that forgets the little necessities of time, that is by nature lazy. I never wanted really but one thing in my life and that I got. Any person inspecting 60 Overstrand Mansions may see that somewhat excitable thing—free of charge. In another person, whom with maddening jealousy I suspect of being some inches taller than I am, I believe I notice the same tendency towards monomania. He also, being as I have so keenly pointed out, male, he also—I think has wanted only one thing seriously in his life. He also has got it: another male weakness which I recognize with sympathy.

All my reviewers call me frivolous. Do you think all this kind of thing frivolous? Damn it all (excuse me), what can one be but frivolous about serious things? Without frivolity they are simply too tremendous. That you, who, with your hair down your back, played at bricks with me in a house of which I have no memory except you and the bricks, that you should be taken by someone of my miserable sex—as you ought to be—what is one to say?

I am not going to wish you happiness, because I am quite placidly certain that your happiness is inevitable. I know it because my wife is happy with me and the wild, weird, extravagant, singular origin of this is a certain enduring fact in my psychology which you will find paralleled elsewhere.

God bless you, my dear girl.

Yours ever,

Gilbert Chesterton.

ASSIGNMENT

1. To what extent does it appear to you, a stranger, that these letters reveal the personalities of their writers? Which would you rank as most revealing? Go back over them, listing a few adjectives which seem to you to characterize each writer.

2. Check over your own correspondents to decide which are most successful at writing as they talk; at writing the kind of letter you most enjoy getting.

3. Write a letter to a friend or relative and submit it to your instructor. Don't, however, let it become a mere classroom exercise; choose a definite person and write the kind of letter you think he would like to get (perhaps you can send it later, and thus kill two birds with one stone).

4. Check your own social correspondence from now on, for a while, to see how well it accords with the suggestions given in this unit as to both form and content.

11111111111111111111 PART IV 11111111111111111111
FURTHER READINGS

THE BRITISH WAY OF RADIO¹

Dorotheen Ingham Allan

A thrilling serial called "Dick Barton, Special Agent" is a program of some popularity on the English radio. When it originated, it had the usual characteristics of the cliff-hanger, and was much in the American style. A large part of the listening public accepted it and enjoyed it; but there were other thoughtful people who considered the program overexciting to children and a bad influence because of its license to violence—the same kind of criticism that is sometimes expressed about such programs in America. But in England this dissatisfaction was brought to the notice of Parliament, the members of which discussed the program from all aspects, not as party members, but as representative, responsible citizens. As a result of this discussion the Governors of the British Broadcasting Corporation issued twelve rules to Dick Barton's script writers, which have since limited his adventures. Barton is now intelligent as well as hard-hitting, he uses force only when normal peaceful means have failed, he may deceive but never lies, his violence is restricted to "clean socks on the jaw," and even his enemies may not inflict any injury or punishment that is basically sadistic. Horror effects such as night-prowling gorillas and vampires are to be avoided. And Barton himself never drinks, flirts, or swears.

This incident, although rare in British life, illustrates the difference between English and American attitudes to radio, and also the difference between the English and American versions of democracy. In England, control of the content of our noncommercial radio is part of the democratic process; whereas in the United States a major weapon used against the FCC's small Mayflower control is that such interference with the industry is undemo-

¹ Reprinted from *The Hollywood Quarterly*, Vol. III, No. 4. Used by permission.

cratic. From two so very different attitudes toward government, naturally, quite different ways of radio arose—in America an industry, in England a public utility.

The wave-length question was obvious in England from the beginning of broadcasting, and this put responsibility for radio into parliamentary hands early in radio history. Temporarily, the British Broadcasting Company was formed, and John Reith became its general manager. A little later, a special committee was appointed by the Prime Minister to consider the best way of using the available wave lengths. John Reith's recommendation to the committee was that the British Broadcasting Company become a public utility; and this was the organization later approved by Parliament. Broadcasting was given into the care of a board of governors appointed by the Prime Minister and answerable to him through the Assistant Postmaster General (an early statute vested all telegraphic rights in the Post Office). The revenue of the corporation is derived from license fees collected by the Postmaster General from all owners (or all traceable owners) of receiving sets. Having satisfied itself that this was the proper authority to have charge of broadcasting, Parliament gave it complete permission to carry on radio broadcasting as a public service.

The weakness of this arrangement is that whereas the Minister of Health, for example, is completely responsible—to the point of resigning his office—for his department, the Assistant Postmaster General is merely the parliamentary representative of the BBC, called upon to do no more than refer questions or criticism to the board of governors, or read out answers as formulated by the public relations department. Consequently, there is no satisfactory contact between the corporation and the public; what happened to Dick Barton is encouraging, however, and shows that the route to the corporation is open when enough feeling is aroused. The terms of reference of the corporation—"as a public service"—are the essence of its attitude and

its perpetual problem. The early solution expressed the influence of John Reith, director general until 1938, an idealist, perhaps an egoist, but the key personality in the development of the educational fervor of British radio: public service to so religious a man meant giving people what what would be good for them; adult-education programs of serious topical and nontopical talks, music programs to encourage appreciation, and austere Sabbath radio represent his policy.

Since Reith's graduation to higher public office, subsequent directors-general have been more conciliatory in their interpretation of "public service": they have tried more and more in recent years to persuade people to desire what is "good" for them—and have even been criticized for pandering to public taste.

This is corroborated by the establishment of a large machine for discovering what people do enjoy on the radio. The BBC's form of Hooper organization, the Listener Research Division, has two lines of investigation, of which the first estimates the size of a program's listening audience and the second attempts to assess listeners' reactions to broadcasts by analyzing detailed comments received from representative listening panels, each consisting of a few hundred regular listeners.

In England, as in the United States, the highest rating is invariably commanded by a comedy show, and the BBC carries a number of programs on the pattern of the American star show. As a public corporation, however, the BBC is not a slave to the Hooperatings, although it must take them into account, and acknowledges as much responsibility to its minority groups of listeners, who want serious talks, high-quality music, and drama, as to its majorities, who enjoy comedy and light music. The wave lengths in operation domestically carry three distinct types of service:

1. The Light Program carries mostly comedy, simple light music, easy short dramas (or serials) and documentaries, and brief news bulletins. It is heard regularly by

rather more than half of the radio audience. The service is comparable to an enlightened American network with daylight programs other than soap operas.

2. The Home Service carries some comedy, light music of all kinds (from Kern to Mozart), and some heavier music, more drama than the Light Program, more documentary programs, serious topical and nontopical talks, and longer news bulletins. This service also carries daily educational broadcasts to schools, and the daily Children's Hour: it aims, as it says, at meeting the needs of the family unit.

3. The Third Program (no better name having been suggested) is a service for the mature and educated person, carrying complex music and drama, the latter in foreign and dead languages at times, long series of erudite nontopical talks and discussions, and no news bulletins. Programs sometimes last a whole evening, and they are as eagerly awaited, tasted, and enjoyed as a visit to the theater. There is also a modicum of sophisticated comedy.

The distribution of programs is not rigid, however: with the aim of assisting public taste and development, the policy of the present director general, Sir William Haley, is to repeat, occasionally, items from the Third Program on the Home Service, and some items from the Home Service on the Light Program. Public service is now interpreted apparently as providing what people want, but also helping them to develop—from Light Program listeners to Home, and even from Home Service listeners to Third, as it were.

There is supposed to be enough competition among the three services to act as a stimulus to an organization which could, and often does, have the lethargy of the civil service. The corporation is still nervous of suggestions that a little healthy competition, in the form of another corporation or a parallel commercial radio setup in England, would provide the public with better radio.

However, when viewed from America, the British public enjoys, perhaps, not the opulence of Bob Hope, followed by

Mr. and Mrs. North, followed by a string of other million-dollar-a-year comedians and entertainers, but the real wealth of a much wider range of choice, owing to careful planning among available wave lengths in order to serve the widely differing levels of taste among its audience.

It is significant that Sidney Webb, when completely paralyzed at the end of his life, looked forward all day to the hours between 6 P.M. and midnight, when the Third Program was on the air; and in listening to it he found satisfaction. His radio gave him enough. Indeed, the level of thought with which the Third is concerned is very high. For instance, here is just any program schedule (it happens to be Thursday, May 13, 1948):

- 6:00 P.M. Bach, played live by violin and harpsichord.
- 6:35 P.M. Weekly talk on international affairs.
- 6:50 P.M. *An Opera in the Making*. Michael Tippett talks about the composition of his new opera. Excerpts are sung live.
- 7:30 P.M. Verdi's *Requiem*, Part I, broadcast from the Royal Albert Hall.
- 8:20 P.M. Bernard Wall talks about Manzoni, in whose honor Verdi composed his *Requiem*.
- 8:35 P.M. Verdi's *Requiem*, Part II.
- 9:20 P.M. Philip Hope-Wallace comments on recent dramatic productions in the Third Program.
- 9:35 P.M. Chopin Twenty-four Preludes, played live on the piano by Cortot.
- 10:15 P.M. *Life History of a Delusion*, dramatic study of the development of a persecution complex, with specially composed music, etc., material supplied by Alexander Kennedy, Professor of Psychological Medicine in the University of Durham, who speaks at the end of the program.
- 11:15 P.M. *Russian Readings*, poems.
- 11:30 P.M. Hindemith on gramophone records.
- 12 MIDNIGHT. Close down.

And so it goes on, evening after evening, heard only by a small number of listeners usually, but available to all listeners whose homes are in the gradually increasing area

covered by the Third's wave length. It is to be the first British FM program.

The same evening, the Home Service, trying to provide something for everyone, has still some serious listening and and some light relief. The same hours of the same evening :

- 6:00 P.M. News.
- 6:30 P.M. *This Week's Composers*: Fauré and Chausson, gramophone records.
- 7:00 P.M. *Oliver's Twists*, comedy show.
- 7:30 P.M. Thursday Concert performed live (Haydn and Brahms).
- 8:30 P.M. *Itma (It's That Man Again)*, weekly comedy show.
- 9:00 P.M. News.
- 9:15 P.M. *Questions of the Hour*, Managers and Men (2), discussion of the problem.
- 9:35 P.M. *Through the Looking Glass*, Episode 3, adapted from Lewis Carroll.
- 10:05 P.M. *Bridge on the Air*.
- 10:30 P.M. *Weekly Science Survey*, Professor Munro Fox talks about Red, Green, and Blue Bloods.
- 10:45 P.M. *Today in Parliament*.
- 11:00 P.M. News.
- 12 MIDNIGHT. Close down.

The Light Program carries, on the same evening :

- 6:00 P.M. Live light music.
- 6:15 P.M. *Music While You Work*, played live.
- 6:30 P.M. *The Island of Peril*, adventure play.
- 7:00 P.M. News and Radio Newsreel.
- 7:25 P.M. Sport, news.
- 7:30 P.M. *Merry-Go-Round*, comedy show.
- 8:30 P.M. *Music in Miniature*, live chamber music.
- 9:00 P.M. Bing Crosby on records.
- 9:15 P.M. Variety, comedy show.
- 10:00 P.M. News.
- 10:15 P.M. Competitive storytelling program.
- 10:35 P.M. Dance orchestra, live.
- 11:15 P.M. Algernon Blackwood tells a strange story.

11:20 P.M. *Sweet and Lovely*—music.

11:56 P.M. News Summary.

12 MIDNIGHT. Close down.

Radio is taken quite seriously all the time. To an American, even the gayest of English radio shows would seem restrained: the announcers who set the tone of the broadcasting seem to bear out the usual conception—outside England—of typical Englishmen, pompous, reserved, speaking carefully, and, on the rare occasions when they make an effort to be friendly, achieving little more than a strained heartiness. To ordinary people living in England they are as unrepresentative of their countrymen as are the boys on the American radio who gurgle about soup and candy bars. English as spoken by radio announcers is not used by any of the ordinary people of England: it is generally associated with class, educational, or regional (London) snobbery, and although clear and not unpleasant, is the language of a minority. The BBC uses it not only for clarity, but as part of its personality as a benevolent monopoly, which is all-providing but wishes to inspire complete trust without getting too friendly.

With this attitude, it is not surprising that the kind of program which needs to establish a sort of laughing intimacy is not achieved in England as naturally, as casually, or as vigorously as it seems to be in America. Nor is the BBC particularly worried that this should be so, for its public-service attitude, since Reith's idealism, tends to draw away from too much popular entertainment, in spite of its other aim of giving the public everything possible.

Perhaps the most valuable element that this idealistic monopoly has managed to rear without permanent suffocation has been the artistic exploration of the medium. In early days there was lively experiment, but in the 'thirties this almost died away; then, in the long years of wartime blackouts, people had to turn to their radios for a large part of their entertainment. They came also to trust the

BBC's news service more than almost any newspaper, and to have "heard it on the wireless" became a common seal of accuracy. As the BBC responded to its new responsibilities it had to use all its resources.

The feature program or documentary, until the war a rather pale imitation of the documentary film (as it still mostly is in America), was developed as a means of presenting the background to events in an interesting and often propagandist way, and what may be called the factual feature was sharpened as a radio form; *Harbour Called Mulberry*, *Salute to Josef Stalin*, *An American in England*, and *Hiroshima* provided a service. A variation on this pattern, the fictional feature, in which actors take the place of real people, and imaginary events are used instead of facts, has taken the form closer to radio art and away from documentary film, which can present a factual picture much more vividly than blind radio. In straightforward features like *It's Your Money They're After* a number of illustrative incidents put one wise to confidence tricksters. In a series, *This Is the Law*, each particular imaginary episode (such as an accident in domestic employment) explains how the law applies: dramatic form is used, so far as various characters follow through their actions, but a narrator slips between them and the microphone from time to time with comments for the listener such as "H'm, that was foolish of her. Her legal position, . . . is not strong enough for her to be so bold. He has the right to sue."

But the fictional feature has been taken further still, to become a pure radio satire, often highly sophisticated. In the *How* program by Stephen Potter and Joyce Grenfell (sample titles: *How to Give a Party*, *How to Blow Your Own Trumpet*, *How to Woo*, *How to Listen to Radio*), a number of witty vignettes, maybe fifty or so, some consisting of only a single phrase, illuminate a particular aspect of life, often brilliantly. In others, *Salute John Bullock*, and *Hurrah for Womanhood*, the technique provoked a similar bitter amusement. This kind of use of the medium is lead-

ing at least a few people to believe that television cannot fully supplant radio.

In this respect the field of drama has paralleled that of features in its development toward a pure radio form. There were early experiments with radio drama in England, as in America, but the 'thirties saw a loss of vigor and an increased reliance on adapting novels, stories, and stage plays to the microphone. Again the impact of the war on broadcasting, through the listener, broke the lethargy and created an opportunity for discovering anew the power of the radio medium. Employment directives, also, helped during the war by bringing poets into the BBC; and it is from the poets who have worked in the medium that the greatest dramatic work has come. Louis Macneice in particular has written and produced some very fine radio dramas, outstandingly *The Dark Tower* and *Christopher Columbus*. Making full use of the medium's focus on words and its power to express and stimulate generalized thought, the poetry play is in all respects an excellent use of radio.

On a simpler plane, English radio, like American, has discovered its power to excite the listener by fantasies impossible in any visual medium, quick-fire thrillers and chillers that invade the listener and his home with horror. And sometimes an exceptional play is thrown up out of the mass. Straightforward drama, either original or adapted from the stage, forms a larger part of English listening than American, but a delightful absentee is the soap-opera type of drama. Serials have made their way onto the English air—a domestic story has a daily fifteen minutes—but the violent emotional wrangles of the soapier opera are unknown, there being no soap-sellers in a position to give this to us.

A use of radio almost unknown in America, however, is the broadcasting of "talks"—which are quite different from the Kaltenborn type of ponderous comment, being closer to spoken articles, or, one might say, essays or lectures, depending on the speaker. Some series are on topical sub-

jects all the time, for example, *This Week in Westminster*, by a different M.P. each week, and *In Your Garden*, top Hooperating while Mr. C. H. Middleton was alive.

Also there are strictly nontopical talks: a speaker might come to the microphone to describe the effect of sunspots on our lives, or someone might talk about Chinese art. A current series has used numerous speakers, each giving an account of some aspect of Victorian life. Another recent collection of talks, entitled *The Challenge of Our Time*, gave the listener a chance to hear the views of many contemporary personalities. This use of radio seems to have no place in the United States, and English influence must be negligible, whereas in certain parts of English radio the American influence is strong—that is, in the smaller section more intensively explored in America, the comedy show. This part of British radio has followed the star pattern, and perhaps it is the livelier for it and more efficient. Quizzes and audience-participation shows, first popular in America, have recently enjoyed a large-scale boom in England, though without the spice of freely given away washing machines.

But the greater part of British radio has tried to develop radio art and has used radio's power of communication to relay other arts. American industry might be said to have used radio to make it a parallel of the newspaper; the BBC's use of it has tried to make radio the equivalent of the printed word.

ON PULLMANS¹

E. B. White

I suppose a man can't ask railroads to stand still. For twenty or thirty years the railroads of America stood about as still as was consistent with swift transportation. The gas mantles were removed and electric lights installed, but out-

¹ Reprinted from *One Man's Meat* by E. B. White. Copyright, 1942, by E. B. White. Used by permission of Harper & Brothers, publishers.

side of that the cars remained pretty much the same. It's only in the past few years that the railroads, fretting over the competition from busses and planes, have set about transforming their interiors into cocktail lounges, ball-rooms, and modern apartments.

In my isolated position here in the country, I have plenty of time to study Pullman trends—which are readily accessible in full-page color ads in the popular magazines. I note that the Pullman Company, although emphasizing the high safety factor implicit in Pullman travel, is advertising a new type of accommodation called, somewhat ominously, "S.O.S." This is the Single Occupancy Section. It is for the dollar-wise and the travel-wise, the ads point out. From the illustration, the single occupancy section appears to have a dead body in it, hooded in a sheet, bound and gagged. There is also a live occupant—a girl in a pink dressing gown, apparently in the best of spirits. More careful examination of the photograph reveals that the dead body is nothing more nor less than the bed itself, which has reared up on its hind end and been lashed to the bulkhead, while the occupant (who is "single" of course) stands erect and goes through the motions of dressing in comfort.

I feel that the Pullman Company, in introducing the note of *comfort* into its adventurous calling, is perhaps slipping outside the particular field in which it has made such an enviable reputation. This being able to stand erect in an ordinary single berth and dress in something like ease—isn't it likely to destroy the special flavor of Pullman travel? I don't take a night journey on a railroad for the sake of duplicating the experiences and conveniences of my own home: when I travel I like to get into some new kind of difficulty, not just the same old trouble I put up with around the house.

Travelers, I will admit, differ temperamentally, differ in their wants and needs; but for me the Pullman Company will never improve on its classic design of upper and lower berth. In my eyes it is a perfect thing, perfect in conception and execution, this small green hole in the dark moving

night, this soft warren in a hard world. In it I have always found the peace of spirit which accompanies grotesque bodily situations, peace and a wonderful sense of participation in cosmic rhythms and designs. I have experienced these even on cold nights when I all but died from exposure, under blankets of virgin gossamer.

In a Pullman berth, a man can truly be alone with himself. (The nearest approach to this condition is to be found in a hotel bedroom, but a hotel room can be mightily depressing sometimes, it stands so still.) Now if a modern Pullman proposes to provide headroom for everyone, it will have to answer for whatever modification this may cause in human character. The old act of drawing one's pants on and off while in a horizontal position did much to keep Man in a mood of decent humility. It gave him a picture of himself at a moment of wild comic contortion. To tuck in the tails of a shirt while supine demanded a certain persistence, a certain virtuosity, wholly healthful and character-building.

The new single occupancy section, besides changing all this and permitting a man to stand erect as though he had no ape in his family background, has another rather alarming feature. The bed not only is capable of being cocked up by the occupant, to resemble a cadaver, but can be hoisted by a separate control from the aisle by the dark, notional hand of the porter as he glides Puckishly through the car. It does not sound conducive to calm.

GRAND-PRIZE JINGLES¹

Dorothea Kahn

"I like Merry Monday soap flakes because . . ." When you finish this statement in 25 glowing words and drop your bid for the grand prize of the advertising contest into

¹ Reprinted from *The Christian Science Monitor*, June 26, 1948. Used by permission.

the mailbox, do you sometimes wonder whether your pearl will be read by the judges? Do you sometimes fear it may be overlooked entirely among the hundreds of thousands of entries these contests attract?

Be reassured. It's true that the makers of Merry Monday flakes and Tranquil Tuesday starch may not have time to read everything that comes in, but they can and do hire experts who have.

Several large advertising companies make a business of judging prize contests. With them it is a matter of pride as well as honor to make sure that every legible entry is read and rated. When you learn about their systems, you feel pretty sure that your little gem gets its chance, even if it must compete for attention with 999,999 others, as is the case in some of the larger contests.

To find out just what happens to our entries, let's call at the office of the Reuben H. Donnelley Corporation in Chicago, a direct mail advertising concern. This company has handled many of the largest contests since it embarked upon the contest-judging business in response to a client's demand for help in the early '30's. This year, so far, it has conducted nearly a score, including Armour & Company's Chiffon Flakes contest, which offered \$100,000 in prizes, and the Pepsi-Cola Treasure Top contest, with its prizes totaling \$205,725.

Their system, like those of the three or four other companies doing this work, simply does not permit personal or geographical considerations to influence the choice of winners. You would be wasting your time if you tried to dress up your entry in novel form to catch attention.

Fortunately, the lady who embroidered her 25 words on a table runner in order to make a hit with the judges doesn't know what happened to her entry. It was typed out by a clerk and sent to the judges in the same form as all the rest, for embroidery would be pretty awkward to handle on a judging desk.

The same thing happened to the entry of the man who

surrounded his jingle with electric lights and sent it in equipped with battery, ready to be turned on to dazzle the judges. It, too, went to the judges on a neatly typed slip. And so did that of the cook who entered a cake-flour contest with an endorsement written in frosting on a beautifully baked cake.

As for the enterprising contestants who make records of their contributions, hoping the judges will take time to play them on a phonograph, they would have done just as well to write them with pencil on a piece of scratch paper, according to Donnelley executives.

All these contestants showed great ingenuity, but they expressed originality in the wrong place. The contest terms stated that credit would be given for originality in the wording of the entry, not in its presentation, and judging is kept strictly to the terms as stated.

Geographical location is not allowed to enter into decisions either, the Donnelley people explain. The companies that make a business of judging stake their reputations on the fairness of their work. They say they would not stay in business long if they manipulated the awards in any way, even if they did it to please an advertiser. One of the reasons that most big companies hire their judging done outside, they say, is to make sure that the judging is entirely removed from any personal considerations.

But in a contest with thousands, sometimes millions, of entries, to be fair requires more than good intentions. It demands know-how. What would you do if even 10,000 entries were piled on your desk some morning and you were required to pick the best?

Here's how the Donnelleys do it. First they arrange with the post office and the advertiser to get a post-office box number. This enables the postal workers to place all contest mail directly into Government bags, which can be picked up and carried to the contest-judging room upon presentation of proper credentials. In popular contests, it is not unusual to get two or more bags a day, each with

around 2,000 contributions. As the deadline draws near, the volume swells enormously. Most people rush to get under the wire for contests just as they do to file their income tax returns.

A bonded messenger gets the bags. Careful check is made to be sure the number signed for reaches the contest room. In the room they are kept under lock and key until the contest staff goes to work upon them.

The steps in judging are systematic. A battery of workers, picked for natural judging ability and trained in the actual work, is ready and waiting when the letters arrive. As fast as the envelopes come in they are opened and examined to see whether the entry complies with the terms of the contest. Was it posted before the expiration of the contest date? Is a box top, or reasonable facsimile thereof, enclosed? (Yes, some persons actually go to the trouble of making facsimiles, and do it very well with color effects.)

Then comes what is called "preliminary judging." The trained workers run through the entries to see if they meet basic requirements, such as the specified number of words or the rhyme. A rough estimate is made of the merit of each. Each worker who passes upon an entry writes his or her initials upon it.

Next comes the "junior judging," with scoring by points. For each contest a scale is set up in accord with the terms of the contest. A typical one may read something like this:

For completing statement (or jingle), 10 points maximum.

For aptness, 30 points maximum.

For sincerity, 30 points maximum.

For originality, 30 points maximum.

• Total, 100 points maximum.

The junior judges grade the entries on the basis of these points just as if they were examination papers, and total the score. They, too, sign their initials.

The senior judges then take over. The seniors grade the

papers over again, sometimes changing the marks given by the junior judges, but leaving the first ratings visible so that the next set of judges, who have the final say, can see what was done at each stage.

At this point the papers are ready for final decision, but just to make sure that none was missed or that no mistake in addition was made, the entire collection of contributions is gone over again quickly for a rechecking.

The executive judges, who get the entire lot at this stage, are officials of the Donnelley Corporation. They are men of mature judgment and advertising experience. They do not, of course, attempt to go through all the entries, but they sample a few entries in the different grades to make certain the judgment is up to their standard, and then make an intensive study of those in the higher-point brackets. From these they pick the winners.

There is just one thing that can keep the best entry from winning after it is recognized, say those in charge of judging. This is duplication. There are no tied winners in advertising contests. This rule automatically eliminates those entries which are bought from racketeers who make a business of selling bright ideas to overly eager and unethical contestants. For the racketeers don't stop at selling the idea once; they take on as many customers as they can get. And every one of them finds his entry ruled out because of duplication. Sometimes it even happens that two honest independent workers send in identical contributions of high quality. By the rules, they too are out of the running.

When I had the opportunity to talk with the executive who is in charge of this big judging business at the Donnelley Corporation, I couldn't resist asking him to tell me the secret of winning contests.

"Send in a good entry," he said laconically. Then he enlarged a bit on his reply. Freshness and sparkle are the qualities that make an entry stand out. But there must be a note of sincerity, too. Cleverness alone is not enough.

THE PHANTOM OF FEAR¹*Alan Devoe*

The experience of fear is as valuable and necessary in the world of nature as any of the other great aboriginal feelings and drives and impulses: hunger, lust, exuberance, weariness, or rage. A fox incapable of fear would not prowl and caper for very long under the cold moon. Fear is a part of the naturality of things, and in its way a constructive gift. The brief, quick stab of fear is a part of the "edge," the tang, that an animal's life has. It does not dye the life with doom; but it darts in, as a swift periodic messenger, to set feet running and adrenalin pumping, and to sharpen eyes and ears and make strong muscles stronger.

That is what fear is in the naturality of things. That is what it is to a rabbit: a sudden startling whisper—"Weasel!"—and then a tumult of attempted escape; and then the whisper of fear dies away as abruptly as it came; and then the rabbit is restored to its rabbitry peace again. Fear speaks its quick whisper to the animals, and then is gone. When it goes, it goes as hunger goes, after eating. The strike of fear is quick and clean. Nor is it a constantly recurring experience, nor even a very common one. The things to strike fear into an animal are only the actual lively perils encountered in living: the actual enemy, here and now; the actual injury, here and now. An animal, even a rabbit, may pass many days without hearing the sharp whisper of fear at all, but only giving itself over to its good enjoyments.

That is the way fear is, in the naturality of things. But in the case of the creature called man, it is something altogether other and awful. We go bowed down with fear, tangled and fettered in fear, our days black and bitter with it. Fear waits behind every tree: it tinges the remembrance of every yesterday; it stains the promise of each tomorrow. We do not look out upon the same fair summer evening

¹ Reprinted from "Down to Earth," a monthly feature of *The American Mercury*. Used by permission of *The American Mercury*.

that a fox looks out upon. For us, the dusk is full of goblins. Oh, not perhaps for all of us. But for all the great "civilized middle-class" human creatures . . . all the "white-collar" ones . . . all the "properly raised" and "refined" and "respectable" ones . . . for all these fear is a daily and hourly companion, its dreadful whisper in the ear a constant.

To psychiatrists our burden of fear is so primary a fact as to be commonplace, and they do not lack ready illustrations of its working among us. We try to swallow and stifle our fears, and they cry out in an ulcer. We try to still the urge of our feet to run, and what runs is our bowel, in a nervous colitis. Fear-haunted, we feel our hearts pound and pump and labour, and presently there is a little despatch in the newspapers: "Executive Dies Suddenly of Coronary Thrombosis." How many faces are twitched by tics? How many thousands of us are made wretched by a terror of high places, or a terror of blood, or an endless sweat of self-consciousness? How many millions more find their days poisoned by the most ghastly and gruelling of all the fears: the vague, pervading, featureless fear that is a general anxiety? Plainly enough, fear plays in our lives a role monstrously huge.

It falls properly to a naturalist, as to a psychiatrist, to consider the question: Why? What has happened to (so to speak) our fox stalwartness, our squirrel confidence, our woodchuck contentment? Why do we go shaken and timid and tense?

Obviously, since we have greater endowments of perception and imagination than animals do, and since our civilization is a rushing, clanging thing abounding in innumerable actual hazards, from auto traffic to atom bombs, a certain amount of human fearfulness is grounded in good reason. It is more stressful business for a clerk to earn a living than for a rabbit to find a sufficiency of good green grass. It puts more strain on the nerves to get across a city street than to stroll across a ferny forest-clearing. But the human animal, like most other animals, is happily a tough

organism of great adaptability; and were these real fears the only terrors to be borne, we might adjust to them as satisfactorily as a fox can adjust to the roaring motor highways that run through what was once the green quiet of the woods. It is not these real fears that make all the tenseness and tics and trembling. It is the fears that lie within. These are the deadly phantoms.

What happens to a human child is a kind of thing that happens to no other animal on earth. It is a catastrophe that has two parts. In the first place, the youngster finds itself in a world of elders who are themselves terrified: knotted with worries, anxieties, hesitations and dire misgivings, all of which make up a life-mood that is communicated to the child with a terrible intensity. In the second place, as the child grows, it finds itself tugged and urged by a variety of perfectly natural drives—impulsions as natural to a young Two-Legs as to any furry Four-Legs—and it is simultaneously told that virtually every one of these is somehow sinful or shameful or wrong. There is set in motion a deadly conflict, tearing the psyche and infecting it forever with deep guilts: a conflict between the enormous urgings of nature, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, the desperate need to have the approval of the elders, to lose which means to lose love and security.

The first kind of fears—the fears communicated to a child by example—are of a thousand kinds. There comes to mind an experiment performed by John B. Watson. He presented a number of animals to a child, and found that the child manifested no fear toward any of them. Cats, snakes, dogs and rats . . . none aroused anything but a healthily alert interest. Then Watson presented to the child a white rat, and just as the child was stretching out its hands toward it, the psychologist struck a clashing blow against a steel bar that hung behind the child. The child was naturally startled and frightened. After an interim, Watson repeated the procedure. Only a few repetitions were required before the child manifested startled terror at

any appearance of a white rat. Significantly, it manifested the same terror thenceforth on being presented with any sort of white furry object at all.

Few children have to hear the clang of a steel bar; but fear is communicated to them in many similar ways. The child puts its dirty finger in its mouth, and it sees its mother's fear-stricken face and hears her panicky intake of breath. The child cuts its finger, and thinks as little of its injury as a fox thinks of a cut paw; but then it sees blanched faces, contemplating the blood, and it hears a great tumult of people rushing for antiseptics, and an agonized voice is saying: "Does it hurt *terribly*?" A child is constantly hearing anxious whispered scraps of conversation: the ghastly pain that Mrs. So-and-So is having . . . the awful business of how Mr. Thus-and-Such has lost his money . . . murmur-murmur about how excruciatingly important it is always to do the right thing and never to make a misstep. A struck steel bar, in childhood, can make a grown man obscurely terrified of every white thing he encounters. The whole pervasive atmosphere of a respectable childhood can make the grown man obscurely terrified of everything there is.

Already dyed with a vague general alarm, the child is now subjected to the tearing conflict between natural urge and elder commandment, from which are born the deepest and darkest phantoms of fear. Nature has put in him a certain urge to aggression. It is in him as it is in a young fox. But he finds that to let it show is to be disapproved for "rough-house," for "not being a little gentleman." On the other hand, he is given in the naturalness of things deep impulses of relish for the wonder of the world: an animal life-delight that in human beings becomes the thing called love of beauty. But he finds that to let this show is to be scorned as somehow weak and not quite manly. His bursts of animal altruism are an imprudent foolishness; his natural urge to laziness and vagabondage is not respectable; his mammalian urge to sleep as much or as little as he wants,

and to eat only when he is hungry, he finds to be an absurd eccentricity and counter to the insistent rules of eight hours and three meals. At virtually every point there comes the head-on collision between what his nature as an animal urges him to do and what he must do if he would not encounter dreaded disapproval and rejection.

Nature is immeasurably strong, so strong that in these conflicts it is bound to triumph again and again. Pre-eminently is this so, of course, in the matter of sexuality. Dr. Alfred C. Kinsey, that prodigious zoologist who has lately turned his attention from the study of gall-wasps to the study of the sexual life of the human creature, has established statistically a truth long familiar: that sexual drive (and power) is at its most tremendous during precisely those young years when, in our society, its exercise is a forbidden thing, a thing not even to be whispered about, a thing of shame and sin. Nature being nature, the great drive of young sexuality is simply insuppressible. And so it comes about that in every youth "dreadful" things are done; the elders are disobeyed; the law is broken. There grows in the depths of the psyche a phantom of guilt, a phantom of fear, a dark pervasive terror of retribution. It will not down, ever. Twenty years later its harbinger—preyed on by a vague torment of ever-present anxiety, a taut sense of perpetual worry and unease—is engaged in communicating this life-mood to *his* young one, infecting him with the terror of the world.

Out in the woods and fields the animals go their good ways, able to enjoy the abundant excellences of the adventure of being alive. They have nothing to fear but this pounce, these talons, this snap of an enemy's jaws. But by the thousands we human creatures go through the same sun-warmed and grass-green world and must shiver with fear at every step of the way. Danger is behind that bush; doom is hidden in this tree; there is a thing of dread lurking just yonder. For fear does not come to us from without, to whisper its occasional warning. The whisper of fear

is perpetual, omnipresent, not to be located ; for what whispers is a phantom within.

A distinguished psychiatrist the other day made a grim but very true remark. What is surprising, he said, is not that so many of us are crippled by neuroses and phobias. The really surprising thing—and a great tribute it is, too, to our species' extraordinary toughness and nervous endurance—is that we are not all screaming mad.

RESEARCH HAS A MORAL RESPONSIBILITY¹

David E. Lilienthal

As to the central importance of research in modern life there is little dispute. Millions of people the world over sense it almost instinctively. They have seen the wonders of radio and plastics and penicillin. The war, furthermore, has dramatized the amazing things research can accomplish. We can build a firmer foundation under our feet with the fruits of research and through the methods of creative intelligence that research exemplifies. This is one of the great and shining facts that sustain faith and confidence in the future.

But it is by no manner of means inevitable that scientific research and technology will work for good. It is equally possible that they may yield a harvest of bitter fruit. When those speak who imply that our problem is only one of securing more and more funds for more and more scientific workers in private or public research, we need constantly to remind ourselves that, in terms of human happiness and freedom, such a conclusion is far from true.

Unless research and technology are consciously related to a central purpose of human welfare, unless research is defined and directed by those who believe in and who have faith in people and in democratic ends and means, it may

¹ Reprinted from *The Christian Century*. Used by permission.

well be that the more money we spend on research the further we miss the mark. It is like trying to reach your destination in an automobile that is going in the wrong direction; the faster you drive the farther away from your goal you will be.

The purpose of research, then, largely determines whether it is likely to further human well-being or threaten it. What I am saying is simply that the purpose must be a moral, an ethical one. We know what amazing things research can do to increase the destructive powers of armies and navies—the enemy's and our own. We still must ask: What can research do to nourish and strengthen the human spirit? What can research do to strengthen men's freedom? Can a democracy consciously use research to further human welfare?

On these propositions there is the greatest difference of opinion. Some pay lip service to the general idea I have here outlined, but their actions disclose that they fear and oppose any such concept of the purpose of research and technology. Some do not even bother to dissemble. They flatly oppose such ideas. They deny that research or its products and use bear any such moral responsibility.

There are men who control large sectors of industrial and physical research who have used research further to entrench vast economic monopoly. There are those, furthermore, who use research and technology and, after the war, proposed a gigantic expansion of such use, in the exploitation of countless millions of people and their resources in distant undeveloped parts of the world, for their limited and special advantage.

The interest in the TVA the world over is largely based on a growing understanding of and respect for research as the foundation for an improved standard of living and more democratic forms of administration, for TVA is built upon research. To the several score of Chinese who have visited the TVA, to the scientists from India, to the administrators from Australia and New Zealand, to the

journalists from Iran and the agricultural scientists from Brazil—to most of the nearly 400 representatives of 57 foreign countries who visited the Tennessee Valley in recent months—the TVA seems to stand as a symbol of what research and technology can do in putting in the hands of the people modern tools to meet modern problems and aspirations everywhere in the world.

But research can be ever so intelligent and yet fail dismally to advance the cause of men's freedom and happiness. Most of us are familiar with the play by Karel Capek, the Czech playwright, called "R. U. R." It deals with the invention of the robot, a mechanical man. Do you remember how, in the first act, Domin, the general manager of the factory making these robots, describes them? "Mechanically," he says, "they are more perfect than we are. They have an enormously developed intelligence, but they have no soul."

Research must have a "soul." Intelligence is not enough without a spiritual and humane purpose. Research that is only "enormously developed intelligence," research that leaves out the primary driving force in human affairs—the *spirit* of men—can lead only to one catastrophe after another, one war after another, each more horrible and mechanically perfect than its predecessor, to the exploitation and devastation of natural resources, and finally to the most terrible catastrophe of all, a non-moral rather than a moral world.

SUGARING OFF¹

Louis Bromfield

All the year round until late in February, the sugar camp belongs to the wild things. Then one morning when the snow begins to melt and the earth to heave and the

¹ Reprinted from *Pleasant Valley* by Louis Bromfield. Copyright, 1945, by Louis Bromfield. Used by permission of Harper & Brothers, publishers.

fields and pastures to stream with water, men come to the place and take it over. There is a great bustle and activity and the evaporator is turned right side up and a big fire built under it to boil out last year's sticky syrup and leave it fresh and clean for the new boiling. Outside the shed the big iron butchering kettle is suspended over another fire and water is heated in it to wash out the sap buckets which have been piled high in a corner of the shed for nearly a year. In my grandfather's day the sap buckets were made of wood and a couple of weeks before an expected run of sap they had to be lined up and filled with melting snow water from the spring run to swell and become watertight again. It was a lot of work but there was something special in the rite which is missing in these days of metal buckets. I think the seasoned ancient wood, soaked year after year with fresh sap, gave a special flavor to the syrup.

Our sugar bush lies all the way along a north slope on the side of the hill where the sandstone crops out among the big beeches and oaks and sugar maples. It is the last place on the whole farm to thaw out and so the sap runs late, but is, I suspect, all the sweeter for its lateness. The crude paths cut among the young trees and underbrush to permit the passage of a wagon to collect the sap from the trees, run up and down, dangerously, across big rocks and through miniature ravines. When the ground is thawing and streaked with melting snow and water streams everywhere, the almighty tractors can't do the job. The front rears up in protest on a steep slope or the big wheels slide helplessly around. Gathering sap is a job that only horses can do and for my money only horses should draw the big sled with the three-hundred gallon tank. A tractor would be a desecration.

There is something beautiful and satisfactory in the sight of the two big iron-blue Percheron mares, Queen and Sylvia, seen from a distance among the bare trunks of the big trees against the snow-streaked hillside. For me it brings back memories of pleasanter times when living was easier

and people had a chance to know each other in the leisurely comfortable way of neighbors in a Currier and Ives farm picture.

There are lots of reasons why I should like to be twenty years old again, but one of the reasons I am glad I am middle-aged is that it makes me old enough to remember what living was like and what farm life was like before there were automobiles and tractors and airplanes. I am not yet old enough to sit dreaming of the past but I know that life had values in those days which are gone forever, unless someday the world begins all over again. The sight of the big Percherons among the trees brings back all those values which my grandfather knew as well as any man of his time because values were important to him. He did not simply take them for granted. He was intelligent enough to know what a good life he had and to savor it.

And the sight of the big blue mares brings back memories of my grandfather's sugar bush where we used to boil sap round the clock during a big run. It was a big shed, bigger than our own, with bunks built in it where one could sleep or snatch a nap after building up a roaring fire under the evaporator. With him sugar making was a kind of rite celebrating the return of spring. My uncles and my father and friends from town joined him and ate chicken and sweet potatoes roasted in the red-hot coals and they drank hard cider until the sky turned gray and then frosty blue and they went to the barn to harness the big horses and make the rounds of the buckets brimming with sap at sunrise.

There is a kind of excitement which tinges the whole ceremony of sugar making, for it is the symbol of the breaking up of winter and the coming of spring when the sap rises in the trees and the first faint flush of green follows the streaks of melting snow. The cress begins to grow in the spring run and the chickadees and sparrows to call. After the death of winter it is rebirth, the beginning of hope, a new year with the promise of plenty. Even the dogs

and horses feel it. The big mares stamp the earth and toss their heads and their breath steams as they snort in the frosty air of early morning or evening. And the dogs go mad running in circles round and round the sled, chasing rabbits and squirrels that never were save in their imaginations.

Few things on earth taste so good as the syrup of the first sugaring off. It is fresh and new, the very essence of the earth and the budding trees and the wakening spring. You can smell it in the steam from the evaporator and taste it in the hot syrup lifted from the vat in the big ladle.

Boiling down at night is the pleasantest of all. The sap boils and the steam smells of syrup and the fire under the evaporator throws shadows against the gray weather-beaten wall of the shed. On the ground, close to the evaporator, lie the dogs, grateful for the pleasant warmth, sleeping heavily after all the foolish running they have done all day. And in the corner is a jug of cider or maybe something stronger, and seated on logs or cordwood you sit around and tell stories about the Valley and the people who lived there before you were born and trod this same earth that is beneath your feet and tapped the same big maple trees. A kerosene lantern casts a pleasant yellow glow over the whole scene. If you go outside into the frosty air there is the sound of the rustling and scurrying of the wild things which have come up to stare at the strangers who have invaded their territory. And sometimes if you turn the electric torch in the direction of the big fallen chestnut a hundred yards away the light will catch the reflection of a dozen or more eyes that gleam like green jewels in the darkness—the eyes of the raccoon and rabbits and possum and muskrat that have found the new spot a little way off, where you leave apples and potatoes and corn.

In that weather-beaten shed you are very close to the earth and to security and peace and indeed, very near to God.

BURRO BILL AND MRS. BILL¹*Edna Price*

Bill was insistent that I learn to do each of his tasks—as well as he did, if possible. This, he assured me, was for my own good. Suppose some day he broke a leg or was snake-bitten and I might have to go on alone for a week's travel? I soon learned that being a burro-man's helpmeet meant not only acquiring all the usual feminine arts, such as baking sour-dough in a hole, making sun-dried burro jerky, washing clothes on a rock, and making shorts out of cement sacks—it also involved learning the ways of the trail.

The first time Bill sent me to picket out the burros on thirty-five-foot ropes to graze, I came back triumphant. "I tied a bow-line," I announced proudly.

"Fine," said Bill. "Glad you learned."

The next morning Bill went for the burros, and returned, leading poor old John, his head swollen almost as big as his body from a night of strangulation. I had tied a slip-knot! The next night, Bill sent me again and refused to check on my efforts until morning.

"You have to learn to do it right," he announced grimly, "if you kill every last burro in the process." The fact that I *knew* I'd done it right this time didn't prevent me from tossing all night in my blankets, haunted with visions of stiffened burros stretched lifeless at the end of their tethers. I could hardly wait till Bill returned with the living proof that at last, I had learned a hitch that bore no resemblance to the hangman's knot.

Eventually, I became fairly adept at the use of the diamond-hitch, and in fact, almost every task but shooting. I disliked guns and could not bring myself to shoot any living thing. It might have been better had I learned—the

¹ Printed here by permission of the author. (The Prices spent several years, during the thirties, packing across the deserts of the West with their burros.)

only rattlesnake I ever killed died of starvation beneath an avalanche of badly-aimed rocks!

The desert taught us her ways. At first, we used the desert water bags for cooling our drinking water, and they did a very efficient job. But after a while, we found that they were far too fragile to entrust with this most precious commodity of the desert. A metal canteen covered with layers and layers of wet gunny-sack did the job as well, and safely withstood the inevitable wear and tear of the trail. We learned from bitter experience that water, uncooled, in a metal canteen will "go bad" in summer in a matter of hours. Giving forth a terrible "dead-rat" odor, it will cause the most violent nausea, but may be restored to its former sweetness by pouring from one container to another to aerate it.

We learned that men have died on the summer sands with full canteens, not from thirst, but from suffocation. Desert travelers who may have thrown themselves on the ground to rest have invited the very thing they sought to avoid, for the lower the level, the rarer the air. Pets may suffer pitifully while some five feet above, man is breathing in comparative comfort. We learned to take salt, salt, and more salt, to replace that which poured forth in perspiration to cake rapidly in white crusts on flannel shirts and even in the wrinkles of heavy boots. Although we never went to the extreme of wearing long gray woolen underwear through the summer, as did many of the old-timers, still we did stick to woolen shirts, which were cooler than cotton in desert heat.

Gradually, as we learned the advantages of "traveling light," our possessions became fewer and fewer—a camera tripod cast away, an extra 22 rifle, all the little accumulation of stuff we had thought to find useful.

"The more you have, the greater your wants," Bill would grin as he tossed aside another article for which he had no immediate need. Soon, we were stripped to the barest essentials—a few cooking utensils, a little grub, a tiny

tent, the clothes on our backs, and one extra set to be worn by either Bill or myself on alternate bath days while our others dried in the sun. Of course, there was the indispensable axe, the shovel, and the bucket that watered the burros and their owners. And there was our medical kit, consisting of one anti-venom kit and a dime's worth of iodine.

Bill was exultant. "Free as a bird!" he would exclaim. "All we have to do is toss it on the burros and in five minutes we are moving! Who else in the world has so little and still so much?" Always he felt that he was having an experience denied to any but the luckiest of God's creatures, and of the lucky ones, *he* was the most favored.

There was one possession to which I clung, despite Bill's protests—my biscuit bowl. In vain, he reminded me that it wasn't really necessary—that Shorty Borden, "the best camp cook in America," mixed his bread in a hole hollowed out of the flour, right in the flour sack. Besides, Diogenes, when he found he could drink from his hands, didn't he get smart and throw away *his* bowl?

"Yeah," I retorted unmoved, "and Diogenes ended up wearing a barrel! I'll be wearing less than that if you throw away much more." And this was literally true, for before we had taken off on our desert wanderings, trunks containing our worldly goods had been shipped to Bill's mother, two thousand miles away, with instructions to open them and use the contents, saving only our books and papers. As for money, there was still about a hundred dollars, held by my brother in Palo Alto and mailed to us at the rate of ten dollars a month. For all my thirty-odd years on earth, I now owned only three things that belonged to me and me alone—my boots, my toothbrush, and my pink panties. And I knew full well that when the latter wore out, the cement-sack shorts would become half-mine.

Always in the back of my mind was a creeping little worry. How could we ever go back to civilization with no clothes, no money to buy any, and no transportation but

burros? I could see myself riding down Market Street, astride a burro, hopping off and presenting my application for a nursing job, clad in blue jeans and hobnailed boots.

Bill was unruffled. "It's a lot easier to find work than it is to escape it," he would say. "When I need a job, I'll bet I can sit right down on a roadside and rest. First thing you know, some busy soul will rush up and offer me a job because he can't stand anybody else to be idle when he has so much to do." Time proved him right—but that was many days and many, many miles farther along our way.

SHAKESPEARE AND I¹

Mikhail Jeleznov

After the October Revolution, my family, for reasons of health, decided to leave Russia and go to America. How we were going to accomplish this, no one knew. It was impossible to leave Russia and just as impossible, probably, to enter the USA.

But very correctly we all reasoned that it was no use worrying simultaneously over two things. We decided to concentrate on how to get out of Russia and worry afterwards about America.

My contribution to the general plan was a determined effort to become an American Yankee in the shortest possible time. Somewhere I discovered an old dilapidated book entitled "English Self-Taught—A Short Course in the English Language, Grammar and Composition with Exercises, A Glossary and Phonetic Pronunciation of Words."

We all expected to leave for America in the "very near future." That was a convenient time, if somewhat indefinite and vague. My English book contained 250 pages, and I set myself the goal of memorizing daily 4½ pages so as

¹ Reprinted from *Common Ground*, Autumn, 1948. Used by permission.

to become an English-speaking person in about sixty days and be ready for America at the first call.

The "very near future" turned out to be several years. Our collective health deteriorated, but the profound knowledge of the English language I managed to acquire did help me get along in this world and almost catapulted me into the Foreign Service of the young Soviet Republic. But this is an entirely different story.

Each day I memorized $4\frac{1}{2}$ pages of "English Self-Taught"—words, rules, exceptions, nouns, pronouns, verbs, adjectives, the names of all the British kings, and poems by Wordsworth, Shelley, and Milton.

The technique of pronunciation did not come easily, but I followed the golden rule that no word in the English language should be pronounced the way it is spelled. This was of tremendous help to me.

I had certain difficulties with the letters *th* but overcame them by diligent practice before a mirror. I scrupulously followed all the rules set down in "English Self-Taught" and finally discovered that they were very simple. All I had to do was roll up my tongue in the shape of a cup, push it up front, place it between my front teeth, then easily and effortlessly throw it out and say *th*. At first my tongue would emerge too far into the open, but eventually I learned to control it, and the entire procedure of pronouncing *th* took no more than two minutes.

The pronunciation of the rest of the letters of the English alphabet was considerably easier and less troublesome. The book told me exactly when to pronounce the letter *e* like an *e* upside down, or like an *e* downside up, or one laid flat on its stomach. It also told me when to pronounce the letter *a* like an *a* with a hyphen over it, or under it; the letter *t* like *sh*; *s* like *z*; *gh* like *f* or like nothing at all.

From one of my friends whose aunt lived in America I had learned about certain peculiarities of the English language as spoken in the United States. My textbook, of course, gave only the English, or Oxford pronunciation of

words, which, my friend said, would not do for America. I fully agreed with him. After all, we did plan to go to America, and not to England, and the Oxford pronunciation was of no earthly use to me. I wanted to speak American English. So I eliminated all the letters *r* from my vocabulary, for the Yankees, I was told, never pronounce the letter *r* and easily recognize a foreigner by the way he rolls his *r*'s.

Within three months I spoke English fluently. I knew the meaning of every word in the book and pronounced them with an impeccable American accent. To the great awe and delight of my family and friends, I was able to recite by heart two poems by Wordsworth, one by Shelley, and a number of passages from "Paradise Lost."

That year I did not go to Petrograd, which had not yet become Leningrad, to study at the university. My parents prevailed upon me to stay at home: did we not expect to go to America in the very near future?

I remained with the family. My fame as an English scholar spread far and wide. Several friends who also expected to go to the United States (everyone dreamed of going to America, and if the Russian government had relaxed its exit rules and the American government its entry rules, the entire population of Russia, that is, one hundred and eighty million people, would have migrated to the New World)—these friends asked me to teach them the English language. I found it very profitable. My rates, as be-hooved the only English-speaking person in a small Russian town, were high, even exorbitant: a quarter of a pound of sugar, or three-quarters of a pound of bread, or one-eighth of a cake of soap per four lessons. Among my pupils was a young actor who expected an affidavit from a distant cousin in America and wanted to recite in the original English language Hamlet's monologue "To be or not to be."

I had a difficult job with him: my actor just would not learn how to pronounce *th* the way it said in the book, and

he obstinately insisted upon rolling his *r*'s. I finally gave up in despair and let him declaim Hamlet's monologue with an Oxford accent instead of an American one.

What happened to my pupils I do not know. But when we finally did arrive in this country and were met by a group of hitherto unknown relatives, I, of course, immediately addressed them in my best American English.

They listened to me attentively. Finally one of them said sadly—in Russian—"You know, I left Russia thirty years ago and never realized how profoundly the language has changed. You probably speak the new Soviet Russian. We will have a difficult time understanding each other until you learn some English."

WOLF SONG¹

Theodora C. Stanwell-Fletcher

Last night we heard the love song of the wolf! There had been fresh snow followed by clear sky and a full brilliant moon. Our thermometer stood at 24 below. I proposed a snowshoe hike to Wolf Hill on the chance that we might be able to observe wolves down on the lake. J. scouted the notion of actually seeing them, but the night was so beautiful that he couldn't resist the idea any more than I could.

We stepped out in a dazzling world. At least a foot of new powdery snow covered the firm six-foot snow level and made ideal snowshoeing. We traveled swiftly and silently through silver glens and black shadows. Our snowshoes kicked up feathery clouds that twinkled like quicksilver. Our breath froze over jackets and caps and hair so that we were dressed from head to toe in white crystals.

¹ Reprinted from *Driftwood Valley* by Theodora C. Stanwell-Fletcher. Used by permission of Little, Brown & Company, publishers. (The author and her husband lived for several years in a remote section of northern British Columbia, making studies of wild life.)

When we reached the top of Wolf Hill, all below us spread the Driftwood Valley, clear as noontime, lit by the moon for a hundred miles, still and primeval as in the days before the few men who know it now had ever seen it. Belts of dark forest were interspersed by willow swamps which, deeply buried, lay like open fields brushed with gold. To the south the mountains of Takla were faint blue in the distance. The jagged, tumbled Frypans jutted like silver spearheads into the deep amethyst, star-studded sky. The Driftwoods, our own mountains, lay serene and golden, so close that we could almost reach out and touch them. The glacial-covered range far behind to the west showed distinctly, and the Bear Lake Mountains stood sharp and shining all around the northern horizon. Finally we moved across to the east side where a rock precipice falls down to Wolf Lake, crisscrossed with fresh black tracks, and looked on the miles of forested hills that rise gradually to the rolling Ominecas.

Utter silence, a deathlike hush over the land, and then from somewhere below, came a sound that made our hearts stand still. Like a breath of wind, rising slowly, softly, clearly to a high, lovely note of sadness and longing; dying down on two distinct notes so low that our human ears could scarcely catch them. It rose and died, again and again. A wolf singing the beauty of the night, singing it as no human voice has ever done, calling on a mate to share the beauty of it with him, to come to him, to love him. Over and over it sang, so tenderly and exquisitely that it seemed as if the voice were calling to me and I could hardly keep from crying. The whole wilderness was musical with it. After an interval—I have no idea whether it was short or long—from far away across the eastern hills came a soft, distinct, answering call. Three times more the wolf below us sang and was answered. Gradually the other voice grew nearer and nearer, until we thought that the two must have come together, for the sudden quiet was not broken again.

Then I knew that I was shivering like a leaf and my

arm, which J. had been grasping, was almost paralyzed.

J. was cussing to himself and saying: "Gad, what luck! What marvelous luck! I've heard wolves howling in India and the Arctic, but I never heard the like of that! Let's go home—if we're not too cold to move."

On the west, Wolf Hill slopes steeply, almost perpendicularly, for several hundred feet, and is clear of trees. Spurred to recklessness by the height of our emotions, we did something that we'd never dreamed of daring to do before. We sat on the crossed heels of our snowshoes and toboganned down the icy slope at terrific speed. Powdered snow flew up in clouds and turned to rainbows where the moon shone through it. That we arrived, unscathed, in a drift below, instead of being smashed to bits against trees, was just a part of the magic of the night.

We reached the warm cabin after midnight, stoked up a roaring fire, and drank hot scalding cocoa. I hardly remember getting into bed and to sleep, but all night in my dreams I thought I could hear a wolf calling and singing and sobbing in a voice of exquisite tenderness.

MR. MOOKERJHEE¹

Robert Clurman

Foreign experts here also recommend a 25 per cent reduction in the number of employees on the government payroll in the interest of efficiency and economy.

—A.P. dispatch from New Delhi

I advise the foreign experts to tread cautiously. I speak as a man whose career almost foundered on the problem of eliminating unnecessary employees in India.

I was sent to Calcutta by the United Press in the torrid autumn of 1945, with specific instructions from the U.P. division manager in Bombay to run the Calcutta bureau

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with not more than one Indian assistant, plus the usual retinue of messengers and coolies. If possible, I was to dispense with the assistant. Like most other outfits immediately after the war, the U.P. was in the midst of an economy drive, in an effort to get operations back to a normal, peacetime basis. I had just joined the U.P., after being discharged from the American Field Service, in Secunderabad, and I was anxious to demonstrate not only that I was a man who knew how to economize but that I was an executive to be reckoned with as well.

Mr. Mookerjee, a Hindu whom my predecessor in Calcutta had hired as cable editor, was my first executive problem. I had had a report about him before I left Bombay. The former head of the Calcutta bureau had written me that Mr. Mookerjee was "willing but unsatisfactory," and added that he was incapable of editing cables and couldn't even type accurately. The division manager had advised me to fire him and then, if I found that I could not get along without an assistant, hire the best man that could be found among the available Indian journalists in Calcutta. He had great hopes for me, he said, and would keep a sharp eye on my performance.

It took me only a day or two to realize that my predecessor had been right about Mr. Mookerjee. The cable copy he laid on my desk, with a timid smile, was awful. Next, I tried him at copying off mailer stories, which weren't in "cablese," but he wasn't any good at this, either. His typing was full of errors, and he omitted words and sometimes whole sentences.

At last, I called Mr. Mookerjee into the small anteroom I had set aside for "executive" matters and explained the situation to him. He sat with his slender hands folded on his lap and nodded sympathetically. His dark, liquid eyes forgave me everything. He realized he was no good—"absolutely useless" was what he said. The agency had been foolish to keep him as long as it had. He was a terrible burden.

He went so far in running himself down that I began to assure him he really wasn't as bad as all that. He was really quite good, I told him. It was just that this type of work took a particular kind of temperament—in fact, a rather undesirable one. And on an impulse I told him I would give him a full month's severance pay—he had been with the office only ten weeks—and do my best to find him another job.

I wrote the division manager that I had given Mr. Mookerjhee notice but that I definitely needed an assistant. I said I was looking around for the right man and had asked Mr. Mookerjhee to remain until I found one.

Finding the right man wasn't easy. I put ads in the *Calcutta Statesman* and the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, and was deluged with letters from applicants who professed, in broken English, to read English and write it fluently. I had several of the more promising ones try out on a couple of cables. They weren't up to it. In my opinion, there is no way to tell anyone when to use "a" instead of "the" in a sentence. He either knows or he doesn't.

Mr. Mookerjhee watched with genuine sympathy my fruitless efforts to find a replacement for him. He sighed and seemed upset each time a new prospect didn't pan out, and one morning, after a particularly discouraging day spent testing applicants, I found a vase filled with jasmine on my desk.

Finally, I discovered Mr. Bannerjhee. He was a Hindu employed in the Calcutta office of the O.W.I., but, with the war over and the O.W.I.'s future uncertain, he was looking for a permanent connection. I tried him out on the definite and indefinite articles. He wasn't infallible, but he was a lot better than any of the others had been. I wired the division manager that I was hiring Mr. Bannerjhee, as of November 15th, and that I was keeping Mr. Mookerjhee on until November 30th, to help break in Mr. Bannerjhee.

The rapport between Mr. Mookerjhee and Mr. Banner-

jhee was immediate and complete. They acted like two old friends who have unintentionally offended each other and are trying to make amends. Mr. Mookerjhee would jump up to bring Mr. Bannerjhee copy paper, pencils, and carbons before Mr. Bannerjhee had a chance to ask for them—sometimes before he even realized he needed them. Mr. Bannerjhee, on his part, was tactful and gentle. He asked questions in a soft, lilting voice, and Mr. Mookerjhee's normally low-pitched tones became even more murmurous in response. Whenever the telephone rang, they engaged in a lengthy, wordless byplay that implied that since the call was undoubtedly important, only the other was qualified to answer it. Eventually, they solved the problem by taking telephone calls alternately, and each would smile deprecatingly as he picked up the instrument, to assure the other that he was certain nothing could be more trivial than this particular call. Their long looks of silent communion affected me so much that I soon found myself issuing instructions around the office in an apologetic half whisper.

Toward the end of the first week, Mr. Mookerjhee and Mr. Bannerjhee started going out to lunch together. Each day I watched them from my office window as they crossed Chowringhee Square, delicately holding hands, and I began to have a vague feeling that something was going wrong. I thought perhaps I was uncomfortable only because I couldn't get accustomed to seeing men hold hands, an ordinary practice in India; or it may have been the illusion, from the distance of the office window, that Mr. Mookerjhee and Mr. Bannerjhee were identical. Both were trim and long-legged, with the same shade of mahogany skin, and both had long, slender necks and carried their heads slightly to one side, like drooping flowers.

On November 30th, Mr. Mookerjhee wore a shirt with a collar and a green necktie instead of his hitherto invariable white, open-throated polo shirt. About four o'clock, he began assembling his personal things in a cardboard box,

with deft precise movements—a cake of soap, a small blue towel, a bottle of sesamum oil, a pocket English dictionary, and several back copies of American news magazines, which he must have rescued from the wastebasket.

I didn't like watching him. I went into the anteroom and busied myself at my desk. In a few minutes, there was a knock at the door. I said, "Come in," and Mr. Bannerjee came forward silently and laid a sheet of yellow paper in front of me. It was a news story written from a piece of cable copy I had spiked a couple of days previously. It bore Mr. Mookerjee's initials.

"What's this?" I asked.

Mr. Bannerjee smiled and clasped his elongated hands in front of him. "Mr. Mookerjee wrote it," he said.

"Oh," I said, and looked at the copy again. "You must have helped him."

"Just a little," he replied with a shrug.

"Well, it's not bad," I said. I held it out to him.

He didn't take it. "Mr. Mookerjee is very happy here," he said.

"Yes, I know. I'm sorry . . ."

There was a long pause. Mr. Bannerjee kept his large, cholocate-colored eyes fixed on my face.

"Mr. Mookerjee and I have become very good friends," he said, at last.

I nodded. "I'm trying to find him another job," I said.

"I believe he is capable of doing the work here," Mr. Bannerjee said with careful emphasis. "I will help him."

I laid the paper back on the desk. "I'm afraid that's impossible, Mr. Bannerjee," I said. "He isn't up to it, and anyway I can't keep you both. I have orders from Bombay."

Mr. Bannerjee hesitated for a moment, then slowly bobbed his head. "I am prepared to resign."

"Nonsense!" I said. "You can't resign. I brought you here to replace Mr. Mookerjee."

"I can't take Mr. Mookerjhee's job. I couldn't sleep nights," Mr. Bannerjhee said.

I told him he wasn't taking Mr. Mookerjhee's job—that I had decided to let Mr. Mookerjhee go long before he had come into the office and that he would accomplish nothing by stepping out himself. It would just put me to great inconvenience, after I had spent two painstaking weeks breaking him in. Besides, I pointed out, he had given up his O.W.I. job and would be out of work himself.

Mr. Bannerjhee looked sadder than ever and kept shaking his head. "Yes," he said. "Yes, I will be out of work, but I can't keep this job. I am prepared."

There was a knock at the door. It was Mr. Mookerjhee. He came toward the desk hesitantly, reached for the yellow paper, then drew back, and turned to Mr. Bannerjhee with a look of benign reproach.

"Mr. Bannerjhee forced me to write it," he said quietly. "He came over specially to my house last night. I didn't want to. He corrected it three times. We are good friends."

"You can do this work, Ramuni," Mr. Bannerjhee said to him.

Mr. Mookerjhee shook his head. "I know what Mr. Bannerjhee has told you," he said to me. "That he is prepared to resign. I don't permit it. I leave in any case. *In any case*. This I am firm on. I have told him it."

Mr. Mookerjhee's eyes were moist. Mr. Bannerjhee's eyes were moist.

The session lasted two hours. At the end, there were some emotional and glowing speeches in my honor by Mr. Mookerjhee and Mr. Bannerjhee, and considerable handshaking all around. Then they left the office arm in arm, pausing long enough for Mr. Mookerjhee to put the soap, towel, and comb back in his desk. He was still with us.

My correspondence with the division manager during the next three weeks was lengthy and inconclusive. I patiently explained that I needed a minimum of two as-

sistants, and that both Mr. Mookerjee and Mr. Bannerjee were indispensable. He less patiently replied that my proposal was preposterous. I kept a box ready for my own soap, towel, and comb.

After four or five exchanges of letters, the division manager was suddenly called to Tokyo, and there, absorbed in weightier matters, he had no time for Mr. Mookerjee and Mr. Bannerjee. When I left Calcutta, a year later, they were both firmly entrenched in the organization. Mr. Mookerjee still didn't know the difference between "a" and "the," but his typing had improved slightly.

THEY PUT MEANING INTO BROTHERHOOD¹

Margaret Frakes

Two years ago, when national attention centered on Gary, Indiana, after a student walkout in protests against a new policy of non-segregation in the public schools, outside observers were impressed by the wisdom and effectiveness with which local institutions—labor and teachers' unions, the council of churches, the League of Women Voters, the daily newspapers, civic clubs—pitched in to help carry the day for democratic education.

Among those groups was a little nucleus of men who had been finding inspiration to "put their religion to work" in a unique and vital fellowship known as the Anselm Forum. Besides publicly affirming their stand as a group for educational equality, they quietly acted as "leavening agents" in the other groups to which they belonged, and in the community at large. ("We don't like to speak of 'infiltrating,' " they say, "but that's how it works out.")

This spring Anselm is to celebrate its 17th anniversary. It had a modest beginning, back in that depression year of 1932, when eight young laymen, active in their respective churches or synagogues, fell into the habit of meeting to-

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gether to share their ideas and experiences in working out problems of human relations. Community tensions were particularly numerous just then; it was easy to blame someone else or some other group for what was wrong with society. As time went on, the men invited others to join them. Still others, attracted by an opportunity to put into practice what they had heard preached from pulpits, asked to be admitted. Together they discovered a way to utilize their diverse backgrounds to enrich each others' lives. And they realized that such an exchange, in a city with the largest percentage of foreign-born in the nation, and of Negroes in the North, was not only desirable but necessary.

The name came early, but not until considerable research had narrowed the choice to Anselm, Italian-born priest appointed archbishop of Canterbury in 1093, who was renowned for his championship of universal brotherhood in a day when universal hate was the rule. It seemed to these young men that Anselm's principles matched what they had set forth as their aim: "To bring reason, tolerance, and intelligence to all problems, issues and associations in life; to put into action some of the truths proclaimed by our various religions and by democracy."

There were difficulties. Early in the game, someone proposed a Negro for membership. One Anselmite objected. "I can go along with interfaith ideas," he said, "but not with this." He resigned, and the Negro, now a prominent sociologist, came in. Then a member of the Mohammedan group in Gary asked to join. "No," said a Syrian Orthodox, who could not forget what his countrymen had suffered at the hands of the Turks during a nightmare flight after World War I. Sorrowfully, for they regarded the Syrian highly for his sincerity and devotion, the other Anselmites accepted his resignation.

Today Anselm has 150 members—Jew and Protestant, Catholic and Orthodox, fundamentalist and liberal, Negro and white Southern aristocrat, Nisei and Chinese, steel ex-

ecutive and steel puddler, school principal and school janitor, Republican and Socialist. It resists the temptation to expand its membership, for a unique demand of the group is that all must know each other well. There is a long waiting-list. Many of the men are connected with the steel mills on which most of the city depends for its livelihood. Current president of Anselm is a Catholic judge; the vice-presidents are a Rumanian Orthodox dentist and a Jewish lawyer; the secretary is an Episcopal high school student; the treasurer is a Negro Baptist, a deputy state attorney general; the public relations director is a Lutheran, a foreman in the steel mills.

Anselm's only property is a typewriter—"but a really good one." Its monthly forums are held in churches or synagogues or parish halls, on a rotating basis. There any subjects on which men are called to form opinions are aired. So imbued are members with the aim of their fellowship that they always come away with new perspective and understanding; they have learned to disagree agreeably. Along the way, Anselm has absorbed other creative bodies, civic and religious, which exemplified similar ideals—the Fireside Forums, for instance, which met for a time in groups of a score or so to discuss matters of vital current interest.

The forum has an advisory board made up of clergymen from the various faiths, but membership is limited to laymen. "We like to think that, even though we are not a religious organization, our members represent the best in churchmanship," an Anselmite explained recently. "It's easy to be tolerant, you know, but we want men who are really strong in their religious feeling and who are willing to *do* something about it. When we started out we were ordinary young men restless over the inactivity of our churches in practical living. We have found here a way to put what religion teaches into action, and we have gone back into our churches to act as 'exciters' there."

How that "exciting" works is illustrated by the part one

member, a Lutheran steelworker, played in getting his parish to accept into membership a young Chinese laundryman, and, later, a Nisei couple. He saw to it, too, that the Lutheran men's brotherhood of which he was president widened its base to include men outside that church who needed what it offered. An Anselmite was responsible for the formation of the Gary council of churches, and two members have served it as president. A Presbyterian millworker who engineered the formation of a church council in suburban East Gary and Garyton says: "If it hadn't been for the strong wish given me by Anselm to see all God's people united in love and common purpose, the council probably wouldn't have been formed." A Jewish lawyer, vice-president of his synagogue, reported his surprise at finding that "Catholics and Orthodox, Lutherans and Baptists and all the others had the same aspirations as we do in the synagogue." And he added: "Finding out what I have here has been one of the most wonderful things that ever happened to me." Many of the members have been or are church school superintendents; others are vestrymen, elders or other parish officers. Anselm, they say, makes them better churchmen.

Within the fellowship is an agnostic who recently exclaimed: "Yon know, sometimes I think that if I had been invited into an Anselm meeting ten years ago I wouldn't have become an agnostic." Asked why, he explained that he had become disillusioned because he found too little real love and brotherhood in the churches, but that in Anselm he discovered working churchmen exemplifying the very qualities he had thought no churchmen possessed.

For some years Anselm went its own way, its members content to find inspiration for themselves in the fellowship of men of different racial and religious backgrounds. Then, on its tenth birthday, it was challenged by Chaplain Hall of the Indiana state penitentiary twenty-five miles away to go beyond its own circle, to "throw out the lifeline." Anselm responded by sending a team—men of Jewish, Italian,

Welsh, Scandinavian, Philippine and Japanese ancestry—to conduct a discussion program for the convicts along the lines followed in its own meetings. Their subject: religion and democracy.

The response was genuine. Says a Congregational minister who was present: "At first the prisoners were cold and inhibited. Then, as they saw the miracle of mutual respect unfold, they were swept away." This simply bore out one of Anselm's basic tenets: Let people meet and understand each other, and almost any barrier or reserve or hostility can be broken down. Anselm teams now have an annual standing date at the penitentiary.

Although Anselm has never for a moment thought of itself as called on to "educate" the community, that experience at the penitentiary turned its face outward, and the lifeline has remained dangling. Within its own membership were men equipped to interpret all sorts of community problems. Why not make that interpretation available to others? Anselm set about rounding up panels of members, experts all, ready to conduct forum discussions on various subjects, from the admission of displaced persons to local housing. Today, thirteen such panels are set to go at a moment's notice. They have been invited to appear before many groups in Gary and in other cities.

Anselm was the first local organization to recognize that wartime tensions were producing an increase in juvenile delinquency. Quickly it set up a panel of judge, police officer, prison sociologist, minister, and school psychologist. The discussions that panel conducted focused public attention on the problem, and community action followed. Anselm helped pave the way for Gary's acceptance of Japanese-American resettlers during the war. Just now it is focusing attention on a report indicating the need for changes in the state public school system.

Through the years, Anselm has never lost sight of its original basic concern—brotherhood. Its members realize, however, that it is more effective to exemplify brotherhood

than to preach about it. For instance, only one of the panels is set up to *discuss* brotherhood, but each *demonstrates* it by having on its roster a Negro, a Jew, a Catholic, and a member of a Protestant or Orthodox congregation. The panels pull no punches. Often they go before groups known to be "anti," or where a Negro, perhaps, has never been welcome before.

Anselm is now launching a biweekly radio program featuring discussions by the various panels. It discovered a band of young Negroes, former G.I.'s, who were meeting to sing together, and encouraged their training. Today the sponsorship of concerts by the Kingsmen glee club is one of Anselm's most pleasant endeavors.

The interest in community problems aroused by the panels soon created a demand for additional information. Anselm responded by starting a collection of books and pamphlets bearing on those problems. Today any person or group is welcome to make free use of the hundreds of volumes on the shelves or just to browse in the James Henry Garnett library—named for the remarkable slave-born educator who after his retirement at ninety-two made for himself an unforgettable place in the Anselm fellowship until his death seven years later. The six films on brotherhood which the forum offers for free use have been given more than three hundred showings by groups in the community.

Gary has come to rely on the Anselmites, realizing, as one member puts it, that they are "neither radicals nor standpatters, just middle-roaders trying to be decent in the field of human relations." When the group takes a stand on any issue, Gary takes notice. Newspaper headlines report its thinking on everything from the Chinese exclusion act to a local campaign to eradicate venereal disease. When it announces an "open meeting" for consideration of some problem of vital interest, the public crowds in to hear the discussion.

The Anselm idea is spreading. There are now branches in

East Chicago, where the unit within two years has succeeded in making a creative impact upon the life of that industrial community, and at Purdue University, where the student membership, representing twenty nations, meets regularly in the University Presbyterian Church. These branches are open to women as well as men. Not to be outdone, Gary women have formed their own subsidiary, which sponsors forum discussions and joins the parent body in arranging the annual camp in Dunes State Park, where members and their families share a Labor Day week end of fellowship that has proved unique and rewarding.

Despite the influence Anselmites have come to exert on the community as a group, it is probably the routine, everyday impact they make as individuals that counts most. Being on hand quietly and unobtrusively to pour oil on community tension spots wherever and whenever they show up has become a habit with these laymen. And the habit pays off in smoother functioning of all aspects of community life. Members of Anselm have served as organizing presidents of many other groups which have made their own peculiar creative mark on this city which has been called "an Old World in miniature."

Those who are on the sidelines appreciate what Anselm does in its unspectacular way to make easier the task of building a worthwhile community life. Said a Jewish rabbi, just returned from an army chaplaincy, after attending one of the family camps: "Remembering particularly Iwo Jima, the bloodiest island of the war, I thought I would like to have had some of the 5,600 American dead there spend the week end with me. Perhaps they would have felt that they had not died in vain. The Anselm ideal is the dream of the noblest American way of life." The rabbi's sentiments are echoed by an Anselmite who immigrated from Greece at the age of 12 to enter kindergarten, graduate from high school with honors a few years later, and become a successful businessman: "Anselm is to me what I

always prayed America might prove to be." And a former Gary Congregational minister, writing back from his new field of action in California, had this to say: "Anselm is living proof of the conciliatory power of real religion, whatever its name. It stands above the stormy straits of civic tensions to remind men that brotherhood and aggressive good will are social necessities in a free society."

LA GRANDE TRAPPE ¹

Geddes MacGregor

I left Gare Montparnasse in Paris at 9 A.M., travelling by electric train with hundreds of French holiday-makers to Laigle, about ninety miles due west, where I joined a handful of people in an uncomfortable little bus going twenty miles south to the little village of Soligny-la-Trappe. Thence I had to walk two or three miles to that lonely corner of Normandy where, on the site of the Abbey founded in 1140, Trappist monks continue to live a life more thoroughly mediaeval in the ferocity of its discipline than any which has ever elsewhere gained a foothold in Western Christendom. The Abbey was almost wholly destroyed at the French Revolution; but the monks returned in 1815, rebuilt their Abbey, and pursued with relentless rigour the rule laid down in the seventeenth century by the famous "Thundering Abbot," de Rancé. It is a life which makes even that of the Carthusians seem almost worldly.

The monks rise at 2 A.M. every day except Sunday, when they get up half an hour earlier. They have nothing to eat but a crust of bread till 11 A.M., when they dine on the produce of the land they till. Meat and even fish are wholly excluded, and eggs are allowed only when health demands some extra nourishment. Their only other meal is at 6 P.M., two hours before they retire for the night.

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About a third of the day is spent in prayer in the church, a third in strenuous manual labour mainly in the fields (for they are peasant-monks whose aim is to be as nearly self-supporting as possible), and a third in study. They never speak, except when required by the Abbot or to make some perfunctory explanation about a piece of work to be done, and they have no "time off" for recreation of any kind. One of the worst of their penances, it seemed to me, is their very mediaeval practice of sleeping fully dressed in their coarse white habit, in the large, bleak, white-washed dormitory. But the worst of all, according to the Prior who conducted me over the Abbey, is the total absence of privacy: the monks have no cells to which they may retire for study, quiet or rest, for it is essential to the spirit of the Order that they should find their solitude in the midst of the community. At night they are housed together in the dormitory, and during the eighteen hours of their daily waking life there are only three places in which they ought to be found: in the church together for prayer, in the library together for study, or in the fields together for manual work. They are never alone. I asked the Prior what happened to them during the war. He replied: "We knew almost nothing of what was going on, for of course we never see a newspaper. When the Germans came we were given twenty-four hours to quit the Abbey, which they required for a hospital. But we stayed on in the barns and out-houses." When I remarked that four years of that must have been very hard, his eyes twinkled, his kindly old face wrinkled with amusement and then glowed into a radiant smile. "On the contrary," he said, "it was very pleasant for us—a nice change, plenty of straw to sleep on at night—much more comfortable than our ordinary life."

Never have I seen monks who looked so much as though they had stepped right out of the Middle Ages. Yet there is not a scrap of mediaeval romance about the Abbey itself: apart from the Abbot de Rancé's lodge, a barn-like seventeenth century structure in which he received Bossuet,

there is hardly a stone which survived the Revolution, and the present buildings are in the dreariest nineteenth-century Gothic style. But one is far nearer the life of the Middle Ages than at Avignon or Chartres. Entering the square lodge at the visitors' gate I found it hung with drab religious pictures, musty and foxed, such as one might possibly have found in a very pious English household a hundred years ago, like illustrations for a family copy of the *Pilgrim's Progress*. But the one-eyed monk who hobbled out to greet me was indeed authentic, the living embodiment of a bygone age. He spoke gently and sweetly, as unhurried as if within these walls time had no longer meaning. When I said that the Abbot was expecting me, he smiled, nodded his old head several times, and muttered "très bien," as though in his heart he had known from eternity why I had come and whom I wished to see. Then he limped off, his boots clattering on the cobbles and his leathern girdle creaking by his side. He beckoned me to follow him along a muddy path to another building where, after waiting for some time in a dreary vestibule, I met the Guest Master, a young monk ordained only a year, with a fine delicate face uncannily like that of a wax saint. He asked me slowly and very sweetly when I had last eaten, and when I confessed that it had been nearly six hours ago he said quite firmly: "Then you must eat before I take you to the Abbot. Please wait here while I get your meal." In a few minutes he returned to lead me into a small bare room where he sat me at a table and served me with a copious meal which included an enormous omelette, made, of course, with real eggs. He stood all the time, humbly serving, for humility is a virtue much esteemed in the Order. Now and then he spoke a little, for it was his special duty to make the guests of the Abbey welcome. Then he took me to the Abbot's quarters, leaving me on a bench in front of the Abbot's office for a few minutes till the Abbot would be free to see me. I sat there for a quarter of an hour, watching the monks come and go, gaunt, grave, and

silent, yet most of them fairly robust and vigorous in appearance. The lay brothers had an even more austere aspect than the others: they are distinguished by their thick brown habit and cloak and the fact that they are all fully bearded, while the others are, of course, shaven and tonsured.

In a small office lined with a few shelves of theological books I spoke with de Rancé's successor, a middle-aged man, mild, with a genial smile and a practical turn of mind. His power in the Abbey is absolute; he is master of its destiny, in both spiritual and temporal affairs, to an extent that must be without parallel in Western Europe to-day. His subjects obey him absolutely: he consults no council and has no superior, and bears the simple title, "Dominus." I had met him in Paris some time previously, when he had invited me to the Abbey. We talked for a little about current movements in thought, but he declined to take any of these very seriously: for him the Middle Ages had provided a storehouse of truth. It happened to be his feast-day, which in monasteries takes the place of a birthday, for it is the day of the saint whose name one has taken on entering the Order. I asked the Prior, as we walked round the Abbey, what celebrations would take place that day to recognise the Abbot's feast. He took me into the refectory, all set for the evening meal. At each place lay an aluminum plate, fork and spoon, a mug, a carafe of water and one of very weak cider. The Abbot's was like all the others, except that in front of his plate was a ring of marguerites and other simple flowers, like a child's garland. "That is what we do to wish the Abbot a happy feast," he whispered.

Even the church is cold and austere. The altar, consisting of five stones supporting a stone slab, has no adornment but a crucifix and six candlesticks, all of the simplest design. Enormous service-books stand in the monks' stalls, and from these they sing their plainsong for several hours each day. There is a little loft at the west end of the church where visitors may follow the services, but a notice forbids

such to attempt to join in the monks' song, for this would disturb the peace of a Trappist cloister. In contrast to the church and the refectory, which, though austere, have a certain modest grandeur, the library is a pleasant, simple, almost cosy room. The monks sit all facing the same way, with their cowed backs to the door. It is still called the Scriptorium, as in the days when they laboriously copied out Bibles and missals. To this room they come straight from the fields to pore over books in the same silence in which they till the soil and do all the ordinary work of a busy farm.

Their farm is much like most others of its size in Normandy, and despite their mediaeval manner of life the monks are ready to use very modern agricultural implements, for it is no part of their spirit to play at being old-fashioned and conservative in such matters; much more important is it that they should be as autonomous as possible, and so be independent of the outside world. At present they number seventy-five, while they need a hundred for full strength. I noticed a brand-new American machine for cutting and threshing. Yet since they are not wholly independent of the world, they have to go up to the village occasionally, and for this they still use a little pony and trap. They wear long leather thongs attached to their habits, and by putting these through holes at the foot of the skirt they may draw up their habit to the knees for greater ease in outdoor work. Out of doors they usually wear wooden clogs, exchanging these for heavy leather slippers when they return from the fields. Otherwise they study and dig in the same clothes, and when they go into church they simply throw on an additional choir habit. Such ways, not very cleanly by modern standards, together with their monotonous, vegetarian diet and Spartan fasts and abstinences—one of these lasts from September to Easter—would seem likely to undermine their physical stamina; nevertheless they look healthy enough on the whole, and I understand they usually live long. Their mental health is

probably in much greater danger on account of the rigorous silence and lack of recreation. Some of them have a fanatical look about their eyes, and those with whom I was able to speak often found their words only with some difficulty, like men who have lived for years in the desert. Their mental equilibrium is preserved, one must suppose, by the regularity of their life and their constant touch with the earth, living near which men do not so often lose their mental balance as they do in cities. Though in their choice of life they seek to be near heaven, they are also very close to earth, believing perhaps in the old English yeoman's view that "the man who rides straight across country will ride straight to the Kingdom of God." They may be far out of touch with modern life and thought, but they are not out of touch with nature, and to hear them sing, is to know that they are certainly not out of touch with God. I left them singing Vespers and at 11 P.M. found myself again in the boulevards of Paris, feeling that within that day I had been really transported to the Middle Ages and found my way back to a civilisation which for all its life and movement lacked a secret these monks possessed.

RIGHT AND WRONG¹

C. S. Lewis

Every one has heard people quarrelling. Sometimes it sounds funny and sometimes it sounds merely unpleasant; but however it sounds, I believe we can learn something very important from listening to the kind of things they say. They say things like this: "That's my seat, I was there first"—"Leave him alone, he isn't doing you any harm"—"Why should you shove in first?"—"Give me a bit of your

¹ The selection from C. S. Lewis, "Right and Wrong," from *The Case for Christianity*. Copyright, 1944, by The Macmillan Company and used with their permission. (This is the first of a series of talks delivered over BBC's Third Program, discussed in "The British Way of Radio," page 367.)

orange, I gave you a bit of mine"—"How'd you like it if anyone did the same to you?"—"Come on, you promised." People say things like that every day, educated people as well as uneducated, and children as well as grown-ups.

Now what interests me about all these remarks is that the man who makes them isn't just saying that the other man's behaviour doesn't happen to please him. He is appealing to some kind of standard of behaviour which he expects the other man to know about. And the other man very seldom replies, "To hell with your standard." Nearly always he tries to make out that what he has been doing doesn't really go against the standard, or that if it does, there is some special excuse. He pretends there is some special reason in this particular case why the person who took the seat first should not keep it, or that things were quite different when he was given the bit of orange, or that something has turned up which lets him off keeping his promise. It looks, in fact, very much as if both parties had in mind some kind of Law or Rule of fair play or decent behaviour or morality or whatever you like to call it, about which they really agreed. And they have. If they hadn't, they might, of course, fight like animals, but they couldn't *quarrel* in the human sense of the word. Quarrelling means trying to show that the other man's in the wrong. And there'd be no sense in trying to do that unless you and he had some sort of agreement as to what Right and Wrong are; just as there'd be no sense in saying that a footballer had committed a foul unless there was some agreement about the rules of football.

Now this Law or Rule about Right and Wrong used to be called the Law of Nature. Nowadays when we talk of the "laws of nature" we usually mean things like gravitation, or heredity, or the laws of chemistry. But when the older thinkers called the Law of Right and Wrong the Law of Nature, they really meant the Law of *Human* Nature. The idea was that, just as falling stones are governed by the law of gravitation and chemicals by chemical laws, so

the creature called man also had *his* law—with this great difference, that the stone couldn't choose whether it obeyed the law of gravitation or not, but a man could choose either to obey the Law of Human Nature or to disobey it. They called it Law of Nature because they thought that every one knew it by nature and didn't need to be taught it. They didn't mean, of course, that you mightn't find an odd individual here and there who didn't know it, just as you find a few people here and there who are colour-blind or have no ear for a tune. But taking the race as a whole, they thought that the human idea of Decent Behaviour was obvious to every one. And I believe they were right. If they weren't, then all the things we say about war are nonsense. What is the sense in saying the enemy are in the wrong unless Right is a real thing which they at bottom know as well as we do and ought to practise? If they had no notion of what we mean by right, then, though we might still have to fight them, we could no more blame them for that than for the colour of their hair.

I know that some people say the idea of a Law of Nature or decent behaviour known to all men is unsound, because different civilisations and different ages have had quite different moralities. But they haven't. They have only had *slightly* different moralities. Just think what a *quite* different morality would mean. Think of a country where people were *admired* for running away in battle, or where a man felt *proud* for double-crossing all the people who had been kindest to him. You might just as well try to imagine a country where two and two make five. Men have differed as regards what people you ought to be unselfish to—whether it was only your own family, or your fellow countrymen, or every one. But they have always agreed that you oughtn't to put yourself first. Selfishness has never been admired. Men have differed as to whether you should have *one* wife or four. But they have always agreed that you *mustn't* simply have any woman you liked.

But the most remarkable thing is this. Whenever you

find a man who says he doesn't believe in a real Right and Wrong, you will find the same man going back on his statement a moment later. He may break his promise to you, but if you try breaking one to him he'll be complaining, "It's not fair" before you can say Jack Robinson. A nation may say treaties don't matter; but then, next minute, they spoil their case by saying that the particular treaty they want to break was an unfair one. But if treaties don't matter, and if there's no such thing as Right and Wrong—in other words, if there is no Law of Nature—what is the difference between a fair treaty and an unfair one? Haven't they given away the fact that, whatever they say, they really know the Law of Nature just like anyone else?

It seems then, that we are forced to believe in a real Right and Wrong. People may be sometimes mistaken about them, just as people sometimes get their sums wrong; but they are not a matter of mere taste and opinion any more than the multiplication table. Now if we're agreed about that, I go on to my next point, which is this: none of us are really keeping the Law of Nature. If there are any exceptions among you, I apologise to them. They'd better switch on to another station, for nothing I'm going to say concerns them. And now, turning to the ordinary human beings who are left:

I hope you won't misunderstand what I'm going to say. I'm not preaching, and Heaven knows I'm not pretending that I'm better than anyone else. I'm only trying to call attention to a fact: the fact that this year, or this month, or, more likely, this very day, we have failed to practise ourselves the kind of behaviour we expect from other people. There may be all sorts of excuses for us. That time you were so unfair to the children was when you were very tired. That slightly shady business about the money—the one you've almost forgotten—came when you were very hard up. And what you promised to do for old So-and-so and have never done—well, you never would have promised if you'd known how frightfully busy you were going

to be. And as for your behaviour to your wife (or husband), if I knew how irritating they could be, I wouldn't wonder at it—and who the dickens am I, anyway? I am just the same. That is to say, I don't succeed in keeping the Law of Nature very well, and the moment anyone tells me I'm not keeping it, there starts up in my mind a string of excuses as long as your arm. The question at the moment is not whether they are good excuses. The point is that they are one more proof of how deeply, whether we like it or not, we believe in the Law of Nature. If we didn't believe in decent behaviour, why should we be so anxious to make excuses for not having behaved decently? The truth is, we believe in decency so much—we feel the Rule or Law pressing on us so—that we can't bear to face the fact that we're breaking it, and consequently we try to shift the responsibility. For you notice that it's only for our bad behaviour that we find all these explanations. We put our *bad* temper down to being tired or worried or hungry; we put our good temper down to ourselves.

Well, those are the two points I wanted to make. First, that human beings, all over the earth, have this curious idea that they *ought* to behave in a certain way, and can't really get rid of it. Secondly, that they don't in fact behave in that way. They know the Law of Nature; they break it. These two facts are the foundation of all clear thinking about ourselves and the universe we live in.

THE ABOLITION OF UNTOUCHABILITY IN INDIA ¹

John S. Hoyland

The origins of Untouchability in India are racial and economic as well as religious. A large proportion of the fifty odd million Untouchables are descended from the

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dark-skinned inhabitants whom the fair-skinned invaders from the North West subdued, perhaps fifteen centuries before Christ. The word "subdued" is important. The darker race was not exterminated, but it was reduced to servitude. The majority of Untouchables are still to all practical purposes land-serfs, living under a vicious form of landlordism, and enslaved by debt often to the landlords themselves. In South Africa we are witnessing to-day the fashion in which the position of a darker race, held down by a more "civilised" white ruling race, may rapidly deteriorate towards serfdom and slavery. A similar process has been going forward for many centuries in India. Its results have been stabilised by a religious system which has taken the caste-organisation of society—with the Untouchables as its base—under its wing, and has reinforced it by a great complex of ceremonial rules and sanctions. There have always been Hindu reformers who protested against caste, but Gandhi was the first of such reformers to bring about a really revolutionary change in Hindu public opinion regarding it.

A few generations ago Untouchables, in the part of India where I lived from 1912 to 1928, were required to drag behind them the branch of a tree when they travelled along a public road, in order that their unhallowed footsteps might be expunged from the dust. They were also enjoined to carry a pot slung round the neck, in order that if they needed to spit they might not defile the face of mother earth. They ate dead cattle, no matter of what disease the beasts had died, the hides being their perquisite. They were often extremely filthy, and had to perform disgusting tasks for the village community. They lived in separate ramshackle settlements at some distance from the villages. During the pneumonia epidemic of 1918 I had occasion to visit many such Untouchable settlements, and became profoundly impressed by the misery and horror of the existence endured by their inhabitants. On one occasion a high-caste landlord went with me to the outskirts of one such

settlement. He would not enter it, but waited till I had paid my visits, and listened with ill-disguised scorn whilst I gave the heads of the Untouchable families some simple advice regarding diet for the pneumonia patients (we were the hardest-hit province in the hardest-hit country of the world during that dreadful epidemic). When I mentioned milk, the landlord, whose debt-slaves as well as land-serfs the Untouchables before him no doubt were, could contain himself no longer. He hissed out, "Yes, you may drink milk, but it will be the milk of your own swine!" Old residents in the East will relish the force of that insult.

Gandhi started his work against Untouchability nearly thirty years ago, because (for one thing) he was convinced that India must put her own house in order if she was to claim justice and freedom from Britain. He declared that, with cottage industries, Hindu-Moslem peace, the emancipation of womanhood, and the abolition of the misuse of drink and drugs, the ending of Untouchability was "one of the five fingers of the hand with which I work for India." A test case occurred at a small town called Vaikom in Travancore, where the local Untouchables decided to vindicate their right to use a certain street, alongside which were the houses of Brahmins. A procession was arranged, and prohibited. It was held, and those who took part in it were jailed. More and more processions were organised, with the same result. Then the State police drew a cordon across the entrance to the street. By Gandhi's advice the Untouchables, maintaining absolute non-violence, remained standing in front of the cordon, in shifts, till it gave way, which took sixteen months. Thousands of volunteers came to help the Vaikom Untouchables in this task, and intense interest was aroused all over India. During the rains the water was deep in the street, the police being in boats. Cholera broke out in the Untouchables' camp, and there was great suffering. Finally the sympathy aroused far and wide was so great that the State authorities gave way, and

the Untouchables marched their procession in triumph up the street.

This Vaikom precedent was the signal for a widespread movement of effective emancipation, Untouchables being allowed all over India to enter temples, schools, public buildings, waiting rooms, etc., and to use wells. Year after year Gandhi travelled up and down India holding immense meetings not only for political objectives but also, and for many years even more frequently, to secure the abolition of Untouchability. I have vivid memories of one such meeting at Nagpur, about 1926, held in the open air in a large park and attended by thousands. When Gandhi appeared the whole of the vast crowd rose as one man and rushed forward to get the chance of touching his feet. A few of us who were close to him had to join arms in a circle to keep the weight of that eager throng off the frail little Mahatma, as we slowly worked him up to the platform. In industrial centres like Nagpur the emancipation of the Untouchables was rendered immensely more rapid and easy by the fact that they formed the bulk of the mill-hands. In the 'twenties they were gradually learning that, if they voted together in municipal and provincial elections, they could do a very great deal to improve their lot. I remember an official garden party at a time when the first Untouchable members had lately been returned to the Provincial Legislature. The centrepiece of the refreshment tent was a sumptuous fruit salad, in a noble bowl. One of the newly elected Untouchable legislators, in festive mood, touched the bowl, whereupon he and his fellow Untouchables had the whole of it to themselves.

Gandhi did much more than hold meetings against Untouchability. He took the amazingly courageous step (for a caste Hindu) of welcoming an Untouchable child into his own family. The child's advent broke up the family for a time, not for long. It also meant that the Mahatma brought down on his own head the concentrated rage of

orthodox Hinduism. Moreover, inasmuch as his murderer in January 1948 was a member of a fanatically orthodox Hindu organisation, prepared to use terrorist methods to enforce its views, it may justly be asserted that he died a martyr to his convictions regarding the emancipation of the Untouchables.

A few weeks back Dr. Ambedkar, himself an Untouchable and chairman of the Drafting Committee commissioned to prepare the new Indian Constitution, presented to the Constituent Assembly this clause: " 'Untouchability' is abolished and its practice in any form is forbidden. The enforcement of any disability arising out of 'Untouchability' shall be an offence punishable in accordance with law." The clause was triumphantly adopted. Its inclusion amongst the "Fundamental Rights" in the initial section of the new Indian Constitution is a posthumous acknowledgment, and a worthy one, of the value and significance of Gandhi's work.

With the dark examples of the colour bars in the Southern United States and in South Africa before our eyes, it is inevitable that we should ask whether the clause outlawing Untouchability will remain mere words, or whether it will be enforced, and if so, how? The best minds in India have been bent for months and years to the task of making the ending of Untouchability effective. In anticipation of the constitutional ban now enacted, inspecting officers have been appointed to travel widely through both towns and villages in order to make sure that all discrimination against Untouchables is being abandoned. The education of the Untouchables is being energetically pushed forward, with special allotments on a liberal scale in provincial budgets. Although the old system of special "weightage" for minorities in appointments to public services is in other respects being abandoned, it is being continued on an adequate scale on behalf of the Untouchables. Incidentally they are no longer even to be called "Untouchables." Gandhi set the example of a constructive change of name

when he called them Harijans, "Children of God," and he chose the same name for his own all-important newspaper. Sometimes they are now called "Depressed Classes," but this also is beginning to be thought invidious. Better alternatives are "Scheduled Classes" or "Special Classes."

It is not hard to foresee that the complete abolition of Untouchability will be achieved only with the coming of a new and marked degree of economic prosperity to India. Fundamentally this means the abolition of landlordism, the taking over by the State of the peasant debt (with no unduly generous compensation to the landlord moneylenders), the urgent prosecution of the already promising movement for co-operative credit banks, co-operative land-ownership, the active pushing of great new irrigation and hydro-electric schemes as advocated by Lord Wavell and others, and (in the background) the right use of atomic energy—India is rich in thorium—for the creation of cheap electric power to be used for sub-artesian wells. With an era of effective improvement in agricultural and industrial conditions, the economic forces making for the perpetuation of Untouchability will cease to exercise their present reactionary influence. Unfortunately it is still true, though much less true than ten years ago, that anyone with a few rupees to spare can become a moneylender at rates of interest so high that his debtors are soon well on the way towards becoming his hereditary debt-slaves. Gandhi himself, through advice given to the Gandhi-ite provincial governments in the "honeymoon period" of 1937–39, showed the way to a wise legislative action for the ending of such debt-slavery, especially by the abolition of imprisonment for debt, the limitation of interest, the registration of moneylenders, the establishment of debt conciliation boards, and (above all) rural education. Such legislative action is well under way once more and it will prove effective; for all India knows that the greatest man of our time lived and died for this cause of effective emancipation.

At his innumerable meetings Gandhi made it a habit to

survey beforehand the crowd which he was to address. If he saw any sign of the Untouchables being confined (as used to be customary) in a separate pen, apart from the rest of the audience, he would insist on going to sit amongst the "Children of God" in that pen, however impossible it might be for the rest of the audience to see and hear him when so seated. India remembers this habit of the Mahatma, and knows that it stands for a change of spirit without which constitutional provisions and social and economic changes must prove ineffective. The signs are that this change of spirit is now taking place and on a scale adequate for emancipation. But here, as always, "the price of liberty is eternal vigilance."

THE PERSIAN SAGE AND THE YOKEL¹

Herbert Howarth and Ibrahim Shahrullah

A few years ago a Persian came to this protected city and, presenting himself to the Prime Minister, announced himself as the foremost savant of his nation, and probably the most erudite man in the world. The Prime Minister was much impressed by his style of conversation, and extended his patronage to him, with the promise of a high and confidential appointment. At the same time he asked whether he was prepared to wrangle with our university men; the Persian seemed delighted with the challenge, asked that the Minister should personally attend the disputation, and promised to put a question which should be the test of which party was the wiser.

The Prime Minister called the University before him, and when a large assembly had gathered, he rehearsed the Persian's offer and asked whether the dons were prepared to submit themselves to a question of their opponent's

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choice. They agreed, and the Persian placed himself in front of them and put a question without making a sound. At this they turned to the Premier and complained that signs were only for the deaf and dumb, and that naturally they could not follow his meaning. But the Minister preferred to favour his Persian, and insisted that the University should find an answer or confess themselves the losers. So they asked for three days' respite to go apart and confer with one another ; and this was allowed.

After an exhaustive debate on the means of combatting the foreigner and driving him home with his tail down, one of them proposed the following plan : to go out and find a yokel from the provinces, 'a fellow with a stout cudgel, who doesn't know the difference between heaven and earth and broad and long. We will rig him out in a doctor's gown, and parade respectfully behind him to the Premier's house and offer him as our chosen representative to meet the Persian. And so we escape by setting the dog on the pig.'

A number of them went down town looking for somebody to fit the description. And they lit on a yeoman from the villages, tall and thick-necked, with hams like a horse's and a long beard, and an outsize cape over his head and a gabardine cloak down to his knees. He was sitting in a shop eating boiled eggs, and when they entered there was still one egg which he had not broken into, and he thought that they must mean to steal it. So he popped it under his cape, and tried to slip away, but they caught hold of him. Then followed a conversation something like this :

THE YOKEL : I'm your servant and friend, poets, so help me God. Play fair by me and help me out.

THE DONS : Now, countryman, don't be afraid.

THE YOKEL : I *am* afraid. I'm afraid you'll put me in front of the tax-collector, who will nick off my head. Never until this year did I spend a penny or come near Cairo. And now I was hungry and happened to have these four eggs. I boiled them and ate three, and the one that was

left, I put it behind my ear because I was feared you wanted it. And I've paid His Majesty all my taxes but sixpence. . . .

THE DONS: In actual fact our intention is to do you a favour. Carry out our instructions, and we will pay you the necessary sixpence, and moreover we will give you a dinner and an excellent round of amusements.

THE YOKEL: Instruct anything you like. I'll dig a well, or pull a wall down, or cart mud, or bake dung-bricks for your fire. I'll do it all in no time. Or I'll fight anyone you like—you stand out, just give me a stick and leave it to me, I'll break a thousand heads for you.

THE DONS: Indeed, we want something much simpler. We shall install you as our chairman and conduct you to a certain foreign gentleman, who will ask you questions which you must answer and show yourself his superior. But be very careful not to employ words in your answers. Confine yourself to gesticulation, please.

THE YOKEL: Take me along to this namby-pamby. Just say the word, and I'll give him a cuff that will put paid to his account whether he's the Prime Minister's man or the Emperor's. Trust me, that foreigner will come off worst.

They took him and put a great swelling turban on his head, and wrapped him in a doctor's gown. And he slipped his egg inside the flap. They told him 'Leave your egg behind till we come back,' but he would have none of them: 'Never on your life. I won't leave it anywhere. This is my hen's egg, the very first egg she laid, at that. I'm keeping it to eat when I'm hungry.'

So they let him have his own way, and walked him before them to the Prime Minister's house, and the Premier rose and greeted them with due courtesy. The master chosen to answer the Persian was presented, and the disputation began. The Persian seated himself with crossed legs, like a humble searcher after truth, but the peasant flopped down and thrust his legs out arrogantly as if he were in the cowshed. The Persian was much put out of

countenance when he saw his rival seated so, and began to think himself up against the sublimest of sages, who held an academic wrangle in contempt.

First the Persian pointed with a stretched finger. The yokel quickly pointed two fingers back at him. The Persian then lifted his hand to the sky, and the yokel furiously clapped a hand on the floor. Then the Persian put his hand in his gown and fetched out a box and opened it, and out jumped a chicken which he threw at his opponent. But the yokel instantly flipped the egg from the inside of his gown, and threw it at the Persian, who waved his arms in amazement, and, turning to the Minister and the assembled divines, told them, 'He has answered each question I posed. Be witness all, that henceforward I am one of his disciples.'

The Minister showed his appreciation of the dons and their delegate, and they departed with triumph shining on their foreheads.

Once outside the house, the countryman's supporters asked him to explain the questions and answers, 'neither of which we understood.'

'God help you,' said the man, 'you are scholars, but any mortal can baffle you. There I was sitting in front of him, and I saw his eyes reddening and his anger rising, and he pointed his finger at me, as if to say, "Take care, I shall pick your eye out with this finger." So I pointed two fingers at him to say, "Be careful I don't pick out both your eyes." And he lifted his hand and held it upwards, meaning that if I didn't give in he would crucify me on the ceiling. So I put my hand on the ground, meaning that if that was his line I was ready to flatten him down until all the devils were squeezed out of his carcase. And when he saw I was winning, he fished a little chicken from his coat, swanking because he ate chickens every day and lived in great bliss of eating and drinking. So I took out my boiled egg to show that I was as good as he and lived in the bliss of boiled eggs. And like that I answered his questions and beat him.'

They went next to the Persian, and he said, 'Your doc-

tor is the first man in the world to answer these questions, which I have been submitting to scholars all my life.' They asked what the questions and answers signified, and he said: 'I lifted my finger, as if affirming "God is one," and he lifted two fingers, affirming "And He has no second." I lifted my hand to the sky, stating "Without pillars He raised up the Heavens." And he laid a hand on the ground to respond "On frozen water He spread the earth." And I took my box and brought out a chicken, which means "And He creates the living out of the dead." And he took an egg and replied, "And the dead out of the living." A greater scholar I have never met.'

WHAT'S HAPPENING TO OUR LANGUAGE?¹

J. N. Hook

To those persons who would like an orderly, unchanging world, or a world with at least a few immutables, the refusal of language to stay put is somewhat annoying. One such person, a likeable elderly teacher of English, recently said to me, "I'm rather disturbed that many of the linguistic conceptions that I've regarded as sacred seem to be so no longer. Where can we draw the line between correctness and incorrectness? If we don't draw a definite line, won't we head toward linguistic anarchy?" These questions lead to a brief consideration of two points: why a language changes, and what some of the changes occurring in English at present are.

More than two thousand years ago the Greek Aristarchus worked valiantly in behalf of a "correct" Greek language. He edited Homer and other earlier writers, eliminating what he considered their solecisms or improprieties and substituting expressions that were supposed to serve as the model of correct Greek for all times. But despite the ef-

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forts of Aristarchus and his long line of successors, the Greek language continued to change. It squirmed out from under the restrictions and gradually underwent such a metamorphosis that an Athenian man-of-the-street today would need an interpreter if he were brought face to face with the ghost of either Homer or Aristarchus.

The experience of the French has been similar. One of the purposes of the French Academy, founded in 1635, was to prescribe "pure" French. A remarkably good dictionary was among its achievements. But in spite of the restraining influence of the Academy, the past three hundred years have apparently brought almost as many changes to French as they have to English and other tongues.

Languages change because things happen to people. In a completely static society, language would remain constant; but there is no completely static society. Lands are invaded, wars are fought, commerce is carried on, inventions are made, ideas are born, habits of thought are changed, fads are popularized, new problems are faced; things happen to people, and language keeps pace with events.

Since the time of Christ the British Isles have been overrun by Romans, Angles, Saxons, Jutes, Danes, and Normans. Had it not been for these invasions, modern "English" would probably have been an altered form of the Celtic spoken in 1 A.D. But because the invasions occurred, Celtic survives in English in only a few words, such as *dun*, *bin*, *crag*, *cairn*, *shamrock*, and *whiskey*.

The English that the Normans found in 1066 was a blend of Celtic, Latin, Anglo-Saxon, Danish, and some older elements, with Anglo-Saxon predominating. In comparison with modern English, old English was complicated and cumbersome. It possessed, for example, several declensions of nouns with slight but irksome differences in endings; its pronouns were declined not only in singular and plural but also in dual number; its adjectives had to be given different endings to agree with the nouns they modified; its verb endings depended upon whether the verb be-

longed to one of the six classes of strong verbs, to one of the three classes of weak verbs, to the re-duplicating verbs, or to the irregular verbs; gender was not natural but grammatical (as it still is in German, French, Spanish, and other languages), and had to be learned for each noun so that one could employ the right pronouns and adjectives to refer to such words as *sun* (feminine), *moon* (masculine), or *wife* (neuter).

The Normans had much the same kind of falderal in their bastard-French, but they did not want to bother to learn any more. So in their dealings with the conquered Anglo-Saxons they carried further a tendency that was already becoming noticeable, so that there gradually evolved a clipped kind of English that eliminated most of the endings, broke down the differences among declensions and among conjugations, threw out dual number, and substituted natural gender for grammatical. (G.I.'s in the 1940's made the same kind of simplification in the languages of foreign lands where they were stationed; had they remained long enough, much of this simplification might have become permanent.)

Since the Norman Conquest the English language has continued to change, though less dramatically and more slowly. Here are a few small instances in point: In Chaucer's day, double negatives and double superlatives were "good English"; today they are usually condemned. The possessive *its* did not enter the language until after 1600, and no doubt was at first considered an error. When Charles II and his court returned in 1660 from their enforced exile in France, they revealed some of their occupational interests by popularizing in English such French words as *caprice*, *caress*, *burlesque*, *ballet*, *blonde*, *brunette*, and *apartment*.

A half-century later, Alexander Pope rhymed the aforementioned *caprice* with *vice* and *tea* with *obey*; he and his contemporaries pronounced *serve* as *sarve*, *gold* as *goold*, *London* as *Lunnon*, and *hundred* as *hunderd*. In the early

nineteenth century, *sung* was regarded as preferable to *sang* for the past tense. During World War II, Allen Walker Read compiled, for the *Saturday Review of Literature*, articles listing hundreds of words newly added to the language. Literally thousands of other examples demonstrating the ceaselessness of linguistic change in English might be mentioned.

Perhaps no one would argue that all change is for the better. But even a casual comparison of modern with old English reveals that the changes made in the last thousand years have resulted in improvement. Modern English can express more ideas and can express them with greater precision than could old English; yet in most respects modern English is a simpler language than that of our great grandfathers.

Now let us turn to the question of what changes are being made at present. It must be admitted that since we lack the perspective that will be possible in 2049, we can make only a few best guesses. But apparently among the changes now going on are these:

1. Each year many new words are added. Precisely how many are invented and how many of these will endure no one can say, but estimates of the number of annual coinages range from three hundred up to three thousand or more. Of these coinages many are so technical that they will perhaps never be widely employed, and others serve only a transitory purpose and may soon be forgotten. Nevertheless each year several scores of useful new words enrich our language.

2. Concurrently other words become obsolescent or obsolete, although the history of the language shows that the death rate of words lags far behind the birth rate.

3. With increasing speed the rigid restriction of a word to use as a single part of speech is being abandoned. For example, a short time after the noun *airlift* was first employed, the verb *airlifted* was used. Such functional shift is by no means new (the noun *paper* for instance, soon

after its introduction was used as an adjective and as a verb), but twentieth-century writers and speakers seem to hesitate less than did their ancestors when they wish to alter the function of a word. Not long ago I heard a young woman remark that she was going to *taxi* downtown as soon as she *diapered* the baby. The two nouns used as verbs caused no lifted eyebrows. Nouns used as adverbs (He came *Tuesday*. It weighs sixty *pounds*.) are standard English. The distinction between adjectives and adverbs (e.g., *good* and *well*) is becoming increasingly difficult to maintain.

4. Pronunciations are gradually changing, but apparently in the direction of greater uniformity, at least within the United States. Those great levelers, radio and the movies, seem especially among young people to be reducing sectional differences. Battles over individual words still continue, of course (e.g. *Bahston* vs. *Bawston*, *ant* vs. *ahnt*, *peeanist* vs. *peanist*).

5. Spelling is being simplified much less rapidly than the reformers would like. For at least seven centuries attempts have been made to reduce the vexations of orthography, but in the presence of human inertia and with the lack of a really workable plan, simplified spelling remains a dream for the future. Several newspapers and magazines have adopted hit-or-miss plans; *gram* and *check* have been generally accepted; *catalog*, *tho*, and *thru*, as well as a handful of other simple spellings, have become fairly popular; but all in all little progress has been or is being made in this area.

6. Loss of inflected endings took place most rapidly between 1066 and 1400 or 1450 A.D. During that period the separate form for the dative case virtually disappeared, verbs lost many of their peculiarities, adjectives achieved considerable uniformity, and so on. Today few changes in inflection seem to be occurring. There is a tendency to anglicize foreign plurals, as may be shown by the acceptance of *prima donnas*, *gymnasiums*, and *campuses*; the

battle of the plurals still continues in *curriculum*s vs. *curricula*, *hippopotamus*es vs. *hippopotami*, *formula*s vs. *formulae*, etc. If history repeats itself these battles will be decided in favor of the anglicized form.

Certain verbs are not as yet completely standardized: e.g., the past participles *forgot*, *forgotten*, *got*, *gotten*, *bit*, *bitten*, and the past tenses *dived*, *dove*, and perhaps *began*, *begun*, *sprang*, *sprung*.

7. Various grammatical and syntactical changes are occurring. The merged verb (a verb plus an adverb or preposition with the meaning of a single verb) is assuming increased importance. Examples are: He *dug up* (= spaded) the garden; She *cut up* (= dismembered) the chicken; He *put on* (= donned) his shoes; She *ran across* (= discovered) a strange fact. Merged verbs are highly idiomatic and are therefore often difficult for a foreigner to learn. The danger is that unneeded constructions may be formed.

Despite the statements of most textbooks that *shall* and *will* are used to indicate future time, the word *going* is becoming the most frequent indication of futurity. "I *shall* visit my mother" is heard much less often than "I'm *going* to visit my mother." Moreover, the traditional distinctions between *shall* and *will* are seldom observed in conversation and only irregularly in literature. Pooley refers to a study by Bell Telephone in which 79,390 words were recorded; *will* was used 1,305 times as an auxiliary, and *shall* was used only 6 times. But General MacArthur, it will be remembered, to indicate his determination to come back to the Philippines, said "I *shall* return"—a clear contradiction of the textbook rule that *will* should be used with the first person to show determination.

The subjunctive mood is infrequently used except in clearly contrary-to-fact statements such as "If I *were* you," and not invariably even there. The great grammarian Jespersen has pointed out that the subjunctive has been losing ground for centuries and that the indicative is more emphatic. French employs the subjunctive much more than

does English, but even in French there is a tendency to substitute the indicative.

Linguists tend to regard "It is *me*" as established, but are still hesitant about "It is *him* (*her, them*).". The French, it may be noted, regard as standard "C'est moi" and "C'est lui" ("It is me" and "It is him"). Winston Churchill, in a radio broadcast, said "It was me," and Ramsay MacDonald had earlier remarked, "The navy is us." The reason for the victory of the objective case in such constructions is that since the typical pattern of the English sentence is subject-verb-object, the feeling exists that the objective case should follow any verb. Similar feelings have in the past led to drastic alterations in case. At one time, for example, "Him was told a story" was good English, but the feeling that the subject should come first resulted in the change of *him* to *he*, which is now regarded as natural.

The pronouns *everyone* and *everybody* are a source of confusion because they are singular in form but apparently often plural in meaning. For instance, someone asks, "Was everybody there?" The answer "Yes, he was" is absurd, since several people were there; but the answer "Yes, they were" employs the plural *they* to refer to the singular antecedent *everybody*. Similarly, "Has everyone received his ticket?" sounds like masculine arrogance, since a woman in the group may have received *her* ticket. It is to avoid difficulties like these that the plural pronoun is being used increasingly to refer to *everyone* and *everybody*: "Has everyone received their tickets?"

8. Sentences are gradually becoming shorter. According to a study made about twenty years ago, modern professional authors write sentences averaging 20.9 words. But a page chosen at random from Milton's *Areopagitica* (1644) contained 861 words in 14 sentences, or 61.5 words per sentence. In contrast a page chosen at random from Hemingway's "The Undeclared" (1927) contained 325 words in 31 sentences, or 10.5 words per sentence.

The elliptical sentence, or sentence fragment, each year

seems to occupy a more important place in writing and speaking. Perhaps the tempo of our age is responsible. "Why use ten words when eight will do?" seems to be the underlying question. As an observant student of mine wrote, "More and more we tend to speak as wordlessly as possible." Kathryn McEuen, in the *English Journal*, lists four possible reasons for the increased use of the sentence fragment: the desire to save time, the tastes of modern readers, the informality of our age, and the occasional effectiveness of the fragmentary sentence. Miss McEuen does not believe, however, that the sentence is in danger of disappearing, because it remains the fundamental form of expression in English.

The foregoing are only examples of the ways in which English seems to be changing in the twentieth century. How far the changes will go, and what undercurrents are leading toward future alterations, no one can say with assurance.

READING AND UNDERSTANDING¹

H. R. Huse

There are two kinds of reading: mechanical reading, which is the conversion of written symbols into sounds or into inner speech; and, on the other hand, reading which implies, besides the possibility of this conversion, an understanding of what the sounds symbolize. We can all pronounce, for instance, such phrases as "the champak odors fail," but to understand exactly what the sounds mean, or whether they mean anything, is another matter.

¹ Reprinted from *Studies in Philology*, July, 1945, pp. 708-715. Used by permission of the University of North Carolina Press. Footnotes from the original article have been omitted here. (The subject of semantics, the science of meaning, has begun to receive increased attention from writers and teachers, as being even more vital to successful communication than the art of rhetoric, long stressed.)

Our schools teach mechanical reading almost exclusively, and we are usually satisfied with that attainment. We have a natural tendency to assume that what is pronounced correctly is understood. Thus we take reading ability for granted, confuse sound and sense, and think of the majority of our population as significantly literate.

A number of investigators, however, have revealed the disquieting limitations of mechanical reading. In one case it was found that a pupil who had pronounced the word "evolution" correctly thought that this articulation stood for a political principle opposed by the Democrats. Another student who was reading *Julius Caesar* thought that Cassius was a fundamentalist and wanted the old religion restored, and that the first Triumvirate was composed of Shakespeare, Milton, and Browning.

But investigations of this kind are hardly required. To gain an idea of what is read and of the capacities involved, it is only necessary to look at the newsstands in bus stations and in drug stores. In many cases all reading of unbroken material is too difficult, a fact which accounts for the great vogue among adults as well as children of "comics," picture magazines, and tabloids. For fifty years almost no publishing errors have been made through underestimating the reading ability of the public. On the other hand, such magazines as the *Atlantic Monthly* or the *Nation* have barely survived. The editor of one of the popular pulp magazines explained the situation to a new member of his staff. "Always remember," he said, "that we are getting out a magazine for the 'Great American Moron.'"

When we consider the magazines for the genteel masses, the situation appears little better. We can judge the literacy of their readers by the advertisements which appear in them, since these advertisements offer almost an exact measure of interpreting capacity. No literature is tested as rigorously as advertising. To be successful, advertising copy must reflect accurately the critical sense or gullibility of those to whom it is addressed. To say that these adver-

tisements display hypocrisy, lying, insincerity, and stupidity is to say only what every one with critical sense or a faint notion of honesty and candor already knows. After a look at the ads in some of the popular women's magazines, one can question seriously whether it is worth while to teach women how to read. The same can be said of some magazines for men. Our schools turn out their products equipped with a deceptive literacy like lambs ready for the slaughter.

From this viewpoint the effect of universal education has been merely to facilitate the operations of tricksters and mobmasters. Formerly these men were obliged to follow the fairs and to work on those within reach of their voices. Nowadays the cleverest of the Barnums have graduated into publicity and advertising, and can work effectively at long range.

When the present school traditions originated, the scientific method, advertising, and even printing were future developments. In the Middle Ages, for reading the Bible or even Aristotle, faith largely sufficed. Democracy and commercialism are new novelties in the old history of education. Once there was scarcely a better rule for interpreting spoken or written words than that implied in the scholastic maxim: "The master affirms it, therefore it is so." But that day has passed. It is now not the learned doctor who speaks *ex cathedra*, but rather the politician or publicity expert, neither of whom needs even to delude himself while deluding others. Our courses of study have had many recent additions; the schools have been as restless as a patient seriously ill; it might restore comfort to attend to the main business of teaching the first of the three R's.

Before any one can read critically, he should know what words are, how they are used, and what they stand for. He should know something about the origin of language and of its great emotive, magical, and suggestive uses.

The work of Ogden and Richards, Korzybski, Stuart Chase, Hayakawa, and many others has brought attention

to the subject of semantics. English departments in many institutions have seen the relative unimportance of rhetoric as formerly taught. In our daily lives we are confronted not so much with the subtleties of literary appreciation as with crude deception which elementary instruction in reading should make difficult. But only a beginning has been made.

Perhaps the most widespread delusion about language is that it is used primarily to communicate ideas or thought. In a considerable amount of speech there is no communication whatever. Children talk to themselves by the hour. We speak to pets, not at all unconscious that they cannot understand what we are saying. We use language as inner speech in our thinking while deliberately refraining from communication and even from articulation. Oaths uttered when we hurt ourselves and the curious monologues of drunkards are manifestations of language independent of communication and of all social life. The most usual function of language is the expression of emotions and of attitudes that will lead to practical results. When a wife tells her husband, for instance, that the cat wants to go out or that the room is getting cold, she is really not conveying information primarily, but expressing an implied command. Likewise when we talk about the weather we are not revealing our thought so much as expressing a gregarious attitude.

The emotive use of language is perhaps the oldest use, and is certainly the most constant in daily life. Small children frequently use words in a kind of cooing, as a cat purrs, as an expression of contentment. In adult speech, exclamatory utterances go back to the origins of language. Under the stress of fear or pain, inarticulate cries and groans reappear in all of us. Likewise many slang expressions are used in a vague fashion to express gusto, joy, disgust, or humor. They can be used over and over on almost any occasion. Oaths are not real invocations or reflections on parentage, but serve for emotional relief. Some of our commonest terms express emotional attitudes: *rebels* (for Confederates), *scabs*, *brats*. There are "fighting

words" and words that arouse enthusiasm. Some produce mutual good will and collective harmony: *cooperation*, *brotherhood*. In the language of politeness, a whole range of attitudes may be expressed. The same person may be Charles, Charley, Shorty, Doctor, or Professor Jones (to cite only a few possibilities), according to subjective feeling, relationship, or attitude. Malinowski, in his study of primitive society, has shown how language is used mainly to enter into sociable relations.

Another source of confusion in language is due to the figurative use of words. The commonest and most mischievous figures of speech are euphemism, hyperbole, and metaphor.

Euphemism is the substitution of a vague or softened phrase to avoid the pronunciation of a more specific term. By this device "fornication" becomes "misconduct," or a "fault," or a "lapse." Workmen are "laid off," girls get "in trouble." To avoid such a sinister invocation as "inflation," politicians have used the term "reflation" for exactly the same thing. "Selectee" is used for "conscript," "our way of life" for "finance capitalism," and so on. In this way we can qualify acts or things by our attitude toward them, and so great is the power of the word that we will fight for a thing designated by one term which we would spurn if designated by another.

Hyperbole is characteristic of youthful speech. When words intended to convey an emotion or an attitude become tame from long use, we seek a more impressive term. If "fine" or "heavenly" or "gorgeous" should lack emotional emphasis, we can add an adverb: "superlatively fine," "ravishingly gorgeous." Advertisers of an automobile started with a "six," which became in a later model a "super-six," and still later a "super super-six." Ultimately it was called a "terraplane." Salesmen and others thumb the dictionary for more impressive words to transmute reality.

But of all figures of speech, the commonest is metaphor.

In a sentence such as the following, cited by Jespersen, nearly every word has been given a metaphorical usage: "He *came to look upon* the low *ebb* of morals as an *outcome* of bad *taste*." While the use of metaphor, especially of "*dead* metaphors," is necessary and inevitable, the confusion in thought and in speech caused by its abuse is almost incalculable. Our metaphors are often divorced from fact and may be used, like a false premise in a syllogism, to make any statement plausible. They come between us and the reality.

The use of word magic has declined greatly with the development of rationalism and modern science, but our language still shows many traces of it. All human societies, according to Lorimer, exhibit a series of quasi-symbols, terms which have largely lost their symbolic character and have become in themselves objects of love, dread, or loyalty. People are easily impressed by the properties of words, not as symbols, but as independent entities. Children delight in the sound and magic effect of such terms as Tom-Tit-Tot or Rumpelstiltskin, and accept with charming naïvete the taboos on "naughty" words. In "eenie, meenie, minie, mo," in a "hey and a ho, and a hey nonny no," this nonsymbolic use of words occurs. "There are depths of language that have no meaning and never have had."

The Greelanders divide a person into a soul, a body, and a name. The Arabs will lie down to let a curse fly over them. A king or a pope changes his name when he assumes his new and sacred character. When the Romans were obliged to mention a disastrous event, they were careful to say "Absit omen." There are prohibitions everywhere against using sacred names too lightly. We often disguise them by saying "Drat" (God rot), "Gosh," "Gad," "Great Scott," "Golly," "Bedad," etc.

History and legend abound in examples of the magic power of words. Orpheus quieted the storm by his song. The Devil has always shuddered at the name of Jesus or Mary. Pareto mentions a conjuration for stopping a snake.

The charms for controlling the winds and elements are endless. The Romans avoided the difficulty of not knowing the name of the god to address in certain circumstances by means of a formula, as, for example, Jupiter Optime Maxime, sive quo alio nomine te appellari volueris.

Traces of the old magic are found in euphemism. A superstitious fear of a word causes a loved one "to expire," "to breathe his last," "to join the silent company," "to fall asleep," or perhaps "to be lost at sea." Common words such as "mother" and "home," not to mention such divinities as Morality and Justice, have sanctity as articulations. Legal fictions and scientific terms form the basis of much modern word magic. As the phrase is used by salesmen, "modern science" is the beginning of a formula that can sell anything from corsets to toothpicks. Terms like "halitosis" or "pyorrhea" frighten like the bogey man.

The greatest "power of the word," however, is not to be found in word magic, but rather in the suggestive use of language. Speech used in this way may accomplish miracles. Under hypnotism, which is produced mainly by verbal means, a mere suggestion changes water into wine. Nearly all that a person does or thinks and the culture pattern to which he unconsciously conforms is the result of suggestion. Advertisers depend largely upon suggestion: they prefer to deal with women, who are more easily influenced, and flatter them regularly with such subtle suggestions as, "Women know values."

The possibilities for fraud, disorder, mass madness, and hysteria that the suggestive resources of language permit can hardly be exaggerated. Diarrhoea may be produced by calomel, fear, and hypnosis. Hunger, thirst, pain, anesthesia, constipation, and other psychophysical processes are influenced by words. Coué used to cure toothache by a formula: "Every day in every way we are getting better and better." Advertisers create new maladies by suggesting them. Diseases have their fashions and are sometimes made epidemic by suggestion. Neurasthenia has been variously

known as *acedia*, sloth, ennui, and romantic melancholy. It has been treated by a low calory diet and by *suralimentation* (overfeeding). Cases of hysteria due to suggestion fill the pages of history. Armies in every age have suffered from sudden panics. In finance also, panics occur, due to suggestion. St. George appeared plainly on the walls of Jerusalem to all the Crusaders, suggested doubtless by an individual who had the original hallucination. Suicide compacts are far from rare, owing to the suggestion of one individual and the susceptibility of the other. The Crusades were the result of suggestion, and for two hundred years the madness lasted. In America several outbreaks of mass madness have been recorded. The revivals and camp meetings of the early part of the last century offer curious examples of verbal suggestion and mass psycho-pathology.

Credulity and susceptibility to suggestion are not a psychic abnormality, but the rule. Suggested aberrations take many forms: anarchism, anti-Semitism, race prejudice, religious and anti-religious fanaticism, and so on. The principal agencies of suggestion are the press, advertisements, and popular gatherings.

As Forel states, "The opinions of a normal human being are merely a colorless impression of the teaching of his parents, his party, his country, and the daily press. His mentality is a stereotype of these opinions. In a pious country, he is pious, in a free-thinking country, a free-thinker." The crowd of the uneducated never sees through the tricks of the mobmasters, who understand instinctively the art of exploiting them. The central problem of reading is the development of habits which may act in some measure as defences.

The work of Korzybski would probably rank as one of the great accomplishments of the century if only for its exposition of the process of abstracting and the dangers of abstractionism. A brief article can barely hint at the importance of this subject.

Abstractions are verbal devices that exist only in our

minds, not in the outer world where our experience is confined to individual things. There is a fundamental difference between the abstraction, Beauty, for instance, and a particular statue that can be pointed at. Everywhere people make this confusion between the inner (intentional) and the outer (extentional) worlds. We talk about Liberty, Truth, Justice, Freedom, Morality, as we might talk about a monument that can be touched, photographed, and measured. When we speak about abstractions as we do about particular things we live in a delusional world, like the insane who hear voices and see things that aren't there.

The ancient Greeks had their gods, some of whom the early Christians converted into saints. We have adopted them also, but changed them into articulations, into abstractions. We are told by the high priests of abstractionism what Morality demands, and the sacrifices owed to Miss Freedom.

The academic as well as the clerical mind is peculiarly obsessed with abstractions. Most teachers are insulated from first-hand experience: their dealings are largely with words. But everywhere the danger of abstractionism is present. Politicians punctuate their discourse with Truth, Righteousness, Service, and Ideals, and compete with each other in this piety. When Justice demands that some one should be executed, we might learn that this mystic being is only verbal, that it is rather the opinion of the judge and jury that the accused should be killed. Likewise when France or Bolivia is planning some action, it should not be too difficult to understand that these terms indicate, not some fabulous creation, like the Devil, but the few Frenchmen or Bolivians (the rulers, or ruling class) who for the moment control the policy of those countries.

This brief review of the nature of language, of the emotive and figurative uses of words, or word magic, of suggestion, and of abstractionism indicates a few aspects of language that our schools and colleges almost utterly neglect. It is possible to receive a doctor's degree in lan-

guage and literature with only a slight knowledge of these fields. What is involved is the only kind of literacy that can do much toward accomplishing the democratic purpose.

The contrast between teaching the use of mathematical symbols and the use of linguistic symbols is striking. Through constant practice and solving problems, pupils learn that two plus three are *not* six, and would be shocked to see such a statement. In the use of words, a similar incongruity causes no reaction at all: the evidence is abundant in the commercial and political propaganda which is addressed to the products of our schools, and which serves as a measure of interpreting capacity.

If entire dependence had to be placed on innate intelligence, no important change could be expected. But a *habit* of critical reading can be developed in almost all students by constant practice in solving verbal problems, in somewhat the same way that practice is given in solving mathematical problems. Words, phrases, and statements should be translated into terms of motive, authority, probability, the laws of evidence, and *meaning* as expressed by examples or by the student's own words. Without this ability to translate, the public is the inevitable victim of commercial, political, and literary fraud, and, since language is so important in thinking, the mental life of the people may be corrupted. In spite of present successes, we cannot have an entire faith in the survival value of a nation of semantic illiterates.

DOS PASSOS¹

Granville Hicks

John Dos Passos has devoted his literary career to the examination and portrayal of life in the United States. The fact is worth recording, if only because there is no other

¹ Reprinted from "Dos Passos and His Critics" in a monthly feature of *The American Mercury* known as "The Library." Used by permission of *The American Mercury*.

contemporary novelist of any stature about whom such a statement could be made. From a sociological point of view, Dos Passos has chosen to be inclusive and central, whereas his contemporaries have been exclusive and often marginal. Faulkner has found his themes in a single Mississippi county, but Dos Passos has been satisfied with nothing less than the whole nation. Hemingway locates his novels in France and Italy and Spain, as if to proclaim that the specifically American has no particular interest for him. (He is, of course, as unmistakably and incurably American as Dos Passos, but that is another matter.) Wolfe is rhapsodically subjective; Dos Passos is conscientiously objective. Farrell has endlessly worked over the little area of experience that circumstances granted him; Dos Passos has deliberately broadened his range. Steinbeck has more in common with Dos Passos, being in some measure a disciple, and a couple of his novels are comparable in subject matter with what Dos Passos has done; but he has also dealt, rather more affectionately, with marginal themes.

Let it be understood that I am using "central" and "marginal," "inclusive" and "exclusive," as descriptive terms with no suggestion of praise or blame. In comparing John Dos Passos with his contemporaries, I am not saying that this is good and that is bad; I am merely trying to show where he stands. He is a writer pre-eminently concerned with a time and a place—that is, with the United States in the first half of the twentieth century—and he wants to know what distinguishes life here and now from life in other times and places. This means that he is directly occupied with the urban-industrial civilization that has reached its furthest development in this country. Obviously this is not the only field for a novelist to work in; it may even prove in practice to be more than commonly unyielding; but it is the field Dos Passos has chosen, and one can scarcely argue *a priori* that it is unworthy of a serious writer's attention.

Certain qualities of Dos Passos' fiction, some of which

have been warmly debated, can be understood and evaluated only if one bears in mind what he has been trying to do. The charge is made that his characters are flat, and the charge is true. But Dos Passos might perfectly well reply that he intended his characters to be flat and that they had to be flat if he was to accomplish his aims. He is concerned with characters who are representative of twentieth-century America, and he is, furthermore, concerned with them in their representative aspects. As a result, there is a loss, a loss of insight into the deeper, more mysterious reaches of human personality. But let us not forget that there is also a loss when a writer chooses to portray a character as perfectly unique, for, though each of us is unique, each of us is also in some degree representative. A reader may prefer the novelist who deals with the unique, may prefer Dostoyevsky, let us say, to Balzac, but it is folly to ask Balzac to be both himself and Dostoyevsky. Another novelist would have done something different with J. Ward Morehouse and Eleanor Stoddard and Charley Anderson, and quite possibly would have made more of them than Dos Passos has, but would we then have understood, as we do now, precisely what they are in relation to the contemporary American scene?

Other consequences follow from Dos Passos' choice of theme. For one thing, he cannot possibly know the United States as William Faulkner knows Yoknapatawpha County or as James T. Farrell knows a few Chicago blocks. He has a restless foot and a highly trained eye, and he has done as much as any human being can do, but this is a big country and it has 140 million people in it. Consequently, Dos Passos has to rely on what can only be called sociological generalizations. In other words, his conception of what is representative does depend in part on theories about the country and about this period of history. Every writer has general ideas, but not every writer has ideas about the structure of the society he lives in, and the ideas some writers have on that subject are largely irrelevant to their

writings. Dos Passos' general ideas are specifically social and political, and they have to be.

I am not suggesting that Dos Passos went out and got himself a set of social and political theories so that he could write about contemporary America. The reverse would be nearer true. At the beginning of his career he hated the machine age and tried to get away from it; one could almost say that it was because he quarreled with existing society that he made an effort to understand it. The fact remains, however, that in every book he has written, the selection of materials has been influenced by the theories he held. I hasten to add that Dos Passos has always been an extraordinarily honest observer, and in both his journalism and his fiction he has set down what he has seen whether it fitted his theories or not. Moreover, as will shortly be pointed out, he has constantly revised his ideas about society. Nevertheless, the dependence on theory has persisted because it is implicit in his aims.

In the autumn of 1945 Dos Passos was interviewed by a young radical who asked him if the Dos Passos of 1919 wouldn't regard the contemporary Dos Passos as an out-and-out reactionary. According to his account of the incident in *Tour of Duty*, Dos Passos replied, "No, I don't think so. I have changed and so have the times." Precisely. Most people do change their social philosophies in the course of a quarter-century, and those who don't almost certainly should. Leaving college in a state of romantic revolt, Dos Passos was pushed in the direction of philosophical anarchism by the disillusionments of the first World War. His dissatisfactions with contemporary society hardened in the late twenties into a quasi-Communism—a belief that capitalism must be done away with and that the working class could and should establish a new society. Under the impact of the depression, he formed a close alliance with the Communist Party, though merely as a fellow-traveler and never without reservations. Disillusionment with the party set in by early 1934, and was intensi-

fied by the trials and purges in Russia. By the end of the thirties, after seeing something of Communists in action in Spain, he was an unqualified opponent of the Stalinist regime. As *The Ground We Stand On* shows, he attempted the systematic formulation of a political philosophy based on traditional American democracy. The formulation, however, refused to stick, and has undergone constant revision in the forties.

If Dos Passos were a social philosopher or simply a journalist, the changes in his thinking would not have been embarrassing to him or surprising to his readers. Since, however, his political ideas have been part of the very fabric of his novels, and—I must say it again—necessarily so, he has had some tough problems to deal with. A shift in political thinking may do strange things to a writer, as Hemingway demonstrated during his rapid passage through the Communist orbit, and as Faulkner may be in the process of demonstrating now that he has become occupied with the Negro problem. Dos Passos wrote the first volume of *U. S. A.* when he was drawing closer to Communism, the second volume when he was deeply convinced of the imminence of revolution, and the third after disillusionment had set in. It is a miracle that the work hangs together as well as it does, but the discrepancies are quite apparent and they do detract from its force. The Spotswood trilogy is intentionally looser, and the reader is not so acutely aware of changes in the author's point of view, but he does sense that the events portrayed in the various volumes are not being judged by quite the same standards. This is a risk that Dos Passos, as a man of integrity and as an author who has chosen to portray the social scene, has had to run.

EDUCATION BY BOOKS¹*Mark Van Doren*

Let us assume that an institution was founded for the sole purpose of requiring its members to read certain books. These members were called students, for the institution was something like a school or college; and there were a few exacting elders on hand who after announcing their authority began to teach.

The teaching in this institution, like the studying, was at the same time simple and difficult. It consisted in the first place, as I have said, in requiring the students to read certain books. It consisted next in requiring that an intelligible account be rendered of the contents of each book. And it consisted last of all in requiring that the readers be able, in the course of discussing a given book, to prove that their memory of all previous books was accurate and complete.

It was as simple as that, and as difficult. The books were the acknowledged masterpieces of the past three thousand years—masterpieces of poetry, of history, of philosophy, of fiction, of theology, of natural science, of political and economic theory. There were two hundred or so of them, and none of them was read in an abridged edition. Neither was any of them approached through a digest or a commentary, or through a biography of the author which told how many wives he had and what the biographer believed to be the modern significance of his mind. No, these books which the teachers selected for the students to read—Homer, the Bible, Herodotus, Thucydides, Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, Aristophanes, Plato, Aristotle, Cicero, Lucretius, Vergil, Horace, Ovid, Plutarch, Lucian, Marcus Aurelius, Plotinus, St. Augustine, the Volsunga Saga, the Song of Roland, Thomas Aquinas, Dante, Petrarch, Chaucer, Leonardo da Vinci, Machiavelli, Erasmus, More, Rabelais,

¹ Reprinted from *The Nation*, December 6, 1933. Used by permission. (The type of education here proposed is being put into practice increasingly by both colleges and adult groups.)

Montaigne, Cervantes, Bacon, Shakespeare, Galileo, Grotius, Hobbes, Descartes, Leibnitz, Corneille, Racine, Molière, Milton, Spinoza, Locke, Newton, Swift, Voltaire, Fielding, Hume, Rousseau, Adam Smith, Kant, Gibbon, Bentham, Goethe, Malthus, Hegel, Schopenhauer, Balzac, Mill, Darwin, Dickens, Thackeray, Marx, Tolstoy, Dostoevski, Pasteur, Ibsen, Nietzsche, Freud, Proust, Einstein—these authors, or rather the principal works of these authors, were read naked and entire; and understood.

A few students—some say a good many—had got into the institution by mistake. They complained about the lack of freedom to read what they pleased; some of these books, they insisted, were not suited to their personalities, and they had supposed that what one went to college for was to develop one's personality. Precisely, answered the head preceptor, closing the door behind them with the most obvious and reckless relief. Others proved to be helpless once they were face to face with an author's original sentences; they had been brought up on outlines, introductions, histories of literature and thought, and collections of excerpts, and so had long ago lost whatever ability to read they had been born with. Still others had expected to learn a trade or a profession. Then there was a final group of pedantic youngsters who snorted at the reading list because it was not contemporary. They wanted as swift an introduction as possible to the civilization about them. To the reply that this was that, they were very scornful as they scurried off to become freshmen in some up-to-date college where field trips to factories alternated in the weekly schedule with lectures on large and immediate subjects.

These gone, the others settled down to the task that had been so arbitrarily assigned them. At regular intervals they met in small groups with two or more teachers who questioned them closely concerning the contents of the required, the inevitable book. If they revealed by their answers that they had read it badly, they were forced to read it again. There was no going forward until Aristotle's conception of the individual, or Grotius's theory of natural law, or the

unity of "King Lear" was clearly stated. No excursions were made into the culture of the Greeks or the domestic life of the Middle Ages; merely the books themselves were read, discussed, and understood. And so on for four years.

At the end of which time a generation of students was set loose upon a world with many of whose aspects they were not at the moment prepared to cope. The only thing, indeed, to be said in their favor was that they were educated. They were equipped, that is, with so much understanding of what the best human brains had done in three thousand years that they realized without difficulty how few contemporary brains—naturally—were of the best. They were so competent in the recognition of theory that they felt strangely at home in a world most of whose citizens lived by theories without knowing it. They were able to reduce a kind of order out of the childish chaos which they slowly recognized contemporary literature to be. They missed a great many ideas and distinctions which they knew had been fruitful in past centuries, and some of them set about considering the possibility of restoring these to an intellectually impoverished world. Whether they succeeded is not yet known. But it can be said of them that in their own minds they continued to be fairly secure. For never would there be written a book which they could not understand simply by reading it from the first word to the last. They might not save the world. They might not change it. But they would comprehend it.

EVOLUTION OF A UNIVERSE¹

A. S. Eddington

Looking back through the long past we picture the beginning of the world—a primeval chaos which time has fashioned into the universe that we know. Its vastness ap-

¹ The selection A. S. Eddington, "Evolution of a Universe," from *Science and the Unseen World*. Copyright, 1929, by The Macmillan Company and used with their permission.

pals the mind : space boundless though not infinite, according to the strange doctrine of science. The world was without form and almost void. But at the earliest stage we can contemplate the void is sparsely broken by tiny electric particles, the germs of the things that are to be ; positive and negative they wander aimlessly in solitude, rarely coming near enough to seek or shun one another. They range everywhere so that all space is filled, and yet so empty that in comparison the most highly exhausted vacuum on earth is a jostling throng. In the beginning was vastness, solitude, and the deepest night. Darkness was upon the face of the deep, for as yet there was no light.

The years rolled by, million after million. Slight aggregations occurring casually in one place and another drew to themselves more and more particles. They warred for sovereignty, won and lost their spoil, until the matter was collected round centres of condensation leaving vast empty spaces from which it had ebbed away. Thus gravitation slowly parted the primeval chaos. These first divisions were not the stars but what we should call "island universes," each ultimately to be a system of some thousands of millions of stars. From our own island universe we can discern the other islands as spiral nebulae lying beyond another as far as the telescope can fathom. The nearest of them is such that light takes 900,000 years to cross the gulf between us. They acquired rotation (we do not yet understand how) which bulged them into flattened form and made them wreath themselves in spirals. Their forms, diverse yet with underlying regularity, make a fascinating spectacle for telescopic study.

As it had divided the original chaos, so gravitation subdivided the island universes. First the star clusters, then the stars themselves were separated. And with the stars came light, born of the fiercer turmoil which ensued when the electrical particles were drawn from their solitude into dense throngs. A star is not just a lump of matter casually thrown together in the general confusion ; it is of nicely

graded size. There is relatively not much more diversity in the masses of new-born stars than in the masses of new-born babies. Aggregations rather greater than our Sun have a strong tendency to subdivide, but when the mass is reduced a little the danger quickly passes and the impulse to subdivision is satisfied. Here it would seem the work of creation might cease. Having carved chaos into stars, the first evolutionary impulse has reached its goal. For many billions of years the stars may continue to shed their light and heat through the world, feeding on their own matter which disappears bit by bit into aethereal waves.

Not infrequently a star, spinning too fast or strained by the radiant heat imprisoned within it, may divide into two nearly equal stars, which remain yoked together as a double star; apart from this no regular plan of further development is known. For what might be called the second day of creation we turn from the general rule to the exceptions. Amid so many myriads there will be a few which by some rare accident have a fate unlike the rest. In the vast expanse of the heavens the traffic is so thin that a star may reasonably count on travelling for the whole of its long life without serious risk of collision. The risk is negligible for any individual star; but ten thousand million stars in our own system and more in the systems beyond afford a wide playground for chance. If the risk is one in a hundred millions some unlucky victims are doomed to play the role of "one." This rare accident must have happened to our Sun—an accident to the Sun, but to us the cause of our being here. A star journeying through space casually overtook the Sun, not indeed colliding with it, but approaching so close as to raise a great tidal wave. By this disturbance jets of matter spurted out of the Sun; being carried round by their angular momentum they did not fall back again but condensed into small globes—the planets.

By this and similar events there appeared here and there in the universe something outside Nature's regular plan, namely a lump of matter small enough and dense enough

to be cool. A temperature of ten million degrees or more prevails through the greater part of the interior of a star; it cannot be otherwise so long as matter remains heaped in immense masses. Thus the design of the first stage of evolution seems to have been that matter should ordinarily be endowed with intense heat. Cool matter appears as an afterthought. It is unlikely that the Sun is the only one of the starry host to possess a system of planets, but it is believed that such development is very rare. In these exceptional formations Nature has tried the experiment of finding what strange effects may ensue if matter is released from its usual temperature of millions of degrees and permitted to be cool.

Out of the electric charges dispersed in the primitive chaos ninety-two different kinds of matter—ninety-two chemical elements—have been built. This building is also a work of evolution, but little or nothing is known as to its history. In the matter which we handle daily we find the original bricks fitted together and cannot but infer that somewhere and somewhen a process of matter-building has occurred. At high temperature this diversity of matter remains as it were latent; little of consequence results from it. But in the cool experimental stations of the universe the differences assert themselves. At root the diversity of the ninety-two elements reflects the diversity of the integers from one to ninety-two; because the chemical characteristics of element No. 11 (sodium) arise from the fact that it has the power at low temperatures of gathering round it eleven negative electric particles; those of No. 12 (magnesium) from its power of gathering twelve particles; and so on.

It is tempting to linger over the development out of this fundamental beginning of the wonders studied in chemistry and physics, but we must hurry on. The provision of certain cool planetary globes was the second impulse of evolution, and it has exhausted itself in the formation of inorganic rocks and ores and other materials. We must

look to a new exception or abnormality if anything further is to be achieved. We can scarcely call it an accident that among the integers there should happen to be the number 6; but I do not know how otherwise to express the fact that organic life would not have begun if Nature's arithmetic had overlooked the number 6. The general plan of ninety-two elements, each embodying in its structural pattern one of the first ninety-two numbers, contemplates a material world of considerable but limited diversity; but the element carbon, embodying the number 6, and because of the peculiarity of the number 6, rebels against limits. The carbon atoms love to string themselves in long chains such as those which give toughness to a soap-film. Whilst other atoms organise themselves in twos and threes or it may be in tens, carbon atoms organise themselves in hundreds and thousands. From this potentiality of carbon to form more and more elaborate structures a third impulse of evolution arises.

I cannot profess to say whether anything more than this prolific structure-building power of carbon is involved in the beginning of life. The story of evolution here passes into the domain of the biological sciences for which I cannot speak, and I am not ready to take sides in the controversy between the Mechanists and the Vitalists. So far as the earth is concerned, the history of development of living forms extending over nearly a thousand million years is recorded (though with many breaks) in fossil remains. Looking back over the geological record it would seem that Nature made nearly every possible mistake before she reached her greatest achievement Man—or perhaps some would say her worst mistake of all. At one time she put her trust in armaments and gigantic size. Frozen in the rock is the evidence of her failures to provide a form fitted to endure and dominate—failures which we are only too ready to imitate. At last she tried a being of no great size, almost defenceless, defective in at least one of the more important sense-organs; one gift she bestowed to save him

from threatened extinction—a certain stirring, a restlessness, in the organ called the brain.

And so we come to Man.

THE METHOD OF SCIENTIFIC INVESTIGATION¹

Thomas H. Huxley

The method of scientific investigation is nothing but the expression of the necessary mode of working of the human mind. It is simply the mode at which all phenomena are reasoned about, rendered precise and exact. There is no more difference, but there is just the same kind of difference, between the mental operations of a man of science and those of an ordinary person, as there is between the operations and methods of a baker or of a butcher weighing out his goods in common scales, and the operations of a chemist in performing a difficult and complex analysis by means of his balance and finely-graduated weights. It is not that the action of the scales in the one case, and the balance in the other, differ in the principles of their construction or manner of working; but the beam of one is set on an infinitely finer axis than the other, and of course turns by the addition of a much smaller weight.

You will understand this better, perhaps, if I give you some familiar example. You have all heard it repeated, I dare say, that men of science work by means of induction and deduction, and that by the help of these operations, they, in a sort of sense, wring from Nature certain other things, which are called natural laws, and causes, and that out of these, by some cunning skill of their own, they build up hypotheses and theories. And it is imagined by many, that the operations of the common mind can be by no means compared with these processes, and that they have

¹ From *On the Origin of Species*, D. Appleton, 1880. (This essay is deservedly famous for its clear exposition of a difficult abstract concept through the use of simple concrete examples.)

to be acquired by a sort of special apprenticeship to the craft. To hear all these large words, you would think that the mind of a man of science must be constituted differently *from that of his fellow men* ; but if you will not be frightened by terms, you will discover that you are quite wrong, and that all these terrible apparatus are being used by yourselves every day and every hour of your lives.

There is a well-known incident in one of Molière's plays, where the author makes the hero express unbounded delight on being told that he had been talking prose during the whole of his life. In the same way, I trust that you will take comfort and be delighted with yourselves, on the discovery that you have been acting on the principles of inductive and deductive philosophy during the same period. Probably there is not one here who has not in the course of the day had occasion to set in motion a complex train of reasoning, of the very same kind though differing of course in degree, as that which a scientific man goes through in tracing the causes of natural phenomena.

A very trivial circumstance will serve to exemplify this. Suppose you go into a fruiterer's shop, wanting an apple—you take up one, and, on biting it, you find it is sour ; you look at it, and see that it is hard and green. You take up another one, and that too is hard, green, and sour. The shopman offers you a third ; but, before biting it, you examine it, and find that it is hard and green, and you immediately say that you will not have it, as it must be sour, like those that you have already tried.

Nothing can be more simple than that, you think ; but if you will take the trouble to analyse and trace out into its logical elements what has been done by the mind, you will be greatly surprised. In the first place, you have performed the operation of induction. You found that, in two experiences, hardness and greenness in apples went together with sourness. It was so in the first case, and it was confirmed by the second. True, it is a very small basis, but still it is enough to make an induction from ; you generalise the

facts, and you expect to find sourness in apples where you get hardness and greenness. You found upon that a general law, that all hard and green apples are sour; and that, so far as it goes, is a perfect induction. Well, having got your natural law in this way, when you are offered another apple which you find is hard and green, you say, "All hard and green apples are sour; this apple is hard and green, therefore this apple is sour." That train of reasoning is what logicians call a syllogism, and has all its various parts and terms,—its major premiss, its minor premiss, and its conclusion. And, by the help of further reasoning, which, if drawn out, would have to be exhibited in two of three other syllogisms, you arrive at your final determination, "I will not have that apple." So that, you see, you have, in the first place, established a law by induction, and upon that you have founded a deduction, and reasoned out the special conclusion of the particular case. Well now, suppose, having got your law, that at some time afterwards, you are discussing the qualities of apples with a friend: you will say to him, "It is a very curious thing,—but I find that all hard and green apples are sour!" Your friend says to you, "But how do you know that?" You at once reply, "Oh, because I have tried them over and over again, and have always found them to be so." Well, if we were talking science instead of common sense, we should call that an experimental verification. And, if still opposed, you go further, and say, "I have heard from the people in Somersetshire and Devonshire, where a large number of apples are grown, that they have observed the same thing. It is also found to be the case in Normandy, and in North America. In short, I find it to be the universal experience of mankind wherever attention has been directed to the subject." Whereupon, your friend, unless he is a very unreasonable man, agrees with you, and is convinced that you are quite right in the conclusion you have drawn. He believes, although perhaps he does not know he believes it, that the more extensive verifications are,—that the more frequently

experiments have been made, and results of the same kind arrived at,—that the more varied the conditions under which the same results are attained, the more certain is the ultimate conclusion, and he disputes the question no further. He sees that the experiment has been tried under all sorts of conditions, as to time, place, and people, with the same result; and he says with you, therefore, that the law you have laid down must be a good one, and he must believe it.

In science we do the same thing; the philosopher exercises precisely the same faculties, though in a much more delicate manner. In scientific inquiry it becomes a matter of duty to expose a supposed law to every possible kind of verification, and to take care, moreover, that this is done intentionally, and not left to a mere accident, as in the case of the apples. And in science, as in common life, our confidence in a law is in exact proportion to the absence of variation in the result of our experimental verifications. For instance, if you let go your grasp of an article you may have in your hand, it will immediately fall to the ground. That is a very common verification of one of the best established laws of nature—that of gravitation. The method by which men of science establish the existence of that law is exactly the same as that by which we have established the trivial proposition about the sourness of hard and green apples. But we believe it in such an extensive, thorough, and unhesitating manner because the universal experience of mankind verifies it, and we can verify it ourselves at any time; and that is the strongest possible foundation on which any natural law can rest.

So much, then, by way of proof that the method of establishing laws in science is exactly the same as that pursued in common life. Let us now turn to another matter (though really it is but another phase of the same question), and that is, the method by which, from the relations of certain phenomena, we prove that some stand in the position of causes towards the others

I want to put the case clearly before you, and I will therefore show you what I mean by another familiar example. I will suppose that one of you, on coming down in the morning to the parlour of your house, finds that a tea-pot and some spoons which had been left in the room on the previous evening are gone,—the window is open, and you observe the mark of a dirty hand on the window-frame, and perhaps, in addition to that, you notice the impress of a hob-nailed shoe on the gravel outside. All these phenomena have struck your attention instantly, and before two seconds have passed you say, "Oh, somebody has broken open the window, entered the room, and run off with the spoons and the tea-pot!" That speech is out of your mouth in a moment. And you will probably add, "I know there has; I am quite sure of it!" You mean to say exactly what you know; but in reality you are giving expression to what is, in all essential particulars, an hypothesis. You do not *know* it at all; it is nothing but an hypothesis rapidly framed in your own mind. And it is an hypothesis founded on a long train of inductions and deductions.

What are those inductions and deductions, and how have you got at this hypothesis? You have observed, in the first place, that the window is open; but by a train of reasoning involving many inductions and deductions, you have probably arrived long before at the general law—and a very good one it is—that windows do not open of themselves; and you therefore conclude that something has opened the window. A second general law that you have arrived at in the same way is, that tea-pots and spoons do not go out of a window spontaneously, and you are satisfied that, as they are not now where you left them, they have been removed. In the third place, you look at the marks on the window-sill, and the shoe-marks outside, and you say that in all previous experience the former kind of mark has never been produced by anything else but the hand of a human being; and the same experience shows that no other animal but man at present wears shoes with hob-nails in them such

as would produce the marks in the gravel. I do not know, even if we could discover any of those "missing links" that are talked about, that they would help us to any other conclusion! At any rate the law which states our present experience is strong enough for my present purpose. You next reach the conclusion, that as these kinds of marks have not been left by any other animals than men, or are liable to be formed in any other way than by a man's hand and shoe, the marks in question have been formed by a man in that way. You have, further, a general law, founded on observation and experience, and that, too, is, I am sorry to say, a very universal and unimpeachable one—that some men are thieves; and you assume at once from all these premisses—and that is what constitutes your hypothesis—that the man who made the marks outside and on the window-sill, opened the window, got into the room, and stole your tea-pot and spoons. You have now arrived at a *vera causa*:—you have assumed a cause which, it is plain, is competent to produce all the phenomena you have observed. You can explain all these phenomena only by the hypothesis of a thief. But that is a hypothetical conclusion, of the justice of which you have no absolute proof at all; it is only rendered highly probable by a series of inductive and deductive reasonings.

I suppose your first action, assuming that you are a man of ordinary common sense, and that you have established this hypothesis to your own satisfaction, will very likely be to go off for the police, and set them on the track of the burglar, with the view to the recovery of your property. But just as you are starting with this object, some person comes in, and on learning what you are about, says, "My good friend, you are going on a great deal too fast. How do you know that the man who really made the marks took the spoons? It might have been a monkey that took them, and the man may have merely looked in afterwards." You would probably reply, "Well, that is all very well, but you see it is contrary to all experience of the way tea-pots and

spoons are abstracted ; so that, at any rate, your hypothesis is less probable than mine." While you are talking the thing over in this way, another friend arrives, one of that good kind of people that I was talking of a little while ago. And he might say, "Oh, my dear sir, you are certainly going on a great deal too fast. You are most presumptuous. You admit that all these occurrences took place when you were fast asleep, at a time when you could not possibly have known anything about what was taking place. How do you know that the laws of Nature are not suspended during the night? It may be that there has been some kind of supernatural interference in this case." In point of fact, he declares that your hypothesis is one of which you cannot at all demonstrate the truth, and that you are by no means sure that the laws of Nature are the same when you are asleep as when you are awake.

Well, now, you cannot at the moment answer that kind of reasoning. You feel that your worthy friend has you somewhat at a disadvantage. You will feel perfectly convinced in your own mind, however, that you are quite right, and you say to him, "My good friend, I can only be guided by the natural probabilities of the case, and if you will be kind enough to stand aside and permit me to pass, I will go and fetch the police." Well, we will suppose that your journey is succesful, and that by good luck you meet with a policeman ; that eventually the burglar is found with your property on his person, and the marks correspond to his hand and to his boots. Probably any jury would consider those facts a very good experimental verification of your hypothesis, touching the cause of the abnormal phenomena observed in your parlour, and would act accordingly.

Now, in this suppositious case, I have taken phenomena of a very common kind, in order that you might see what are the different steps in an ordinary process of reasoning, if you will only take the trouble to analyse it carefully. All the operations I have described, you will see, are involved

in the mind of any man of sense in leading him to a conclusion as to the course he should take in order to make good a robbery and punish the offender. I say that you are led, in that case, to your conclusion by exactly the same train of reasoning as that which a man of science pursues when he is endeavouring to discover the origin and laws of the most occult phenomena. The process is, and always must be, the same; and precisely the same mode of reasoning was employed by Newton and Laplace in their endeavours to discover and define the causes of the movements of the heavenly bodies, as you, with your own common sense, would employ to detect a burglar. The only difference is, that the nature of the inquiry being more abstruse, every step has to be most carefully watched, so that there may not be a single crack or flaw in your hypothesis. A flaw or crack in many of the hypotheses of daily life may be of little or no moment as affecting the general correctness of the conclusions at which we may arrive; but, in a scientific inquiry, a fallacy, great or small, is always of importance, and is sure to be in the long run constantly productive of mischievous, if not fatal, results.

Do not allow yourselves to be misled by the common notion that an hypothesis is untrustworthy simply because it is an hypothesis. It is often urged, in respect to some scientific conclusion, that, after all, it is only an hypothesis. But what more have we to guide us in nine-tenths of the most important affairs of daily life than hypotheses, and often very ill-based ones? So that in science, where the evidence of an hypothesis is subjected to the most rigid examination, we may rightly pursue the same course. You may have hypotheses and hypotheses. A man may say, if he likes, that the moon is made of green cheese: that is an hypothesis. But another man, who has devoted a great deal of time and attention to the subject, and availed himself of the most powerful telescopes and the results of the observations of others, declares that in his opinion it is probably composed of materials very similar to those of which our own earth

is made up: and that is also only an hypothesis. But I need not tell you that there is an enormous difference in the value of the two hypotheses. That one which is based on sound scientific knowledge is sure to have a corresponding value; and that which is a mere hasty random guess is likely to have but little value. Every great step in our progress in discovering causes has been made in exactly the same way as that which I have detailed to you. A person observing the occurrence of certain facts and phenomena asks, naturally enough, what process, what kind of operation known to occur in Nature applied to the particular case, will unravel and explain the mystery? Hence you have the scientific hypothesis; and its value will be proportionate to the care and completeness with which its basis had been tested and verified. It is in these matters as in the commonest affairs of practical life: the guess of the fool will be folly, while the guess of the wise man will contain wisdom. In all cases, you see that the value of the result depends on the patience and faithfulness with which the investigator applies to his hypothesis every possible kind of verification.

MORE POWER TO YOU¹

Editors of *Time*

Bolted motionless on a test stand, the little monster is not impressive. It has no coolly symmetrical propeller, no phalanx of cylinderheads, none of the hard geometrical grace of the conventional aircraft engine. Yet the unprepossessing turbojet engine has thrown the air designers into ecstatic confusion: nobody yet knows how fast the jet will enable man to fly, but the old speed ceilings are off. In their less guarded moments, sober designers talk of speeds so high that aircraft will glow like meteors.

The coming of the turbojet does not mean that the engine in use since the first days of the Wright brothers (pistons and propellers) is done for. It will be a long time, if

¹ Courtesy of *Time*. Copyright Time Inc., 1948.

ever, before that old stand-by disappears; it still has the edge over jets for many purposes, including long-range bombers. But where the power range of the old engine stops, the power of the jet begins. An air revolution is beginning too.

To watch a jet engine spring into life is to feel that power. (Only when the engine is set up with a pipe to catch its gases is it safe to watch the fires kindle.) Dimly visible inside is the turbine, like a small windmill with close-set vanes. When the starting motor whines, the turbine spins. A tainted breeze blows through the exhaust vent in the tail, followed by a thin grey fog of atomized kerosene. Deep in the engine a single sparkplug buzzes. A spot of fire dances in a circle behind the turbine. Next moment, with a hollow *whoom*, a great yellow flame leaps out. It cuts back to a faint blue cone, a cone that roars like a giant blowtorch. The roar increases to thunder as the turbine gathers speed. Then it diminishes slightly, masked by a strange, high snarl that is felt rather than heard. This is "ultrasonic" sound (a frequency too high for the ear to hear). It tickles the deep brain, punches the heart, makes the viscera tremble. Few men like to stay in a test room when a jet is up to speed.

The engine now has the fierce beauty of power. Its massive rotor, the principal moving part, is spinning some 13,000 times per minute (though with only the faintest vibration). The fire raging in its heart would heat 1,000 five-room houses in zero weather (though much of the engine's exterior is cool). From the air intake in its snout, invisible hooks reach out; their suction will clasp a man who comes too close and break his body. The blast roaring out the tail will knock a man down at 150 feet. The reaction of the speeding jet of gas pushes against the test stand with a two-ton thrust. If the engine were pointing upward and left unshackled, it would take off like a rocket, each pound of its weight overbalanced by more than two pounds of thrust.

When an airplane designer looks at this engine, his gloating eyes light up. He knows that it develops some 5,000 horsepower—even more when moving through the air at high speed. But it weighs less than half as much as an equivalent piston engine, and is much more simple to build.

The early jet planes were hurried improvisations (Lockheed wrapped the famed P-80 around a jet engine in 141 frantic days) which did not begin to utilize the new engine's capabilities. Even later air-frame designs have not kept up with the fast-growing muscles of the engine. Britain's first turbojet flew successfully in 1941. Designed by Britain's Air Commodore Frank Whittle, it developed only 850 lbs. of propulsive thrust. Now engines with 5,000 lbs. of thrust are available, and soon there will be bruisers with 8,000–10,000 lbs. No one thinks that even these will be the last word.

Before the jet engine came into the picture, air-frame designers were screaming for more power. Now they have it, they do not know quite what to do with it. The power-plant men are doing the screaming now. The great engine builders (Pratt and Whitney, Allison, General Electric, Westinghouse) are working on more powerful engines. "Get busy," they warn the air-frame men, "and design some air frames that can keep up with us."

Only one present type of airplane, the fast, short-range fighter, is well adapted to the jet engine, whose great failing is its gargantuan thirst for fuel. Consumption varies with speed, altitude, and other factors, but a fair figure for the big jets flying at low altitudes is 1,000 gallons of kerosene an hour. This means one gallon every 3.6 seconds. Fighters and interceptors justify this drain, but for bombers and commercial airliners, jet engines still use too much fuel.

This is mostly because the "propulsive efficiency" of the jets at ordinary speeds is low compared with conventional airplanes. Propeller-driven planes are pushed forward by

the reaction from the blast of air forced backward by the prop. When the plane is standing still on the ground with its propeller roaring, all the engine's effort is wasted on merely moving air. None goes into forward motion; the propulsive efficiency is zero. When the plane is in the air, the propulsive efficiency is high. Propellers are designed in such a way that when the plane is flying at full speed, the air blast from them washes backward at a mild 10 or 15 m.p.h. Comparatively little energy is wasted; most of it goes where it should go: into moving the airplane.

Jet planes are pushed by the reaction of the blast of hot gas shooting out the tail pipe. The present problem is that this blast is speeding much too fast—at about 1,300 m.p.h. Even when the plane is flying at 600 m.p.h., the blast is shooting backward in still air at 700 (1,300 minus 600) m.p.h. The engine is still wasting too much energy merely stirring up the air. To approach the normal propulsive efficiency of a propeller plane, a jet plane would have to fly faster than sound. But one arresting compensation—for the jets—is that some day they may fly even that fast.

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