COMPANION

TO THE

WRITING-DESK.

THE COMPANION

TO THE

WRITING-DESK;

OR,

HOW TO ADDRESS, BEGIN, AND END LETTERS TO TITLED AND OFFICIAL PERSONAGES.

TOGETHER WITH

A TABLE OF PRECEDENCE, COPIOUS LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS, RULES FOR COMPOSITION AND PUNCTUATION, INSTRUCTIONS ON PREPARING FOR THE PRESS, ETC.

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ART OF COMPOSITION.

COMPANION

TO THE

WRITING-DESK

HOW TO ADDRESS LETTERS TO TITLED AND OFFICIAL PERSONAGES.

THOUGH punctiliousness with regard to title not carried so far in England as elsewhere, yet sufficient distinctions as to honour and precedence exist here to embarrass those unaccustomed to use the forms of address and superscription severally appropriate to different ranks. Inattention to these matters of etiquette is inexcusable, offensive, and even ridiculous; while the formulas of courtesy are so simple, that it is within the power of every person to acquire a knowledge of them. It is therefore designed, under the above head, to furnish the reader with forms of superscription and address to persons of various ranks, which will be found serviceable in preserving him from inaccuracies of this description.

Royal Personages.

The Sovereign must be addressed on public matters through Her Ministers. Memorials and Petitions to the Queen in Council should be forwarded to the Lord President at the Council Office.

and all others to the Home Secretary. Though presents are not usually received, yet they may sometimes be addressed to the charge of the Lord or Lady in Waiting at the Royal Palace. In former treatises of this branch of etiquette, a distinction has been erroneously drawn between Princes and Princesses of the Blood *Royal* and those of the Blood; all those members of the Royal Family are entitled to the designation of Royal Highness, in whatever degree of relationship they may stand to the Sovereign.

THE QUEEN.

To the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty.
(If on matters connected with India the words "Empress of India" should be added.)

MADAM,

. . . . .

I remain, with deepest veneration,
MADAM,
Your Majesty's most faithful Subject and dutiful Servant,

THE PRINCE OF WALES.

To his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales.

SIR,

. . . . .

I remain, with profound respect,
SIR,
Your Royal Highness's most humble Servant,

THE PRINCESS OF WALES.

To Her Royal Highness the Princess of Wales.

MADAM,

. . . . .

I remain, with profound respect,
MADAM,
Your Royal Highness's most humble Servant,

THE DUKE OF CAMBRIDGE.

To His Royal Highness the Duke of Cambridge.
SIR,

. . . .

I remain, &c.
SIR,
Your Royal Highness's, &c.

All other princes and princesses of the Blood Royal are similarly addressed, as Sir, or Madam; and the writer can vary the terms of courtesy concluding the letter according to his taste, carefully avoiding any appearance of servility.

The Nobility.

DUKE.

To His Grace the Duke of -
MY LORD DUKE,

I have the honour to be,
MY LORD DUKE,
Your Grace's most obedient Servant,

DUCHESS.

To Her Grace the Duchess of -
MADAM,

I have the honour to be,
MADAM,
Your Grace's, &c.

MARQUIS.

To the Most Noble the Marquis of ———.
MY LORD MARQUIS (or MY LORD),

. . . . .

I have the honour to be,
MY LORD,
Your Lordship's, &c.

MARCHIONESS.

To the Most Noble the Marchioness of ———.
MADAM,

. . . . .

I have the honour to be,
MADAM,
Your Ladyship's most obedient Servant

EARL.

To the Right Honourable the Earl of ———.
MY LORD,

. . . . .

I have the honour to be,
MY LORD,
Your Lordship's, &c.

COUNTESS.

To the Right Honourable the Countess of ———.
MADAM,

. . . . .

I have the honour to be,
MADAM,
Your Ladyship's, &c.

VISCOUNT.

To the Right Honourable Viscount ———.
MY LORD,

. . . . .

I have the honour to remain,
MY LORD,
Your Lordship's, &c.

VISCOUNTESS.

To the Right Honourable Viscountess ———.

MADAM,

. . . . .

I have the honour to remain,
MADAM,
Your Ladyship's, &c.

BARON.

To the Right Honourable Lord ———.

MY LORD,

. . . . .

I have the honour to remain,
MY LORD,
Your Lordship's, &c.

BARONESS.

To the Right Honourable Lady ———.

MADAM,

. . . . .

I have the honour to remain,
MADAM,
Your Ladyship's, &c.

Where, in the case of Earls and Peers of higher rank, the title is taken from a locality, we generally say, the Duke *of* Wellington, or the Earl *of* Aberdeen; but where the family name supplies the title, generally speaking, the "of" is not used, as Earl Grey, Earl Nelson. The "of" is never used in the appellations of Viscounts and Barons.

Sons of Peers.

The eldest sons of Dukes, Marquises, and Earls are by courtesy addressed as Peers, though in legal documents they are termed Esquires. This courtesy title is always the second title of the father, which may not, however, be that immediately below the first in rank, since the second title of a dukedom may be only a barony; but whatever the title, the eldest son of a Peer ranks immediately after the next grade below his father; a Duke's son after Marquises, a Marquis's after Earls, and so forth. The younger sons of Dukes and Marquises are addressed as Lords, the Christian name being added.

ELDER SON OF A DUKE.

To the Most Noble the Marquis of ——.
(Or Earl, Viscount, or Baron, as the case may be.)
MY LORD,

. . . . .

I have the honour to remain,
MY LORD,
Your Lordship's, &c.

YOUNGER SON OF A DUKE.

To the Right Honourable the Lord John ——.
MY LORD,

. . . . .

I have the honour to remain,
MY LORD,
Your Lordship's, &c.

ELDER SON OF MARQUIS.

To the Right Honourable the Earl of -
(Or Viscount or Baron as the case may be.)
MY LORD,

. . . . .

I have the honour to remain,
MY LORD,
Your Lordship's, &c.

YOUNGER SON OF MARQUIS.

To the Right Honourable the Lord George —
MY LORD,

. . . . .

I have the honour to remain,
MY LORD,
Your Lordship's, &c.

ELDER SON OF EARL.

To the Right Honourable the Viscount ——
(Or simply Lord, as the case may be.)
MY LORD,

. . . . .

I have the honour to remain,
MY LORD,
Your Lordship's, &c.

YOUNGER SON OF EARL.

To the Honourable George ——.
SIR,

All the sons of Viscounts and Barons take simpl the prefix Honourable to their name; as,—

To the Honourable William — ——.
SIR,

These titles of courtesy do not extend to the

third generation, except where the grandson is in direct line of succession; in all other cases, the grandchild of a peer is plain Mr. or Miss.

The wives of these sons of Peers take the style of their husbands; the daughters of Dukes, Marquises, and Earls are styled ladies; as,—

The Right Honourable Lady Sophia ——.
MADAM,

The daughters of Viscounts and Barons are Honourables; as,—

The Honourable Miss ——.
MADAM,

Maids of Honour to the Queen are also styled Honourable in virtue of their office, whatever their birth, and they retain that courtesy title after their marriage.

BARONET.

To Sir William ——, Bart.
SIR; or, intimately, as DEAR SIR WILLIAM

KNIGHTS.

To Sir John ·
SIR; or intimately as DEAR SIR JOHN,

Should the person addressed be a Companion of the Bath, or Knight Commander of the Bath, C.B. or K.C.B. must be added after the name.

The Wives of Baronets and Knights are addressed as "Lady,"—

To Lady ———.
MADAM,

. . . . .

I have the honour to be,
MADAM,
Your Ladyship's, &c.

The Widows of all titled persons, including Knights, often retain the title and name of their former husbands if they remarry with an untitled person; but if their second husband possesses a title above or equal to that of the first husband, they frequently assume his name and title.

Certain Official Personages.

A PRIVY COUNCILLOR.

To the Right Honourable Sir William ———.
To the Right Honourable John ———.
SIR,

The Wives of Privy Councillors derive no title or rank from their husbands' position.

MINISTERS OF STATE.

To the Right Honourable ——— ———,
First Lord of Her Majesty's Treasury.
SIR,

To the Right Honourable ——— ———,
Her Majesty's Secretary of State for the Colonial Department.
SIR,

DEPARTMENTS.

To the Right Honourable the Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury.

To the Right Honourable the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty.

To the Honourable the Commissioners of Her Majesty's Customs.

To the Honourable the Commissioners of Her Majesty's Revenue of Excise.

To the Honourable the Commissioners of Stamps and Taxes.

To the Honourable the Commissioners of Her Majesty's Woods and Forests.

GENTLEMEN,

Commissioners of Government Departments are frequently addressed by their official title, particularly if without other rank; as,—

To Commissioner ———&c., &c.;

or,

To H. ———, Esquire, Commissioner of Her Majesty's Excise.

SIR,

The Church.

ARCHBISHOP.

To His Grace the Lord Archbishop of -
MY LORD ARCHBISHOP,

. . . . .

I remain, with great respect,
Your Grace's obedient servant,

BISHOP.

To the Right Reverend the Lord Bishop of ——.
MY LORD,

. . . . .

I have the honour to be,
MY LORD BISHOP,
Your Lordship's most obedient Servant,

When Bishops are Privy Councillors, the style will be, "Right Honourable and Right Reverend," and also if they happen to be younger sons of Dukes or Marquises; if younger sons of an Earl or Baron, "Honourable and Right Reverend."

The Wives of Bishops, Archbishops, and other Ecclesiastics are addressed simply as "Mrs." unless possessing some title in their own right, or through the husband, apart from his office in the Church.

Bishops of the Episcopal Church in Scotland and the United States are thus addressed,—

To the Right Reverend Bishop ——.
RIGHT REVEREND SIR,

COLONIAL BISHOPS.

[Same as Scotch & American Bishops.]

There seems to be no doubt that Ecclesiastically all Bishops holding office as Bishops, and not retired from their Sees (as in the case commonly with respect to Colonial Bishoprics), should be addressed as My Lord.

It is the custom to address Roman Catholic Bishops as My Lord, although they have no temporal rank, like the Bishops of the Establishment, and very often have no Sees. It was also anciently the custom to address the Deans of Cathedrals, &c., as "My Lord."

DEAN.

To the Very Reverend the Dean of———.
REVEREND SIR; or, Very Reverend Sir.

ARCHDEACON.

To the Venerable Archdeacon——
REVEREND SIR; or, Venerable Sir.

CLERGYMAN.

The Reverend William ——, D.D
REVEREND SIR,

The Reverend George———, M.A
REVEREND SIR,

Persons in Orders possessing lay titles are thus addressed:—

The Right Honourable and Reverend Lord ———.
The Honourable and Reverend John———, M.A.
The Reverend Sir George ———, Bart.
The Right Honourable and Right Reverend the Earl of ———.

The Law.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR.

To the Right Honourable the Lord Chancellor;
or,
To the Right Honourable Lord ———.
Lord High Chancellor.
MY LORD,

QUEEN'S BENCH.

To the Right Honourable the Lord Chief Justice of the Court of Queen's Bench;
or,
To the Right Honourable Lord ———,
Lord Chief Justice, &c.
MY LORD,

MASTER OF THE ROLLS.

To His Honour the Master of the Rolls;
or,
To the Right Honourable Lord ———,
Master of the Rolls.
SIR,

COMMON PLEAS.

To the Right Honourable ——— ———
Lord Chief Justice of Common Pleas.
MY LORD,

EXCHEQUER.

To the Right Honourable Sir Frederick -
Lord Chief Baron of the Court of Exchequer
MY LORD,

VICE-CHANCELLOR.

To His Honour the Vice-Chancellor of England;

or,

To the Right Honourable Sir ——— ———,
Vice-Chancellor of England.

SIR,

The other Vice-Chancellors similarly, excepting the words of "England."

PUISNE JUDGES.

To the Honourable Mr. Justice ———.
To the Honourable Mr. Baron ———.

SIR,

On the Bench only they are styled "My Lord."

Navy and Army.

ADMIRAL.

To the Right Honourable Lord ———,
Admiral of the Red.

MY LORD,

To Vice-Admiral Sir Charles ———

or,

To Sir Charles ———,
Vice-Admiral of the White.*

SIR,

To Rear-Admiral ———;

or,

To ———,
Rear-Admiral of the Blue.

SIR,

* It is customary to address an Admiral as Admiral of the Red, White, Blue, as the case may be, only while his flag is flying in token of his command, otherwise his title is

Rear-Admiral Sir Charles ———, K.C.B.,

because officers in the Navy are rarely knights except in right of some order, which should invariably be signified as, *e.g.* above.

COMMODORE.

To Commodore Sir Thomas ———, K.C.B.
SIR,

CAPTAIN.

To Captain John ———, R.N.

or, if on service,

*To John ———, Esq.,
Captain of H.M.S. *Camilla*.
SIR,

Officers in the Navy, under the rank of lieutenant, should be addressed as Esquires, with the name of their ship if on actual service, or simply "R.N."

FIELD MARSHAL.

To Field-Marshal Sir John L———.
SIR,

I have the honour to be, &c.

GENERAL.

To General Sir James R————, G.C.B.
SIR,

To Lieut.-General Sir L——— ———.
SIR,

To Major-General Sir Edward L——— ——.
SIR,

To Brigadier-General H————.
SIR,

Accounts of Courts-martial are always commenced—

At a Court-Martial held on board H.M.S. *Warrior*: present Charles ———, Esq., C.B., Captain H.M.S. *Northumberland*, &c.

* This is rarely used but in legal documents.

COLONEL.

To Colonel the Right Honourable the Earl of ———.

MY LORD,

To Colonel R—— ———.
H.M. —— Regt. of ——.

SIR,

To Lieut.-Colonel ——— ———.
9th Regt.

SIR,

MAJOR.

To Major ——— ———.
H.M. 28th Regt.

SIR,

CAPTAIN.

To Captain L—— L——.
H.M. —— —— Dragoons.

SIR,

LIEUTENANT.

To Lieutenant ——— ———.
H.M. —— Foot.

SIR,

ENSIGN.

To Ensign B—— L——.
—— Infantry;

Subalterns may be addressed as -

——— ———, Esq.,
—— Regt.

SIR.

Ambassadors and their Wives.

To His Excellency the Prince ———.
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary
from H.M. the Emperor of ———.
SIR,

To His Excellency the Count de ———.
Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary
from H.M. the King of———.
SIR,

To Her Excellency the Countess de ———.
MADAM,

To His Excellency the Honourable ——— ———.
Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary
from the United States of America.
SIR,

To the Honourable Mrs ———.
MADAM,

Consuls.

To the Chevalier A. B. ———,
His Imperial Russian Majesty's Consul-General.
SIR,

To Colonel ———,
Consul General of the United States of America.
SIR,

To William ———, Esq.,
H.B.M.'s (Her Britannic Majesty's) Consul, Belize.
SIR,

Public Companies.

BANK.

To the Governor, Deputy-Governor, and the Court of Directors of the Bank of England.

GENTLEMEN,

WEST-INDIA DOCKS.

To the Court of Directors of the West India Dock Company.

GENTLEMEN,

RAILWAY COMPANY.

To the Directors of the South-Western Railway Company.

GENTLEMEN,

If a Peer happen to be Chairman of the Company (*e g.*, Lord Salisbury was at one time Chairman of the Great Eastern Railway), the address will be—

MY LORD AND GENTLEMEN,

Civic Authorities.

The *Lord* Mayors are those of London, York, and Dublin, and these are Right Honourable during their tenure of office.

LORD MAYOR.

To the Right Honourable the Lord Mayor of London: or, To the Right Honourable Sir R. ——, Lord Mayor of London.

My Lord,

I have the honour to be,
Your Lordship's, &c.

MAYORS.

To the Right Worshipful the Mayor of Southampton.

Sir,

RECORDER OR SHERIFF OF LONDON

To the Right Worshipful A—— B——, Sheriff or Recorder of London.

Sir,

ALDERMAN OF LONDON.

To the Right Worshipful Alderman Wire.

Sir,

To Aldermen and Recorders of other Corporations, and to Justices of the Peace, the style "Worshipful" is given; but is only used in official business.

LORD PROVOSTS.

To the Right Honourable the Lord Provost of Edinburgh.

MY LORD,

To the Right Honourable the Lord Provost of Glasgow.

LADY MAYORESS.

To the Right Honourable the Lady Mayoress.

MADAM,

. . . . . Your Ladyship's, &c.

MAYORESS.

To the Right Worshipful the Mayoress of Norwich.

MADAM,

Esquires.

To John Abernethy, Esq., M.D., F.R.S.

SIR,

To Edward Coke, Esq., Queen's Counsel.

To Sampson Brass, Esq., Attorney-at-Law.

The adjunct of Esq. is now generally given to all who have no other rank to distinguish them, and is so indiscriminately lavished on persons making any pretensions to gentility, particularly such as seem to be independent of everything termed business, that a well-known wag has defined the modern idea of an Esquire as equivalent to a very old but heretofore unambiguous legal phrase, "one who has

nc visible means of livelihood." Much of this latitude in the application of the term has arisen from the fact that it is somewhat unsettled what constitutes an "Esquire." There is a commonly-received opinion that any gentleman is an esquire who has 300*l.* a year in landed property; but the fact is, that no estate, however large, confers the rank. Sir Edward Coke observes, that every esquire is a gentleman; and a gentleman is defined to be one *qui arma gerit*—who bears coat-armour, the grant of which adds gentility to a man's family. But, says Sir Thomas Smith, "as for gentlemen, they be made good cheap in this kingdom: for whosoever studieth the laws of the realm, who studieth in the universities, who professeth liberal sciences, and, to be short, who can live idly and without manual labour, and will bear the part, charge, and countenance of a gentleman, he shall be called Master, and shall be taken for a gentleman." Camden, a great authority, reckons up four kinds of Esquires:—1. The eldest sons of knights and their eldest sons in perpetual succession; 2. The eldest sons of the younger sons of peers, and their eldest sons in perpetual succession; 3. Esquires created by the monarch's letters patent, or rather investiture, and their eldest sons; 4. Esquires by virtue of their offices—as Justices of the Peace and others who bear any office of trust under the Crown. To these may be added the Esquires of Knights of the Bath, each of whom constitutes three at his installation; and all those who have at any time been called Esquires by the Crown in any document whatever.

This title, however, is now given to every one

ranking as a gentleman, and is even frequently added when the party is entitled to a higher precedence than that of an esquire. Heralds place colonels, serjeants-at-law, and doctors of the three learned professions before Esquires; yet we shall often find the word appended to the names of *lay* gentlemen holding the degree of LL.D. or D.C.L.

Some writers maintain that it is a mark of respect to write the word "Esquire" at full length after the name. We apprehend the rule to be, that titles of courtesy or honour, used before the name, should be written in full, but that those following the name are almost invariably abbreviated; therefore the usual "Esq." can convey no disrespect.

It appears that any graduate of a University constituted by the Monarch in Council, or any one holding the Monarch's Commission, is entitled to the title Esquire. It should be remarked that all the foregoing forms of address are subject to considerable modification in correspondence carried on between friends. They signify the forms to be used in official correspondence only. Clergymen are rarely addressed by each other as M.A.; Lawyers do not append Attorney-at-Law, &c., when writing to acquaintances; and the whole way of familiar letter-writing naturally tends to err on the side of omission in the direction of names, titles, and style.

TABLE OF PRECEDENCY.

In making lists of names of subscribers, offence may sometimes be inadvertently given, through ignorance of their relative rank, and, in such cases, the annexed general Table of Precedency (taken from that prefixed to the *Shilling Peerage*) will be found serviceable.

All † Peers rank among themselves by date of creation, in the following order:—English, Scotch, of Great Britain, Irish, of the United Kingdom.

THE SOVEREIGN.
Prince of Wales, Sons of the Sovereign, in order of birth.
Grandsons, Brothers, Nephews, and Uncles of the Sovereign.
Younger Princes of Blood Royal.
Archbishop of Canterbury.
Lord Chancellor.
Archbishops of York, Armagh, Dublin.
President of Council.
Lord Privy Seal
Lord Great Chamberlain.
The Earl Marshal.
Lord Steward of Household.
Lord Chamberlain of Household.
Dukes †
Lord Great Chamberlain,
Lord High Constable,
Earl Marshal,
Lord Steward of Household,
Lord Chamberlain of Household,
} If a Marquis.
Marquises.†
Dukes' Eldest Sons.
Lord Great Chamberlain,
Lord High Constable,
Earl Marshal,
Lord Steward,
Lord Chamberlain,
} If an Earl.
Earls.†
Eldest Sons of Marquises
Younger Sons of Dukes.

Lord Great Chamberlain,
Lord High Constable,
Lord Steward,
Lord Chamberlain,
} If a Viscount.
Viscounts.†
Eldest sons of Earls.
Younger Sons of Marquises.
The Bishops of London, Durham, and Winchester.
English Bishops according to date of Consecration.
The Bishop of Meath.
Other Irish Bishops, in order of Consecration.
Lord Great Chamberlain,
Lord High Constable,
Lord Steward,
Lord Chamberlain of the Household,
Secretary of State,
} If a Baron.
Barons.†
Speaker of House of Commons.
Commissioners of the Great Seal (when they have no claim to higher rank).
Treasurer of the Household,
Comptroller of the Household,
Master of the Horse,
Vice-Chamberlain of Household,
} If of no higher rank.
Secretary of State, if below the rank of Baron.
Eldest Sons of Viscounts.
Younger Sons of Earls.
Eldest Sons of Barons.
Knights of the Garter, if of no higher rank.
Privy Councillors, in order of appointment, when with no higher precedence.
Chancellor of the Garter.
Chancellor of Exchequer.
Chancellor of Duchy of Lancaster.
Chief Justice of Queen's Bench.
Master of the Rolls.
Chief Justice of Common Pleas.
Chief Baron of Exchequer.
Vice-Chancellors, according to seniority.
Puisne Judges of Queen's Bench.
Puisne Justices of Common Pleas.
Puisne Barons of Exchequer.
Commissioners of Bankruptcy.
Younger Sons of Viscounts.
Younger Sons of Barons.
Baronets of England, Scotland, Great Britain, Ireland, and United Kingdom, in order of their respective patents.

Knights of the Thistle, if of no higher rank.
Knights of St. Patrick, if of no higher rank
Knights Grand Cross of the Bath; and of St. Michael and St. George.
Knights Commanders of the Bath; and St. Michael and St. George.
Knights Bachelors.
Companions of the Bath; and of St. Michael and St. George
Eldest Sons of younger Sons of Peers.
Eldest Sons of Baronets.
Eldest Sons of Knights Grand Cross of the Bath.
Eldest Sons of Knights Grand Cross of St. Michael and St. George.
Eldest Sons of Knights Commander of the Bath.
Eldest Sons of Knights Commander of St. Michael and St. George.
Eldest Sons of Knights Bachelors.
Younger Sons of the younger Sons of Peers.
Younger Sons of Baronets.
Esquires of the Sovereign's body.
Gentlemen of Privy-chamber.
Esquires of Knights of the Bath.
Esquires by creation, and by office.
Younger Sons of Knights Grand Cross of the Bath; of Knights Grand Cross of St. Michael and St. George; of Knights Commanders of the Bath; of Knights Commanders of St. Michael and St. George; and of Knights Bachelors.
General and Flag Officers.
Colonels in the Army, Captains in the Navy.
Gentlemen entitled to bear arms.

Ladies, except those of Archbishops, Bishops, and Judges,* rank according to the precedency of their husbands. Unmarried ladies have the same rank as their elder brothers.

No British officer can wear the insignia of a foreign order without Her Majesty's sanction, which must be registered at the Herald's office; and every such permission, subsequent to March, 1813, forbids the assumption of any style, precedence, or privilege, appertaining to British Knighthood.

* As the Judges in England are always Knighted, their wives rank as the wives of Knights.

ABBREVIATIONS.

Before the invention of printing, various abbreviations were introduced to lighten the labour of the copyist, which are generally reducible to two classes:—Substitutions of the initial letter or letters for the entire word, and contractions of the final syllables. These abbreviations are much more numerous than common usage would indicate; and below we append a list of them, which, although not exhaustive, will be found to contain most of the initials and words used in the professions, Learned Societies, various Associations, together with many bearing on inscriptions, salutations, &c.

Academical.

A., Associate.
A.A., Associates in Arts (title conferred on local examination by Oxford and Cambridge).
A.B., Bachelor of Arts.
A.C., Advanced Certificate (a musical distinction).
A.C.P., Associate of College of Preceptors.
A.K.C., Associate of King's College.
A.L.S, Associate of Linnean Society.
A.M., Master of Arts.
A.R.A., Associate of Royal Academy.
A.R.I.B.A., Associate Royal Institution of British Architects.
A.R.S.A., Associate Royal Society of Arts, or Royal Scotch Academy.
B.A., Bachelor of Arts, also British Association.
B.C.L., Bachelor of Civil Law.
B.Ch., Bachelor of Surgery (Chirurgery).

B.D., Bachelor of Divinity.
B.S., Bachelor of Surgery.
B.Sc., Bachelor of Science.
Cambs, Cantab } Cambridge.
C.E., Civil Engineer.
Chirg., Surgeon (used chiefly at foot of medical prescriptions).
D.C.L., Doctor of Civil Law (degree peculiar to England).
D.D., Doctor of Divinity (not Doctor Divinitatis).
D. Lit., Doctor of Literature (given by University of London only).
D.M., D. Mus., } Doctor of Music.
Dr., Doctor.
D. Sc., Doctor of Science (lately established in London and Edinburgh).
F., Fellow = Socius.
F.A.S., Fellow Antiquarian Society.
F.C.P., Fellow College of Preceptors.
F.C.S., Fellow Chemical Society.
F.G.S., Fellow Geological Society.
F.G.H.S., Fellow Genealogical and Historical Society.
F.I.A., Fellow Institute Actuaries.
F.K.& Q.C.P., Fellow King and Queen's College Physicians (Ireland).
F.L.S., Fellow Linnean Society.
F.P.S., Fellow Pharmaceutical Society.
F.R.A., Fellow Royal Academy.
F.R.A.I., Fellow Royal Archæological Institute.
F.R.A.S., Fellow Royal Astronomical Society.
F.R.B.S., Fellow Royal Botanical Society.
F.R.C.S.E., Fellow Royal College Surgeons, England.
F.R.C.S.I., Fellow Royal College Surgeons, Ireland.
F.R.C.P., Fellow Royal College Physicians.
F.R.C.V.S., Fellow Royal College Veterinary Surgeons.
F.R.G.S., Fellow Royal Geographical Society.
F.R.H.S., Fellow Royal Horticultural Society.
F.R.I.B.A., Fellow Royal Institute British Architects.
F.R.M.S., Fellow Royal Microscopical Society.

F.R.S., Fellow Royal Society.
F.R.S.E., Fellow Royal Society of Edinburgh.
F.R.S.L., Fellow Royal Society of Literature.
F.S.A., Fellow Society of Arts or Antiquaries.
F.S.S., Fellow Statistical Society.
F.T.C.D., Fellow Trinity College, Dublin.
F.Z.S., Fellow Zoological Society.
J.U.D., Juris utriusque Doctor (somewhat obsolete).
Jun. Opt., Junior Optime.
L.A.H., Licentiate Apothecaries' Hall.
L.C.P., Licentiate College of Preceptors.
LL.B., Bachelor of Laws. (Note.—University of London prints it LL.B.)
LL.D., Doctor of Laws (Legum Doctor ; the two letters denote plurality).
LL.M., Master of Laws.
Lit. Hum. Literæ Humaniores (the Humanities).
L.R.C.P., Licentiate Royal College of Physicians.
L.R.C.S., Licentiate Royal College of Surgeons.
L.R.V.C., Licentiate Royal Veterinary College.
L.S.A., Licentiate Society of Arts.
M., Member. (M. standing before initials of any societies mentioned above signifies membership.)
M.A., Master of Arts.
M.B., Bachelor of Medicine.
M. Ch., Master of Surgery (Dublin).
M.D., Doctor of Medicine.
M.E., Master of Engineering (conferred in Dublin).
M.R.I.A., Member of Royal Irish Academy.
M.R.A.S., Member of Royal Astronomical Society.
M.S., Master of Surgery (London).
Mus. Bac., Bachelor of Music.
Mus. Doc., Doctor of Music.
Oxon, Oxford.
Ph.B., Bachelor of Philosophy. } Foreign Degrees.
Ph.D., Doctor of Philosophy. }
Prin., Principal.
Prof., Professor.
R.A.M., Royal Academy of Music.
Reg. Prof., Regius Professor.
Sen. Opt., Senior Optime.
S.T.B., Bachelor of Sacred Theology—B.D.

S.T.P., Professor of Sacred Theology=D.D.
V.P., Vice-President.
V.S., Veterinary Surgeon.

SOME ABBREVIATIONS USED IN ACADEMICAL MATTERS LESS GENERALLY.

Ad eund., ad eundem: to the same degree.
Cl., Class, or Classics.
Com. Causâ, Comitatis Causâ: for courtesy's sake.
Ds., Dominus, used in publication of the Honours List, Cambridge.
Mag. Inf., Magister Informator: Head Master.
Oxon, Oxford.
Pro-Mag., Pro-Magister: Vice-Master.
Sch., Scholar.
Soc., Socius = Fellow.
Trip., Tripos.
Wrang., Wrangler.

Ecclesiastical.

Abp., Archbishop.
A.C., Ante Christum.
A.D., Anno Domini.
A.M.D.G., Ad majorem Dei Gloriam.
A.P.U.C., Assoc. for Promoting Unity of Christendom.
Armach., Armachanus (Armagh, title of see of).
A.S., Anno Salutis.
Bp., Bishop.
Bp. in part., Bishop in partibus infidelium.
Bp. Suff., Bishop Suffragan.
Cantuar., Canterbury (title of see of).
Cicest., Chichester ,, ,,
Dunelm., Durham ,, ,,
Ebor., York ,, ,,
Exon., Exeter ,, ,,
Menev., St. David's (rarely used)
Oxon., Oxford (title of see of).
Roffens., Rochester (title of see of).
Sarum, Salisbury ,, ,,
Winton., Winchester.*

* Other sees than these, given here for convenience sake together, have no particular Latin equivalent for their names; *e.g.*, the Bishop of Carlisle uses the signature Harvey Carlisle

B.V.M., Blessed Virgin Mary.
C., Curate, also Confessor.
C.SS.R., Congregation of Most Holy Redeemer (the Redemptorist Fathers).
Can., Canon.
Cant., Cantoris; the Precentor's side of a Choir.
C.A.S., Curates' Aid Society.
C.F., Chaplain to the Forces.
Ch., Church. Ch. Ch., Christ Church.
Chan., Chancellor.
Chap., Chaplain or Chapel.
Clk., Clerk (in Holy Orders).
C.O.S.C., Congregation of the Oblates of S. Charles.
Deac., Deacon.
Dec., Decani; the Dean's side of a Choir.
D.G., Dei Gratia: by grace of God.
Dio., Diocese, Diocesan.
D.O.M., Deo Optimo Maximo.
D.V., Deo volente: God willing.
E.C.U., English Church Union.
F.D., Fidei Defensor (a title Ecclesiastical of the Monarch).
H.J., Hic jacet.
I.H.S., Jesus Hominum Salvator. (These are really the first three letters of the Greek name, IHΣOYΣ)
I.H.✠S., In hâc cruce salus: Salvation in the cross.
Inc., Incumbent.
I.N.R.I., Jesus Nazarænus Rex Judæorum.
Lect., Lector, or Lecturer.
M., Martyr.
Mgr., Monsignor.
Min., Minister.
Min. Can., Minor Canon.
M.S., Memoriæ Sacrum: Sacred to the Memory.
N.T., Novum Testamentum.
O., Order.
O.C.D., Order of Barefooted Carmelites.
O. Carm. Disc., Ordo Carmelitanorum Discalceatorum (same as preceding).
O.M.I., Order (or Oblates) of Mary Immaculate (Marists).
O.P., Order of Preachers.

O.S.A., Order S. Augustine (Augustinians).
O.S.B., Order S. Benedict (Benedictines).
O.S.C.B., Order S. Charles Borromeo (Oblates).
O.S.D., Order S. Dominic (Dominicans).
O.S.F., Order S. Francis (Franciscans).
O.S.J., Order S. Joseph.
O.S.M., Order S. Mary.
O.S.P.N., Order S. Philip Neri.
O.T., Old Testament.
P.C., Perpetual Curate.
P.P., Parish Priest.
Pr., Priest.
Preb., Prebendary.
Prec., Precentor.
Presb., Presbyter.
Pr.V., Priest Vicar.
Q.T., Quarter Tense, Quatre Temps, Ember Days.
R., Rector.
Ry., Responsory.
R.C., Roman Catholic.
R.D., Rural Dean.
Rev., Reverend.
R.I.P., Requiescat in pace: May he rest in peace.
S., Saint, also Society.
Sac., Sacerdos, Priest.
S.J., Order or Society of Jesus (Jesuits).
S.P.C.K., Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge.
S.P.G., Society for Propagation of the Gospel.
SS., Saints.
S.S.J., Society of S. Joseph.
S.S.S., Society of the Holy Ghost (Sancti Spiritûs Societas).
St., Saint.
Stip. C., Stipendiary Curate.
Succ., Subcantor, Succentor.
S.V.P., Saint Vincent of Paul.
Theol., Theological.
U.P., United Presbyterian.
V., Vicar.
℣., Versicle.
V.A., Vicar Apostolic.

V.Ch., Vicar Choral.
V.G., Vicar General.
V.T., Vetus Testamentum (Old Testament).
Xt., Christ.
Xtmas, Christmas.

Civil (i.e. Commercial, Legal, Literary, Medical).

Admors., Administrators.
ætat., aged.
Ald., Alderman.
A.M., Anno Mundi, also Ante Meridiem.
Amt., Amount.
Assigns., Assignees.
Atty., Attorney.
Ca-sa., Capias ad satisfaciendum.
Cap., Chapter.
Cent., Centum, a hundred.
Cf., Confer, Compare.
Co., Company.
Cod., Codd., Codex, Codices.
C.O.D., Cash on Delivery (American system).
C.P., Common Pleas.
Cp., Compare.
C.P.S., Custos Privati Sigilli.
Cr., Creditor.
C.S., Civil Service.
cwt., hundredweight.
D., Denarius.
D.D., Dono dat, or dedit (a form used in making a present).
D.D.A., Dat, Dicit, Addicit = Just administration of law).
del., dele, deleatur = erase.
D.L., Deputy-Lieutenant.
dwt., penny(d)weight.
ed., edd., edition, editions.
e.g., Exempli gratiâ.
etc., et cetera.
et seq., et sequentia (the following).

Ex., Exx., Example, or Examples.
Exors., Executors.
Fi.-fa., Fieri facias (words prefixed to certain writs).
h.e., hoc est: this is.
H.S., Hic Sigillum: here is the Seal.
Ib., Ibid., in the same place.
Ictus., Juris consultus: Lawyer.
id., idem, the same.
i.e., id est: that is.
inf., infra: below.
in loco, at the place.
ins., instant; the present month.
J.P., Justice of the Peace.
K.T.Λ. (κ.τ.λ.), Greek equivalent for etc.
lb., pound.
L.C.J., Lord Chief Justice.
loc. cit., locus citatus: place quoted.
L.S., Loco Sigilli: Place of the Seal.
M.C., Member of Congress, also Master of Ceremonies.
Mdlle., Mademoiselle.
Mem., Memorandum: thing to be remembered.
MM., Messieurs.
Mme., Madame.
M.P., Member of Parliament.
Mr., Mrs., Mister (originally Master), Mistress.
MS. MSS., Manuscript, Manuscripts.
N. or M., Nomen or Nomina: Name or Names. N.N. = M.
N.B., Nota bene.
Nem. con. } Nemine contradicente } Nobody opposing.
Nem. diss. } Nemine dissidente }
Nisi, Decree made, unless reason can be shown to the contrary.
No., Number, Numero.
N.P., Notary Public.
N.S., New Style (since 1752).
Ob., Obiit: he (she) died.
O.S., Old Style (before 1752).
oz., ounce.
P., President.
Parl., Parliamentary.
P.C., Privy Councillor or Police Constable.

P.M., Post Meridian : afternoon.
P.O., Post Office.
P.P.S., Pour prendre Congé (form of farewell).
Prox., Proximo = next month.
P.S., Post scriptum.
Q.C., Queen's Counsel.
q.d., quasi dicat = as if one should say.
Q.E.D., which was to be shown.
Q.E.F., which was to be done.
q.s., quant. suff. = enough.
q.v., quod videas = look and see.
Qy., Query.
Rp., Recipe, Receipt.
R.S.V.P., Repondez s'il vous plait.
s., shilling.
sc. or scil., scilicet.
S.I., Sub-Inspector.
S.M., Stipendiary Magistrate.
S.S.C., Solicitor of Supreme Court.
St., Street.
S.V. Sub voce : at the word (literary term of reference).
T.C., Town Councillor.
ulto., last month.
ut sup., as above (literary term of reference).
Verb. Sap., Verbum Sapientibus : a word to the wise.
Verb. Sat., Verbum satisd : a word is enough.
viz., videlicet : to wit, namely.
V.P., Vice-President.
V.R., Victoria the Queen.
W.S., Writer to the Signet.
&, and.
&c., et cetera.

Masonic.

A.A.R., Ancient and Accepted Rite.
A.G S., Assistant Grand Secretary.
D.G.M., Deputy Grand Master.
E.A., Entered Apprentice.
F.C., Fellow Craft.
F.G.A.S., First Grand Assistant Sojourner.

G.C., Grand Commander
G.Ch., Grand Chaplain.
G.D., Grand Deacon.
G.D.C., Grand Deputy Commander.
G.M., Grand Master.
G.O., Grand Organist.
G.P., Grand Principal (Royal Arch).
G.P.S., Grand Poursuivant (Royal Arch).
G. R., Grand Registrar.
G.S., Grand Secretary.
G.S.B., Grand Sword-bearer.
G.Sc.E., Grand Scribe East.
G.S.P., Grand Superintendent Provinces.
G. St., Grand Steward.
G. St. B., Grand Standard-bearer.
G.S.W., Grand Superintendent of Works.
G.T., Grand Tyler.
G.Tr., Grand Treasurer.
G.W., Grand Warden.
H.R.A., Holy Royal Arch.
I.G., Inner Guard.
I.T.N.O.T.G.A.O.T.U., In the name of the Grand Architect of the Universe.
J.D., Junior Deacon.
J.G.D., Junior Grand Deacon.
J.W., Junior Warden.
K.H., Kadosh Harodim (a special Order—name Hebrew)
K.J., Knights of Jerusalem.
K.M., Knights of Malta.
K.T., Knights of the Temple.
M.E.Z., Most Eminent Z.
M.M., Master Mason, also Mark Master.
M.W.G.M., Most Worshipful Grand Master.
M.W.S., Most Wise Sovereign,
O., Organist.
*P.M., Past Master.
Prov., Provincial.
R.C., Rose Croix.
S., Secretary.
S.D., Senior Deacon.

S.G.D., Senior Grand Deacon.
S.G I.G., Sovereign Grand Inspector General 33°.
S.G.W., Senior Grand Warden.
S.P.R.C., Sovereign Prince Rose Croix.
S.P.R.S., Sublime Prince Royal Secret.
St., Steward.
S.W., Senior Warden.
T., Tyler.
Tr., Treasurer.
W.M., Worshipful Master.

There are numerous titles used in Masonry of less general interest, but a few words may be added on the subject of the very lofty distinctions whose style is somewhat impressive.

The head of the Supreme Council of 33rd Order, and of the Ancient and Accepted Rite, is called the Most Puissant Sovereign Grand Commander, M.P.S.G.C. 33°. The Chief of the Templars is styled The Most Eminent and Supreme Grand Master of the Temple and Hospital, M.E. & S.G.M.T.&H. His deputy is called the Very High and Eminent Deputy Grand Master.

The Provincial Grand Commanders are Very Eminent Sir Knights, and the Chief of an Encampment, Eminent Commander.

Masonry enjoys a wealth of titles, and is somewhat lavish of Eminences, Sovereigns, and Princes.

English Masonry recognizes only three Orders, although there are altogether as many as thirty-three.

Z. H. J. E. N. are respectively used to signify Zerubbabel, Haggai, Jeshua, Ezra, Nehemiah, in a certain mystical, that is to say, Masonic sense.

Imperial.

A.B., Able-bodied seaman.
A.D.C., Aide-de-Camp.
Adj., Adjutant.
Adj.-Gen., Adjutant-General.
Adm., Admiral.
Admin., Administrative.

A.V., Artillery Volunteers.
B., Battery.
Batt., Battalion.
B.C.S., Bengal Civil Service.
Brig., Brigade.
Brig.-Gen., Brigadier-General.
B.O., Board of Ordnance.
Capt., Captain.
C.B., Companion of the Bath.
C.H., Companion of the Hanoverian Order.
C.M.G., Companion of SS. Michael and George (Greek).
Col., Colonel.
Com., Commander.
C.P.S., Custos Privati Sigilli: Keeper of the Privy Seal.
C.S., Civil Service.
D.D., Disrated, Dead (Naval).
D.G., Dragoon Guards.
D.L., Deputy-Lieutenant.
E., Ensign.
E.I.C.S., East-India Company's Service.
E.M., Earl-Marshal.
F.M., Field-Marshal.
G.C.B., Grand Cross of the Bath.
G.C.H., Grand Cross of the Hanoverian Order.
G.C.J.J., Grand Cross of St. John of Jerusalem (not recognized).
G.C.M.G., Grand Cross of St. Michael and St. George.
Gen., General.
G.O., General Order.
H., Hussars.
H.A.C., Honourable Artillery Company.
H.C., Hospital Corps.
H.E., His Excellency.
H.E.I.C., Honourable East-India Company.*
H.E.I.C.S., Honourable East-India Company's Service.*
H.I.H., His Imperial Highness.
H.M.S., Her Majesty's Service, or Ship.

* This Company is defunct, but numbers of its servants entitled to this appellation survive, apart from its use in literature.

H.R.E., Holy Roman Empire.
H.R.H., His or Her Royal Highness.
I.G., Inspector-General.
K.A., Knight of St. Andrew (Russia).
K.A.N., Knight of St. Alexander Newski (Russia).
K.B., Knight of the Bath.
K.B.A., St. Bento d'Ario (Portugal).
K.B.E., Knight of the Black Eagle (Prussia).
K.C., Knight of the Crescent.
K.C.B., Knight Commander of the Bath.
K.C.H., Knight Commander of Hanover.
K.C.H.G., Knight Commander of the Guelphic Order.
K.C.J.J., Knight Commander of St. John of Jerusalem.
K.C.M.G., Knight Commander of St. Michael and St. George.
K.C.S., Knight of Charles the Third (Spain).
K.C.S.I., Knight Commander of the Star of India.
K.E., Knight of the Elephant (Denmark).
K.F., Knight of Ferdinand (Spain).
K.G., Knight of the Garter.
K.G.C.M.G., Knight Grand Cross of St. Michael and St. George.
K.G.F., Knight of the Golden Fleece (Spain).
K.G.V., Knight of Gustavus Vasa (Sweden).
K.H., Knight of Hanover.
K.J., Knight of St. Joachim (Naples).
K.J.J., Knight of St. John of Jerusalem.
K.L., Knight of Leopold (Austria).
K.L.S., Knight of the Lion and Sun.
K.M., Knight of Malta.
K.M.H., Merit in Holstein.
K.M.J., Knight of Maximilian Joseph (Bavaria).
K.M.M., Order of Military Merit (Prussia).
K.M.T., Knight of St. Maria Theresa (Austria).
K.P., Knight of St. Patrick.
K.P.S., Knight of the Polar Star (Sweden).
K.R.E., Knight of the Red Eagle of Prussia.
K.S., Knight of the Sword (Sweden).
K.S.A., Knight of St. Anne (Russia).
K.S.E., Knight of St. Esprit (France).
K.S.F., Knight of St. Ferdinand and of Merit (Sicily).

K.S.F., Knight of the Order of St. Ferdinand of Spain.
K.S.G., Knight of St. George (Russia).
K.S.I., Knight of Star of India.
K.S.L., Knight of Sun and Lion (Persia).
K.S.P., Knight of St. Stanislaus (Poland).
K.S.W., Knight of St. Wladimir (Russia).
Kt. or Knt., Knight.
K.T., Knight of the Thistle.
K.T.S., Knight of the Tower and Sword of Portugal.
K.W., Knight of William (Netherlands).
K.W.E., Knight of the White Eagle (Poland).
L., Lancers.
Ldp., Lordship.
L.D.C., Light Dragoon Guards.
L.I., Light Infantry.
Lieut., Lieutenant.
Lieut.-Col., Lieutenant-Colonel.
Lieut.-Gen., Lieutenant-General.
Maj., Major.
Maj.-Gen., Major-General.
M.C., Member of Congress.
M.P., Member of Parliament.
M.T., Military Train.
P., President.
P.C., Privy Councillor.
P.M., Provost Marshal.
Q.M., Quarter-master.
Q.M.G., Quarter-master General.
R.A., Royal Artillery.
R.B., Rifle Brigade (60th Regt.).
R.E., Royal Engineers.
R.H., Royal Highness.
R.H.A., Royal Horse Artillery.
R.H.G., Royal Horse Guards.
R.M.A., Royal Marine Artillery.
R.M.L.I., Royal Marine Light Infantry.
R.N., Royal Navy.
R.N.B., Royal Naval Brigade.
Rt. Hon., Right Honourable.
Rt. Wpful., Right Worshipful.
T.C., Town Councillor.

T.S., Tower and Sword.
U.S., United States.
V., Volunteers.
V.C., Victoria Cross.
V.P., Vice-President.
W.O., War Office.

Ancient.

A., Anno.
A., Aulus; also,—
A., Absolvo (form of acquittal); Antiquo=voting the previous question).
Æd., Ædile.
App., Appius.
A.U.C., Anno urbis conditæ (year since the foundation of the city of Rome).
C., Caius; also,—
C., Condemno (form of condemnation).
Cn., Cnæus.
Cos., Coss., Consul, Consuls.
D., Decimus; also,—
D., Divus (applied to deceased emperors).
D.D., Dono dedit.
D.D.D., Dat, dicat, dedicat (form of dedication).
Des., Designatus = elect, *e.g.* Consul.
D.M., Dis Manibus (sepulchral inscription).
D.O.M., Deo Optimo Maximo (still used).
F., Filius (son).
F.C., Faciendum curavit = undertook to do, or make.
F.F.F., Felix, Faustum, Fortunatum (formula of benediction).
F.F., Feriundo Flando.
H.C.S.E., Hic conditus situs est: here lies he.
H.M.H.N.S., Hoc monumentum heredes non sequitur.
*Imp., Imperator.
I.O.M., Jovi Optimo Maximo: to Most High Jove.
K., Kæso (proper name).
L., Lucius (proper name); also, Libertas.
M., Marcus (proper name).

* Imperator placed after a name signified honorary rank, as Hortensius, Imperator; before a name, Imperial power, Imperator Julius.

M', Manius.
Mam., Mamercus.
M.P., Mille passuum: a mile.
M.P.C., Monumentum ponendum curavit: erected a memorial).
N., Numerius (proper name).
N., Nepos: nephew or grandchild.
Ob., Obiit: he died.
P. Publius (proper name).
P.C., Patres conscripti: Senators.
Pont. Max., Pontifex Maximus: Arch-priest.
Q., Quintus.
Quir., Quirites: Roman citizens.
Resp., Respublica: the Commonweath.
S., Sextus.
S.C., Senatus consultum: Decree.
S.D., Salutem dicit
S.P.D., Salutem plurimam dicit } forms of salutation.
Ser., Servius (proper name).
Sp., Spurius.
S.P.Q.R., Senatus populusque Romanus.
S.V.B.E.E.V., Si vales bene est, ego valeo (mode of epistolary address).
T., Titus (proper name).
Tib., Tiberius.
Tr. Pl., Tribunus Plebis: Tribune.
V., Vixit (Sepulchral inscription): he lived.

ASTRONOMICAL SIGNS.

SIGNS OF THE ZODIAC.

Northern Signs.

♈	Aries, the *Ram.*	Spring.
♉	Taurus, the *Bull.*	
♊	Gemini, the *Twins.*	
♋	Cancer, the *Crab.*	Summer.
♌	Leo, the *Lion.*	
♍	Virgo, the *Virgin.*	

Southern Signs.

♎	Libra, the *Balance.*	Autumn.
♏	Scorpio, the *Scorpion.*	
♐	Sagittarius, the *Archer.*	
♑	Capricornus, the *Goat.*	Winter.
♒	Aquarius, the *Water-bearer.*	
♓	Pisces, the *Fishes.*	

PLANETS, &c.

⊕	♁ The Earth.	♆	Neptune.
☉	The Sun.	☌	Conjunction.
☾	The Moon.	□	Quadrature.
☽	First Quarter.	△	Trine.
☾	Last Quarter.	⚹	Sextile.
●	Full Moon.	☍	Opposition.
☿	Mercury.	☊	Ascending Node.
♀	Venus.	☋	Descending Node.
♂	Mars.	°	Degrees.
⚶	Vesta.	′	Minutes of Arc.
⚵	Juno.	″	Seconds of Arc.
⚴	Pallas.	H.	Hours.
⚳	Ceres.	D.	Days.
♃	Jupiter.	M.	Minutes.
♄	Saturn.	S.	Seconds of Time.
♅	Uranus.		

ARITHMETICAL SIGNS.

= *Equal.* The sign of Equality; as 4 quarters = 1 cwt., that is, 4 quarters are equal to 1 cwt.

− *Minus*, or less. The sign of Subtraction; as $8-2=6$, that is, 8 lessened by 2 is equal to 6.

+ *Plus*, or more. The sign of Addition; as $4+4=8$, that is, 4 added to 4 is equal to 8.

× *Multiplied by.* The sign of Multiplication; as $4\times6=24$, that is, 4 multiplied by 6 is equal to 24.

÷ *Divided by.* The sign of Division; as $8\div2=4$, that is, 8 divided by 2 is equal to 4.

: *As*, :: *So* The signs of Proportion; thus, 2 : 4 :: 8 : 16, that is, as 2 is to 4, so is 8 to 16.

Numbers placed like a Fraction likewise denote Division, the upper number being the dividend, and the lower the divisor, as $\frac{3}{4}$, that is, 3 divided by 4, or 3 fourths.

A line drawn over two or more figures, as $\overline{2+3}$, shows that they are to be regarded as one quantity.

$7-2+5=10$. Shows that the difference between 2 and 7 added to 5 is equal to 10.

$9-\overline{2+5}=2$. Shows that the sum of 2 and 5 taken from 9 is equal to 2.

$\surd$ Sign of the *Square Root;* as $\surd16=4$; that is, the square root of 16 is 4.

$\sqrt[3]{}$ Sign of the *Cube Root;* for example, $\sqrt[3]{64}=4$, that is, the cube root of 64 is equal to 4.

A dot placed before a figure shows it is a Decimal Fraction; as ·3, which is the same as $3\div10$, or $\frac{3}{10}$.

ROMAN NOTATION.

The Romans used seven letters; they were as follows:—I one, V five, X ten, L fifty, C one hundred, D five hundred, M one thousand.

I.....	1	XIX	19	ↀ	100
II	2	XX	20	ↀↀ	200
III	3	XXV	25	ↀↀↀ	300
IV	4	XXX	30	ↀↀↀↀ.....	400
V.....	5	XXXV ..	35	D or IↃ.....	500
VI	6	XL	40	Dↀ	600
VII	7	XLV	45	Dↀↀ	700
VIII....	8	L	50	Dↀↀↀ	800
IX	9	LV.....	55	Dↀↀↀↀ	900
X	10	LX.....	60	M or CIↃ	1,000
XI	11	LXV	65	MM	2,000
XII	12	LXX	70	IↃↃ or V̄	5,000
XIII ..	13	LXXV ..	75	V̄I.....	6,000
XIV....	14	LXXX ..	80	X̄ or ↀIↃↃ	10,000
XV	15	LXXXV ..	85	IↃↃↃ.....	50,000
XVI....	16	XC.....	90	C̄ or ↀↀIↃↃↃ .	100,000
XVII ..	17	XCV	95	M.Dↀↀↀ.LVI	1856
XVIII ..	18				

OBSERVE.—In Roman figures, as often as a character is repeated, so many times will its value be increased. A letter bearing a less value than the one before which it is placed, is deducted from the value of the latter; as, I (one) put before X (ten), diminishes the ten by one, leaving nine; but a less character after a greater increases the former by the amount of the latter. When Ↄ is affixed to a letter, its value is increased ten times; C and Ↄ set one at each end of X, show that the number is 10 times greater than X (ten). A line over any increases it 1000 times.

THE ART OF COMPOSITION

INTRODUCTION.

It has been a matter of complaint from most writers on the art of Composition, that the world shows an inclination to undervalue their labours, from a notion that rules on the subject are nearly useless; that, in fact, excellence in composition is rather a natural than an acquired gift. That such a notion is in a great degree erroneous, a very little consideration would be sufficient to show; and, indeed, it never could have obtained currency but among the unthinking, who overlook the obvious distinction, that, in strictness, an art of composition has to deal not so much with ideas as with the words in which they are clothed. The business of this little treatise is to furnish hints for the guidance of those who are not wanting in ideas, but are deficient in facility of expression. That such treatises are useful, is satisfactorily proved by the example of classical antiquity. The structure of the Greek and Roman languages is pre-eminently favourable to the display of the graces that are to be obtained from a choice arrangement of words; and so far were those acknowledged masters of the science

from despising such help to the tyro as may be afforded from a system of rules, that treatises on the art of composition were not only abundant in number, but their profoundest thinkers and most accomplished men of taste deem themselves well employed in the authorship of them.

The most plausible objection to the employment of exercises in composition, is one founded on their abuse rather than on their use. The subjects proposed for the pupil's practice are too often above his intellect—subjects of which he has no knowledge and in which he has little interest. This objection is so excellently met by a late author, and the source of the evil so clearly pointed out, that we cannot do better than quote his precise words :—

It commonly happens that an exercise composed with diligent care by a young student, though it will have cost him far more pains than a *real* letter written by him to his friends, on subjects that interest him, will be greatly inferior to it. On the *real occasions* of after-life (I mean, when the object proposed is not to fill up a sheet, a book, or hour, but to communicate his thoughts, to convince, or persuade)—on these real occasions, for which such exercises were designed to prepare him, he will find that he writes both better and with more facility than on the *artificial* occasion, as it may be called, of composing a declamation ;—that he has been attempting to learn the easier by practising the harder. But what is worse, it will often happen that such exercises will have formed a habit of stringing together empty commonplaces and vapid declamations,—of multiplying words, and spreading out the matter thin,—of composing in a stiff and artificial and frigid manner: and that this habit will, more or less, cling through life to one who has been thus trained, and will infect all his future compositions.—*Whately's Elements of Rhetoric.*

Care, then, must be given, that the earlier compositions of the pupil should be derived, if possible, from real occurrences. If based on a suppositious theme, it is clear that the tyro has not only the task of finding words, but of inventing his subject also. Take a letter from one intelligent lad to another of his own standing, and you will find that he conveys an impression of such topics as are suitable to their age, in language easy and natural; exhibiting a mental proportion to the full-grown man something in the ratio of their physical development. Set the boy on a theme whose subject shall be some moral axiom, and all will be unnatural and turgid, as if he were masquerading in buckles and a bag-wig. When youths are destined for the bar or the pulpit, indeed, theme-writing is to be viewed in a somewhat different light, since it will then have a double object—not only as a practice in composition, but as an effort in the art of reasoning—an exercise in logic no less than in rhetoric. But for that far wider class for whom this little Guide is intended—for such as demand only a readiness in composition which may subserve the usual business of life—a different course should be pursued.

TRANSCRIPTION.

We would recommend, then, instead of theme-writing, that the tyro should habituate himself to the use of his pen in the following way:—Let him read carefully a passage from some work of reputation—historical or narrative, in preference to anything of the didactic or essay kind,—let him read it over twice, or oftener if necessary, to impress the facts in his recollection; then, after a space has intervened sufficient for him to have forgotten the principal portion of the phraseology, so that his version shall not be a mere act of memory, let him proceed to write down the incident in his own words. A comparison with the original will prove his best master in the art of composition. Let him observe first in what instances he has made the sentence perplexed, ambiguous, or contradictory,—in what he has failed to convey the meaning of his original. Let all such faults be attended to, before any defect in harmony or elegance is amended; for in the documents of real life, clearness and perspicuity are the essentials. The selection for transcription should be made with reference to the student's age and intellectual progress: the book should be rather below than above him. Every idea contained should be amply within his grasp; he must not expect that he can interpret in language what is unintelligible to him in thought. As he finds himself advance, works of a higher class should be chosen; narrative may be laid aside, and an argu-

mentative subject taken up, which will serve to develop a different order of faculty. It will be found also an excellent practice to keep a kind of diary—not a dry catalogue of dates or a string of gossip, but a record of anything remarkable which may occur to the writer personally; and especially a record of the train of thought arising either from such circumstance, or from the perusal of a book, the listening to a sermon or lecture, a concert, &c. Every thinking man, for want of such a memorandum, has had to regret the loss of ideas that some future period makes him conscious can never be recovered, the clue once being lost. In that singular mixture of sound English sense in matters of business and vile latitudinarianism in morals, *Lord Chesterfield's Letters to his Son*, the young Stanhope, then on his travels, is advised to keep a book for the purpose of noting matters of this kind, in a passage curious as giving considerable antiquity to what is with us of very modern introduction; curious, too, as showing that after a century the ordinary use, as well as the name, remain unchanged. Writing, Feb. 16, 1748, he says, "You would do well to keep a blank paper book, which the Germans call an *Album*; and there, instead of desiring, as they do, every fool they meet with to scribble something, write down all these things as soon as they come to your knowledge."

Language by the pen will be learnt, as was language by the tongue in infancy, only by continued practice. Day by day the student will find that he comes nearer to the standard of his author in the process of transcription we have recommended; and so also will he find an increasing facility in commit-

ting to paper those ideas which he may consider worth the pains of preservation. The old authorities agree in little but the one standard direction, "Practice, practice." One of the earliest writers on the subject in our tongue, "Rare" Ben Jonson, in his *Discoveries*, thus quaintly lays down certain excellent rules, which it was hardly fair in him to class under such a title, since a large portion is to be found nearly word for word in Quintilian :—

> For a man to write well, there are required three necessaries,—to read the best authors; observe the best speakers; and *much exercise* of his own style. In style, to consider what ought to be written; and after what manner: he must first think and excogitate his matter; then choose his words, and examine the weight of either. Then take care, in placing and ranking both matter and words, that the composition be comely; and to do this with diligence, *and often*. No matter how slow the style be at first, so it be laboured and accurate: seek the best, and be not glad of the forward conceits or first words that offer themselves to us; but judge of what we invent, and order what we approve. Repeat often what we have formerly written. * * * * *
> So did the best writers in their beginnings; they improved upon themselves by care and industry. They did nothing rashly. They obtained first to write well, and then custom made it easy and a habit. By little and little, their matter showed itself to them more plentifully; their words answered, their composition followed; and all, as in a well-ordered family, presented itself in place. So that the sum of all is,—ready writing makes not good writing, but good writing brings on ready writing.

The student, though sensible he has fallen below the author from whom he is transcribing, will, perhaps, be unable to detect very accurately the quality in which he is most deficient. And for his

assistance in this respect, we shall proceed to point out what qualities it should be his aim to acquire, and what defects he is more particularly to avoid.

It has pleased our predecessors on composition to divide styles into the concise, the diffuse, the nervous, the feeble, the vehement, the plain, the neat, the graceful, the florid, the simple, the affected, &c., with, as we conceive, considerable labour to themselves and little benefit to their readers. We would therefore advise following the directions of Archbishop Whately, that attention be given to three points,—Perspicuity, Energy, and Elegance. Of these, the first is the most generally important.

PERSPICUITY.

Perspicuity, or clearness and propriety of expression, demands, above all, that the writer should himself possess clear notions on the subject of which he is about to treat. If his own ideas are confused or undecided, his style will probably partake of the same defects. Distinct notions are most likely to insure distinct language. Talleyrand, indeed, said, that speech was given to man that he might possess the faculty of concealing his thoughts; but in writing, perspicuity must always be the chief object, since attempts at mystification will be immediately seen through. In the present day, moreover, no reader expects to be at the pains of casting his eye twice over a sentence ere

he can be master of its meaning. We must not be content with the endeavour to be understood, but must render it impossible that we should be *mis*-understood.

PURITY AND PROPRIETY.

Perspicuity has been said to be dependent on three qualities,—purity, propriety, and precision. The two first of these may seem to be identical; but the distinction is by no means difficult. Purity of style demands the use of words and phrases that are strictly idiomatic—that have been recognized as a portion of the English language by the usage of the best authorities; rejecting such as are novel importations, obsolete, new-coined, or unsanctioned. Propriety of style implies the choice of words most suitable for the ideas we desire to convey. A style may be free from vulgarisms, from un-English idioms, or unwarranted combinations of words, and yet be wanting in propriety. The author may have selected words too grave and ponderous for his subject; or, on the other hand, have detracted from the dignity of his theme by the application of low or trifling expressions. His sentences may be made up of words and phrases to be found in the purest exemplars of the English tongue; and yet want of taste or experience may render the *ensemble* a mass of patchwork. Precept can do little for the student with reference to the ingredient second on our list. "Therein the patient must minister to himself," by the cultivation of his sense in the perusal of the best examples.

Purity also demands a sufficiency of grammatical

knowledge. Of course, this little treatise supposes its readers to possess that sufficiency; and the demand is very moderate. A professor of dancing would not be considered as exacting, who required that, at least, his intending pupils should be able to walk; for as walking may be considered the alphabet of motion, so grammar is the very A, B, C of correct composition. It is no result of any peculiar difficulty that the English language is so often, even at the present day, written and spoken with inaccuracy, for the grammar is perhaps easier than that of any other civilized language, ancient or modern. Indeed, it was formerly objected that the language was destitute of grammar; as we learn from Sir Philip Sidney's *Defence of Poesy*,—"Another will say, it wanteth grammar. Nay, truly, it hath that praise, that it wants not grammar; for grammar it might have, but it needs it not, being so easy in itself, and so void of those cumbersome differences of cases, genders, moods, and tenses; which, I think, was a piece of the Tower of Babylon's curse, that a man should be put to school to learn his mother tongue."

GRAMMATICAL NICETIES.

It may be of some importance to warn the inexperienced against being led away by grammatical niceties and quibbles; for there has sprung up of late years a class of writers who seek to trammel our native English by systems of rules derived from languages of an entirely different genius. Where there are flexible terminations to the nouns and verbs, and accordant variations in other parts of

speech, as in the classical and many modern tongues, the grammar is a thing fixed and almost immutable, and therefore demands a very strict observance. But to the English language the remark of Archbishop Whately is pre-eminently applicable, that "correct use is not founded on grammar, but grammar on correct use." And if it were necessary to produce further authority for this axiom, a most unexceptionable one has recently been published,—that of the late Lord Holland, whose own natural abilities and acquirements were refined by unbroken intercourse, throughout a long life, with intellects of the highest order and the most cultivated taste. An acute fault-finder had discovered what he considered to be an error in grammar in the address written by Lord Byron for the opening of Drury-Lane Theatre, on its re-erection after the fire. On being appealed to, Lord Holland wasted no time on the refutation of a quirk, but was content to produce an authority from Shakspeare, adding, "The fact is, these grammarians hand down rules from other languages or from their own theories, and then endeavour to reduce our English tongue to their arbitrary standard, instead of making good idiomatic writers their rule." Let our reader then make himself master of the few indispensable rules of grammar relating to the agreement of the verb with the noun, the relative with the antecedent, &c., and let him leave the subtle refinements of the subjunctive, and so forth, to professed grammarians; whose punctilios, if he attempt to observe them, will but plunge him into doubt and difficulty. Some zealots of the class we are speaking of have even gone so far as to deny the English language the

power of making compound words, and have insisted on *hands-ful, spoons-ful,* though the difference in the orthography of the final syllable (*ful,* not ful*l*) might have proved to them our assertion of the right exercised by every other language—that of making compounds, possessing in all respects the attributes of the simple words of which they are formed. Such men are traitors to their mother-tongue, and labour to inflict on us the whole measure of "the Tower of Babylon's curse."

Yet it must be remembered that gross errors in grammar can never be pardoned in the present day. Great names even of the last century permitted themselves a carelessness that our present polish will not suffer; and a man guilty in this respect would probably be set down for a person of so low an origin as never to have received the commonest rudiments of education. We were lately grieved to find the following words enclosed in a circular, soliciting pecuniary aid for a most praiseworthy purpose:—

> The liberty of addressing a circular may be pardoned. The want of these institutions *are* [is] so felt amongst the poor colliers: no other means of *getting* them than by the assistance of the benevolent.

We fear the application met with very moderate support; for the grammatical and orthographical errors in so small a compass must have thrown doubts on the discretion and even respectability of the really well-meaning applicant.

Here are samples of the inaccuracies into which inexperienced writers are most easily betrayed:—

> James paid a third more than William, who had pro-

mised more in that very proportion than *him* [than he—had promised].

It we can find time, you and I may as well go as *them*, [they].

He *whom* ye pretend reigns in Heaven, is so far from protecting the miserable sons of men, that he perpetually delights to blast the sweetest flowerets in the garden of Hope.—*Hawkesworth's Adventurer.*

It should be, "He who," *who* being the nominative case to *reigns;* but "He who ye pretend" sounds harsh and inelegant, and the wish to avoid that blemish was no doubt the cause of the *lapsus.* The more elegant phrase would be, "He whom ye pretend *to reign.*"

Who [whom] should I meet but our old friend?

Examples of false grammar might, however, be extended to any length; and to be really useful, should be abundant. If the tyro be conscious of his ignorance on the point, let him at once go through *Murray's Exercises,* with the assistance of a master or the *Key.* If his errors arise merely from want of practice, steady application to transcription will both cure the defect and advance his own powers in composition.

PRECISION.

Precision is the third and most important ingredient in a perspicuous style. This quality implies the elision of all superfluous words, retaining only such as will serve to present an exact copy of the writer's ideas; and the more distinct and definite his thoughts, the greater will be the clearness of

his language. Looseness of style, the opposite of the attainment we are speaking of, generally results from employing a superabundance of words. Dr. Irving, in his *Elements of Composition*, which will be a very serviceable book to those who may desire to consult a larger treatise, has the following well-expressed sentences on this point:—

> Feeble writers employ a multitude of words to make themselves understood, as they imagine, more distinctly: but instead of accomplishing this purpose, they only bewilder their readers. They are sensible that they have not caught an expression calculated to convey their precise meaning; and therefore they endeavour to illustrate it by heaping together a mass of ill-consorted phrases. The image which they endeavour to present to our mind is always viewed double; and no double image can be viewed distinctly. When an author tells me of his hero's *courage* in the day of battle, the expression is precise, and I understand it fully. But if, for the sake of multiplying words, he should afterwards extol his *fortitude*, my thoughts immediately begin to waver between these two attributes. In thus endeavouring to express one quality more strongly, he introduces another. *Courage* resists danger; *fortitude* supports pain.

It must, however, be borne in mind, that precision may be carried to too great an extent, and that different subjects require different degrees of this quality. Extreme precision may induce a dry and barren style; too much pruning may deprive a composition of all copiousness and ornament, things which the matter in hand may properly admit of or even require. This failing may be frequently noticed in some of the more serious pieces of Dean Swift.

It is important, also, for the writer to bear in

remembrance, that in most cases the reader is not to be supposed so thoroughly acquainted with the subject as is the author. From inattention to this, many sentences appear quite intelligible to the latter, that the former may find exceedingly intricate and puzzling. The author has his design clearly before him; he knows at the beginning of his sentence the exact idea he desires to convey, and is apt to forget that the reader may not fall into the same train of thought with himself, or may never have experienced the perceptions necessary for pursuing it. Thus it will sometimes happen, that persons do not treat perspicuously of subjects with which they possess the most intimate acquaintance; from the fact that they do not perceive the necessity of explaining fully and copiously certain points which, from long acquaintance, have taken in their eyes the position of self-evident truths.

AMBIGUITY.

Ambiguity is one of the most common defects in the compositions of the unpractised. And this they find the more difficult to be guarded against, since the most severe observance of the rules of grammar is no protection against this fault, though it be one of a fatal nature. In Greek and Latin, the construction of a sentence is easily discovered by the varying terminations of the words, according to mood or tense, number, case, or gender. In English we have no such help, and the relations of the words or members of a sentence are defined by the place in which they stand. Hence it should be

borne in mind, that those words or members most closely related should be as near in position as is consistent with elegance and harmony, that their mutual connection may be unmistakable.

An improper position of the adverb is a frequent cause of ambiguity. Thus—

The fourth Duke of Beaufort was, if I remember rightly, a great collector of paintings, at least.

The position of the *at least* gives a very different turn to the meaning from that intended by the author. The sentence would be better—"Was at least, if I remember rightly." Generally speaking, the adverb should be in proximate collocation with the word whose sense it is intended to modify.

Men get into a habit of using the adverb in composition as carelessly as they do in common conversation; forgetting that in the latter, the emphasis, the eye, the gesture, are sure to convey the proper stress, and render the meaning unavoidable. But in writing, where these helps will be wanting, greater accuracy is requisite.

The connection of the thought should be strictly adhered to, and no clause be suffered to intervene between portions which naturally should flow on. Perspicuity can in no way be so grossly violated as by the separation of those members of a sentence which are intimately connected.

It is folly to pretend to arm ourselves against the accidents of life, by heaping up treasures, which nothing can protect us against but the good providence of our Heavenly Father.

Here we are told, that it is the "heaping up of treasures," that no man can protect himself against

—an assertion which will have equal novelty and interest for many of our readers. If we alter the construction, the true meaning will appear—"It is folly to pretend, by heaping up treasures, to arm ourselves," &c.

The management of the relative pronoun, where various antecedents are referred to in the same period, is a point of great delicacy. Thus, the following sentence is a perfect enigma:—

The Earl of Falmouth and Mr. Coventry were rivals, *who* should have the most influence with the Duke, *who* loved the Earl best, but thought the other the wiser man, *who* supported Penn, *who* disobliged all the courtiers, even against the Earl, *who* contemned Penn as a fellow of no sense.—*Clarendon.*

Without a recollection of the contents of several preceding pages, the passage is perfectly unintelligible.

A new circumstance should never be interposed between the two principal members of a period, as it will then be doubtful to which of the two it refers.

The Knight, seeing his habitation reduced to so small a compass, and himself in a manner shut out of his own house, *upon the death of his mother,* ordered all the apartments to be flung open, and exorcised by his chaplain.—*The Spectator.*

This may either imply, that upon the death of his mother the knight was shut out of his own house, or that immediately on her loss he ordered all his apartments to be exorcised. As the latter was the author's meaning, the sentence should have stood thus:—"Seeing his habitation reduced to so small a compass, and himself in a manner shut out

of his own house, the knight, upon the death of his mother, &c."

Ambiguities of this nature may be frequently removed by care in the punctuation, as will be shown when we are treating of that head; but there is a peculiar beauty in a clear and perspicuous arrangement of words, which mere artifices of punctuation can never confer.

UNITY.

Unity in the construction of a sentence forms no inconsiderable part of perspicuity. Some portion of this quality is absolutely necessary in all compositions; since there must always be some leading principle to link together their component parts; and the same principle should also prevail in the separate sentences composing the whole.

The clauses of a sentence should have an intimate connection with each other; and that connection should never be broken by the introduction of thoughts which are irrelevant to the subject of the sentence, or which had better be the subject of a separate period. This error is very remarkable in the following passage from Middleton's *Life of Cicero*:—

> In this uneasy state, both of his public and private life, Cicero was oppressed by a new and cruel affliction, the death of his beloved Tullia; which happened soon after her divorce from Dolabella, whose manners and humours were entirely disagreeable to her.

The purpose of the sentence is to record the

death of Tullia, and the consequent addition to the father's troubles. The time of the event is next pointed out, and without impropriety: but the character of Dolabella is matter altogether extraneous, and breaks the unity of the sentence, by calling the attention of the reader to a subject perfectly distinct from that to which his thoughts were directed.

LENGTH OF SENTENCES.

It will be found an excellent rule for the unpractised composer, to beware of making his sentences too long. A cautious observance of this maxim will go far to prevent his lapsing into several of the faults we have just been speaking of. Indeed, the style of the present age seems considerably opposed to those lengthened periods which are to be met with in our standard writers of the last and seventeenth centuries. More recently, however, this mode has been pushed to the extreme of abruptness; so that in the length of sentences, some consideration should be given to the quality of the audience appealed to, whether illiterate or educated, more or less plain or refined. Mr. O'Connell, in many of his manifestoes, knowing well, no doubt, the style that would achieve most with those he addressed, employed a continuation of short sentences; and the late Mr. Cobbett also, no mean judge of the effective in language, frequently adopted this manner. Yet, we think we have noticed that the first-mentioned gentleman afterwards somewhat lengthened his periods; feeling, perhaps, that his curter method

palled on repetition. Certain it is, that in writings addressed to large masses, a judicious employment of short hortatory or admonitory periods will tell well; but the easiness of the style may betray the less skilful into a tiresome prodigality in this respect, and they will succeed in being nauseous when they aim at being emphatic. In narrative composition, more especially, nothing can be more fatiguing than a constant repetition of short sentences.

Still, in the length of his sentences, every writer will use that latitude most agreeable to himself; the experienced alone being cautioned, that an ambitious attempt at long flowing periods is very likely to betray him into error. In general, a proper admixture of long and short sentences will prove a great relief to the reader, preventing on the one hand the jerking, disjunctive sensation of the latter, and avoiding the rumbling, heavy tediousness of the former. The following is an example of a judicious use of what the elder critics used to call the *style coupé*, where the idea is evolved by a series of independent propositions, each forming a complete sentence. Hume is giving reasons why "the liberty of the press is so essential to our mixed government." The inner sentences form our example:—

We need not dread from this liberty any such ill consequences as followed from the harangues of the popular demagogues of Athens and tribunes of Rome. A man reads a book or pamphlet alone and coolly. There is none present from whom he can catch the passion by contagion. He is not hurried away by the force and energy of action. And should he be wrought up to never [ever] so seditious a humour, there is no violent

resolution presented to him, by which he can immediately vent his passion. The liberty of the press, therefore, however abused, can scarce ever excite popular tumults or rebellion.—*Hume's Essays.*

Gibbon will afford us an excellent example, and almost at random, of the flowing, harmonious, and well-rounded period:—

Something of a doubtful mist still hangs over these Highland traditions; nor can it be entirely dispelled by the most ingenious researches of modern criticism: but if we could with safety indulge the pleasing supposition that Fingal lived, and that Ossian sung, the striking contrast of the situation and manners of the contending nations might amuse a philosophic mind. The parallel would be little to the advantage of the more civilized people, if we compared the unrelenting revenge of Severus with the generous clemency of Fingal; the timid and brutal cruelty of Caracalla, with the bravery, the tenderness, the elegant genius of Ossian; the mercenary chiefs, who, from motives of fear or interest, served under the imperial standard, with the freeborn warriors, who started to arms at the voice of the King of Morven; if, in a word, we contemplated the untutored Caledonians, glowing with the warm virtues of nature, and the degenerate Romans, polluted with the mean vices of wealth and slavery.

PARENTHESES.

Parentheses are now almost discarded, and very properly so. Even the best writers of what has been termed the Augustan age of English literature disfigured their compositions by the frequent use of these unsightly barriers to the free current of thought and language. It might be maintained that they are at best but an awkward way of in-

truding something which the writer is too idle or too clumsy to introduce in its proper place. Often, their contents might be referred to a note; more often they should form the subject of a separate sentence, or clause of a sentence. We shall endeavour to cull an example of the faulty and allowable employment of the parenthesis—only allowable, in any case—from Lord Bolingbroke, an author of whose *Idea of a Patriot King* Lord Chesterfield thus speaks: "I desire that you will read it over and over again, with particular attention to the style, and to all those beauties of oratory with which it is adorned. Till I read that book, I confess I did not know all the extent and powers of the English language." We have no misgivings now in referring the student to Lord Bolingbroke's political works. Those of his publications bearing on religious topics have long since met with that oblivion they so entirely deserved. They belonged to a school of infidelity which never took root in England, and which it is now impossible to revive.* But his political essays will always

* The two names, Bolingbroke and Chesterfield, incite us to quote a little passage that we stumbled on in the *Letters* of the "polite" Lord. He is giving news to his son (then envoy at the court of Dresden) of the latter's tutor, now an old man, and he writes thus:—"Poor Harte is very ill, and condemned to the Hotwells at Bristol. * * * He is grown extremely devout, which I am very glad of, because that is always a comfort to the afflicted." Chesterfield was then himself [1765] a miserable invalid, passing the dregs of life in carrying what he terms an "old, shattered, and cold carcase," to and fro from London to the various watering-places. Who so sensitive a judge of what was "comfort to the afflicted!"

retain their place as models of clear and nervous English.

However savage our British ancestors may be represented by the Romans (whom the luxury of Greece and effeminacy of Asia had already corrupted), they certainly were a people of spirit and sense; who knew the ends of government, and obliged their governors to pursue those ends.—*Remarks on the History of England.*

Here you have a perfectly uncalled-for parenthesis, which only serves to distract the thought from the subject of the period—viz., one especial feature in the character of the Britons.

Few were the blemishes which may be thought to tarnish the lustre of this reign of Edward the Third. Few and short were the struggles between him and his people; for as he was fierce and terrible to his enemies, he was amiable and indulgent to his subjects. He not only observed the laws, but he made the sense of the nation in some measure a law to him. On this principle (in which, to a considering mind, there will appear as much wisdom as goodness), he removed a son, nay a favourite mistress, from court.—*Remarks on the History of England.*

A corrupt parliament, a degenerate nobility, a servile commonalty, will sacrifice anything to any prince; to a Richard the Second or an Edward the Third, equally and indiscriminately. But a free, a generous, a virtuous people (such as we may boast our ancestors were in those days) will sacrifice every thing, except liberty, to a prince like Edward the Third: and liberty is a sacrifice which a prince like him would never require at their hands. To him who would require it, they would sacrifice nothing.—*Ibid.*

Here the parenthesis is introduced without impropriety; though it may be remarked, that the modern style would most probably have avoided

it by a different method of punctuation—as by the use of the dash. So that, indeed, as will be shown hereafter, in the two last examples, the parenthesis is rather an error in the pointing than in the composition.

We shall conclude this branch of our subject by again impressing on the reader the utmost attention to perspicuity or clearness. Not only is it a quality demanded by the rules of composition, but it is the one quality particularly insisted on by the present age. There have been periods in the history of our literature, when men have attained a certain position merely from style—as being full of Latinity, possessing polish, or so forth. But that day is past. The public mind is more than ever materialized; and every man who now addresses the public must be sure, first, that he has *matter;* and his next care must be, that his matter be plainly and clearly conveyed. To this end, and in order that the novice may not be discouraged, and confound deficiency of matter with incapacity for composition, we must again press a continued application to the practice of transcription from memory, as recommended before To those who know enough of Latin, and for that larger class acquainted with French, the constant habit of translation will prove of incalculable advantage. An excellent judge has left on record his choice of this system for the formation of his own style: "I remember, that even when I was at Cambridge, whenever I read pieces of eloquence—and they were my chief study—whether ancient or

modern, I used to write down the striking passages, and then translate them, as well and as elegantly as I could; if Latin or French, into English—if English, into French. This, which I practised for some years, not only improved and formed my style, but imprinted on my mind and memory the best thoughts of the best authors. The trouble was little, but the advantage I have experienced was great." Let the student, we insist, practise transcription or translation but for a week, and he will be astonished at the increased facility he will have gained.

In a work just published, *Contributions to the Eclectic Review, by John Foster*, the author of *Essays on Decision of Character*, and other well-known works, that tasteful and very able critic lays down so admirably the characteristics of the style to be envied, that we cannot resist an extract. He is speaking of Mr. Fraser Tytler, known on the Scottish bench as Lord Woodhouselee; and to such as may be at a loss, we name one of that author's works, the "Elements of History," as an excellent transcription-book:—

Lord Woodhouselee is an able and practised thinker, possessed of ample stores of learning and general knowledge, well acquainted with the history, the schools, and the questions of philosophy; a discriminative judge of character; and writing in a style which we deem a finished example of what may be called transparent diction. It is so singularly lucid, so free from all affected rhetoric and artificial turns of phrase—so perfectly abstracted, with the exception of a law term or two, that we have never viewed thoughts through a purer medium. It is so pure and perfect, that we can read on a considerable way without our attention being

arrested by the medium; it is as if there were nothing, if we may so express ourselves, between us and the thought. And we are made to think of the medium, after some time, only by the reflection how very clearly we have apprehended the sense, even when relating to the uncouth subjects of law or the abstruse subjects of metaphysics.

It will be proper, also, to caution the student, that the book he fixes on for this exercise should be of a tolerably recent date. For there are many defects of style which belong rather to an age than to any individual author. The examples of faulty composition which have been selected by our predecessors are culled not from obscure names, but from authors still holding the highest rank; and their writings are vitiated more often by forms of expression now grown obsolete than by positive solecisms. For those who favour this book with their notice, it will generally be of consequence that their style should at least be that of the present time; wherefore, history or narrative by an established modern author—the more recent the better—should furnish the subject of the beginner's first essays.

With a little pains, or with the assistance of a judicious friend, our reader may select his transcription-book, with a view to the prosecution of future and more important aims; and exercise in composition may be blended with professional improvement. In Divinity, models of style are particularly abundant; the lawyer cannot hesitate whilst he has *Blackstone;* and among the records of the medical art, are to be found many disquisitions equally scholar-like and elegant. To those

who desire to imbibe a manner distinct from anything that bears the impress of professed authorship, but possesses the refined ease and unaffected polish of the English gentleman of our own day, we would recommend Lord Carnarvon's *Portugal and Galicia*.

OF ENERGY.

THE student having attained the power of expressing his thoughts with clearness and precision, will next desire to add to his style Energy and Vivacity; so "as to comprehend everything that may conduce to stimulate attention,—to impress strongly on the mind the arguments adduced,—to excite the imagination, and to arouse the feelings."

To this end, clearness and precision are absolutely requisite, but are insufficient alone. For a sentence may possess clearness and precision, and yet, by some unfavourable circumstance in its structure, may be destitute of that strength or vivacity of expression which a more happy arrangement would have produced.

VERBIAGE.

Redundant words and phrases should be especially avoided. These may not interfere with perspicuity, but are always irreconcilable with strength. Words or phrases that add nothing to the sense or clearness must weaken the force of a

sentence. The spirit of the thought is diluted by its transmission through a mass of verbal superfluity.

A principal cause of languid verbosity is the injudicious use of adjectives and epithets. When used sparingly and with judgment, they have a powerful influence in enlivening the expression; but a profusion of them has an effect directly opposite. Then, they lengthen the sentence without adding proportionate vigour; they betray a violent effort to say something dazzling or uncommon. This kind of lavishness is one of the principal faults in the rich and elegant style of Gibbon. Some excellent observations on the proper use of the adjective are made by Dr. Irving:—

> Adjectives, however, are not always to be regarded as mere epithets. Whatever is necessary for ascertaining the import of either a noun or a verb, whether by adding to the sense or limiting it, is something more than an epithet, according to the common acceptation of the term. Thus when I say "the glorious sun," the word *glorious* is an epithet; but when I say "the meridian sun," the word meridian is not barely an epithet; it makes a real addition to the signification, by denoting the sun to be in the station which he always occupies at noon.—A similar distinction is to be made between adverbs that are absolutely necessary for the expression of an idea, and those which are introduced for the sole purpose of embellishment.

CONNECTIVES.

Particular attention should be paid to the use of copulatives, relatives, and all the particles employed in transition and connection. They are the

joints and hinges on which all sentences turn, and the gracefulness and strength of a sentence must in a great measure depend on their judicious introduction. And yet, as every author will be found to have a mode of his own in this respect, it is almost impossible to lay down particular rules: the student must be directed by his own observation of the practice of standard writers, and by his own trials of the different effects produced by different applications of those particles.

The separating a preposition from the noun which it governs is a thing hardly ever to be tolerated. How awkward to the eye and ear is the following:—

Socrates was invited *to*, and Euripides entertained *at*, his court.

Some writers have a practice of unnecessarily repeating the copulative particle *and*, which is both tedious and enfeebling. On the other hand, when the sentence is cumulative, and a stress is to be laid on each addition, a redundancy of copulatives is used with great effect.

Dining one day at an alderman's in the City, Peter observed him expatiating, after the manner of his brethren, in the praises of a sirloin of beef. "Beef," said the sage magistrate, "is the king of meat. Beef comprehends in it the quintessence of partridge, and quail, and venison, and pheasant, and plum-pudding, and custard."— *Swift's Tale of a Tub.*

ARRANGEMENT.

In arranging a sentence, the most important words ought to be placed in that situation in which they will make the strongest impression. In all sentences there are certain words of superior importance, and those words should stand in a conspicuous and distinguished place. Their position must vary with the nature of the sentence; perspicuity ever being studied in the first place. Sometimes, the paramount words are placed in the beginning of the sentence; at others, it is of advantage to suspend the meaning for a while, and then unfold it completely at the end of the period.

Some authors have endeavoured to assume for the English tongue a degree of that inversion of words permitted by the genius of the classical languages; but in this they have almost always signally failed. With us, such an inverted order is forced and constrained; and the unnatural construction is liable to result in obscurity. Here, however, is an instance where the inverted style is forcibly and elegantly adopted:—

> The praise of judgment Virgil has justly contested with him, but his invention remains yet unrivalled.—*Pope's Preface to Homer.*

Sentences ought never to close with petty and inconsiderable words. There may indeed be periods in which the stress lies chiefly on adverbs, prepositions, or other words of the same kind; and in that case they should hold a prominent place:

out a sentence should never conclude with prepositions which mark the cases of nouns, or are combined with verbs. For besides the want of dignity resulting from a final monosyllable, it is disagreeable to be left pausing on a word which of itself cannot produce any idea, or present any picture to the fancy. Take an example from Warton:—

But it is absurd to think of judging either Ariosto or Spenser, by precepts which they did not attend to.

CONCISENESS AND DIFFUSENESS.

It has already been observed that a writer's manner of thinking will be sure to leave its impress on his style; and, perhaps, in no attributes will the thought affect the style more remarkably than in those of conciseness and diffuseness.

A concise writer compresses his thoughts into the fewest possible words; he employs none but such as are most significant, and he lops off every vague and redundant expression. He studies compactness and strength, rather than grace and harmony. His sentences are constructed with a view to the utmost precision; and they are frequently designed to suggest more to the reader's imagination than they directly express. On the other hand, a diffuse writer places his ideas in a variety of lights, and gives the reader every possible assistance for understanding them completely. He is not solicitous to express them at once in their full extent, because he generally repeats the impression; and what he wants in strength, he

proposes to supply by copiousness. His periods naturally run out into some length: and having room for ornament, he is somewhat lavish of its use.

It must be evident that different subjects require different sorts of style; and even different parts of the same composition demand a different manner of treatment. The individual bent of mind, also, will be sure to impress some predominant character on the style. Wherefore, without laying down rules which might only serve to trammel the natural bias, it will be sufficient to observe, that conciseness and diffuseness have each their peculiar advantages. The extreme of the former may degenerate into abruptness and obscurity, and is apt to introduce a style too pointed, and bordering on the epigrammatic. The extreme of diffuseness becomes weak and languid, and is fatiguing to the reader: the author is no longer diffuse but prolix.

Speeches require a more copious style than books. When the whole meaning must be caught from the mouth of the speaker, without the advantage which books afford, of pausing at pleasure, and reviewing what appears obscure, great conciseness is always to be avoided. A flowing copious style, therefore, is of great advantage to the public speaker; taking care that the matter be not diluted with verbiage to the extent of feebleness and *ennui*. On the other hand, in written compositions, a certain degree of conciseness is a great acquisition. It appears lively—keeps up the attention—makes a stronger impression—and gratifies the mind by supplying more exercise to

the reader's faculties. In narrative, a concise comprehensive style is a great ornament. A judicious selection of striking circumstances clothed in nervous and terse language produces a delightful effect. In addressing the passions, the concise manner is to be preferred: when the imagination and heart are once enlisted, they supply many particulars to greater advantage than an author can display them. But when we address the understanding—in all matters of reasoning, explication, and instruction, a more free and diffuse manner will be most successful. One of our predecessors thus lays down the axiom: "When you would captivate the fancy, or engage the heart, be concise; when you would inform the understanding, be more copious and diffuse. The understanding moves more slowly, and requires to be assisted in its operations."

But since it often becomes necessary to *in*sist and *per*sist on particular points, it is important to have some rules the observance of which may enable us to be diffuse without being feeble, to be copious and yet concise. And directions to this end are excellently delivered by Archbishop Whately:—

The best general rule for avoiding the disadvantages both of conciseness and prolixity, is to employ *repetition:* to repeat,—that is, the same sentiment and argument in *many different forms of expression;* each in itself brief, but all, together, affording such an expansion of the sense to be conveyed, and so detaining the mind upon it, as the case may require. [And he adds in a note]—It is remarked by anatomists, that the nutritive quality is not the only requisite in food;—that a certain degree of *distention* of the stomach is required, to enable it to

act with its full powers, and that it is for this reason, hay and straw must be given to horses, as well as corn, in order to supply the necessary bulk. Something analogous to this takes place with respect to the generality of minds; which are incapable of thoroughly digesting and assimilating what is presented to them, however clearly, in a very small compass. Many a one is capable of deriving that instruction from a moderate-sized volume, which he could not receive from a very small pamphlet, even more perspicuously written, and containing everything that is to the purpose. It is necessary that the attention should be detained for a certain time on the subject: and persons of unphilosophical mind, though they can attend to what they read or hear, are unapt to dwell upon it in the way of subsequent meditation.

No fault is so common to young and aspiring writers as that of pompous verbosity; and therefore the attainment of conciseness and energy is a point of which the student should never lose sight. For though perspicuity and energy are different qualities, certain it is that a writer can hardly be energetic without being tolerably perspicuous. No strong impression can be made on the mind of the reader but by words whose meaning is clear. Yet many inexperienced writers hope to achieve energy and clearness at the same time by heaping together a number of contradictory images, which in reality obscure instead of illustrating each other. Their meaning is lost in a blaze of metaphor—they become "dark through excess of light." They follow a train of words rather than of thought; they string together a mass of striking phrases, which, however they may sometimes delight the ear, utterly overload and crush the *idea*. For example, an author thus attempts to

depict the moral effect on the soldier of the punishment of "flogging:"—

Thus he lives; time is but a tell-tale of his woes; and at last, in the cup of inebriety he seeks refuge from the storm, or, as he would term it, *drowns* his cares and his sorrows. For the bite of the tarantula there is an antidote: the moon wanes and becomes bright again; the rose fades under the influence of a meridian sun, but the evening breeze restores its fragrance and its freshness; the billows rage and are convulsed, yet subdue again into calm repose; but this poor degraded man's peace returns not to its chamber of rest.

This conglomeration of imagery serves to distract and not to concentrate the attention. To such writers was the admonition addressed, on revising their compositions—"Whenever you meet with anything you think particularly fine, strike it out." Neither must the author always content himself with the comparatively easy task of elision: he must do more—he must frequently be at the pains of recasting the entire sentence ere he can get rid of the redundancy. On this head we shall quote from Dr. Campbell's *Philosophy of Rhetoric*, a work recommended by very high authority as one "which does not, indeed, enjoy so high a degree of popular favour as Dr. Blair's, but is incomparably superior to it, not only in depth of thought and ingenious original research, but also in practical utility to the student."

The third and last fault I shall mention against vivid conciseness, is *verbosity*. This, it may be thought, coincides with the Pleonasm [superfluity] already discussed. One difference, however, is this,—in the pleonasm there are words which add nothing to the sense; in the verbose manner, not only single words, but whole

clauses, may have a meaning, and yet it were better to omit them, because what they mean is unimportant. Instead, therefore, of enlivening the expression, they make it languish. Another difference is, that in a proper pleonasm, a complete correction is always made by razing. This will not always answer in the verbose style: it is often necessary to alter as well as blot.

METAPHORS.

Quintilian regards it as a favourable presage in juvenile writers when their compositions display a redundancy of fancy; for, he argues, "facile remedium est ubertatis; sterilia nullo labore vincuntur." But if this redundancy be exhibited only in the words, not in the thought, it will be necessary that the writer should keep a tight rein on himself, and check, as much as possible, a habit which is sure to end in a style of tinselled affectation. This youthful exuberance is very apt to show itself in an extravagant use of metaphor: either pursuing the figure too far, or heaping together a mass of dissimilar and incongruous ideas, —in the style of the Hibernian orator, who exclaimed, "I smell a rat—I see it brewing in the storm—I'll crush it in the bud." In reality, there is nothing in which a skilful hand is more eminently shown than in the judicious use of this ornament. He is at liberty to collect his images from the various objects that surround him; but as the field of selection is ample, so is there great judgment required in the choice. Metaphors must be suited to the nature of the subject. There are some, for instance, which are allowable, nay beau-

tiful, in poetry, which it would be absurd to employ in prose; some may be graceful in orations, which would be very improper in historical or philosophical composition. A proper use of metaphor serves to add light to the expression and energy to the sentiment; but when unskilfully employed, it tends effectually to cloud the sense, and may even pervert the author's real meaning. This will happen not only where there is a mixture of discordant metaphors, but where the metaphorical style is too long continued, or too far pursued. Metaphor may then run into allegory, and allegory pass into enigma.

Where different metaphors are thrust into the same sentence, the grossest absurdity is a frequent result. A good rule has been suggested for testing the propriety of mixed metaphors—which is, to consider what sort of a figure they would present to the mind if exhibited upon canvas. But even where different metaphors in the same period are preserved distinct, the effect is unpleasant. The rapid transition distracts the mind; and the images are rendered too faint to produce any powerful effect upon the imgination.

It must be observed here, that for the purposes of this little treatise, the observations under this head of Metaphor must be taken to apply to the whole cognate class of figures—as tropes, allegories, &c., as our space will not permit us to be deeply critical on this branch of our subject.

For the various qualifications, then, of suitability to the subject and the parties addressed—for delicate tact in selecting the precise image which would please and impress most—for com-

pleteness and unity, there cannot be produced, perhaps, a more striking example of judicious metaphor than is to be found in Mr. Canning's allusion to the "ships in ordinary," in a speech delivered at Plymouth in 1823. His aim is to show his audience, that the pacific attitude of Great Britain as regarded the interference of France with the internal dissensions in Spain, was no proof of want of energy or power:—

The resources created by peace are means of war. In cherishing those resources, we but accumulate those means. Our present repose is no more a proof of inability to act, than the state in which I have seen those mighty masses that float in the waters above your town is a proof they are devoid of strength, and incapable of being fitted for action. You well know, gentlemen, how soon one of those stupendous masses, now reposing on their shadows in perfect stillness—how soon, upon any call of patriotism or of necessity, it would assume the likeness of an animated thing, instinct with life and motion—how soon it would ruffle, as it were, its swelling plumage—how quickly it would put forth all its beauty and its bravery, collect its scattered elements of strength, and awaken its dormant thunder. Such is one of those magnificent machines when springing from inaction into a display of its might: such is England herself, while, apparently passive and motionless, she silently concentrates the power to be put forth on an adequate occasion.

We shall give one example from Dr. Conyers Middleton, in which a simple figure is very elegantly introduced at the close. Professor Porson considered this, for elevation of thought and simplicity of expression, as the noblest passage in the English language:—

I persuade myself, that the life and faculties of man,

at the best short and limited, cannot be employed more rationally or laudably than in the search of knowledge; and especially of that sort which relates to our duty and conduces to our happiness. I look upon the discovery of anything which is true as a valuable acquisition to society; which cannot possibly hurt or obstruct the good effect of any other truth whatsoever: for they all partake of one common essence, and necessarily coincide with each other; and like the drops of rain, which fall separately into the river, mix themselves at once with the stream, and strengthen the general current.

In contrast, take this Report issued by a "Journeyman Trades' Benevolent Society" a short time since, which will show strikingly enough how easily an unpractised hand may be carried out of his depth, if he ventures on a stream of metaphor:—

The Directors have to congratulate you on the termination of the Society's first apprenticeship: it may be said almost to have attained its climax. Like the modest rose, this institution first reared its head, and its odour filled the land. The kindly dews of the succeeding summer nourished its roots, and the benign sun of Heaven shone upon it, improving its sweetness and increasing its strength; giving to its form all beauty and fair proportion, and preparing it for the broad and open field of the soil to which it was to be transplanted. Here it grew up to a stately tree, and its wide-spreading foliage was refreshed beneath the summer's sun. It braved the blasts of the coming winter, which gave majesty to its trunk, and might to its giant arms; and it may now be said to have taken up its position in the forest of the world, and become a proud rival to the lordly oak. How grateful, how encouraging is this! How sweet the perfume it exhales! How soft must it make the pillow! how calm the sleep! It breathes an odour which is borne on the winds of heaven—wafted

on the spicy gales of Arabia and the East Indies. It is carried over the proud waves of the broad Atlantic: it stimulates in the North—it invigorates in the South; for its supporters are to be met with at every point of the compass.

THE BIG-BOY STYLE.

In casting about for a model of energy, many a beginner has been misled by the style of Johnson. Now, Johnson is unquestionably an energetic writer, and would have been more uniformly so, had he been less attentive to a roundness and majestic sound in his sentences, and a pendulating balance of one clause with regard to another, that often leads him into redundancy. At first view it seems exceedingly easy to imitate this style, to those even who have no particle of thought to encase in the apparently tumid words; but such imitations are intolerable. They present, as it has been phrased, "all the nodosities of the oak without its roborification." And here we must venture to differ from Archbishop Whately, who lays down that Johnson's style is not a difficult one to acquire. "To string together substantives," he says, "connected by conjunctions, which is the characteristic of Johnson's style, is, in fact, the rudest and clumsiest mode of expressing our thoughts: we have only to find *names* for our ideas, and then put them together by connectives, &c." "Hoc opus, hic labor est"—this finding "names for our ideas." It must be remembered, that for a considerable portion of Johnson's life, he was either meditatively or actively engaged in the Herculean task of compiling

his dictionary; and this gave him such a thorough appreciation of the value of words, that he was enabled to express with nice precision, by the use of the noun and the verb, what others would have called in the aid of half a dozen auxiliaries to attain. Thus, when Johnson says, "Shakspeare approximates the remote, and familiarizes the wonderful," he may, perhaps, be only finding "names for ideas;" but he *does* find them, and says in a sentence what others would be hammering at for a paragraph. And so with his see-saw sentences, which give an idea of mock antithesis. The second clause is hardly ever really redundant, but, from his wonderful appreciation of the sense of words, does positively serve to define more strictly, to amplify or narrow, the intent of the preceding one. And this quality of precision has tested the claims of his imitators, and nearly all have been ludicrously wanting. Still, the beginner, especially if he be in any degree familiar with the Latin and Greek, is almost sure to be seduced into what he deems Johnsonian grandeur, when aiming at serious argument or a loftier elevation. His second clause is no explanation of the first, but its direct opposite refers to something not naturally connected with it, and thus the combination of the two leaves no definite idea on the reader's mind. The consequence is, that the sentences of the imitator often consist of a number of epithets or "names for ideas" that appear to have been borrowed from the memorials of the nearest cemetery. This sort of balderdash has been aptly called the "Big-boy style." Here is an example, from

a lately published character of Mary Queen of Scots:—

> The offices of religion engrossed a large share of her attention; and the wants and sufferings of the poor never failed of relief from the overflowing benevolence of her soul. Pious without bigotry; learned without pedantry; elegant and accomplished without frivolity; charitable without ostentation; majestic and queenly, yet familiar and condescending, she enchained the affections of all who saw her, and subdued even her enemies by the graces of her person and the perfections of her mind.

Even in the best hands, the Johnsonian style runs great danger of becoming tedious; and the measured and monotonous counter-balancing of clauses often ends in the farcical. Dr. Parr was one of the greatest of the followers of this school. He united amazing erudition to massive powers of thought; and yet his addiction to the see-saw manner could make him ridiculous when he most wished to be emphatic. We find the following anecdote in a very shrewd book published some twenty years since, called *The Political Primer*:—

> Dr. Parr formed the habit of analyzing words, so that he could tell the exact number of separate ideas which were conveyed by one term; and thus his precision became so great, that in bestowing an epithet, he never failed to abstract from the compound idea those simple notions which were not directly applicable to the object. In a moment of irritation with one of his military acquaintances, he said, "Sir, I think this of you—you're profuse, without being generous; you're a profligate, without the excuse of temperament; and a liar, without the merit of ingenuity; and if you have been brave in battle, 'twas the courage of a bravo, not of a cavalier."

This invective only amused its object, who took pleasu in repeating it to all his friends.

Read Johnson, then, and endeavour to cate something of his philological nicety; but bewar of attempting an imitation, which will most prc bably end in your becoming absurd. In the *Letter of Junius*, also, you will find a wonderful exactnes of phrase; and if you should take him as you model, you will not run so great a risk of lapsin into caricature as you would with the lexico grapher.

OBSOLETE AND NON-NATURALIZED WORDS.

Be sparing in the use of obsolete, foreign, new coined, or strangely-compounded words. Gene rally speaking, their effect is derogatory to energy Whatever seems to savour of affectation, o betrays an overstrained solicitude about terms destroys that feeling of earnestness which is n inconsiderable ingredient in energy. And her we cannot but notice, that many who object t the introduction of a Latin or Greek phrase a *pedantic*, are themselves guilty of a similar pe dantry with regard to French, or some othe modern language: whereas nothing can be mor offensive both to the eye and the mind than tha interlarding of foreign *italics* now so commonly met with in a certain class of light literature. It will be generally found that the author, in such cases, desires to convey a something he knows not precisely what, and adopts a phrase which has no very defined meaning to himself, and is not likely, therefore, to be more explicit to his reader.

There are some men, indeed, to whom the introduction of a strangely-compounded word is allowable. In their hands it possesses a quaintness which evidently is the natural offspring of a corresponding quaintness in themselves. Thus, when the Rev. Sydney Smith, in his epistles to the Transatlantic Repudiators, talked of "the plumeopicean robe of American controversy," the phraseology at once struck you as germane to the man—as personal as his gait or his accent. But any one else who may venture on its serious employment will deserve a "plumeopicean robe" himself—a critical "tarring and feathering."

TECHNICAL PHRASEOLOGY.

The use of technical phraseology, in writings addressed to the general public, should be avoided as much as possible; since its employment cannot but be unfavourable to energy. On the other hand, when addressing a particular class, in profession, art, or trade, the use of technical terms is not only unavoidable, but is perhaps to be recommended; as men almost always have a very clear and as it were visual sense of the meaning of those words that form the technology of their business.

SLANG PHRASES.

Of late years, greater toleration than could be wished has been allowed to a class of phrases that formerly found a rare access into the pages of polite literature; but from bad example, or from

a coarser public taste, that craves rather for pungent ideas than for delicacy of medium, this greater license makes it necessary to give a few cautions on the employment of what used to be designated "slang,"—a name which we have no disposition to soften, since even the appellation may deter the tyro from resorting to it. Certainly, very high and very ancient authority may be found for the occasional adoption of an unrefined phrase. Longinus says, that a vulgar expression is sometimes much more significant than an elegant one. And thence it is that each generation adds to the language some word that was at first used only in a "cant" sense, but whose pregnant meaning forces it into all companies and at last establishes for it a firm footing. Thus, in 1749, we have the polite Lord Chesterfield writing to his son, "Sir Charles Williams has *puffed* you (as the mob call it) here extremely." Two or three letters later we catch the obnoxious verb again, with the parenthetical note of "to use a low phrase;" but the word continues to be repeated, and we see that though my lord shook his head at first, significance had compelled himself and the rest of the polite world to admit into their vocabulary a word that in its origin was mere "slang." Many of these words or phrases derive their strength from being exceedingly pictorial. They positively place the action before the eye, and therefore are favourable to energy, however opposed to elegance. They are often taken from the technical language of a particular class, and this kind may be used on proper occasions with great effect; as witness Lord Stanley's trenchant

allusion to "thimble-rigging" some years since in the House of Commons. In political or partisan squibs, the introduction of such phrases may be properly allowed, though sparingly; for they are most undoubtedly a species of ornament that soon nauseates upon repetition. There is a still lower species of "slang" consisting of the "catch phrase of the day," in great vogue among the gods at the minor theatres, that we only mention to reprobate entirely; and which, as common sense is no ingredient in its concoction, is as destitute of energy as it is abhorrent to a cultivated ear.

ELEGANCE OR HARMONY.

ACCORDING to a great authority of the last century, "Style is the dress of thought, and a well-dressed thought, like a well-dressed man, appears to great advantage." Having secured, then, the two more important point of perspicuity and energy, the student should now bestow some pains on the polish and smoothness of his periods. Yet he is always to bear in mind, that if the polish deprive his sentence of any great degree of energy, however rugged, his pains had much better have been withheld.

It would be futile to attempt to lay down any system of rules as those by which elegance may certainly be acquired. It will be enough to impress this one axiom—that the ear must be diligently cultivated by the constant perusal of the best models in prose and verse. The poets of what

is called the Augustan age of English literature—Dryden and Pope particularly—will habituate the sense to a keen perception of harmonious cadency, and bring the student to recoil at once from whatever sound is harsh and grating. It will be found, we conceive, from the use and non-use of the best authorities—for what to avoid must be a portion of the beginner's task—that whatever words are difficult in pronunciation are proportionately harsh and painful to the ear. Vowels add softness, consonants strength, to the sound of words; and melody of language requires a due mixture of both, and will be injured by an excess of either. Long words are commonly more agreeable to the ear than monosyllables. They please by the succession of sounds which they present, and accordingly the most musical languages possess them in the greatest abundance. Among words of any length, those are the most musical which do not wholly consist either of long or short syllables, but contain a due admixture of both.

But care in the choice of words is merely the first portion of the task. However select and fluent may be each single word, yet if they be ill disposed, the music of an entire sentence will be wanting. The harmony of the period will depend on the proper distribution of its several members and the close or cadence of the whole. The proper position of the pauses is a point of great importance. They should be so distributed as that the rests may recur conveniently for the breath, and they should fall at such distances as to bear a certain musical proportion to each other. But the close of the sentence demands, perhaps, the greatest care.

Upon that the mind pauses and dwells. The period should be well rounded and conducted to a full and resonant close. These rules, again, must not be carried too far, or, every sentence being formed on the same model, the ear will soon be cloyed with monotony; which is the great error committed by those writers who fastidiously study harmonious arrangement. A very common ear will enable an author to catch some kind of melody, and to form all his sentences according to it; but a just and correct ear is requisite for its diversification.

Let Perspicuity and Energy, we must again repeat, be first studied. Time will bring an increasing command of language—more various terms, daintier epithets—and thence, from their judicious intermixture, harmony more easily attained. One knows not which most to admire, the tender regret or the deep knowledge of his art exhibited by Dryden in the whole of the beautiful tribute to the memory of Oldham; some lines of which bear strikingly on our subject:—

"O early ripe! to thy abundant store
What could advancing age have added more?
It might (*what Nature never gives the young*)
Have taught the numbers of thy native tongue
But Satire needs not those, and Wit will shine
Through the harsh cadence of a rugged line.
* * * * * —— maturing time
But mellows what we write to the dull sweets of rhyme."

Take then the advice of Dr. Whately,—"Let an author study the best models—mark their beauties of style, and dwell upon them, that he may insensibly catch the habit of expressing himself with

elegance: and when he has completed any composition, he may revise it, and cautiously alter any passage that is awkward and harsh, as well as those that are feeble and obscure; but let him never, *while writing*, think of any beauties of style, but content himself with such as may occur spontaneously." For the value of a well-rounded cadence often assumes an exaggerated importance to the beginner; and we cannot, perhaps, close with a more useful warning than that to be found in one of Dr. Ferriar's very curious and instructive disquisitions — the *Menippean Essay on English Historians*:—

When a prevalent taste for a certain smoothness and splendour of style is established, the value of such a decoration is easily overrated. And writers capable of doing good service by a laborious union of facts are compelled to waste their exertions in those favourite turns of expression which they can never incorporate with their own diction by the strongest mechanical efforts. It gives pain to a good-natured reader to see his author engaged in such unavailing struggles; for some persons can no more aquire a good style than a graceful manner; and, in both instances, the affectation of unattainable grace only adds distortion to clownishness.

"Vain such a boast of polished style!
We seem to hear the rasping file,
As thro' the laboured lines we drudge:
If sullen Nature grace deny,
Not Vestris can the fault supply,
Nor wit to praise the sneering judge."

OF LETTER-WRITING.

"Next to the power of pleasing with his presence," says Dr. Johnson, "every man would wish to be able to give delight at a distance." And although he admits the difficulty of laying down formularies which shall be adapted to the ever-varying occasions for epistolary correspondence, yet he insists that "precepts of this kind, however neglected, extend their importance as far as men are found who communicate their thoughts one to another; they are equally useful to the highest and the lowest; they may often contribute to make ignorance less inelegant; and they are frequently wanted for the embellishment even of learning."

LETTERS OF FRIENDSHIP.

Perhaps, much of the difficulty felt by youth in their first attempts at letter-writing arises from the generally stiff and formal manner of the examples which are placed before them. But as our little manual is intended for those who are actually engaged in the business of life, we feel that our principal task towards the beginner is to encourage rather than to discipline;—to assure him that simplicity and ease are all that are required—and that those qualities will be the best attained by committing his thoughts to the paper just as they arise, and nearly in the very language. And to this end we cannot but recommend that the habit of cor-

respondence should be commenced as early as possible—as soon as the youth is supposed to have any stock of ideas on which to draw. Above all, an interchange of letters should be encouraged between brothers and sisters. Educated as young ladies are at present, as well as from natural temperament, they are earlier attentive to elegancy and correctness of expression than their sturdier brothers. More than a century ago, it is true, the wits of the days had many smart things to say touching feminine epistles. According to them, grammar and orthography, like all other things, were expected to "give place, when a lady 's in the case." The fair sex, however, have long since deprived these smartnesses of the sting of truth; an improvement dating, if we are to believe a satire entitled *Bibliotheca*, published in 1712, from the day when the Spectators and Tatlers began their career of amusement and instruction. Addressing Sir Richard Steele, the writer says—

> "The ladies, pleased with thee to dwell,
> Aspire to write correct and spell:
> We scarce behold, though writ in haste,
> Five letters in a score misplaced;
> Marshall'd in rank they all appear,
> With no front vowels in the rear,
> Nor any, out of shame or dread,
> Skulking behind, that should have led.
> With half our usual toil and pain
> We both unravel and explain,
> Nor call in foreign aid to find,
> In mystic terms, the fair one's mind."

The ladies of the present day are generally admitted to be superior to their contemporaries of the other sex in the refinements of letter-writing;

and indeed there is something in that quiet interchange of thought, with just so much time for consideration as may set each sentiment in an engaging dress, that seems peculiarly agreeable to the female mind. And therefore it is that we press on the young a regular correspondence with that portion of their kindred in writing to whom every instinct of manhood will urge them to be observant and yet at ease, unaffected and yet elegant.

An early habituation to so much of the practice of composition as is implied in correspondence, will prove of the greatest benefit in after-life. The adult tyro in letter-writing frequently presents a ridiculous picture of embarrassment. Unused to deal with language on paper, he is shocked at the presence of numerous solecisms, of which he is conscious at the first view, and of which he also discovers he knows not how to disembarrass himself. Then, he has extravagant notions of what is expected from him, and consequently produces an epistle couched in the starched circumlocution of the seventeenth century. Indeed, he feels all the awkwardness of a gentleman of that period, when letter-writing was coming more into use, on being driven unexpectedly to handle the pen himself, his "poor scholar" being out of the way, or some weighty reason demanding that the epistle should be autographic; the said worshipful knight or squire having vainly trusted in Heaven that his life would pass over without such an effort being required of him. In Tytler's *History of Scotland*, there is preserved such a letter, from Logan of Restalrig, one of the Gowrie conspirators (A.D.

1600), which might at the utmost fill three sides of ordinary letter-paper, and to it is appended the following postscript :—

"Pray your Lo! hold me excused for my unseemly letter, quilk is not so well written as muster were [need were], for I durst not let ony of my writers ken of it, but took two sundry idle days to it myself."

If the writer sit down to what may then truly be called his task, to weigh every word and criticise every phrase, he may carry his fastidiousness to the extent of an inordinate consumption of time, the fruit of which will be an inflated formality quite opposed to the true epistolary style. Some of these gentlemen are apt to console themselves with the notion, that Addison's ease was the result of a similar labour of the file ; but we apprehend that this notion is erroneous. There is, indeed, a story, that as Under-Secretary, Addison was so long in deciding on the terms of an official letter it was his duty to write—the announcement of a royal death, we think—that his superiors could wait no longer, and the document was drawn up by an inferior clerk in the usual routine phraseology. This tale, however, is entirely at variance with Steele's account of him, who says, that when Addison "had taken his resolution, or made his plan for what he designed to write, he would walk about the room, and dictate it into language with as much freedom and ease as any one could write it down, and attend to the coherence and grammar of what he dictated."

It cannot be said that any one style can be appropriated to the great variety of subjects which are discussed in letters. Ease should distinguish

familiar letters, written on the common affairs of life; though even in these, some topic may incidentally arise that requires elevated language; and then not to elevate the expression would be to write unnaturally.

The ease and simplicity that form the charms of epistolary correspondence are not to be understood as importing entire carelessness. In writing to the most intimate friend, a certain degree of attention both to the subject and style is requisite and becoming. We owe it as well to ourselves as to the friend with whom we correspond. A slovenly and negligent manner of writing argues a want of due respect. Moreover, the license which some persons assume of scribbling letters with too free a hand is apt to betray them into imprudence in what they write. Now, an imprudent expression in conversation may be forgotten and pass away; but when we take the pen in our hand, we must remember that "Litera scripta manet."

LETTERS OF BUSINESS.

With reference to letters of business, it will be, perhaps, difficult to frame better instructions, or to express them so well, as those given by Lord Chesterfield to his son, at his first entering on the business of life, in the *bureau* of the English Embassy at Paris. They have the advantage, too, of being the instructions of a man of eminence, who had himself been successfully engaged in public affairs, and who felt the deepest interest in the welfare of

the party to whom they were addressed. They are as follows:—

"You are now entered upon a scene of business, where I hope you will one day make a figure. Use does a great deal, but care and attention must be joined to it. The first thing necessary in writing letters of business, is extreme clearness and perspicuity; every paragraph should be so clear and unambiguous, that the dullest fellow in the world may not be able to mistake it, nor obliged to read it twice in order to understand it. This necessary clearness implies a correctness, without excluding an elegancy of style. Tropes, figures, antitheses, epigrams, &c., would be as misplaced and as impertinent in letters of business, as they are sometimes (if judiciously used) proper and pleasing in familiar letters upon common and trite subjects. In business, an elegant simplicity, the result of care, not of labour, is required. Business must be well, not affectedly dressed, but by no means negligently. Let your first attention be to clearness, and read every paragraph after you have written it, in the critical view of discovering whether it is possible that any one man can mistake the true sense of it, and correct it accordingly.

"Our pronouns and relatives often create obscurity or ambiguity; be therefore exceedingly attentive to them, and take care to mark with precision their particular relations. For example: 'Mr. Johnson acquainted me, that he had seen Mr. Smith, who had promised him to speak to Mr. Clarke, to return him (Mr. Johnson) those papers which he (Mr. Smith) had left some time ago with him (Mr. Clarke).' It is better to repeat a name, though unnecessarily, ten times, than to have the person mistake once. *Who*, you know, is singly relative to persons, and cannot be applied to things: *which* and *that* are chiefly relative to things, but not absolutely exclusive of persons; for one may say, the man *that* robbed or killed such-a-one; but it is much better to say, the man *who* robbed or killed. One never says, the man or the woman *which*. *Which* and *that*, though chiefly relative to things, cannot be always used indifferently as to things, and euphony

must sometimes determine their place. For instance: the letter *which* I received from you, *which* you referred to in your last, *which* came by Lord Albemarle's messenger, and *which* I showed to such-a-one. I would change it thus:—The letter *that* I received from you, *which* I referred to in your last, *that* came by my Lord Albemarle's messenger, and *which* I showed to such-a-one.

"Business does not exclude the usual terms of politeness and good-breeding, but, on the contrary, strictly requires them; such as, 'I have the honour to acquaint your lordship—Permit me to assure you—If I may be allowed to give my opinion, &c.' For the Minister abroad who writes to the Minister at home writes to his superior—possibly to his patron, or at least one whom he desires should be so.

"Letters of business will not only admit of, but be the better for certain graces; but then they must be scattered with a sparing and a skilful hand; they must fit their place exactly; they must decently adorn without encumbering, and modestly shine without glaring. But as this is the utmost degree of perfection in letters of business, I would not advise you to attempt those embellishments till you have first laid your foundations well.

"Carefully avoid all Greek or Latin quotations, and bring no precedents from the 'virtuous Spartans, the polite Athenians, and the brave Romans.' Leave all that to futile pedants. No flourishes, no declamation. But (I repeat it again) there is an elegant simplicity and dignity of style absolutely necessary for good letters of business; attend to that carefully. Let your periods be harmonious, without seeming to be laboured; and let them not be too long, for that always occasions a degree of obscurity. I should not mention correct orthography, but that you often fail in that particular, which will bring ridicule upon you; for no man is allowed to spell ill. I know a man of quality who never recovered the ridicule of spelling wholesome without the *w*. I wish, too, that your handwriting were better; and I cannot conceive why it is not, since every man may certainly

write whatever hand he pleases. Neatness in folding up, sealing, and directing your packets, is by no means to be neglected, though I dare say you think it is. But there is something in the exterior even of a packet that may please or displease, and, consequently, worth some attention."

We have received of late years such ample enlargements of our stock of published correspondence of eminent men of all ranks and studies, that examples may be found, if wanted, of letters on almost every subject. Indeed, the English language is now master of peculiar wealth in this branch of literature. If we begin with the letters of Pope, Swift, and their galaxy of contemporaries, through Horace Walpole, Gray, Cowper, and others, down to the most recent editions, those of Southey and Taylor of Norwich, with those of Mrs. Grant of Laggan—which last have the advantage of being very modern examples of feminine excellence—we may boast a continuation of pictures of manners and opinions, sketched by such hands as perhaps no other nation can boast of. And for the more material business of life, we have the letters of St. Vincent, Collingwood, the Despatches of the Duke of Wellington, the papers of the Marquis Wellesley, the recently published Malmesbury papers, and a host of others. Every publishing season, indeed, now furnishes its quota; for the more the public is treated with these unbosomings of men of celebrity, the more craving do they grow for a further supply. And in this they only echo the opinion of Lord Bacon, who says, that "Letters, such as are written from wise men, are of all the words of men, in my judgment, the best." In

these publications of recent years, it must be admitted that our military men show in the front rank; they handle the pen with as much vigour as the sword. Marlborough's fame, which had suffered so long under the slur thrown by Chesterfield, that "he wrote bad English, and spelt it still worse," has been entirely redeemed by the lately-discovered papers given to the world under the editorship of Sir George Murray: he would seem to have been in the first rank among his contemporaries for the clearness of his business letters, and the elegant turn of those of compliment, no less than for those graces of manner which have always been unquestioned. We have seen mention made in a work published in the early part of this century, "of one of the most elegant billets that ever came under our notice, written by General Wolfe, to recommend an officer for promotion." And to conclude the bright list, letters of the Duke of Wellington, positively written in the tumult of action, are very models of clearness and strength; and should be studied by every one who desires to possess a style decisive and unencumbered.

LETTERS OF COURTSHIP.

It has been the invariable practice of our predecessors to give some directions under this head. We must at once confess that if we are to judge by the letters of the kind which come before the public through the courts of law—and these appear to be the only channels by which the public is ever so gratified,—past instructors would seem to have

thrown away their labours; for the letters of lovers, however interesting to themselves, afford only merriment to the rest of the world. Whether the mighty power sways the breast of royalty or that of the simple country clodhopper, the bewildering and hyperbolical effect appears to be the same.

One hint we have met with seems well deserving the attention of sighing swains. "A man of sense in love may say extravagant things, but never silly ones."

PETITIONS AND MEMORIALS.

In all documents of a public nature our age has received its bent from that particular kind of business that engrossed the early years of the present century—a military brevity has the preference. And that business papers should be drawn up so as to take no more time in their perusal than is strictly indispensable to an acquaintance with facts, is a precept of such evident authority as not to require any prolix enforcement.

In such papers, perspicuity and energy are to be studied almost exclusively. And as an important rule for those ends, remember to think more of those you are addressing than of yourself. Smother your own sense of your wrongs, or demands, or whatever they may be, under an earnest design to make the representation of them as little obtrusive

as possible towards those you address. With this view, you must be short—and short in this way, that you appear to be so sensible of the justice and perception of the party petitioned, as that you are sure a temperate and succinct statement is all that is wanted to procure you right. This spirit will never be attained unless the petitioner be careful to get rid of all exacerbation of feeling before he sits down to his task. The present age—the business section of it especially—can rarely be brought to listen to an angry man.

All applications to the Sovereign in Council, Houses of Lords and Commons, &c., are by Petition, and are generally drawn out in the following form, varying only in the title.

To the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty in Council.

The humble Petition of —— ——, of the city of ——, (profession).

HUMBLY SHOWETH,

That your Petitioner . . . .

Wherefore your Petitioner humbly prays that your Majesty will be graciously pleased to . . . .

And your Petitioner, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

(Date.) (Name.)

In 1840, when the sheriffs of London were committed to the custody of the Serjeant-at-Arms, for an asserted violation of what the House of Commons term their "privileges," the following petition for their discharge was presented by Sir Edward Sugden, signed by 599 members of the Bar, 27 of whom were Queen's counsel and serjeants-at-law. Such a body may be supposed to

have proper notions of what a petition should be; and it will be perceived that the prayer is stated as succinctly as possible.

To the Honourable the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland in Parliament assembled.

The humble Petition of the undersigned Queen's Counsel, Serjeants, and Barristers-at-Law,

SHOWETH,

That your Petitioners have heard with alarm of the recent proceedings of your Honourable House in committing to the custody of the Serjeant-at-Arms the persons who now hold the office of Sheriff of Middlesex, and also the plaintiff in an action brought against your Honourable House.

That your Petitioners feel deep regret that punishment should thus be inflicted on a subject of the realm for having brought an action in one of her Majesty's courts in Westminster Hall, and on the officers of that court, for having, in the ordinary discharge of their duty, executed her Majesty's writ in carrying into effect a judgment of that Court.

Your Petitioners therefore humbly pray that the persons in custody may be discharged.

And your Petitioners will ever pray, &c.

The annexed formula, by alteration of the superscription, is applicable to all ordinary occasions wherein a Petition becomes necessary.

To . . . .

The humble petition of —— ——, of —— ——,

HUMBLY SHOWETH,

That your Petitioner (*here state circumstances.*)

Wherefore your Petitioner respectfully solicits . . .

And will ever pray.

(Name.)

Persons employed in the public service often have occasion to solicit from official superiors testimonials as to their ability and probity, with a view to promotion; while other individuals engaged in mercantile pursuits, and without immediate employ, find recommendations from their former employers essential to their securing a new position: in such emergencies the accompanying simple form of application may be of some utility.

To —— ——, Esq., (Date.)
Comptroller of ———.

SIR,

Having had the honour of serving in that branch of the ——— Department under your immediate control, for —— years, during which period I have happily never incurred reproof for negligent execution of my duties; I most respectfully solicit from your kind consideration such certificate as to my capacity and probity, as you may conceive justified by the premises, with a view to applying for promotion to the vacancy which has recently occurred in the Department.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your obedient humble Servant.

———

(Date.)

Messrs. —— & ——.

GENTLEMEN,

I respectfully request that you will be pleased to furnish me with those testimonials as to my professional efficiency and moral character to which you may consider that my long services to your Firm fairly entitle me, with a view to soliciting an engagement from another House.

I remain, Gentlemen,
Very respectfully,
Your most obedient Servant.

CIRCULARS, &c.

CIRCULARS are matters that vary so much according to the practice of different trades and professions, that it would be worse than futile to offer any rules as generally serviceable. We have only to remark, that we have known experienced hands retain a copy of any issue of the kind in which they observed something worthy of notice. Thus, they had by them a number of references, whence they might draw at least new combinations of phrases, sometimes as meritorious as inventions—and often more successful: for *artifice* avails more than *art* in this species of composition.

To the tradesman, undoubtedly, a frequent call on public attention by these means is of incalculable importance. In most parts of the country, and of London too, the press will prove a better canvasser for support than any display of gewgaw and decoration on the outside of the premises. It is but the change of a letter in the cash-book, and you may rely on it that money paid to the printer will give far heavier returns than that handed over to the painter. With this feeling, experienced hands vary their circulars according to the character of the class to whom they are addressed; and if they happen to have five or six different grades of customers, they have something suitable to the wants of each, never troubling opposite classes with prices or solicitations quite unsuitable to them.

PUNCTUATION.

PUNCTUATION is defined by Dr. Webster to be the marking of the several pauses which are to be observed in reading or speaking a sentence or continued discourse. By means of pauses, a discourse is divided into periods or complete sentences, and then into phrases. This definition, in common with those given by others who have written on this subject, includes two sorts of pauses,—those which the sense and those which an accurate elocution require. This double purpose it is which produces those difficulties and doubts that have caused authors to vary so much in the rules they lay down, in proportion as they have limited the art of punctuation to the purpose of clearing the sense, or have endeavoured to make it subservient beside to the marking of the emphasis. Our own opinion decidedly is, that punctuation should be confined as much as possible to the elucidation of the sense; being convinced that it fails as a means of marking emphasis, or what Lindley Murray calls "accurate pronunciation." For the different pauses in even a perfect elocution admit of infinite variety; but the number of points we have to mark this variety is very small. Hence, we are under the necessity of expressing pauses of the same quantity, on different occasions, by different points; and more frequently, of expressing pauses of different quantity by the same point.

Bishop Lowth observes, "that the precise quantity or duration of each pause or note cannot be

defined; for that varies with the time; and both in discourse and music the same composition may be rehearsed in a quicker or slower time. But in music the proportion between the notes remains ever the same; and in discourse, if the doctrine of punctuation were exact, the proportion between the pauses would be ever invariable." But as the doctrine of punctuation is not exact, and cannot be made so with the present limited number of marks, our readers need not be surprised at the immense difference they may find in the systems adopted by various authors. Nay, they will on examination discover that at different eras different modes of pointing have been in vogue; so that one curious in these matters might form a tolerably exact notion of the time when a book was printed, by closely examining the punctuation.

A quotation from Mr. Francillon's valuable little work, *An Essay on Punctuation*, will further show how impossible it is to derive any uniform method of punctuation from past authorities. He says—

> I come also to this conclusion, yet without speaking very confidently, that in the earlier ages of printing something like a system of pointing was observed; but that for the past two centuries, there are not two authors to be found who have observed the same system, and perhaps not one author, even in the same work, who is consistent throughout.

It will be proper to caution the reader that the words Period, Colon, Semicolon, and Comma, have come to be employed in a sense different to that in which they were used by ancient Grammarians. The Period was the whole sentence; the Colon, a chief constructive part of a sentence; the Semi-

colon, a lesser subdivision, which might be again subdivided into commas, or segments; but these words are now used to denote the points which distinguish the various parts of a sentence, and not as the appellatives of the parts themselves.

A Period is a sentence complete, making perfect sense, and not connected in construction with what follows. The pause after the period is marked by a [.], and in speaking is distinguished by a cadence or fall of the voice.

The members of a period, or clauses and phrases, are all more or less connected in sense; and, according to the nearness of the connection, are marked by a comma [,] a semicolon [;] or a colon [:]

THE COMMA.

The comma is the shortest pause, and is often used to mark the construction when little or no interruption of voice is allowable. In giving examples for its use we shall base our remarks on the grammar prefixed to Webster's Dictionary, pointing out such alterations as modern practice demands or justifies.

In general, the parts of a simple sentence or clause are not to be separted by any point whatever; but when a simple sentence is long, or contains a distinct phrase or phrases, modifying the affirmation, it may be divided by a comma; as,

To be very active in laudable pursuits, is the distinguishing characteristic of a man of merit.

By forgiving an injury, a man rises superior to his enemy.

We consider the comma after "pursuits" quite superfluous: that portion of the sentence forms the nominative to the verb; and we hold that a comma should never come between a nominative and a verb, or an adjective and substantive, when they are not otherwise disjoined.

When a conjunction is omitted between two or more words, whether nouns, adjectives, pronouns, or verbs, the place is supplied by a comma; as,

Virtue, wit, knowledge, are the chief advantages of a man.

A man never becomes learned without studying constantly, methodically, with a just application.

The most innocent pleasures are the most rational, the most delightful, and the most durable.

A comma ought to be supplied after the word "delightful," since in the construction of the sentence that word is more closely connected with "durable" than is "rational."

Two or more simple sentences closely connected in sense, or dependent on each other, are separated by a comma only; as,

When our vices leave us, we flatter ourselves we leave them.

The temperate man's pleasures are durable, because they are regular.

Many writers would leave out the comma after "durable," where it is by no means imperatively required.

The sentence independent, or case absolute, detached affirmations, or phrases involved in sentences, and other important clauses, must be

separated from the other parts of the sentence by a comma; as,

The envoy has returned, his business being accomplished.
The decision of Patronage, who was but half a goddess has been sometimes erroneous.
It is, in many cases, apparent.

The propriety of the comma after "is" and "cases," must depend on the stress which the writer meant to lay on the exception—that it was not so "in *all* cases."

A comma is often required to mark contrast, antithesis, or remarkable points in a sentence, and sometimes very properly separates words closely dependent in construction; as,

A good man will love himself too well to lose, and his neighbour too well to win, an estate by gaming.
Prosperity gains friends, and adversity tries them.
Though deep, yet clear; though gentle, yet not dull.

A single appellative in apposition is not separated by a comma, as "the Apostle Peter;" but when such name is accompanied with an adjunct, it should be separated; as "Parmenio, a friend of Alexander's, hearing the offers that Darius made." On the other hand, when the adjunct expresses a title or office, the comma is now often omitted, with great improvement to the perspicuity of the sentence; as, "Her Majesty was received by the Provost, Mr. Duncan, the Member for Dundee, and the authorities, on the quay." As punctuated, Mr. Duncan and the Member for Dundee may be different personages; but, omitting the comma, "Mr. Duncan the Member for Dundee" at once

identifies the man and his office; neither does the voice require any pause between the two.

Modifying words and phrases, as first, secondly, formerly, lastly, nay, so, hence, again, once more, above all, on the contrary, in the next place, in short, finally, besides, are usually separated by a comma.

Terms of address, and words of others repeated, but not introduced as a quotation, are separated by a comma; as,

I am obliged to you, my friends, for your many favours.

It hurts a man's pride to say, I do not know.

'Twas a political maxim of that day, that every man must be supposed a knave.

When a verb is understood, a comma may often be properly introduced; as, "From law arises security; from security, curiosity; from curiosity, knowledge."

When the verb *to be* is followed by a verb in the infinitive, which by transposition might be made the nominative case to it, the former is frequently separated from the latter verb by a comma, as, "The most obvious remedy is, to withdraw from all associations with bad men."

Hyper-punctuation, or high-pointing, generally exhibits itself in an extravagant use of the comma, as if the printer kept his commas in a pepper-box, and rained them over the page at random. In the following sentences, the commas placed in a parenthesis we consider superfluous:

Why did none of them claim the reward (,) which Xerxes promised to him (,) who could invent a new pleasure.

You will never want booksellers (,) while there are buyers of books: but there may frequently be readers (,) where there are no authors.

Which (,) in my opinion (,) is, generally speaking, not the most amiable (,) that is to be met with in human society.

The introduction of a comma is, however, to be permitted in cases where the length of a clause, especially in reference to its accompanying clauses, appears to require it, though the construction of the sentence may not necessarily demand one.

THE SEMICOLON.

The semicolon is placed between the clauses of a period which are less closely connected than such as are separated by a comma.

When the first division of a sentence completes a proposition, so as to have no dependence on what follows, but the following clause has a dependence on the preceding, the two parts are generally separated by a semicolon; as,

Upon the revival of learning, those sects of Stoics and Epicureans, Platonists, and Pythagoreans, could never regain any credit or authority; and, at the same time, by the example of their fall, kept men from submitting with such blind deference to those new sects which have attempted to gain an ascendant over them.

Where the clauses of an antithesis are short, they are usually divided by a semicolon; though formerly the colon was preferred:

Art may make a suit of clothes: but nature must produce a man.

The hundred eyes of Argus were not always kept open; but they were never all closed.

When several members have a dependence on each other, by means of a substitute for or close reference to the same principal word, the clauses constituting distinct propositions in other respects, the semicolon may be used:—

If Elizabeth seemed avaricious, let it be considered that the nicest frugality was but necessary in her situation; if imperious, that a female government needed to be made respectable by a show of authority; and if at any time oppressive, that the English constitution, as it then stood, as well as her own nature, had a good deal of that bias.

The semicolon is frequently used when several proper names, united with words designating rank or quality, occur in the same period; as, "There were present, Lord Wharncliffe, President of the Council; the Duke of Buccleuch, Lord Privy Seal; and Lord Ripon, President of the Board of Control." Much difference exists on this head.

THE COLON.

The Colon is used to divide a sentence into two or more parts, less connected than those which are separated by a semicolon: and great is the variance between the authorities as to that lesser connection which is to be evinced by the use of this mark.

Sir James Burrow, Master of the King's Bench some seventy years since, and well known to lawyers for his reports, is perhaps the most profound

authority we have on punctuation. In his work *De Ratione et Usu Interpungendi*, he says—"A colon serves to distinguish the conjunct members of a sentence which are capable of being divided into other members, whereof one at least is conjunct." This definition is worth bearing in mind, though the present custom allows a greater latitude in the application of this point. The period is now often inserted when the practice of the last age would have employed the colon. Indeed, to show that the colon then marked clauses by no means dependently connected with the preceding, it is sufficient to observe that till the latter half of the last century printers commenced the colon clause with a capital letter.

The colon is properly used when the sense of a division of a period is complete, so as to admit of a full point, but something is added by way of illustration; or there follows some supernumerary reason or consequence—

The very sky of the painter is not the portrait of the sky of nature: it is a composition of different skies, observed at different times, and not the whole copied from any particular day.

The water undoubtedly heightens the poetical associations, but it does not make them; and the ship amply repays the obligation: they aid each other: the water is more poetical with the ship—the ship less so without the water.

This expedient succeeded so well, and was so generally relished, that in the next reign [William Rufus], the clergy to a man almost were become professors of the common law: *nullus clericus nisi causidicus*, as William of Malmesbury takes care to inform us.

It has been observed that the propriety of using

a colon or semicolon is sometimes determined by a conjunction being expressed or not expressed as,—

This comparison of our own condition with that of others we are continually making, even in common life· [; *but*] the misfortune is, that we are apt rather to compare our situation with that of our superiors than with that of our inferiors.

The correct and judicious use of the colon requires very considerable practice; which is, however, well worth bestowing, for its employment often gives a solidity and firmness to the sentence not otherwise to be attained.

THE PERIOD.

The Period or Full Point marks a completion of the sense, a cadence of the voice, and the longest pause used between sentences.

Having now treated of the four principal Points, we shall advise the author, in conclusion, to adhere to some steady and consistent rule of punctuation; bearing in mind that hyper-punctuation is perhaps a worse fault than leaving too much to the sense of the reader. Above all, let him shun mere eccentricities. Among the various modes by which the public eye is for the moment arrested, novel punctuation sometimes has its turn; and of this a favourite author of the day is a remarkable instance. We know that the great classics of antiquity, whose productions have delighted and

informed mankind for so many ages, composed without points—that there was nothing like our punctuation till at least the middle of the third century; and whether our own Boz may resolve, after the manner of his elder fellow-inheritors of fame, to do without points altogether or to retain his own extravagant fashion, he would very probably have the same hold on public favour. But, "counterfeits, beware!" Mr. Dickens's punctuation is *not* his passport to posterity; and an imitation of the mere oddities of a man of genius is likely to suggest comparisons anything but favourable to the simulator. Make the experiment of reading Boz aloud, paying attention to the pauses as he has marked them, and giving the time to each usually considered proper, and you will find that the effect on your hearers will be anything but enlivening—there is hyper-punctuation of the most tedious kind. We have referred to this matter, because we have noticed a tendency in some quarters to adopt this style of pointing. Let Dickens do as he pleases—determine to commence all those words with a small letter that long usage has decreed shall begin with a capital, as Voltaire once set an example—or play any other vagary in those minutiæ that he chooses, but such liberties can be allowed only to him and his equals.

THE DASH.

This mark, though now much used, met at first with a very unfriendly reception from the stricter grammarians; who considered it a kind of jack-of-all-work intruder, to be ever at the service of the ignorant and unskilful, and quite useless to those who understood their business. Into the service of whom it was generally pressed may be learnt from Swift, who says,

> "In modern wit, all printed trash is
> Set off with num'rous breaks and dashes."

However, now that its legitimate use is better defined, its claims to just estimation and employment have been fairly recognized.

As a guide to the eye in at once detecting the intent of the author, it is particularly serviceable —where the sentence breaks off abruptly; where a significant pause is required; where there is an unexpected turn in the sentiment; or in commencing a series of arguments or details, the following separate clauses being marked by a semicolon.

It is also now used before a quotation, where it was formerly the custom to insert a colon:—

In one of his Essays, Cowley talks thus strangely—"It is the great boast of eloquence and philosophy, that they first congregated men dispersed, united them into cities, and built up their houses and their walls. I wish they could unravel all they had woven, that we might have our woods and our innocence again, instead of our castles and our terraces."

THE INTERROGATION AND INTERJECTION.

These points [? !] are almost sufficiently designated by their names; but a difficulty sometimes occurs, where an expression of admiration seems to take an interrogative turn; as, "What more perfect than beauty and virtue"—a sentence which will take either point, according as the interrogative or the interjective may prevail in the mind of the utterer. The interjective must be considered predominant where no answer seems to be expected or implied.

Mr. Francillon observes, that the interjection "is often abused, and pressed by satirists and libellers into their service. One of these writers is afraid to speak out, yet he wishes to satirize or to libel a particular person. To effect this, he uses words of courtesy, but he adds the dagger-like note of admiration; as, 'the gallant admiral!' In such hands it may be denominated the coward's point"

THE PARENTHESIS AND BRACKETS.

Of the use of the Parenthesis [( )] we have spoken before, deprecating its employment. Indeed, the sentence formerly placed in a parenthesis is now frequently put between dashes, which, perhaps, indicate the parenthetical matter to the eye more strikingly.

The Parathesis, or Brackets, such as those that enclose the parenthesis above, is used when reciting the words of another, and you find an inter-

Write only on one side of the page, and use slips of paper not larger than an ordinary copy-book, or smaller than the page of an octavo book.

If your manuscript extends to more than one page, take care to number them.

Leave the minor details of the punctuation to the printer, and correct what you think wrong in the proof. Few authors can punctuate in manuscript; and the necessities of the sense are more easily seen in print.

CORRECTING PROOF-SHEETS.

Instructions are frequently given in books for correcting proofs by means of the marks used by practical printers, but this course is more likely to lead to confusion than to make the meaning of the author clear. The best way to proceed is to take a fine-pointed pen and make a small mark where the mistake occurs: from this mark let a fine line run to the nearest vacant space in the margin, and at that place write the instructions in such a form that you can understand them yourself. Should you desire to retain any words which you have by accident crossed out, put a line of dots (.....) under the words, and the word *stet* in the opposite margin; this and the letter *d* (for *delete*, to leave *out*) placed opposite to any words or sentences you may wish to be omitted, will be the only printer's marks which you require. Those who cultivate a closer acquaintance with the printing-office will soon acquire a knowledge of the secret evolutions.