

Traditional English Sentence Style

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CHAPTER ONE:

Sentence Patterns

The culture and society of today are marked by an ever expanding quantity of language. We are surrounded by a more massive quantity of raw language than in any other historical time. Because of more and more media, we have become a sound-bite society, an advertisement society, a talk show society. Today, what we say does not have to be thoughtful and conclusive; it just has to be said *now*, while the microphone is still on. In a culture like ours, the ability to be a fast talker is more valued than the ability to be a reasoned and weighty talker. In this talk show society, it seems that the *quantity* of language has become more important than the *quality*.

This flood of language has had its effect on writing and thinking styles within the culture at large. Ideas today no longer need be expressed in full sentences. Rather, the ideas of today seem to come out in a continuous flow of ongoing language. Sooner or later the idea seems to be “out there,” and then the word-stream stops. But this style, based on flow and quantity, is not the language style of yesterday. In the past, the carefully structured sentence was the medium for encapsulating and precision-stating our thoughts. Today, precision and structure seem to be less important than the ability to “wax eloquent” at the drop of a hat.

The teaching of English today reflects the same misplaced priority. Less and less grammar is taught, and more and more group discussion takes place. Precision becomes less important; spontaneous expression of opinion becomes all-in-all. Composition classes involve paragraphs, essays, and creative writing, but not the basic building block of expression, sentences. Students today receive little or no instruction in sentence structure and grammar, a situation that was unthinkable fifty years ago. For some thousands of years and more, grammar was the mainstay of intellectual education; but, on the authority of a handful of education experts today, it has now been all but deleted from the English curriculum.

The most important concept that I want readers of this workbook to take away is that language is *not* a flow or stream; instead, every sentence is

composed of structured parts, clusters of words that fit together like complex building blocks.

I want this textbook to stand against the current culture of language as quantity and flow, and to allow for the study of sentence structure as a whole subject. This is the first part of sentence structure grammar: to analyze and dissect a sentence to reveal its logical construction. Through sentence analysis, students of this textbook will develop and enhance their perception of the logical construction of sentences.

The second part of sentence structure grammar is to apply this analysis to well written examples. For this dimension, for the analysis of well written sentences, I offer the best writers in English as the source for examples, exercises, and worksheets. To this end I have isolated extensive examples from classic English authors. I have tried to select the sentences which show the most interesting and integrated structures. Through the use of classic writers, practice in writing style as well as the analytical side will come into play. Students of this book will perceive sentence structure in more detail, and will also absorb the sentence style of great writers.

A sentence is not a loose or random stream of words. Instead, every sentence has definite construction and parts within it. This textbook is based on the study of the internal segments within the sentence. We will study the sentence in the same way that a botanist studies a flower, or a biologist studies a cell; i.e., we will ask ‘what are the internal parts within this entity?’ and ‘how do the internal parts connect to each other?’ The parts, in the case of sentences, are word clusters of the types that we will identify in the chapters ahead.

However, when we talk about the subject of grammar, in addition to structure, we also talk a little bit about the subject of writing style. Grammar is both the analysis of sentence parts, *and* the ability to handle those parts skilfully in our own expression. Accordingly, this textbook is also designed to increase our skills with clear and effective writing. Grammar offers an exercise in writing skills that can never be achieved by writing whole paragraphs and essays; it must be based on the structure of individual sentences. Becoming aware of sentence-structure is key to thinking clearly, and to expressing that thought in clear, comprehensive, and expressive ways.

The grammar that we will study in this book is not the whole story of grammar. Instead, I am purposely limiting the scope only to sentence structure. In the examples chosen for this textbook, sentence structure tends to be very prominent. Often these sentences are intentionally arranged by authors in parallel patterns. These well-composed sentences make for

language that forms very rounded and complete expression; they illustrate a style of English that bespeaks precision, not a style that is turned on like a tap.

A simple example of a patterned sentence is one by Francis Bacon in his essay called “Of Studies”: “*Studies serve for delight, for interest, and for ability.*” This example falls into three obvious components, each beginning on the word “for,” and including the next word. As we study sentence parts like these, we will notice more and more just how much cohesion they really have. Notice, for example, that if we were to revise this sentence, we would move the whole phrase around as one piece. That is, we would switch it from “*for delight, for interest, and for ability,*” to a different order of phrases, such as “*for interest, for ability, and for delight.*” If we were to expand upon this sentence, we would add more “for-” phrases, and each one would be a complete piece, just like the three above. However, we would *not* break these clusters; we would *not* move the word “delight” without also moving “for.” In other words, these clusters are closed units. Each one functions as one whole piece.

These facts (that we *move* them, *add* them, or *delete* them all as *one piece*) demonstrate just how solid the phrase structure really is. These phrases are like “mega-words;” they are larger clusters that cohere together in much the same way that the syllables of one word cohere together. This is an important recognition. The recognition that words are clustered allows us to understand sentence structure: instead of seeing the sentence as a flow of words, we begin to see it on the level of internal clusters. Sentence structure is made up of these clusters. In the example above, the three clusters (“*for delight,*” “*for interest,*” and “*for ability*”) are **prepositional phrases**, and these will form a big part of our discussion in the next chapter.

Here is the second sentence in Francis Bacon’s essay: “*Their chief use for delight, is in privateness and retiring; for interest, is in conversation; and for ability, is in the judgement and disposition of business.*” Take a look at the structures within this sentence and compare them to the previous ones. Draw a circle around the three “for-” phrases. Note that the same word follows each phrase. Underline the repeating segments. Use your pencil to diagram the word clusters in various ways as you find them. You might come up with a structure diagram like the following:

Their chief use for delight, {is in privateness and retiring;} for interest, {is in conversation;} *and for ability*, {is in the judgement and disposition of business.}

This sentence, with the previous example, shows the remarkable extent to which Bacon is a structured writer. The first sentence is parallel (“Studies serve for delight, for interest, and for ability”), and the second sentence is an *expansion* structure. He sets out the structure in the first sentence, and then adds a piece after each phrase in the second: “Their chief use for delight, {is in privateness and retiring;} for interest, {is in conversation,} and for ability, {is in the judgement and disposition of business.”} As it turns out, almost every sentence in Francis Bacon’s essay contributes further variations and embellishments upon this type of parallel structuring. The whole essay is copied below as a diagramming exercise at the end of this chapter.

Next, consider the various ways in which patterning and clustering are going on in the following Francis Bacon sentences: “*Prosperity is not without many fears and distastes; and adversity is not without comforts and hopes. Prosperity does best reveal vice; but adversity does best reveal virtue.*” Below I give only two possible ways that you could use diagramming to reveal the patterns within these sentences.

Prosperity is not without (many fears and distastes;)
 -- AND --
adversity is not without (comforts and hopes.)

Prosperity does best reveal vice;
 -- BUT --
adversity does best reveal virtue.

In the sentences which follow below, you may diagram or map the parallels in a wide variety of ways. The only requirement is to look for corresponding patterns. Look on the level of clusters, not individual words. Any repeating or matching patterns should be indicated in your analysis. Copy out some sentences on separate sheets and map them as above. Be prepared to find many varieties of pattern within them, and to indicate the patterns in various ways graphically. Once you have examined the structures, read the sentences aloud using pauses and voice inflections in ways that emphasize the structures vocally.

There are two complete excerpts from Francis Bacon below for you to diagram. A lot of sentences are provided, but it is a relatively easy and interesting exercise. The more of these that you do the more you will be exercising your 'language centers,' so even if you get the idea of this exercise really quickly, more practise is still preferable. Only by doing and re-doing these diagrams will you give your mind time to absorb these patterns, which you need to do before they will become habitual and therefore begin to affect your writing style. Spend a half an hour or more of pencil time with these

sentences by one of the best writers in the English language. If nothing else, it will at least be time away from the overflowing language style of today's society!

For the sentences in the second essay, "Of Negotiating," re-copy them onto a fresh sheet. Sketch, bracket, and "map" the sentence parts in ways that show the patterns graphically. If you are working with other students, compare the interpretations that others have come up with. This pencil time will help you to understand, and to absorb the expressive style of classic English, in an age and culture where clarity and precision are often undervalued.

Please use circles, underlines, square and round brackets, and "sentence maps" to analyze the sentences on the worksheet for "Of Studies." Find creative ways to reveal patterns, repetitions, and parallels within these sentences. Please note: even if you understand the idea behind this exercise intellectually, it is still important to go through with the application sentence by sentence. Only the practice of structuring sentences in this way will really ingrain the habit of thinking this way, and therefore make the enhancements to your writing style.

For the second essay, "Of Negotiation," I would ask you to re-copy the sentences one by one double spaced. Then analyze them. Even the act of re-copying the sentences will contribute to the ingraining process. By the end of this textbook, you will be writing like Bacon, Wells, Lincoln and Austen all rolled into one! (Or more likely, you will be writing like yourself, just with an enhanced awareness of structure and expression of voice.)

Francis Bacon

“Of Studies”

Studies serve for delight, for interest, and for ability.

Their chief use for delight is in privateness and retiring; for interest, is in conversation; and for ability, is in the judgement and disposition of business.

To spend too much time in studies is sloth; to use them too much for interest is affectation; to make judgement wholly by their rules is the quirk of a scholar.

Crafty men condemn studies; simple men admire them; and wise men use them: for they teach not their own use; but that is a wisdom outside of studies and above studies, won by observation.

Read not to contradict and confute; nor to believe and take for granted; nor to find talk and discourse; but to weigh and consider.

Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested: that is, some books are to be read only in parts; others to be read, but not curiously; and some few to be read wholly, and with diligence and attention.

Reading makes a full man; conversation a ready man; and writing an accurate man.

And therefore, if a man write little, he had need have a great memory; if he converse little, he had need have a quick wit; and if he read little, he had need have much cunning, to seem to know what he doth not.

Histories make men wise; poets, witty; mathematics, subtle; natural philosophy, deep; moral philosophy, grave; logic and rhetoric, able to contend.

Bowling is good for the belly and the veins; shooting for the lungs and chest; gentle walking for the stomach; riding for the head; and the like.

So if a man's mind be given to wandering, let him study mathematics; for in demonstrations, if his attention be called away ever so little, he must begin again: if his mind be not apt to distinguish or find differences, let him study logic; for that is the "hair splitter": if he be not apt to beat over matters, and to call one thing to prove and illustrate another, let him study the lawyers' cases: so every weakness of the mind may have its own remedy.

"Of Negotiating"

¹It is generally better to deal by speech than by letter; and by the mediation of a third than by oneself. ²Letters are good, when a man would draw an answer in writing back again; or when it may serve for a man's justification afterwards to produce his own letter; or where it may be a danger to be interrupted, or to be heard by pieces. ³To deal in person is good, when a man's face breeds good regard, as commonly with inferiors; or in delicate cases, when a man's eye upon the expressions of him with whom he speaks may give him a direction how far to go; and generally, where a man will reserve the liberty either to disavow or to expound. ⁴In choice of ambassadors, it is better to choose men of a plainer sort, that are likely to do that which is committed to them, and to report back again faithfully the success, than to choose those who are cunning to contrive out of other men's

business something to grace themselves, and who will alter the matter in report for their own benefit. ⁵Use also such persons who enjoy the business wherein they are employed, for that quickens much; and such as are fit for the matter, as bold men for expostulation, fair-spoken men for persuasion, and stubborn men for business that does not easily bear itself out. ⁶Use also such as have been lucky and prevailed before in the things wherein you have employed them; for that breeds confidence, and they will strive to maintain their reputation. ⁷It is better to sound out a person with whom one deals, than to fall upon the point too quickly; unless you mean to surprise him by some short question. ⁸It is better to deal with men in need, than with those who are already where they would be. ⁹All practice is to reveal, or to work. ¹⁰Men reveal themselves in trust, in passion, when unawares, and out of necessity, when they would have something done and cannot find an apt pretext. ¹¹If you would work any man, you must either know his nature and fashions, and so lead him; or his goals, and so persuade him; or his weakness and disadvantages, and so over-power him. ¹²In dealing with cunning persons, we must ever consider their objectives to interpret their speeches; and it is good to say little to them, and that such as they least expect to hear. ¹³In all negotiations of difficulty, a man may not look to sow the seeds and reap the grain at once; but must prepare a business, and then ripen it by degrees.

CHAPTER TWO:

The Prepositional Phrase and Other Phrase Types

In the previous chapter you were examining the internal clusters of a sentence in a general way. You noticed segments which appeared to correspond with each other in a variety of ways. In this chapter we will start to define particular segment types more specifically. These segment types will include the **prepositional phrase**, the **infinitive phrase**, and the **participial phrase**.

The Prepositional phrase is the most regular of all. This phrase type actually follows a specific formula: $p \rightarrow n$. More simply, this formula states that you start the phrase on each preposition, and continue until you reach the next following noun. The fact that we can use a formula emphasizes the regularity of this phrase type. Prepositional phrases make up about 30% to 40% of all English, and every prepositional phrase follows the exact same pattern. As a result, the analysis of this phrase type is quite habit forming: if you have not already been introduced to this phrase, you will begin to recognize it very quickly. Furthermore, the regularity of the prepositional phrase helps to emphasize the argument from Chapter One, namely, that word clusters within a sentence have a solid unity. Prepositional phrases are solid, consistent word clusters that basically function as one.

Prepositions are words like *in, on, at, under, over, through, beside, by, behind, upon, along, near, to, and of*. Just add any noun (for example “the barn”) to any one of the prepositions above, and you will get a prepositional phrase, such as

in the barn,
on the barn,
at the barn,
under the barn,
over the barn,
through the barn,
beside the barn,

by the barn,
behind the barn,
upon the barn,
along the barn,
near the barn,
to the barn,
of the barn,

and so on for other prepositions. Or you could select any other noun (like “the river”), and run through all of the prepositions again, to create another whole set of prepositional phrases.

Note also that these phrases support the idea that a sentence is made up of integrated clusters. The continual repetition of this defined structure indicates that it is a solid entity. When you hear them over and over, they begin to sound like integrated pieces. They also function together as a whole

segment. For example, one whole phrase can act as a modifier, such as “the book *on the table*,” where the whole phrase tells you where the book is.

There are very few variations to upset the regular pattern of the prepositional phrase. One variation is to add a compound noun at the end, such as “near the river *and the trees*.” In this case the formula alters slightly: $p \rightarrow n \ \& \ n$. This is essentially the same pattern, however, because one could say that the conjunction “and” joins the two nouns, and since they are joined they essentially act as one, keeping to the same formula: $p \rightarrow n$.

Some prepositional phrases are very short, just the two words needed: “To me,” “for us,” “through darkness,” etc. Others can become quite long, but still keep to the essential formula: “for every barn and each haystack,” “to one or the other class member,” “in the most official and profound designation,” etc.

In addition to these structural variations, there are also some deceptive cases to look out for. Some words can function as a preposition at one time, but can function as a different part of speech at other times. It all depends on the particular usage in any actual case. For example, the word “for” can be used exactly as the above cases: “This new lumber is *for the barn* that we are building.” When used as such, in a perfect match with the formula, one can easily argue that the word in this case is functioning as a preposition. However, there is another case where it does not fit with the formula: “We need lumber, for we are building a new barn.” In this case the word “for” seems to be acting as a conjunction to join two mini-sentences: “we need lumber” and “we are building a new barn.” Because it is used in a joining function, in this case it must be defined as a conjunction. Another example is “as.” It can be used in the pattern of prepositional phrases (“I sing *as a professional*”), or it can be used to join two whole sentences (“I sing *as she dances*”).

Finally, some prepositions can function as adverbs. “Above” is a word that can function within the formula (“*above the barn*”). But it can also act alone as a simple modifier (“the *above* pages,” “the cases mentioned *above*”), in which case the word is simply as an adjective or an adverb.

These are the variations in structure applicable to the prepositional phrase. All things considered, it is a very consistent, repetitive language structure. Once you get an ear for the phrase type it will become quite easy for you to pick them out *from the page*.

Hugh Blair

from Lectures on Rhetoric

Perspicuity is the fundamental quality of style, a quality so essential in every kind of writing, that, for the lack of it, nothing can atone.

Without perspicuity, the richest ornaments of style only glimmer through the dark.

Authors sometimes plead the difficulty of their subject, as an excuse for the lack of perspicuity.

The study of perspicuity requires attention, first, to single words and phrases, and then to the construction of sentences.

Purity is the use of words and constructions that belong to the idiom of the language which we speak; in opposition to words and phrases that are imported from other languages, or that are obsolete, or new-coined, or used without proper authority.

The above discussion of style relates chiefly to the choice of words.

From words I proceed to sentences; and since, in all writing and discourse, the proper composition and structure of sentences is of the highest importance, I shall treat this fully.

So much depends upon the proper construction of sentences, that, in every sort of composition, we cannot be too strict in our attention to it.

Prepositional phrases account for about 95% of all the phrase types that we have to deal with in this chapter. They are so numerous and so regular that they make our job for this Chapter very easy!

However, there are a few additional phrase types that we must also account for. These types, **infinitive phrases** and **participial phrases**, are very similar in pattern to the prepositional phrase, but they do introduce more exceptions, variations, and some difficulties.

The *infinitive phrase* follows a formula just like the prepositional phrase, but in this case the formula has more variations. The prepositional phrase always ends on a noun; but the *infinitive* phrase can end 1) on a noun, 2) on nothing, in other words, just the infinitive, or 3) on an adverb that modifies the infinitive: $\text{inf} \rightarrow \text{n} / \emptyset / \text{av}$. There are more options as to how an infinitive phrase can end. Infinitive phrases are modelled after the prepositional, but introduce more variations.

The infinitive itself is constructed by placing the word “to” in front of any verb, for example “to consider,” “to see,” “to purchase,” and so on. Every verb in the language can be made into an infinitive in this way. The infinitive phrase simply uses this infinitive verb type as the starting key word for a phrase. Take any prepositional phrase and replace the preposition with an infinitive and it becomes an infinitive phrase, for example “in the barn” becomes “to purchase the barn.” Try to think of the infinitive as one key starting point, even though it takes the form of two actual words. The infinitive is a combination, but it should be seen as essentially a single entity. (Again, the infinitive, with its two-word combination, supports the idea of word clusters.) To make an infinitive phrase, you simply start with one of these infinitives and then fill it in as per the above formula, with a noun, with nothing, or with an adverb.

The *participial phrase* also matches the structures described above quite well. Like the others, it depends entirely on the key starting word. Prepositional phrases start on every preposition; infinitives on every infinitive; and likewise, participial phrases start on each participle.

A *participle* is the term for words that form one component, or *part*, of a verb in the English verb system. As we know, English verbs often take up more than a single word. (This is another example of words that cluster tightly into one integral segment.) In “I have been going” the complete verb is “have been going.” You need all three of the words to express the

complete action that takes place, “have been going.”. In “I go” the verb is one word, but in “I am going” the verb is two words.

Participles come from multi-word verbs like these. Let’s start with one complete verb and proceed to take it apart.

If you say “She was considering a career in mathematics,” then the verb is “was considering.” The second part of that verb (i.e., the word “considering”) *cannot* act as a verb on its own. It is only *part* of a verb, a participle. “She considering” does not function as anything in grammar. So the participle part of the verb is not the actual verb on its own. But these participles can become detached from their verbs. The participle part can start to occur by itself in other areas of the sentence and in these cases begins to function as a phrase, not a verb anymore.

One of these participial functions is to act as the key word starting a phrase. In this sentence -- “Considering her resume, a career is guaranteed”-- the root sentence is “a career is guaranteed.” The other part is a participial phrase, “considering her resume.” Other examples would be “Selecting her resume was the easiest part of the committee’s work;” and “Writing her resume took all night.” The participial phrase starts on a participle and continues to the next noun, not too different from the pattern in prepositional phrases, like “in her resume” or “on her resume” or “for her resume,” and infinitive phrases, like “to write her resume,” “to send her resume” or “to read her resume.”

The above are examples of *present participle* phrases. It is called a *present* participle because, with its “-ing” ending, it is in the present tense, “considering.”. A *past* participial phrase (which is even more rare) is structured the same way as all of the above examples, but the key beginning word is in the past tense. The corresponding example would be “*Considered as a whole*, her resume is good.”

In the sentences below you still will find numerous examples of prepositional phrases, but in these, there are also infinitives and a few participles. Please spend some pencil time drawing a line through, i.e., crossing out each prepositional, infinitive, and participial phrase in these sentences. A key is provided so you can see if our answers match.

When you are done with the worksheet below as well as the previous one, please go back over both of them and read out loud all of the crossed out phrases. Doing this will help to ingrain the phrasing pattern in your mind. It is part of helping you to internalize, or habituate, grammatical structure.

In the next chapter, we will talk about all of the parts *not* crossed out in brackets; we will see that these are the clauses or root sentences.

Hugh Blair

from Lectures on Rhetoric continued...

By giving attention to the rules which relate to this part of style, we acquire the habit of expressing ourselves with perspicuity and elegance; and, if a disorder does arise in some of our sentences, we immediately see where it lies, and are able to rectify it.

The least failure in clearness, the least degree of ambiguity, which leaves the mind in any sort of suspense about the meaning, should be avoided with the greatest care.

Ambiguity arises from two causes: either from a wrong choice of words, or from a wrong collocation of them.

A capital rule in the arrangement of sentences is that the words or members most nearly related should be placed in the sentence as near to each other as possible.

Still more attention is required to the proper disposition of the relative pronouns, "who" "which," "what," "whose," and of all those particles which express the connection of the parts of speech with one another.

In every composition, of whatever kind, some degree of unity is required, in order to render it beautiful.

But most of all, in a single sentence, is required the strictest unity.

For the very nature of a sentence implies one proposition to be expressed.

It may consist of parts, indeed; but these parts must be so closely bound together, as to make the impression upon the mind, of one object, not of many.

We should not be hurried by sudden transitions from person to person, nor from subject to subject.

I proceed to a third rule for the unity of sentences, which is to keep clear of all parentheses in the middle of them.

I shall add only one rule more for the unity of a sentence, which is to bring it always to a full and perfect close.

If we are obliged to follow a writer with much care, in order to comprehend him fully, he will never please us long.

We must study, not only that every hearer may understand us, but that it shall be impossible for him not to understand us

The exact import of precision may be drawn from the etymology of the word.

It comes from “precidere,” “to cut off”: It imports retrenching all superfluities, and pruning the expression so as to exhibit neither more nor less than an exact copy of his idea who uses it.

In order to write with precision, though this be properly a quality of style, one must possess a very considerable degree of distinctness and accuracy in his manner of thinking.

Feeble writers employ a multitude of words to make themselves understood, as they think, more distinctly; and they only confound the reader.

Answer Key

Perspicuity is the fundamental quality of style, a quality so essential in every kind of writing, that, for the lack of it, nothing can atone.

Without perspicuity, the richest ornaments of style only glimmer through the dark.

Authors sometimes plead the difficulty of their subject, as an excuse for the lack of perspicuity.

The study of perspicuity requires attention, first, to single words and phrases, and then to the construction of sentences.

Purity is the use of words and constructions that belong to the idiom of the language which we speak; in opposition to words and phrases that are imported from other languages, or that are obsolete, or new-coined, or used without proper authority.

The above discussion of style relates chiefly to the choice of words.

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So much depends upon the proper construction of sentences, that, in every sort of composition, we cannot be too strict in our attention to it.

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CHAPTER THREE:

The Clause

In order to identify the clause unit, there would be no better method than to go back to the sentences from the Hugh Blair worksheet above, and to read over all of the parts *not* crossed out as phrases. Amongst the non-phrasal parts, we will find the core of each sentence, also referred to as the “clause.” Within the clause, there are two key, core words, which constitute the very center of the sentence. These two words are termed the “subject” and the “verb” respectively, and in combination they form the very minimum of any statement, sentence, or assertion. Here are some examples:

*Without perspicuity, the richest **ornaments** of style only **glimmer** through the dark.*

***Authors** sometimes **plead** the difficulty of their subject, as an excuse for the lack of perspicuity.*

These bold faced segments are examples of clauses. Please browse back over the answer key to Blair, and read out all of the parts not included in brackets. In most cases these will form into well developed sentences, with the exception of a few structural words left over, whose grammatical functions will be explained in following chapters. The distinction of bracketed and non-bracketed parts (with the non-bracketed parts actually forming rough sentences) shows us the two fundamental parts of sentence structure, phrases (in brackets, “add-on segments”), and clauses (underlying core sentence).

The clauses actually focus narrowly on two key words in each case, first “ornaments glimmer” and second “authors plead.” The other words such as “the richest” and “only” are directly connected to the base words; therefore, all of the part *not* in brackets constitutes the clause in these sentences.

The definition of the clause is the combination of a main noun, with a main verb, in a direct connection, to form a core statement. Any time a noun is associated with a verb in this way, it is said to be the “grammatical subject” of the verb. In the second example above there is also a grammatical “object,” namely the word “difficulty.” The *clause* is this two or three word core of every sentence.

Take a moment to cross out the prepositional and infinitive phrases in the sentences below

The original proposal to provide the N.I.C.E with a ‘police force’ of its own was rejected with disgust by the members on the floor.

Twenty-five kilobytes of information about the geological composition of the planet were transmitted to the main computer to be processed within a week.

Respect for our rights at home, security against similar future violations, and power to repel these violent attacks, these are our strength in a time of international turbulence.

To those peoples in the huts and villages of half the globe, struggling in the bonds of misery, we pledge our best efforts to help them in their times of need.

I sit by myself in the lamplight with an ancient book before me, and hold intimate converse with men of unseen generations.

Now, looking again at the above sentences, you will see that the words which remain form into core “mini-sentences.” These mini-sentences are each one a clause. When the non-phrase segments are isolated in this way, we can see the underlying sentence cores, the clauses: “The original proposal was rejected;” “Twenty-five kilobytes were transmitted;” “Respect, security, and power, these are our strength;” we pledge our best efforts;” “I sit and hold intimate converse.” These non-phrase segments are based most fundamentally on just two words: the noun and the verb which combine together to form the absolute core: “proposal --- was rejected;” “kilobytes --- were transmitted;” “these --- are;” “we --- pledge;” “I --- sit and hold.”

The core sentence seems to be more than just two words in some cases. But some word combinations are essentially functioning as one word. For example, “was rejected” is a single verb that takes up two words. The action taking place in the sentence can only be described by the two words, “was rejected.” This is also true for “were transmitted.” The two verbs “sit and hold” tell a slightly different story. There are indeed two verbs, as shown by the two separate actions. However, these two verbs are joined by the conjunction, and so they are combined into one.

There are also secondary words that may hide the core noun as well. In “*the original proposal*,” “*twenty-five kilobytes*,” and so on, the italicized words are adjectives, but they are so closely associated that we can point either to “proposal” or to “the original proposal,” and either to “kilobytes” or to “twenty-five kilobytes” as the key noun or noun phrase which connects directly to its verb. Therefore, in spite of the appearance of more than two key words, the underlying clause is actually focussed on two very specific components.

A noun which connects directly to a verb designated as a “subject.” There may be any number of nouns in a sentence, but the “subject” designation applies only to the one or two nouns which are in close association with a verb.”

Thus, in identifying the clause, we are identifying the underlying “subject and verb” combination. When we identify the core clause, we separate the underlying, base words, from the phrases which are built up upon this base.

These “subject-verb” combinations, and sometimes “subject-verb-object” combinations, are underlined in the sentences below:

*The **study of perspicuity** requires attention, first, ~~to single words and phrases,~~ and then ~~to the construction of sentences.~~*

*The above **discussion of style** relates chiefly ~~to the choice of words.~~*

*The least **failure in clearness,** the least **degree of ambiguity,** which leaves the mind ~~in any sort of suspense about the meaning,~~ **should be avoided with the greatest care.***

In some clauses, a noun following the verb is also underlined. A noun in this relation to the core clause is called an “object,” with the proviso that the “object” is optional. So, there are some further complications that we must talk about. Nonetheless, if you pick out the underlined words, you will see that they do form the root mini-sentences:

“Study -- requires -- attention” presents no problems. “The” is simply an article or small modifier attached directly to “study.” This leaves the words “first” and “and then,” which can be explained as connecting words which join the prepositional phrases to each other, and compare them. In sentence two above, “purity -- is -- use” presents no problem. But in clauses like “that belong,” “which we speak,” and “that are obsolete, or new-coined, or used,” further explanation will be needed.

The definition of the clause is very specific. A clause occurs where there is a key noun (i.e., “noun subject”) which links directly to a verb to form a core statement. This part of clause analysis is completely regular and consistent. However, this basis can be elaborated in several ways. One variation is to have a compound subject; another is to have a compound verb; and another would be to have both compound. There can be embedded and hidden clauses. We will begin to deal with the more elaborate, multiple-clause sentences in the pages ahead.

Compound and Complex Sentences (from Francis Bacon and Hugh Blair)

Place double underlining under each conjunction between two clauses.

Letters are good, when a man would draw an answer in writing back again

In dealing with cunning persons, we must ever consider their objectives to interpret their speeches; and it is good to say little to them

Crafty men condemn studies; simple men admire them; and wise men use them: for they teach not their own use; but that is a wisdom outside of studies and above studies, won by observation.

Precision imports retrenching all superfluities, and it implies pruning the expression.

Feeble writers employ a multitude of words to make themselves understood more distinctly; but they only confound the reader.

A writer will never please us long. if we are obliged to follow him with much care, in order to comprehend him fully,

So much depends upon the proper construction of sentences, that, in every sort of composition, we cannot be too strict in our attention to it.

We acquire the habit of expressing ourselves with perspicuity and elegance; we immediately see any disorder, and we are able to rectify it.

Most of all, the strictest unity in a single sentence is required, for the very nature of a sentence implies one proposition to be expressed.

It may consist of parts, but these parts must be so closely bound together, that they make the impression upon the mind of one object, not of many.

I proceed to a third rule for the unity of sentences; this is to keep clear of all parentheses in the middle of them.

I shall add only one rule more for the unity of a sentence; this is to bring it always to a full and perfect close.

Compound and Complex Sentences (from Francis Bacon and Hugh Blair)

Key.

Letters are good, when a man would draw an answer in writing back again

In dealing with cunning persons, we must ever consider their objectives to interpret their speeches ; and it is good to say little to them

Crafty men condemn studies ; simple men admire them ; and wise men use them ; for they teach not their own use ; but that is a wisdom outside of studies and above studies, won by observation.

Precision imports retrenching all superfluties, and it implies pruning the expression.

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CHAPTER FOUR:

Dependent Clauses

In the previous chapter we talked about the forms that one individual clause can take. Even if it has a compound subject or a compound verb, or has many phrases attached to it, it is still at center just one clause. In this chapter we will talk about the next level of complication: the addition to clause structure is to *combine* several individual clauses together. A clause can sometimes be a sentence in itself, as in all of the examples used in Chapter Three.

However, a sentence is, in the structural sense, a larger container than a clause. A sentence can contain a minimum of one clause; but it can also contain several or more clauses. The result of this combination is a *multi-clause sentence*, a sentence comprised of several “mini-sentences” within. Such combinations happen on a regular basis. In fact, the majority of sentences spoken or written in everyday English are various types of multi-clause sentence.

In addition to the several clauses, larger sentences contain an important structure word known as a *clause conjunction*. The basic structure will be as follows:

subject--verb--(object) CONJUNCTION subject--verb--(object).

Any two basic clauses can be joined together in this way, to form what is naturally designated as a compound sentence. Every time two such clauses are joined together in one sentence, there must be a conjunction. Conjunctions include words like “and,” “but,” “or,” “yet,” and “for,” as well as words like “therefore,” “moreover,” and “nevertheless.” The pattern results in sentences which are structured in this way:

We sent the letters, BUT the post office failed to deliver them;

She took them to the zoo WHEN I gave the needed permission.

Note that there is a full sentence both before and after the clause conjunctions.

One note of caution is that even though these words are *conjunctions*, they do not always act as “*clause conjunctions*.” The word “and” can act as a conjunction for *any* two elements of a sentence. You can use “and” to join a word to a word, or a phrase to a phrase. It is only when a conjunction is used to join *a whole clause to a clause* that we call it a “*clause conjunction*.” In the following example, the first “and” is acting as a word conjunction; the

second “and” is a clause conjunction; while the third “and” is a phrase conjunction:

Jim and Terry went camping, and they had a great time, both ~~in the sunshine~~ *and in the rain*.

The second note of caution deals with the word “for,” because this word has more than one grammatical function. When “for” sits between two clauses and serves to join them, it is acting as a clause conjunction: “We went swimming *for* it was a hot day.” On the other hand, when “for” occupies the place and structure of a preposition, it is acting as a preposition: “We went swimming *for one hour*.” Therefore, while the word “for” can function in either way, you can tell the function in any given instance from the context. If “for” is followed by a noun (as in any other prepositional phrase, e.g. “for one hour”), then it is clearly acting as a preposition. If it is followed by a whole sentence and is acting to join the two sentences together (“we went swimming FOR it was a hot day”), then it is clearly acting as a clause conjunction.

This type of difficulty arises on many occasions when one particular word is capable of shifting from one grammatical function to another. Functional shifts occur in many areas of the English language. This shifting represents a certain amount of variability in English. But, on the side of stability, there is a great deal of regularity in the structures. The words may shift from one function to another, but the *functions* and *structures* of the sentence do not change. Such shifts should present no great inconvenience in adapting our analysis of sentences.

The final concept that we need to understand for sentence structure analysis is the concept of *independent* versus the *dependent* clauses. Both types fit the “subject and verb” structure. A clause consists of a *subject word* that connects directly to a *verb*, thereby forming a mini-statement. However, some clauses cannot act as a sentence. There is no difference in the basic definition; both types contain the *subject-verb* combination, but the dependent clauses clearly do not constitute an independent sentence. These clauses are designated as *dependent* because they cannot stand alone as a sentence; therefore, they must be attached to, or “depend on,” another sentence. Whenever a clause can also act as an independent sentence, it is designated as an *independent* clause. A dependent clause is a clause but not a sentence, whereas an independent clause is both a clause and a sentence. Dependent clauses are in one sense similar to prepositional phrases: because

they act as another type of add-on, they also build up parts into a complicated sentence.

There are a few issues which also makes the analysis of clauses tricky at times. One occurs in cases where the subject of the clause takes the form of a pronoun. These clauses can be hard for you to notice, and don't often look like very much when you do find them. Here is an example: "The chapters that follow constitute a history of England." This sentence contains two clauses. The noun which connects to the verb *constitute* is "chapters." But the noun for the verb *follow* is actually the word "that." While "the chapters constitute," is a clause, the words "*that follow*" are also a clause. They don't look like a very significant segment, but they do fit the definition: a key noun ("that") which connects directly to a key verb ("follow") to form a core statement: "that follow." The word "that" is a pronoun. "That" is also a type of noun, and, when used within the clause structure, is capable of connecting to a verb. Therefore, the structure of "that follow" has, by definition, elements of a clause; therefore, it is a clause. In the sentence below, the remaining words are subjects, verbs, and sometimes objects. In otherwords, whatever is not crossed out, is a clause:

Purity is the use ~~of words and constructions~~ that belong to the idiom of the language which we speak; ~~in opposition to words and phrases~~ that are imported from other languages, or that are obsolete, or new-coined, or used ~~without proper authority~~.

The sentence contains four separate clauses or "mini-sentences" (underlined), of which the first is *independent*, and the last three, *dependent*. All four clauses are subject-verb connections, but only the independent clause would count as a sentence on its own. Note also that clauses are the non-phrasal parts of these sentences. In other words, clauses are the parts that remain once the phrases have been removed.

No matter how elaborate a sentence may become, it always must return to a foundation of at least one independent clause, as in the above example, "purity is the use."

The distinction between dependent and independent clauses relates specifically to the type of clause conjunction at the start of the clause. Every time there is another clause added to a sentence, there is always a clause conjunction used to connect it. Furthermore, clause conjunctions fall into two groups; one results in independent clauses and the other results in dependent clauses.

In the first example below, the clause starts out as independent. It is both a clause and a sentence. However, it ceases to be a sentence in the subsequent examples. This change from sentence to non-sentence (even though both are clauses) shows the radical effect of clause conjunctions. A clause conjunction has the power to transform an independent sentence into a mere fragment. We see this happening in all of the examples that follow. Perhaps the reason for this change is to be found in the connective implication of the clause conjunction. A conjunction is by nature a connector; and having a connector implies having two things to connect; if only one thing is actually present, then the connection is inherently fragmented: this may be the underlying reality behind the grammar rule. Note how the *sentence* becomes a *fragment* when the word in italics (clause conjunction) is added:

Sentence: Perspicuity is the fundamental quality of style.

Fragments: although perspicuity is the fundamental quality of style

if perspicuity is the fundamental quality of style

while perspicuity is the fundamental quality of style

when perspicuity is the fundamental quality of style

since perspicuity is the fundamental quality of style

because perspicuity is the fundamental quality of style

which is the fundamental quality of style

unless perspicuity be the fundamental quality of style

before perspicuity may be the fundamental quality of style

how perspicuity may become the fundamental quality

whether perspicuity be the fundamental quality

The first example above – “Perspicuity is the fundamental quality of style” -- is both a *clause* and a *sentence*. All of the subsequent examples are still *clauses*, because they still have the subject-verb combination. However, none of them any longer qualifies as a sentence. All of them have gone from *independent* to *dependent* clauses. In each case, the change is caused by the type of conjunction added to front of the clause.

All of the words in italics above are clause conjunctions. The clause conjunctions above are all classified as *subordinating conjunctions*, because they all render the clause into a dependent fragment. But in the case of an additional set of simpler, more mild conjunctions (including “and,” “or,” “yet,” “so,” “for,” or “therefore,” as well as the semi-colon and colon), the connection is less intensive. In the case of these clause conjunctions (called *coordinating conjunctions*), the two clauses are still joined into one sentence, but both clauses are considered to remain independent.

In the example sentences below, I ask you to place square brackets around *all* clause conjunctions, whether subordinating or coordinating. However, in the case of a subordinating conjunction, the following clause is said to be dependent; in the case of dependent clauses I ask you to place brackets around the whole clause. The following are examples of this diagramming method:

It was a summer day and it was perfect for swimming.

The days (that I love are grey and rainy.)

The days (that make August last forever) are called the dog days.

It was a summer day (which was perfect for swimming.)

Please diagram these sentences in the manner described, and compare to the key provided:

We are pleased with an author who frees us from all fatigue of searching for his meaning.

I shall not confine myself to perspicuity alone, but shall inquire also, what is requisite for their grace and beauty.

For, be the subject what it will, if the sentences be constructed in a clumsy manner, it is impossible that such a work can be read with pleasure, or even with profit.

A second rule is never to crowd in things which have so little connection that they could bear to be divided into two or three sentences.

Let us now consider the import of precision in language, which, as it is the highest part of the quality denoted by perspicuity, merits a full explication.

Key:

We are pleased with an author (who frees us from all fatigue of searching for his meaning.)

I shall not confine myself to perspicuity alone, but shall inquire also, (what is requisite for their grace and beauty.)

For, be the subject (what it will,) (if the sentences be constructed in a clumsy manner,) it is impossible (that a such work can be read with pleasure, or even with profit.)

A second rule is never to crowd in things (which have so little connection) (that they could bear to be divided into two or three sentences.)

Let us now consider the import of precision in language, (which, (as it is the highest part of the quality denoted by perspicuity,) merits a full explication.)

Now go back to the second Chapter and include phrase crossing-out. This takes us to the full sentence structure analysis, as shown below. There are three elements of this analysis: 1) cross out phrases, 2) place square brackets around clause conjunctions, and 3) place brackets around the dependent clauses.

Key:

We are pleased ~~with an author~~ (who frees us ~~from all fatigue of~~ searching for his meaning.)

I shall not confine myself ~~to perspicuity alone~~, but shall inquire also, (what is requisite ~~for their grace and beauty~~.)

For, be the subject (what it will,) (if the sentences be constructed ~~in a clumsy manner~~,) it is impossible (that a such work can be read ~~with~~ pleasure, or even ~~with profit~~.)

A second rule is never ~~to crowd in things~~ (which have so little connection) (that they could bear ~~to be divided into two or three~~ sentences.)

Let us now consider the import of ~~precision in language~~, (which, { as it is the highest part of the quality denoted by perspicuity,) merits a full explication. }

Now you have studied all aspects of phrase and clause structure that are necessary for a diagram analysis of any sentence in English. The analysis method outlined in this workbook does not cover the whole subject of English grammar. However, it is a complete system in regards to sentence structure. All that remains is to apply the bracketing method again and again. As you practice this method on actual sentences, you will reinforce the sentence structure part of your "language center" in the brain. You will form the unconscious and half-conscious habits of classic English writers. You may not ever write in this way on purpose, but this underlying awareness will filter down and give additional strength and control to your writing abilities. When you practice using the classic authors who are presented on the worksheets, you will absorb a part of their writing style. Since these are some of the great writers of English, that's not a bad thing!

We have gotten to this analysis method fairly quickly and directly. Now I ask you to spend as much pencil time as you can in working with the sentences themselves. Apply the diagramming method to the sentences below at least one or two times. Once you have mastered the *concept*, continue the *practise* of diagramming, and reading out, the sentences. Accentuate the internal phrase and clause structures. With this type of exercise, it is not just the concept itself, but the actual practice, that gives rise to greater sentence structure awareness and strong sentence-writing style.

Classic English Authors

Cross out the prepositional phrases in the following sentences. Cross out any infinitive and participial segments with round brackets. Double underline clause conjunctions and bracket the dependent clauses.

Abraham Lincoln

The year that is drawing toward its close has been filled with the blessings of fruitful fields and healthful skies.

To these bounties, which are so constantly enjoyed that we are prone to forget their source, others have been added, which are of so extraordinary a nature that they cannot fail to penetrate and soften the heart which is habitually insensible to the ever-watchful providence of almighty God.

It has long been a grave question whether any government which is not too strong for the liberties of its people, can be strong enough to maintain its existence in great emergencies.

Any proposition which embraces the restoration of peace, the integrity of the whole Union, and the abandonment of slavery, will be received and considered by the executive government of the United States.

In the midst of a civil war of unequalled magnitude and severity, which has sometimes seemed to foreign states to invite and provoke their aggressions, peace has been preserved with all nations, order has been maintained, the laws have been respected and obeyed, and harmony has prevailed everywhere, except in the theatre of military conflict.

Needful diversions of wealth and of strength from the fields of peaceful industry to the national defense have not arrested the plow, the shuttle, or the ship; the axe has enlarged the borders of our settlements, and the mines, as well of iron and coal as of the precious metals, have yielded even more abundantly than heretofore.

I do, therefore, invite my fellow-citizens in every part of the United States, and also those who are at sea and those who are sojourning in foreign lands, to set apart and observe the last Thursday of November next as a day of thanksgiving and praise to our beneficent Father who dwelleth in the heavens.

Fourscore and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.

Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure.

We have come to dedicate a portion of that field as a final resting-place for those who here gave their lives that that nation might live.

The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated this ground far above our poor power to add or detract.

The world will little note nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here.

We have been the recipients of the choicest bounties of Heaven.

We have been preserved for these many years in peace and prosperity.

We have grown in numbers, wealth, and power as no other nation has ever grown; but we have forgotten God.

We have forgotten the gracious hand which preserved us in peace, and multiplied and strengthened us; and we have vainly imagined, in the deceitfulness of our hearts, that all these blessings were produced by some superior wisdom and virtue of our own.

Jane Austen

Every impulse of feeling should be guided by reason; and, in my opinion, exertion should always be in proportion to the requirement.

Jane united a composure of temper with a uniform cheerfulness of manner, which would guard her from the suspicions of the impertinent.

It may perhaps be pleasant to impose on the public in such a case; but it is sometimes a disadvantage to be always on guard.

The rain continued the whole evening without intermission; Jane certainly could not come back.

You must know that Mrs Long says that Netherfield is taken by a young man of large fortune from the north of England; that he came down on Monday in a chaise and four to see the place, that he was so much delighted with it that he agreed with Mr Morris immediately; and that he is to take possession before Michaelmas.

You and the girls may go, or you may send them by themselves, which perhaps will be still better, for, as you are as handsome as any of them, Mr Bingley might like you the best of the party.

Indeed you must go, for it will be impossible for us to visit him, if you do not.

Mr. Bennet was so odd a mixture of quick parts, that the experience of three and twenty years had been insufficient to make his wife understand his character.

When she was discontented she fancied herself nervous.

Mr Bennet was among the earliest of those who waited on Mr Bingley.

He had always intended to visit him; although to the last he always assured his wife that he would not go; and until the evening after the visit was paid, she had no knowledge of it.

One cannot know what a man really is by the end of a fortnight.

But if we do not venture, somebody else will; and after all, Mrs Long and her nieces must take their chances; and, since she will think it an act of kindness if you decline the office, I will take it on myself.

If I had known as much this morning, I certainly would not have called on him.

The rest of the evening was spent in conjecturing how soon he would return Mr Bennet's visit, and in determining when they should ask him for dinner.

H. G. Wells

Far overhead, on three sides, vast cliffs of grey-green rock were capped by cliffs of ice; but the glacier stream came not to them but flowed away by the farther slopes, and only now and then huge ice masses fell on the valley side.

It was to seek some charm or antidote against this plague of blindness that he had with fatigue and danger and difficulty returned down the gorge.

In those days, in such cases, men did not think of germs and infections but of sins; and it seemed to him that the reason of this affliction must lie in the negligence of these priestless immigrants to establish a shrine when they entered the valley.

The stream that had once made the gorge now burst from the mouth of a rocky cave, and the legend that his poor, ill-told story set going developed into the legend of a race of blind men somewhere 'over there,' which one may still hear today.

Long years ago the valley lay so far open to the world that men might come at last through frightful gorges and over an icy pass into its equable meadows; and thither indeed men came.

Then came the stupendous outbreak of Mindobamba, when it was night in Quito for seventeen days, and the water was boiling at Yaguachi, and all the fish were floating and dying even as far as Guayaquil; everywhere along the Pacific slopes there were landslips and swift thawings and sudden floods, and

one whole side of the old Arauca crest slipped, and came down in thunder, and cut off the Country of the Blind for ever from the exploring feet of men.

But one of these early settlers had chanced to be on the hither side of the gorges when the world had so terribly shaken itself, and he perforce had to forget his wife and his child and all the friends and possessions he had left up there, and start life over again in the lower world.

He started it again but ill; blindness overtook him, and he died of punishment in the mines; but the story that he told begot a legend that lingers along the length of the Cordilleras of the Andes to this day.

He told of his reason for venturing back from that vastness, into which he had first been carried lashed to a llama, beside a vast bale of gear, when he was a child.

The valley had in it all that the heart of man could desire: sweet water, pasture, an even climate, and slopes of rich brown soil with tangles of a shrub that bore an excellent fruit; and, on one side, great hanging forests of pine that held the avalanches high.

I figure this dim-eyed young mountaineer, a man all unused to the ways of the lower world, telling this story to some keen-eyed, attentive priest before the great convulsion; I can picture him presently seeking to return with pious and infallible remedies against that trouble, and I can see the infinite dismay with which he must have faced the tumbled vastness where the gorge had once come out.

W. B. Yeats

When I must have been still a very little boy of seven or eight years perhaps, an uncle called me from bed one night, to ride the five or six miles to Rosses Point to borrow a railway-pass from a cousin.

I was let out through a gate that opened upon a little lane beside the garden away from ear-shot of the house, and I rode delighted through the moonlight and awoke my cousin in the small hours by tapping on his window with a whip.

My first memories are fragmentary and isolated and contemporaneous, as though someone remembered some first moments of the Seven Days.

It seems as if time had not yet been created, for all thoughts connected with emotion and place are without sequence.

I may have already had that night of misery when, having prayed for several days that I might die, I began to be afraid that I was dying, and prayed that I might live.

I used to think about God and fancy that I was very wicked, and one day when I threw a stone and hit a duck in the yard by mischance and broke its wing, I was full of wonder when I was told that the duck would be cooked for dinner and that I would not be punished.

He was never unkind, and I cannot remember that he ever spoke harshly to me, but it was the custom to fear and admire him.

He had no relations, for he was an only child, and, being solitary and silent, he had few friends.

CHAPTER FIVE:

Punctuation

The main purpose of punctuation is to highlight the clause and phrase structure of the sentence, quickly and clearly. Three rules account for a great deal of punctuation:

- 1) Use a comma to separate an introductory, *lead in segment* from the beginning of the independent clause.
- 2) Use a comma to separate an attached, *follow out segment*.
- 3) Use the comma in pairs, like a *detour and return sign*, to indicate a segment which is inserted into a main clause.

Punctuation Worksheet

Indicate the punctuation type of the following sentences. In each of the following sentences, choose from 1) a lead in segment, 2) a follow out segment; 3) an inserted segment, or 4) other, and underline the independent clause(s).

In contrast to the Elizabethans, Eighteenth-century thinkers were worried by the absence of rules.

In their desire for a rational style, Eighteenth-century authors turned their attention to English grammar.

Before the appearance of the printing press, manuscripts were copied by hand.

In spite of our four-wheel-drive on demand, our progress was arrested at the end of the passage by a pile of snow-covered debris.

Without a moment of hesitation, I ordered ten of the shirts with the ruffled collars from Saks in New York.

The car rattled along the street, trailing an array of tin cans.

Voyager II gathered more information about Saturn in eight hours, than astronomers were able to amass in 205 years of observations.

Two conclusions seem to emerge from the first accounts, with a clarity to be admired.

The big man strides along, his whole carriage suggesting the eagerness and confidence of a

soldier marching forward to receive some important medal.

He is quick to see the faults of others, but not to see his own.

My uncle, who lives in Australia, sent me a camera which I use on a daily basis.

The distinguished scientist, who has a successful career aboard, returned to visit the simple cottage where he had been born.

Two episodes, feeding the pigeons and seeing the mountains, are especially important.

Mr Bennet lacks ambition and motivation; his life has become a retreat into the security of his library.

Jane finally had to make a decision: one of these men was in the wrong.

Sandy wasted no time: when the store opened she went right in to return the broken lamp.

Mrs Bennet's thoughts are of marriage, riches and gaiety; in other matters, her opinions match those of the people whom she admires.

Punctuation Worksheet

The sentences below are taken from the Hugh Blair excerpts found starting on page 45 of this book. However, as copied here, *all of his original punctuation has been deleted*. Add correct punctuation to these sentences. Compare your versions to the original versions by the author. Your punctuation does not have to match that of the author exactly to be valid according to the punctuation rules that we discussed above.

It is not easy to give a precise idea of what is meant by style. The best definition I can give of it is the peculiar manner in which a person expresses his thought by means of language. It is different from mere language or words. The words which an author employs may be proper and faultless and his Style may nevertheless have great faults it may be dry or stiff or feeble or affected. Style has always some reference to an author's manner of thinking. It is a picture of the ideas which rise in his mind and of the manner in which they rise there and hence when we are examining an author's composition it is in many cases extremely difficult to separate the style from the sentiment. No wonder these two should be so intimately connected as style is nothing else than that sort of expression which our thoughts most readily assume. Hence different countries have been noted for peculiarities of style suited to their different temper and genius. The eastern nations animated their style with the most strong and hyperbolic figures. The Athenians a polished and acute people formed a style accurate clear and neat. The Asiatics gay and loose in their manners affected a style florid and diffuse. The like sort of characteristic differences are commonly remarked in the style of the French the English and the Spanish. In giving the general characters of style it is usual to talk of a nervous a feeble or a spirited style which are plainly the characters of a writer's manner of thinking as well as of expressing himself so difficult it is to separate these two things from one another. Of the general characters of style I am afterwards to discourse but it will be necessary to begin with examining the more simple qualities of it from the assemblage of which its more complex denominations in great measure result.

All the qualities of a good style may be ranged under two heads Perspicuity and Ornament. For all that can possibly be required of Language is to convey our ideas clearly to the minds of others and at the same time in such a dress as by pleasing and interesting them shall

most effectually strengthen the impressions which we seek to make. When both these ends are answered we certainly accomplish every purpose for which we use writing and discourse.

Perspicuity it will be readily admitted is the fundamental quality of style a quality so essential in every kind of writing that for the want of it nothing can atone. Without this the richest ornaments of style only glimmer through the dark; and muddle instead of pleasing the reader. This therefore must be our first object to make our meaning clearly and fully understood and understood without the least difficulty.

Discourse ought always to be obvious even to the most careless and negligent hearer so that the sense shall strike his mind as the light of the sun does our eyes though they are not directed upwards to it. We must study not only that every hearer may understand us but that it shall be impossible for him not to understand us (Quintilian).

If we are obliged to follow a writer with much care to pause and to read over his sentences a second time in order to comprehend them fully he will never please us long. Mankind are too indolent to relish so much labour. They may pretend to admire the author's depth after they have discovered his meaning but they will seldom be inclined to take up his work a second time.

Authors sometimes plead the difficulty of their subject as an excuse for the want of perspicuity. But the excuse can rarely if ever be admitted. For whatever a man conceives clearly that it is in his power if he will be at the trouble to put into distinct propositions or to express clearly to others and upon no subject ought any man to write where he cannot think clearly. His ideas indeed may very excusably be on some subjects incomplete or inadequate but still as far as they go they ought to be clear and wherever this is the case perspicuity in expressing them is always attainable. The obscurity which reigns so much among many metaphysical writers is for the most

part owing to the indistinctness of their own conceptions. They see the object but in a confused light and of course can never exhibit it in a clear one to others.

Perspicuity in writing is not to be considered as merely a sort of negative virtue or freedom from defect. It has higher merit it is a degree of positive beauty. We are pleased with an author we consider him as deserving praise who frees us from all fatigue of searching for his meaning who carries us through his subject without any embarrassment or confusion whose style flows always like a limpid stream where we see to the very bottom:

*Though deep yet clear though gentle yet not dull
Strong without rage without o'erflowing full.*

The study of perspicuity requires attention first to single words and phrases and then to the construction of sentences. I begin with treating of the first and shall confine myself to it in this lecture. Perspicuity considered with respect to words and phrases requires these three qualities in them Purity Propriety and Precision. Purity and Propriety of language are often used indiscriminately for each other and indeed they are very nearly allied. A distinction however obtains between them. Purity is the use of such words and such constructions as belong to the idiom of the language which we speak in opposition to words and phrases that are imported from other languages or that are obsolete or new- coined or used without proper authority. Propriety is the selection of such words in the language as the best and most established usage has appropriated to those ideas which we intend to express by them. It implies the correct and happy application of them according to that usage in opposition to vulgarisms or low expressions and to words and phrases which would be less significant of the ideas that we mean to convey. Style may be pure that is it may all be strictly English without Scotticisms or Gallicisms or ungrammatical irregular expressions of any kind and may nevertheless be deficient in Propriety. The words may be ill chosen not adapted to the subject nor fully expressive of the author's sense. He has taken all his words and phrases from the general mass of

the English Language but he has made his selection among these words unhappily. Whereas style cannot be proper without being also pure and where both purity and propriety meet besides making style perspicuous they also render it graceful. There is no standard either of Purity or of Propriety but the practice of the best writers and speakers in the country.

Let us now consider the import of precision in language which as it is the highest part of the quality denoted by perspicuity merits a full explication and the more because distinct ideas are perhaps not commonly formed about it.

The exact import of precision may be drawn from the etymology of the word. It comes from "precidere" to cut off It imports retrenching all superfluities and pruning the expression so as to exhibit neither more nor less than an exact copy of his idea who uses it. I observed before that it is often difficult to separate the qualities of Style from the qualities of thought and it is found so in this instance. For in order to write with precision though this be properly a quality of style one must possess a very considerable degree of distinctness and accuracy in his manner of thinking.

The words which a man uses to express his ideas may be faulty in three respects They may either not express that idea which the author intends but some other which only resembles or is akin to it or they may express that idea but not quite fully and completely or they may express it together with something more than he intends. Precision stands opposed to all these three faults but chiefly to the last. In an author's writing with propriety his being free from the two former faults seems implied. The words which he uses are proper that is they express that idea which he intends and they express it fully but to be precise signifies that they express that idea and no more. There is nothing in his words which introduces any foreign idea any superfluous unseasonable accessory so as to mix it confusedly with the principal object and thereby to render our conception of that object loose and indistinct. This requires a writer to have himself a very clear apprehension of the object he means to present to us to have laid fast hold of it in his mind and never to waver in any one view he takes of it a perfection to which indeed few writers attain.

CHAPTER SIX:

Readings on sentence structure from Hugh Blair

From *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres*

LECTURE X. Style -- Precision and Perspicuity.

It is not easy to give a precise idea of what is meant by style. The best definition I can give of it is the peculiar manner in which a person expresses his thought, by means of language. It is different from mere language or words. The words, which an author employs, may be proper and faultless; and his Style may nevertheless have great faults; it may be dry, or stiff, or feeble, or affected. Style has always some reference to an author's manner of thinking. It is a picture of the ideas which rise in his mind, and of the manner in which they rise there; and, hence, when we are examining an author's composition, it is, in many cases, extremely difficult to separate the style from the sentiment. No wonder these two should be so intimately connected, as style is nothing else, than that sort of expression which our thoughts most readily assume. Hence, different countries have been noted for peculiarities of style, suited to their different temper and genius. The eastern nations animated their style with the most strong and hyperbolic figures. The Athenians, a polished and acute people, formed a style accurate, clear, and neat. The Asiatics, gay and loose in their manners, affected a style florid and diffuse. The like sort of characteristic differences are commonly remarked in the style of the French, the English, and the Spanish. In giving the general characters of style, it is usual to talk of a nervous, a feeble, or a spirited style; which are plainly the characters of a writer's manner of thinking, as well as of expressing himself: so difficult it is to separate these two things from one another. Of the general characters of style, I am afterwards to discourse; but it will be necessary to begin with examining the more simple qualities of it; from the assemblage of which, its more complex denominations, in great measure, result.

All the qualities of a good style may be ranged under two heads, Perspicuity and Ornament. For all that can possibly be required of Language is to convey our ideas clearly to the minds of others, and, at the same time, in such a dress, as by pleasing and interesting them, shall most effectually strengthen the impressions which we seek to make. When both these ends are

answered, we certainly accomplish every purpose for which we use writing and discourse.

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The study of perspicuity requires attention, first, to single words and phrases, and then to the construction of sentences. I begin with treating of the first, and shall confine myself to it in this lecture. Perspicuity, considered with respect to words and phrases, requires these three qualities in them: Purity, Propriety, and Precision. Purity and Propriety of language are often used indiscriminately for each other; and, indeed, they are very nearly allied. A distinction, however, obtains between them. Purity is the use of such words, and such constructions, as belong to the idiom of the language which we speak; in opposition to words and phrases that are imported from other languages, or that are obsolete, or new-coined, or used without proper authority. Propriety is the selection of such words in the language, as the best and most established usage has appropriated to those ideas which we intend to express by them. It implies the correct and happy application of them, according to that usage, in opposition to vulgarisms, or low expressions; and to words and phrases, which would be less significant of the ideas that we mean to convey. Style may be pure, that is, it may all be strictly English, without Scotticisms or Gallicisms, or ungrammatical irregular expressions of any kind, and may, nevertheless, be deficient in Propriety. The words may be ill chosen; not adapted to the subject, nor fully expressive of the author's sense. He has taken all his words and phrases from the general mass of the English Language; but he has made his selection among these words unhappily. Whereas, style cannot be proper without being also pure; and where both purity and propriety meet, besides making style perspicuous, they also render it graceful. There is no standard, either of Purity or of Propriety, but the practice of the best writers and speakers in the country.

Let us now consider the import of precision in language, which, as it is the highest part of the quality denoted by perspicuity, merits a full explication; and the more, because distinct ideas are, perhaps, not commonly formed about it.

The exact import of precision may be drawn from the etymology of the word. It comes from

"precidere," to cut off: It imports retrenching all superfluities, and pruning the expression so as to exhibit neither more nor less than an exact copy of his idea who uses it. I observed before, that it is often difficult to separate the qualities of Style from the qualities of thought; and it is found so in this instance. For, in order to write with precision, though this be properly a quality of style, one must possess a very considerable degree of distinctness and accuracy in his manner of thinking.

The words, which a man uses to express his ideas, may be faulty in three respects: They may either not express that idea which the author intends, but some other which only resembles, or is akin to it; or, they may express that idea, but not quite fully and completely; or, they may express it, together with something more than he intends. Precision stands opposed to all these three faults; but chiefly to the last. In an author's writing with propriety, his being free from the two former faults seems implied. The words which he uses are proper; that is, they express that idea which he intends, and they express it fully; but, to be precise signifies that they express that idea, and no more. There is nothing in his words which introduces any foreign idea, any superfluous unseasonable accessory, so as to mix it confusedly with the principal object, and thereby to render our conception of that object loose and indistinct. This requires a writer to have, himself, a very clear apprehension of the object he means to present to us; to have laid fast hold of it in his mind; and never to waver in any one view he takes of it, a perfection to which, indeed, few writers attain.

The use and importance of precision may be deduced from the nature of the human mind. It never can view, clearly and distinctly, above one object at a time. If it must look at two or three together, especially objects among which there is resemblance or connection, it finds itself confused and embarrassed. It cannot clearly perceive in what they agree, and in what they differ. Thus, were any object, suppose some animal, to be presented to me, of whose structure I wanted to form a distinct notion, I would desire all its trappings to be taken off, I would require it to be brought before me by itself, and to stand alone, that there might be nothing to distract my attention. The same is the case with words. If, when you should inform me of your meaning, you also tell me more than what conveys it; if you join foreign circumstances to the principal object; if, by unnecessarily varying the expression, you shift the point of view, and make me see sometimes the object itself, and sometimes another thing that is connected with it; you thereby oblige me to

look on several objects at once, and I lose sight of the principal. You load the animal you are showing me with so many trappings and collars, and bring so many of the same species before me, somewhat resembling, and yet somewhat differing, that I see none of them clearly.

This forms what is called a loose style; and is the proper opposite to precision. It generally arises from using a superfluity of words. Feeble writers employ a multitude of words to make themselves understood, as they think, more distinctly; and they only confound the reader. They are sensible of not having caught the precise expression to convey what they would signify; they do not, indeed, conceive their own meaning very precisely themselves; and, therefore, help it out, as they can, by this and the other word, which may, as they suppose, supply the defect, and bring you somewhat nearer to their idea: They are always going about it, and about it, but never just hit the thing. The image, as they set it before you, is always seen double; and no double image is distinct. 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, from the desire of multiplying words, he will needs praise his courage and fortitude; at the moment he joins these words together, my idea begins to waver. He means to express one quality more strongly; but he is, in truth, expressing two. Courage resists danger; fortitude supports pain. The occasion of exerting each of these qualities is different; and being led to think of both together, when only one of them should be in my view, my view is rendered unsteady, and my conception of the object indistinct.

The great source of a loose style, in opposition to precision, is the injudicious use of those words termed synonymous. They are called synonymous, because they agree in expressing one principal idea; but, for the most part, if not always, they express it with some diversity in the circumstances. They are varied by some accessory idea which every word introduces, and which forms the distinction between them. Hardly, in any language, are there two words that convey precisely the same idea; a person thoroughly conversant in the propriety of the language will always be able to observe something that distinguishes them. As they are like different shades of the same colour, an accurate writer can employ them to great advantage, by using them so as to heighten and to finish the picture which he gives us. He supplies by one, what was wanting in the other, to the force, or to the luster of the image which he means to exhibit. But, in order to this end, he must be extremely attentive to the choice which

he makes of them. For the bulk of writers are very apt to confound them with each other; and to employ them carelessly, merely for the sake of filling up a period, or of rounding and diversifying the language, as if their signification were exactly the same, which, in truth, it is not. Hence a certain mist, and indistinctness, is unwarily thrown over style.

In the Latin language, there are no two words we should more readily take to be synonymous, than "amare" and "diligere." Cicero, however, has shown us that there is a very clear distinction betwixt them: "Quid ergo," says he, in one of his epistles, "tibi commendem eum quem tu ipse diligis? Sed tamen ut scires eum non a me diligi solum, verum etiam amari ob eam rem tibi haec scribl." In the same manner "tutus" and "securus" are words which we should readily confound; yet their meaning is different. "Tutus" signifies out of danger; "securus," free from the dread of it. Seneca has elegantly marked this distinction: "Tuta scelera esse possunt, securia non possunt." In our own language, very many instances might be given of a difference in meaning among words reputed synonymous; and, as the subject is of importance, I shall now point out some of these. The instances which I am to give, may themselves be of use; and they will serve to shew the necessity of attending, with care and strictness, to the exact import of words, if ever we would write with propriety or precision.

Austerity, Severity, Rigour. Austerity relates to the manner of living; severity, of thinking; rigour, of punishing. To austerity is opposed to effeminacy; to severity, relaxation, to rigour, clemency. A hermit is austere in his life; a Casuist, severe in his application of religion or law; a Judge, rigorous in his sentences.

Custom, Habit. Custom respects the action; Habit, the actor. By custom, we mean the frequent repetition of the same act; by habit, the effect which that repetition produces of the mind or body. By the custom of walking often in the streets, one acquires a habit of idleness.

Desist, renounce, quit, leave off. Each of these words implies some pursuit or object relinquished; but from different motives. We desist from the difficulty of accomplishing. We renounce on account of the disagreeableness of the object or pursuit. We quit for the sake of some other thing which interests us more; and we leave off because we are weary of the design. A politician desists from his designs when he finds they are impracticable; he renounces the court, because he has been affronted by it; he quits ambition for study in retirement; and leaves off his attendance of the great, as he becomes old and weary of it.

Pride, Vanity. Pride makes us esteem ourselves; vanity makes us desire the esteem of others. It is just to say, as Dean Swift has done, that a man is too proud to be vain.

Haughtiness, Disdain. Haughtiness is founded on the high opinion we entertain of ourselves; disdain, on the low opinion we have of others.

To distinguish, to separate. We distinguish what we want not to confound with another thing; we separate what we want to remove from it. Objects are distinguished from one another by their qualities. They are separated by the distance of time or place.

To weary, to fatigue. The continuance of the same thing wearies us; labour fatigues us. I am weary with standing; I am fatigued with walking. A suitor wearies us by his perseverance; fatigues us by his importunity.

To abhor, to detest. To abhor imports simply strong dislike; to detest imports also strong disapprobation. One abhors being in debt; he detests treachery.

Only, alone. Only imports that there is no other of the same kind; alone imports being accompanied by no other. An only child is one who has neither brother nor sister; a child alone is one who is left by itself. There is a difference, therefore, in precise language, betwixt these two phrases, "Virtue only makes us happy;" and, "Virtue alone makes us happy." Virtue only makes us happy imports that nothing else can do it. Virtue alone makes us happy imports that virtue, by itself, or unaccompanied with other advantages, is sufficient to do it.

Entire, complete. A thing is entire, by wanting none of its parts; complete, by wanting none of the appendages that belong to it. A man may have an entire house to himself; and yet not have one complete apartment.

Tranquillity, peace, calm. Tranquillity respects a situation free from trouble, considered in itself; peace, the same situation with respect to any causes that might interrupt it; calm, with regard to a disturbed situation going before, or following it. A good man enjoys tranquillity in himself; peace, with others; and calm, after the storm.

A difficulty, an obstacle. A difficulty embarrasses; an obstacle stops us. We remove the one; we surmount the other. Generally, the first expresses somewhat arising from the nature and circumstances of the affair; the second, somewhat arising from a foreign cause. Philip found difficulty in managing the Athenians from the nature of their dispositions; but the eloquence of Demosthenes was the greatest obstacle to his designs.

Wisdom, prudence. Wisdom leads us to speak and act what is most proper. Prudence prevents our speaking or acting improperly. A wise man employs the most proper means for success; a prudent man, the safest means for not being brought into danger.

To avow, to acknowledge, to confess. Each of these words imports the affirmation of a fact, but in very different circumstances. To avow supposes the person to glory in it; to acknowledge supposes a small degree of faultiness, which the acknowledgment compensates; to confess supposes a higher degree of crime. A patriot avows his opposition to a bad minister, and is applauded; a gentleman acknowledges his mistake, and is forgiven, a prisoner confesses the crime he is accused of, and is punished.

Equivocal, ambiguous. An equivocal expression is one which has one sense open, and designed to be understood; another sense concealed, and understood only by the person who uses it. An ambiguous expression is one which has apparently two senses, and leaves us at a loss which of them to give it. An equivocal expression is used with an intention to deceive; an ambiguous one, when it is used with design is with an intention not to give full information. An honest man will never employ an equivocal expression; a confused man may often utter ambiguous ones, without any design. I shall give only one instance more.

With, by. Both of these particles express the connection between some instrument, or means of effecting an end, and the agent who employs it: but with expresses a more close and immediate connection; by a more remote one. We kill a man with a sword; he dies by violence. The criminal is bound with ropes by the executioner. The proper distinction in the use of these particles is elegantly marked in a passage of Dr. Robertson's History of Scotland. When one of the old Scottish kings was making an enquiry into the tenure by which his nobles held their lands, they started up, and drew their swords: "By these we acquired our lands, and with these we will defend them." "By these we acquired our lands" signifies the more remote means of acquisition by force and martial deeds; and "with these we will defend them" signifies the immediate direct instrument, the sword, which they would employ in their defense.

These are instances of words, in our language, which, by careless writers, are apt to be employed as perfectly synonymous, and yet are not so. Their significations approach, but are not precisely the same. The more the distinction in the meaning of such words is weighed, and

attended to, the more clearly and forcibly shall we speak or write.

LECTURE XI. Structure of Sentences.

Having begun to treat of Style, in the last lecture I considered its fundamental quality, perspicuity. What I have said of this relates chiefly to the choice of words. From words I proceed to sentences; and as, in all writing and discourse, the proper composition and structure of sentences is of the highest importance, I shall treat of this fully. Though perspicuity be the general head under which I, at present, consider language, I shall not confine myself to this quality alone, in sentences, but shall enquire also, what is requisite for their grace and beauty, that I may bring together, under one view, all that seems necessary to be attended to in the construction and arrangement of words in a sentence.

So much depends upon the proper construction of sentences, that, in every sort of composition, we cannot be too strict in our attention to it. For, be the subject what it will, if the sentences be constructed in a clumsy, perplexed, or feeble manner, it is impossible that a work, composed of such sentences, can be read with pleasure, or even with profit. Whereas, by giving attention to the rules which relate to this part of style, we acquire the habit of expressing ourselves with perspicuity and elegance; and, if a disorder chance to arise in some of our sentences, we immediately see where it lies, and are able to rectify it.

The properties most essential to a perfect sentence seem to me to be the four following: 1) Clearness and Precision; 2) Unity; 3) Strength; 4) Harmony. Each of these I shall illustrate separately, and at some length. The first is clearness and precision. The least failure here, the least degree of ambiguity, which leaves the mind in any sort of suspense as to the meaning, ought to be avoided with the greatest care; nor is it so easy a matter to keep always clear of this, as one might, at first, imagine. Ambiguity arises from two causes: wither from a wrong choice of words, or a wrong collocation of them. Of the choice of words, as far as regards perspicuity, I treated fully in the last lecture. Of the collocation of them, I am now to treat. The first thing to be studied here is to observe exactly the rules of grammar, as far as these can guide us. But as the grammar of our language is not extensive, there may often be an ambiguous collocation of words, where there is no transgression of any grammatical rule. The relations which the words or members of a period bear to one another cannot be pointed out in English, as in the Greek or Latin, by means of termination; it is

ascertained only by the position in which they stand. Hence a capital rule in the arrangement of sentences is that the words or members most nearly related should be placed in the sentence as near to each other as possible, so as to make their mutual relation clearly appear. This is a rule not always observed, even by good writers, as strictly as it ought to be.

Still more attention is required to the proper disposition of the relative pronouns, "who" "which," "what," "whose," and of all those particles which express the connection of the parts of speech with one another. As all reasoning depends upon this connection, we cannot be too accurate and precise here. A small error may overcloud the meaning of the whole sentence; and even where the meaning is intelligible, yet where these relative particles are out of their proper place, we always find something awkward and disjointed in the structure of the sentence.

In the construction of sentences, one of the first things to be attended to is the marshalling of the words in such order as shall most clearly mark the relation of the several parts of the sentence to one another; particularly that the adverbs shall always be made to adhere closely to the words which they are intended to qualify; that, where a circumstance is thrown in it shall never hang loose in the midst of a period, but be determined by its place to one or other member of it; and that every relative word which is used shall instantly present its antecedent to the mind of the reader, without the least obscurity. I have mentioned these three cases, because I think they are the most frequent occasions of ambiguity creeping into sentences.

With regard to Relatives, I must farther observe that obscurity often arises from the too frequent repetition of them, particularly of the pronouns "who," and "they" and "them," and "theirs," when we have occasion to refer to different persons; as in the following sentence of archbishop Tillotson: "Men look with an evil eye upon the good that is in others; and think that their reputation obscures them, and their commendable qualities stand in their light; and therefore they do what they can to cast a cloud over them, that the bright shining of their virtues may not obscure them." This is altogether careless writing. It renders style often obscure, always embarrassed and inelegant. When we find these personal pronouns crowding too fast upon us, we have often no method left, but to throw the whole sentence into some other form, which may avoid those frequent references to persons who have before been mentioned.

All languages are liable to ambiguities. Quintilian gives us some instances in Latin, arising from faulty arrangement. A man, he tells us, ordered, by his will, to have erected for him, after his death, "Statuam auream hastam tenentem;" upon which arose a dispute at law, whether the whole statue, or the spear only, was to be of gold. The same author observes, very properly, that a sentence is always faulty when the collocation of the words is ambiguous, though the sense can be gathered. Indeed, to have the relation of every word and member of a sentence marked in the most proper and distinct manner gives not clearness only, but grace and beauty to a sentence, making the mind pass smoothly and agreeably along all the parts of it.

I proceed now to the second quality of a well-arranged sentence, which I termed its Unity. This is a capital property. In every composition, of whatever kind, some degree of unity is required, in order to render it beautiful. There must be always some connecting principle among the parts. Some one object must reign and be predominant. This, as I shall hereafter show, holds in History, in Epic and Dramatic Poetry, and in all Orations. But most of all, in a single sentence, is required the strictest unity. For the very nature of a sentence implies one proposition to be expressed. It may consist of parts, indeed; but these parts must be so closely bound together, as to make the impression upon the mind, on one object, not of many. Now, in order to preserve this unity of a sentence, the following rules must be observed:

In the first place, during the course of the sentence, the scene should be changed as little as possible. We should not be hurried by sudden transitions from person to person, nor from subject to subject. There is commonly, in every sentence, some person or thing, which is the governing word. This should be continued so, if possible, from the beginning to the end of it. Should I express myself thus: "After we came to anchor, they put me on shore, where I was welcomed by all my friends, who received me with the greatest kindness." In this sentence, though the objects contained in it have a sufficient connection with each other, yet, by this manner of representing them, by shifting so often both the place and the person, we, and they, and I, and who, they appear in such a disunited view, that the sense of connection is almost lost. The sentence is restored to its proper unity by turning it after the following manner: "Having come to an anchor, I was put on shore, where I was welcomed by all my friends, and received with the greatest kindness." Writers who transgress

this rule, for the most part transgress, at the same time,

A second rule; never to crowd into one sentence things which have so little connection that they could bear to be divided into two or three sentences. The violation of this rule never fails to hurt, and displease a reader. Its effect, indeed, is so bad, that, of the two, it is the safer extreme to err rather by too many short sentences, than by one that is overloaded and embarrassed. Examples abound in authors. I shall produce some, to justify what I now say. "Archbishop Tillotson," says an author in *The History of England*, "died in this year. He was exceedingly beloved both by King William and Queen Mary, who nominated Dr Tennyson, Bishop of Lincoln, to succeed him." Who would expect the latter part of this sentence to follow, in consequence of the former? "He was exceedingly beloved by both King and Queen" is the proposition of the sentence: we look for some proof of this, or at least something related to it, to follow, when we are on a sudden carried off to a new proposition, "who nominated Dr. Tennyson to succeed him." The following is 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 daughter Tullia; which happened soon after her divorce from Dolabella; whose manners and humours were entirely disagreeable to her." The principal object in this sentence is the death of Tullia, which was the cause of her father's affliction; the date of it, as happening soon after her divorce from Dolabella, may enter into the sentence with propriety; but the subjunction of Dolabella's character is foreign to the main object; and breaks the unity and compactness of the sentence totally, by setting a new picture before the reader. The following sentence, from a translation of Plutarch, is still worse: "Their march," says the Author, speaking of the Greeks under Alexander, "their march was through an uncultivated country, whose savage inhabitants fared hardily, having no other riches than a breed of lean sheep, whose flesh was rank and unsavoury, by reason of their continual feeding upon sea-fish." Here the scene is changed upon us again and again. The march of the Greeks, the description of the inhabitants through whose country they travelled, the account of their sheep, and the cause of their sheep being ill-tasted food, form a jumble of objects, slightly related to each other, which the reader cannot, without much difficulty, comprehend under one view.

These examples have been taken from sentences of no great length, yet over-crowded. Authors who deal in long sentences are very apt

to be faulty in this article. One need only open Lord Clarendon's History to find examples everywhere. The long, involved, and intricate sentences of that Author are the greatest blemish of his composition; though, in other respects, as a Historian, he has considerable merit. In later, and more correct writers than Lord Clarendon, we find a period sometimes running out so far, and comprehending so many particulars, as to be more properly a discourse than a sentence. Take, for an instance, the following from Sir William Temple, in his Essay upon Poetry: "The usual acceptation takes profit and pleasure for two different things, and not only calls the followers or votaries of them by the several names of busy and idle men; but distinguishes the faculties of the mind, that are conversant about them, calling the operations of the first, 'wisdom;' and of the other 'wit;' which is a Saxon word, used to express what the Spanish and Italians call *ingenio*, and the French, *esprit*, both from the Latin; though I think 'wit' more particularly signifies that of Poetry, as may occur in remarks on the runic language." When one arrives at the end of such a puzzled sentence, he is surprised to find himself got to so great a distance from the object with which he at first set out.

I proceed to a third rule for preserving the unity of sentences, which is, to keep clear of all parentheses in the middle of them. On some occasions, these may have a spirited appearance, as prompted by a certain vivacity of thought, which can glance happily aside, as it is going along. But, for the most part, their effect is extremely bad; being a sort of wheels within wheels; sentences in the midst of sentences; the perplexed method of disposing of some thought, which a writer wants art to introduce in its proper place. It were needless to give many instances, as they occur so often among incorrect writers. I shall produce one from Lord Bolingbroke, the rapidity of whose genius, and the manner of writing betrays him frequently into inaccuracies of this sort. It is in the Introduction to his Idea of a Patriot King where he writes thus: "It seems to me, that, in order to maintain the system of the world, at a certain point far below that of ideal perfection (for we are made capable of conceiving what we are incapable of attaining), but, however, sufficient, upon the whole, to constitute a state easy and happy, or at the worst, tolerable; I say, it seems to me, that the Author of Nature has thought fit to mingle, from time to time, among the societies of men, a few, and but a few, of those on whom he is graciously pleased to bestow a larger portion of the Ethereal Spirit, than is given, in the ordinary course of his government, to the sons of men." A very bad sentence this;

into which, by the help of a parenthesis, and other interjected circumstances, his Lordship had contrived to thrust so many things that he is forced to begin the construction again with the phrase "I say;" which, whenever it occurs, may always be assumed as a sure mark of a clumsy ill-constructed sentence; excusable in speaking, where the greatest accuracy is not expected, but in polished writing, unpardonable.

I shall add only one rule more for the unity of a sentence, which is to bring it always to a full and perfect close. Everything that is one, should have a beginning, a middle, and an end. I need not take notice, that an unfinished sentence is no sentence at all, according to any grammatical rule. But very often we meet with sentences, that are, so to speak, more than finished. When we have arrived at what we expected was to be the conclusion, when we have come to the word on which the mind is naturally led, by what went before, to rest; unexpectedly, some circumstance pops out, which ought to have been omitted, or to have been disposed of elsewhere; but which is left lagging behind, like a tail adjoined to the sentence; somewhat that, as Mr. Pope describes the Alexandrine line, that, "Like a wounded snake, drags its slow length along." All these adjections to the proper close disfigure a sentence extremely. They give it a lame ungraceful air, and, in particular, they break its unity. Dean Swift, for instance, in his Letter to a Young Clergyman, speaking of Cicero's writings, expresses himself thus: "With these writings, young divines are more conversant, than with those of Demosthenes, who, by many degrees, excelled the other; at least, as an orator." Here the natural close of the sentence is at these words: "excelled the other." These words conclude the proposition; we look for no more; and the circumstance added, "at least, as an orator," comes in with a very halting pace. How much more compact would the sentence have been, if turned thus: "With these writings, young divines are more conversant, than with those of Demosthenes, who, by many degrees, as an orator at least, excelled the other." In the following sentence, from Sir William Temple, the adjection to the sentence is altogether foreign to it. Speaking of Burnet's Theory of the Earth, and Fontenelle's Plurality of Worlds, "The first," says he, "could not end his learned treatise, without a panegyric of modern learning, in comparison of the ancient; and the other falls so grossly into the censure of the old poetry, and preference of the new, that I could not read either of these strains without some indignation; which no quality among men is so apt to raise in me as self-sufficiency." The word "indignation" concluded

the sentence, the last member, "which no quality among men is so apt to raise in me as self-sufficiency," is a proposition altogether new, added after the proper close.

LECTURE XII. Structure of Sentences.

Having treated of perspicuity and unity as necessary to be studied in the structure of sentences, I proceed to the third quality of a correct sentence, which I termed "strength." By this I mean such a disposition of the several words and members, as shall bring out the sense to the best advantage; as shall render the impression, which the period is designed to make, most full and complete; and give every word, and every member, their due weight and force. The two former qualities of perspicuity and unity are, no doubt, absolutely necessary to the production of this effect; but more is still requisite. For a sentence may be clear enough; it may also be compact enough, in all its parts, or have the requisite unity; and yet, by some unfavourable circumstance in the structure, it may fail in that strength or liveliness of impression, which a more happy arrangement would have produced.

The first rule which I shall give, for promoting the strength of a sentence is to divest it of all redundant words. These may sometimes be consistent with a considerable degree both of clearness and unity; but they are always enfeebling. They make the sentence move along tardy and encumbered: "Concise your diction, let your sense be clear, / Nor with a weight of words, fatigue the ear." It is a general maxim, that any words, which do not add some importance to the meaning of a sentence, always spoil it. They cannot be superfluous, without being hurtful: "All that can be easily supplied in the mind," says Quintilian, "is better left out of the expression." Thus: "Content with deserving a triumph, he refused the honour of it," is better language than to say, "Being content with deserving a triumph, he refused the honour of it." I consider it, therefore, as one of the most useful exercises of correction, upon reviewing what we have written or composed, to contract that roundabout method of expression, and to lop off those useless excrescences which are commonly found in a first draft. Here a severe eye should be employed; and we shall always find our sentences acquire more vigour and energy when thus retrenched; provided always that we run not into the extreme of pruning so very close as to give a hardness and dryness to style. For here, as in all other things, there is a due medium. Some regard, though not the principal, must be had to fullness and swelling of sound. Some leaves must be left to surround and shelter the fruit.

As sentences should be cleared of redundant words, so also of redundant members. As every word ought to present a new idea, so every member ought to contain a new thought. Opposed to this stands the fault we sometimes meet with, of the last member of a period being no other than the echo of the former, or the repetition of it in somewhat a different form. For example, speaking of beauty, "The very first discovery of it," says Mr. Addison, "strikes the mind with inward joy, and spreads delight through all its faculties" (no. 412.). And elsewhere, "It is impossible for us to behold the divine works with coldness or indifference, or to survey so many beauties, without a secret satisfaction and complacency" (no. 413). In both these instances, little or nothing is added by the second member of the sentence to what was already expressed in the first: and although the free and flowing manner of such an author as Mr. Addison, and the graceful harmony of his period, may palliate such negligences, yet, in general it holds that style, freed from this prolixity, appears both more strong, and more beautiful. The attention becomes remiss, the mind falls into inaction, when words are multiplied without a corresponding multiplication of ideas.

After removing superfluities, the second direction I give for promoting the strength of a sentence is to attend particularly to the use of copulatives, relatives, and all the particles employed for transition and connection. These little words, "but," "and," "which," "whose," "where," etc. are frequently the most important words of any; they are the joints or hinges upon which all sentences turn, and, of course, much, both of their gracefulness and strength, must depend upon such particles. The varieties in using them are, indeed, so infinite, that no particular system of rules, respecting them, can be given. Attention to the practice of the most accurate writers, joined with frequent trials of the different effects produced by a different usage of those particles, must here direct us. Some observations I shall mention, which have occurred to me as useful, without pretending to exhaust the subject.

What is called splitting of particles, or separating a preposition from the noun which it governs, is always to be avoided. As if I should say "Though virtue borrows no assistance from, yet it may often be accompanied by, the advantages of fortune." In such instances, we feel a sort of pain, from the revulsion, or violent separation of two things, which, by their nature, should be closely united. We are put to a stand in thought; being obliged to rest for a little on the preposition by itself, which, at the same time,

carries no significance, till it is joined to its proper substantive noun.

Some writers needlessly multiply demonstrative and relative particles, by the frequent use of such phraseology as this: "there is nothing which disgusts us sooner than the empty pomp of language." In introducing a subject, or laying down a proposition, to which we demand particular attention, this sort of style is very proper; but, in the ordinary current of discourse, it is better to express ourselves more simply and shortly: "Nothing disgusts us sooner than the empty pomp of language."

Other writers make a practice of omitting the relative, in a phrase of a different kind from the former, where they think the meaning can be understood without it. As, "The man I love." -- "The dominions we possessed, and the conquests we made." But though this elliptical style be intelligible, and is allowable in conversation and epistolary writing, yet, in all writings of a serious or dignified kind, it is ungraceful. There, the relative should always be inserted in its proper place, and the construction filled up: "The man whom I love." -- "The dominions which we possessed, and the conquests which we made."

With regard to the copulative particle, "and," which occurs so frequently in all kinds of composition, several observations are to be made. First, it is evident that the unnecessary repetition of it enfeebles style. It has the same sort of effect, as the frequent use of the vulgar phrase, "and so," when one is telling a story in common conversation. We shall take a sentence from Sir William Temple, for an instance. He is speaking of the refinement of the French language: "The academy set up by Cardinal Richelieu, to amuse the wits of that age and country, and divert them from raking into his politics and ministry, brought this into vogue; and the French who have, for this last age, been wholly turned to the refinement of their style and language; and, indeed, with such success, that it can hardly be equalled, and runs equally through their verse, and their prose." Here are no fewer than eight "ands" in one sentence. This agreeable writer too often makes his sentences drag in this manner, by a careless multiplication of copulatives. It is strange how a writer, so accurate as Dean Swift, should have stumbled on so improper an application of this particle, as he has made in the following sentence from his "Essay on the Fates of Clergymen": "There is no talent so useful towards rising in the world, or which puts men more out of the reach of fortune, than that quality which generally passes by the dullest sort of people, and is, in common language, called 'discretion;' a species of lower prudence, by the assistance of which . . ." By

the insertion of "and is" in place of "which is" he has not only clogged the sentence, but even made it ungrammatical.

But, in the next place, it is worthy of observation, that though the natural use of the conjunction "and" be to join objects together, and thereby, as one would think, to make their connection more close; yet, in fact, by dropping the conjunction, we often mark a closer connection, a quicker succession of objects, than when it is inserted between them. Longinus makes this remark; which, from many instances, appears to be just: "Veni, vidi, vici," expresses, with more spirit, the rapidity and quick succession of conquest, than if connecting particles had been used. So, in the following description of a rout in Caesar's commentaries: "Our men, after having discharged their javelins, attack with sword in hand: of a sudden, the cavalry make their appearance behind; the bodies of men are seen drawing near: the enemies turn their backs; the horse meet them in their flight; a great slaughter ensues."

Hence, it follows, that when, on the other hand, we seek to prevent a quick transition from one object to another, when we are making some enumeration, in which we wish that the objects should appear as distinct from each other as possible, and that the mind should rest, for a moment, on each object by itself; in this case, copulatives may be multiplied with peculiar advantage and grace. As when Lord Bolingbroke says, "Such a man might fall a victim to power; but truth, and reason, and liberty, would fall with him." In the same manner, Caesar describes an engagement with Nervii: "The enemy, having easily beat off, and scattered this body of horse, ran down with incredible celerity to the river; so that, almost at one moment of time, they appeared to be in the woods, and in the river, and in the midst of our troops." Here, although he is describing a quick succession of events, yet, as it is his intention to show in how many places the enemy seemed to be at one time, the copulative is very happily redoubled, in order to paint more strongly the distinction of these several places.

This attention to the several cases, when it is proper to omit, and with to redouble the copulative, is of considerable importance to all who study eloquence. For it is a remarkable particularity in language, that the omission of a connecting particle should sometimes serve to make objects appear more closely connected; and that the repetition of it should distinguish and separate them, in some measure, from each other. Hence, the omission of it is used to denote rapidity, and the repetition of it is designed to retard, and to aggravate. The reason seems to be,

that, in the former case, the mind is supposed to be hurried so fast through a quick succession of objects, that it has not leisure to point out their connection; it drops the copulatives in its hurry; and crowds the whole series together, as if it were but one object. Whereas, when we enumerate, with a view to aggravate, the mind is supposed to proceed with a more slow and solemn pace; it marks fully the relation of each object to that which succeeds it; and, by joining them together with several copulative, makes you perceive, that the objects, though connected, are yet, in themselves, distinct; that they are many, not one. Observe, for instance, in the following enumeration, made by the Apostle Paul, what additional weight and distinctness is given to each particular, by the repetition of a conjunction. "I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God" (Rom. viii 38-9.). So much with regard to the use of copulatives.

I proceed to a third rule, for promoting the strength of a sentence, which is to dispose of the capital word, or words, in that place of the sentence where they will make the fullest impression. That such capital words there are in every sentence, on which the meaning principally rests, everyone must see; and that these words should possess a conspicuous and distinguished place is equally plain. Indeed, that place of the sentence where they will make the best figure, whether the beginning, or the end, or sometimes, even the middle, cannot, as far as I know, be ascertained by any precise rule. This must vary with the nature of the sentence. Perspicuity must ever be studied in the first place; and the nature of our language allows no great liberty in the choice of collocation. For the most part, with us, the important words are placed in the beginning of the sentence. So Mr. Addison: "The pleasures of the imagination, taken in their full extent, are not so gross as those of sense, nor so refined as those of the understanding." And this, indeed, seems the most plain and natural order, to place that in the front which is the chief object of the proposition we are laying down. Sometimes, however, when we intend to give weight to a sentence, it is of advantage to suspend the meaning for a little, and then bring it out full at the close: "Thus," says Mr. Pope, "on whatever side we contemplate Homer, what principally strikes us is his wonderful invention."

A fourth rule, for constructing sentences with proper strength, is, to make them members of them go on rising and growing in their importance above one another. This sort of

arrangement is called a Climax, and is always considered as a beauty in composition. From what cause it pleases, is abundantly evident. In all things, we naturally love to ascent to what is more and more beautiful, rather than to follow the retrograde order. Having had once some considerable object set before us, it is, with pain, we are pulled back to attend to an inferior circumstance. "Care must be taken," says Quintilian, "that our composition shall not fall off, and that a weaker expression shall not follow one of more strength; as if, after sacrilege, we should bring in theft; or, having mentioned a robbery, we should subjoin petulance. Sentences ought always to rise and grow." Of this beauty, in the construction of sentences, the orations of Cicero furnish many examples. His pompous manner naturally led him to study it; and, generally, in order to render the climax perfect, he makes both the sense and the sound rise together, with a very magnificent swell. The following instance, from Lord Bolingbroke, is also beautiful: "This decency, this grace, this propriety of manners to character, is so essential to princes in particular, that, whenever it is neglected, their virtues lose a great degree of lustre, and their defects acquire much aggravation. Nay more; by neglecting this decency and this grace, and for want of a sufficient regard to appearances, even their virtues may betray them into failings, their failings into vices, and their vices into habits unworthy of princes, and unworthy of men" (Idea of a Patriot King).

I must observe, however, that this sort of full and oratorical climax, can neither be always obtained, nor ought to be always sought after. Only some kinds of writing admit such sentences; and, to study them too frequently, especially if the subject require not so much pomp, is affected and disagreeable. But there is something approaching to a climax, which it is a general rule to study, "*ne decrescat oratio*," as Quintilian speaks, "*et ne fortiori subjungatur aliquid infirmius*." A weaker assertion or proposition should never come after a stronger one; and when our sentence consists of two members, the longest should, generally, be the concluding one. There is a twofold reason for this last direction. Periods, thus divided, are pronounced more easily; and the shortest member being placed first, we carry it more readily in our memory as we proceed to the second, and see the connection of the two more clearly. Thus, to say, "When our passions have forsaken us, we flatter ourselves with the belief that we have forsaken them," is both more graceful and more clear, than to begin with the longest part of the proposition: "We flatter ourselves with the belief that we have forsaken our passions, when they have forsaken

us." In general, it is always agreeable to find a sentence rising upon us, and growing in its importance to the very last word, when this construction can be managed without affectation, or unseasonable pomp. "If we rise yet higher, says Mr. Addison, very beautifully, "and consider the fixed stars as so many oceans of flame, that are each of them attended with a different set of planets; and still discover new firmaments and new lights, that are sunk farther in those unfathomable depths of ether; we are lost in such a labyrinth of suns and worlds, and confounded with the magnificence and immensity of Nature." Hence follows clearly,

A fifth rule for the strength of Sentences; which is, to avoid concluding them with an adverb, a preposition, or any inconsiderable word. Such conclusions are always enfeebling and degrading. There are sentences, indeed, where the stress and significancy rest chiefly upon some words of this kind. In this case, they are not to be considered as circumstances, but as the capital figures; and ought, in propriety, to have the principal place allotted them. No fault, for instance, can be found with this sentence of Bolingbroke's -- "In their prosperity, my friends shall never hear of me; in their adversity, always" -- where "never" and "always," being emphatical words, were to be so placed, as to make a strong impression. But I speak now of those inferior parts of speech, when introduced as circumstances, or as qualifications of more important words. In such case, they should always be disposed of in the least conspicuous parts of the period; and so classed with other words of greater dignity, as to be kept in their proper secondary station.

Agreeably to this rule, we should always avoid concluding with any of those particles, which mark the cases of nouns: "of," "to," "from," "with," "by." For instance, it is a great deal better to say, "Avarice is a crime of which wise men are often guilty," than to say "Avarice is a crime which wise men are often guilty of." This is a phraseology which all correct writers shun; and with reason. For, besides the want of dignity which arises from those monosyllables at the end, the imagination cannot avoid resting, for a little, on the import of the word which closes the sentence: And, as those propositions have no import of their own, but only serve to point out the relations of other words, it is disagreeable for the mind to be left pausing on a word, which does not, by itself, produce any idea, nor form any picture in the fancy.

For the same reason, verbs which are used in a compound sense, with some of these prepositions, are, though not so bad, yet still not

so beautiful conclusions of a period; such as, "bring about," "lay hold of," "come over to," "clear up," and many other of this kind: instead of which, if we can employ a simple verb, it always terminates the sentence with more strength. Even the pronoun "it," though it has the import of a substantive noun, and indeed often forces itself upon us unavoidably, yet, when we want to give dignity to a sentence, should, if possible, be avoided in the conclusion; more especially, when it is joined with some of the prepositions, as "with it," "in it," "to it." In the following sentence of the Spectator, which otherwise is abundantly noble, the bad effect of this close is sensible: "There is not, in my opinion, a more pleasing and triumphant consideration in religion, than this, of the perpetual progress which the soul makes towards the perfection of its nature, without ever arriving at a period in it." How much more graceful the sentence, if it had been concluded upon the word "period"!

Besides particles and pronouns, any phrase, which expresses a circumstance only, always brings up the rear of a sentence with a bad grace. We may judge of this, by the following sentence from Lord Bolingbroke (Letter of the State of Parties at the Accession of King George I): "Let me therefore conclude by repeating, that division has caused all the mischief we lament; that union alone can retrieve it; and that a great advance towards this union, was the coalition of parties, so happily begun, so successfully carried on, and of late so unaccountably neglected; to say no worse." This last phrase, to say no worse, occasions a sad falling off at the end; so much the more unhappy, as the rest of the period is conducted after the manner of a climax, which we expect to find growing to the last.

I shall give only one rule more, relating to the strength of a sentence; which is, that in the members of a sentence, where two things are compared or contrasted to each other; where either a resemblance or an opposition is intended to be expressed; some resemblance, in the language and construction, should be preserved. For when the things themselves correspond to each other, we naturally expect to find the words corresponding too. We are disappointed when it is otherwise; and the comparison, or contrast, appears more imperfect. Thus, when Lord Bolingbroke says, "The laughs will be for those who have most wit; the serious part of mankind, for those who have most reason on their side;" the opposition would have been more complete, if he has said, "The laughs will be for those who have most wit; the serious, for those who have most reason on their side." The following

passage from Mr. Pope's Preface to his Homer, fully exemplifies the rule I am now giving: "Homer was the greater genius; Virgil, the better artist: in the one, we most admire the man; in the other, the work. Homer hurries us with a commanding impetuosity; Virgil leads us with an attractive majesty. Homer scatters with a generous profusion; Virgil bestows with a careful magnificence. Homer, like the Nile, pours out his riches with a sudden overflow; Virgil, like a river in its banks, with a constant stream. -- And when we look upon their machines, Homer seems like his own Jupiter in his terrors, shaking Olympus, scattering the lightnings, and firing the heavens; Virgil, like the same Power, in his benevolence, counseling with the gods, laying plans for empires, and ordering his whole creation." Periods thus constructed, when introduced with propriety, and not returning too often, have a sensible beauty. But we must beware of carrying our attention to this beauty too far. It ought only to be occasionally studied, when comparison or opposition of objects naturally leads to it. If such a construction as this be aimed at in all our sentences, it leads to a disagreeable uniformity; produces a regularly returning clink in the period, which tires the ear, and plainly discovers affectation. Among the ancients, the style of Isocrates is faulty in this respect; and, on that account, by some of the best critics, particularly by Dionysius of Halicarnassus, he is severely censured.

This finishes what I had to say concerning sentences, considered with respect to their meaning, under the three heads, of Perspicuity, Unity, and Strength. It is a subject on which I have insisted fully, which, by its nature, can be rendered more didactic, and subjected more to precise rule, than many other subjects of criticism; and next, because it appears to me of considerable importance and use.

For, though many of those attentions, which I have been recommending, may appear minute, yet their effect, upon writing and style, is much greater than might, at first, be imagined. A sentiment which is expressed in a period, clearly, neatly, and happily arranged, makes always a stronger impression on the mind, than one that is feeble or embarrassed. Everyone feels this upon a comparison: and if the effect be sensible in one sentence, how much more in a whole discourse, or composition, that is made up of such sentences?

The fundamental rule of the construction of sentences, and into which all others might be resolved, undoubtedly is, to communicate, in the clearest and most natural order, the ideas which we mean to transfuse into the minds of others.

Every arrangement that does most justice to the sense, and expresses it to most advantage, strikes us as beautiful. To this point have tended all the rules I have given. And, indeed, did men always think clearly, and were they, at the same time, fully masters of the language in which they write, there would be occasion for few rules. Their sentences would then, of course, acquire all those properties of Precision, Unity, and Strength, which I have recommended. For we may rest assured, that, whenever we express ourselves ill, there is, besides the mismanagement of language, for the most part, some mistake in our manner of conceiving the subject. Embarrassed, obscure, and feeble sentences, are generally, if not always, the result of embarrassed, obscure, and feeble thought. Thought and language act and re-act upon each other mutually. Logic and Rhetoric have here, as in many other cases, a strict connection; and he that is learning to arrange his sentences with accuracy and order, is learning, at the same time, to think with accuracy and order; an observation which alone will justify all the care and attention we have bestowed on this subject.

LECTURE XIII. Structure of Sentences: Harmony

Hitherto we have considered sentences, with respect to their meaning, under the heads of Perspicuity, Unity, and Strength. So are now to consider them, with respect to their sound, their harmony, or agreeableness to the ear; which was the last quality belonging to them that I proposed to treat of.

Sound is a quality much inferior to sense; yet such as must not be disregarded. For, as long as sounds are the vehicle of conveyance for our ideas, there will be always a very considerable connection between the idea which is conveyed, and the nature of the sound which conveys it. Pleasing ideas can hardly be transmitted to the mind, by means of harsh and disagreeable sounds. the imagination revolts as soon as it hears them uttered. "Nothing," says Quintilian, "can enter into the affections which stumbles at the threshold, by offending the ear. "Music has naturally a great power over all men to prompt and facilitate certain emotions: insomuch, that there are hardly any dispositions which we wish to raise in others, but certain sounds may be found concordant to those dispositions, and tending to promote them. Now, language may, in some degree, be rendered capable of this power of music; a circumstance which must needs heighten our idea of language as a wonderful invention. Not content with simply interpreting our ideas to others, it can give them those ideas enforced by

corresponding sounds; and to the pleasure of communicated thought, can add the new and separate pleasure on melody.

In the Harmony of Periods, two things may be considered. First, agreeable sounds or modulation in general, without any particular expression: Next, the sound so ordered as to become expressive of the sense. The first is the more common; the second, the higher beauty.

First, let us consider agreeable sound, in general, as the property of a well-constructed sentence: and, as it was of prose sentences we have hitherto treated, we shall confine ourselves to them under this head. This beauty of musical construction in prose, it is plain, will depend upon two things; the choice of words, and the arrangement of them.

I begin with the choice of words; on which head, there is not much to be said, unless I were to descend into a tedious and frivolous detail concerning the powers of the several letters, or simple sounds, of which speech is composed. It is evident, that words are most agreeable to the ear which are composed of smooth and liquid sounds, where there is a proper intermixture of vowels and consonants; without too many harsh consonants rubbing against each other; or too many open vowels in succession, to cause a hiatus, or disagreeable aperture of the mouth. It may always be assumed as a principle, that, whatever sounds are difficult in pronunciation, are, in the same proportion, harsh and painful to the ear. vowels give softness; consonants, strength to the sound of words. The music of language requires a just proportion of both; and will be hurt, will be rendered either grating of effeminate, by an excess of either. Long words are commonly more agreeable to the ear than monosyllables. They please it by the composition, or succession of sounds which they present to it; and, accordingly, the most musical languages abound most in them. Among words of any length, those are the most musical, which do not run wholly either upon long or short syllables, but are composed of an intermixture of them; such as, *repent, produce, velocity, celerity, independent, impetuosity.*

The next head, respecting the harmony which results from a proper arrangement of the words and members of a period, is more complex, and of greater nicety. For, let the words themselves be ever so well chosen, and well sounding, yet, if they be ill disposed, the music of the sentence is utterly lost. In the harmonious structure and disposition of periods, no writer whatever, ancient or modern, equals Cicero. He had studied this with care, and was fond, perhaps to excess, of what he calls, the "*Plena ac*

numerosa oratio." We need only open his writings, to find instances that will render the effect of musical language sensible to every ear. In English, we may take, for an instance of a musical sentence, the following from Milton, in his *Treatise on Education*: "We shall conduct you to a hill-side, laborious, indeed, at the first ascent; but else, so smooth, so green, so full of goodly prospects, and melodious sounds on every side, that the harp of Orpheus was not more charming." Everything in this sentence conspires to promote the harmony. The words are happily chosen; bull of liquids and soft sounds; laborious, smooth, green, goodly, melodious, charming: and these words so artfully arranged, that, were we to alter the collocation of any one of them, we should, presently, be sensible of the melody suffering. For, let us observe, how finely the members of the period swell one above another. "So smooth, so green," -- "so full of goodly prospects, -- and melodious sounds on every side;" -- till the ear, prepared by this gradual rise, is conducted to that full close on which it rests with pleasure; -- "that the harp of Orpheus was not more charming."

The structure of periods, then, being susceptible of a very sensible melody, our next enquiry should be, How this melodious structure is formed, what are the principles of it, and by what laws is it regulated? And, upon this subject, were I to follow the ancient rhetoricians, it would be easy to give a great variety of rules. For here they have entered into a very minute and particular detail, more particular, indeed, than on any other head that regards language. They hold, that to prose, as well as to verse, there belong certain numbers, less strict, indeed, yet such as can be ascertained by rule. They go so far as to specify the feet, as they are called, that is, the succession of long and short syllables, which should enter into the different members of a sentence, and to show what the effect of each of these will be. Wherever they treat of the Structure of Sentences, it is always the music of them that makes the principal object. Cicero and Quintilian are full of this. The other qualities of Precision, Unity, and Strength, which we consider as of chief importance, they handle slightly; but when they come to the "*junctura et numerus,*" the modulation and harmony, there they are copious. Dionysius of Halicarnassus, one of the most judicious critics of antiquity, has written a treatise on the Composition of Words in a Sentence, which is altogether confined to their musical effect. He makes the excellency of a sentence to consist in four things: first, in the sweetness of single sounds; secondly, in the composition of sounds, that is, the numbers or feet; thirdly, in change or variety of sound; and, fourthly, in

sound suited to the sense. On all these points he writes with great accuracy and refinement; and is very worthy of being consulted; though, were one now to write a book on the Structure of Sentences, we should expect to find the subject treated of in a more extensive manner.

In modern times, this whole subject of the musical structure of discourse, it is plain, has been much less studied; and, indeed, for several reasons, can be much less subjected to rule. The reasons, it will be necessary to give, both to justify my not following the track of the ancient rhetoricians on this subject, and to show how it has come to pass, that a part of composition, which once made so conspicuous a figure, now draws much less attention.

In the first place, the ancient languages, I mean the Greek and the Roman, were much more susceptible than ours, of the graces and the powers of melody. The quantities of their syllables were more fixed and determined; their words were longer, and more sonorous; their method of varying the terminations of nouns and verbs, both introduced a greater variety of liquid sounds, and freed them from that multiplicity of little auxiliary words which we are obliged to employ; and, what is of the greatest consequence, the inversions which their languages allowed, gave them the power of placing their words in whatever order was most suited to a musical arrangement. All these were great advantages which they enjoyed above us, for Harmony of Period.

In the next place, the Greeks and Romans, the former especially, were, in truth, much more musical nations than we, their genius was more turned to delight in the melody of speech. Music is known to have been a more extensive art among them than it is with us; more generally studied, and applied to a greater variety of objects. Several learned men, particularly the Abbe du Bos, in his Reflections on Poetry and Painting, have clearly proved, that the theatrical compositions of the ancients, both their tragedies and comedies, were set to a kind of music. As music then, was an object much more attended to in speech, among the Greeks and Romans, than it is with us; as, in all kinds of public speaking, they employed a much greater variety of notes, of tones, or inflections of the voice, than we use; this is one clear reason of their paying a greater attention to that construction of sentences, which might best suit this musical pronunciation.

It is farther known, that, in consequence of the genius of their languages, and of their manner of pronouncing them, the musical arrangement of sentences, did, in fact, produce a greater effect in public speaking among them, than it could

possible do in any modern oration; another reason why it deserved to be more studied. Cicero, in his treatise, entitled, Orator, tells us, "I have often been witness to bursts of exclamation in the public assemblies, when sentences closed musically; for that is a pleasure which the ear expects." And he gives a remarkable instance of the effect of a harmonious period upon a whole assembly, from a sentence of one of Carbo's Orations, spoken in his hearing. The sentence was, "Patris dictum sapiens temeritas filii comprobavit." By means of the sound of which, alone, he tells us, "Tantus clamor concionis excitatus est, ut prorsus admirabile effet." He makes us remark the feet of which these words consist, to which he ascribes the power of the melody; and shows how, by altering the collocation, the whole effect would be lost; as thus: "Patris dictum sapiens comprobavit temeritas filii." Now, though it be true that Carbo's sentence is extremely musical, and would be agreeable, at this day, to any audience, yet I cannot believe that an English sentence, equally harmonious, would, by its harmony alone, produce any such effect on a British audience, or excite any such wonderful applause and admiration, as Cicero informs us this of Carbo produced. Or northern ears are too coarse and obtuse. The melody of speech has less power over us; and by our simpler and plainer method of uttering words, speech is, in truth, accompanied with less melody than it was among the Greeks and Romans. For these reasons, I am of opinion, that it is vain to think of bestowing the same attention upon the harmonious structure of our sentences, that was bestowed by these ancient nations. The doctrine of the Greek and Roman critics, on this head, has misled some to imagine, that it might be equally applied to our tongue; and that our prose writing might be regulated by spondees and trochees, and iambuses and paeons, and other metrical feet. But, first, our words cannot be measured, or, at least, can be measured very imperfectly by any feet of this kind. For, the quantity, the length and shortness of our syllables, is far from being so fixed and subjected to rule, as in the Greek and Roman tongues; but very often left arbitrary, and determined by the emphasis, and the sense. Next, though our prose could admit of such metrical regulation, yet, from our plainer method of pronouncing all sort of discourse, the effect would not be at all so sensible to the ear, nor be relished with so much pleasure, as among the Greeks and Romans: And, lastly, this whole doctrine about the measures and numbers of prose, even as it is delivered by the ancient rhetoricians themselves, is, in truth, in a great measure loose and

uncertain. It appears, indeed, that the melody of discourse was a matter of infinitely more attention to them, than ever it has been to the moderns. But, though they write a great deal about it, they have never been able to reduce it to any rules which could be of real use in practice. If we consult Cicero's Orator, where this point is discussed with the most minuteness, we shall see how much these ancient critics differed from one another, about the feet proper for the conclusion, and other parts of a sentence; and how much, after all, was left to the judgment of the ear. Nor, indeed, is it possible to give precise rules concerning this matter, in any language; as all prose composition must be allowed to run loose in its numbers; and, according as the tenor of a discourse varies, the modulation of sentences must vary infinitely.

But, although I apprehend, that this musical arrangement cannot be reduced to a system, I am far from thinking, that it is a quality to be neglected in composition. On the contrary, I hold its effect to be very considerable; and that every one who studies to write with grace, much more who seeks to pronounce in public, with success, will be obliged to attend to it not a little. But it is his ear, cultivated by attention and practice, that must chiefly direct him. For nay rules that can be given, on this subject, are very general. Some rules, however, there are, which may be of use to form the ear to the proper harmony of discourse. I proceed to mention such as appear to me most material.

There are two things on which the music of a sentence chiefly depends. These are, the proper distribution of the several members of it; and, the close or cadence of the whole.

First, I say, the distribution of the several members is to be carefully attended to. It is of importance to observe, that, whatever is easy and agreeable to the organs of speech, always sounds grateful to the ear. While a period is going on, the termination of each of its members forms a pause, or rest, in pronouncing: and these rests should be so distributed, as to make the course of the breathing easy, and, at the same time, should fall at such distances, as to bear a certain musical proportion to each other. This will be best illustrated by examples. The following sentence is from Archbishop Tillotson: "This discourse concerning the easiness of God's commands does, all along, suppose and acknowledge the difficulties of the first entrance upon a religious course; except, only in those persons who have had the happiness to be trained up to religion by the easy and insensible degrees of a pious and virtuous education." Here there is no harmony; nay, there is some degree of harshness and

unpleasantness; owing principally to this, that there is, properly, no more than one pause or rest in the sentence, falling betwixt the two members into which it is divided, each of which is so long, as to occasion a considerable stretch of the breath in pronouncing it.

Observe, now, on the other hand, the ease with which the following sentence, from Sir William Temple, glides along, and the graceful intervals at which the pauses are placed. He is speaking sarcastically of man: "But God be thanked, his pride is greater than his ignorance, and what he wants in knowledge, he supplies by sufficiency. When he has looked about him, as far as he can, he concludes, there is no more to be seen; when he is at the end of his line, he is at the bottom of the ocean; when he has shot his best, he is sure none ever die, or ever can, shoot better, or beyond it. His own reason he holds to be the certain measure of truth; and his own knowledge, of what is possible in nature." Here everything is, at once, easy to the breath, and grateful to the ear; and, it is this sort of flowing measure, this regular and proportional division of the members of his sentences, which renders Sir William Temple's style always agreeable. I must observe, at the same time, that a sentence, with too many rests, and these placed at intervals too apparently measured and regular, is apt to savour of affectation. Or this instance. --He is addressing himself to Lady Essex, upon the death of her child: "I was once in hope, that what was so violent could not be long: but, when I observed your grief to grow stronger with age, and to increase, like a stream, the farther it ran; when I saw it draw out to such unhappy consequences, and to threaten no less that your child, your health, and your life, I could no longer forbear this endeavor, nor end it, without begging of you, for God's sake, and for your own, for your children, and your friends, your country, and your family, that you would no longer abandon yourself to a disconsolate passion; but that you would, at length, awaken your piety, give way to your prudence, or, at least, rouse the invincible spirit of the Percys, that never yet shrunk at any disaster."

The next thing to be attended to, is, the close or cadence of the whole sentence, which, as it is always the part most sensible to the ear, demands the greatest care. So Quintilian: "Let there be nothing harsh or abrupt in the conclusion of the sentence, on which the mind pauses and rests. This is the most material part in the structure of discourse. Here every hearer expects to be gratified; here his applause breaks forth." The only important rule that can be given here, is, that when we aim at dignity or elevation, the sound

should be made to grow to the last, the longest members of the period, and the fullest and most sonorous words, should be reserved to the conclusion. As an example of this, the following sentence of Mr. Addison's may be given: "The sense of sight fills the mind with the largest variety of ideas; converses with its objects at the greatest distinct; and continues the longest in action, without being tired or satiated with its proper enjoyments." Every reader must be sensible of a beauty here, both in the proper division of the members and pauses, and the manner in which the sentence is rounded, and conducted to a full and harmonious close.

The same holds in melody, that I observed to take place with respect to significance; that a falling off at the end, always hurts greatly. For this reason, particles, pronoun, and little words, are as ungracious to the ear, at the conclusion, as I formerly showed they were inconsistent with strength of expression. It is more than probable, that the sense and the sound have here a mutual influence on each other. That which hurts the ear, seems to mar the strength of the meaning; and that which really degrades the sense, in consequence of this primary effect, appears also to have a bad sound. How disagreeable is the following sentence of an author, speaking of the Trinity! "It is a mystery which we firmly believe the truth of, and humbly adore the depth of." And how easily might it have been mended by this transposition! "It is a mystery, the truth of which we firmly believe, and the depth of which we humbly adore." In general it seems to hold, that a musical close, in our language, requires either the last syllable, or the last but one, to be a long syllable. Words which consist mostly of short syllables, as, contrary, particular, retrospect, seldom conclude a sentence harmoniously, unless a run of long syllables, before, has rendered them agreeable to the ear.

It is necessary, however, to observe, that sentences, so constructed as to make the sound always swell and grow towards the end, and to rest either on a long or a penult long syllable, give a discourse the tone of declamation. The ear soon becomes acquainted with the melody, and is apt to be cloyed with it. If we should keep up the attention of the reader or hearer, if we would preserve vivacity and strength in our composition, we must be very attentive to vary our measures. This regards the distribution of the members, as well as the cadence of the period. Sentences constructed in a similar manner, with the pauses falling at equal intervals, should never follow one another. Short sentences should be intermixed with long and swelling ones, to render discourse sprightly, as well as magnificent. Even discords,

properly introduced, abrupt sounds, departures from regular cadence, have sometimes a good effect. Monotony is the great fault into which writers are apt to fall, who are fond of harmonious arrangement: and to have only one tune, or measure, is not much better than having none at all. A very vulgar ear will enable a writer to catch some one melody, and to form the run of his sentences according to it; which soon proves disgusting. But a just and correct ear is requisite for varying and diversifying the melody: and hence we so seldom meet with authors, who are remarkably happy in this respect.

Though attention to the music of sentences must not be neglected, yet it must also be kept within proper bounds: for all appearances of an author's affecting harmony, are disagreeable; especially when the love of it betrays him so far, as to sacrifice, in any instance, perspicuity, precision, or strength of sentiment, to sound. All unmeaning words, introduced merely to round the period, or fill up the melody, complementa numerorum, as Cicero calls them, are great blemishes in writing. They are childish and puerile ornaments, by which a sentence always loses more in point of weight, than it can gain by such additions to the beauty of its sound; and, where the sense of a period is expressed with clearness, force, and dignity, it will seldom happen but the words will strike the ear agreeably; at least, a very moderate attention is all that is requisite for making the cadence of such a period pleasing: and the effect of greater attention is often no other, than to render composition languid and enervated. After all the labour which Quintilian bestows on regulating the measures of prose, he comes at last with his usual good sense, to this conclusion: "Upon the whole, I would rather choose, that composition should appear rough and harsh, if that be necessary, than that it should be enervated and effeminate, such as we find the style of too many. Some sentences, therefore, which we have studiously formed into melody, should be thrown loose, that they may not seem too much laboured; nor ought we ever to omit any proper or expressive word, for the sake of smoothing a period."

Cicero, as I before observed, is one of the most remarkable patterns of a harmonious style. His love of it, however, is too visible; and the pomp of his numbers sometimes detracts from his strength. That noted close of his, *esse videatur*, which, in the Oration Pro Lege Manilia, occurs eleven times, exposed him to censure among his cotemporaries. We must observe, however, in defence of his great Orator, that there is a remarkable union in his style, of harmony with ease, which is always a great beauty; and if his

harmony be studied, that study appears to have cost him little trouble.

Among our English classics, not many are distinguished for musical arrangement. Milton, in some of his prose works, has very finely turned periods; but the writers of his age indulged a liberty of inversion, which now would be reckoned contrary to purity of style: and though this allowed their sentences to be more stately and sonorous, yet it gave them too much of a Latinized construction and order. Of later writers, Shaftsbury is, upon the whole, the most correct in his numbers. As his ear was delicate, he has attended to music in all his sentences; and he is peculiarly happy in this respect, that he has avoided the monotony into which writers, who study the grace of sound, are very apt to fall:

having diversified his periods with great variety. Mr. Addison has also much harmony in his style; more easy and smooth, but less varied, than Lord Shaftsbury. Sir William Temple is, in general, very flowing and agreeable. Archbishop Tillotson is too often careless and languid; and is much outdone by Bishop Atterbury in the music of his periods. Dean Swift despised musical arrangement altogether.

I have now given sufficient openings into this subject: a moderate acquaintance with the good authors, either ancient or modern will suggest many instances of the same kind. And with this, I finish the discussion of the structure of sentences; having fully considered them under all the heads I mentioned; of Perspicuity, Unity, Strength, and Musical Arrangement.

Appendix: Answer Key

Abraham Lincoln

The year (that is drawing) ~~toward its close~~ has been filled ~~with the blessings of fruitful fields and healthful skies.~~

~~To these bounties,~~ (which are so constantly enjoyed) (that we are prone) ~~to forget their source,~~ others have been added, (which are) ~~of so extraordinary a nature~~ (that they cannot fail) ~~to penetrate and soften the heart~~ (which is habitually insensible) ~~to the ever watchful providence of almighty God.~~

It has long been a grave question (whether any government (which is not too strong) ~~for the liberties of its people,~~ can be strong enough) ~~to maintain its existence in great emergencies.~~

Any proposition (which embraces the restoration ~~of peace,~~ the integrity ~~of the whole Union,~~ and the abandonment ~~of slavery,~~) will be received and considered ~~by the executive government of the United States.~~

~~In the midst of a civil war of unequalled magnitude and severity,~~ (which has sometimes seemed) ~~to foreign states to invite and provoke their aggressions,~~ peace has been preserved ~~with all nations~~ , order has been maintained , the laws have been respected and obeyed , and harmony has prevailed everywhere, ~~except in the theatre of military conflict.~~

Needful diversions ~~of wealth and of strength from the fields of peaceful industry to the national defence~~ have not arrested the plow, the shuttle, or the ship ; the axe has enlarged the borders ~~of our settlements,~~ and the mines, as

well ~~of iron and coal~~ as ~~of the precious metals~~, have yielded even more abundantly than heretofore.

I do, therefore, invite my fellow-citizens ~~in every part of the United States~~, and also those (who are ~~at sea~~) and those (who are sojourning) ~~in foreign lands, to set apart and observe the last Thursday of November next as a day of thanksgiving and praise to our beneficent Father (who dwelleth) in the heavens.~~

Fourscore and seven years ago our fathers brought forth ~~on this continent~~ a new nation, ~~conceived in liberty~~, and dedicated to the proposition (that all men are created equal.

Now we are engaged ~~in a great civil war~~, testing (whether that nation, or any nation so ~~conceived~~ and so ~~dedicated~~, can long endure).

We have come ~~to dedicate a portion of that field as a final resting place for those~~ (who here gave their lives) (that that nation might live).

The brave men, ~~living and dead~~, (who struggled here), have consecrated this ground far ~~above our poor power to add or detract~~.

The world will little note nor long remember (what we say here), but it can never forget (what they did here).

We have been the recipients ~~of the choicest bounties of Heaven~~.

We have been preserved ~~for these many years in peace and prosperity~~.

We have grown ~~in numbers, wealth, and power~~ (as no other nation has ever grown;) but we have forgotten God.

We have forgotten the gracious hand (which preserved us ~~in peace~~, and multiplied and strengthened us); and we have vainly imagined, ~~in the deceitfulness of our hearts~~, (that all these blessings were produced) ~~by some superior wisdom and virtue of our own~~.

Jane Austen

Every impulse ~~of feeling~~ should be guided ~~by reason~~; and, ~~in my opinion~~, exertion should always be ~~in proportion to the requirement~~.

Jane united a composure ~~of temper with a uniform cheerfulness of manner~~, (which would guard her) ~~from the suspicions of the impertinent~~.

It may perhaps be pleasant ~~to impose on the public in such a case~~; but it is sometimes a disadvantage ~~to be always on guard~~.

The rain continued the whole evening ~~without intermission~~ ; Jane certainly could not come back.

You must know (that Mrs Long says) (that Netherfield is taken by a young man) ~~of large fortune from the north of England~~; (that he came down) ~~on Monday in a chaise and four to see the place~~, (that he was so much delighted) ~~with it~~ (thathe agreed ~~with Mr Morris immediately~~); and (thathe is) ~~to take possession before Michaelmas~~.

You and the girls may go , or you may send them ~~by themselves~~, (which perhaps will be still better) , for, (as you are) ~~as handsome as any of them~~, Mr Bingley might like you the best ~~of the party~~.

Indeed you must go , for it will be impossible ~~for us to visit him~~, (if you do not).

Mr. Bennet was so odd a mixture ~~of quick parts~~, (that the experience ~~of three and twenty years~~ had been insufficient) ~~to make his wife understand his character~~.

(When she was discontented) she fancied herself nervous.

Mr Bennet was among the earliest ~~of those~~ (who waited) ~~on Mr Bingley~~.

He had always intended ~~to visit him~~; (although ~~to the last~~ he always assured his wife) (that he would not go) ; and ~~until the evening~~ (after the visit was paid), she had no knowledge ~~of it~~.

One cannot know (what a man really is) ~~by the end of a fortnight~~.

But (if we do not venture), somebody else will ; and ~~after all~~, Mrs Long and her nieces must take their chances ; and, (since she will think it an act) ~~of kindness~~ (if you decline the office), I will take it ~~on myself~~.

(If I had known ~~as much~~ this morning), I certainly would not have called ~~on~~ ~~him~~.

The rest ~~of the evening~~ was spent ~~in conjecturing~~ (how soon he would return Mr Bennet's visit) , and ~~in determining~~ (when they should ask him) ~~for~~ dinner.

H. G. Wells

Far overhead, ~~on three sides~~, vast cliffs of grey-green rock were capped by cliffs of ice; but the glacier stream came not ~~to them~~ but flowed away ~~by the farther slopes~~, and only now and then huge ice masses fell ~~on the valley side~~.

It was ~~to seek some charm or antidote against this plague of blindness~~ (that he had with ~~fatigue and danger and difficulty~~ returned) ~~down the gorge~~.

In those days, ~~in such cases~~, men did not think of germs and infections but of sins ; and it seemed to him (that the reason of this affliction must lie) ~~in the negligence of these priestless immigrants to establish a shrine~~ (when they entered the valley).

The stream (that had once made the gorge) now burst ~~from the mouth of a rocky cave~~, and the legend (that his poor, ill-told story set going) developed ~~into the legend of a race of blind men somewhere 'over there,'~~ (which one may still hear today.)

Long years ago the valley lay so far open ~~to the world~~ (that men might come) ~~at last through frightful gorges and over an icy pass into its equable meadows~~ ; and thither indeed men came.

Then came the stupendous outbreak ~~of Mindobamba~~, (when it was night) ~~in~~ ~~Quito for seventeen days~~, and the water was boiling ~~at Yaguaehi~~, and all the fish were floating and dying even ~~as far as Guayaquil~~ ; everywhere ~~along the~~

~~Pacific slopes there were landslips and swift thawings and sudden floods , and one whole side of the old Arauca crest slipped, and came down in thunder , and cut off the Country of the Blind for ever from the exploring feet of men.~~

~~But one of these early settlers had chanced to be on the hither side of the gorges (when the world had so terribly shaken itself , and he perforce had to forget his wife and his child and all the friends and possessions ([that] he had left up there), and start life over again in the lower world.~~

~~He started it again but ill ; blindness overtook him , and he died of punishment in the mines ; but the story (that he told) begot a legend (that lingers) along the length of the Cordilleras of the Andes to this day.~~

~~He told of his reason for venturing back from that vastness, into (which he had first been carried) lashed to a llama, beside a vast bale of gear, (when he was a child).~~

~~The valley had in it all (that the heart of man could desire): sweet water, pasture, an even climate, and slopes of rich brown soil with tangles of a shrub (that bore an excellent fruit, and, on one side, great hanging forests of pine (that held the avalanches high).~~

~~I figure this dim-eyed young mountaineer, a man all unused to the ways of the lower world, telling this story to some keen-eyed, attentive priest before the great convulsion ; I can picture him presently seeking to return with pious and infallible remedies against that trouble , and I can see the infinite dismay with ([which]) he must have faced the tumbled vastness (where the gorge had once come out).~~

W. B. Yeats

(When I must have been still a very little boy) ~~of seven or eight years perhaps, an uncle called me from bed one night, to ride the five or six miles to Rosses Point to borrow a railway pass from a cousin.~~

I was let out ~~through a gate~~ (that opened) ~~upon a little lane beside the garden away from ear shot of the house , and I rode delighted through the moonlight and awoke my cousin in the small hours by tapping on his window with a whip.~~

My first memories are fragmentary and isolated and contemporaneous, (as though someone remembered some first moments) ~~of the Seven Days.~~

It seems (as if time had not yet been created) , for all thoughts connected ~~with emotion and place are without sequence.~~

I may have already had that night ~~of misery~~ (when, having prayed for several days (that I might die), I began ~~to be afraid~~ (that I was dying), and prayed (that I might live).

I used ~~to think about God and fancy~~ (that I was very wicked) , and one day (when I threw a stone and hit a duck ~~in the yard by mischance~~ and broke its wing), I was full ~~of wonder~~ (when I was told) (that the duck would be cooked) ~~for dinner~~ and (that I would not be punished).

He was never unkind , and I cannot remember (that he ever spoke harshly) ~~to me , but~~ it was the custom ~~to fear and admire him.~~

*He had no relations ,for he was an only child ,and, ~~being solitary and silent~~,
he had few friends.*